

The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

VOL. XIV.—No. 26.

SUNDAY, JULY 1, 1894.

PRICE TWOPENCE.



TAKING THE CAKE.

OLD NICK—"I'm a bit of a liar myself, but you take the cake."

PRICE HUGHES AGAIN.

LAST week's *Methodist Times* contained a number of editorial paragraphs on the coming London School Board elections, and the adjectives and adverbs unmistakably betrayed the hand of the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes. These paragraphs are not worthy of any special notice in themselves, but as they indicate the attitude of a large section of the Christian world in London, and incidentally throw a good deal of light upon the "eminent minister" so extravagantly lauded by Mr. Holyoake, we venture to bring them before the attention of our readers.

Our readers will remember that Mr. Hughes, in common with the vast majority of "evangelical" Nonconformists, and, as he says, of "reasonable Churchmen," supports the "Compromise" of 1871, under which the Bible is read in Board schools, and the teachers are allowed to comment upon it at their pleasure—provided, that is to say, that they give no offence to their employers, which it is very easy to do if a teacher happens to have any ideas of his own, and any scrupulosity about teaching little children what he disbelieves himself. This "Compromise" is, of course, merely an arrangement between rival bodies of Christians. Other citizens, and especially Secularists, have no concern with it except to oppose it. Nor should they have any difficulty in understanding why the "Compromise" is so

ardently supported by Nonconformist ministers. There is a professional motive behind all the fine pretences of these gentlemen. They would like to teach Christian doctrines as they hold them, but as this is impossible in face of the Church of England, they fall back upon the next best line of policy, keeping the Bible at least in the schools, and impressing its "sacred" character upon the children, so that when they grow up to be men and women they may attend the gospel-shops where the "Word of God" is expounded. "Rather than tolerate a Secular system," as Mr. Hughes says, the Nonconformists would "submit even to a Universal Denominational system." They must lay all "minor differences" aside, and "stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of the Bible and of Christian morality." Mr. Hughes is of opinion that the Bible is worth all other books put together—which it undoubtedly is to the mystery men of every Christian denomination. We are not so sure, however, that the Bible is the "foundation of civil and religious liberty." In fact, we are quite sure it is nothing of the kind. Civil and religious liberty, as far as they obtain, have been won in spite of the Bible and its upholders. There is still no civil liberty in England on Sunday, because of the rank fanaticism of Bibliolators. Nor is there any religious liberty for Secularists, who exist on sufferance, with penal laws hanging over their heads, which the lovers of "religious liberty" of the school of Mr. Hughes have never lifted a finger or

raised a voice to abolish. When men like Mr. Hughes talk about liberty they only mean to extend the area of privilege. The only freedom they understand is equality amongst Christians. All outside that sacred pale are at best to be "tolerated," and at the worst to be denied the common rights of citizenship.

Mr. Hughes would deny this impeachment. He talks hypocritically, for instance, about the Conscience Clause as a protection to Secularists, although he has again and again declared that it is no sort of protection to Nonconformists who are obliged to send their children to Church schools. Nothing, in our opinion, could be meaner than such an attitude. It is absurd to expect Secularists to martyrise their children, however ready they may be to incur persecution themselves in the service of their convictions. And it is equally absurd, as we dare say Mr. Hughes is well aware, to argue that "Secularists are an insignificant minority of the people" because they do not label their children as objects of Christian odium.

It is indeed clear that Mr. Hughes is not a victim of this fallacy. If he were, he would not be in such a rage. Why this frenzied appeal to Christians to sink minor differences and stand shoulder to shoulder, if the Secularists are such a negligible quantity? It is all very well to say that "the Secularists are blatant and pugnacious." That is the natural opinion of the detected and convicted author of "The Atheist Shoemaker." But what has it to do with the question at issue? All the blatancy and pugnacity in the world will not turn ten votes into a hundred. Why then is Mr. Hughes in a flurry? Simply because he knows the Secularists are *not* an insignificant minority, but will have to be reckoned with *at the poll*.

For this reason Mr. Hughes displays his peculiar sense of "civil and religious liberty" (founded on the Bible) by calling on his London readers to "do their utmost to prevent Secularists from appearing as Progressive candidates." Here is the cloven hoof of the old devil of bigotry. It was in this spirit that the late Samuel Morley, who could match any man in enlogising "civil and religious liberty," implored the electors of Northampton not to vote for Charles Bradlaugh. We have long understood this spirit. We felt all along that the Nonconformists would display it at the proper opportunity. For this reason we warned Secularists against an alliance with the so-called Progressives. We begged them to fight their own battle, and the result has amply justified our appeal.

Mr. Hughes has forgotten his fulsome (and interested) compliments to Mr. Holyoake, or perhaps he trusts that his readers have forgotten them. Not only is the Secular system "absurd and pestiferous," not only are the Secularists "blatant and pugnacious," but "the Secularist is not a Progressive." The Secularist, in fact, is "a Reactionary of the most dangerous type." There is no reservation, not even for Mr. Holyoake, whose opinion of this outbreak on the part of his *protégé* would be interesting to the readers of the *Freethinker*.

Mr. Hughes is an original sort of man. He can tell a lie, and prove it truth. Such a feat is beyond the range of ordinary men. No wonder that he fills St. James's Hall on Sundays—with the aid of free admission, a brass band, and a big choir. It required such a man to call the Secularist a "Reactionary." He will presently call the Secularist a "Superstitious," or go one better and call him a "Christian." Who knows? The Christian has for some time been the "true Secularist," and why may not the Secularist become the "true Christian"? Nothing is impossible in the orthodox pantomime. Wonderful transformation scenes have been witnessed already, and there is no limit to even a rational expectation.

There is a pathetic expression in Mr. Hughes's final paragraph. He appeals to the members of the Church of England to believe that Nonconformists are as "heartily in sympathy with Biblical Christian teaching as they are themselves." He admits that they also have their difficulties. "The Sacerdotalist worries them," he says, "as the Secularist worries us." Poor man! The Secularist "worries" him. Sadness lines his noble brow and puts grey streaks on his hair and beard. And all because he wrote a Bunyan-like story for the glory and honor of Christ. It is really *too* bad. Yet we fear the "blatant and pugnacious" Secularists will go on "worrying" this poor man of God, until he reaches the place where Secularists cease from troubling and the Christian is at rest.

G. W. FOOTE.

DEVIL WORSHIP.

SENSATIONAL paragraphists have of late devoted much attention to the doings, or alleged doings, of a sect of Satanists or Luciferians in France. They are said to have a conventicle in which they perform "black mass," their central rite of devil worship, for which, it is asserted, they steal the chalices and consecrated hosts from Catholic churches. A cross is said to be placed on the floor at the entrance, upon which each worshipper must tread; and they are further reported to have organised a clandestine catechism class, to which children, preparing for their first communion, have been inveigled. The arrest last week at Clignancourt, for disorderly conduct, of a person in clerical garb, who described himself as a celebrant of "black masses," has given the French journalist a rare opportunity of ministering to morbid love of horror and exciting the fascination attaching to all mysteries.

I am not altogether sceptical as to the existence of such a sect,* though I am quite sure the scribes are exaggerating its importance. There is very much in the Catholic faith calculated to absolutely overcome the reason, as well as to suggest its parody, to the French ape. Students of occult literature know well enough that remnants of secret devil worship can be traced back to the days of Paganism. Much of what was persecuted by the Church as witchcraft and sorcery was really the performance of the rites of an earlier cult. As traces of sorcery and necromancy remain among spiritists, so traces of direct devil worship occasionally turn up as a part of the not extinct belief in sorcery. Devil worship, like Theosophy, is a survival; and this, to my mind, constitutes their chief interest. Both are offshoots from the once mighty tree of Magic, and both largely owe their revived being to the spread of psychic experiments and hypnotism. They owe something, too, to imaginative romance. It has been said that modern Theosophy dates from the publication of *Zanoni*. Madame Blavatsky acknowledged her indebtedness to the novel of Lord Lytton. The sect of Luciferians has emerged to daylight since the publication of Huysmann's novel, *La Bas*, in which he tells of a priest of the "black mass" so fanatical as to have the crucifix tattooed on the soles of his feet, that he might have the pleasure of constantly treading upon it. The objection to the cross on the part of Mohammedans and Pagans, to whom it was a symbol of conquest, was natural enough; but this, like the other proceedings ascribed to the Satan worshippers, is only ridiculous parody.

Devil worship is not new. My friend, Mr. Joseph Symes, in an article on the subject in the *Liberator*, says: "It is as old as god worship." I should say it is older, or rather that the earliest gods were ugly devils, worshipped through fear. On this point I may cite the eminent authority of Sir John Lubbock, who, in his work on *The Origin of Civilisation and Primitive Condition of Man*, says of the religion of the lower savage races: "Their deities are evil, not good; they may be forced into compliance with the wishes of man; they generally require bloody, and often rejoice in human, sacrifices; they are mortal, not immortal; a part, not the author, of nature; they are to be approached by dances rather than prayers; and often approve what we call vice, rather than what we esteem as virtue."

This last item is certainly applicable to the earlier notions of Jehovah, the God of the Jews. He commanded the slaughter of those who accepted not his cult. He demanded bloody sacrifices, and rejoiced in their sweet savor. It is evident from Leviticus xxvii. 29, Micah vi. 6 (Heb.), and the story of Jephthah, that human sacrifices were once offered. The legend of Abraham and Isaac conveys that animals were substituted as symbols, just as the Romish mass is a symbol of the offering of the blood of the Divine Redeemer. When Jehovah had an only begotten Son, the old Jew God must still have his pound of flesh. Without shedding of blood there is no remission. Till the days of Anselm (dated 1033-1109), the whole Christian world believed that the ransom for man's redemption was paid over to the devil as a compensation for relinquishing his hold upon mankind. This was, and still is, the logical view of the Atonement for to make God require the blood of his own innocent son before he will forgive

* See note to my article on "Revived Superstitions," *Freethinker*, February 18.

the sins of his own creatures is to turn him into a devil. This doctrine alone suffices to show how largely devil-worship is an ingredient of Christianity.

The Gnostics held that the God of the Old Testament was the devil. Mr. Symes says that when Jesus told the Jews, "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the works of your father ye do," he seems to countenance the Gnostic view. He says, also, that their father was "a murderer from the beginning." This hardly applies so well to Satan as to the creator and destroyer of life, who murders all that die. In the story of the Scapegoat, upon whom the sins of the people were put on the day of Atonement, and sent to Azazel in the wilderness (Leviticus xvi., Heb.), we can see that the evil spirit was felt to be as much entitled to his offering as God. In the book of Job, though, my friend N. M. X. justly points out, Satan only executes the permission of Jehovah, he, nevertheless, appears among the sons of God on a footing of civility, if not equality. "Give the devil his due" is an old saying, representing a deep-rooted idea.

Devil-worship and god-worship have this in common: they are attempts to get something out of nature without adequately paying for it. That is about the meaning of prayer. Give us all we want, oh spirit, heavenly or hellish, and we will praise you, who cannot need our praises. The man was logical who prayed to the devil on the ground that God was good, and could be depended upon; but it was "the other fellow" he was afraid of. "Send me no Catholic priest," said the dying Duke of Buckingham—"they eat their god; but if you happen to know one who eats the devil, you can send him." Devil-worship still exists and lurks in the churches, though it lies lower than it did, being a bit ashamed of itself. What is orthodox Christianity, with its salvation for the few and its damnation for the many, but devil worship? On the theory of the Romish Church and of Calvinism, Satan bags the biggest swag. In the New Testament, Christ alludes to the Devil as the prince of this world. Paul, indeed, calls him the god of the world, says he can transform himself into an angel of light, and comes with all power, and signs, and lying wonders; so that, indeed, the believer must be puzzled to tell "t'other from which." Christianity has not yet rid itself from the savage notions from which it sprung. It still believes in the magical efficacy of blood, of sacraments, prayers, and reading of its fetish book. It still holds up a bogie devil and a bogie god. It prays: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," or the evil one. While in legal documents we still read of disasters as "the act of God," and coroners' juries bring in verdicts of "Died by the visitation of God," we cannot wonder that the representative of the savage in our streets calls on God to strike him dead, blind, or speechless, showing that his notion of a deity is little differentiated from that of a devil.

