

The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

A NEW CHRIST.

Prologue.

MOST of our readers will recollect the controversy that was carried on, more than twelve months ago, in the columns of the *Daily Chronicle*. Mr. Robert Buchanan had published his new poem, "The Wandering Jew," in which Jesus Christ was depicted as a forlorn vagrant, sick of the evil and infamy wrought in his name, and for which he was historically though not intentionally responsible. This poem was reviewed by Mr. Richard Le Gallienne, a younger poet, who is also a professional critic in the *Star*, where his weekly *causerie* on books and their writers is printed over the signature of "Logroller." Mr. Le Gallienne took Mr. Buchanan to task for his hostility to "the Christianity of Christ," the nature of which was not defined nor even made intelligible. Mr. Buchanan replied with his usual impetuosity, declining to have anything to do with Christianity except in the way of opposition, and laughing at the sentimental dilution which his young friend was attempting to pass off as the original, unadulterated article. Mr. Le Gallienne retorted with youthful self-confidence that Mr. Buchanan did not understand Christianity. Other writers then joined in the fray, and the result was the famous "Is Christianity Played Out?" discussion in the *Chronicle*. It was kept going for a week or two, until parliament met and Jesus Christ had to make way for William Ewart Gladstone.

Mr. Le Gallienne hinted that he was preparing a kind of manifesto on the subject of Christianity. The world was to be informed at length as to the "essential" nature of that religion. Divines and Freethinkers had alike misunderstood and misrepresented it. After the lapse of nearly two thousand years the "straight tip," if we may so express it, was to come from "Logroller." He would soon speak and set the weary world at rest with the triumphant proclamation of the real, imperishable religion of Jesus Christ. Presently it was announced, in judicious puffs, that the manifesto was growing under Mr. Le Gallienne's hands. It would take the form of a book, to be entitled *The Religion of a Literary Man*. The title had little relation to the Galilean carpenter or his fishing disciples. Nor was it in any sense happy. It smacked too much of the "shop." Sir Thomas Browne, it is true, wrote a "Religio Medici," and gave a physician's view of religion; but he was a man of rare genius as well as quaintness, and allowance was to be made for his idiosyncrasy. Besides, there is a certain speciality in a doctor's way of looking at religion, if he compares his knowledge with his faith. But what is the speciality of a literary man on this particular subject? Other trades and professions might as well follow suit, and give us "The Religion of a Porkbutcher," or "The Faith of a Farmer," or "The Creed of a Constable." Even the "Belief of a Barman" is not beyond the scope of a rational probability.

A Dainty Evangel.

Mr. Le Gallienne's long-promised evangel "burst upon the town" a month ago. The "Religio Scrip-toris"—which a puzzler at Latin might render as "The

No. 661.]

Religion of a Scribbler"—made a dainty appearance. The title-page was in two colors, with a pretty arabesque border. The type throughout was neatly leaded, with a column for summaries in the old fashion, and a wide margin of imitation hand-made paper. The book was pretty, like the writing, and opposite the title-page was a pretty verse:—

'The old gods pass'—the cry goes round,
'Lo! how their temples strew the ground';
Nor mark we where, on new-fledged wings,
Faith, like the phoenix, soars and sings.

Yes, it is *all* pretty. There is an air of dilettanteism about the whole production. It will probably be grateful to the sentimentalists who, despite their scepticism, still cling to the name of Christian; but we imagine it will rather irritate than satisfy other readers of more strenuous and scrupulous intelligence.

The Dedication.

The book is dedicated to "A. E. Fletcher, Esq.," editor of the *Daily Chronicle*, who may well be proud (not of this dedication, but) of the high position to which he has raised that organ of Radical principles. Mr. Le Gallienne refers to the old controversy in the *Chronicle* as "raising an important question—to me the most important of questions—as to whether Christianity was really so obsolete to-day as its opponents glibly assume." "I could not stand by," he continues, "and see the sublime figure of Christ vulgarised to make an Adelphi holiday." For this reason, he modestly says, he "ventured to play David to Mr. Buchanan's Philistine." Mr. Fletcher allowed him a battlefield, and "thence sprung [he means *sprang*] the following pages." Thus much for the origin of the work, and now for its character. "I have condensed in its pages," the writer says, "much religious experience, and long and ardent thought on spiritual matters." No doubt he believes this statement, but is it true? Is not the writer too young to have had "much experience"? and where are the traces of the "long and ardent thought"? Mr. Le Gallienne might reply that his thought *has* been long and ardent, whatever the value of the result; but, in that case, he is not cut out for a thinker; and, indeed, he seems aware of the fact, for he often prints "thinker" in inverted commas to show his disdain of the article. His "one cure" for "modern doubt" is to "think less and feel more," and some may be tempted to remark that he has certainly followed the first part of the prescription.

Classifying Mankind.

Mr. Le Gallienne is a long time in coming to "the sublime figure of Christ." He has a considerable ground to cover before he undertakes the cleaning and painting of the old idol. First of all, he has to establish his native superiority over the common herd. He divides the world into "natural spiritualists and materialists." The first have a Spiritual Sense (capitals, please), while the second have not; and "it is obvious that the large majority of mankind belong to the latter class." Mr. Le Gallienne, of course, belongs to the former. He is a member of Nature's (or God's) aristocracy. It is for them that he writes, although on his own supposition the task is superfluous. The common herd of materialists are warned against wasting their time in reading him—which also is somewhat superfluous.

The fault of materialists—or rather their misfortune, for they are born that way—is that they are such sticklers for facts, and have “no conception of aught they cannot touch and handle, eat, or see through a microscope.” Not, indeed, that Mr. Le Gallienne objects to eating, for instance; he speaks of it with wet lips, and looks down upon the Vegetarian as a person whose “spiritual insight” is not “mercifully intermittent,” especially at meal times. But barring meal times, and other fleshly occasions when the spiritualists join the materialists, the former habitually see facts as “transitory symbols” of “transfiguring mysteries,” so that the whole world (and perhaps the moon) is “palpitating with occult significance.”

For instance. A materialist eats rook-pie, and cares for nothing else but a sound digestion. The spiritualist also eats rook-pie, but after the repast he will sentimentalise over dead rooks, without losing his belief in an all-merciful Providence. He will assure you, indeed, and try to convince you, that the shooting of rooks and the pulling off their heads to prevent the rook-pie from tasting bitter, is simply one of the “terrible and beautiful mysteries” which make the world so interesting—especially to gentlemen of comprehensive natures, who combine a taste for rook-pie with a taste for optimistic theology.

Mysteries.

When we come to test Mr. Le Gallienne's conception of mystery, we find it to be nothing but muddle. The whole mystery of life, he says, may be found in a curve: as thus, Why isn't it straight?

“Color in itself is a mystery, and are there not trance-like moments when suddenly we ask ourselves, why a colored world, why a blue sky, and green grass, why not *vice versa*, or why any color at all?”

Mr. Le Gallienne is evidently prepared to stand aghast at the fact that twice two make four. Why always four? Why not three to-day and seven to-morrow? Yea, and echo answers, Why?

Here is another illustration of “mystery”—

“Science can tell us that oxygen and hydrogen will unite under certain conditions to produce water, but it cannot tell us why they do so; the mystery of their affinity is as dark as ever.”

Mr. Le Gallienne has a whole chapter on the Relative Spirit, yet his “long and ardent thought” does not enable him to see that he is himself a slave of metaphysics. All this “mystery” is nothing but the “meat-roasting power of the meat-jack.” The question of *why* oxygen and hydrogen form water is a prompting of anthropomorphism. Intellectually, it is simply childish. It could only be put by one who has not grasped the great doctrine of the Relativity of Knowledge. Man can no more get beyond his own knowledge—which is and ever must be finite—than he can get outside himself, or run away from his own shadow.

“The sacred mystery of motherhood,” of which Mr. Le Gallienne speaks, is a pretty expression. It may pass in the realm of poetry, with the “everlasting hills” and the “eternal sea,” which are but transient phenomena in the infinite existence of the universe. The “mystery” of human motherhood is no greater than the “mystery” of any other form of reproduction, while its “sacredness” depends on circumstances; the term, in short, being a compendium of a great variety of personal and social feelings, which may or may not be present in any particular case. What becomes of the “sacred mystery of motherhood” when a poor servant girl brings her child into the world unaided, and casts it into the Thames? What becomes of it when violation takes the place of seduction, and a woman bears a child to a man she loathes and hates?

“Mystery,” like other words we inherit from the theological and metaphysical stages, is only fit for use in poetry; it is out of place in science or philosophy; and we advise Mr. Le Gallienne to get a comprehension of this truth before he takes fresh excursions in the “realm of long and ardent thought.” The subjective ideas of poetry cease to be admirable and stimulating when they are projected into the external world, and become our masters instead of our servants.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded).

AN ATHEIST ENTHUSIAST—ANACHARSIS CLOOTZ.

ONE hundred years ago, on the 24th of March, 1794, there was guillotined, together with the Hébertists, an enthusiast who was one of the most picturesque figures of the French Revolution. To an account of his life and times, M. Georges Avenel has devoted two volumes, full of deep interest for all students of the great events of a century ago. Jean Baptiste Clootz, Baron du Val de Grace, was born at the Castle of Gnadenthal, near Cleves (Rhenish Prussia), on June 24, 1755. His father had been private counsellor of Frederick the Great, and his uncle was the learned author, Cornelius de Pauw. He was thus, as it were, brought up in a school of philosophy. Though put to the military school at Berlin, he felt a profound antipathy for the military despotism before his eyes, and became a confirmed Republican, indeed, “the apostle of the universal republic.” At the age of 21 he inherited enormous wealth, £100,000, which he devoted to propagating his ideas, taking as his motto, *Veritas atque libertas*—“Truth and Liberty.” The first work which he published was a parody of the then most famous defence of Christianity against the attacks of Voltaire, by the Abbé Bergier, entitled *Certitude des preuves du Christianisme*. Clootz, by way of refutation, undertook to show in the same terms, and by the same reasons, the truth of Mohammedanism. His work was entitled, *La Certitude des Preuves du Mahométisme*, par Ali. Gier Ber (an anagram of Bergier). It had the imprint, Londres, 1780, but was really issued at Amsterdam in the previous year. The work was an attack on Christianity and all revealed religion. It had a pretended “Approbation,” signed Mustamet, but was really suppressed.* It brought Clootz to the notice of Diderot, d'Alembert, d'Holbach, and he became a figure of that group that did so much to overturn the old mental despotisms. He also wrote *Letters from a Young Philosopher to a Young Theologian*, a *Letter on Jews* (Berlin, 1783), and *Vœux d'une Gallophile* (1786). Menaced with the Bastille, he came to England (1784), then to Holland and Southern Europe. He says: “I was at Rome when they would incarcerate me at Paris, and I was at London when they would burn me at Lisbon.” He preached everywhere Freethought, Cosmopolitanism, and the Universal Republic.

After the fall of the Bastille he became a conspicuous figure in Paris. He defenestrated himself by renouncing his title, and debaptised himself by taking the name of the young Scythian traveller Anacharsis, an example copied by many. To Burke's *Reflections* he replied with a spirited address, which itself might prove that the age of chivalry was not dead. Carlyle says of Clootz:

“Him mark, judicious Reader. Thou hast known his Uncle, sharp-sighted, thorough-going Cornelius de Pauw, who mercilessly cuts down cherished illusions; and of the finest antique Spartans will make mere modern cutthroat Mainots. The like stuff is in Anacharsis: hot metal; full of scoræ, which should and could have been smelted out, but which will not. He has wandered over this terraqueous Planet; seeking, one may say, the Paradise we lost long ago. He has seen English Burke; has been seen of the Portugal Inquisition; has roamed, and fought, and written; is writing, among other things, ‘Evidences of the Mahometan Religion.’ But now, like his Scythian adoptive godfather, he finds himself in the Paris Athens; surely, at last, the haven of his soul. A dashing man, beloved at Patriotic dinner-tables; with gaiety, nay, with humor; headlong, trenchant, of free purse; in suitable costume; though what mortal ever more despised costumes? Under all costumes Anacharsis seeks the man; not Stylites Marat will more freely trample costumes, if they hold no man. This is the faith of Anacharsis: That there is a Paradise discoverable; that all costumes ought to hold men. O Anacharsis, it is a headlong, swift-going faith. Mounted thereon, mesceins thou art bound hastily for the City of *Nowhere*; and wilt arrive! At best, we may say, arrive in good riding attitude; which indeed is something.

