

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

AN OBSCENE BOOK.

IN her old unregenerate days, before she discovered the sublime wisdom of Theosophy, Mrs. Besant was very much interested in social questions; and in dealing with the problem of population she gained an introduction to an English judge and jury. The judge was a sensible man; he knew the world, and had read and studied. But the pudding-headed jury would not take his direction, and they found Mrs. Besant guilty of publishing an "obscene libel," although they exonerated her from any evil motive. Naturally her Irish blood was roused. She went upon the war-path, and hurled at the bigots a pamphlet entitled *Is the Bible Indictable?* Of course she concluded that it was, and that, according to the English law as applied in her case, its publishers were liable to fine and imprisonment.

Mrs. Besant was right in theory, though not in fact; for the Bible is our Protestant fetish, and were it thrice as filthy as it is, it would still be circulated with impunity. Fancy a magistrate asked to grant a summons against the British and Foreign Bible Society! Why, the worthy old gentleman would fall into a fit on the bench.

Yet no one in his right senses can deny that the Bible is—in parts at least—an obscene book. The lowest animal functions are often called by their vulgar names; there are frequent, and sometimes very brutal, references to the generative organs; the stories of lust, adultery, incest, and unnatural vice, are bad enough to raise blushes in a brothel; and in the Song of Solomon the most passionate eroticism is decked out with the most voluptuous imagery. Everyone knows there are things in the Bible which no minister would dare to read out to a mixed congregation. Some of it would be too strong at one of those tricky meetings "for men only." It would be hissed in a music-hall and howled at in a theatre. Yet the entire book, with all its obscene passages, is placed in the hands of little children in our public schools; and the so-called Progressives are fighting to keep it there, under the banner of the good old Compromise.

When the great Atheist and scientist, Paul Bert, in the course of an educational debate in the Chamber of Deputies, began reading out passages from certain Jesuit books of instruction, the clericalists soon cried out "Enough!" In the same way, it is impossible for a Freethinker to shame the Christians as he would. The worst parts of the Bible—to use a French expression—do not permit themselves to be read aloud, even in a remorseless debate. To read them would be to affront the common decencies of civilised society. Nor is it even possible to print them. The editors of the *Bible Handbook* could only give references to the obscenities of scripture, leaving the reader to find them in the only place where they should be discovered—in the Word of God.

But everything happens in time, and what cannot be brought about by human ingenuity will sometimes occur by accident. The vindictiveness of a Christian clergyman in America has resulted in putting the Bible on trial in a court of justice.

It happened in this way. An epistolary controversy was carried on between this clergyman and a Freethinker named Wise. In the course of the debate Mr. Wise copied out the twelfth verse of the thirty-sixth chapter of Isaiah; whereupon the man of God had him (not Isaiah, but Mr. Wise) arrested for circulating obscene matter through the

American mail! Mr. Wise was committed for trial, and in due course we shall hear the result. Meanwhile the Christian papers are trying to make out that the incriminated text is not obscene *in* the Bible, but only *out* of it; which is as brazen a piece of hypocrisy as we ever encountered.

Mr. Wise is a sturdy Freethinker, but he is not a practised speaker. We presume, therefore, that he will be defended by counsel. But if *we* stood in his shoes, we should conduct the case in a fashion that would make the hypocrites writhe. First of all, we should take the wind out of the sails of the prosecution by pleading Guilty. At that stage of the trial we should address the court something in this style: "I admit that the text in question is obscene. No honest man could deny it. Its obscenity is beyond dispute, except in a church or an asylum. On this point, therefore, I have no defence. Consequently I plead Guilty in fact to the indictment. I did circulate obscene matter through the American mail."

Such a plea would be a stunner. It would also leave no room for the pious and mercenary eloquence of the counsel for the prosecution. We should do all the running on the track.

