

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

FATHER ADAM.

THE London Nonconformist Council, representing the Evangelical Free Churches in the metropolis, has issued its manifesto to the School Board electors, and we commend it to the attention of the so-called Progressives. The framers of this manifesto have only two classes in view—Churchmen and Dissenters. All other sections of the community they treat with sublime indifference. They talk about “civil and religious freedom,” but what they mean by it is having their own way. They talk about “the false and pernicious superstitions” taught by the Established Church, but it does not occur to them that their own teaching is regarded by others as of precisely the same character. They do indeed hint that the “compromise of 1871” is not perfect; they say “it does not represent our ideal theory of religious instruction.” But they do not tell us what is their ideal theory. What they do tell us is, that they are determined to maintain the “compromise” which has “secured the reading of the Bible and the teaching of its truths and obligations to the many thousands of children who have been educated in the London Board Schools.”

Nothing could exceed the fatuity or the impudence (call it which you will) of these Nonconformists. How virtuously indignant they wax over the sins of their rivals. How oblivious they are to the objections taken against themselves. Their cry of “Down with the Church!” is supposed to be the first and last word of “religious freedom.” They forget—or they *affect* to forget—that there is as much sense and justice in the cry of “Down with the Bible!” Their fetish has no more right in Board Schools than the Churchman’s dogmas. All they want is to become the upper dog in this fight. The whole affair is a squabble between rival firms, and there is a growing disposition on the part of the general public to exclaim, “A plague on both your houses!”

“As Evangelical Nonconformists,” say these manifesters, “we regard the Bible as containing the divinely-revealed standard of faith and morals.” Well, suppose they do? What concern is it, or what concern *should* it be, to the London electors? Will these “Evangelical Nonconformists” kindly answer the question? Having uttered their oracles, will they condescend to explain them? Let them state on what ground of “civil and religious freedom” they imagine their opinion of the Bible is of the slightest interest to “the electors for the London School Board”? Those electors may *as individuals* take the greatest interest in such opinions, but *as electors* they have no more just concern with the Bible than they have with the Church Catechism.

We will put another question to these “Evangelical Nonconformists.” They would keep the Bible in the schools as the “divinely revealed standard of faith and morals.” Now there are Christians, like the Rev. Charles Gore, who regard the moral standard of the Old Testament as “deplorably low.” But that is not our point. Thousands of Freethinkers regard the Bible as a positively bad guide in ethics, to say nothing of the disgusting nature of some of its stories, or the terrible brutality of much of its language. Let us suppose, then, that such Free-

thinkers were in a majority; or, rather, let us take a case where they *are* in a majority. Would the Municipal Council of Paris, for instance, be entitled to teach the school-children that the Bible is *false*, if the London School Board is entitled to teach them it is *true*? And, if not, *why* not?

The only *real* freedom is that which is advocated by Secularists. Religion should be banished entirely from the domain of the State. It should neither be taught as *false* nor as *true*, but left—like all matters of *opinion*—to the mind and conscience of individual citizens.

In the meantime, however, it is the duty of Freethinkers to *expose* the Bible, precisely because the Christian sects, and especially the Nonconformists, force it as God’s Word into the hands of little children. We could say a great deal about the Bible as containing the “divinely revealed standard of morals,” and before this controversy is ended we may be obliged to hold up some very offensive texts to Christian noses. But for the present we refrain. It is only a dire necessity that could drive us to such a piece of scavenging.

Leaving the “morals” alone, for the present, let us look at the “faith.” By this word, we presume, the “Evangelical Nonconformists” mean *what is to be believed*. Things which can be proved are not matters of *faith*, but matters of *knowledge*. Accordingly, the children are to be taught to *believe* the Bible. Very well then, we will just open it and see what it contains. It begins with an oriental rigmarole about Creation, which a lot of apologists, including Mr. Gladstone, torture into a bastard harmony with Science. At the end of this Creation are two human beings—Mr. Adam and Mrs. Eve—the one manufactured out of mud, and the other from one of the mud-man’s ribs. And these two persons, with this extraordinary origin, were the first parents of the human race!

Good old Father Adam! How many of the “Evangelical Nonconformists” really believe in the existence of this gentleman? Many of them laugh at it under the rose, and they commit a crime in presenting it solemnly to school-children. Darwinism is triumphant, and Father Adam is a legendary figure. Scientific men know it, and Christian ministers know it, but they try to keep the *children* from knowing it. When the little ones grow up, some of them will find out how they were tricked. Meanwhile they are to be taught what the teacher generally knows to be a *lie*—that all the races of the *genus homo* on this planet (white, yellow, brown, red, and black) are descended from a pultry old fellow, who started life one morning about thirty years old, got married before dinner and sacked by his employer in the afternoon; after which he lived for nearly a thousand years without saying a single word, or doing a single thing, which his biographer thought worthy of relation. The dreariest, barren, muddling old fool that ever shuffled across the stage of life or romance.

Fifty years ago it was more excusable to teach such rubbish. Even so shrewd a man as Archbishop Whately, the author of a standard treatise on Logic, could at that time bring Father Adam into a serious enquiry. Discussing, in his *Commonplace Book*, the

shortness of human life in relation to the length of time required for reaching maturity, the Archbishop remarks that great longevity was of more importance in the early ages before writing was in use, and he thinks that this great longevity was due to "the use of the tree of life by our first parents before they were expelled from Paradise, which was likely to have imparted to the constitution of their descendants a strength which was slowly and gradually worn out in many generations."

Archbishop Whateley wrote this as a private memorandum. He never meant it for other eyes than his own, although it was published after his death by his daughter. We may therefore look upon it as at least *sincere*. And when a remarkably clever man could honestly write in this way, it was not so ridiculous as it is now to set the Bible up as "a divinely revealed standard." Darwin has lived and taught since then, and Father Adam now belongs to the Museum of Religions. The Bible, therefore, begins badly; and the bad beginning vitiates all that follows. Adam and Christ are the Siamese twins of the Bible scheme of salvation; and when the one dies, the other is warned to prepare for his funeral.

G. W. FOOTE.

THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE.

IF ever there was a stupid story received as a sacred one, it is the legend of the Tower of Babel. It begins by the statement that the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. Such a time never existed, for even the cries of monkeys are not exactly alike in different countries. It is civilisation which extends languages, and this mainly by literature; the peasant of Lombardy still cannot understand the peasant of Sicily, but the *lingua Toscana* is common to the educated of both parts. English is gradually becoming a universal language by the spread of intercourse; but there is no evidence of a time when the inhabitants of remote districts understood one another better than now.

The folly ascribed to the people in trying to "build a tower whose top should reach to heaven," only betrays the ignorance of the holy writer. Did he know that the sun is over ninety millions of miles distant? The Almighty gets alarmed, and, instead of leaving them to their own devices and the law of gravitation, comes down to see the city and the tower, and, to restrain them, confounds their language. A more puerile representation of the deity is hardly to be found even in the Bible. But the particular absurdity with which I am now concerned is the representation of the diverse languages of the world as having arisen in a sudden manner. This notion, still inculcated in the schools, stands in the way of perceiving that language is, like all else, a growth, and to be studied with the key of evolution.

To describe the origin and evolution of language would need a book rather than an article. Yet I would boldly state my conviction that there is no natural intrinsic difference between the sounds of animals and the words of men. The only difference, and it is immense, is one of the application of mind. If we regard but children, we may see that the human being speaks before he reasons, and that language develops slowly side by side with reason.

André Lefevre, in his book on *Races and Languages*, postulates as the origin of speech that the animal is already in possession of the two significant germs of language: the cry, spontaneous and reflective, of emotion and need; the cry, already intentional, of warning menace and appeal. From these two sorts of cry, man, with a richer vocal apparatus and less limited cerebral faculties, has derived numerous varieties by prolongation, duplication, and intonation. The cry of appeal, the germ of the demonstrative roots, prelude to nouns of number, sex, and distance; the emotional cry, of which our simple interjections are survivals, combining with the demonstratives, prepares the outlines of the preposition, and prefixes the verb and the noun of condition and action. Imitation, either direct or symbolical, of the sounds of nature, furnishes the elements of attributive sorts, from which proceed the

names of objects and special verbs and their derivation. Analogy and metaphor enlarge the vocabulary by applying to objects of touch, sight, smell, and taste the qualification derived from onomatopœia. Then comes reason, discarding much of this unwieldy wealth, selecting and combining, and by derivation, suffixing, and composition, evolving from these subroots indefinite lineages of words, having every manner of relationship amongst themselves, from the closest to the most dubious, and which grammar proceeds to distribute among the recognised categories of parts of speech.

Those, from the time of Lucretius, who have taken the natural as opposed to the supernatural view of mankind have found an origin for speech in the imitation of natural sounds. And this I hold to be the first stepping-stone in language. The nursery words of today are survivals from the infancy of speech. The nurse imitates the lowing of a cow or bleating of the sheep in moo-oo and baa-ah while she points to the animal. When the identification is complete it suffices to say moo, or baa, or moo-cow, baa-lamb, the earlier onomatops being gradually dropped. Here, I think, we have the main process. Professor Max Müller calls this the bow-wow theory, his own being known as the ding-dong. Well, as a matter of fact, it is, combined with gesture—the importance of which in the evolution of language can hardly be over-rated—the natural resort of one trying to make himself understood. Witness the old story of the Englishman at a Chinese banquet, who, curious as to the composition of the dish he was eating, turned to the servant with an interrogative "Quack, quack." The reply "Bow-wow," intimated, as clearly as if he spoke in English, that the food was dog instead of duck. Hood describes how an Englishman made known his wants in France:—

Moo, I cried for milk;
If I wanted bread,
My jaws I set a-going;
And asked for new-laid eggs
By clapping hand and crowing.

The large part played by gesture made sound of less importance. The French describe a shot by *pouf*, and we by *bang*, yet both are imitations of sound. There is no resemblance between *hog* and *grunt*, yet *hoch* and *grogner* alike represent the noise.

Max Müller allows that the formation of words from the imitation of sounds has some play. It has, I think, far larger play than he admits. Words of an imitative character, by the aid of gestures, soon become mere symbols. Yet the underlying imitation can be traced in all languages. As an illustration of the far-reaching extent of an onomatop take the sound made by the tongue and its operations of lapping, licking, presented by our word "lick"; the liquid *l* being the unit. In Sanskrit the bases are *lih*, to lick; *lal*, to frolic, play, dally; *lak*, to taste; *lich*, to mark, to write; *ling*, to paint; whence *linga*, the sign *par excellence*. Confining ourselves to affinities in our own language (from *lingua*, tongue), we may see how lick is allied to like, relish, delicious, delight, delicate, lief, leave, love, leman. The French *lecher* suggests leash and lash. Lush and liquor have the same descent; "likerish tooth" keeps the old meaning. Chaucer, in writing that "liquorish tongue has lecherous tail," had a fine ear for the alliances of language. Licking leads to notions of gloss and smoothness* and brightness, looseness. Trace the first in derivatives of *luo*, to shine, lux, luxury, luminous, illumine, elucidate. Note, too, lubricate, glabrous, glaze, glass, glare, glow, glisten, gleam, glance, glint, glimmer, glimpse; with smoothness in glide, lizard, or glider, slide, slip, elide, slap, slippery, slope, clope, sleek, sloop, slit, sledge, sling, with looseness in loss lax, slack, slick, laugh, relax, lout, lubber, lublolly boy, slobber, saliva, sloven, slow, slug, slug-gard, linger, loiter, lounge, languor, lure, lurk, lair, latent, lodge, lie, lay, lag, lagoon, lug, liberty, *liber* (bark which slips off), library, leaves, folio, *fleur*, flower, leaf, running off to flat, *Ger. blatt*, blade. Licking has also the opposite notion of causing to adhere, as in link, line, lanyards, cling, clench, clutch, glue, latchet, league, religious, law, legislate, licence, allow, ally,

* Compare the soft smoothness of liquid *l* in "little children lulled asleep by lullabies," with the rough effect of guttural *r* in "rude, ragged rascals cracking rugged rocks."

ply, pleat, lock. Probably a thousand words could be linked and allied with this sound of licking. I leave the rest to the ingenious reader, with the warning to the novice that in language sound counts for nothing apart from etymology and the history of words. My lists are not meant as showing derivatives, but as suggesting relationship.