Clootz was bent on the Revolution being made to serve the Universal Republic and the Brotherhood of Man. Accordingly he assembled representatives of all nations

* See E. G. Peignot, “Dict des Principaux Livres Condamnés au feu Supprimé ou Censurés.”

(the Orientals being represented by Orientalists conversant with their languages*) and asked a place at the Feast of Federation, June 19, 1790. His discourse on this occasion was translated into many languages. He was henceforward styled speaker for the human race, *orateur du genre humain*. This proceeding was much ridiculed, but it was not without its effect on the spectacle-loving French. For the rest Cloutz "se moquait des moquers." He became one of the best known speakers of the Jacobin Club; was among the earliest republicans; and was, with Paine, Priestley, Bentham, Mackintosh, Washington, Klopstock and others, made a French citizen. He was in 1792 elected to the Convention by two departments, and voted for the death of the king. He gave the sum of 12,000 livres to sustain the war, and circulated his book called *La République Universelle*, a project for uniting all nations in one federated Republic. He voted usually with the Mountain, but was of no particular party, but for the welfare of the people, as he made plain in his pamphlet *Ni Marat, ni Roland*, which was afterwards used against him by Robespierre.

Thiers says: "Anacharsis Cloutz incessantly preached up a universal republic and the worship of reason. Full of these two ideas, he was continually developing them in his writings, and holding them forth to all nations, sometimes in manifestoes, at others in addresses. To him Deism appeared as culpable as Catholicism itself. He never ceased to propose the destruction of tyrants and of all sorts of gods, and insisted that, among mankind enfranchised and enlightened, nothing ought to be left but pure reason and its beneficent and immortal worship."

He thought and said, before the convention, that the time had come when humanity should burn its swaddling clothes. He aided the project of a new calendar, to which scientists like Lalande and the committee of public instruction, which was the centre of the dechristianising movement, contributed. He it was who persuaded Gobel, the constitutional bishop, to abjure his faith, and actually induced him to surrender his episcopate, which he did on the 17 Brumaire An II. (Nov. 7, 1793). This was followed by a decree charging the committee of public instruction to present a project "tending to substitute a reasonable worship for the Catholic one." Says Carlyle: "Let Atheist Maréchal, Lalande, and little Atheist Nageon rejoice; let Cloutz, Speaker of Mankind, present to the Convention his *Evidences of the Mahometan Religion*, 'a work evincing the nullity of all religions, with thanks.' There shall be Universal Republic now, thinks Cloutz, and 'one God only, *Le Peuple*.'" Cloutz also proposed the erection of a statue to Jean Mesliér, "the first priest who had the courage and the good faith to abjure religious error."

But fall soon followed success in the turmoil of the Revolution. His friendship with Chaumette, who established the Feasts of Reason, provoked the enmity of Robespierre, who asked, "Can we regard as a patriot a German baron? Can we consider a man worth 100,000 livres a sansculotte?" "Cloutz is a Prussian." That was the Incorruptible's reason for his arrest, as the fact that Paine was English by birth was used against him also. They were imprisoned together, and Miss Maria Williams says Cloutz reproached the author of the *Age of Reason* for retaining too many political and religious prejudices.† Although arrested two months and a half previously, he was brought with the Hébertists before the revolutionary tribunal, and of course was condemned to death. The night before their execution some of the condemned were inclined to recrimination. Cloutz silenced them by reciting a then famous apologue, showing all share a common lot. In its English translation it runs—

I dreamt that, gathered to my fellow-clay,
Close to a common beggar's side I lay, etc.

At his execution he showed the same fortitude. He desired that he might be executed last, and said we shall soon return to the elements from which we sprung.‡

* There were thirty-six in all. England was represented by R. Pigott, the Pythagorean and Jacobin. America was to have been represented by Paul Jones, the Corsair, but an accident prevented his appearance.

† Letters in 1794, vol. ii, p. 177.

‡ Nous avons pris racine dans le sein de la femme, nous reprendrons racine dans le sein de la terre. Ensevelissez-moi sous la verte pelouse pour que je renaisse par la végétation.

One by one heads are lopped off. Each moment there is one less till his turn comes, when he gravely bows to the right, to the left, and to the centre of the audience before him. On the morrow three profound bows become fashionable, *à la Prussien*, but the Orator of the human race—the cosmopolitan, republican, Atheist, is no more.

J. M. WHEELER.

EDUCATION AND THEOLOGY.

[CONCLUDED.]

THE crusade which has been carried on by the orthodox party against a secular system of education in our Board Schools, is doubtless the result of a mistaken notion that theology and Bible reading are a preventive to crime; and moreover that a "godless" education is dangerous to the moral condition of society. Now there is ample evidence, furnished by undeniable facts, that Bible reading and the teaching of theology, do not prevent crime or increase the moral status. The truth is, that since the Board Schools have replaced Church instruction, crime has considerably decreased. In referring to the early part of the present century, the Rev. Dr. Milner quotes official figures which show that during the first seven years of the Bible Society's existence, the wickedness of the country, instead of being diminished, had almost been doubled! For instance in 1810 the convictions for crime were 834, but in 1817, when for ten years thousands of additional Bibles had been in circulation, the convictions had increased to 3,177. From a Parliamentary Report of Sir John Trelawney in 1873, concerning England and Wales, we learn the following percentage of criminals to the population:—Church of England, 1 in every 72; Dissenters, 1 in every 666; Roman Catholics, 1 in every 40; and Infidels 1 in every 20,000. The *Pall Mall Gazette* recently stated that "during the period between October 1, 1891, and October 10, 1892, there were 629 convictions for various offences, of clergymen connected with the Established Church." The *Church Times*, some time ago, reported the Bishop of Dover as saying, at the Conference of the Canterbury Diocesan Sunday-school Teachers, that he had tried to trace the career of a hundred of his own scholars. He was only able to trace seventy-seven, and of these only two attended church regularly, while thirty-nine were confirmed drunkards. He further stated that at Leeds the chaplain of the gaol reported, that 230 out of 282 prisoners had been Sunday-school scholars. At Pentonville Prison, out of 1,000 convicts, 757 had been brought up at Sunday-schools. "The United States Commission of Education for 1871, published some curious figures from which it is found, that in examining the educational condition of eight Bavarian provinces, the following suggestive facts were presented:—In the first four provinces there were forty-seven churches, twenty-two schools, and seventy-one criminals. In the second four provinces there were ten churches, thirty-four schools, and only forty-three criminals. Thus it is seen that those who read the Bible, and also those who preached from it, were not prevented from becoming criminals; while the facts in reference to the Bavarian provinces, show that the School was superior to the Church as a promoter of the great virtues of life.

Another interesting truth worthy of note is that during the "godless" teaching of our Board schools crime has decreased. The evidence presented by the Judicial Statistics of England and Wales for the year ending September 29, 1891, reveals the fact that under nearly every head of crime there was a marked decrease compared with those of preceding years. Mr. West, Q. C., Recorder of Manchester, recently stated that crime in that city had decreased by two-thirds, and this improvement he attributed largely to the influence of Board school instruction. Mr. Howard Evans was reported in *Lloyd's Newspaper* of November 27, 1892, as saying: "Criminal statistics show that the work of education has proved morally effective. Only a quarter of a century ago the population of our convict prisons was 11,600; it is now only 5,000, though our population has increased ten per cent. Within the same period the numbers convicted for indictable offences have

fallen from 14,000 to 9,000." After reading these facts surely it cannot be contended that Bible reading and theological teaching are necessary to secure a moral state of society. It is not here contended that religious teaching should not be taught under some circumstances and at some places. What we urge is the necessity of keeping it from our public schools, so that these institutions shall be devoted to their original and legitimate purpose, which is the educating of the young in the secular requirements of life. Those who believe in the necessity of Christian instruction (whatever that may mean) have their churches and chapels wherein such instruction can be given.

There are other grave reasons why the Bible should have no official place in our public schools. Its educational teaching is based upon fear and not upon love. In Proverbs we read: "A rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding." "Thou shalt beat him with a rod." "Chasten thy son . . . and let not thy soul spare for his crying." Such Bible injunctions as these may be the teachings of God, but they are the very essence of brutality. Moreover, portions of the Bible are unfit for children to see. Where is the moral to be derived from such stories as those of Lot and his daughters, David and his adultery, Jacob and his wives, Judith and Ruth? What effect would the following passages have upon the religious youth in whom the appetite for strong drinks was hereditary? "Thou shalt bestow thy money for whatever thy soul lusteth after—wine or strong drink" (Deut. xiv. 26); "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink and forget his poverty and remember his misery no more" (Prov. xxxi. 6, 7). It may be said that only the good portions of the Bible are to be read. If so, these (or precepts equally as useful) can be had from other books unaccompanied by what is so very objectionable.

But further, the Bible undoubtedly teaches what is false upon matters of history, science, philosophy, and morals; and yet these are among the Bible lessons that are to be read. Still, upon each subject the most glaring errors are propounded. The teaching of such fallacies is the more reprehensible because many of those so-called orthodox saints who insist upon "Bible Lessons," do not believe in them. Professor Huxley saw the evil and inconsistency of such conduct. Hence, some years ago, when he was a member of the London School Board he addressed its members as follows. Speaking of the first chapter of Genesis, he said: "The reading of this chapter would convey—whatever the chapter was intended to convey—that the world was made in six natural days. I don't say whether this is the right interpretation or not; but I appeal to the common sense of the Board whether that is not the interpretation which every child capable of understanding the English language would naturally derive from the statement contained in the book of Genesis? And, that being the case, it is perfectly certain that this statement is erroneous, and no more capable of being disputed than whether the earth stands still or not. I submit that it is an absolute crime that this Board should sanction the instilling into the minds of children statements which are not true, and which the instruction which they receive a few years later will infallibly upset. . . . What I ask, and what I have a right to ask, and what you as honest men must grant is this, that these tender children shall not be taught that which you do not yourselves believe."

Thus we plead for purely secular education. Sanctions for moral actions depend upon no Bible and upon no supernatural religion. Let our children be taught that honesty is right, not because they are commanded by the Bible not to steal, but for the reason that stealing is an infringement upon the rights of others; that telling the truth is right, not because lying would offend any God, but for the reason that falsehood tends to undermine that confidence which is necessary to the stability of society; that honor is due to parents, not because children may live long, but for the reason that they are indebted to their parents for life and training. These are real and natural sanctions, dependent upon neither theology nor upon "sacred books." Finally, we

plead for secular education because it is no part of the functions of School Boards to seek to increase the numbers of either Roman Catholics, Protestants, or unbelievers. That is a task which should be left to those who take an interest in either one of the three classes of society mentioned, and it is their duty to provide for the cost of the respective propaganda. No one would complain more vehemently than the Christian, if he were called upon to pay for the teaching of the principles of the National Secular Society. Why, then, should Secularists be taxed to pay for the teaching of a theology which they believe to be the greatest enemy of all correct and useful education? Is there no justice to be found in the realms of theology? Has the orthodox faith blunted within its devotees all sense of equality and right? We think that, to a large extent, it has, and our duty as Secularists is at least to protect the young, who are unable to protect themselves, and to resist the snares placed in their path. We would shield them from the allurements and the dangerous policy of those who would sacrifice the mundane welfare of the rising generation, unless it is sought to be secured by the aid of a theology that has, during centuries, proved itself to be the deadliest foe to all noble and ennobling aspirations.

CHARLES WATTS.

AN UNRELATED ADVENTURE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.

(With Apologies to Dr. A. Conan Doyle.)

SINCE the decease of my dear ever-to-be-lamented companion, Sherlock Holmes, I have heard the subject of his religious views discussed in more quarters than one. It has been a matter of interest to know to what particular Church or sect Sherlock belonged; and methinks there are many who covet the honor of numbering him among their adherents. But for myself, and as far as my knowledge goes, I never knew him to attend divine service. While we lived together in Baker-street, he seldom went out on Sundays—unless, indeed, the exigencies of the case he had in hand at the moment required, and then he had not the slightest Sabbatarian scruples. When he did take recreation on Sundays, he attended concerts and recitals. I have before mentioned, I think, that the violin was Holmes's one hobby, and if there chanced to be a violin recital, he would travel to the extremest part of London to hear it. Yet since his death, and the discussion to which I have referred, it has struck me that one case in which Holmes was engaged and which, by one chance or another, I omitted to include in my recent memoirs, may throw some light on the religious character, or otherwise, of my dead friend.