J. M. WHEELER.

IMPROVERS OF CHRISTIANITY.

PROBABLY the readers of this journal are aware that in the early part of the present century there were gentlemen known as "improvers of Shakespeare"; they professed to put him right by substituting words of their own in the place of his, with the intention of "improving the text." A similar process has been going on for many years in reference to the words ascribed to Jesus and his apostles. Although the Bible was supposed to be inspired, modern criticism discovered that there was "room for improvement" in the interpretation of its meaning, if its teachings were to command even nominal adherents to-day. Hence, during the last few years, we have had innumerable attempts, not only to improve the text, but also to put an entirely new construction upon what the text implies. For instance, in former times nothing appeared clearer than the reality of the "Fall of Man" through Adam, and its connection with the professed redemption through Christ. The "inherent wickedness" of man was thought to be established by the Bible biography of the human family. It was sincerely believed by pious people that children were "born in sin and shapen in iniquity." In fact, the Church insisted that it was through the sin of Adam that death entered into the world, and that all mankind became corrupt. But, as knowledge progressed, and

reason was allowed to exercise its legitimate power, the story of Adam, who was alleged to be the parent of "original sin," was regarded by a large section of the more intelligent members of the community as a mere fable. Notwithstanding these improved views, which were based upon discoveries of geology and anthropology, and in spite of the results of the "higher criticism," the orthodox Church continued to preach that man "by nature" was sinful, and that his "heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." For centuries this was accepted as undoubtedly the teaching of the Bible.

Recently, however, a second Daniel has come to judgment in the person of the Dean of Ely, who preached on Sunday, June 10, what the *Daily Chronicle* termed a "remarkable sermon," in which he gave an entirely "improved" version of the scriptural doctrine of "original sin." The sermon was delivered in Shoreditch Church, and the subject chosen was "The Spiritual Basis of Education." During his discourse the Dean positively refused to endorse the Christian idea that at every birth a fresh stock of human depravity is introduced into the world. Evidently he does not believe that mankind still suffers from the effects of the alleged transgression of Adam. Voltaire long ago gave his opinion that children were not born wicked. He said: "Bring together all the children of the universe, you will see nothing in them but innocence, gentleness, and fear; were they born wicked, spiteful, and cruel, some signs of it would come from them; as little snakes strive to bite, and little tigers to tear. But nature, having been as sparing of offensive weapons to man as to pigeons and rabbits, it cannot have given them an instinct to mischief and destruction." Such a view of human nature as this is, perhaps, only what could be expected from the brilliant French Freethinker. Clarendon expressed himself in similar language when he said: "If we did not take great pains, and were not at great expense to corrupt our natures, our natures would never corrupt us." We confess that we were not prepared to find the Dean of Ely endorsing, before a church congregation, such sentiments as the above. Yet, discarding the old notion of "inherent depravity," he said: "By nature we are the children of impulse, of emotion, of passion, governed by the things about us, and the impression they make on our senses." This means that children are what they are by their nature and as the result of the education they receive, using the term education in its truest and broadest sense. This sounds more like rationalism than orthodoxy; and it is a humane effort to improve a supposed God-sent faith. It shows that the Dean is not only "abreast of the times," but that he is considerably in advance of those gentlemen who are said to have been in former times "moved by the Holy Ghost."

The Dean repudiates the New Testament teaching that the human family are "the children of wrath" (Ephesians ii. 3); and he says there is no word in the Greek text, "as some people imagine," about the "wrath of God as implying that the hearts of little children are by nature so prone to evil, so incapable of conceiving a good thought, saying a good word, or doing a good thing. . . . St. Paul says nothing about the wrath of God. It is not God's wrath, but the children's wrath, of which he is speaking, just as he speaks of the children of disobedience." If the Dean's contention is right, the writings ascribed to St. Paul need considerable improvement, for in their present form they unmistakably speak of the "wrath of God" (see Romans i. 18; ix. 22; Ephesians v. 6). It is a fatal blow to the reliability of the Bible if it is a fact that it makes one of its principal writers falsely attribute a palpable weakness to the Christian's God. The Dean admits that he is "not unaware that the misrepresentation of the text is a very largely-accepted one, and has exerted a very wide influence on methods of education. It is taught in the Westminster Confession. But this appalling theory, that by our mere birth we incur the divine anger, and that apart from any voluntary wrong-doing we are under the divine curse, is not true." He then quotes passages from the Bible which deny that children are necessarily depraved, and urges that Jesus said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." "If depravity," said the Dean, "is the natural state of the child's heart, and of such is the kingdom of heaven, wherein does the kingdom of heaven differ from the kingdom of hell?" That is a question we leave the Dean to settle, if he can, with his Bishop. We desire

Christians to note, however, how this "improving process" demonstrates, not only the contradictory teachings of "God's Word," but also the revolting character of one of its fundamental doctrines. In this sceptical age humanity, even within the Church, stands aghast and shudders at the "appalling theory" of the orthodox notion of human depravity.

The Dean defines "original sin" as being "nothing more nor less than the brute inheritance which every man carries with him, and the process of evolution is an advance towards true salvation, for salvation—'saving health,' as the Prayer Book calls it—means throwing off the brute inheritance, gradually throwing it off through ages of struggle, that by-and-bye will make struggle needless. Man is slowly passing from a primitive social state, in which he was little better than a brute, towards an ultimate social state, in which his character shall have become so transformed that nothing of the brute can be detected in it. The ape and the tiger in human nature will become extinct." We do not remember that any mention is made in the Bible of a connection with the "brutes" from which man could "inherit" anything. On the contrary, it is there stated that it was proposed to make man in the "image of God," and his subsequent inheritance was the acquirement of knowledge through his having his own way, in spite of God's plan. The gospel contained in the words above quoted from the Dean's sermon is that according to Darwin, rather than that according to Christ or Christianity.

We are next informed by this eminent divine that "modern science, at least, teaches us that 'original sin' is real enough, though 'heredity' is the word it prefers to use." Now, we would submit to the Dean that the "identification" of the original sin of theology with the "heredity" of science cannot be maintained. There is an important distinction between the two which no special pleading can remove. The first is associated with descent from the hand of omnipotent perfection; while the second is involved in the finite, or the region of imperfection, bearing no resemblance whatever to the act of eating certain fruit. Heredity, as the Dean uses the term, does not mean one defect, but the accumulation of many imperfections that have been handed down from sire to son.

We certainly have never discovered that Jesus laid down "three great laws" which might be specially adapted for Board schools. But, according to the Dean of Ely, he did so. Here they are, as set forth by him: "Take heed that ye despise not; take heed that ye offend not; take heed that ye hinder not one of these little ones." We regret that the New Testament does not admit of any reference to these laws by way of elucidation. Yet the Board-school teachers were told by the Dean that without these "three laws" all the rest of their work "must end in miserable failure." What bearing such laws could have on the problem of national education was not attempted to be shown. If this were the only contribution Christ could offer towards an educational scheme, no wonder that the Church has failed to properly instruct the rising generation.

Still, we do not hesitate to place the Dean of Ely among the modern improvers of Christianity. Whether or not it will be "improved off the face of the earth" time will show; but there seems no reason to despair. We find on every hand the enlightened leaders of the Church explaining away, one after the other, the doctrines of orthodoxy; so that, if ever the saints again appear in the streets of Jerusalem, unless they come quickly, they will fail to discover any relics of the original "faith once delivered to the saints."

CHARLES WATTS.

THE THEATRE.

SECULARISTS are likely to be the chief supporters of the theatre in the future. They have not the conscientious scruples of pious folk against exhibitions, good, bad, or indifferent, of the actor's art. They do not use the euphemistic phrases in vogue amongst religionists, such, for example, as "Synagogue of Satan," to denote the theatre. They have a more just appreciation of acting, and can, as a rule, enjoy what is good in it, without loving all that is poor and unworthy. No wise Secularist will deny that the theatre is not all that it might be made if a little more care and attention were bestowed upon it. It

would be, indeed, a folly to deny, in the present rather chaotic state of the Thespian art in these countries, that there is much room for improvement, and much occasion for deprecation of the methods of the theatrical world. The Secularist should seek to mend this state of things, which he knows is not all that is desirable. Whether he always does so or not, it is certain that he is not responsible for the low ebb of merit on the modern stage. We believe that, generally speaking, art on the stage is much poorer than it should be, but do not despair of seeing it better. The Church has chosen to take up a stand directly antagonistic to it; and the Church, having chosen, must abide the consequences. If the pious people had generously applauded what was good on the stage, the bad would doubtless have grown less; perhaps, by this, would have entirely disappeared. They have withdrawn themselves from it, gathering in the tails of their broadcloth lest their righteousness should suffer contamination by contact. They have tried to write, preach, and sing it down in every available way. A little—a very little—thought would have shown them the folly of this; but that is their business, not ours. We have no fear but that the art which has been enriched by the superb minds of Shakespeare, Goethe, Schiller, Voltaire, Racine, Calderon, and a host of others, will survive their efforts at suppression, and think it possible that their mean little religious ideas may suffer in conflict with these noble master-minds.

The stage is one of the most influential of modern teachers. Such is the admission which everyone, with a modicum of common sense, will be obliged to make. It may teach well, or it may teach ill; but that it *is* a teacher cannot be denied. It will also be admitted that for the past three hundred years or so all efforts to exterminate it have proved unavailing. It is too deeply fixed in the affections of the multitude to be uprooted. Having arrived at this conclusion, what remains for the wiseacres of the age to do? To go on vainly clamoring for its suppression, or severely to withhold themselves from it? Yes; these are the courses the religionist, in his wisdom, has seen fit to pursue. And the result is an impoverished stage and a narrow, unintelligent religion.

It rests with Secularists to elevate and reform the stage, since religionists will not do it. This can be tolerably well accomplished by simple means. Let every Secularist determine only to patronise those plays which are of sterling worth. Let him systematically deprecate all that is poor or of doubtful value. Managers of theatres lay the blame of the prevalence of poor plays on the popular taste for such things. The people often, in their turn, blame the managers for staging rubbishy pieces. Who is most at fault it cannot be directly ascertained; but neither party seems to be entirely blameless in the matter. The Secularists, who are a strong and ever-growing party, might by their action turn the balance in favor of good art in the theatres. Someone will have to make a beginning; and since religionism is in this matter as stationary as the rock to which it is so fond of alluding, it remains for Secularists to lead the way.

At the present day the mounting and stage effects in our theatres are such as would have made our forefathers dumb with wonder. Jingo Jones himself might open his eyes with astonishment could he see the scenic accessories of an ordinary modern play. But beyond this we do not seem to have made much real advancement. Little else than burlesque will do at present. A short time ago the rage was all for cheap melodrama. A good farce is an event in the theatrical world. The comic opera is the highest point to be obtained. The librettist rules the boards. If here and there, at long intervals, we hear of a legitimate drama being produced, our hopes are almost invariably dashed upon a closer acquaintance with it.

Mr. Beerbohm Tree is doing good service in the line of right drama. To Benson and other Shakespearean scholars and actors we have a right to be sincerely thankful. To Henry Irving, whether we consider him to be the true prince of actors or as only a shallow Perkin Warbeck of the footlights, we owe a debt of real gratitude for the work he has done in introducing the world's masterpieces to the English stage. But these are the exceptions; below them, and some others of good calibre (let the truth be plainly spoken), lies a weltering chaos of bad art, bathos, hysterics, vulgarity, printer's humor, and pruriency. A general view of the English stage brings a feeling of discontent, intermingled with a little flickering of good hope.

It is a notorious fact that there are fifty representations

of Shakespeare's plays in Germany to one in England. The German stage is, besides, rich in noble dramas. In many English towns the theatres drag on a somewhat precarious existence. I know a city of over a quarter of a million inhabitants which has but one theatre, and that very poorly supported. The reason given, rightly or wrongly, is the prevalence of the pious Presbyterian element. Yet that city is no better than others in financial or personal morality. It is time this state of things should cease. In this enlightened age such unintelligent prejudice is a kind of anachronism, which should as speedily as possible be dismissed and forgotten.