Man is an imitative animal, but not purely so. He has impulses to spontaneity and variety. Under these impulses words originally imitative, or intended to be so, would soon change their forms by combination, compression, symbolic substitution, and their meanings by metaphoric usage. Instance the sharp sound of crack used in the sense of smart, and softened, to click, clack, giving us clock. As an illustration of the changes in one and the same word, take the variations of our *eye*. Latin, *oculus*; Flemish, *oog*; German, *auge*; Swedish, *oga*; Italian, *occhio*; Spanish, *ojo*; Portuguese, *olha*; French, *oeil*. There is little similarity between the Sanscrit *pitar* and the Irish *na-thair*; but these words can all be linked by the Zend, *pai-tar*; Persia, *pa-dar*; Latin, *pa-ter*; Spanish, *pad-re*; French, *peré*, *papa*; Turkish, *pe-pe*; Tartar, *ba-ba*; Abyssinia, *abba*;* Gothic, *fa-der*, or *at-ta*; Welsh, *a-thair*; Irish, *na-thair*. There are considerably over a hundred words for father, all of which may be traced to the sucking sound *p. b.* of the child at the breast, and hundreds of words besides from our nursery, pap and bib, to bee and beer, and other pabulum.

The evolution of language and its relations to thought is an interesting and instructive subject, though to dwell on it further might take us somewhat out of the province of this paper. One important point, which goes to the root of our differences with the metaphysicians and theologians, was well summed up by the old Freethinker, Hobbes, when he said: "Words are the counters of the wise, but the money of fools."

J. M. WHEELER.

SIR J. W. DAWSON AND THE FLOOD.

THE *Expositor* is a neat "shilling monthly," published in the interest of the orthodox faith, and on its staff is Sir J. W. Dawson, F.R.S., one of the very few scientists who still cling to the old orthodox notions as to the origin and government of the universe. In the May number of the above journal he has an article on Noah's flood, under the title of "The Bible and Science." It is a rare thing to find at the present day a scientific man risking his reputation in supporting the story of the overflowing of the mighty waters of bygone days. Such an individual is one of the wonders of the nineteenth century. The nearest approach to the position taken by Sir J. W. Dawson that we can remember was that which was assumed by a member of the British Association in 1855. This bold speaker hazarded an opinion that 9,000 years ago the torrid zone occupied the place where London now stands, and that, in due course of time, owing to similar and perpetual changes to those which have hitherto gone on, we shall be slowly landed in the Arctic Circle. Of course the present generation will not be alarmed at such a startling announcement, but will pursue the even tenor of their ways regardless of the fate of posterity.

It is surprising how largely the theological mind is affected by the conjectures of what "might have been," or what "may be." We know of nothing more potent in disturbing the balance of the judgment of mankind than the influence of orthodox training. In many cases it entirely reverses the aspect of things, and induces persons to draw upon their imagination rather than to rely upon truth. Instead of basing their theories upon facts, they seek to make those facts square with their theories; and, in so doing, they frequently represent as realities the very antithesis of what is the truth. Sir J. W. Dawson has done this in his article in the *Expositor*. With a view of making good his contentions, he draws extensively upon his imagination, and makes allegations that are not justified by what is

found in the Bible. He appeals to "the law and the testimony," and coolly declares that we are justified in regarding the Deluge as an established event in geological history. He then asserts that the Flood was "not local, but a very widely-extended phenomenon," and that the width of the phenomenon does not mean "universality in that absurd sense" which implies an enormous addition to the waters of the globe. Further, he states that "the narrator" in the Bible meant by his universal terms only what he saw of the event. This is orthodox supposition and special pleading with a vengeance. If "the narrator" meant what is here ascribed to him, why did he not say so, and confine himself to the observations he made, and report the result accurately? It would have been quite as easy for him to have done that as it was to have recorded that "all the hills were covered," and that "every living substance was destroyed." If there is one thing clearly stated in the Bible, it is that the Flood was, in the strictest sense, universal, and that it extended far beyond what "the narrator" could possibly have seen. Here is the declaration of the Bible itself: "And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them." "And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die." "Every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth." "And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the water prevail; and the mountains were covered. And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man. All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, all that was in the dry land, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth; and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark." With such clear language as this before them, how reasonable men can assert that the Flood was not universal is, to us, like "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding." Bishop Colenso says that the Flood described in Genesis, whether it be regarded as a universal or a partial deluge, is equally incredible and impossible.

Sir J. W. Dawson imparts the information that the mother of Moses had an ark, "her little basket," that floated on the river, and after assuring us that "it was certainly not a ship or a boat, but, like Noah's Ark, a box or basket coated with bitumen, and on a small scale intended for a similar purpose," he states that the great blessing this Flood story confers upon the present age, or what he calls "these last days," is that it puts us in spiritual contact with "primitive man," and renders his history helpful to us and our "children." This we pronounce supreme nonsense. In the first place, the tale of the Deluge as told in the Bible is no "history" at all, but a poor reproduction of a more ancient myth; and, in the second place, it cannot bring us in contact with "primitive man," who, in all probability, lived millions of years before the supposed time of Noah's Flood. If, however, the "contact" could be achieved, its "spiritual" nature would not be very exalted. The cold-water cure for the evils of the alleged "Fall of Man" was both useless and cruel. What is its "history"? Why, that a God who, it is said, possessed infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, either could not or would not devise a plan of reformation for the human race, but resolved instead upon wholesale destruction, and so drowned them all except one family. This was a terrible resolve, opposed to every sentiment of justice and to every feeling of benevolence. No being with a spark of humanity in his nature would be guilty of voluntarily exposing thousands of creatures—men, women, and children—to the agonies and struggles of a watery grave. Surely an omnipotent God could have found other means to

* Abbot and pope are etymologically alike.

correct the work of his own hands without bringing "a flood of water upon the earth to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven." Besides, as a remedy and a warning, the cold-water process proved a failure. The people are reported as being no better after the deluge than they were before it. If this deluge were a fact, what can be said of the God who was the chief actor in it, and who was entirely responsible for the great calamity—an event which was so fearfully cruel and so revolting that one "cannot think of it without horror, nor contemplate it without dismay"? How can we reconcile the drowning of a whole world with the justice and goodness of the Almighty One? Say that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, was that any reason for destroying any chance of repentance? What should we say of an earthly despot who acted in a like manner? The cruelty and utter brutality of the action thus attributed to God have never been paralleled, or even approached, by the greatest monster the world has ever seen; and if an event is caused by one who has infinite power, the event must partake of the character of the actor, and become infinite in its utter depravity. If men were wicked, was it therefore just to overwhelm, in a common destruction, the son with the sire, the little child who had not yet learned to sin with those who were the real sinners, if such existed?

Sir J. W. Dawson has no easy task in his endeavor to reconcile the incidents connected with the Flood with the facts of Science. Moreover, we know of no scientist of the present day unassociated with theology who would attempt such an impossibility. If he did make such an effort, among the many difficulties he would have to grapple with would be the following: (1) He would have to prove that the present diluvian deposits found in the earth do not date back beyond the Noachian period. (2) That sufficient water existed to cover mountains 17,000 feet high. (3) That a vessel, not more than 600 feet long, 100 feet broad, and 60 feet high, could have held "two of every living thing of all flesh," with food enough to keep them alive during their watery excursion. (4) That Noah, or some one for him, could have collected his "happy family" from countries thousands of miles apart, and could have prevented them from either devouring each other on the way to the Ark, or from dying through being exposed to climatic influences foreign to their nature. (5) That it was possible for animal life to exist for months in the temperature prevailing at a place "3,000 feet above the region of perpetual snow. And, lastly, how an olive tree could retain its life after being under the pressure of hundreds of tons weight of water for over half a year. These are some of the difficulties which prevent us from accepting the theory that the Bible and Science agree. The one is stationary, the other is progressive; the first is bound by the ignorance of the past, the second is guided by the knowledge of the present.

CHARLES WATTS.

PROFESSOR ROMANES.

It can hardly be out of place here to pay a brief tribute of respect to the memory of Professor G. J. Romanes, who passed away on Wednesday, May 23, at the rather early age of forty-six. Professor Romanes was a scientist who rendered considerable service in the great battle over Evolution. He was one of the able and powerful band—powerful out of all proportion to its number—who did the work of spreading the Darwinian gospel far and wide, of popularising and carrying to the mass of the people the truths which Darwin had discovered.

Take, for instance, this pithy summing up of the theory of natural selection from his little book on *The Scientific Evidences of Organic Evolution*, a pamphlet which will well repay reading: "It is a matter of observable fact that all plants and animals are perpetually engaged in what Mr. Darwin calls 'a struggle for existence.' That is to say, in every generation of every species a great many more individuals are born than can possibly survive; so that there is

in consequence a perpetual battle for life going on among all the constituent individuals of any given generation. Now, in this struggle for existence which individuals will be victorious and live? Assuredly those which are best fitted to live: the weakest and the least fitted to live will succumb and die, while the strongest and the best fitted to live will be triumphant and survive." This drives home the fact, lays out so clearly the broad lines of the theory of natural selection, that the densest schoolboy could hardly fail to understand it, nor the least observant man to grant its substantial truth.

Professor Romanes, too, recognised the practical unity—the sameness of kind, though not of degree—of the mental functions of man and the lower animals. In his profoundly interesting book on *Animal Intelligence*, in the International Scientific Series, he says in the Introduction: "Now it is notorious that no distinct line can be drawn between instinct and reason. Whether we look to the growing child or to the ascending scale of animal life, we find that instinct shades into reason by imperceptible degrees, or, as Pope expresses it, that these principles are 'for ever separate, yet for ever near.' Nor is this other than the principles of Evolution would lead us to expect, as I shall afterwards have abundant occasion to show."

It will be seen that Professor Romanes, unlike Dr. Wallace, saw no necessity for the introduction of an extraneous supernatural element; indeed, he was, as we shall presently see, a pronounced anti-supernaturalist. In short, he concerned himself with nature, and believed in the natural explanation of all phenomena. This fascinating book on *Animal Intelligence* is literally packed with authenticated stories of the intelligence, and even reasoning powers, displayed by animals, from ants to monkeys. He relates his observations of one monkey which he was lent by the Zoological Gardens, and whose intelligence and power of conducting researches into the details of articles which were given him to play with led Professor Romanes' sister to exclaim, "When a monkey behaves like this, it is no wonder that man is a scientific animal."

We have said that Professor Romanes was an anti-supernaturalist. As proof let us take this again from *The Scientific Evidences of Organic Evolution*. It is somewhat long, but we think it is worth quoting in full: "Such, then, is the theory of natural selection, or survival of the fittest; and the first thing we have to notice with regard to it is, that it offers to our acceptance a scientific explanation of the numberless cases of apparent design which we everywhere meet with in organic nature. For all such cases of apparent design consist only in the *adaptation* which is shown by organisms to their environment, and it is obvious that the facts are covered by the theory of natural selection no less completely than they are covered by the theory of intelligent design. Perhaps it may be answered, 'The fact that these innumerable cases of adaptation may be accounted for by natural selection is no proof that they are not really due to intelligent design.' And, in truth, this is an objection which is often urged by minds—even highly-cultured minds—which have not been accustomed to scientific modes of thought. . . . But here we meet with a radical misconception of the whole logical attitude of science. For, be it observed, the exception *in limine* to the evidence which we are about to consider does not question that natural selection *may* not be able to do all that Mr. Darwin ascribes to it: it merely objects to his interpretation of the facts, because it maintains that these facts might *equally well* be ascribed to intelligent design. And so undoubtedly they might, if we were all childish enough to rush into a supernatural explanation whenever a natural explanation is found insufficient to account for the facts."