We were sitting one November evening at the fire, chatting idly, when there was a sharp knock at the street-door. Presently we heard feet mounting the stairs; there was a little tap at our door, and the next moment a tall, dark, oldish, military-looking man entered.

"Mr. Parkson Kenwick, I believe," said Sherlock Holmes, rising from his seat to greet the stranger. The man was stunned by the familiarity of the address. I need hardly say it did not astonish me. I had by that time become accustomed to Holmes's acute powers of induction. The new-comer desired to know by what means Holmes had arrived at his name.

"Oh!" replied Holmes, "that is a trivial point; let us to business. You have come about that robbery of bank-notes in Burham-terrace, I suppose." The man stood aghast.

"Really, Mr. Holmes," he said, "you seem to know the entire affair. There is little use in my explaining."

"Oh, proceed," said Holmes, calmly.

"Well," continued Mr. Kenwick, "on Tuesday week last I had occasion to leave town for a few days. I had the day before received £325 in £5 Bank of England notes, and, foolishly, no doubt, instead of banking them immediately, I locked them up in my private desk, of which, I may mention, there is only one key that I never allow out of my possession. Judge then, Mr. Holmes, my surprise and horror on arriving home to find, on opening my desk, the

bank-notes gone. Nothing was stirred. The desk was in the precise spot in which I left it. No marks of force having been used appeared on the desk—nothing, in fact, to indicate that the least violence had been done. Yet my notes were gone. No other documents in the desk had been touched or moved—the notes were abstracted as cleanly and as neatly as if I had taken them calmly out myself. I have puzzled my brain, Mr. Holmes, for the past two days. I have put the matter in the hands of the police, and, since they seem unable to do anything, I have at last come to you.” Holmes acknowledged the veiled compliment with a bow.

“And have you formed any theory of the matter?” inquired Sherlock, without almost raising his eyes.

“Well no, none,” replied Mr. Fenwick, “except, indeed, discussing the matter with an old friend this morning—he suggested that there might be some occult influence at work. He pointed out to me that people whom he referred to as ‘Mahatmas’ were quite active just at present, that occult-knowledge had been recklessly dispensed, and that possibly some evil-disposed person had made use of this knowledge to commit a crime. He told me that a lady, recently deceased, was able to move tables and chairs, and precipitate roses from the roof by means of hidden forces; and he thought that possibly something of that kind had happened in my case.

“H’m, might I ask the name of the friend who offered this theory,” said Holmes.

“Oh, certainly,” replied Kenwick, “his name is Brandon Brennon, on old and intimate friend. I believe he has lately taken up the study of Theosophy. But, Mr. Holmes, of course you do not for a moment imagine that he—”

“Oh,” interrupted Holmes, “I was really thinking that if he were possessed of any of this occult knowledge, he might place it at our disposal, and thereby help us considerably—that is, if his view of the case were correct.”

“Quite so, Mr. Holmes,” said the old man; “I will see him and enlist him in our service—if you think it advisable.”

“I would think it very advisable,” said Holmes with an ironical emphasis on the *very*, which the old man did not catch. “However, Mr. Kenwick,” continued Holmes, “as we can do little more to-night, say I call round to you to-morrow morning about eleven, and we can talk the matter over further.” So saying Sherlock bowed the old gentleman out with that subtle and official yet kindly grace which so distinguished my late companion’s manner.

“Curious case that,” I remarked when Holmes returned to the fire, “a good deal in the mahatma-theory, it seems to me, I have seen Sherlock, that they obtain subscriptions to their funds from departed friends and so forth, and it is established you know that they can receive letters by occult means. And if letters, why not bank-notes? What is your view, Holmes?” I inquired.

“My view, Watson?” repeated Holmes, “Watson you can accept it from me, the name of the man who stole those notes is—Brandon Brennon.”

“Good heaven, Holmes,” I said, “what makes you think that?”

“Watson, that is too long to go into to-night. To-morrow we will investigate further, and develop the business.”

I saw that Holmes was not to be drawn that night, so I said no more on the subject of the robbery. We drifted to other topics and retired early.

The next morning I was going down to breakfast when there came a knock which I instantly recognised as that of the previous night. Hence I was not surprised to see Kenwick coming up the stairs when I reached the landing. He seemed excited somewhat and entered the room without ceremony.

“Mr. Holmes,” said he, addressing Holmes who was sitting at the table, “another mysterious thing has occurred at home. When I left to see you last night I locked my study-door and placed the desk on a table in the corner. When I returned the door was locked as I left it, but when I entered the room I found the desk moved from the table on which I left it, to a chair

near the window. No one could have gone into the room in my absence for I had the key with me.”

“Well,” said Holmes, “we shall go over after breakfast.”

“Now,” said I to Holmes, when Kenwick was gone, “there does really seem to be some occult force at work in this case. Don’t you think so, Holmes?”

“Not at all,” coolly replied Sherlock. “Are your critical faculties still so undeveloped, Watson, as not to perceive that this moving of the desk was a mere *ruse* to support the theory of occult force?”

“But, Holmes,” I said, “why do you bar the occult or the supernatural from the possibilities of the case? Why may this crime *not* have a supernatural cause?”

“Now, my dear Watson,” returned Holmes paternally, “I thought I often told you that detective work with me was a science? Science knows nothing of the supernatural. If I were to allow your suggestion to cross me, I would be thwarted and crushed at every step; I would see the supernatural in every move. No, my dear Watson, every act with me has a cause—a plain, natural, discoverable cause. Without that predicated, my work would be useless; granted, and I am vain enough to declare, on the record of a career that has never known a failure, that there is no mystery however deep, no riddle however difficult, that I would not be able to solve.”

As I have seen Holmes claimed as a believer in superstitions which I know he regarded with contempt, and as I am, to some extent, the guardian of my dead friend’s honor, I have thought it right to put on record the foregoing narrative. I cannot say that Holmes ever discussed, in my hearing, theological questions, and I fancy he took little or no interest in them. But he was deeply versed in Church history, and especially the history of the Dark Ages, and he was well posted in all the details of the Inquisition. This often struck me as a strange trait in a shrewd modern like Holmes. For, beyond as I have said, the violin, he had really no recreation and no hobby. Everything he read or studied had for him a professional value. It will be remembered, I think, that early in our acquaintance—at the period of the *Study in Scarlet*—I was astonished at Holmes’ ignorance of the most elementary facts of astronomy. At that time he explained to me that only subjects which had a bearing on the problem of Crime and its methods, were of interest to him. I have since thought that this is the explanation of Holmes’ otherwise inexplicable familiarity with ecclesiastical history. But the story which I have above related may shed a glimmer of light, however faint, on the philosophical opinions of one whose death has left a void in my life that I fear the new and fresher friendships I shall probably make hereafter, can never wholly fill.

FREDERICK RYAN.

OBITUARY.

A LEADING supporter of the Freethought cause in the United States has passed away in the person of Mr. Abraham Schell, of Knight’s Ferry, California. He died, as he lived, an Atheist. The address delivered at his grave by W. F. Freeman, is printed at length in the *Boston Investigator*.

It is with sincere regret that I have to record the death, on the 8th inst., of James R. Robson, of Jarrow. Deceased was a young man of very pronounced convictions, and was largely instrumental in forming the Jarrow Branch of the N.S.S. He was elected the first secretary, which office he filled in a very capable and energetic manner until he was compelled to resign through illness a few months ago. Deceased was not allowed to see any Freethinkers for some weeks before he died, although Christians who were utter strangers to him were permitted to see him, including the Presbyterian minister. It is gratifying to know that, notwithstanding the efforts thus made to change his opinions, he died as he had lived, a Freethinker.—WM. HOPPER.

No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning, as *fear*.—Edmund Burke.

True science will continue to fulfil one of her most beneficent functions; that of relieving men from the burden of false science, which is imposed upon them in the name of Religion.—T. H. Huxley.

THE LORD'S PRAYER, WITH RESPONSES.

BY ANTICHRIST.

Our Father which art in heaven.

And in hell also; for "if I make my bed in hell behold thou art there." Ps. cxxxix. 8.

Hallowed be thy name.

But as the true pronunciation of thy name in Hebrew is lost, we won't try to repeat it.

Thy kingdom come.

Especially in America, where kings no longer exist.

Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

For since Satan was expelled from heaven he hath gotten pretty full sway on earth.

Give us this day our daily bread.

Or, as it should read, our needed bread; and do we not know that bread is generally kneaded?

And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Though we don't like to lose money by debtors; nor do we know exactly how much we are indebted to thee.

And lead us not into temptation.

As thou didst Abraham, David, and other old saints; for we fear we couldn't stand the trial any better than they did.

But deliver us from evil.

Or "the evil one," as they say it ought to read; and we have had enough of his spirit control anyhow.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory.

But as this is a modern addition to the prayer, why not let us omit it, especially as thy kingdom, power, and glory are not yet manifested.

Amen.

Gammon.

A SLIGHT MISTAKE.

Deacon Ironside (after the service): "Elder, I got a little late this morning, but I don't think you had any right to take it out of me in your sermon."

Elder Keepalong: "Take it out of you? How?"

"Get back at me. Ain't that what you did? I hadn't hardly got inside the door when I heard you say: 'And now comes the worst of them all, the chief rebel against the government of heaven.' And then you went on describing my character and putting all my failings in the worst light you possibly could. You didn't mention no names, but I know who you was driving at, and I must say, Elder, that I don't like this way of—"

"But, my dear Deacon Ironside, you totally misapprehend. The subject this morning was 'The Rebellion in Heaven,' and when you came in I was trying to picture the depravity of Lucifer, the arch-apostate. I am truly sorry, deacon, if I seemed to—"

"Never mind, Elder; never mind. We'll—h'm—we'll say no more about it. Rather a nasty morning, ain't it?"

ACID DROPS.

The "social position" of a man of God is higher than that of other men who earn an honest living by more obviously useful labor. It appears that a certain rector, in County Londonderry, belonging to the disestablished Church of Ireland, left his daughter a legacy on condition that she should not marry a man "beneath her in social position." She had married a farmer who had been in receipt of 17s. 6d. a week, though he had since become a clerk; and the judge held that the lady had forfeited the property. Had she married some beggarly man of God, with a lean curacy and a leaner person, she would have been all right. His "social position"—heaven save the mark!—would have secured her the legacy.

The Chertsey Board of Guardians is not yet exclusively composed of Freethinkers. Some of its members, in interviewing candidates for the office of nurse, asked questions as to their religion. This induced Mr. Taylor to ask the Local Government Board inspector if the Guardians had any right to interrogate these women. For his part, he thought that a nurse would be none the more efficient if she could repeat the Thirty-nine Articles backwards. The inspector agreed with Mr. Taylor; the guardians should not ask such questions, and the applicant's need not answer them. Whereupon a certain member named Vaux let the cat out of the bag. The question had merely been put, he said, to discover whether the can-

didate was an Atheist. Mr. Vaux is *not* an Atheist. He is only a bigot.

Some of the lads about Aberdeen are too sharp for their religious teachers. A small native was in a class at school, and the story of the man who fell amongst thieves was under consideration. The minister asked the question, Why did the priest and the Levite pass by on the other side? That small native held up his hand, and replied, "The mon was robbit (robbed) a'ready."

If Bishop Moorhouse were as right in regard to the increase of crime in Victoria, as Mr. Wheeler, in his paper on "Education and Crime," proved him to be wrong; and if increased crime is a consequence of the system of secular day schools, and not attributable to other causes, the same cause must produce the same effect elsewhere. Now the school system of New Zealand is as completely secular as that of Victoria. Nay, more so; there is no spot on earth where Freethought principles have more sway than in New Zealand, where two Premiers, John Ballance and Sir Robert Stout, have been avowed Freethinkers.

In New Zealand, "Bible instruction of any kind is not permitted during school hours" (Victorian Year Book, 1888-9, vol. ii., p. 508). But crime is, and has been, diminishing. Between 1880 and 1890, the arrests or summonses per 1,000 of the population have fallen, for offences against the person, from 4.16 to 2.44; amongst property, from 4.93 to 3.70; drunkenness, from 13.22 to 9.39; other offences, from 21.50 to 13.86 (Victorian Year Book, 1892, vol. ii., p. 212).