The stage is capable of great development, and it is in the nature of things that it should improve gradually. When the improvement comes, it will be, we believe, owing to the exertions of the Secularist party. It is not likely to take up the Pharisaical position of the Church, and say: "Stand off, I am holier than thou"; and we trust it will bend its energies to refine and elevate the stage until it becomes all that it can and should become.

M.

UNVEILING OF BRADLAUGH'S STATUE.

THERE was a stir in Northampton on Monday. As you walked along the streets in the morning you could feel, even if a stranger to the town and its doings, that "something was happening." Northampton, in fact—or at least a very large section of it—was thinking of the late Charles Bradlaugh, whose statue was to be unveiled in the afternoon at Abingdon-square; and, although he has been dead for three years and five months, "Bradlaugh," or "Charlie," as they often call him, is still the hero of the Northampton Radicals.

A procession was announced to start from Market-square at 2.30. A big crowd assembled there, including Radicals and Secularists from all parts of the South of England and the Midlands. Banners were flying, and bands were playing. Now and again they broke into "Bradlaugh for Northampton," which has been sung by thousands of shoemaker throats in so many hotly-contested elections.

The procession got to Abingdon-square, but it was quite another thing to get near the statue. Thousands of men and women thronged the square, the windows of the houses were all occupied, and the balconies were crowded. Various estimates of the crowd were given. Some said twenty thousand. We should say there were more than that. Even in the old Bradlaugh days, when the town was sometimes in a perfect fever of excitement, we never saw such a multitude. And it was a remarkably orderly multitude. All the police had to do—and there were not many of them—was to check the swaying which could not be avoided until the speaking began. Unfortunately there was some delay in this respect. The chairman and his friends ought to have been on the platform *before* 3 o'clock, instead of *after*. Mr. Foote and Mr. Forder were there, and at the base of the statue were a good many Freethinkers—men of the Old Guard, who had been with Charles Bradlaugh on many a battle-field. About a hundred came from London, including Mr. James Anderson, who had (with Mr. Forder) looked after the "excursion" arrangements. Visible in the distance were the Alpine hat and great shoulders of Toby King, who had travelled up from Hastings. Ten years ago Toby would have got through that crowd easily enough. When he pushed something had to give way. But his feet are slow now, and he has to shun excitement. Mr. George Ward was near the platform, with Mrs. Ward and Miss E. Robins. Mr. George Standing was somewhere in the crowd. But we must stop, or we shall be giving a catalogue of the chief frequenters of the Hall of Science.

Mr. Labouchere, who was to have unveiled the statue, was unable to attend, being prostrate with lumbago. Mrs. Labouchere came as "his apology"—to use her own expression. She spoke a few words and handed the cord to Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner, who pulled away the wrapper and disclosed the statue, which was hailed with a magnificent burst of cheering, after which the band struck up the old fighting song, while many eyes were wet with tears.

We hope to give our readers a picture of the statue next week. Meanwhile, let it suffice to say that the statue and pedestal have cost about £400, more than £100 of which

came from India. The figure is in terra-cotta by Mr. George Tinworth, of Messrs. Doulton & Co.'s, at the Lambeth Art Pottery. It is well posed, and is a fair likeness of Bradlaugh; but the artist has rather missed the massive character of the hero's face and head. It is suggested, however, that the likeness will improve under the mellowing hand of time. The inscription on the front panel of the pedestal runs thus:—"Thorough." Charles Bradlaugh. Born Sept. 26, 1833: Died Jan. 30, 1891. Four times elected to one Parliament, in vindication of the Rights of Constituencies. India, too, chose him her representative. A sincere friend of the people. His life was devoted to Progress, Liberty, and Justice."

Sir P. Manfield, M.P., the chairman, Mr. Crick, the secretary, and other speakers were only audible to the reporters. But a change came over the scene when Mr. Foote stepped to the front of the platform, and his first sentence rang out strong and clear. The people on the balconies of the houses could hear him, and his tribute to Charles Bradlaugh was rapturously applauded.

At five o'clock over a thousand persons sat down to tea in the Corn Exchange. At 6.30 the speech-making began. Letters of apology for absence were read from several members of Parliament, who were obliged to attend to their duties in London; including Thomas Burt, James Rowlands, J. W. Logan, H. P. Cobb, and J. G. Shipman. Mrs. Besant simply wrote that she could not be in Northampton that day. Perhaps the letter that evoked the heartiest applause was one from the Eleusis Club, Chelsea, where Charles Bradlaugh was always held in the highest affection and esteem.

Sir P. Manfield, who presided, delivered a brief, eulogistic speech, and was followed by Mr. Channing, M.P., who spoke of Charles Bradlaugh's noble and generous qualities, and of how tolerant and considerate he was to others who could not see eye to eye with him. His five years' work in the House of Commons was a lesson to friends and opponents in patience, perseverance, and scrupulous fidelity to duty. He was one of the very greatest members of Parliament of this century.

Mr. Naoroji, M.P., spoke of Charles Bradlaugh's work for India, his knowledge of Indian history and affairs being truly "surprising." He earned the "deep gratitude of all India," whose people joined with the English Radicals in mourning his untimely death.

Mrs. Bonner followed with a brief pathetic speech, which touched the audience deeply. She hardly knew how she could praise her father, though she of all persons knew how much he deserved it. She was followed by Mr. Foote, whose speech excited great enthusiasm. Next came Mr. Campion, the Radical editor, and Councillor Covington, a veteran reformer. Mrs. Labouchere had a fine reception, and made a bright little speech. Her husband, she said, caught a chill at Leeds, at that terrible House of Lords meeting, which was enough to give any man a chill. No one admired Bradlaugh more than he did. "Mr. Bradlaugh quite won my heart," said Mrs. Labouchere, "for he nursed my little girl and said she was a beautiful child"—at which all the women in the meeting laughed good-humoredly. Mr. Tebbutt and Mr. F. Adams—the latter being heartily cheered—gave the concluding speeches, and the great meeting broke up in good time for the London friends to catch their return train. Altogether, the day's proceedings were a brilliant success, and the Secularists are thoroughly satisfied with their share in the function. It would have been less bright and stirring without them.

SATAN A SERVANT OF GOD.

CHRISTIANITY and the Bible are utterly at variance as to the origin of evil. According to the Christian doctrine, Satan is the "Father of Lies" (John viii. 44) and the author of all evil. But the Scriptures—that is, the Old Testament—declare, in language the most precise and unequivocal, that God, and not Satan, created evil, that Satan is merely the servant of God, and can do only as God permits him to do.

This latter statement is proved up to the hilt by the book of Job—a book that is the grandest poem that was ever written; a book which is, to use the words of Carlyle, "our first and oldest statement of the never-ending problem

—man's destiny, and God's ways with him here on earth." What says this noble book, this grand old poem? Here is what it says: "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan: 'Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil?'" (Job i. 6-8).

Now, observe! God's statement with regard to Job was definite and precise. It was, that Job was a *perfect and an upright man*. Job, therefore, could not have been other than God said he was, because God had made him so.

Satan's reply to God was: "Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast Thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face" (Job i. 9-11).

These are very pregnant words. From them it is evident that Job was prosperous and happy simply because God had made him so, and that no evil could befall him unless God brought it upon him. "Put forth thine hand" are the words—that is, the hand of God, *not* the hand of Satan. And that this is the true reading is proved by what follows: "And the Lord said unto Satan: 'Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand'" (Job i. 12). So that Satan could and can work evil only when, and to what extent, *God permits him*.

The result was that Job was bereft of all his children and wealth. And he "rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped and said: 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord'" (Job i. 20, 21).

Now, there can be no doubt whatever as to the meaning of all this, because we have these scenes reproduced with all their details. "Again, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them, to present himself before the Lord. And the Lord said unto Satan: 'Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.' And Satan answered the Lord and said: 'Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse Thee to Thy face.' And the Lord said unto Satan: 'Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.' So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes. Then said his wife unto him: 'Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Renounce God and die'" (Job ii. 1-9).

The old version of the Bible translates this last phrase, "Curse God and die"; whilst the new version renders it, "Renounce God and die." But, according to Hebrew scholars, both these translations are incorrect; for the Hebrew verb, we are told, really means "bless." The true translation, therefore, is—"Bless God and die"; or, paraphrastically—"Bless God and pass into the spirit-land."

"But he said unto her: 'Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?'" (Job ii. 10). So that Job and his wife understood that the evil that had befallen them had been brought upon them by God, and not by Satan.

The antithesis presented in Job's last words is very significant; especially when it is remembered that the words "good" and "evil" are to be translated by God, and not by man; and that it was God himself who planted in the Garden of Eden the "tree of knowledge of good and evil" (Gen. ii. 9).

It may be objected that these statements respecting God, and Satan, and Job are to be taken figuratively or allegorically, and not literally. Be it so! What then? What is an allegory but a poetic or symbolic statement of a truth? Symbols are word-paintings in the true spiritual idiom. It matters not, therefore, whether these statements be taken literally or allegorically, because they picture the truth as minutely and as faithfully as the sun photographs

a landscape. In the words of that great biblical scholar, Hewlett: "The one great object of this divine book is to establish the uncontrolled sovereignty of God, in opposition to the absurd notion of two independent principles, the one of good, and the other of evil." N. M. X.

ACID DROPS.

THE papers on Monday must have been a trial to the faith of any reflecting Theist. The head of the French nation assassinated in a way likely to arouse an enduring bitter feeling, and a terrible mine disaster involving the deaths of over 250 men engaged in their daily occupation men; and horses blown to pieces and frightfully mutilated by "the agency of God." Elijah suggested that Baal was asleep or on a journey, and surely the same might be said with as much justice of "our Heavenly Father" to-day. But perhaps good Theists consider the birth of a new prince a sufficient set-off to the other calamities.

There was something very comical in the application of that Northampton Socialist who applied to the Board of Guardians for a decent funeral. He was about to commit suicide, he said, and his wife and young family could not afford to bury him properly. Either this applicant was playing off a joke on the Guardians, or he was himself an incarnate joke, though he took himself seriously. His own importance was such that his very carcase required a lot of consideration, while his wife and children were of such little importance that they might take care of themselves in the "competition" in which he was preparing to leave them. We have not heard of the applicant's suicide. Perhaps he is only waiting for that guarantee. It is a wonder he does not also apply for a seat in heaven.

Congregational ministers have been holding a Conference at Manchester. Among the topics for consideration were Fabian Socialism and Answers to Prayer. What a jumble! It is a pity that Bernard Shaw was not invited to speak. He is an authority on Socialism, and we dare say he would be happy on Prayer.

The Salvation Army gave James Hurley the magnificent sum of 14s. a week for twelve hours' work a day in taking out bread with a barrow and receiving accounts. The Army now bring a criminal charge against him of embezzling £1 11s. 8½d., after compounding with him to make a full confession and statement of accounts, and to accept the money by instalments.

Charles Raybourne, *alias* Richard Arthur Carden, a sinner of sixty-eight, has been sentenced at the Old Bailey to seven years' penal servitude for forgery, this being his second term of imprisonment. The prisoner pleaded for leniency on the ground that he was a parson for ten years at St. James's, Kennington, and had had the charge of St. Stephen's, South Lambeth.

William Edmonds, a young lawyer's clerk, shot himself dead at Bury, St. Edmunds. He is said to have suffered from religious mania. As Talmage says, those Atheists are always committing suicide.

"Let me go; I want to go to heaven." Thus said Jeremiah O'Leary to a police-constable, at Boston, Lincolnshire, on Sunday night. The route to Paradise chosen by Jeremiah was not a pleasant one. He jumped off the old Gravel-lane bridge, in the East-end, a place known as the Bridge of Sighs; and, as the policeman was doubtful as to the real heaven, he pulled out the voyager against his will.