And he proceeds to point out that the law of parsimony, which forbids an appeal to higher causes when lower ones are sufficient to explain the effects, is "the only logical barrier between science and superstition." The religionist denied the evidences of Evolution until the denial was no longer decently possible, and, then having to admit the fact, a mushroom breed of theologians springs up who discover

that, after all, "God" is at the bottom of Evolution; God causes all these organisms to develop, and so forth, and so forth. And so, as fast as Science moves on, God shifts back; and as rapidly as one fetish is destroyed, another fetish—more hazy, more vague, more aerial, perhaps—arises in its place. And the fetish will melt, melt away, just as what Professor Romanes called "scientific modes of thought" become more general.

Even in one of the latest of his books, in the first volume of the series of lectures entitled *Darwin and After Darwin*, Professor Romanes still shows himself a pronounced Rationalist. He points out (p. 40) that the facts pertaining to the natural classification of plants and animals "are precisely what they ought to be according to the theory of genetic descent; while no one of them is such as might be—and, indeed, used to be—expected upon the theory of special creation."

In the conclusion of this work on *The Darwinian Theory*, Professor Romanes observes that the fundamental difficulty of the Theist is the lack of evidence of beneficent purpose in nature, and he goes on: "The external world appears, in this respect, to be at variance with our moral sense; and when the antagonism is brought home to the religious mind, it must ever be with a shock of terrified surprise. It has been newly brought home to us by the generalisations of Darwin; and, therefore, as I said at the beginning, the religious thought of our generation has been more than ever staggered by the question—Where is now thy God?" But Professor Romanes was too much a man of the times not to round off a corner; if he could not bow the knee, he at least touched his hat; for, of course, it will be long before every scientist has the courage of a Huxley, though even he sometimes pays homage he might withhold. To end his book with the question, "Where is now thy God?" would not do, and so Professor Romanes tells us that "when this cry of Reason pierces the heart of Faith, it remains for Faith to answer now, as she has always answered before—and answered with that trust which is at once her beauty and her life—Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself." Aye, verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, that coverest thyself up, who art undiscoverable, who concernest not thyself with man, and of whom man in turn need take no thought. Science will not attack thee, for thou art intangible; Reason will not know thee, for thou art unknowable. O, thou vague, shadowy, undefined, undefinable Nothing, thou canst rest in peace. And if "Faith" is satisfied with *this*, why it is hardly for Science to complain.

The few selections we have given—brief, snappy, inadequate, as they must be—will, however, give some idea of Professor Romanes's work, and of his position to the problems of Freethought. Besides his work in expounding Darwin, he was an original investigator, and contributed a couple of valuable articles—notably one on Instinct—to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*; nor should his work on *Mental Evolution* be overlooked. By his death Science has lost an honored son, and Humanity one who did much to spread that "scientific mode of thought" in the progress of which lies the potency of human happiness.

FREDERICK RYAN.

GOSPEL FORGERIES.

THE story of the supernatural birth of Jesus Christ is told only by Matthew and Luke. This circumstance alone is sufficient to arouse suspicion as to the truthfulness of the statement. For how comes it that this wondrous fact—if fact it be—was confined to the knowledge of these two men? That the apostles—including Paul, who was not "called to be an apostle" (Rom. i. 1) until long after the crucifixion—were utterly ignorant of the supernatural birth of Jesus Christ is beyond all doubt, for they never even alluded to it. Had they known it, and believed it, they would not have failed to promulgate it as evidence of the highest value that Jesus was the expected Messiah. That they did not know of it—had not even heard of it—is proved by the statement of Luke himself, who says that

"Jesus was *supposed* to be the son of Joseph" (Luke iii. 23). That it was not known to either Mark or John we may infer from their silence; for what writer concerning Christ would have failed to notice so momentous a circumstance had he heard of it, and believed in its truth? How, then, are we to treat these statements of Matthew and Luke—as true or false? Before we reply let us ask and determine another question, which is: Were these statements ever made by Matthew and Luke, or are they spurious interpolations, and consequently forgeries?

Now, the four gospels, as we have them at the present day, have been accepted on the authority of those early Fathers, whom ecclesiastical writers have denominated "orthodox." No other gospels have descended to us, although, as Luke himself bears testimony, such evangelical histories were numerous (Luke i. 1). It goes without saying that, before the invention of printing, it was a very easy matter for bigoted or superstitious copyists not only to interpolate authentic writings with such alterations and additions as accorded with their own credulity and cunning, but also to produce entire pieces of their own or others' forgeries. And that fraudulent offences of this character were common there can be no doubt.

Irenæus tells us that different sectarists had published a multitude of apocryphal and spurious scriptures to astonish the weak and ignorant (book i., chap. xvii.). Origen informs us that that part of Luke's gospel wherein Christ promises the penitent thief that he should "that day be with him in Paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43) was not in the older copies, and was a late addition by some of the interpolators (Comm. on John). And that Origen (born A.D. 185, died 254) was right in his statement may be inferred from the fact that neither Justin (the) Martyr (born A.D. 70, martyred 167), nor Irenæus (born A.D. 120, martyred 202), nor Tertullian (died A.D. 216), take the least notice of the circumstance, although they have quoted almost every other passage of Luke relating to the crucifixion. The established maxim—a maxim that was not confined to the early Christians—appears to have been that it was not only lawful, but commendable, to deceive and assert falsehoods in order to promote what those who uttered them considered to be the cause of truth and piety. Mosheim assures us that the early Christians "asserted that a man did no wrong who supported truth, when hard pressed, by deceit and lies" (*Hist. Eccl.*, chap. iii., sec. 3).

But the early Fathers themselves were as ignorant and superstitious as those whom they condemned. Dr. Shuckford and other Biblical *savants* speak of them in deprecatory terms; but no condemnation of them is so severe as that of their own utterances. Here are some few of their statements by way of illustration:—

Justin Martyr justifies the doctrine of the Incarnation by its *similarity* to the births of Æsculapius and Hercules, and the other illustrious *god-men* of Pagan mythology (*Apol. i.*). Irenæus, describing the millennium, assures us, not only that every productive part of the vine, from the stem to the bunch, and of wheat, from the root to the ear, shall be multiplied by ten thousand—every bunch containing ten thousand grapes, and every ear ten thousand grains, but that "every grain of wheat shall yield ten pounds of pure fine flour, and every grape four hogsheads of wine, and that, when any of the saints shall be going to gather one of these bunches, another will cry out: 'I am a better bunch! Take me, and bless God by me!'" (book v., chap. xxxiii.). Tertullian asserts, upon his own knowledge, "that the corpse of a dead Christian, at the first breath of the prayer made by the priest, on occasion of its own funeral, removed its hands from its sides into the usual posture of a supplicant, and, when the service was ended, restored them again to their former situation." He also relates, as a fact which he and all the orthodox of his time credited, "that the body of another Christian, already interred, moved itself to one side of the grave to make room for another corpse which was going to be laid by it" (*De An.*, chap. li.). With this evidence before us must we not view with suspicion the testimony of these "Fathers"? Bearing these facts in mind, let us consider if the first two chapters in each of these gospels be not interpolations, and, therefore, forgeries that are not to be relied upon.

That the first two chapters of Luke, if not other portions of this gospel, are interpolations there can be no doubt, for the statements of Luke himself are conclusive of the point. Luke, it should be remembered, wrote not only the gospel which bears his name, but also the Acts of the Apostles.

Both his works are dedicated to Theophilus, and he commences his Acts by stating, in brief but pregnant terms, what he had written in his gospel. Says he: "The former treatise I have made of all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day in which he was taken up." In these words Luke tells us that his gospel contains only a history of the public ministry of Christ from its commencement to its ending, and he utterly ignores the contents of the first two chapters. And the introduction to his gospel bears out this view, for in it he says that he had "taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which had been delivered unto them by those who, from the beginning, were *eye-witnesses and ministers* of the word." Now the "eye-witnesses and ministers" could have been none other than the apostles, and as they were strangers to Christ until he had commenced his public ministry, the treatise written by Luke could, and can, refer only to his public ministrations.

Here an important preliminary observation should be made. It is this—that there are, in each of the suspected portions of these gospels, circumstances detailed which are not even referred to in any of the other gospels; they are, therefore, entirely uncorroborated, and must be treated accordingly.

N. M. X.

(To be concluded.)

ACID DROPS.

The Mayor of Gloucester sent the Queen a birthday gift in the shape of a lamprey pie. It weighed thirty-one pounds, and we dare say it was good eating, though it is to be presumed that the whole of it did not pass the royal masticators. But that is by the way. What we should like to ask the Mayor of Gloucester (no doubt a very good Christian) is this: "Why did you send that fine, large pie to the Queen? Was it on the principle that unto him that hath shall be given? Could you not discover some hungry people in your own city, perhaps little children crying for bread, who would have rejoiced over a cut of that lamprey pie, and thought themselves in paradise?"

"One hundred and sixteen years to-day," said the *Echo* of May 30, "the soul of the godless Voltaire set forth on its quest for the Infinite Truth." The only thing certain in this statement is the date. The "quest" is a matter of speculation. The "godless" is entirely false. Voltaire was not an Atheist, but a Deist. He wrote articles to prove the existence of God. The *Echo* should be more particular. Even the heading of "Gossip" does not excuse such inaccuracy.

Baroness Langenau is an Austrian and a Methodist, and being in England she has naturally been interviewed for the *Methodist Times*. She says there is not much spiritual life in Vienna—which of course is very shocking. On the other hand, there is not much social distress in Vienna as compared with London, and "you never see a drunken man or woman." Our own metropolis has the best of it in religion, destitution, and drunkenness. Yet a desperate effort is being made in London just now to raise a special lot of money for the conversion of the heathen.

A Chaldee gentleman, representing himself as "a direct descendant of Nebuchadnezzar," has been confiding his strange and painful experiences to the *Pall Mall Gazette*. He was bitterly persecuted at San Francisco, and actually put into a lunatic asylum. But perhaps the folk there really thought he was mad, for he says that he saw Noah's Ark up Mount Ararat, and there was "talk of a syndicate" to bring it over to Yankeeland.

America is not such a happy place for preachers, after all, says the *Christian Commonwealth*. The best paid Methodist pastor in New York only gets 4,500 dollars a year, and some get as little as 2,000 dollars. Really the case of these gentlemen is quite pitiable. It is shocking to think that not more than £900 a year can be obtained by preaching "Blessed be ye poor"—still worse to think that the remuneration may sink so low as eight pounds a week.

Sky-pilot Skerret, of Cathedral-square United Presbyterian

Church, Glasgow, has been suspended from the ministry, and from the "privileges of full communion." The Synodical Commission thought he had too much communion with a female member of his church.

A writer in the *New Review* contemplates with pleasure the reading of the Bible by "maidens," and speaks of its "chaste outspokenness." This is a euphemism for "dirty plainness." Some parts of the Bible are queer studies for "maidens," unless they belong to the species of Lot's daughters.

The writer who does the "Science" column in the *Christian Commonwealth* declares that no scientific fact is at variance with the Bible; but he makes the reservation that the Bible must be "interpreted in a liberal spirit"—that is, we suppose, made to mean what it doesn't say. There are a lot of subtle humorists on the religious press. The comic papers don't seem able to find work for them.

The Town Clerk of Deal has been ordered to inform the "Captain" of the local Salvation "Army" that the terrible noise his squadron makes is a disturbance of the public peace. But the "Army" lives on noise.

Annie Elizabeth Marsden committed suicide at Hull by drinking bella-donna liniment. Annie Smith, a fellow servant, said the deceased was not in any trouble; she read religious books, chiefly the Bible, and went to chapel every other Sunday. As Talmage says, those Atheists are always killing themselves.

Rev. Thomas Spurgeon is as orthodox as his father was, and the *Sword and Trowel* is, of course, ditto. It alludes to the *Christian World* as "a weekly paper which has long been notorious for its opposition to Evangelical truth," and refers to some of the correspondence in its columns as "blasphemous." Good old blasphemy! And happy Christian family!