There is a diminution in all offences tabulated, except horse-stealing, which is stationary; and robbery with violence, which has increased. But this particular offence has increased also in New South Wales, where unsectarian religious instruction is given in all the schools, and where, in addition, the clergy and minister may give an hour a day to the religious instruction of the children of their own persuasion. The offences are due to increase of population, and offenders are not those secularly educated or otherwise, but for the most part the riff-raff from other lands.

The following is translated from the *Paris Figaro*: "The Prince of Wales spent last Sunday evening at the Renaissance Theatre, and applauded the performance. After the third act he visited the room of Mme. Sarah Bernhardt, whom he felicitated both on her admirable acting, and on her choice of the fine drama 'Izeyl.' Izeyl is a drama in which Buddha is substituted for Christ and the Magdalene. What will English Sabbatarians say to this? Why, they will go on prosecuting barbers and newsboys, who try to earn an honest penny on Sunday."

At Lincoln they have again fined Walter Fletcher, herbalist, of the Waterside, for trading on Sunday. This was the fourteenth time that he has been fined five shillings and costs. The magistrate, Mr. H. Goddard, said he was only sorry they could not increase the fine and make him obey the law. What would he do if the Prince of Wales was brought before him for Sabbath breaking?

Another instance where, if there is not one law for the rich and another for the poor, there is at least a difference of application, is in regard to fortune telling. Poor gipsies and others who tell fortunes by cards are continually run in, while astrologers, pachymetrists, and practicers of palmistry, whose dealings are with the upper circles, make fortunes by their profession. In the *Two Worlds* there are no fewer than thirty advertisements of clairvoyants, healers, astrologers, etc. The prudent fortune teller carries about with him a bald and bumpy head made of plaster and extensively labelled. Then he becomes a scientist.

There has been a disturbance at the Mumbles Church, Swansea, owing to the ejection of a parishioner from his accustomed seat by the churchwardens, who called in the aid of a policeman. The Rev. F. E. Scott defended the action of the churchwardens in demanding the vacation of the pew, declaring that it was not meet that the two extremes of society should herd together in God's holy fane. The parishioner had held the same seat for five years, but it was required by a more wealthy member of the congregation.

The *Leeds Daily News* tells the following story of Mr. Justice Maule: Prisoner in the dock, charged with robbery, was positive as to his innocence. "May God strike me dead," he remarked, "if I did it." The judge took out his watch, and paused while two minutes went by. Then, looking over to the expectant prisoner, he said, "As Providence has not seen fit to interpose, the sentence of the Court is that you be imprisoned for eighteen months with hard labor."

The Rev. J. W. Talbot, vicar of Barmby, Howden, Yorks, has a new version of the yarn about the sun standing still. He says that the story is a quotation from the Book of Jasher, and "forms no part of the inspired word." Mr. Talbot forgets that the Book of Jasher is quoted as authoritative, and that the writer adds: "And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel."

Last year, in the September number of the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, the Rev. A. H. Sayce, who is chief defender of the Bible traditions, wrote an article suggesting that the traditional Mount Sinai was not in the traditional spot, and that instead of being either Mount Serbal or the Jabel Mûsa of the Mohammedans, "we have to look for it on the borders of Midian and Edom."

The real reason for this change of geographical site, transferring Mount Sinai right away from the Sinaitic Peninsular, was disclosed by Mr. W. St. Chad Boscawen in his first lecture of a course of five Wednesday afternoon lectures, which he delivered on March 14 in the British Museum. Mr. Boscawen said plainly that biblical students had given up many traditions, and must give up the traditional position of Mount Sinai, for inscriptions showed that during the time given for the Exodus the Egyptians had strong garrisons stationed at the mines in the Sinaitic Peninsular, and if the Israelites took their course there, they must have fallen into the hands of their enemies.

Mr. Boscawen was of opinion that the Sinaitic Peninsular had been a position of connection between Egypt and Babylonia, as far back as 4000 B. C. When Egypt was weak it fell into the hands of the Babylonians, and *vice versa*. He tried his own hand at locating one of the Bible places, expressing the opinion that the land of Nod was the mountainous region of Elam.

Martin Lucas, a farmer living in Putnam county, is insane through attending religious meetings. He wandered from home in a nude condition, and when found in the woods had God's Holy Bible under his arm. To prevent him from injuring his family, confinement in the hospital was necessary. One hopeful sign is the announcement that the feeling against the evangelist is intense, and threats of violence are heard.

"All for Jesus" has had a curious illustration at Bolton. A young fellow called at the house of a ragged-school manager, and said he wanted to "give all to the Lord." Being left in a room for a minute, he stripped off everything but his shirt and stockings, and walked into the street, where he was arrested by a profane policeman, who put a cloak round him and took him to the station. His complaint is religious mania.

Nephew: "Good Friday falls on March 23, does it not?"
Uncle: "This year it does. By the bye, what is the meaning of Good Friday?" Nephew hesitates. Uncle: "Ah! I thought you didn't know." Nephew: "Yes I do—er—er—it was the day our Savior used to eat hot cross buns."

The London correspondent of the *Western Morning News* is down on Talmage, and quotes a nasty passage from the *New York Tribune* to the effect that the "great preacher's" sincerity is very much open to question. "A number of years ago," says the *Tribune*, "he was tried before his brethren on charges of falsehood, and, though not convicted, the impression was created in many minds that his regard for strict veracity might advantageously be intensified."

The *Glasgow Weekly Mail* has a heading, "Contemporary Notices of Christ." It begins, "When the Gifford Lectures are so directly assailing the authenticity of the gospel narratives about Jesus Christ, it will interest many to read

the following contemporary notices of Christ elsewhere than in the *New Testament*," and proceeds to give the spurious passage from Josephus, followed by Quadratus. The editors of the *G. W. M.* are educated men, and must know that the best Christian critics allow the first to be a forgery, and that the second, if genuine, is not contemporary at all. Why do they admit such paragraphs even from outsiders?

Witchcraft is a good old Bible superstition. Of course it is dead in educated circles, but it lingers in ignorant, out of the way places. A case has just occurred at Poole, where Harry Gardner assaulted Frederick Barnes for "bewitching" him, and had in consequence to appear before the magistrate. The assault took place in a public-house, and perhaps the witchcraft was mixed up with something else.

The Rev. T. P. Milne, son of the Rev. Dr. A. Milne, minister of the Parish of Fyrie, E. Aberdeenshire, committed suicide by hanging himself. He had only recently been inducted to the ministry.

The choir-boys of the parish of Tydd St. Mary's, Lincolnshire, were so lost to a sense of what is needful to salvation that they sang at a special service at the Primitive Methodist Chapel, Tydd Gate. Miss Lowe, the rector's daughter, strongly censured the erring ones for supporting the deadly sin of schism, and by way of penance ordered the boys to wear a black surplice instead of a white one on the following Sunday. For of such is the kingdom of heaven.

"Autolycus," of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, is denounced by an orthodox correspondent for indicating delicacies that are suitable for Good Friday. It is worse than heathenish, this irate gentleman says, to talk of eating nice things on the day on which Christ died—just as though he actually died on a day which shifts every year with the moon! The *P. M. G.* is implored to save "some remnants of common reverence for sacred things." The editor winks. "Nothing is sacred to an editor."

James Davidson, who was some time ago a member of the Wolverhampton Branch of the National Secular Society, has been arrested on a charge of bigamy. We do not desire to express an opinion on the case while it is *sub judice*, but the facts are worth noting. Davidson is said to have married at Glasgow in 1882. Apparently there was a separation soon afterwards. At any rate, he married again at Leicester in 1885, and he alleges that his second wife, with whom he has lived ever since, was thoroughly acquainted with the circumstances of his first marriage. If that be true, she has suffered no injury at his hands. The legal question of bigamy is another matter altogether.

The *Midland Evening News* represents Davidson as a contributor to the *Freethinker*. Our regular readers will know that this is untrue, and Davidson's acquaintances will know it is an absurdity. We are tired of asking Christians to correct their misrepresentations.

A poor woman complained to the magistrate at Wandsworth that the Rev. Patrick Watson, of St. Andrew's Church, refused to perform the ceremony of marriage between her daughter and her would-be husband, because she was approaching her confinement. The banns had been put up and paid for. Probably the man of God will find he is as much without legal authority, as he assuredly is without humanity in the matter.

Dr. Nulty, R. C. Bishop of Meath, forbids all Catholics to read the *Westmeath Examiner*, a Nationalist (Parnellite) organ. He says he does so "by the authority of the Holy See," and therefore by "Divine authority." Fancy God boycotting a newspaper!

St. Paul's, the new illustrated monthly, is an organ both of Church and Stage. What would St. Paul have thought of this mingling of secularism and religion?

The *Weekly Dispatch*, noticing Booth's over the sea colony scheme, remarks that the philanthropic emigrationist, as a rule, has done his work ill, and has launched on our colonies a population for whose depravities we are responsible, and who are certainly not appreciated by our hard-working and honest kith and kin over the sea. A benevolent scheme

which is but a huge advertisement is not likely to be very successful as an emigration agency.

The B. and F. Bible Society have issued, during the century, 135,894,552 Bibles and Testaments, at a cost of more than £11,000,000. What have they to show for the money?

Evangelist Sampson, who is performing such wonders in Jersey, as he has done, according to his own account, in so many other places, has been invited in the local press to give the name of that Rotherham Atheist he converted, one who was "the trusty follower and admirer of Charles Bradlaugh." He replies that he cannot give the name, but he thinks Dr. Branson can. Will some of our Sheffield friends see whether there is a Dr. Branson at Rotherham, and whether his memory is any better than Evangelist Sampson's?

Miss Isabella Elliot is going out to Central Africa by the direct command of God. She said so herself at Hawick, and gave as her reason that when there was a call for lady missionaries, she twice in succession opened her Bible, and the first words she read were, "Go, set a watchman." Why these words should mean a woman to go to Central Africa is not quite clear, but God in his revelations always was slightly enigmatical.

Bibliomancy, or the custom of telling your fortune from a verse of the Bible opened at random, used to be prevalent among Christians. It was rife among the early Methodists, and Joseph Nightingale, in his *Portraiture of Methodism*, says they printed packs of cards with a variety of texts containing nothing but the most comforting promises. Thus his disciples drew, with courage and comfort, in a lottery where there were many prizes and no blanks.

This Joseph Nightingale was no friend to the Methodists. He exhumed and published an early love poem by John Wesley. It was on a flea, and the flea was supposed to be on a lady. The verses are given on page 21 of Nightingale's work, and are more luscious than poetical. There was some human nature in the Father of Methodism after all.

The International Tract Society, 59 Paternoster-row, put forward a pamphlet, entitled *Rome's Challenge: Why do Protestants Keep Sunday?* The Church of Rome denies that Sunday-keeping has any warrant in the scriptures, and therefore denies that Protestants can with reason, while rejecting the authority of Rome, claim any part in the observance of that institution which the Church holds as a badge of her authority.

The Rev. W. P. Rathff shot and instantly killed S. A. Jackson, a Democratic member of the Mississippi Legislature, and mortally wounded two by-standers, in a court-house duel.

"Really speaking, there are no Atheists, for there is no life without a purpose, without hope and faith and love.—Rev. M. M. Mangasarian. This is a fair sample of the logic of the "Liberal" minister. As though one must believe in a God in order to have a purpose in life, or to have hope for the morrow of himself and of humanity, or faith in justice and mercy, or love for the lovable. What of Charles Bradlaugh? Who that believed in God worked more determinedly than this Atheist to destroy injustice, to establish liberty, to educate and elevate the people of England? What of W. Kingdon Clifford? What of Ludwig Buchner? What of Ernest Hæckel? What of the hundreds and thousands less distinguished but not less devoted and tender and steadfast?—*Truthseeker.*

The salary of a sky-pilot depends a good deal on the value of the souls he has to save from Hades. Paupers' souls are of course worth very little. Anyhow the Epsom Board of Guardians, wanting a chaplain for the workhouse, had a longish discussion as to his salary. Some thought £100 a-year would do, but the figures were run up to £150, and the post was to be advertised in the *Guardian*, a paper which is read by clericals, many of whom are ready to snap at £3 a week in the present condition of the white-chokered labor market. It is worthy of notice, however, that the chaplains of gaols are better paid than the chaplains of workhouses. The man of God in Holloway Prison, when we resided there, had £350 a year, with a fine house rent free, and coals and gas, we believe,

into the bargain. A criminal's soul is evidently more precious than a pauper's, unless it is harder to save. We should like to know which.