Mr. Arnold White is a gentleman of some reputation for the careful attention he has given to social problems. Why should he endanger it by talking upon things he does not understand? He said, for instance, in the Northumberland Hall, Newcastle, that "Tom Paine was a noted Atheist and politician of the last century." Now, if Mr. White had read a single page of the *Age of Reason*, he would know that Paine was an ardent Deist.

How funny it is to hear people question if there are real Atheists. Hume remarked that the knight-errants who went in quest of giants had a belief in the real existence of such monsters. Yet the Rev. Lyman Abbott, after a long tilt at Atheism, declares he "does not know of one real Atheist." Suppose Dr. Abbott looks around him for one real Christian. We guarantee to produce a real Atheist for every real Christian he brings forward.

Zola's *Lourdes* is appearing in the *New York Herald*, and a correspondent sends us a quantity of letters that have

appeared in that journal from angry correspondents who predict death or other calamities to the *Herald* for printing such abominable "attacks on religion." They naturally object to its being dealt with by a naturalist.

J. Hammond Trumbull, librarian of Hartford (Conn.) City Library, was careful to pigeon-hole clippings. One day he was wired to by a clergyman, who had got into a hot discussion with a brother clerical on infant damnation: "Please mail me at once the contents of that damned infant pigeon-hole of yours."

A contract has been signed for the purchase of what is known as the Garden Tomb, at Jerusalem, which the Rev. Hesketh Smith believes to have been the site of the burial-place of God Almighty. The only thing certain is that the traditional site is inaccurate, since it is fair in the midst of the city. Captain Conder, of the Palestine Exploration Fund, believes in neither site, but has a third one of his own. We expect that all the sites are purely conjectural—indeed, invented to satisfy the curiosity of pilgrims and draw their gate-money.

There has been another row at Christ's Holy Sepulchre, at Jerusalem, an Italian monk having been killed outright by an Austrian. The *Crescent* remarks: "For generations the quarrels, disputes, and brawls that take place in the sanctuary, that is of all others the most sacred in the eyes of Christians, have been a scandal and a disgrace. Mohammedan troops are, upon the occasion of special religious festivals, obliged to be placed on guard in the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, and in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, to prevent the Christians of various creeds from flying at each other's throats in the sacred edifices."

The Boston Open-air Mission have had another baptismal service, in the Corporation Baths, ducking some twenty-five neophytes. Nobody was permitted to witness the ceremony but the faithful members of the band. One lady who was immersed, recently, has had to keep in bed ever since. She should have waited to receive the Holy Ghost in the warm weather.

Some alarm was excited at Madras by the discovery that the statue of the Empress Victoria was smeared with Hindu religious marks. Upon investigation it turned out that they were made by a native desirous of worshipping the statue. The smearing of stones with vermilion is a substitute for an offering of blood. Another method was to anoint the stone, as we read that Jacob poured oil on the pillar at Bethel (Genesis xxviii. 18).

At the instigation of the sky-pilots, the pious Canadians have passed a Bill prohibiting the sale of Sunday newspapers. It is a barefaced attempt to uphold clerical monopoly, in flagrant disregard of their own principles, for the Sunday newspapers to which they object are produced on the week days and only sold in the early hours of Sunday morning; while the Monday papers, in which the clericals delight to see reports of their own sermons, are entirely produced by Sunday labor, against which the sky-pilots utter no word. What they object to is that persons should read instead of attending church.

The Scotch pride themselves on the Forbes Mackenzie Act, which gives an appearance of sobriety on the blessed Sawbath. But Superintendent Orr, in an interview with a representative of the *Glasgow Herald*, seems to allow that it is beyond the power of the police to stamp out shebeening. There are so many drouthy persons going about on Sunday prepared to pay extra for a dram that police raids, fines, and imprisonment do not suffice to suppress the traffic.

The Bishop of Norwich wants the clergy to be allowed to give religious instruction to Church children in Board schools. Probably the teachers would welcome this as a release from uncongenial duties; but are the clergy prepared to take on this additional duty—of course, in hours not interfering with secular instruction?

According to Bishop Anson, "there is a terrible waste of hard-won money" in connection with the Church of England missionary societies. He asserts that the mere collection of the incomes of the S.P.G. and C.M.S. costs £44,000 a year. No wonder the heathen rage. They get very little of the money raised for their conversion.

Over £800,000 was subscribed last year in England alone to the various societies for giving the heathen a chance of Christian damnation. A large portion of the money remains with officials, and the bulk of the rest keeps missionaries abroad in a state of far higher comfort than they could ever enjoy at home. But the heathen are not brought in very perceptibly, and people at home starve for want of the means of subsistence.

Noticing Bishop Ingham's recent book on his diocese of Sierra Leone, the *Daily News* mentions "the suspicion with which the independent States surrounding the colony regard the morals of its population, whether converted Black or imported White." The Christianising of the colony was begun over a hundred years ago, yet the Bishop admits "the country around Sierra Leone, and even the greater part of the colony itself, is in just as wild and undeveloped a state as it was in 1787."

Bishop Ingham gives the Diary of Governor Clarkson, which contains some terrible descriptions of the drunkenness, the mortality, and the general viciousness of the colony during his administration. One of the first converts of rank who visited England from Sierra Leone was Prince Nannhanna. This exemplary Christian convert, hearing misrepresentation made by an orator on the slavery question, "requested to be allowed to shoot him outside." Perhaps he had been more indoctrinated in the precepts of the law than in those of the gospel.

The Rev. Arthur Robins, who is a Queen's chaplain, is the writer of an article on "Our Home-made Heathen." He points out that in London alone there are 50,000 families living in one room each. True, and this fact alone shows the humbug of missionary societies. Surely the "heathen" in foreign lands might well cry out to the English missionaries, "Physician, heal thy kindred." A correspondent of the *Echo* says that the London Missionary Society spent in salaries, etc., last year, £13,692 1s. 3d. The item for printing, postage, rent, and incidentals was £5,934 13s. 2d. That's the way the money goes.

At Sierra Leone the missionaries provided the natives with holy Christian marriage at eighteen-pence a couple. But the money was not always ready. The Rev. E. Collier records: "Once, after marrying a couple, upon my presenting them with the certificate, the eighteen-pence was not forthcoming, when an altercation ensued below, and it turned out that the man entrusted with the money had expended it in the purchase of rum, which was to be consumed at the approaching festivity! Finding that they could not muster money to meet the demand, one of the company stripped off his shirt, and offered it as a pledge!"

The Maori king, Tawhiao, has, it is stated, resigned the last vestige of independence, and expressed the wish of his subjects to live under the laws of the Queen of England. New Zealand statesmen consider that this will only lead to their speedier extermination, for nothing is more striking than that it is those who have been most influenced by contact with the white new-comers who have most rapidly diminished in numbers. In another century the proud Maori may be as extinct as the Tasmanian.

A Mr. Jenken Lloyd Jones has started a new "Creedless Church" in Chicago. A church building is to be put up containing bath-rooms, gymnasium, and reading-rooms. The *Catholic Review* says: "His is no longer a religion of the supernatural, but a religion of the bath-room and the gymnasium. He will cultivate not the souls but the bodies of his congregation." The Welsh-named gentleman is evidently on the right tack.

The West-end Londoner who goes to Hyde Park has a good notion of what the religion of the upper classes is like. Church parade is devoted to fashion, gossip, and enjoyment. The one theme is not the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, but the dresses of the ladies.

The Church has a new enemy in the automatic gum machine. Small children, on their way to worship, have got in the habit of slipping their missionary pennies into the machine and extracting therefrom chewing gum, instead of making the designed contribution to the conversion of the heathen. In consequence, Sunday-school collections are falling off, and various clergymen have inaugurated a crusade against this fresh device of Satan. As the heathen have not been heard from, and as the children appear to enjoy the gum, it looks as though the Church would have to absorb the machine to save the pennies. A nice nickel-in-the-slot device, duly consecrated, would not be a bad substitute for that old offender, the contribution box; and if there were gum in it, the contributor would at least have something to show for his money.—*Truthseeker* (New York).

Professor Dods recommends Professor Pfeleiderer's Gifford Lectures as strengthening the Theistic argument. Dr. Fergus Ferguson states that in Professor Pfeleiderer's system there is absolutely no room for a personal God at all. The German's veiled heresy may obtain better hearing owing to the dispute as to what he really means.

Prayers were ordered to be said in all the Catholic churches in Hungary for the defeat of the Civil Marriage

Bill. They were as efficacious as prayers usually are, and the Church has suffered another defeat.

A rare hodge-podge of Bible texts is sent to us under the title of *A Treatise on the Divinity of our Lord, proving that he is perfect God as well as perfect Man*, by William Hannan, of Wakefield. It is the beau ideal of what Ruskin called a disgusting sausage of chopped-up Bible. William Hannan of Wakefield, thou art an ass. Go to!

The editor of the *World of Mystery* suggests that teachers, instead of telling the beastly story of Lot getting drunk and becoming the father of his own children, should explain the matter allegorically. He says Lot is no more a man than Jack Frost, and his story is a description of the change from winter to summer; when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire and brimstone from heaven—that is, when the sun's rays fell more perpendicularly on the earth, and Lot, or Jack Frost, has to fly to the mountains, where he spends his time with the constellations of Andromeda and Cassiopeia, who are his two daughters. This mysterious editor says that, if his explanations of the Bible were adopted, infidelity would cease.

Protestant missions in China can hardly be said to be successful, if, indeed, they are not, as some observers hold, absolutely losing ground. They have been established for half a century, and there are now more than 1,300 foreign laborers in the field, and yet their converts number but 37,000, while the hatred felt for them by all classes is apparently stronger than ever.

The status of Christianity among the religions of the world is illustrated by its missionary conquests. It succeeds when brought into contact with savage faiths such as the fetishism of the South Sea Islands and the devil-worship of Shanars and Santals, being itself a superior kind of fetishism and devil-worship. But it fails in touching any of the great civilised faiths, such as Confucianism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, or Judaism.

The Moslems claim that they convert more Christians to Islam than Christians convert from Mohammedanism. They point to the fact that in their faith there is neither drunkenness, gambling, prostitution, nor infanticide, all of which are so common in Christian countries. The chief weapon used against them by Christian missionaries is denunciation of polygamy; but, as they do this holding in their hands as inspired a book which records the marital relations of Abraham, Lot, David, and Solomon, they have little effect indeed upon the followers of Mohammed.

A visitor in Geneva, under Calvin's reign, exclaimed in praise of the "lovely liberty" to be enjoyed in that city. He was overheard by a peasant woman, who retorted: "Lovely liberty, indeed! Formerly we were compelled to go to mass, and now we are to go to sermon." This is just about the difference between the Churchmen and the Nonconformists on the School question. One would have his catechism, and the other his Bible taught, and both at the expense of the general ratepayer, who may object to the one as much as to the other.

At Auckland, New Zealand, Parson Blaikie had an organ-grinder arrested for playing an organ in the street, where he was holding a service with an harmonium. It appeared, however, that the organ-grinder had a permit from the Town Clerk, while none had been given to Parson Blaikie, who, probably, was the bigger nuisance of the two. The case was dismissed.

The Rev. William Chorley Loveland, vicar of West Down, Devon, borrowed £400 from a rich lady of his congregation, and professed that it was a gift. The lady sued him, and the jury found that the money was a loan and not a gift, and judgment was entered for £408 8s. 2d., being loan and interest. It came out during the trial that the man of God had made the will of a testator, the bulk of whose property he bequeathed to himself. Judge Hannen set aside the will in terms of strong indignation.

Paul says "there be gods many and lords many," and Paul was quite right. Christians are now inventing a brand new God, having so little in common with the old one that a minister is reported as saying, in an address at the Philharmonic Hall, Southampton, that "the theological God was no other than the Devil himself, but even worse than the Bible picture of Satan." Well, a comparison of the text 2 Sam. xxiv. 1 with 1 Chron. xxi. 1 shows that God and Satan were one and the same.

Over £8,000 is paid by cemetery companies in London to the representatives of the Established Church, in nine parishes alone, as toll for the dead. The priest wants his finger in the pie at birth, marriage, and death, and the people are foolish enough to suffer the incubus.