Our great opportunity would come at the point where the prisoner is entitled to say why sentence should not be passed upon him. We should then put in our real defence. It would require a good long speech, but the substance of it would be as follows:—

"My lord—at this stage of the proceedings I beg to offer, with all possible respect to the court, yet in justice to myself, some reasons why sentence should not be passed upon me. In the first place, I desire it to be remembered that I am not the *author* of the obscene text on account of which I am prosecuted. Its nominal author was Isaiah, but I learnt at church, at Sunday-school, and in the divinity class, that its real author is the Holy Ghost. I submit, therefore, that this personage ought to stand in the dock beside me, and bear the principal share of the court's displeasure. I further submit that his trial, as the chief offender, should precede mine, and that until this is effected I ought not to suffer pains or penalties.

"In the next place, I beg to observe that there is something invidious and malicious in singling me out for prosecution. What everyone else does with impunity ought not to be punished in my particular case. I remember quite well, when I was a Sunday-school scholar, hearing this very text read out aloud to a large class of boys. I have also heard it read out aloud in church. It is forced upon the attention of every compositor and reader in the offices where the Bible is printed. In numberless other ways this text *must* be heard or read by a multitude of persons. I submit, therefore, that to punish me, while all the other culprits are allowed to escape, would be a scandal to the judicature of this realm.

"Further, I beg to observe that my offence, if it be an offence, is by no means heinous. In selecting a dirty passage from the Bible, in the course of a discussion on its moral value, I did not lose regard for common decency. I might easily have chosen very much obscener passages; in fact, I am almost astonished at my own moderation. I selected the least noisome text as a sample from a very filthy collection; a fact which shows that I was animated by no obscene motive whatsoever. If I am to be punished for such discretion, future controversialists will not stick at trifles; on the principle that it is as well to be hung for a sheep as a lamb, they will select the very worst text in the

Bible; and this, I conceive, will not be in the interest of decency and morality.

"Finally, I appeal to your lordship, as a Christian man, not to fly in the face of your own revelation, wherein I read that 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.' Not *some* scripture, but *all* scripture. And as this verse in Isaiah is certainly a part of *all* scripture, it is in every way profitable, even in respect to righteousness. Whether it be obscene or not, it bears the imprimatur of the Almighty. I conceive, therefore, that your lordship, as a Christian man, cannot possibly sentence me to fine or imprisonment for doing what God himself declares to be 'profitable'; and I respectfully ask your lordship to defer sentence indefinitely, or to bind me over in my own recognisances to come up for judgment on the morning of the resurrection."

Mr. Wise's case will not be conducted in this way. We hope he will not suffer fine or imprisonment; but, if he does, there will be some compensation in knowing that the Bible has at last been declared *obscene* in a court of justice.

G. W. FOOTE.

EMERSON AND STERLING.

It was with even greater interest in the speaker than in his subject that I visited South Place Institute last Sunday, for the lecturer was the son of Ralph Waldo Emerson, a teacher I had never seen, but had honored, revered, and loved. There was sufficient in the appearance of Dr. Edward Waldo Emerson to remind one of the portraits of his father. The same slim figure, square brow, and long head. "A Greek head on right Yankee shoulders," as Lowell wrote of the elder Emerson, but with a shade more of the artist and cultured man of the world, and a shade less of the serene thinker than his father. He speaks well, with a slight American accent here and there. Beyond the ability to speak and write well, there was little to indicate that he is the ninth of a consecutive line of ministers and teachers in the Emerson family, each of whom held the most advanced views in the religious thought of their day. His subject was sufficiently interesting—"John Sterling," the gifted son of the *Times* Thunderer. John Sterling's fine qualities were amply testified to by his friendships with men like Maurice, Tennyson, Mill, Spedding, Haere, and Carlyle, the last two of whom have erected monuments to his memory, one of which, at least, will outlast bronze and marble. Usually men's lives are written because the world has rung with the noise of their work. In the case of Sterling, only the select few ever heard of his name, and his works fell from the press almost stillborn. Yet Sterling was a noble fellow. One cannot forget his saying, "I would plunge into the bottom of hell if I were sure of finding the Devil there and getting him strangled." But he left little worthy of his reputation. As Dr. E. W. Emerson remarked, in opening his discourse, "Such lives are not to be counted as though they had failed. They live on in the radiation of the nobility and sympathy with which they have influenced the lives of their friends." They live, in the words of George Eliot,

In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self;
In thoughts sublime, that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.