It appears that the Guildhall Art Exhibition may not be open on Sundays this year after all. A Mr. Morton unintentionally voted against the motion, and the tellers transferred his vote to the right side. But the bigots were able to decide that only his vote in error could be recognised, and that he must remain on the intolerant side and so turn the scale against Sunday opening.

The Kaffirs of Johannesburg are feeling the effects of Christianity and civilisation. The authorities promulgated a law that no Kaffir may walk on the pavement with white men. According to *Truth*, fully 200 Kaffirs have already received ten lashes each for infringing this law, which probably they did not know. The cat with which the lashes were inflicted was steeped in brine, and after the infliction a pannikin of salt and water thrown over the victim's back. Those who preach of the benign influence of Christianity upon heathens should consider what is going on in our own day in South Africa. That should suffice to silence them for ever.

According to the *Islamic World*, the Christian societies are constantly calling for money and men to convert India. Mahommedanism is rapidly spreading there. In Bengal proper, the Mussulmans exceeds the Hindus in a population of about forty millions, by a million and a half.

An earthquake of great severity has devastated an area of 9,000 square miles in the Thibetan region of Kada. Seventy-four Lamas, or priests, and 137 Chinese and Thibetans were killed and a large number injured. The Dalai Lamas' Grand Monastery at Hueiyuan, built in the seventeenth century, was demolished by the shock. Out of its ruins were afterwards dug nine pure gold images of Buddha and 100 brazen ones, presented by the Emperor Yung Ching to the temple. Is this the effect of the Lord's determination to overthrow Buddhism?

M. Notovitch, who has travelled in Thibet, has brought back a curious story of a Buddhist Life of Christ which he found in a monastery there. According to this, Issa—the Eastern name for Jesus—visited India, including the sacred City of Benares. In Persia he opposed the religion of Zoroaster, but he was persecuted by the magicians and fled, returning to Judæa, where he was crucified with two thieves; but the third day Issa's sepulchre was found open and empty.

The Bishop of Ripon has deprived the Rev. Alexander Blair, vicar of Allerton, Bywater, Yorkshire, of his vicarage and benefice, for being drunk while officiating at a funeral. This is the first judgment under the New Clergy Discipline Act. The good men of God are losing all their little privileges.

On the whole, we are not so greatly grieved that the dogmatists of the London School Board have at length got their way, and will impose on the teachers tests which have long been removed from the universities. They will not permanently put back the clock, but they will show many that the time has come for a serious demand for complete secular education. We were no parties to the old compromise, and if it is torn to tatters the battle for freedom will have to be fought over again, and the ultimate issue will be all the clearer.

Professor Huxley has been much quoted as in favor of Bible reading in the schools, and he certainly took this attitude when standing for the first London School Board. Apparently he has since become more consistent, for Mr. R. Laishley, the gentleman authorised by the New Zealand Government to draw up a *Report on State Education* (1886), says (p. 13): "Prof. Huxley gives me leave to state his opinion to be that the principle of strict secularity in State education is sound, and must eventually prevail."

The Liverpool Christian Evidence Society, we hear, is looking out for a fresh job. Perhaps it will turn its attention to the Rev. William Browne, who has eloped with £700 and a lady who is not his wife—that lady being left behind, as is usual in such cases. If the clerical Lothario could be brought back repentant, he would make a first-rate addition to the C.E.S. forces. The bigger the sinner the better the saint.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

April 1 and 8, Hall of Science, London.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- MR. CHARLES WATTS' ENGAGEMENTS.—March 25, Hall of Science, London. April 15, Hall of Science, London; 22, Failsforth; 29, Hall of Science. May 6, Glasgow; 7, 8, 9, debate at Glasgow; 13, Dundee.—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.
- H. G. SHEPHERD.—Have read it with interest. Keep pegging away. A lot of good is done by private propaganda as well as by public speaking and writing.
- MEDALS.—Your severe criticism, as a Wesleyan, of Mr. Holyoake's vindication, is debarred from our columns by the rule that correspondents must send us their real names and addresses, though not necessarily for publication.
- J. KENNEDY.—Pleased to have your opinion that we spoke of Mr. Holyoake in a "respectful and even deferential way" until he compelled us to speak more plainly.
- C. DOEG.—Glad to hear of Mr. Watts's fine evening meeting at Liverpool; also of your judicious circulation of the "Lie" pamphlet. Mr. Foote will offer you another date very shortly.
- J. WOOD.—See "Sugar Plums."
- W. M. KNOX.—Pamphlets sent to your address. See paragraph.
- HUMANITAS.—Thanks for the sketch suggestion. You resemble so many others in finding Mr. Holyoake's attitude "incomprehensible."
- S. BRERLEY.—Mr. Forder has sent you a packet for distribution.
- J. TROPWEN.—The matter is hardly of sufficient importance.
- H. ROWDEN.—We have ventured to omit one word from the resolution. The Lambeth Branch will appreciate our motive. Mr. Foote will not overlook your application if he decides to make such engagements.
- T. D. HARRIS.—All right this time.
- S. ELLIOTT.—It is difficult to advise you. So much depends on little circumstances that we cannot really know as you do. If your boy be withdrawn from religious instruction, and the only one so withdrawn, bigotry will no doubt make him very uncomfortable. On the other hand, if the boy is of a resolute character, he may be none the worse at the finish.
- A. W. OXLEY.—We will try to give the precise reference in future. The other matter is one in which we have no status. The persons appointed in the will are the ones to act, and, if they do not choose to do so, they cannot be compelled. Still, we thank you for sending us the information.
- P. HATCHARD.—A cover to the weekly issue of this journal would be too costly. It is all very well in the case of papers that appeal to the general public and enjoy an immense circulation.
- N.S.S. BENEVOLENT FUND.—Miss E. M. Vance, sec., acknowledges:—Collected by T. Thurloe, 2s. 6d.; M. Christopher, 1s.
- T. BRIDER.—Shall appear if possible. We have been deluged with letters in reply to N. M. X.
- E. T. N. (Jersey).—We have no time to write such a letter, but an "Acid Drop" appeared in the *Freethinker*. See this week's paragraph.
- E. E.—(1) We can hardly reply to questions based on the views of our contributors. Our own view of Jesus Christ may be found in our pamphlets—*What was Christ?* and *Will Christ Save Us?* (2) Your friend has no sense of humor. The cartoon evidently alluded to the recent wholesale slaughter of the Matabele by enterprising Christians.
- W. CABELL.—(1) Had not Mr. Hughes found that shift he would have found another. Don't you recollect the case of a brother Wesleyan minister, the Rev. Allen Rees, who was caught by Mr. George Standing in the act of retailing from the pulpit a fable about Charles Bradlaugh's wavering on his Atheism? Mr. Rees was taken to task by Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner, and when he was pushed into a corner he extricated himself by saying he could not stand her manners. Yet her language was scrupulously polite. (2) The only "importance" of Mr. Hughes's alleged convert is the importance given to him in Mr. Hughes's book.
- T. WOOLLATT.—Pamphlets sent. Glad you are "delighted" at Hucknall Torkard.
- D. F. GLOAK.—It is pleasant to learn that Mr. Foote's lectures at Dundee have brought the Branch several new members. We are also glad to hear of Mr. Harkis's success amongst you. He is young yet, and in the pessimistic stage which generous natures have to go through, like the measles; but we have hopes of him. The Aberdeen and Dundee friends should keep him occupied.
- F. HUSBAND.—Glad to hear that Mr. Rowney's lecture gave great satisfaction at Bermondsey. See the paragraph.
- W. COOK.—Hope to find room.
- H. GUTHRIE.—See paragraph.
- J. H. N.—As soon as possible.
- A. B. MOSS.—Mr. Foote has returned from his tour in good health. Hope to see you at Executive meeting.

JOHN GRANGE.—Thanks for your cordial letter. We wish the projected monthly all success, and shall be happy to give it a notice when it appears. It cannot possibly injure the circulation of the *Freethinker*, which must subsist, like every other journal, on its merits. We have always held that there is room in our movement for varieties of activity.

J. COLLINSON.—In our next.

L. LEVINE, who sends us some welcome cuttings from Charleston, S.C., writes—"Your organisation I would call a splendid success. No wonder you feel proud of your co-workers. Would that we had as well equipped an organisation, as well officered, on this side the water."

JOHN HELM, Port Hope, Ontario, sends a subscription towards our Atheist Shoemaker pamphlet, and wants some copies for distribution.

DELTA.—Such varieties of type would be troublesome and costly. Thanks for cutting.

O. N. W.—Received.

E. D. H. DALY.—Thanks for cuttings.

E. YRAXLEE.—Delayed through Mr. Foote's absence from London.

T. THURLOW, 350 Old Ford-road, Victoria Park, London, E., is open to engagements for indoor or outdoor lectures, in town or country. Out of pocket expenses only, for first engagements; ordinary fee to Branches for whom he has lectured before. Mr. Thurlow is an old and tried soldier of Freethought.

ADMIRER.—We can quite understand that the Rev. S. D. Headlam does not think the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes was "inspired" when he wrote the Atheist Shoemaker story. Mr. Headlam is a man of truth, probity, and courage.

J. LONG.—Received.

J. SAMUEL.—Shall appear when space is available.

H. W. JONES.—Will offer Blackburn a date shortly.

H. BLAKEMAN.—Thanks. Shall be inserted. Mr. Morley's "less" of course means "more." An obvious misprint.

A. J. MARRIOTT.—The matter is to be definitively settled at the next N.S.S. Executive meeting. It was best to let the religious parties take up their positions first.

OWING to Mr. Foote's absence from London, and his late arrival home, some arrears of correspondence could not be cleared off for this week's number. Writers of letters that are unanswered must kindly wait until next week.

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—Freidenker—Two Worlds—Der Arme Teufel—Western Figaro—Liberator—Liberty—Clarion—Flaming Sword—Liver—De Dageraad—Progressive Thinker—Post—Secular Thought—Truthseeker—Ironclad Age—Pioneer—Twentieth Century—Independent Pulpit—Islamic World—Edinburgh Evening Dispatch—Evening News and Post—Straits Times—Lincolnshire Echo—Sun—Goole Times—Church Army Gazette—Derby and Chesterfield Telegraph—Freedom—Liverpool Courier—Wolverhampton Express and Star—Derbyshire Advertiser—Ethical Echo—Boston Guardian—Glasgow Weekly Mail—Evening Dispatch—Midland Express—Yorkshire Post.

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.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS.—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—(Narrow Column) one inch, 3s.; half column, 15s.; column, £1 10s. Broad Column—one inch, 4s. 6d.; half column, £1 2s. 6d.; column, £2 5s. Special terms for repetitions.

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.

THE "LIE" PAMPHLET.

WE have now an ample supply of this pamphlet, which will be maintained in advance of the demand, at least until our resources are exhausted. No one who can distribute copies effectively need hesitate to apply for them. We hope our friends in all parts of the country, as well as in London, will keep a sharp eye on Mr. Hughes's meetings. Copies of the pamphlet should be circulated on such occasions, and an adequate supply can always be obtained for the purpose. Should any

difficulty be experienced, we beg our friends to communicate with us on the matter. Newsagents cannot, of course, be expected to order the gratuitous copies for their customers, as they cannot work without a profit. To meet their case we have printed a small special edition at one penny. G. W. FOOTE.

FUND FOR NAILING DOWN THE "ATHEIST SHOEMAKER" LIE.

H. E. F. 2s., C. T. O. 2s., Bilston Friends 5s., Belfast Branch 10s., Humanitas 5s., Brighton Branch £1 17s. (for pamphlets) — Hayes 6d., A. L. 6d., W. Cabell 5s., Hucknall Friend 2s. 6d., T. Woollatt 1s., J. Umpleby 5s., J. Helm (Port Hope, Ontario) £1, Barnsley Branch 6s.

Per R. Forder—T. Robertson 1s., E. Lucas 1s., E. T. N. 2s. 10d., E. Coker 2s. 6d., J. B. 2s. 6d., C. J. 1s., Mr. and Mrs. Deane 2s., W. J. V. 1s., "Crab" £1.

Erratum.—Tipner, in one of last week's acknowledgments, should have been Tipper.

SUGAR PLUMS.