A Variety Company was doing good business at Pretoria till Rev. John McNeill came there. The people flocked to hear him, and found him a better entertainment. Besides, there was nothing to pay to go in, though no doubt, as usual, there was something to pay to go out.

There are 20,000 Jewish children in the schools of London. It will be a long time before there are as many in the schools of Jerusalem. The modern Babylon is far more attractive to the chosen people than the Holy City. And by the waters of that Babylon they do not sit down and weep.

Professor Corkery thus defines the difference between Romanism and Judaism:—In Judaism roasted sheep were offered as a sweet smelling sacrifice to God. In Romanism roasted gods are offered as a sweet smelling sacrifice to sheep.

Mr. Benjamin Kidd is responsible for circulating much trash in the religious press; but it is hard to beat the item to which most prominence is given—viz., the statement that "through the operation of the law of natural selection the race must grow ever more and more religious." If history shows one thing more certain than another, it is the diminishing power of religion. Savages are so sure of a future life that they will lend, expecting to be paid in another world. Natural selection weeds out the really devout, like celibate priests, monks, and nuns, who give up this world for the sake of God.

Another item made much of by the followers of Kidd is the influence of Christianity in abolishing slavery. In face of the long feudal serfdom when the Church was in power, and the fact that one of the worst forms of slavery remained in America supported by the Church in the present century, this contention only merits the designation of cheek.

Some of the Poole guardians seem to grudge the work-house people a little drop of communion with their Savior. On the proposition to buy a communion cloth and cup one of the guardians said: "Let them drink out of the bottle." Perhaps he thought they might get a better share that way.

If you want to be prepared for heaven in the best style and at no pecuniary cost to yourself, just kill somebody.

And don't work for a reprieve or pardon, for that might put your immortal soul in peril. Here are two cases in point, *vide* the *Sydney Bulletin*: "Parson Campbell, who wrote to the papers explaining that Mrs. Knorr ought to be hanged because 'she was now resigned,' recalls an old story of little Father Lordon, Roman Catholic chaplain in Melbourne Jail long ago—a condemned criminal, whom his reverence had made 'perfectly resigned,' was reprieved at the last moment. 'Ah,' sighed the priest, 'I am not so very pleased after all—he will never be so well prepared again.'"

Booth has been having two days with God at Sheffield. He warned preachers against taking texts from "philosophical fools like Darwin and Huxley," for it only led foolish people to buy their books. Perhaps he would like to serve their works as some of his army recently did novels in New Zealand—make a holocaust of them.

Mr. Richard Le Gallienne, whose *Religion of a Literary Man* was some time ago reviewed at considerable length in the *Freethinker*, has had the great misfortune to lose his young wife. This is not so uncommon a calamity as to be at all miraculous. Still, it is a heavy blow, and we sympathise with Mr. Le Gallienne, although we do not know him personally. The bereavement may affect some of the views expressed in the work we criticised. If a man has any powers of thought and feeling, there is nothing like a great sorrow to make him review his philosophy. We fancy that, even by this time, some parts of Mr. Le Gallienne's little book will seem to him rather bitter, though he once thought them so sweet.

There was a Congregational tea-fight in the village school-room at Great Ambrosden, Oxfordshire. After it was over, the assistant schoolmistress, Miss Alice Perry, a lady fifty-eight years of age, went in to see that all was right, and collected some remnants of bread and butter and sugar for some little children. Whether it was that she was a Church-woman or not, she was actually prosecuted for stealing articles to the value of threepence, and fined eighteen shillings and two shillings costs, with the alternative of fourteen days' imprisonment. What a beautiful exhibition of Christian charity!

Our glorious British campaign in Matabeleland has ended most appropriately. From first to last the African "savages" had a beautiful experience of the virtues of "civilisation." We picked a quarrel with Lobengula and murdered his ambassadors. Then we mowed down his warriors with Gatling guns. Finally we stole all the best of their land. And when it was all over we went to church and praised God from whom all blessings flow.

Poor old Lobengula died of want, hardship, and disease, after being chased like a wild beast; and his last days were marked by another lesson as to the white man's Christian honor. He sent two indunas to the British camp, with a message of submission and a present of £1,000. Two troopers in the Bechuanaland Police stuck to the money and suppressed the message. They have since been tried and sentenced to fourteen years' imprisonment; but how much worse are they than the Christians who sentenced them?

It is safe to say that Lobengula's warriors were incapable of such a crime as those troopers committed. They would have died for their tribe before trying to profit at its expense. No doubt the Matabele is an awful savage; we have been told so too often to think of doubting it; but what a gentleman he is in comparison with those two troopers and a number of other products of Christian training, with whom poor Lobengula and his people had the misfortune to become acquainted.

Matabeleland could hardly produce the equal of Joseph Harvey, a painter, who murdered the woman he lived with at Birmingham. "I stabbed her as often as I could, and then I kicked the life out of her"—these were his own words after the performance. Evidently our Societies for Converting the Heathen need not go very far afield.

Joseph Coulson, a local preacher, died suddenly in the United Methodist Free Church, Girlington, last Sunday evening. Really these "acts of Providence" ought not to

be performed in this fashion. "Great excitement" prevailed among the Girlington worshippers. They all want to go to heaven, but somehow they don't like to be suddenly reminded that the place is only "round the corner."

We were horrified the other evening to see "Nailing Down a Lie" as a heading in the *Sun*. We thought of marking the infamy and sending it to the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes.

At the Anglican Missionary Conference, at St. James's Hall, the Rev. J. A. Shorrocks said the Church in South India was honeycombed with caste; Hinduism was a great living power, and Christians were a comparatively insignificant body, scattered among a mass of Hindus of whose religion caste was the central feature. The Rev. H. Whitehead spoke of another difficulty, that of the support of native converts. "The main difficulties now fronting the missionaries in India arose from the fact that large masses of men had entered the fold of the Church for low and worldly motives." There is nothing like a famine for bringing the poor heathen to the feet of Christ. Mr. Whitehead professed himself in favor of baptising a lad and supporting and educating him till he could earn his own living. At this rate the number of converts will, probably, depend on the amount of cash.

Bishop Moule, referring to missionary work in China, deplored the "want of tact, temper, and charity on the part of many missionaries." The Rev. E. F. A. King spoke of Japanese problems, the chief difficulty being to reach the upper classes and men of education, who are mostly Free-thinkers. The same difficulty confronts the Christian missionary everywhere. All over the world the converts are chiefly from the inferior races, and from the lowest in each race. The conversion of the Shanars, of Tinnevely, only makes Christianity more despised by educated Brahmins.

When the missionaries came to discuss the question of polygamy, the ladies were asked to withdraw. Were they afraid that women should learn there was nothing against polygamy and concubinage in the Bible, but much in favor thereof? Dr. Cust argued that a polygamist should never be baptised. At the same time he would not have a man put away his extra wives. He should wait for baptism till all but one had died. So we presume a cannibal who ate all his wives but one would have the best chance of salvation.

It is a sign of the times, and a welcome sign too, when a journal like the *Westminster Gazette*, which has just been exposing the financial methods of that pious gentleman, Mr. H. S. Foster, M.P., comes out with a strong article on the Missionary business and its awful failure. It opens with a quotation from Mr. Samuel Storey, M.P.—the gentleman who has charge of the Bill for preventing further prosecutions on account of religious opinion. In the course of the Uganda debate in the House of Commons, Mr. Storey said that—"Wherever the missionaries had gone in Uganda there had followed warfare, bloodshed, cruelty, anger, and all the passions that inflamed humanity and disgraced Christian people." The *Westminster* follows this quotation by remarking that the recent Anglican Conference has thrown some curious light on mission-fields in general. For instance, it was pointed out by the Rev. R. P. Ashe that the Church Missionary Society, which has a revenue of a quarter of a million a year, had failed to establish one solitary native church in any part of the world! Nor is this all. The idyllic picture of the missionary, surrounded by happy converts, is belied by the facts. According to Lord Stanmore, the boasted Christian conquest of Fiji is a fraud. The whole life of the Christianised natives is "one piece of unreal acting." It is "punishable by fine and imprisonment" to wear native clothing, to make native cloth, to smoke tobacco, to wear long hair or a garland of flowers, to wrestle or play at ball, to build a native-fashioned house, not to wear shirt and trousers, and in certain localities coat and shoes also. It is even a crime to bathe on Sunday. "To my knowledge," says Lord Stanmore, "women have been flogged for no other offence."

What a *reductio ad absurdum* of Christianity in Fiji! Women flogged for bathing on Sunday! It ought to be written on all the cadging-cards that are put into the hands of Sunday-school children who beg from door to door, with a nice, realistic picture of the performance.

We wish to commend Lord Stanmore's address before yesterday's missionary conference to everybody in the country subscribing to this form of religious enterprise. Nothing could be more ridiculous or more wicked than the state of society he described in Fiji. The insistence on European dress and European manners has often converted missions before now into an agency for destroying the character, and often the existence, of savage tribes as potent as rum itself. But in Fiji things appear even worse. That any attempt to build houses, to dress, or to live after the native Fijian manner should be punished by fine and imprisonment; that a woman bathing on Sunday should be punished by flogging,—these are intolerable outrages quite beyond the ordinary ineptitudes of unintelligent missionary influence. Is the Colonial Office going to permit this in a British possession?—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

The Lord's mercies abound. In Spain it has been so cold that two vagrants, who slept in the streets of Madrid, were found dead from cold and exposure. Cholera has returned to Russia, about half the cases ending fatally.

At Ostrogoshok, on the Volga, the deity is looking after the rats. They are reported as swarming over the country in millions, and the damage already caused is assessed at upwards of two millions of roubles. Military assistance has been sent to help the panic-stricken people in the wholesale destruction of their innumerable enemy. It was observed, as a curious sign of some coming untoward event, that during two or three weeks every cat in the district gradually disappeared. The fugitives all took the same direction, and have, in their turn, now become a sort of lesser pest in the governments of Saratoff and Astrachan.

A disastrous flood in the Punjab has swept away whole villages, the loss of life being estimated at two hundred. In British Columbia they have also had floods on the Fraser River and its tributaries, drowning many persons and rendering hundreds homeless.

In "Free" America the churches are not only exempt from taxation, but from the laws against lotteries and gambling. In the United States Senate objection was made to putting church amusements and outside lotteries on the same footing. To gamble for Christ's sake is quite another thing to gambling for the love of the thing, which surely comes from the devil.

The latest schoolboy coruscation in religious examination is the following: "When Jesus came to Jerusalem he entered into the temple, and he said unto them, 'It is written, My house is a den of thieves, but ye have made it a House of Lords.'"

The *Daily News* says that, on Prince Ferdinand's accession to the throne of Bulgaria, the Exarch, who was not well affected towards the new ruler, gave orders that the Prince's name should not be mentioned in the Church prayers. M. Stambuloff telegraphed to "His Beatitude" that he must either pray, or lose his stipend of £5,600 a year. The Exarch prayed.

A quarrel between two sections of the congregation regarding the pastor led, the other day, to a serious riot in a Polish church at Freeland, Pennsylvania. Four persons were shot, and others were severely beaten. The chief of the police, and another officer who attempted to quell the tumult, were struck with stones.

The Lord's house of All Saints at Norfolk-square, Paddington, has been gutted out by fire. The steeple of the Shurdington Parish Church, near Cheltenham, was struck by lightning during a thunderstorm which passed over the district, and some of the stones hurled a considerable distance, the tower being cracked and the roof damaged.

Freethinking workmen at Cestao, in the province of Biscaya, attempted to give a dead comrade a civil funeral, but the priests interfered with them, going to the grave-side crucifix in hand and forbidding the burial. A violent scuffle ensued, but "order was eventually restored." Some will think the priests were actuated by bigotry. For our part, we think they were actuated by professional motives. Their livings, as well as their power, depend upon such functions

as burials; and they cannot be expected to let business slip through their fingers without a protest.

The *Morning Leader's* report of the presentation to Dr. Parker was rather malicious. It was headed "Joseph and his Brethren," and it made Dr. Parker say, after receiving the thousand guineas, that "he could imagine no happier life than that of a Congregational minister if his people rallied round him as his had rallied round him."