Among the many distinguished friends of Sterling, it appears that, by the suggestion of Carlyle, he sought and found one across the Atlantic, in the transcendental essayist, Ralph Waldo Emerson. They had much in common, beyond their mutual friendship for Carlyle. Both had been in the ministry, and both had left it because, as Dr. E. W. Emerson put it, they found the walls of the Church too narrow for the expansion of their spirits. Both had been brought under the awakening spirit of the French Revolution, and under the influence of Wordsworth and Coleridge. Both were lovers of freedom, and disagreed with Carlyle on the question of negro slavery. Their correspondence, which lasted from 1839 till close upon Sterling's death in 1844, and which was read almost *in toto* by Dr. Emerson, has never yet been published, though it will doubtless shortly see the light. It is the frank,

unrestrained correspondence of literary men and lovers of their kind, holding hands to each other across the sea. Emerson is full of admiration for the poetic power of Sterling. "I must count him happy who has this delicious music in his brain." Sterling longs to personally greet "one who does not regard one's heart's blood as so much puddle-water," perhaps glancing at Carlyle; and mentions with admiration the other poets, Alfred Tennyson and Henry Taylor.

Sterling's tragedy of *Strafford* is dedicated to Emerson. In the copy which he presented he inscribed these lines:—

Teacher of starry wisdom, high serene,
Receive the gift our common ground supplies;
Red flowers, dark leaves, that ne'er on earth had been,
Without the influence of sidereal skies.

It happened, rarely enough, that neither of Sterling's biographers, appreciative as they were, really saw that his best work was poetic. R. W. Emerson seems to have seen this, and his son also. The lines on *Daedalus*, which he read before his discourse, in their choice simplicity are worthy of Matthew Arnold. I must lift out a brick or two as specimens of the building:—

Ever their phantoms arise before us,
Our loftier brothers, but one in blood;
By bed and table they lord it o'er us,
With looks of beauty and words of good.

Calmly they show us mankind victorious,
O'er all that's aimless, blind and base;
Their presence has made our nature glorious,
Unveiling our night's illumined face.

Tenderness, fancy, simplicity, earnestness, and strength were Sterling's characteristics, and they appear more in his "Sexton's Daughter" and his lines on the death of Mirabeau, and on Joan of Arc, than in his more pretentious novels.

Emerson, in his correspondence, tells Sterling of his Concord literary friends, Alcott, Thoreau, and Hawthorne, who, he says, are better than their writings, and therefore do not bear out Kant's cynical saying, "Detestable is the company of literary men." On the other side, Sterling is full of love and not unceremonious admiration for the rough genius of his friend, the sage of Chelsea.

Carlyle's *Life of Sterling* was evidently written as a relief to his feelings. It was not only a monument to his friend, but a protest against the "Theosophic moonshine" which had for a while enthralled him. It is in this biography that Carlyle's own utter rejection of orthodox revealed religion and established Churchianity, with its black dragoons, most distinctly appears. "What is incredible to thee thou shalt not, at thy soul's peril, attempt to believe.....Speedy end to superstition—a gentle one if you can contrive it—but an end. What can it profit any mortal to adopt locutions and imaginations which do *not* correspond to fact; which no sane mortal can deliberately adopt in his soul as true; which the most orthodox of mortals can only, and this after infinite essentially *impious* effort to put out the eyes of his mind, persuade himself to believe that he believes? Away with it." Carlyle, like Emerson and Sterling, had been intended for the black business, but, unlike them, he had never entered the profession in which, as he says, you have to solemnly constitute yourself an impostor at the threshold.