Wonders will never cease. A Rev. Watson J. Mosier, of Brooklyn, is reported as having given up his salary, saying he had vainly searched the Scriptures to find justification for working in the vineyard of the Lord for wages. Should his example be extensively followed, we shall expect the speedy advent of the millennium and those big millennial vines which Jesus promised, according to Papias.

The Christian scientists lost a great opportunity to perform a miracle in Brooklyn when Frank H. Caulfield, junior, who suddenly went blind, was led to the Eye and Ear Infirmary. It was a rare case of hysterical or purely nervous blindness, with no fault in the visual power of the eye-balls; and, with few flashes of light from the examination with the ophthalmoscope, the blind man regained his sight as suddenly as he lost it some days previously. Miracles still happen, but are not so regarded when we know how.—*Foot's (N.Y.) "Health Monthly," June, 1894.*

At Rochester, New York, they have recognised the insanitary character of all communicants, scrofulous or otherwise, imbibing their Savior from the same communion cup. Dr. C. E. Darrow, a prominent Rochester physician, having given his opinion that contagious diseases were spread through the poisonous discharge from the mouths and lips of persons afflicted with certain diseases, an arrangement has been patented whereby each communicant keeps his own communion cup, just as he may his own shaving dish at the barber's shop.

The other ministers, whose congregations cannot afford this luxury, denounce it as opposed to gospel practice. The Rev. D. M. Kirkpatrick is reported as saying: "Oh, my friends, what must Jesus think of this Christian world—men professing to follow him, and actually trying to make money out of an act that represents his death?" He then read an excerpt from an article from the *Living Church*, an Episcopal organ, which said that Rochester must beat the world for diseased Presbyterians, when the germs of twenty-two different kinds of diseases were found in the communion cup after the wine had been used.

The *Cork Examiner* recently reported two cases of poisonous snakes in the south of Ireland; so it would seem that, although St. Patrick banished them, they have returned. The Catholic peasants believe they have been introduced to the country by heretics.

An odd illustration of the habits of mediæval priests occurs in a treatise published by the Early English Text Society, Mark's *Duties of a Parish Priest*. The writer instructs the priest how to baptise a child, and suddenly puts in: "But if you are too drunk to say the words of baptism in their proper order, what should you do? Don't say them by any means. Wait till another time." Query for the believer: How many children went to eternal hell because the priest was too drunk to perform the ceremony essential to salvation?

In January of last year Mr. W. T. Stead wrote: "For the present my last word is this: that before many months are over I think it will be admitted by every candid mind that the persistence of the individual after death, and the possibility of communicating with that individual, has been as well established on a scientific basis as any other fact in nature. That, you may think, is a bold assertion. It is not an assertion; it is a prophecy, based upon facts which are within my own knowledge, and of which I speak with as much confidence as I do of anything which has ever come within my own personal observation." It is now asked how many months did Mr. Stead mean.

In response to a statement that the late H. W. Beecher was a spiritist, his widow writes to Mr. J. Sharpe, of Pudsey:—"Dear Sir,—Yours of May 22 just received. There is not a particle of truth in the statement that Mr. Beecher was in the slightest degree a believer in Spiritualism, or has in any way appeared in a materialised form, or held conversation with me. Many letters are sent me from Spiritualists, which I am assured were dictated by him to me. If he has not grown any wiser in the other life than to write such weak, silly letters, it is a great pity he had not stayed here. I should be ashamed of a child of mine of twelve years old writing such rubbish."

An evangelist called at the house and found her alone. After listening to him awhile, she turned questioner, and this followed: She—"Do you believe that God is omnipresent?" He—"Oh, yes." She—"Do you believe there is a Devil?" He—"Oh, yes." She—"Where is there room for a devil if God is everywhere?" He—"Oh, I believe the spirit of God is everywhere, but not the person of God." She—"If God is a person, how can he be everywhere?" He immediately changed the conversation.

SPECIAL.

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

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, July 1, Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, London, E.C. : 7.30, "President Carnot's Assassination, and its Lessons for Christians and Freethinkers."

July and August, London Hall of Science every Sunday evening.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—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.

HENRY THOMPSON.—We do not understand your perplexity. Our propaganda against Christianity does not involve the assumption that every Christian is "a blind, fanatical, worthless, pitiable object, meriting only ignominy." We have spoken in high praise of such men as the Rev. S. D. Headlam and the Rev. Fleming Williams, while opposing their theology. Why should it surprise you, then, that we spoke also in praise of Lord Coleridge? We found him a high-minded gentleman, and we said so eleven years ago, as we say it now. We can be just to individual Christians while bitterly hostile to their faith. It is evident that you do not understand the editor of the *Freethinker*.

LOUIS LEVINE (Charleston, U.S.A.).—Thanks. Your American papers are always welcome.

C. WRIGHT.—Prof. Faraday was a Sandimian. The sect professes extreme Calvinism, and has been decreasing in numbers and importance since his death.

STEPHEN HATTEN (New York).—Thanks for copy of *Blue Grass Blade*.

E. D. H. DALY.—Thanks.

J. RICHARDS.—Glad to hear the prospect has improved at Ryhope.

T. E. M.—Your article on "The Theatre" has been in type for some time. Others will go in as we can find room. Pleased to hear from you whenever it suits your convenience.

W. HOLLAND.—Thanks for enclosures. Tastes will differ, you know.

T. ROPEL.—We are unable to answer legal questions, except when they relate to Freethought. Sorry we cannot oblige.

S. S. H.—We are overwhelmed with copy just at present. Pleased to hear you find our writings so useful in discussions with Christians.

M. D. H.—Shall appear.

H. KIRK.—It shows the shifts to which orthodoxy is reduced. Blasphemy Laws are only put in force against Freethinkers. Christians can blaspheme at pleasure.

E. G. TAYLOR.—Much obliged. See paragraph.

J. HARKIS.—We sympathise with Mr. and Mrs. Brown in their bereavement.

F. SHEPPARD.—The tract is simply contemptible. The vermin who write and circulate such things are only to be found in the shadow of the Cross. It would be useless to prosecute. There is no law to prevent any Christian from declaring that Secularism teaches "universal prostitution." But if the cowardly creatures will only pluck up enough courage to print plainly that Mr. Foote teaches it, they shall soon learn a disagreeable lesson.

J. G. BARTRAM.—The defence of Christianity against Secularism has fallen of late into most despicable hands. The new champions of the faith are matchless specimens of what Ingersoll calls the malice of meekness.

D. F. GLOAK.—Very pleased to hear of your enterprise at Dundee. Mr. Foote will be nappy to talk matters over with you during his visit in September.

F. WILSON.—Shall appear.

C. A. HOOPER.—Thanks for copy of your letter to the *Christian World*. We will look out for any reference to it. See answer to F. Sheppard.

A. LITTLE.—Shall appear.

H. MORCOMB (Melbourne).—Neither the debate between Mr. Foote and the Rev. J. M. Logan, nor that between Mr. Watts and the Rev. David Macrae, was reported verbatim. We don't reply to the articles in the paper you refer to for two reasons. The first is a good one—we never see it. The second is as good—we have something better to do.

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—Der Arme Teufel—Freidenker—Two Worlds—Liberator—Western Figaro—Ironclad Age—Truthseeker—La Verité—Dageraad—New York People—Blue Grass Blade—Fur Unsere Jugend—Liver—Crescent—Chicago Herald—Sporting Times—Progressive Thinker—Cardiff Evening Express—Twentieth Century—Isle of Man Times—Echo—Hull Daily Mail—Newcastle Evening News—Boston Guardian.

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. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

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.

MR. FOOTE opens this evening (July 1) his two months' campaign at the London Hall of Science. The subject of his address will be "President Carnot's Assassination, and its Lessons for Christians and Freethinkers."

A large meeting was present in Essex Hall, Essex-street, Strand, on Friday evening, June 22, when Mr. Foote lectured on "A Secularist's View of Social Progress." The lecture was listened to with great attention, and very heartily applauded, although a good many auditors were far from being in agreement with the speaker on some points. The lecture was followed by discussion, in which Mr. G. Bernard Shaw took part. This bright and witty speaker, however, found himself very much in agreement with Mr. Foote. He thought their points of difference were rather speculative than practical.

An excellent report of Mr. Foote's lecture appeared in the *Daily Chronicle*, and the *Star* commended his remarks on religious education to the attention of the Diggelites on the London School Board. Unless they are more prudent, the *Star* said, they will find religious education swept away altogether, and the "secular" policy triumphant.

Several of Mr. Foote's lighter sallies provoked hearty laughter, but none more so than his reference to Mrs. Besant. When he debated with that lady a few years ago on State Socialism, she was trying the north-west passage to the millennium, but she is now going round to it by way of the East Indies. All sections of the audience joined in the merriment which was excited by the criticism.

Another good audience gave Mr. Charles Watts an enthusiastic reception at the Hall of Science last Sunday evening. The subject of his lecture was "The New Tactics of Christians," and the clear manner in which Mr. Watts pointed out the changes, both in doctrine and method, that have taken place amongst Christians during the last few years was warmly appreciated by the audience. To-day, Sunday, July 1, Mr. Watts lectures three times in the Oddfellows' Hall, Liverpool.

Ryhope is the place where Mr. Foote had such disgusting treatment at the hands of Christian rowdies. For some time after that occurrence the local N.S.S. Branch was refused a hall for its meetings. Lately, however, the use of the Miners' Hall has been secured, and Mr. C. Cohen has been engaged to deliver a course of eight lectures, commencing on Sunday, July 15. No doubt the Ryhope Branch will have the support of the Freethinkers of the whole district in this experiment.

The Newcastle Branch held a meeting on the Town Moor last Sunday. Despite the interruptions and inarticulate noises of a number of the baser sort of Christians and members of the C.E.S., Messrs. Aarstad, Mitchell, Easton, and Sturt made themselves heard effectively. The storm of bigotry, however, reaching its climax, the platform was pelted with turf, and some of the ladies' bonnets were damaged. Still, the Secularists held their ground, and distributed several hundred tracts, besides a large number of *Freethinkers*. Mr. Aarstad lectures this morning (July 1) at 11 on the Quayside, and we hope the local "saints" will rally around the platform.

Last week we took occasion to mention, in connection with the illness of Mr. Thomas Slater, some of the veterans of our movement. Another grand old Freethinker is Professor Francis William Newman, who, on the 27th of June, entered upon his ninetieth year. From the time when he first exhibited his heterodoxy by his *Phases of Faith, or Passages from the History of my Creed*, his writings have

been of considerable service to the cause of Freethought, though, unlike his brother Charles Robert, he has never advanced beyond the Theistic position, which, by the way, does not include a definite belief in immortality.

Mr. George Meredith's new novel, *Lord Ormont and his Aminta*, is eagerly reviewed in the newspapers. "His brain," says the *Chronicle* critic, "is to that of the average writer or reader as quicksilver to treacle"—which is an emphatic but not very elegant simile. We intend to provide our readers with some "Book Chat" on Mr. Meredith's book shortly. A hasty glance into it satisfies us that the magician has lost none of his power or subtlety.

Signor Cesar Puccioni has successfully accomplished a scheme, which he set on foot some years ago, for erecting a memorial to Shelley in Italy. His notion was to set up a statue of the great poet at Via Reggio, close to the spot where his body was washed ashore some seventy-two years ago, and afterwards cremated. Professor Lucchési has been commissioned to make the statue, and the names of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Swinburne are included in the list of the committee.

The Civil Marriage Bill has been passed in Hungary, and the popular excitement is allayed. The Emperor saw it was necessary to give way; accordingly, he put pressure upon the Magnates, who withdrew their opposition to the measure, but not so completely as to admit of its passing by more than a slight majority. The clericals, of course, were obstinate to the last; and they are now predicting great misfortunes to Hungary for "turning its back on God."

By the way, it is sad to reflect that England is behind Hungary in regard to this marriage question. This fact is drawn attention to in the *Daily News* by a son of the late Sir R. Phillimore, who says that the Nonconformist ministers would oppose a Civil Marriage Bill. At present they solemnise marriage in their chapels, and the courts of law have to complain of their loose way of keeping the records. The fact is, there should be a civil marriage in all cases, as in France. A religious ceremony could follow, or not, according to individual preference or conviction.