Mr. Foote's visit to Aberdeen will probably give a fillip to the Branch and to the circulation of the *Freethinker*. Owing to certain local causes, the Freethought movement has been somewhat languishing there of late, but there is now a fair prospect of improvement. Councillor Maitland, who has for some time been absorbed in other work, will shortly restore to the Branch the benefit of his energy and influence; and we believe the Socialist section of the advanced party in Aberdeen will henceforth give more support to the Secular propaganda, which is a common ground for all who aim at a drastic reformation, as well intellectual and moral as political and social.

Mr. Rennie, a Socialist leader at Aberdeen, is a working man—we believe a stonemason. He is well-read, thoughtful, and able; certainly a man of distinction. He is an out-and-out Atheist, and, while not neglecting his work for Socialism, he is now assisting in the special work of Secularism.

Mr. Calder, one of the old stalwarts of Freethought, spent a good deal of time in promoting the success of Mr. Foote's lectures, and put a quantity of tickets into circulation. The result was the presence of many strange faces at the meetings. The chair was taken on the first evening by Mr. Dow, a philosophical Anarchist—a man of distinguished appearance and many accomplishments. His task as chairman was not too easy, some orthodox persons having got into the free seats who were apparently under the influence of the spirit—whether heavenly or Scotch it was not easy to determine. One of them had to be removed, and the process was carried through with masterly dexterity by a "fine and large" Secularist.

Councillor Maitland presided on the second evening, and the free-seat orthodoxy was again inclined to be turbulent, but the chairman was an old hand at the business, and the would-be disturbers got off second best. There was no real discussion on either evening, but several questions were asked, some of which were phenomenally silly. Evidently the Freethinkers in Aberdeen have plenty of work before them, if only in correcting the worst effects of theological stupification.

Brief reports of Mr. Foote's lectures appeared in the Aberdeen press. We hope Mr. John Harkis, the Branch secretary, will give a little attention to the local newspapers. He is able to write a good letter himself, and there are other able pens in the Branch. Between them, they might often get a happy word into the Aberdeen press in favor of Freethought.

—The Dundee Branch is in a flourishing and progressive condition, largely owing to the zeal of the secretary, Mr. Gloak. Mr. Foote's two meetings in the city were appreciative and enthusiastic. On the first evening there was a little discussion, on the second evening none, although a Unitarian minister (the Rev. Mr. Williamson) was present. Invitations, with tickets, had been sent out to thirteen clericals, but only one came, and he belonged to a heterodox denomination. There was a good sale of literature, and the lectures should promote the circulation of the *Freethinker*. The Dundee friends are full of the approaching debate between

Mr. Watts and the Rev. David Macrae. It is expected to take place in May, and is sure to stimulate the cause of Freethought.

The weather was beautiful at South Shields on Sunday, and the inhabitants turned out in shoals to take the air and bask in the sunshine. It was hardly a day for large indoor meetings: nevertheless, there were capital audiences in the Free Library Hall at Mr. Foote's lectures, the evening meeting being a particularly fine one. No discussion followed the first and second lectures, though bills were circulated outside, announcing that the lectures would be answered next Sunday, by a person who had not heard them. Some opposition was offered in the evening by an "anti-infidel" speaker from Sunderland. He was a very young man, almost a boy, with a slender stock of information and ability, but an inexhaustible supply of impudence. The meeting stood ten minutes of him, somewhat impatiently; but when he wanted a second innings, they got up and went out. We have seen that young man before. He was in the rows at Newcastle and Ryhope. We fear there is little hope of improvement in his case. He appears to belong to the species mentioned by Solomon. Braying him in a mortar would not change his essence.

The Shields friends are well circulating the Atheist Shoemaker pamphlet. They have got out a thousand copies already, and are now distributing a fresh supply. Mr. Peacock is seeing that all the most influential people in the town are furnished with a copy, especially as the newspapers which trumpeted Mr. Holyoake's vindication will not say a word about Mr. Foote's exposure.

We cordially admit one exception. The Shields *Free Press* has acted fairly in this as in other matters. We beg to thank it, here and now, for the handsome editorial paragraph in which it announced Mr. Foote's lectures at the Free Library.

Mrs. Frederika Macdonald had a capital audience at the Hall of Science, and her lecture on Theosophy was well received. Mr. Campbell, F.T.S., who spoke in opposition, contributed much to the diversion of the audience.

This Sunday evening (March 25), Mr. Charles Watts occupies the platform at the Hall of Science, London. He takes for his subject "Christ Alive and Dead." It being Easter Sunday, the subject is an appropriate one.

At the next Social Gathering at the Hall of Science, March 28, the children's play by members' children, which met with such approval at the Annual Party, will be performed again. Chess, draughts, and other games will be provided. Mr. Foote will give a reading, and the proceedings will conclude with a dance as before.

The Queensbury Athletic Club held their first annual supper at the Hall of Science last Tuesday. Mr. G. Ward occupied the chair, and speeches were delivered by Messrs. G. Standing, E. Pownceby, and others. A very pleasant evening was spent.

Good Friday is an awful day for the deed, but the Finsbury Branch is going to hold its fourth annual Smoking Concert at the Hall of Science on that solemn (but shifting) anniversary. Mr. Pownceby takes the chair at 8, and the tickets are only sixpence.

We have received a report from "Argus" of the debate at Derby between Mr. Charles Watts and the Rev. Mr. Hyde, but owing to a press of other matter we have to hold it over till next week. Derby friends will please note.

Mr. G. J. Holyoake has sent us a presentation copy of the new edition of his *Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life*, the first edition of which was reviewed at length in our columns fifteen months ago. Mr. Holyoake expected to hand us the volumes three months ago, when we intended to visit Brighton but were unable to find time for the trip. We are glad to know that a popular edition of Mr. Holyoake's autobiography is called for. There is much in it that the general public will be the better for reading.

Mr. A. B. Moss lectures at very short notice this evening (March 25) in the Camberwell Secular Hall. His subject is

to be "Some Antidotes to Superstition." We hope he will have a good meeting.

The Bristol Branch, which has been commemorating its anniversary, is starting for the summer months a Rambling Society, to rationally enjoy the beauties of nature on Sunday. All desirous of joining should communicate with Mr. J. Roe, secretary, at Shepherds' Hall. The members of the Cricket Club are also requested to attend the Branch meeting.

"Dodo," a much appreciated writer in *Reynolds's Newspaper*, referring to our Atheist Shoemaker pamphlet, says that Mr. Foote traced the matter step by step, with the result that "Mr. Hughes to-day stands before the public fully refuted." The pamphlet is recommended as "interesting reading" to persons who want to learn something of "the spirit and work of the West London Mission."

As will be seen by a cutting in another column from the London *Echo*, a very carefully conducted paper, the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes's "vindication" is not deemed satisfactory in that quarter. Mr. Foote, it says, has "proved to a demonstration" that the Atheist Shoemaker story was "three parts fiction to one part fact."

Secular Thought (Toronto) devotes a leaderette to the Atheist Shoemaker affair. It thinks that Mr. Holyoake "investigated" for Mr. Hughes "good-naturedly and perhaps too willingly." After reading both sides, as presented by Mr. Holyoake and by Mr. Foote, *Secular Thought* delivers this judgment: "There seems no alternative to a full belief that the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes has not only been guilty of putting forth statements as facts without any inquiry, but that he has not hesitated to invent facts to support the story, depending upon the inability of the Secular party to unearth the truth." Precisely.

The New York *Truthseeker* thinks the very fact that Mr. Hughes is flooding England with copies of Mr. Holyoake's "vindication" in itself "goes far to prove that he knew all the time that his story was a fake of the worst kind." Our Transatlantic contemporary remarks that "Mr. Foote is doing his part of the work thoroughly, after the manner of the English Freethinkers."

The *Ethical Echo* is an interesting, well-written monthly, devoted to the furtherance of ethical culture, which reaches us from Dublin. In its February number it reprints the Immediate Practical Objects of the National Secular Society. Its March number has an article, "The Ethical Movement Defined," in which there is an attempt to draw a distinction between the Ethical Culturists and Positivists, Secularists and Socialists.

When the hall of the Bermondsey Gladstone Club was first allowed to be used for Freethought lectures there was a terrible rumpus, and some "eminent" persons resigned. But what a change has since come over the scene! At a recent Club concert the President, on behalf of the Secular Committee, presented Mr. A. N. Staiger with a handsome silver-mounted walking-stick. The President said he was himself a Christian, and when "those lectures were first introduced" he had doubts in his mind whether they would lead to trouble; but he was happy to say that was not the case; everything had been carried on in a just and proper manner, and a free platform had been allowed for both sides.

The Branch at Wood Green is making headway. Evening as well as morning lectures are now arranged for on Sundays. Mr. James Rowney takes the first two Sundays in April. Members are looking forward to a very active propaganda in the open-air during the summer months. We may add that they "heartily endorse" our policy with regard to the Atheist Shoemaker concoction.

Price Hughes had a large meeting in the Newcastle Town Hall on Monday, March 5, and the Newcastle Branch of the N.S.S. made arrangements for circulating copies of the "Lie" pamphlet among the faithful. Six hundred copies found their way into Christian hands. Copies were sent by post to Mr. Hughes's chairman, and to many leading Wesleyans in the City. The example of the Newcastle Branch should be followed by other Branches. Mr. Hughes should be pursued wherever he goes, and the exposure of his

falsehoods placed in the hands of his supporters, whom he keeps as far as possible in ignorance of the real facts of the case.

The Belfast Branch has passed the following resolution:—"That we heartily endorse Mr. Foote's action in exposing the Rev. Price Hughes's fiction, and hope that Mr. Hughes may see the error of his ways ere it is too late, *vide* Acts v. 5, to which we would respectfully call his attention."

The Brighton Branch sends a handsome subscription towards the "Lie" fund, and undertakes to circulate a large number of copies of the pamphlet. The Branch congratulates Mr. Foote on "the masterly manner" in which he has effected the exposure.

The Lambeth Branch, at its annual meeting, passed the following:—"That this Branch congratulates Mr. Foote on his thorough exposure of the Atheist Shoemaker story, and regrets that Mr. Holyoake played such a part in the matter."

The Battersea Branch holds its quarterly tea and soirée to-day (Sunday, March 25) at 5.30; tickets (6l. each) can be had at the hall. The special quarterly meeting takes place on the following Sunday evening after Mr. Heaford's lecture. Every member should attend, also those Secularists who wish to join the Branch.

The *Boston Investigator*, noticing the stories of alleged converted Atheists, says: "The object of the Christian Church in circulating falsehoods about Infidels and Atheists, is not so much to malign the dead as to scare the living. Doubtless such a course has been found profitable by the church, or it would have abandoned it ere this. But what contemptible business for a man professing to do the work of God, to spread slanders of the dead."

The American Jews are much less orthodox than their brethren in Europe, and at San Francisco are about to ordain Miss Rachel Frank as rabbi, a proceeding entirely without precedent in the history of the Jewish Church.

The *Truthseeker* (March 10) has a capital cartoon of Christianity as Lady Macbeth with the blood of heretics upon her hand. It is entitled "A spot that will not out."

Susan H. Wixon, who has for many years conducted "The Children's Corner" in the *Truthseeker* of New York, issues her address to the Freethinkers' International Congress, Chicago, October 1893, in pamphlet form. It is entitled *Woman: Four Centuries of Progress*, and shows the advance made in the emancipation of her sex through freedom of thought and in despite of the doctrines of the church.

Mr. Joseph Symes has been again moved to write on Mrs. Besant. From some little incidents which transpired when he knew her, he thinks she has a deep reverence for the mysterious. He says: "Let her live a few years more and her restless but tired nature will return to her earliest mental and moral crib."

RELIGION AND PROPERTY.

In his *Histoire des Treize*, Balzac puts into the mouth of one of his characters, the following sentiments: "Religion will always be a political necessity. Would you undertake to govern a nation of debaters (*raisonneurs*)? Napoleon himself dared not do it. He persecuted ideologists. In order to prevent the people from reasoning, we must impress upon them (religious) sentiments. Let us, then, accept the Catholic faith with all its consequences. If we wish the French people to attend mass, ought we not to begin by attending it ourselves? Religion is, as you see, the binding-twine of those conservative principles which permit the rich to live peacefully. Religion is closely connected with property."

The ultimate end of all government is the good of the people. Now, the greatest good of a people is their liberty. Liberty is to the collective body what health is to every individual body. Without health no pleasure can be tasted by man; without liberty, no happiness can be enjoyed by society.—*Bolingbroke*.

CALVINISM AND TOLERATION.