Sterling's own views on religion were most fully shown in his letters to his relative, William Coningham. He says therein: "After long and painful resistance of mind I was forced to admit that, if I am to honestly follow the best light afforded me, I must own there is error in the Scriptures, and that the denial of this is, in an adequately instructed man, a mere lying for God—one of the most absurd and suicidal of all human superstitions." "All my interests, prejudices, and even nobler wishes and hopes long fought against that amount of latitudinarian doctrine to which I found that conscience was gradually compelling me. May you gain wisdom at the price of less suffering." Again he says: "Few things have lately struck me as more remarkable than the connection of causes—the interest of the rich in the Established Church, and that of the clergy in extirpating inquiry, which have, as yet, completely excluded from this country all knowledge of controversies that have really revolutionised the thought of all the rest of Europe." Similarly he writes to Emerson of the social ties which closely connect the aristocracy and the clergy, and remarks that the English Deists had, a hundred years previously, pointed out the difficulties of orthodoxy,

difficulties which they had passed on to Voltaire, who had enlightened the continent; while in England the facts remain unknown, except to a few recluses. The writers in the *Freethinker* may, perhaps, lay the flattering unction to their souls that they have followed in the paths of the pioneers who sought to alter, and to some extent succeeded in altering, this state of affairs.

In quitting the Church, Sterling left its dogmas definitely behind. "What we are going to," he said, "is abundantly obscure; but what all men are going from is very plain." He was not of those easy-going Broad Churchmen, who will undertake to reconcile the most palpable contradictions, provided only that their own comfortable berths remain untouched. He died in his thirty-eighth year, the last ten of those years being spent under the shadow of Death's wing. The brave, manly spirit with which this rejector of revelation met his impending doom, and the last noble letter that Carlyle printed, must ever be memorable to readers of his *Life of John Sterling*. Dr. Emerson appropriately referred to it at the end of his discourse, and read Carlyle's no less beautiful and noble letter in reply.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE CHURCH AND THE LABOR QUESTION.

(Concluded from page 603.)

HAVING shown in my article in last week's *Freethinker* the obstructive policy which the Church has always adopted towards the laboring classes, it will be well to consider now a few matters in reference to labor itself. During the past fifty years there has grown up a new aristocracy, or, as it may be termed, a moneyocracy—the vast army of a new class of employers. After the passing of the "Limited Liability Act" the old employer practically disappeared, and the wealth that formerly found its way into the hands of a few is now much more extensively circulated than it used to be, although it is still far from being as evenly distributed as could be desired. The personal element, once so strong in the squire and the large employer, no longer exists. In many instances workmen do not know their employers personally, and the employers do not know their workmen, except through the chief manager, so great have the changes been, within the last few decades, of the relationship between the employed and employer.

Another force that has operated in bringing about a social revolution is the introduction and the rapid increase of the use of machinery. It has been estimated that probably the machine power now in operation is equivalent to the labor of five million men. It must be admitted that the introduction of this new force was followed by much suffering through the displacement of the old style of labor. Still, the employment of machinery has its advantages, and the question which now should be considered is how can these advantages be best conferred upon the community at large. In order to place the labor problem upon a proper basis, we must discover the conditions under which every contributor to the industrial welfare of society shall reap his just reward. Personally, I am in favor of the proper application of the principle of co-operation, which would enable the worker to receive, not only his wages, but a fair share of the profits derived principally through his labor and skill. But to give co-operation a fair opportunity to succeed, every officer and workman connected with it should be dealt with as though he belonged to a private concern. There ought to be no lack of discipline and strictly business qualities. Unless these essentials to all success be observed, no doubt the result of applying the new principle to general industrial undertakings will be disappointing. The opposition which co-operation has had to encounter has been very formidable, and this, perhaps, is not surprising when we remember the class distinctions that have been maintained, and the love of greed that existed among those who formerly controlled the labor market. The employers had been accustomed to receive the whole of the profits obtained from the labor of others, and they were not disposed to give up this advantage, much less to contribute to their own downfall.

Much as I desire to recognize indications of a speedy solution to the labor problem, the present prospect is one of a prolonged battle. The representatives of capital and labor are like two vast armies preparing for an encounter,

the issues of which are by no means certain. Roughly stated, the fact is that on the one side we have the laborer striving to get as much wage as he can obtain by law and combination; while, on the other hand, the employer is seeking to have as much work done as possible for as low a wage as he can pay. The question now arises, In the face of this crisis, what is the best method to adopt to harmonise the two contending interests, with the least friction, and without entailing disorder and suffering, and causing the industrial operations of the country to be at a standstill? Many plans have been suggested, but there is one in which I have great faith—namely, the formation of Boards composed of members of both sides of the contest, with a disinterested person like a stipendiary magistrate to act as umpire. Of course, it is assumed that there is sufficient good sense among the contending parties to enable them to perceive that war, strikes, and lock-outs should belong to the past, and that such methods of redress can be usefully superseded by a dignified and conciliatory mode of settling disputes. Such Boards should be purely democratic in their construction, both sides being equally represented, and each party should feel bound in honor to abide by the decisions arrived at.