A Freethought journal has been started in Argentina. Its title is *Giordano Bruno*. May it prove worthy of the name.

The *Ironclad Age*, of Indianapolis, is well sustained by Mrs. Lulie Monroe Power, daughter of its founder. The number before us reprints Mr. Wheeler's article on "The Bible and the Child," from our columns.

Paine's *Age of Reason* is advertised in a Japanese Buddhist journal as "an annihilating answer to the propagandism of the Christian missionaries." The *Age of Reason* appears like the angel standing in the way of the missionary Balaam as he endeavors to drive his biblical ass over the minds of the Japanese.

The return, at the head of the poll, of Mr. John Cash, who stood as Labor candidate, pledged to Secular education, for the Willesden School Board is a happy augury for the workers are beginning to say to clergy and Nonconformist religionists alike, "A plague on both your houses."

Mr. Samuel Storey is doing his best for the Bill to abolish the Blasphemy Laws, though he is not hopeful of any success at present. Writing to Mr. Taylor, of Manchester, on June 17, he says: "I tried to get the second reading after midnight (the only time), but the Tories objected. There is no chance for any private Bill this year unless it has got second reading, and scarcely any for those unless they are unopposed. All I can do is to bring in the Bill on the first day of next session."

The Executive of the National Secular Society desires all its members throughout the country to write to their local representatives in the House of Commons, drawing their attention to Mr. Storey's Bill, and asking them to support it at the proper opportunity. This will advertise the Bill in the most effective manner, and will show, far better than petitioning, that there is a real demand for such legislation.

According to the *Tablet*, the Church of England has resigned to the Board schools no fewer than 844 Church schools.

A verbatim report of the speeches at Northampton on Monday was promised in the local *Reporter*. Mr. Forder was given to understand that Mr. Foote's speeches would be printed *in extenso* like the others, and he then and there ordered a dozen quires, which will, no doubt, be in request at 28 Stonecutter-street.

While at Northampton on Monday, Mr. Foote saw Mr.

Gibson, the father of the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes's "Atheist Shoemaker," and Mrs. Gibson, the dead young man's step-mother. Mr. Gibson has been seriously ill of late, but is now better. As we expected, and told him, his standing up for the truth has alienated his pious relatives, who callously bade him apply to the Atheists for assistance. Well, perhaps the Atheists have a little more of the milk of human kindness than the canting hypocrites of orthodoxy.

In the *Atlantic Monthly* for July there is a study of Lucretius, by R. Y. Tyrell. He speaks of the great Roman Epicurean poet as "this High Priest of Atheism, this Apostle of irreligion, who thunders against inspiration like one inspired, and who throws all the rapt devotion of a Stephen into his denial of immortality."

Mr. Forder can now take orders for the Second Series of Mr. Foote's *Flowers of Freethought*. The volume is considerably larger, as to the number of pages, than the First Series, though sold at the same price (2s. 6d.). It is bound in the same style. A list of the contents will be found in our advertisement pages.

THE FOOTE TESTIMONIAL FUND.

THE Committee who have the arrangements of this Fund in hand met last Sunday evening, when the following resolution was unanimously passed: "That the Foote Testimonial Fund close about the end of July, and that a special appeal be made to the readers of the *Freethinker*, urging them to forward subscriptions immediately, so that a handsome total may be secured by the time specified." The Committee are desirous that the sum realised shall be worthy of the Freethought party, and a fairly adequate mark of appreciation of the esteem in which the President of the National Secular Society is held throughout the country.

(By order of the Committee.)

[Sixth List.]

G. Whitehead, £2 2s.; Isaac Jackson, £1; G. Harlow, 10s. 6d.; J. Pearson, 10s.; G. F. Wenborn, 10s.; G. Laing, 5s.; W. H. Wood, 5s.; E. Scarrott, 5s.; Ulster Branch, 5s.; J. J., 5s.; No Name (Egypt), 5s.; A. Powell, 5s.; W. Lamb, 5s.; J. Grout, 5s.; Mr. Withy, 5s.; J. Walter, 2s. 6d.; J. W. H., 2s. 6d.; Mr. Turnbull, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Turnbull, 2s. 6d.; J. Bevins, 2s. 6d.; W. Swan, 2s. 6d.; J. W. C., 2s. 6d.; C. J., 2s. 6d.; F. J. Voisey, 2s. 6d.; J. Oram, 2s. 6d.; E. Calvert, 2s. 6d.; T. Prestwich, 2s.; W. Turnbull, 2s.; C. Smith, 2s.; J. Robinson, 2s.; R. Shaw, 2s.; W. H. T., 1s.; J. Jones, 1s.; F. Boorman, 1s.; E. Gage, 1s.; J. Denham, 1s.; T. Hollow-vine, 1s.; J. Hockin, 1s.; A. Bullock, 1s.; G. Bullock, 1s.; J. Butcher, 1s.; E. Rice, 1s.; F. Hiscox, 1s.; J. Rogerson, 1s.; O. Hewlitt, 1s.; T. W. Davis, 1s.; V. Lowe, 1s.

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DEATH OF THOMAS SLATER.

JUST as we are going to press we hear of the death of Thomas Slater at Leicester. He had long been ailing, and his death is perhaps a release. Nevertheless it will be a blow to those who were near and dear to him, and we tender them our sympathy in their bereavement. Thomas Slater was a veteran Secularist and social reformer. During his days of health and strength he never tired of promoting advanced causes. No doubt he suffered materially, but he was too proud to be a hypocrite, and too warm in his feelings to be indifferent to the welfare of his fellow men. For some years he found a shelter for his old age at Leicester in the service of the Secularists. His death removes another of the earnest figures of a sterner generation.

Mr. Slater's remains will be cremated at Manchester on Friday (June 29). The coffin will leave Leicester by the 9.15 train, reaching Manchester Central Station at 12.35. The crematorium will be reached about 2 o'clock. No doubt a good many Manchester Secularists will attend and pay a last tribute of respect to the deceased. Mr. Foote has been strongly invited to direct the funeral service, but has been unable to definitely assume the responsibility. He can only say that he will be present if possible, and arrangements are made to conduct the proceedings in his absence.

INGERSOLL ON PAINE.

[THE restoration of the memorial to Thomas Paine on his farm at New Rochelle was made the occasion of a demonstration of admirers of the author-hero of the Revolution, from all parts of the United States. The chief centre of interest was, of course, Colonel Ingersoll, whose speech upon the occasion we reproduce *in extenso* from the *Truthseeker*.]

Ladies and Gentlemen,—More than one hundred years ago, in the year 1774, Thomas Paine, then a young man of thirty-seven or eight, came to our shores. He was an Englishman; and while I remember the history of that land—the brutalities, the savagery of that people—while I remember their crowned idiots and their robed hypocrites—while I remember all that is bad and all that is great and glorious, I say here to-day that better blood than the English blood never coursed in human veins. He came here, his life up to that time having been, to all appearances, an unbroken and unadulterated failure.

He was born among the poor, and, so far as I know, his parents never thought nor did anything notable. He had, so far as we know, but little education, but a vast deal, as it turned out, of information. He had great capacity, a great brain, and he knew a marvellous number of facts, of things. He had lived close to the breast of nature, and during all the years of failure in England he was a thinker, and he commenced at the bedrock. He was not dazed by glitter, by show, by custom, by genius; nothing deceived him. He saw through all the glorified fog; he saw things as they were, and he came here just as people were beginning to think about forming a nation.

He had nothing to recommend him in the world except a letter of introduction signed by a very great Infidel; so great that when I think of him I feel as though he was kindred of the mountains, as though he were related to the constancy of the stars, one of the greatest, one of the serenest of men—Benjamin Franklin. He was another man who saw to the bedrock, and who was not deceived by prophets, who was not deceived by bloody and ignorant and savage revelation from a monster God.

That is all he had, that letter of introduction, and showing that in the city of Philadelphia, after teaching school a little while, he was employed to write on a magazine, the *Pennsylvania Magazine*; and I want to show you now that the man's mind was filled with great subjects, about which he had great thoughts, and the first article was one against negro slavery, prophesying the trouble it would bring, the blood it would shed upon American soil. Another article was against the infamous practice of duelling, of which Sydney Smith said it was a civilised institution among savages and a savage institution among civilised men. The next, an article on the rights of women, on marriage and divorce, on the infinite brutality of compelling a woman to live with a man she loathed, abhorred, and despised. The next, on international arbitration, to do away with war. The next, on the treatment of criminals in prisons, showing that humanity should never be forgotten by the State. I am simply telling you a few of the things in this man's mind; even then writing upon international copyright, a thing that was achieved only a year or two ago.

In a little while his attention was turned to the politics of the thirteen colonies, and as we are now standing by the monument of Paine, we might as well tell the truth.

A majority of the colonists were not in favor of independence, and they never were, never. There was not one day, from the battle of Lexington to the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, when more than one-third of the colonists were in favor of founding a new nation. Let us tell the truth about them; the country was full of Tories, but the one-third, thoroughly organised, in each one's heart a flame and in each one's brain a star, they accomplished, in spite of their false brethren and in spite of the power of England, the great work, and founded the Republic. But when Paine arrived, nobody was in favor of independence. He fired the first gun. He asked the question, "Is it to the boy's interest to remain a boy all his life? Is it to our interest to be eternally colonists, or to become a nation?"

That man, without an education so-called, had the finest use of the English language of any man of his time. He was the best intellectual marksman then alive. He hit the centre. He used plain, simple, common, forcible English that had ligament and nerve, and he wrote sentences that throbbed as though they had hearts, lines that are alive, and he touched the common sense of mankind; and I say to-day that he did more to establish this Republic than any other man that ever stood on the soil of this continent; and when I say that I remember Franklin, and I remember that other great Infidel, Thomas Jefferson; I remember George Washington; and yet, remembering those names, I say that we are more indebted to-day for the liberty we enjoy to Thomas Paine than to any other man that ever stood upon this continent; and let me tell you, he did more for liberty than all the ministers alive in 1776; he was a greater power than all the pulpits combined in the direction of right.

That man was the first to write the words, "The United States of America"; that man was the originator of the Bank of the United States. That man was the first to suggest a constitution, a greater bond of union than the old Articles of Confederation.

I want you to know something about him. He was a thinker, and he had the courage of his thoughts; and no man spoke braver, clearer than he for everything just, charitable, honest, free, and good. Never in his whole life did he utter a word against anything that is good, never, not one; and no man stood higher when the Revolutionary war closed than Thomas Paine.

Having done what he wished here, having succeeded in forming one government recognising, at least, the rights of white men, he went to England, and in a few years produced his *Rights of Man*, which was an effort to remodel and reform the British Constitution; but at that time the British were savages; patriotism was treason; good sense was heresy; the patriot went to prison, and the thinker went to hell.

In 1791 he went to France. He became a member of the French Convention. He was elected by four departments, but he sat for the department of Calais; and there the principle of this man was put to the test. He was one of the makers of the French Constitution, of their Bill of Rights, and while he sat in that convention the question came up as to what should be done with the king, Louis. Should he be exiled? Should he be killed? What should be done with him? The nation was insane. France had risen from the wrongs of a thousand years; for one thousand years the church, the altar, and the throne had been living on the blood of France. Women were yoked with cattle, ploughing in the field. Men and women belonged to the soil; they were sold like beasts, and there were no human rights. It took the Catholic Church a thousand years to bring about this blessed state of things. But Paine was a man of principle, a philanthropist; and although he knew that he would be suspected, imprisoned, and beheaded if he voted for the life of the king, he had the principle and the courage to say, "No, kill the monarch, but not the man; let him become a useful citizen; it was the man's misfortune to be a king." When he gave that vote he knew that his life depended upon it, and in the history of the world there is nothing sublimer than the conduct of Thomas Paine upon that occasion. He was seized: he was imprisoned.