"The want and misery about us is overwhelming." So says the Rev. Percy Dearmer, and in saying so he condemns his own Church, nay, his own religion, which is demonstrated to be utterly powerless for good in *this world*, whatever use it may be in the next.

The *Spectator* has been writing some nonsense about suicide, which has been aggravated by the *Hospital*. According to the latter journal, there should be an effort to "revive the flagging energies of the pulpit." But what the pulpit "flags" in is not energy, but sense. Our medical contemporary thinks that Atheism is a principal cause of the modern increase of suicide. Yes, as Tenterden steeple was the cause of Goodwin Sands. Suicide occurs most frequently in the crowded centres of population, where the stress of life is the greatest, and the conditions of life are most unhealthy. And nine hundred and ninety-nine self-homicides out of every thousand are religious.

In a New England town there was a man named Bill Jones. Bill was very much of a sot, and when he got so full he couldn't navigate he made a bed just where he was. One night Bill laid his feverish head in the gutter. Three young wags of the town out for a lark happened along, and determined to have some fun. Now, one of these chaps was a clerk in an undertaker's establishment, so Bill was taken into the shop and placed in a pine box. He was then carted off to the graveyard, and the box placed amid the tombs in the silent city of the dead. The jokers secreted themselves in an obscure but overlooking spot, and awaited developments. Just as the gray dawn of morning burst forth, off went the lid of the box, and up popped Bill. Looking around at the tombs for a moment, he straightened up and said: "Well, here we are on the morning of the resurrection, and Bill Jones is the first man on deck, by —!"

In one of Mr. Herbert Spencer's works he quotes a dialogue between Mr. Palgrave, travelling in Arabia, and a Wahhabee, which runs somewhat after this fashion:—

"The greatest of sins is to worship a creature of clay."
 "Doubtless," said I; "but what then is the second?"
 "To drink the shameful (that is, to smoke tobacco)," he replied.
 "But what of murder, adultery, and bearing false witness against thy neighbor?"
 "God is very merciful," said my friend, meaning that these are little sins.
 "Two sins alone are not to be forgiven—polytheism and smoking?" I questioned; and the sheikh, with due solemnity, replied that this was so.

Perhaps no better example could be found of the labyrinths into which men wander when they attempt to substitute ecclesiastical formulæ for the common laws of the land.—*R. Brett*.

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. FOOTE.

[Third List.]

W. McC. £5; O. R. Featherstone, £1 10s.; F. B., £1; From Plymouth, £1; E. Sims, 10s.; W. C. Stewart, 10s.; A German Atheist (Berlin), 10s.; W. R. Muntion, 10s.; R. W., 10s.; A. Scopes, 5s.; Richard Green, 5s.; Robert Green, 5s.; E. Moon, 5s.; W. Witcher, 5s.; M. J. R., 3s.; J. A. L. S., 3s.; Walthamstow Admirer, 2s. 6d.; Nemo (Sussex), 2s. 6d.; W. Scottow, 2s. 6d.; R. Killick, 2s. 6d.; Tom Pay, 2s. 6d.; Annie Fry, 2s. 6d.; J. Brumage, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Brumage, 2s. 6d.; D. Smith, 2s. 6d.; J. Sutcliffe, 2s. 6d.; T. E. Newton, 2s. 6d.; G. & A. F., 2s. 6d.; J. Brown, 2s. 6d.; T. Edmunds, 2s. 6d.; W. Dark, 2s. 6d.; J. Morton, 2s.; L. Levine, 2s.; J. R. C., 2s.; R. H. Chapman, 2s.; H. Pitt, 2s.; J. Knight, 2s.; W. Griffiths, 1s.; H. Horrell, 1s.; Miss Barlow, 1s.; H. G. S., 1s.; W. Featherstone, 1s.

GEO. ANDERSON, *Treasurer*.

R. FORDE, *Sub-Treasurer*, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.O.

GEO. WARD, *Secretary* 91 Mildmay-park, N.

SPECIAL.

Letters for the Editor of the "Freethinker" should be addressed to 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, June 10, Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C. :-
7.30, "The Suicide of Theology."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.**—June 10, Sheffield; 17 and 24, Hall of Science. July 1, Liverpool; 8, Manchester.—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.W.
- C. WRIGHT.**—Who was David's mother? is a trick question, since the lady's name is not given in the Bible. Probably your questioner does not know, but you can tell him that her name is given in the Talmud (Saba Bathra, the Last Gate, chap. v.). It is Nezebeth.
- J. KNIGHT.**—The chief vegetarians of last century were, like T. Taylor and T. Ritson, Freethinkers. The Vegetarian Society was started in 1817 by James Simpson. Some prominent vegetarians like Prof. Newman and Dr. Allinson are Freethinkers, and a number of members of the N.S.S. are vegetarians.
- N.S.S. BENEVOLENT FUND.**—Miss E. M. Vance acknowledges: Blyth Branch, 5s.
- A. W. LISTER.**—Our "next issue" is rather peremptory. Your letter shall appear when we can find room for it. It is longer than it should be.
- T. WILMOT,** 7 Barkworth-road, S. Barnmondsey, will be pleased to enrol any Secularists who wish to join the new Lewisham and New Cross Branch of the N.S.S.
- T. HOLSTEAD.**—(1) Sorry you think you did not have a fair hearing at the Conference. The President conducted the business according to established rules of procedure. We note your view that the hereditary constitution of the House of Lords should not be interfered with. It is one that you are entitled to hold; at the same time, you must admit that the Conference was practically unanimous against it. (2) There is no fear of any party drawing Mr. Foote away from "the great work of Secularism."
- E. S.**—(1) The continued existence of the Jews as a separate people is chiefly owing to Christian persecution. We have not the slightest doubt that as the Jews are admitted to the full rights of citizenship they will melt into the populations around them. (2) Learned Jews have not always regarded the Pentateuch as written by Moses, but sometimes as the books concerning Moses. (3) There is no such text about *stealing* foreign slaves, but the Jews were allowed by their sacred law to make slaves of their prisoners.
- J. F. DEWAR.**—We regret to hear of the death of Mr. Ritchie, whom we held in much respect.
- We should be glad to hear from any London Freethinker who can offer a clerkship, or any similar employment, to Mr. Stanley Jones, late secretary of the N.S.S. Mr. Jones wishes to continue his Sunday lecturing, but to do other (and more remunerative) work during the week. Replies to this appeal should be addressed to Mr. Foote.
- F. FISHER.**—Withdrawal forms sent.
- J. MUNTON.**—Thanks.
- FAIR PLAY.**—The tract is the work of a poor wretch who suffers from that form of malignancy which is known as "Christian charity." Nearly every word in it is a lie, but lies are not actionable.
- J. K. N.**—Cuttings always welcome.
- J. SAMUEL.**—Shall appear.
- W. CABELL.**—Thanks, but the cutting has already been commented upon in "Acid Drops." The double possessive is not exactly improper, though we should not use it in such a case ourselves. Like you, we find the "one man" unintelligible.
- INCOG.**—Mr. Foote is never troubled with sore throat, in the common sense of the words, and his voice is never affected. The best gargle he knows of is fresh air, taken walking. Thanks, all the same.
- C. HEATON.**—The *Crusader* is an English Methodist journal, published in London and Carmarthen.
- BRANCH SECRETARIES** are requested to note our new editorial address, which has been announced for several weeks. Some of them continue to send to 14 Clerkenwell-green. All communications for this journal should be addressed to 28 Stonecutter-street. Those who neglect this direction will only have themselves to thank if their notices fail to get inserted.
- G. W. BLYTHE.**—See announcement in "Sugar Plums."

G. OSTERGAARD.—Glad to hear you found our last number "specially good." The Methusaleh verses you send us from *Pick Me Up* appeared some months ago in the *Freethinker*.

T. BIRTLEY.—Why give such persons a gratuitous advertisement? No doubt the man must live, but we are not inclined to help him in that direction.

TRUTH SEEKER.—It is not necessary to be an Atheist to join the National Secular Society—otherwise Voltaire and Thomas Paine would be ineligible as members. You have only to accept the Society's principles as they are printed. We make no further inquisition. If you join as a passive member, your name will be known only to the Society's officers. Professor Huxley is not a member of the N.S.S. Dr. Büchner is a vice-president. We are not authorised to publish the total number of members on the Society's books. Thanks for your good wishes.

LONDON SECRETARIES need not send in their Lecture Notices unless there is any alteration from the London Secular Federation program.

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

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Der Lichtfreund—Boston Investigator—Open Court—Freidenker—Two Worlds—Der Arme Teufel—Western Figaro—Liberator—Liberty—Clarion—Flaming Sword—Liver—De Dageraad—Progressive Thinker—Post—North Eastern Leader—Ironclad Age—Vegetarian Messenger—Hull Daily News—Western Weekly News—Light of Truth—Religio—Philosophical Journal—Freethinkers' Magazine—Chat—Belfast Evening Telegraph—Truthseeker—Echo—Pall Mall Gazette—Crescent—Islamic World—Eastbourne Chronicle—Secular Thought—Isle of Man Times—Sheffield Evening Telegraph—Hull Daily Mail—Answers—Blackpool Gazette—Bournemouth Guardian—Kentish Mail—Tit-Bits.

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.

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.

ORDERS for literature should be sent to Mr. Forder.

The *Freethinker* will be forwarded, direct from the publishing office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 10s. 6d.; Half Year, 5s. 3d.; Three Months, 2s. 8d.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS.—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements:*—(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.

SUGAR PLUMS.

Next week's *Freethinker* will be printed throughout in *new type*. It will also contain an illustration which will, we think, be highly appreciated. This department of the paper has suffered in consequence of the editor's illness, but our readers may look forward to frequent illustrations in the immediate future. In other ways, also, we hope to improve the contents of the *Freethinker*, with a view to recommending it to a wider circle of readers. We shall be very much obliged if our friends will introduce the paper to the notice of their liberal-minded acquaintances; as, although we intend to do *some* advertising, it is impossible for us, with our limited resources, to operate very extensively in this direction.

There was a fine audience at the London Hall of Science on Sunday evening, when Mr. Foote lectured for the first time since his recent illness on "A New Plea for God"—a criticism of Professor Drummond's lectures on *The Ascent of Man*. Mr. Foote was followed from beginning to end with breathless attention, the hushed intervals being a higher compliment than the outbursts of applause. This evening (June 10) Mr. Foote occupies the platform again. He will discourse on a novel subject—"The Suicide of Theology." His object is to show that every argument for God's existence has been confuted by some eminent theologian; in short, that when the theologians are put together they imitate the famous Kilkenny cats, and perform a mutual extermination. This will be an exceptionally good opportunity for Freethinkers to secure the attendance of their orthodox friends.

After this lecture Mr. Foote will enjoy a holiday with some Freethought friends in East Kent, who have kindly offered him their hospitality to recruit his strength, which, while steadily improving, is not yet up to its normal condition. Mr. Foote hopes to deliver a special course of lectures in London during July.

Mr. Watts held a two nights' debate last week in South Shields with Mr. George Wise, who was put forward as the representative of the local Branch of the Christian Evidence Society. The subject discussed was "The Theories of the Universe." The audiences were large and very orderly. Mr. Watts reports that his opponent would do himself more justice if he were less dogmatic in his statements; but modesty is a virtue with which the younger debaters of the Christian Evidence Society are not overstocked. It is worthy of remark that this Society will not put forward their best men to champion their cause. One amusing incident of the debate was, that Mr. Wise had more than fifty books laid out upon his table for reference, and an industrious friend to select extracts for him. The proceeds of the debate were given to a local charity.

The South Shields Branch of the N.S.S. worked very hard in arranging for the debate, and the members are very pleased with the results. Our colleague gave them complete satisfaction, which, of course, was to be expected. We are informed that these debates are usually followed by an increase of members to the local Branches of the N.S.S. At Mr. Watts's lectures last Sunday at South Shields, many strangers were present who had attended the debate, and Mr. Watts received warm congratulations from Newcastle, Jarrow, and Sunderland friends for the able manner in which he had defended Secularism throughout the discussion.