OF all the sections into which the Christian Church is divided, there is none more logical in its theology than Calvinism. The heartless and intolerant nature of its teachings are, nevertheless, far more conspicuous than their rationality. One of the duties imposed upon the orthodox Calvinist by the Confession of Faith, is "the disapproving, detesting, opposing all false worship, and, according to each one's place and calling, removing it and all other monuments of idolatry." Of course, by "monuments of idolatry" are meant, whatever pertains to the Romish Church. Here is a doctrine which, if practised, would very soon turn the earth into a veritable pandemonium. This theological dogma is well calculated to dissolve the ties which hold society together, and to render intellectual development an impossibility. As all true Presbyterians are bound, by the faith of their church, to "remove all false worship" according to their "place and calling," it naturally follows that all positions in society would be used by them, if they were permitted, in order that their practice might accord with their creed. The results of the doctrines inculcated by the Confession of Faith, may be justly considered as undeniable evidence of the persecuting nature of Calvinistic theology.

Wherever the Presbyterian religion has prevailed as a political power, its hands have been stained with innocent blood. The facts of history support this assertion. If we examine, with any attention, the actions of the founder of Presbyterianism, we shall find out that persecution, for opinion's sake, was the practical lesson of his life. The praises of John Calvin are still sung by the advocates of the "blessed Reformation." The conduct of this holy man of God in reducing his theology to practice, affords important testimony as to the compatibility of Presbyterianism, with civil and religious liberty.

Sebastian Castalio, who, for a considerable length of time was master of the public school of Geneva, suffered imprisonment, and afterwards banishment, for maintaining some theological subtlety that was not in harmony with the "Unconditional Predestination" of Calvin. A man of the name of Gruet was put to death in the year 1550, for expressing the opinion that Calvin, as a reformer, seemed like a "new pope." These instances of Calvinistic persecution dwindle into insignificance before the horror with which the mind is filled, by the inhuman death of Servetus.

It was this man's misfortune to possess a little more brains, and less theology, than most of his contemporaries, and consequently Calvin said to Viret and Farel, that, "if ever that heretic (Servetus) should fall into his hands, he would order it so that it should cost him his life." Servetus was in no way subject either to the civil or the religious laws of Geneva. But regardless of this, Calvin had him arrested and thrown into a foul dungeon on a Sunday, when it was unlawful (according to the civil law of Geneva) to arrest any person except for a capital offence. The arrest of Servetus is eloquently and accurately described by the Protestant historian Robinson, in his *Ecclesiastical Researches*: "Far from his own country, fallen into the hands of cruel strangers, all under the influence of Calvin, his avowed enemy, who bore him a mortal hatred, stript of all his property, and confined to a damp prison, and neglected till he was almost eaten up by vermin, and loaded with every indignity that barbarity could invent, the fate of Servetus was that he was burned to death by Calvin's procurement on the 27th of October, 1553." This tragic death is a typical example of the charity which Calvin extended to his religious opponents; and he manifested his want of conscience by writing a book entitled, *A Faithful Account of the Errors of Michael Servetus; in which it is Proved that Heretics ought to be Restrained with the Sword*. In a letter to the Marquis De Poet, Calvin made it plain that his steeled heart was impervious to the compunctions of conscience. He says: "Honor, glory, and riches shall be the reward of your pains, but above all, do not fail to rid the country of those zealous scoundrels who stir up the country to revolt against us. Such monsters should be exterminated as I have exterminated Michael Servetus, the Spaniard."

The second "shining light" of Presbyterianism is John Knox. To him Scotland is indebted for Protestantism, "the religion of the Bible and the Bible only." Like his co-religionist, Calvin, his hands were red with human gore,

Cardinal Beaton's character was not all that it ought to have been, but the opinion of John Knox as to his murder speaks volumes. According to Dr. Heylin's *History of the Reformation*, the father of the Scottish reformation described the cardinal's assassination as a "godly act." The following from Knox's *History of the Reformation* is absolutely conclusive as to the intolerant nature of his religious principles: "It is not only lawful to punish to death such as labor to subvert religion, but the magistrates and the people are bound so to do, unless they will provoke the wrath of God against themselves." This passage is the best commentary on the doctrine of the Confession of Faith concerning the duty of the magistrates as "nursing fathers to the Church." Here we have Knox's interpretation of the Calvinistic second commandment about "opposing all false worship."
P. SHAUGHNESSY.

WHY DON'T HE LEND A HAND?

You say there is a God
Above the boundless sky,
A wise and wondrous Deity
Whose strength none can defy.
You say that he is seated
Upon a throne most grand,
Millions of angels at his beck—
Why don't he lend a hand?

See how the earth is groaning,
What countless tears are shed!
See how the plague stalks forward,
And brave and sweet lie dead.
Homes burn and hearts are breaking,
Grim murder stains the land;
You say he is omnipotent—
Why don't he lend a hand?

Behold, injustice conquers!
Pain curses every hour!
The good and true and beautiful
Are trampled like the flower!
You say he is our father,
That what he wills doth stand;
If he is thus almighty,
Why don't he lend a hand?

What is this monarch doing
Upon his golden throne,
To right the wrong stupendous,
Give joy instead of moan?
With his resistless majesty,
Each force at his command,
Each law his own creation—
Why don't he lend a hand?

Alas! I fear he's sleeping,
Or is himself a dream,
A bubble on thought's ocean,
Our fancy's fading gleam.
We look in vain to find him
Upon his throne so grand,
Then turn your vision earthward—
'Tis we must lend a hand.

'Tis we must grasp the lightning,
And plough the rugged soil;
'Tis we must beat back suffering,
And plague and murder foil;
'Tis we must build the paradise
And bravely right the wrong:
The God above us faileth,
The God within is strong.

SAMUEL P. PUTNAM.

HOW TO HELP US.

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

BOOK CHAT.

Modern Mystics and Modern Magic is the title of a book chiefly occupied with the late Rev. W. S. Moses, editor of *Light*, and with his Spiritism. It is by Mr. A. Lillie, and published by Swan Sonnenschein and Co. Brief sketches are given of Swedenborg, Boehme, Mme. Guyon, and "The Illuminati." The only thing novel about these is the suggestion that mysticism has come to modern Occidentals through the Gnostics, the Kabbalists, and the Illuminati. We hardly know why Mr. Lillie should resort to such a theory, since he believes in spirit guidance. According to his account, the late Mr. Moses was a medium in communication with a spirit from the seventh sphere—presumably a higher one than the spirit which commanded the original Moses to institute the water of jealousy. This seventh sphere spirit called himself Imperator, and wrote automatically through Mr. Moses's fingers a lot of twaddle, worthy of a fifth-rate Unitarian preacher.

Mr. Moses believed in the mediumship of Hearne and Williams, which we fancy suffices to show Mr. Myers was right in declaring, "He lacked all vestige of scientific and regal instinct," although Mr. Lillie disputes this dictum. He believed he was under the spirit influence of "Mentor, an Arabian philosopher; Philosophus, the great Italian philosopher; Kabbila [? Kapila], an Indian philosopher; Prudens, who was more skilled in the Occult, Alexandrian, and Indian lore than any who ever lived; Chom and Said, priests of Isis and Osiris, skilled in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and Dr. Dee, the great Occultist of England." Yet, with all these sages at his call, he joined the Theosophical Society, only to leave it in disgust when he discovered that the Mahatma, Koot Hoomi, plagiarized a speech of Prof. Kiddle, published in the *Banner of Light*.

Bishop Samuel Wilberforce had been Mr. Moses's patron in the Church. After his death, "Soapy Sam" turned up in a seance and told him that, "With all his shortcomings, and they were many"—he did not mention his *Diary* among them—"he could look back upon his earth-life as a life of useful work honestly done." The bishop's spirit gave no hint on the subject of Disestablishment.

Mr. Lillie tells us (p. 108): "Often and often Mr. Stainton Moses thought his 'gaidos' devils from hell." It is not easy to see how an orthodox believer can escape from this position. He is told in the Bible that Satan can transform himself into an angel of light. If so, how can human faculties detect the difference? What man can hope to be a match for an unseen devil, with a legion of evil spirits at command. Say he gets a loving message in a dead mother's handwriting. He must admit the possibility that the Devil is employing a forger's hand, and is thus landed in insane terrors or in insane hopes. There is but one good reason for holding that Spiritist messages are not the work of the Devil. They are not half clever enough. The messages for Milton, Shakespeare and Shelley, show they have sadly deteriorated in the spirit world. We quite agree that Mr. Moses's case is an interesting one for students of pathological psychology. But they are too late now to investigate the alleged phenomena recorded by Mr. Lillie. Such scrutiny should take place at the time.

Mr. Lillie has an interesting and instructive chapter on Madame Blavatsky. He brings out some of the inconsistencies of that adept, and the improbability of her having ever visited Tibet. To the doctrines of Karma and Re-incarnation he brings an objection taken from Thackeray's story of Barnes Newcome. Barnes at seven had sparks of generous feeling at times which were lost by the time he was thirty-seven. "Supposing that from the womb of Lady Newcome he obtained his fiftieth re-birth, it is quite plain that his fifty-first would carry him lower down in the scale. He would be saddled with all the infamy that we know so well. And if his fifty-first life was worse than the fiftieth, what would the hundred and fifty-first be like? If Theosophy be true, Barnes Newcome would plainly go down and down into a never-ending abyss with accelerating momentum." Mr. Lillie prefers to believe in progression. Theosophy has served to revive interest in such subjects as Mr. Lillie deals with, and his volume is likely to prove attractive to many.

We have received a pamphlet printed at Baltimore, entitled *One Hundred Proofs that the Earth is not a Globe*, by Wm. Carpenter, who attacks the late R. A. Proctor on the subject. Here is one of his *proofs* which will show he is easily satisfied on the flat side. "Human beings require a surface on which to live that, in its general character, shall be LEVEL; and since the Omniscient Creator must have been perfectly acquainted with the requirements of his creatures, it follows that, being an All-wise Creator, he has met them thoroughly. This is a theological proof that the Earth is not a globe." Of course Mr. Carpenter appeals to the Protestant fetish. He says—"We read in the inspired book, or collection of books, called THE BIBLE, nothing at all about the Earth being a globe or a

planet, from beginning to end, but hundreds of allusions there are in its pages which could not be made if the Earth were a globe, and which are, therefore, said by the astronomer to be absurd and contrary to what he knows to be true! This is the groundwork of modern infidelity." Mr. Carpenter makes clear how different is what he calls "biblical science" from science without any such distinguishing appellation.

Anvilantus and Other Poems, by Wm. Emsley (Bradford: 56 Barkerend-road) is a volume of verse by a worker at the anvil. Mr. Emsley is evidently not like the character depicted in his poem, "The Yorkshire Blacksmith," who says—

I niver could tell 'ow it wer; it caps me 'ow t' parson can tell!
'Ow dus he know sinners 're damn'd, an' whether ther's heaven or hell?
But I niver read ony books, sich things 're or lile use t' me,
Aw lissen what foak hev t' saay, an' stick t' mi trade, d'ye see.

He has read, and his poems show the influence of Burns and of Tennyson, on whom he has written an elegy. Other sonnets are addressed to Walt Whitman and to Charles Bradlaugh. For our blacksmith poet is a Freethinker, and speaks out his thought plainly. One very pronounced piece is addressed To Jehovah, but it is too long for quotation, and an extract would do it injustice. We heartily commend the volume, for the author evidently gives free play to his head and heart as well as his arms, and his poems have the sturdy ring of his profession.

The Christ Has Come, by E. Hampdon-Cook, M.A. (London: Simpkin Marshall and Co.; 1894; 1s.), is an attempt to prove from the New Testament predictions that the Son of Man must have come immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem. As Christ predicted it, so it must have taken place. There is no record of it; but then we must recollect that "the annals of the Church, for nearly a century after the destruction of Jerusalem, are almost a blank." As a matter of gospel exegesis, Mr. Cook has a strong case. If one thing is clear about the teachings of Jesus, it is that he was coming again in the lifetime of his apostles—"Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the son of man coming in his kingdom" (Matt. xvi. 28. See, too, Matt. xxiv. 29-34, Mark xiii. 24-30, Luke xxi. 25-33, Acts ii. 17, 1 Thes. iv. 15, Heb. x. 25, etc.) But if, after levitating to heaven he gravitated to earth again, why was there no record of it even by John who, according to the orthodox, did not write the fourth gospel till about the end of the first century? Mr. Cook says he came secretly, like a thief in the night. But he also spoke of coming with power and great glory, with a shout, and with ten thousand of his saints to judge the world. Moreover, the prophecies concerning the first Messiah, that he was to bring peace on the earth, and fill it with the knowledge of Jahveh, were no more fulfilled at his second coming than at his first. Mr. Cook says, "It is clear that we are now living in the midst of the millenium." We should not have thought it—but then, "One never knows."