Just before that time, after having turned his attention to kings and thrones, he took it into his head that he would look behind the altar. He had found that nobles were wretches, parasites living on the blood of honest labor, and he thought he would turn his attention to priests, and he then wrote the first part of the *Age of Reason*, and left the manuscript with Joel Barlow. Then, cast into prison, and while in prison, under the shadow of the guillotine, expecting every moment to be called out to be beheaded, he wrote the second part of the *Age of Reason*; and let me say here to-day that there never has been a clergyman or a doctor of divinity (and it isn't wonderful that such divinity needs doctors)—there never has been one great enough, ingenious enough, educated enough, to answer the arguments of Thomas Paine as found in the *Age of Reason*.

He took the ground that the Bible is not inspired, that it is not the word of an infinitely wise and benevolent God; and there is not to-day, beneath the cope of heaven, an enlightened clergyman who thinks it is. How any human being can read that book, with all its ignorance, with all its atrocities, with its murders and slavery and polygamy, and hell to boot; how any man can read it now and imagine that it was inspired by anybody except a savage is beyond the power of my imagination.

Paine remained in prison, saved from the guillotine by an accident, was finally released, and in 1802 came back to the United States.

The *Age of Reason* had been published. The priests had read it. They could not answer it. What was the next best thing? To attack him—to attack his character, to denounce him; and they commenced, and they are at it now. I don't believe there has ever been an orthodox minister, who has talked on the subject, who has told the truth. I never heard of him if he did; and nearly all intelligent people now, with the exception of the orthodox clergy, know the principal facts in the life of Thomas Paine; and yet every pulpit has been a mint in which slanders and calumnies have been coined against the grandest of American patriots. Will it ever cease? I do not know. Sometimes I think that truth is the weakest thing in the world. I do. Sometimes I think that a lie is the healthiest thing that was ever born into the world. No matter how old it is, it appears without a wrinkle, with ears undulled, with eyes undimmed, fresh as a drop of dew in the heart of a rose; and these lies about Paine pass current to-day in the orthodox world.

You see, the reason was this: The Christians did not think that God could afford to let Paine die in peace. Paine had done what he could to rescue the reputation of God from the slanders of the pulpit. He did not succeed entirely, but he did the best he could; and the ministers said: "If

God allows that man to die in peace, there's something wrong." Now God is just mean enough to try to frighten a dying man. Think of an infinite being, whose thoughts are stars, whose dreams are constellations—think of that being putting in his time frightening a man that is on the crumbling edge of the grave. What a magnificent God—for a cannibal to worship!

For nearly forty years this man had been a herald of the dawn. In the darkness of night he was the star. For nearly forty years he had labored night and day for the happiness of his fellow men, and Christians could not believe that God would allow such a man to die in peace. So they manufactured the facts to fit their theory, and they stated that at the last he recanted.

What had he to recant? He had talked in favor of liberty, honesty, virtue, kindness. Did God want him to recant? That was all he had to take back.

But the fact is that Thomas Paine died as he lived. He had thought about these things, and he knew what his thought was. He had reached the conclusion that, if God exists, he is not unjust; that he does not believe in savagery, in wars of extermination. He had reached the conclusion that, if God were infinite and all-wise, he had at least common sense; and he said so, and that was all the crime he committed. And yet in America the orthodox Church has sacrificed its reputation for veracity upon the grave of Thomas Paine.

Nobody believes a minister now. Everybody knows that every word from the pulpit against the great and glorious man of the past is absolutely untrue. But do you know that sometimes I get a little sorry for the clergy? I have lived to see the brand of mental inferiority put on every orthodox brain. I have lived to see the time when the thinkers, the philosophers, the men of real thought, are on the other side.

And so I tell you to-day that in the great battle between reason and superstition we have passed midnight. In the great battle between government by the people and government by God through kings we have passed midnight. The tendency of the world to-day is towards representative government. The tendency of the world to-day is towards absolute intellectual liberty, towards intellectual hospitality, towards allowing every human being to make the best guess he can on a subject that he knows nothing about.

In the great battle between living for this world and some other, we have passed midnight, and we are living now for this world. We want houses and good food and good clothes; we want books; we want pictures; we want music with its thrilling voice; we want everything there is of joy and gladness beneath the stars; and when we come to another world (if we ever do), we will attend to that.

The world has at last concluded (I mean the sensible ones) to live for this life.

We have concluded that that man is the greatest man who adds most to the sum of human happiness here in this world; and we are believers in homes here, in the family here, and we think more of our families than we do of all the Gods and Christs you can cram into infinite space.

And the man who did as much as any other to help on the human race along this great highway of intellectual and physical progress, a man who did as much as any other, is the man we honor to-day. He lived a laborious life. He was one of the greatest soldiers in the army of human progress, and his reputation is now increasing every day, every day; and in a few years, when the American people meet on the fourth day of July to pay honors to the memory of the great, and when they speak of Washington, and Jefferson, and Franklin, they will also speak of Thomas Paine; and the time will come when in the temple of liberty—our temple—the highest niche will be occupied by the author-hero of the Revolution—Thomas Paine.

The Sikh Bible.

The doctrine of the Sikh Scriptures appears to be not unlike that into which, under the pressure of our theological perplexities, a good many European and some American minds are beginning to slide. In the "Granth" it is said:—

"(1) The One is diffused in the many and all-filling. Wherever I see, there is He.

"By the beautiful mirage of the Maya the world is deluded; only some rare one comprehends the truth.

"All is Govind, all is Govind; without Govind there is no other. As on one string there are seven thousand beads, so is that Lord lengthwise and crosswise.

"(2) A wave of water, froth, and bubble do not become separate from the water.

"This world is the sport of the Supreme Brahm playing about. He does not become another."

The creed may apparently be defined as Pantheism, combined with a strong conception of the Deity, and having as its corollary predestination, qualified, as usual, by the practical recognition of free will.—*Sir Lepel Griffin.*

THE FALL OF ADAM.

A TRAGEDY IN ONE SCENE.

SCENE—Garden of Eden.

Persons Represented—JEHOVAH, ADAM, EVE. (The two last persons are hiding behind a bush.)

JEHOVAH: Adam, where art thou?

ADAM (to Eve): Did you hear that? He's coming to get on to us. This is a fine pickle of fish you've got us into with your accursed inquisitiveness.

EVE: Why, what's he making all the fuss about? 'Twas only an apple, and sour at that.

JEHOVAH: Adam, where art thou?

ADAM: My word, don't he shout! Whatever shall we do?

EVE: Why, just keep behind the bush, and not let him catch us.

ADAM: But there is no use in trying to hide from God. He knows everything and sees everywhere.

EVE: Then what's he shouting for!

JEHOVAH (lower than ever): Adam, where art thou?

ADAM: My god! don't he thunder! We'd better make a clean breast of it. Lord, Lord, was you a-talking to me?

JEHOVAH: Ah! I've got you at last, rascal! What's this you've been up to, eh?

ADAM: Well, to tell you the God's truth, my old lass is awful inquisitive, and ever since you spoke about that forbidden fruit she's been dying to have a taste of it.

JEHOVAH: What then?

ADAM: Well, she took an apple.

JEHOVAH: And what about yourself? Out with it. I'm in the middle of making a world, and can't wait.

ADAM: You see, she persisted in making me have a bite; and as I didn't want a family quarrel over an apple, I took a slice—just to please the old girl.

JEHOVAH: O, you wicked, diabolical couple, to go and eat an apple when I told you not to. Horrible! But I'll have it out of you; see if I don't. I'll not allow you to go naked another day. Eve, I condemn you to petticoats. Adam, I sentence you to trousers.

ADAM and EVE: O, how shall we bear it?

JEHOVAH: Eve, you inquisitive creature, you'll have to suffer for it every time you get a baby. Adam, you scamp, you'll have in future to work for your living; no more loafing, mind you. I curse you all—serpent included. And, remember, my curse isn't a mere sessional affair; on the contrary, I make it a standing order. The whole human race in the future shall suffer the same curse for the same apple.

(Exit JEHOVAH exclaiming): I curse you all, I curse you all; I damn and curse you all!

EVE: My conscience, don't he swear awful. He couldn't get on worse if we'd swallowed the whole garden.

ADAM: Hush, Eve. You mustn't talk in that way about God; he is all-powerful.

EVE: The more's the pity.

ADAM: Hush! God is the potter; we are only the clay. He made us. He manufactured me, for example, out of a little heap o' dust.

EVE: I wish he had left the little heap o' dust alone.

ADAM: You're a wicked sceptic, Eve. You should remember that we owe everything to God. As the poet says:—

The ways of God are wondrous ways,

And difficult to grapple;

He made the world for you and me—

EVE: And damns us for an apple.

WALLACE NELSON.

THE PHILANTHROPIST.

His Life.

He lived the meanest kind of life,
He crimped his children, starved his wife,
And, by all kinds of legal guile,
Together scraped a mighty pile.

His Will.

He died. His will endowed a church,
And left no good cause in the lurch;
Forgotten were his sinful ways,
And all men straightway sang his praise.

His Obituary.

And all the papers straightway said
"That good philanthropist is dead;
That noble, honest, pious man;
Replace him now no other can."

His Epitaph.

They o'er him wrote an epitaph
That must have made the Devil laugh:
"Rest, servant, thy good work is done,
Thy great reward is now begun."

BOOK CHAT.

WE rub our hands over a book like *The Wonderful Law*, by H. L. Hastings. The spread of Freethought is contributed to from many sources, and among these we give a distinguished place to the defences of Christian belief put forward by the orthodox party. Mr. Hastings goes the whole hog, and would have us swallow the laws ascribed to Moses, bristles and all. "Every page of the Mosaic law," says our author, "gives evidence of the circumstance of its origin in the wilderness of Sinai." This includes, of course, the elaborate furniture of the tabernacle. No one need read Colenso, Wellhausen, or Robertson Smith to meet the pretensions of *The Wonderful Law*. A sufficient confutation is a perusal of the Pentateuch.

* * *

The Miseltoe and its Philosophy is a very curious pamphlet which reaches us from America. The author, Mr. P. Davidson, of Loudsville, White co., Georgia, gives some out-of-the-way information on mysticism and religious rites. He traces the sacred character of the miseltoe to the hero of the Hindu epic poem, the Ramayana, and incidentally notices the mystic virtues ascribed to various other plants, and which the writer holds that they really possess.

* * *

Ibsen's Women, by Mary S. Gilliland (W. Reeves, 185 Fleet-street; 4d.), is a reprint of a lecture given before the London Ethical Society. The writer is a lady of culture, thoroughly conversant and in sympathy with her subject. She outlines the stories and characters in Ibsen's plays in an interesting style. The pith of her judgment seems given in the quotations on the title-page: "He is a stern hater of shams." "Ibsen seems to say, Trust Humanity, dare to give women freedom and responsibility—they will be worthy of your trust."

* * *

Mr. Joachim Kaspar, "Humanitarian Deist," issues from 9 Boxworth-grove, Richmond-road, Barnsbury, a vigorous indictment of theological teaching in schools, entitled *The Humanitarian Appeal to the London School Board Electors*.

* * *

Wife Lending, etc., by Walter James (W. Reeves, 185 Fleet-street), consists of a number of lightly-written sketches from the standpoint of a Christian Socialist who opposes "churchianity," which he traces to Paul. The sketch which gives the title links the offer of an English navy to lend his wife with facts given in Letourneau's *Evolution of Marriage*. The subject was gone into by Wake in his *Evolution of Morality*, a work of which Mr. James does not appear to be aware.

* * *

The Great Revolution of 1905, by F. W. Hayes (Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street; 3s. 6d.), is another of the Socialist books of the Bellamy class. The author's dedication evinces his confidence. Here it is: "A man was once confined for fifteen years in a loathsome dungeon. At last a happy thought struck him, he opened the window and got out.—ARTEMUS WARD. In the hope that an inspiration similar to that recorded above may one day visit the 35,000,000 slaves of Great Britain and Ireland, the following pages are respectfully dedicated to them by the author."