To-day, Sunday, June 10, Mr. Watts lectures three times in the Hall of Science, Sheffield.

Mr. John Burns does not pose as *un homme incompris*, nor does he spend the greater part of his time in talking vaguely about the millennium. Without sacrificing his ultimate principles, he delights in doing practical work. Nor does "Honest Jack" go about like some labor leaders in the capacity of a candid friend to Christianity. He does not make out to be a Christian, and he does not mount pulpits to tell Christians how un-Christian they are. He keeps aloof from all conventicles, and only aims at achieving some secular good for the people in the present world—which is the only one about which we have any real information.

Mr. Burns spoke with his usual good sense in addressing a meeting of teachers at Lambeth. He thought there should be more teachers, and that they should be better paid, as well as held in higher honor. London had 6,000 teachers, and 15,000 policemen, and 15,000 public-houses. Were the teachers multiplied, there would be a corresponding reduction in the other figures.

The Metropolitan Federation and other bodies having moved in favor of the withdrawal of children from religious education, all Freethinkers with children at Board Schools should ask that they be instructed in secular subjects during the hour devoted to religion. It has often happened that Secularists, quite unknown to each other, have children going to the same school, yet each fails to withdraw the children, fearing they would be alone and suffer in consequence. London Freethinkers having children attending Board Schools should send the name of the school and particulars to Miss Vance, 28 Stonecutter-street, who will make full enquiries.

This year being the centenary of the death of Gibbon, the English Royal Historical Society, at the instance of Mr. Frederic Harrison, propose to celebrate the occasion by the exhibition of relics in connection with the great historian. Those who are willing to assist in the work should communicate with either of the honorary secretaries—Mr. P. E. Dove, 1 Stone-buildings, Lincoln's-inn, or Mr. Hubert Hall, 3 Staple-inn, W.C.

The Roman correspondent of the *Tablet* is much concerned at the blasphemy in the Italian Parliament of Signor Napoleon Colafanni, the Sicilian Socialist deputy. Some time ago he sneered at the idea of birth from a virgin, and he has recently openly denied the providence of God over the people of Israel.

In the *Open Court* of Chicago, May 25, Mr. M. D. Conway gives some further particulars of the sojourn of Thomas Paine in England from 1787 to 1792.

The Islington Branch desires to see established an N.S.S. cricket club. They do not wish to control such a club, but will inaugurate it by supplying a few members. The names of those who would like to join should be sent to the secretary *pro tem.*, Mr. A. Guest, 18 Waterloo-terrace, Islington.

The date originally announced for the unveiling of Mr. Bradlaugh's statue at Northampton having been deferred, it is now definitely fixed for Monday, June 25, and it will be made the occasion of a political demonstration. Arrangements have been made to convey a party from London and back for 5s. 6d. per head, if fifty is guaranteed. The train, which will be express, will leave Euston Station at 9.30 a.m.; returning from Northampton at 8.40 p.m. Applications for tickets must be made not later than Tuesday, June 19, either to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, or Mr. J. Anderson, Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C.

The Birmingham Branch has arranged to hold Thursday evening meetings (at 8) at the Coffee House, corner of Broad-street. Members and friends are earnestly invited to attend. Papers will be read for discussion, and Freethought literature will be on sale.

The Emperor of Austria has made a mess of it in refusing to support Dr. Wekerle, the Hungarian premier, against the clerical party in the House of Magnates. It is obvious that the Civil Marriage Bill will have to be passed. Dr. Wekerle had a magnificent reception on returning to Buda-Pest, and Count Hedervary, who was commissioned by the Emperor to form a new Cabinet, could not induce a single Liberal to accept a portfolio. Francis Joseph will have to eat the leek, unless he is prepared to face a revolution in Hungary—which of course he isn't; and the clericals, who egged him on, will have to share his repast.

In the *Popular Science Monthly* for June Dr. A. D. White deals with the final effort of theology to oppose scientific views of evolution. He recalls how Bishop Wilberforce declared that "the principle of natural selection is absolutely incompatible with the Word of God"; that it "contradicts the revealed relation of creation to its Creator"; and that it is "inconsistent with the fullness of his glory." The bishop pointed Darwin's attention to "a simpler explanation of these strange forms among the works of God," that cause being—"the fall of Adam." The bishop congratulated himself he was not descended from a monkey, which induced the retort from Huxley that he would rather be descended from a humble monkey than from a man who employed his talents in misrepresenting those who were wearing out their lives in the search for truth.

Cardinal Manning, too, declared his abhorrence of the doctrine of Evolution, which he pronounced "a brutal philosophy—to wit, there is no God, and the ape is our Adam." The Bishop of Melbourne declared that the obvious object of Chambers, Darwin, and Huxley is "to produce in their readers a disbelief in the Bible." Cardinal Wiseman declared that the new views threatened "even the fragmentary remains of Christian belief in England." While the Rev. W. Mitchell, vice-president of the Victoria Institute, declared "Darwinism endeavors to dethrone God." Pope Pius IX. thanked Dr. Constantine James for his book in which he "refutes so well the observations of Darwinism," and Mr. Gladstone said: "Upon the grounds of what is termed evolution, God is relieved of the labor of creation." Yet gradually the theologians came to see how dangerous it was to declare that, if evolution is true, the Scriptures are false; and now they are nearly all steering on the opposite tack.

Even after Darwin was buried in Westminster Abbey a few consistent theologians maintained their opposition. In 1885 the Rev. Dr. Lee issued a volume in which it was declared that, if the Darwinian view be true, "there is no place for God;" and quite recently Dr. Hatchison Stirling has pronounced to a similar effect.

Dr. White mentions many little items worth preserving. Taus at Trinity College, Cambridge, Whewell refused to allow a copy of *The Origin of Species* to be placed in the library. At the American College at Beyrout nearly all the younger members were dismissed for adhering to Darwin's views. Dr. Woodrow was ejected from his chair of Natural Science at the Presbyterian Seminary at Columbia, South

Carolina, and Dr. Winchell from the Vanderbilt University in Tennessee. Dr. White gives copious references to the history of his subject, and his articles are well worth preservation.

De Dageraad for June is largely occupied with translations from the English. In addition to its usual instalment of Lecky's *Rationalism in Europe*, it gives Wordsworth Donisthorpe's views on Love and Marriage. It translates from our columns a "Japanese View of a Funny Faith," and extracts from Mr. Wheeler's paper on "Historic Doubt;" and it also comments on Mr. Foote's exposure of the Rev. H. P. Hughes, under the impolite title of "Een Leugenaar Ontmaskard"—A Liar Unmasked.

The *Westminster Gazette* of Saturday, June 2, gave in its Calendar—"Guiseppe Garibaldi, died 1882." Appropriately enough it gave a stanza on Garibaldi by another Atheist, the author of "The City of Dreadful Night," whom it designated simply as "Thomson"—which is a very high compliment, since there was another Thomson, also a James, who wrote the *Seasons* and the fine and famous *Castle of Indolence*, to say nothing of *Rule Britannia* and other stirring lyrics.

June 3 being Sunday, the *Westminster* gave that day's Calendar on Saturday. It included four items, one of which was—"James Thomson, died 1882," the same year as Garibaldi. Another was "Sydney Smith, born 1768." From this witty clergyman, whose jokes were said to be sermons, and his sermons jokes (which is a libel), the *Westminster* gave a biting quotation: "What a pity it is that in England we have no amusements but vice and religion."

A Second Series of *Flowers of Freethought*, by Mr. G. W. Foote, is now in the binder's hands, and will be ready shortly. It is several sheets larger than the First Series, but will be published at the same price, namely, half-a-crown. In the ordinary book market it would be reckoned excellent value for the money. No doubt it will command as good a sale as its predecessor.

Our good contemporary, *Secular Thought* of Toronto, is ably sustained by the editor, Mr. J. Spencer Ellis, who deserves the enthusiastic support of every Freethinker in Canada. The number before us reprints in its Bible Studies for Sunday Schools the rollicking article on "The Bible and Beans" by "Lucianus."

The *Freethinker's Magazine* for June has as frontispiece a portrait of Mr. John R. Charlesworth, the secretary of the Freethought Federation of America. Mr. Charlesworth looks a smart, determined young fellow. He is a Londoner, thirty years of age, and was a member of the N.S.S. The magazine has a varied list of contents, and we hope it will succeed in the efforts it is making to increase its circulation by offering cheap terms to new subscribers.

In the Egyptian galleries of the British Museum has been placed a cast of an old wooden statue found at Sakkarah, and thought to represent one of the overseers of the workmen engaged on the pyramids. The date given is about B.C. 3,900, or contemporary with Adam.

The death of Dr. Charles H. Pearson is a serious loss to sociology. Apparently it is one of the things we owe to the late unseasonable weather. Dr. Pearson's last, and very important, work on *National Life and Character* is said to have been highly praised in private by Mr. Gladstone. It displayed wide reading, careful study, and independent thought. The author's sceptical tendencies were by no means concealed. "The influence of every Church, Christian or otherwise," he said, "is to discourage examination of those truths which it teaches as fundamental. It allows the intellect of its followers to be apologetic, explanatory, and, it may be, even complementary, but forbids it at all hazards to be critical. Beyond this, every Church is tempted to compromise with human frailty so long as its own supremacy is recognised. It often, almost habitually, prefers the immoral man, who gives it no trouble, to the moral man, who is always fingering his conscience and doubting how far the Church system is adequate. To a considerable extent, accordingly, the Churches proscribe independence of speculation, and weaken the springs of character by relaxing the moral fibre."

DEBATE IN DUNDEE.

THE land of the Forbes Mackenzie Act and the kail pot has wakened up of late, especially that part of it familiarly known as Jutedom or Marmalado Town, but geographically designated Dundee. The sons and daughters of that city who attended the Watts-Macrae debate in the City Assembly Rooms on Thursday and Friday, May 17 and 18, showed that they, at least, had got one eye opened, and some of them had both eyelids up.

Mr. Watts's opponent, Rev. D. Macrae, is a well-known clergyman and lecturer, who came somewhat prominently before the public some eight or ten years ago as an advocate of heterodoxy, at which time he left the Church, and now holds an independent position among the churchmen of the town.

The chair was occupied by Mr. David Taylor, who stated, in his introductory remarks, that the conditions of debate were, that each disputant should have one speech of half an hour, and two speeches of a quarter of an hour each.

The discussion on Thursday was on the postulate, "That the teachings of the Bible are opposed to the progress of Humanity"; the reverend gentleman taking the negative side, and Mr. Watts arguing in favor of the affirmative.

In his opening speech, Mr. WATTS said that he valued the Bible, first, as a record of ancient thought; second, as it contains the history of a unique race; third, as it marked the various epochs of intellectual development. He held that the Bible ought to be regarded as a mirror reflecting the lives, the virtues, the vices, and errors of those who lived in those remote days, and as a beacon warning us not to tread in the same dangerous paths over which so many of our forefathers were drifted. He affirmed the proposition because, in the first place, the supposed time of the production of the Bible was a time when the material did not exist to give birth to thoughts, to present rules to the world calculated to be a guide to its inhabitants through all time. It was a period of mental and moral darkness. The glories of Greece had departed; the grandeur of Rome had, for a time, subsided; facts of science, as the term was now understood, were unknown; philosophy was held at a discount, and ethics were in their infancy. The government of the universe was not at all understood, and the true nature of man at that period, as far as we could judge, was not known in the sense that it is known at the present time. The results of these facts appertaining to the time that the Bible was supposed to be written were, that its morality was necessarily incomplete and defective, its science was inaccurate, and its philosophy was misleading. His second reason was, that the place where the Bible was said to be principally produced (Judea) was not a land of learning or of culture; and his third reason was, that the elements of progress existed before, and apart from, the Bible. His fourth and principal reason was, that the Bible contained teaching that was directly opposed to moral progress. In the course of his argument, Mr. Watts stated that in the Bible the scientific considerations of nature were entirely ignored; that it was not admitted that things changed for the better with increased experience and accumulated facilities. Progress is an evolutionary process, and all laws that are progressive are the outcome of intelligence and industry; but, according to the Bible, intelligence involved death, and knowledge was punishable. Progress implied advancement towards justice, freedom, and personal independence; but they could not have that in the Bible until they blotted out the barbarous doctrine of human traffic called slavery.