The Region of Eternal Fire is the title of a book which is much advertised. It does not refer to Sheol, which is now understood to be refrigerated, but to the Caspian district, whence we obtain much petroleum.

ANANIAS THE INCORRIGIBLE.

Under the heading "The Vice of Exaggeration," "Urbanus," of the *Echo* (March 16), observes: "I should have thought that Mr. Footo, the President of the Secular Society, with all his violence of language, had rendered Mr. Hugh Price Hughes a service by showing him the folly of wild exaggerations in statement. He has proved to demonstration that Mr. Hughes's story of 'The Atheist Shoemaker' was three parts fiction to one part fact. Mr. Hughes, however, is as dogmatic and inaccurate as ever. Speaking in Yorkshire this week, he said that a well-informed gentleman had told him that there are a thousand Primitive Methodist ministers in places where they are not needed. Unless this anonymous 'well-informed' person was a Ritualistic clergyman, who does not think such persons are needed anywhere, he must be a terrible liar. Why should Mr. Hughes give currency to such wild statements on a public platform, without having verified them? Three minutes spent in looking up the fact in any one of half-a-dozen reference books in his own library, would have shown the absurdity of such a statement. There are only about 1,100 Primitive Methodist ministers in the whole country."

THE BIBLE AND THE CHILD.

Were it not for the unconsciousness coming from inveterate habit, every one would shrink with horror from making the careers of adulterers and harlots the special subjects for the religious instruction of children. Nor would it be deemed possible that the contemplation of such characters as Jacob, Samson, Deborah, Barak, Gideon, or even David, in the light of favorites of heaven, could have any other effect but to lower the standard of morality.—J. A. Picton, M.P.

CORRESPONDENCE.

KINDNESS TO ANIMALS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER"

SIR,—In your issue of the 11th inst. an article appears from the pen of Mr. Wheeler on "The Treatment of Animals." Now, it so happens that I am a general lover of the (dumb?) creatures whose cause Mr. Wheeler so ably upholds, and I thank him for his true and forcible remarks quite as much as if he had done me a personal kindness. It is a pity there are not more men who don't think the subject below their consideration. But with the spread of Darwinism, let us hope that men and women with any conscience at all will look with contempt upon actions which cause any unnecessary pain to the lower animals. When I was a child I was told that to make veal look white the poor little calf was bled to death; hung up head downwards, overnight, while its life-blood slowly flowed from the cruel gash of the butcher's knife. Did its mother hear the piteous bleating grow feebler and feebler, until at last weakness caused it to stop altogether, I wonder? I am told that this vile practice is done away with now; I only hope it is true.

Another relish of the selfish epicure I'd like to banish from his greedy palate, viz., the capon. It is a strange fact that about three days before I saw Mr. Wheeler's article, I remarked to someone (through hearing several gun reports, and being told that a party had been formed for pigeon shooting) that I believed the day would come when people would look back upon these days with horror when such cruel sport was allowed. I am glad, very glad, to find I am not the only one who thinks so.

Just recently, Dr. Andrew Wilson drew the attention of the public, in the *Illustrated London News*, to the cruelty attending the practice of accordion players who carry monkeys about the streets, and allow them to sit on our damp pavements, thus causing lung diseases. Anyone who considers for a moment what a vast change they undergo in coming, for the most part, from tropical climates to our cold and uncertain one, will, I am sure, if they have any heart at all, fully endorse all Dr. Wilson says.

But a popular man often has to pay in a queer way for his popularity, and so the poor, harmless little monkeys have unconsciously caused a very polite letter to be written the worthy Doctor who is addressed as "you confounded cad" by "A man who has suffered at the hands of scientific devils." To explain the cause of abuse I will quote the Doctor's own words: "That while I protest against the treatment of the ape by the dirty accordion players, I am yet a supporter of that view of things which sees in experimentation on animals the only means of acquiring a knowledge of the cure of certain of man's mortal ailments." However, I've no doubt the Doctor will survive this unusual dose of politeness, he can but "take it from whence it comes," etc.

It will be comfort to many to read a short article on pain by Dr. Wilson, which has appeared since the above, in the same paper; the writer has made it plain to even the dullest that the greatest pain exists only where the greatest consciousness exists also. Therefore animals not having man's consciousness do not suffer to the same extent that he does. We all know I think of a cat, or a dog, or a pet of some sort, having limped home with a broken leg or the skin off one side of the face, anyway with an accident of some sort; and we know also in what an incredibly short time our dumb friend seems to have forgotten all about his aches and pains.

The great Duke of Wellington taught all of us a lesson when he undertook to see that a toad (which he found a boy who was leaving home for school, crying over because there would be no one to feed his pet) should be looked after and its health reported to its friend. We cannot all say with Cowper—

I would not enter on my list of friends
(Though graced with polished manners and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility) the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.

A man or a woman may have good qualities in great quantities which far out-weigh their bad ones, and though we

might feel grieved and indignant to see them tread needlessly on a worm, it would be absurd to deny ourselves and them the pleasure of a mutual friendship because of this one act of cruelty on their part.

Some people have an intense horror of spiders and other crawling things, and feel an irresistible desire to kill them. I could not myself put the poor little harmless creatures out of existence; but then I never feel any fear of them. "Live and let live" is a good motto. It is only those "who loveth best All things both great and small," can feel the tender pity which the sight of suffering in the lowly and unprotected calls forth. The late Earl of Shaftsbury did a noble work for the poor, patient donkey, but we still hear far too often the heavy blow across its back from the thick stick of an impatient master. If all owners of this useful "beast of burden" were to treat it well, properly groom him, and make him feel that his master is his friend, we should no longer hear the donkey spoken of in the terms of contempt so common now. I can understand one boy calling another boy "a great booby," for the bird bearing the name of "booby" will quietly stand still to be knocked down; but a donkey has far more intelligence than he is usually credited with; he only wants encouragement to bring it to the front.

I much wish I could do more to prevent cruelty. But the old proverb still holds good: "If wishes were horses beggars might ride." DESIDERATUM.

MIRACLES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I am now bordering on my 77th year, having been a decided Freethinker over sixty years, subscribing to the *National Reformer* from its commencement, until the *Freethinker* came out. Considering this more decided and outspoken, I discontinued the former, and took the latter, having every copy now in my possession. Strange to say, I never remember seeing any remarks from our Freethought writers on the absurdity of the rainbow being classed among other natural phenomena as miracle, vide Genesis ix. Indeed, I should think there are few to be found in the present day who are not real savages or Roman Catholics that are not aware of the fact that a rainbow is an arc of a circle consisting of all the colors formed by refraction of rays of light from drops of rain or vapor appearing in the part of the hemisphere opposite to the sun.

Many years back, when employed in H.M. Dockyard at Pembroke, it was the custom to periodically test the Fire Engines, about a dozen in number. At the time I allude to they were worked by hand, requiring the whole of the working-men in the yard to test them efficiently. On those occasions the engines were placed at nearly equal distances apart, in front of the large shipbuilding sheds, and when everything was ready, the principal officers would invariably commence at one end, giving orders to commence pumping, which would be vigorously performed for a few minutes, the end of the hose being held by a subordinate officer, at an angle that would cause the water to fall in a dense, rain-like shower on to the roofs of the large sheds, each engine being tested in a similar manner. These tests were invariably performed between the hours of 11 and 12 a.m., the sun at that time being as near as possible in an opposite direction, and in the summer time it was quite a familiar sight to witness a beautiful little rainbow in front of each engine in succession while the pumping lasted.

Among the seven or eight hundred men employed on these occasions, there were at least four hundred professors of religion, and I feel quite certain that not one even of that number thought for a moment that our little amateur rainbows contained a particle of the supernatural or miraculous elements. Indeed, sir, I always look upon miracles as delusions, manufactured for the sole benefit of priestcraft, and anyone living in this year of advancement, 1894, if not totally blind with bigotry and stupidity, must see that the miracle business that flourished in the dark ages, is now rapidly becoming a dead letter.—Yours etc.

THOS. DUNBAR HARRIS.

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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, H. R. G. Gogay, "Some Anomalies of the Poor Law" (free); 6.30, musical selections; 7, Charles Watts, "Christ, Alive and Dead" (admission free; reserved seats 3d. and 6d.) Wednesday at 8, social gathering, reading by G. W. Foote, children's play, dancing, etc. (tickets 6d.) Good Friday at 8, the Finsbury Branch's fourth annual smoking concert (tickets 6d.)

Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): 5.30, tea, entertainment and dancing (tickets 6d.) Monday and Tuesday at 8, social gatherings (free).

Camberwell—61 New Church-road, S.E.: 11.30 (small hall), J. E. Dobson (East Lambeth Candidate for School Board) will address members and friends of the Branch (free); 7.30 (large hall), A. B. Moss, "Some Antidotes to Superstition." Friday at 7.30, free science classes in chemistry and astronomy.

Hammersmith Club, 1 The Grove, Broadway: Thursday, March 29, at 8.30, Mrs. Thornton Smith, "Woman and the Bible" (free).

Wimbledon—Liberty Hall, Curtis's Coffee House (Broadway entrance): 7, St. John, "Christianity and Progress" (free).

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Battersea Park-gates: 11.30, Stanley Jones, "The Cooling of Hell."

Hyde Park (near Marble-arch): 11.30, A. Herzfeld, "Christianity: its Origin and Development"; 3.30, Stanley Jones will lecture.

COUNTRY.

Bristol—Shepherd's Hall, Old Market-street: 7, R. Weare, "Socialism."

Chatham—Secular Hall, Queen's-road, New Brompton: 11, H. G. Baker, "The Fetish of Monarchy"; 2.45, Sunday-school; 7, H. G. Baker, "Demoralising the Nation's Teachers," and recitations by the author.

Derby—41 Copeland-street (off Traffic-street): 7, members' meeting.

Dundee—Cutlers' Hall, Murraygate: 11.30, mutual improvement class; 1 to 2, music class; 2.30, concert; 6.30, J. McAra, "A Reply to Father Gleeson."

Glasgow—Ex-Mission Hall, 110 Brunswick-street: 12, discussion class, selected article from the *Free Review*; 6.30, social meeting in commemoration of the anniversaries of J. S. Mill and R. Owen (tickets 6d.)

Hull—St. George's Hall, 8 Storey-street: 7, Capt. Monro, "Christ's Burial and Resurrection."

Liverpool—Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street: 11, Tontine Society; 7, Mr. Ross, "The Crucifixion and Ascension."

Manchester N.E.S., Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, All Saints': 3, members' annual meeting; 6.30, two humorous sketches, "Caught in his Own Trap" and "My Wife's Relations." Newcastle-on-Tyne—Good Templar Hall, 2 Clayton-street, East: 3, monthly business meeting; 7, O. H. Reynolds, "Why I Oppose Christianity" (free).

Portsmouth—Wellington Hall, Wellington-street, Southsea: 11, C. Cohen, "Lucretius"; 3, class in Spencer's ethics; 7, C. Cohen, "The Life, Death and Influence of Jesus Christ." Tuesday at 8, C. Cohen, "The French Revolution."

Reading—Foresters' Hall, West-street: 7, J. Slyfield, "The Disposal of the Dead."

Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham-street: 3, B. Riley, "The History of English Poverty"; 5, tea; 7, B. Riley, "Practicable Land Nationalisation."

South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King-street: 6.30, ethical class; 7.30, business meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Rochdale—Town Hall-square: Sam Standing, 3, "How shall the Dead be Raised Up?"; 6.30, "The New Class of Ability—a further Reply to Archdeacon Wilson."

LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.

O. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, E.—March 25 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 Credon-road, Botherhithe, London, S.E.—April 1, Camberwell; 15, m., Hyde Park; e., Hammersmith; 22, m., Wood Green. May 8, m. and e., Camberwell; 13, e., Edmonton; 20, m., Clerkenwell Green; 27, m., Hyde Park; e., Hammersmith.

TOUZEAU PARRIS, Clare Lodge, 32 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, London, W.—April 1, Grimsby; 8, Liverpool; 15, Sheffield; 22, Camberwell.

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