* * *

This, at the outset, promises a short and easy settlement of the social difficulties around which so many minds are at play. And the author precipitates the Great Revolution of 1905 by means of the introduction of the constant *deus ex machina* of the impatient—viz., legislation. A Phalanx League for hastening the evolution of the co-operative commonwealth captures the various political associations and local elective boards, and introduces the principle of State Industrialism into Parliament, where the Phalanx gradually overcomes Liberals, Conservatives, and Independents combined, and passes various Acts inaugurating Collectivism or State Socialism, and severely punishing all refractory persons, every loafer and rough being summarily corrected, and treated either to military service or penal servitude. Taxation, Agriculture, Vagrancy, Temporary Credit, Currency, Judicature, and National Property Acts are brought in, and we are told that "the introduction of a scientifically correct administration of the national affairs achieved, without any direct effort at all, almost everything that had been sought to be effected by centuries of ethical and religious propaganda, and sought in vain."

* * *

All this makes us feel that Mr. Hayes must be rather a young man, though doubtless an able and earnest one. For, if past experience goes for anything, carefully-devised legislation does not effect all expected from it; nay, often effects something quite different. Solving the problem of Co-operative Commonwealth in a few years by force of law strikes us as merely a cutting of the Gordian knot. None the less, it must be said that Mr. Hayes's work is full of interest. Its indictment of our present social state, if not

novel, is anyway tersely and trenchantly put. It is brimful of ideas; and if its schemes are no better than dreams, they are still not without utility, for they are full of suggestion. No one can read through *The Great Revolution of 1905* without having his mind forced to play upon the complex problems of our social life; and to direct the free stream of mind upon such topics is, in itself, a benefit.

* * *

Vivisection and Freethought, by E. H. B. Stephenson (Forder; 2d.), is a little pamphlet deserving special notice, because primarily addressed to Freethinkers by a member of the N.S.S. Mr. Stephenson states the case against vivisection in a rational and moderate manner, and in particular meets the arguments likely to be advanced by those who believe in the unfettered pursuit of science. Such methods, he contends, as experiments on living animals involving their suffering, must tend to destroy the most valuable elements of human character, and to suppress our highest desires—those of relieving suffering and promoting happiness. By citations from the *Handbook of the Physiological Laboratory*, he argues that only callousness to suffering can successfully perform the experiments instanced. Mr. Stephenson does not take upon himself to absolutely deny the benefits alleged to have been obtained through vivisection, but he contrasts the dubious character of the advantages with the absolute pain inflicted and the certain moral drawbacks. We commend his pamphlet to the attention of all interested in the important question with which it deals.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE DATE OF THE GOSPELS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

I AM so far of the opinion of Professor Johnson that I hold that the only way to determine the date of any alleged ancient documents is to examine their contents. They may exist in manuscripts having an appearance of age, and yet the hands may be the simulated hands of Esau the elder, while the voice is the voice of Jacob the younger. Now there is one word in the New Testament which occurs so often that it is almost *vox et praeterea nihil*. I allude to the word *therefore*, one of the most frequent of words in these illogical books. Yet may not the use of this little word, which is almost entirely absent in the Old Testament as well as in the classics, suggest that the documents took their rise after the advent of the scholastic philosophy with its fondness for the terminology of logic? INQUIRER.

CHRISTIAN PICTURES AND IMAGES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—The likenesses of Jesus, St. Paul, St. Peter, and the other saints, when studied scientifically and phrenologically, go a long way to account for the origin of their religious actions, and, in many cases, are a certain proof that some and certain parts of the writings attributed to them are not genuine. Take St. Paul, for instance; his physiognomy is that of a man who had in his youth led a life of apparent goodness, and had conformed to the rules of some form of good society, and yet had been guilty of gross immorality, but had, later in life, in consequence of the decay of physical powers, become intensely religious, though he retained a large amount of worldly wisdom. Many of the pictures of the Virgin Mary—and their variety and difference are very great—show clear signs of idiocy, deceitfulness, and unlimited conceit and self-satisfaction. Perhaps able men than myself might go into this subject thoroughly, and furnish interesting information for your paper.—Yours truly, J. HAINES.

Death.

"What is Death?" The moralist would say,
 "Tis only a transition," and the sage,
 "'Tis a returning unto dreamless clay,
 From whence we sprang;" and thus, from age to age,
 Come questions, doubts, decisions—which, again,
 Must be decided, never set at rest.
 Death mocks within the shadow; and in vain
 We ask, "What art thou?" And in vain our quest
 To search within the viewless land that lies
 Around him and beyond him. Though we call,
 "Let us have light," the echo of our cries
 Comes wailing back to us, and that is all.
 Men weep about us, as the wavering spark
 Sinks—flickers—starts—and passes with a breath.
 A life has slipped into the boundless dark,
 Whither no eye may follow. This is Death.
 J. ARTHUR EDGERTON.

Obituary.

I HAVE to record, with much regret, the accidental death of George Bainbridge, 30, locomotive fireman, of Tyne Dock, South Shields. While following his employment at Normanton Goods-yard a little after midnight on Wednesday, June 20, he was severely crushed, and died within half an hour, without being able to make any statement or send a parting word to his wife and friends. The news of his unexpected and violent death was a severe shock to his young wife, as also to his work-mates, amongst whom he was very highly respected. He had been a Freethinker for some years, and was a regular subscriber to this paper. He was a staunch supporter of Mr. Foote, and specially admired the work of Mr. Charles Watts. Mr. J. J. Potts, a fellow-workman and local preacher, delivered a fair and very impartial address at the house door, and the body was afterwards conveyed to Heworth Churchyard and buried in accordance with the wishes of his parents, in the presence of a large number of sorrowing friends.—R. CHAPMAN.

ON Friday, after a brief illness, passed away Bella, daughter of Alexander and Mrs. Brown, two very earnest Freethinkers and members of the local Branch of the N.S.S. The deceased was a bright little girl of twelve years, and bore her severe illness with remarkable fortitude. A large number of Freethinkers and Socialists attended the funeral, which took place on Sunday, June 24. At the graveside Mr. Maitland made a very impressive little speech.—JOHN HARKIS (Aberdeen).

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

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

LONDON.

HALL OF SCIENCE (142 Old-street, E.C.): 7, musical selections; 7.30, G. W. Foote, "President Carnot's Assassination, and its Lessons for Christians and Freethinkers." (Admission free; reserved seats, 3d. and 6d.)

BATTERSEA SECULAR HALL (back of Battersea Park Station): 6.30, members' quarterly meeting, important business; 8.30, social gathering for N.S.S. members and friends (2d.). Tuesday, at 8, dancing class.

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 4.30, general meeting of members; 6.30, tea and soiree.

FINSBURY PARK BRANCH (91 Mildmay Park, N.): Monday, at 8, members' meeting.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL.—Saturday, June 30, Sam Standing conducts pilgrimage. Meet at Old Swan Pier at 3, Greenwich Hospital at 4.30.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 11.15, H. Snell, "What is the Word of God?"

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, C. J. Hunt, "Christianity and Civilisation."

CLERKENWELL GREEN: 11.30, F. Haslam, "Bible Stories." Members' meeting after lecture.

EDMONTON (Angel-road): 7, C. Cohen, "The Dream of Immortality."

FINSBURY PARK (near the band-stand): 11, S. E. Easton, "Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory"; 3, debate between W. Heaford and W. Jarvis on "What are the Essential Teachings of the New Testament?"

HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE (Middlesex side): 7, A. B. Moss, "Ancient Saints and Modern Sinners." Corner of the Grove: Thursday, at 8, Sam Standing, "Poisonous Bible Doctrines."

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, A. B. Moss, "Two Revelations"; 8.30, J. Rowney, "The Bible Creation Story." Wednesday, at 8, F. Haslam, "Life and Teachings of Jesus."

ISLINGTON (Prebend-street, Packington-street): 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "Mansions in the Sky."

KINGSLAND (Ridley-road, near Dalston Junction): 11.30, Sam Standing, "We Won't Give Up the Bible."

LAMBETH (Kennington-green, near Vestry Hall): 6.30, C. James, "Christianity a Fraud."

LEVTON (High-road, near Vicarage-road): 11.30, C. James, "What Must I do to be Saved?"

MILE-END WASTE: 11.30, C. Cohen, "Religion and Freethought."

REGENT'S PARK (near Gloucester-gate): 11.30, J. Rowney, "Death and Eternal Judgment"; 3.30, St. John, "Why I am an Atheist."

TOTTENHAM (corner of West Green-road): 3.30, Sam Standing, "Some Choice Specimens of Bible Morality."

VICTORIA PARK (near the Fountain): 11.15, St. John will lecture; 3.15, C. Cohen will lecture.

WALTHAMSTOW (Markhouse-road): 6.30, C. J. Hunt will lecture.

WESTMINSTER (Old Pimlico Pier): 11.30, Stanley Jones, "Condition of Mental Development."

WOOD GREEN (Jolly Butcher's Hill): 11.30, W. Heaford, "Reason and Revelation"; 7, S. E. Easton, "The Bible as a Guide to Morality."

Thursday, at 8, C. Cohen, "Christianity and Modern Thought."

WIMBLEDON (Broadway, near Railway Station): 7, W. Heaford will lecture.

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM (Coffee House, corner of Broad-street): Thursday, at 8, papers, discussions, etc.

BLACKBURN (87 Penny-street): 3, members' meeting.

BOLTON (Borough Chambers, Rushton-street): 5, tea party.

LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Ann-street): 11, Charles Watts, "The Bible Opposed to Civilisation"; 3, "The Christian Theory of the Universe"; 7, "Christ Not the Reformer for To-day."

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, W. K. Hall will lecture.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Ante-room above Good Templar Hall): 7, important business meeting.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation Schools, King-street): 6.30, ethical class; 7.30, business meeting.

SUNDERLAND (Lecture Room, Bridge End Vaults, Bridge-street): 7, Hall Nicholson, "Life and Death."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

NEWCASTLE (Quayside): 11, Carl Aarstad, "Did Christ Practise all his Precepts?"

SUNDERLAND (The Green, Ryhope): 11, Hall Nicholson, "Christian and Secular Morality."

Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—July 1, m. Mile End, a. Victoria Park, e. Edmonton; 5, Wood Green; 8, m. Finsbury Park, a. Victoria Park, e. Walthamstow; 12, Wood Green.

C. J. HUNT, 48 Fordingley-road, St. Peter's Park, London, W.—July 1, m. Camberwell, e. Walthamstow; 8, m. Clerkenwell-green; 15, m. Westminster, a. Finsbury Park; 22, m. Camberwell, a. Regent's Park, e. Camberwell; 29, m. and a. Hyde Park, e. Hammersmith.

STANLEY JONES, 53 Marlborough-road, Holloway, London, N.—July 1, m. Pimlico Pier, e. Tottenham; 8, m. Kingsland, e. Wimbeldon; 11, Hyde Park; 15, m. Leyton, e. Walthamstow; 22, m. a., and e., Hyde Park; 26, e. Hammersmith; 29, m. Finsbury Park, e. Lambeth. August 5, m. Pimlico Pier, a. Regent's Park; 12, m. Battersea.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—July 1, m. Hyde Park, e. Hammersmith; 8, Chatham; 15, m. Victoria Park, e. Edmonton; 22, m. Clerkenwell; 29, m. and e. Camberwell. August 12, Failsforth.

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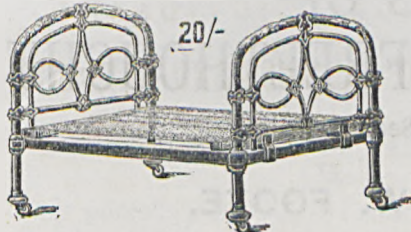
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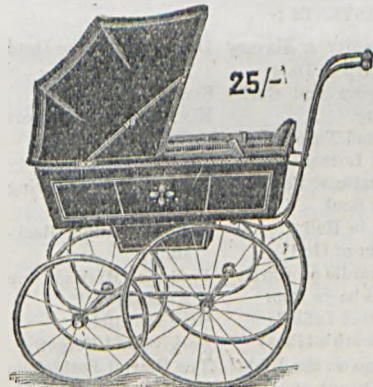
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