Mr. MACRAE, who was received with loud applause, said Mr. Watts had endeavored to make good his position by giving them such a travesty of Bible teaching that some of them would scarcely recognise it as the same book with which they had been familiar in their childhood. The passages he had quoted were to be found in the Bible, but they had been so detached from their connection and from their meaning as to utterly destroy their sense. He then went on to state that the teaching of the Bible aided higher and spiritual advancement, and pointed to a higher conception of life and duty; and this he accepted as the voice of God. The Bible had many untenable theories and crude conceptions, but sweep away these, and the Bible itself remained with its valuable teaching, which had ever fostered the progress of the human race. It denounced avarice, greed, oppression, cruelty, and the doing and wishing of injury to our fellow-men, and taught mercy, charity, honesty, and justice. The very life-principle and pledge of it were justice and true fraternity. "One is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." It sought to bring about the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of a holy, just, and infinitely kind father in Heaven. It was full of admonitions to justice and denunciations of tyranny and oppression. The experience of the world had shown that the Bible had been one of the mightiest instruments in the furtherance of civilization and of humanity. He concluded by repeating that what had been submitted was not the real Bible, but a travesty, and added that the teaching of the Bible had to suffer from

ecclesiasticism on the one hand, and secular misrepresentation on the other.

Mr. WATTS objected that this had not been a reply to his speech, as the historical and other evidence submitted by him had been ignored. He contended that, in education, love should be the power, not fear; but in the Bible we find: "He that spareth the rod hateth his son." The teachings of the Bible are conflicting, even when they can be accepted; while this should not be, as a perfect book must not contain that which annuls its goodness.

Mr. MACRAE maintained that this was but a travesty of Bible teachings. The Bible taught the people how to forge weapons, by which injustice and oppression were overcome. The sum and substance of its teachings were, love to God and love to man. He argued that, instead of hindering knowledge, if a man recognised God as a great creator, it would stimulate him to study, and thus give him a better knowledge of science; the cases of Lord Kelvin and Sir Isaac Newton being cited as examples.

Mr. WATTS, in his last speech for the affirmative, said that his opponent persisted in stating that he travestied the Bible. This being so, he would read every verse he might have occasion to refer to. Mr. Macrae might interpret any verse in whatever way he chose; but for his part, he took it just as it was. It could mean only one thing or nothing, and he took it to mean what it said. In the Bible (2 Sam. xii.) God sanctioned adultery, and he held that by such erroneous teachings the Bible was an active factor in the retarding of intellectual progression.

Mr. MACRAE, in his concluding speech, stated that he treated the first part of Genesis as truth under allegory. It was a conception of man rising into communion with God. The ideal of the Jewish race was not perfect. What the Bible did was to purify that race steadily, and it is also steadily doing so with us. He denied that God sanctioned adultery. Men may have believed that they were right, and may have added the words, "Thus saith the Lord," to give it more the solidity of a direct commandment. On the other hand, the Bible expressly and clearly denounced adultery—"Thou shalt not commit adultery."

The proceedings then terminated with a vote of thanks to the chairman.

On Friday the debate was resumed, Mr. Taylor again occupying the chair. The subject of discussion was, "Is the Christian ideal fitted to develop the highest life of Humanity?" the affirmative being taken by Mr. Macrae, and the negative by Mr. Watts.

Mr. MACRAE said that the highest life of humanity was love, which lay at the root of humanity. And love was the divinest quality in the individual man, making him the friend of all. Science and art were, apart from love, no guarantee for the advancement of civilisation. The Christian ideal was a character inspired by love and desire for the good of others. It was not only in harmony with the highest life of humanity, but it was the essential part of its realisation. The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man were the Christian ideal. They taught holiness, mercy, love, humanity, and the finding of happiness in doing good. Christ's spirit of love to man, taken into the heart, was Christianity, whatever may be the Christianity of the Churches. The essence of Christianity was love, the pure, unselfish love and desire for the good of all that burned in the heart of Christ, and which, if it burned in the hearts of his followers, would turn earth into heaven. Mr. Macrae occupied only twenty minutes.

Mr. WATTS said that he agreed with everything that Mr. Macrae had said regarding love. The only part of ideal life is love; the one requirement of the world is love. Where love is absent, the nightmare of gloom dims the transcendent glory of humanity. Love was not born with Christ; it was not ushered into the world with Christianity, and it was not the only characteristic of the Savior. Plato taught love and peace and goodwill among men; that love is necessary for the regeneration of mankind. The principle of the brotherhood of man and of the fatherhood of God was taught by the Stoics. The New Testament did not confine itself to giving Christ one character. It gave him two, and the one contradicted the other. They had Christ the gentle, and Christ the severe; Christ the mystic, and Christ the plain speaker. It was faith in him, and not in words or actions, that he insisted upon. He limited his interest to those who belonged to his fold, and condemned those who were outside. He was wanting in filial love and brotherly affection; he believed in the possession of devils, in the near end of the world, and in the efficacy of prayer. He taught non-self-reliance, and that salvation depended upon belief, and pronounced the uniformity of belief. His language was the language of an enthusiast, and not of a calm reasoner. The whole preaching of Christ prevented him from being accepted as an ideal man. Experience is our greatest monitor, yet there were five stations that Christ never attempted to occupy: (1) He never was a husband. (2) Nor a father. (3) Nor a statesman. (4) Nor a scientist. (5) Nor a political reformer. How did they expect to have an ideal in a man who never had filled one of these stations in life? And what was more, he has not left the world a single lesson in either of them.

But he never pretended to be a reformer; he was a spiritualiser. There were no rules that could be attributed to Christ whereby the regeneration of the secular world, as the antithesis of the ecclesiastical world, could be accomplished.

Mr. MACRAE, in his reply, stated that Plato's teaching of love was no argument against Christ's teaching. If two men speak the truth, then its acceptance was all the wider and easier. Christ never tried to show that he was a practical reformer. In the course of his reply he quoted John Stuart Mill to prove that Christ was "the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth." Mr. Watts had said that "Faith is put in place of life and practice; that men were condemned not for conduct, but because they did not believe." Instead of this, he referred to Matthew xxv. 31-46. In this picture of the Judgment there was not one word about faith in the whole account. Those that were condemned were condemned not because they did not believe, but because of their heartless unkindness and want of brotherhood of man. If the teaching of Christ had been only this picture of the Judgment, it would have been a living principle. But what is this faith that Christ taught? It is the most practical thing in the world. The farmer sows his seed in the faith of obtaining a good harvest. And even Mr. Watts came in the faith that his committee had carried out the necessary arrangements.

Mr. WATTS said that Mill had been quoted in support of Christ's being a reformer; but this opinion Mill himself showed to be fallacious in his work, *On Liberty*. Therein he states that, had it not been for other ethics than those taught by Christ, the regeneration of the world would never have been achieved. Christ never propounded to the world one scheme of education, nor did he attack slavery. He had no idea of brotherhood outside of those who beloved with him. His brotherhood was limited by a potty faith. The true brotherhood of man is boundless as the universe, and only limited by our common humanity. He also failed to give proper advice at the right time. When asked for advice he answered with the fanaticism of an enthusiast, not with the justice of a loving heart. He offered a big premium on breaking up the peace of the family circle. He never propounded any scheme for the relief of the poor; but, on the other hand, he discouraged self-help. He taught the bitter spirit of persecution, as in the command to his disciples to shake the dust from off their feet—this being in the East an expression of the worst hatred.

Mr. MACRAE, in his last speech, said that Mr. Watts had very crude conceptions of the passages he had quoted. What Mr. Watts had to answer was: How is it that this Christ who talked such nonsense is honored all the world over? Christ's mission was not to give schemes; his mission was to make men who would make measures when wanted. Christ taught love, and if one loves one's children, one will educate them. In regard to slavery, if the principle of love were learnt, slavery would go to the ground. He pointed out, in dealing with the text, "I came not to bring peace, but a sword," that there were two ways of making peace. Sicily was in peace before Garibaldi's rising; but it was the peace of tyranny and oppression. Garibaldi went to bring peace, the peace of freedom. In conclusion, he said that he wished to draw attention to the substantial unity that underlay the principles of Mr. Watts and himself. Mr. Watts had endeavored to show that the one noble thing was a noble life, and in that they were agreed. In closing, he would appeal to the orthodox, the unorthodox, and Secularists to work more together to remedy evils we see around us.

Mr. WATTS, in the closing speech of the debate, said that the reference to Garibaldi had been a most unfortunate one. Garibaldi went to Sicily to do what Christ's promises had not done. Garibaldi did with the secular arm what prayer had failed to do. Christ was not honored all over the world, for fully two-thirds of the human race haven't heard of him yet. Then as to faith—the Secularist's faith was built on experience, and the faith of the theologian on conjecture. He concluded with an eloquent peroration, and sat down amid an outburst of enthusiastic cheering and applause.

A vote of thanks to the chairman was passed, and the proceedings closed.

The hall, which holds 600, was packed on each occasion, and throughout the whole debate the audience was exceptionally orderly. Interruptions in the sense of disapprobations there were none; but at the conclusion of each address the speakers were heartily applauded, while at the close the approbation culminated in a frantic ovation as Mr. Watts sat down. The general feeling among all alike was that the Secular arguments were decidedly the stronger, and some disappointment was expressed that the champion of Christianity had offered so palpably weak a case. He reserved himself to generalisation in his arguments, and failed to follow up the particularising of Mr. Watts. For the most part, what was advanced on behalf of Christianity was simply a ringing of the changes on love; but, as was pointed out, love did not come with Christ, nor can it be taught. As an immediate result, some of those who were present have decided for Secularism; but in Dundee, as everywhere else, there are a very large number of what may be termed half-

fledged Freethinkers; and no doubt, when they have considered the evidence advanced, they may be induced to forsake the outskirts of the priest-governed roost of orthodoxy, and trust more fearlessly to the strength of their own doing.

On the following Sunday evening one of the clergymen of the town took for the subject of his evening discourse the query, "Is Christianity Played Out?—the Recent Debate between Mr. Macrae and Mr. Watts"; and the Rev. Mr. Macrae delivered, on the same evening, a lecture on "My Latest Impressions of Secularism."

J. C. MCCORQUODALE.

"ALL THINGS TO ALL MEN."

ONE God there is from Old Judee,
One God alone, not One-in-three,
Who was, and is, and aye shall be—
The Bible says so.

Three Gods there are from Old Judee,
Not one alone, but One-in-three,
Who were, and are, and aye shall be—
The Bible says so.

No man can ever live and see
This awful God from Old Judee;
The sight the mortal's death would be—
The Bible says so.

In perfect safety men did see
This awful God from Old Judee,
And spoke with him, as you with me—
The Bible says so.

Affirm, deny, that A is C,
That black is white, that one is three;
You must be right, what'er it be—
The Bible says so.
G. I. MACKENZIE.

WAS IT FROM HEAVEN?

"Do you want to see your little baby-brother?" asked a Lawndale mother of her five-year-old, the morning after he had been sent into the city to stay over night at grandma's.

"Yes. Have I got one?"

"Certainly. Come and see him."

"What! that?"

"Of course. Don't you think he is lovely?"

"N-not exactly. Where did you get him?"

"The doctor brought him."

"Where did the doctor get him?"

"An angel brought him from heaven."

"From heaven?"

"Yes."

"Are you sure?"

"Certainly. Why do you ask?"

"Oh, nothing; only I thought he might have got him from the other place by mistake. You see, mother, a real hot fire always makes my face look just as red and wrinkled as that."

"Oh!"

And the poor mother came near going into hysterics.

A minister about to leave home for a few days was bidding good-bye to his family. When he came to Bobby he took the little fellow in his arms and said, "Well, young man, I want you to be a good boy, and be sure to take good care of mamma." Bobby promised, and the father departed, leaving him with a very large and full appreciation of his new and weighty responsibility. When night came, and he was called to say his prayers, the young guardian expressed himself as follows:—"Oh, Lord, please protect papa and brother Dick, and sister Alice, and Aunt Mary, and all the little Jones' boys, and Bobby. But you needn't trouble about mamma, for I'm going to look after her myself."

The following, if not true, is well founded. A French priest who was passionately addicted to card-playing, is said to have inadvertently remarked, instead of "O Lord, who holdest in thy hand the hearts of kings," "O Lord, who holdest in thy hand the king of hearts." The foregoing anecdote may be capped by the story, told by Archdeacon Sinclair, of the nervous curate who, when preaching on the parable of the prodigal son, managed to say correctly "put a ring on his finger," but was totally incapable of resisting the temptation to add, "and bells on his toes, and he shall have music wherever he goes." Truly, also, a prodigal curate.

A bull had tossed him o'er his head,
His tomb this record bore;
"Our little Johnnie is not dead,
He's only gone beef-o'er!"

BOOK CHAT.

In a bookseller's window in Dundee is to be observed a ticket with the following written inscription placed on a row of books: "The Heavenly Twins by Sarah Grand; 4s. 6d. each."

* * *

Dr. Don Jesús Sanchez, who is a director of the National Museum of Mexico, in *A Historical Question* shows that the early Spanish missionaries in Mexico destroyed the antiquities wholesale as idolatrous, and in particular that the native archives of Tezneo were burnt by order of Don Fray Juan de Zumarrago, the first Archbishop of Mexico.

* * *

Messrs. Macmillan and Co. have issued an important work by Dr. D. J. Hill, President of the University of Rochester, U.S., entitled *Genetic Philosophy*. It attempts to trace the genesis of Matter, Life, Consciousness, Feeling, Thought, Will, Art, Ethics, Religion, and Science. Evolution is accepted as a universal law, and unbroken continuity is regarded as the ground of certainty.

CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

FOR the picturesque freebooter on the sunlit, South Sea isle,
Who's escaped the British shooter, and is dressed in Adam's style,
Send around the plate, my brothers; let your silver tinkle in—
Shirts and stockings, maids and mothers, for the heathen and his gin.

FOR the window stained and painted, for a tea and crumpet fight,
For a fat purse for the sainted one who offers you the Light,
And who on the racket liveth, hand out all you can afford—
He who to the Bishop giveth lends, my brethren, to the Lord.

FOR the Chinook and the coolie; for the Jap, and Jew, and Finn,

FOR the Zulu man unruly drop the gold and silver in;

FOR the far idolator who lives in Delhi or Lahore—

FOR all except the Briton who is dying at your door.

THE TERM "INFIDEL."

There is no one term in our language which better expresses the position of the sceptical world than this word infidel. Instead of being "ashamed" to be known as an infidel, I glory in it. The word may grate harshly on the ears of newcomers into our ranks, and be really obnoxious to those clinging to the skirts of Christianity; but they who are "kicking hell," because they hate the infernal teaching, and those who are disbelievers in original sin, total depravity, blood sacrifice, vicarious atonement, and all the incidental, damnable dogmas of the Church, will manage to bear up under a name which those in the faith will be "ashamed of." When invited to attend "divine service," or contribute to the support of a system of religion which has filled the world with woe, paralysed progress, and burned the votaries of knowledge, I always proudly proclaim myself an infidel. If all who are really such would stand out boldly in defence of their views, churchmen would be astonished at our number.—G. W. Brown, M.D.

OBITUARY.

By the death of Dr. Charles H. Pearson, on May 31, at the age of sixty-three, scientific history and sociology have suffered a distinct loss. Dr. Pearson was the son of the Rev. J. W. Pearson, and was educated at Rugby and Exeter College. He was Professor of History at King's College, London, from 1855 to 1865, and lecturer on Modern History at Trinity College, Cambridge, 1869 to 1871. He devoted much attention to the period of the Middle Ages. From 1872 to 1892 he lived in Australia, being Minister of Education at Victoria from 1885 to 1890. By his great work on *National Life and Character*, he displayed his Freethought sentiments.

It is with great regret that I have to record the death of Mr. R. M. Ritchie, which took place on June 3, the deceased being in his forty-third year. He was a brave soldier of Freethought, a member of the N.S.S., and a vice-president of the Edinburgh Branch. His mind was perfectly clear up to a few hours before he expired. Death had no terrors for him; he regarded it as sleep and rest.—J. F. DEWAR.

PROFANE JOKES.

The Sunday-school class was singing "I want to be an angel." "Why don't you sing louder, Bobby?" asked the teacher. "I'm singing as loud as I want to be an angel," explained Bobby.

"Ah, my son," said the minister, "I'm glad to see you in the Sunday-school at last. Is this your first Sunday?" "Yes, sir." "How do you like it?" "Oh, I think I can stand it until after the Christmas tree."

Sunday was a rainy day, and Nera's activity had been much restrained by staying indoors without any playmates. Towards twilight she stood at the window, and, leaving a sigh, said to her mother, "God has had a mighty long day, mudder."

A little girl was kneeling at her mother's side saying her prayers, while her mischievous brother was standing at the back of the chair making grimaces. His little sister evidently had one eye open, if not two, for at last she stopped her prayers, and with "Scooze me, Lord, while I go and kick Georgie," jumped up, kicked her brother, and promptly knelt down again.

Bob had been repeatedly told by his mother that God watched his every action. This idea took deep hold on the boy's mind. One morning his little sister was playing with him out by the stable. "Say, Mamie," said he, "you go back to the house." "Don't want to." "Well, I want you to. It's bad enough to have God allus taggin' roun' after me 'thout havin' you along, too."

A clergyman who owns a farm found his ploughman sitting on his plough resting his horses. Quoth the clergyman: "John, wouldn't it be a good plan for you to have a scythe here, and be cutting a few bushes along the fences while the horses are resting a short time?" "Yes, sir," said John; "and wadn't it be well for you tas hae a tub o' taties in the puolpit, and, when folks were singin', to peel them awhile to be ready for the pan?"

One Sabbath afternoon a Scotch minister, in his closing prayer, earnestly besought some seasonable and much-wished-for rain. Immediately rain began to fall—the first for many weeks—and for a short time it fell in torrents. Meanwhile the congregation was dismissed; and then came the scramble for umbrellas. One lady, who had no umbrella, commenced gathering the skirts of her gown over her head before quitting the church vestibule, at the same time remarking to a neighbor: "Eh wumman, isn't it too bad o' the doctor? He might ha' letten us hame first!"

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

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

LONDON.

Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C.: 7, musical selections: 7.30, G. W. Foote, "The Suicide of Theology." (Admission free; reserved seats 3d. and 6d.)

Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): 8.30, social gathering for members of any Branch (admission 2d.). Monday, at 8, Entertainment for benefit of Branch (3d. and 6d.). Tuesday, at 7.30, dancing class (2d. and 4d.); 8.30, social gathering.

Camberwell—81 New Church-road, S.E.: 7.30, C. J. Hunt, "The Apostles' Creed."

Deptford—Clifton Hall, New Cross-road: 7.30, Sam Standing, "The British Workmen's Representatives."

East London—Swaby's Coffee House, 103 Mile-end-road: 8, P. A. V. Le Lubez, "The Only True Universal Religion."

W. J. Rendell's "WIFE'S FRIEND."

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OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Battersea Park Gates: 11.15, Stanley Jones, "Christianity and Social Questions"; 3, Stanley Jones, "The Creation Story"; 7, S. E. Easton, "Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory."

Camberwell (Station-road): 11.30, G. Standing, "Why I am a Secularist."

Clerkenwell Green: 11.30, C. J. Hunt, "Christianity and Education."

Edmonton—Angel-road: 7, C. James, "Christianity a Fraud." Finsbury Park (near the band-stand): 11, C. James, "Christianity a Fraud"; 3, R. Rosetti, "Heaven and Hell."

Hammersmith Bridge (Middlesex side): 7, F. Haslam, "The Bible and Modern Science." Corner of the Grove: Thursday, at 8, Stanley Jones will lecture.

Hyde Park (near Marble-arch): 11.30, Sam Standing, "The Natural Man"; 3.30, Sam Standing, "The Religious Man." Wednesday, at 8, Sam Standing, "The Social Man."

Islington—Prebend-street, Hackington-street, Essex-road: 11.30, A. Guest, "Theology and Education."

Kennington Green (near the Vestry Hall): 6.30, H. Courtney, "If Christ came to London."

Kingsland—Ridley-road (near Dalston Junction): 11.30, St. John, "Teachings of Christ."

Leyton—High-road (near Vicarage-road): 11.30, W. Heaford, "Science and the Bible."

Mill End Waste: 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "A New Gospel Harmony."

Old Pimlico Pier: 11.30, H. Snell, "Stories of the Sceptics of the French Revolution."

Regent's Park (near Gloucester-gate): 11.30, James Rowney, "Secularism Superior to Bible Teaching"; 3.30, C. J. Hunt, "Design in Nature."

Victoria Park (near the fountain): 11.15 and 3.15, A. B. Moss will lecture. (Collections for Hospital Sunday fund.)

Walthamstow—Markhouse-road: 6.30, W. Heaford, "Religion without Superstition."

Wood Green—Jolly Butchers'-hill: 11.30, F. Haslam, "Modern Science and Revelation"; 6.30, J. Rowney, "Bible Creation." Thursday, at 8, C. Cohen, "The Fate of Religion."

Wimbledon—Broadway: 7, Stanley Jones, "Religion and Morality."

Westminster—Saturday, June 9, at 2.30 sharp, Sam Standing conducts pilgrimage to the Houses of Parliament; 3.30, Westminster Abbey. Meet at Victoria Tower for both places.

COUNTRY.

Hanley—51 John-street: Excursion to Alton (fare 2s. 2d.). Monday, C. Cohen, "Christianity and Modern Thought." Tuesday, C. Cohen, "Christianity and Slavery."

Liverpool—Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street: 11, C. Cohen, "The Scientific Basis of Morals"; 3, "Gods and God-makers"; 7, "Religion and Freethought."

Manchester—Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, All Saints: A. B. Wakefield lectures afternoon and evening.

Nottingham—22 Hunt-street: 7, special meeting.

Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rotherham-street: 11, Charles Watts, "The Bible Opposed to Civilisation"; 3, "The Christian Theory of the Universe"; 7, "Christ Not a Reformer for Modern Times."

South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King-street: 6.30, ethical class; 7.30, W. Cook, "Does Theism Furnish a Reasonable Theory of the Universe?"

Sunderland—Lecture Room above Bridge End Vaults, Bridge-street: 7, R. Weightman, "The Impossible Creed."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Sunderland—near the Miner's Hall, Silkworth Colliery: 11, the Secretary, "Is there a God?"

LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—June 10, Liverpool; 17, m. Finsbury Park, a. Victoria Park, e. Battersea.

C. J. HUNT, 48 Fordingley-road, St. Peter's Park, London, W.—June 10, m. Clerkenwell Green, a. Regent's Park; 17, m. Mile End, e. Lambeth; 24, m. Pimlico Pier, e. Edmonton.

STANLEY JONES, 53 Marlborough-road, Holloway, London, N.—June 10, m. and a. Battersea, e. Wimbledon; 14, e. Hammersmith; 17, m. Kingsland, a. Regent's Park, e. Hammersmith; 24, m. Leyton, a. Victoria Park, e. Walthamstow.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Oredon-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—June 10, m. and a. Victoria Park; 17, m. Wood Green, e. Edmonton; 24, m. and e. Camberwell.

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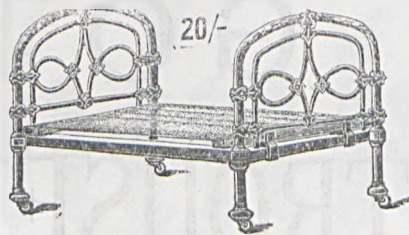
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