Whether for good or for evil, it does appear to me that the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the few must cease, and the capitalists, who invest their money in industrial pursuits, must be content with such a share of the profits as may be equitably assigned them, after all other necessary requirements have been provided for—that is, the capitalist's share should be regulated upon precisely the same principle as though the capital consisted of shares in, say, a limited liability company. It is just and desirable to prevent the inequitable division of wealth and the accumulation of it in the hands of the few, who cannot, or who will not, use it for the promotion of the well-being of the people from whom it was derived. Society loses control over vast accumulations when in the hands of the few; while, if the wealth is distributed among the many, it is more likely to be circulated throughout the community in general. The laboring classes must no longer have reason to feel that their heritage is only toil and poverty, with little or no interest in the wealth of the nation. As John Stuart Mill said: "If the bulk of the human race are always to remain as at present, slaves to toil in which they have no interest, and, therefore, feel no interest, drudging from early morning till late at night for the bare necessaries, and with all the intellectual and moral deficiencies which that implies—without resources either in mind or feeling—untaught, for they cannot be better taught than fed; selfish, for their thoughts are all required for themselves, without interest or sentiments as citizens and members of society, and with a sense of injustice rankling in their minds equally for what they have not and what others have, I know not what there is which should make a person of any capacity of reason concern himself about the destinies of the human race."

While admitting that the present existing society requires that some of the results of labor should be secured for the toilers, it by no means follows, in my judgment, that every man should receive a like proportion, regardless of merit or willingness to use it wisely. That would be granting to birth what should be given to the requirements of the individual, to be employed for the benefit of all. No one should be deprived of the incentive to excel in that for which he is adapted. Some men can do more than others, and some can do what others cannot. Thus, so long as we have labor, skill, and genius, distinctions will prevail, and our duty is to see that such distinctions are based on justice; any proposals that ignore these facts will, in all probability, end in failure. The clergy may preach against riches (while they strive to secure for themselves as much wealth as possible), as they have done for generations; but they might as well attempt to control the waves of the ocean by the same means. It is not the amount of wealth possessed, but who possesses it, and the use to which it is applied, that should command our attention. It is as manifest as a sum in simple arithmetic that, if all were rewarded according to merit, there would be less suffering in the world than we now have, and the excessively rich would be impossible. It is the duty of those who advise working men, in their present unrest, and justifiably dissatisfied state of mind, to remind them that there is no royal road to wealth. It is only by patient industry, by well-directed, intelligent efforts, by

mutual confidence and trust in each other, and by honest co-operative methods, that the laborers can obtain a larger share of the fruits of their labor than has hitherto been obtainable.

It seems to me that the cause of the laborer has suffered from the following three errors: (1) That capital has been considered superior to labor, which it is not. (2) That labor has not been considered the principal requisite in the production of wealth, which it is. (3) That the laborer and capitalist have had an equal opportunity in the struggle for existence, which they have not. In writing thus I do not seek to set class against class; on the contrary, my desire is to destroy the barriers that have too long kept them asunder. "The hive of industry," said John Bright, "is the pride and glory of the nation"; and my plea is that the bees of labor shall be allowed to gather, and keep a proper share of honey, so that with it they can sweeten their lives of toil. Fortunately, there is hope for the future. The masses have awakened to a sense of their rights. As Colonel Ingersoll truly puts it: "The laboring people, a few generations ago, were not very intellectual. There were no school-houses, no teachers except the Church, and the Church taught obedience and faith—told the poor people that, although they had a hard time here, working for nothing, they would be paid in Paradise with a large interest. Now the working people are more intelligent—they are better educated—they read and write. In order to carry on the works of the present, many of them are machinists of the highest order. They must be reasoners. Every kind of mechanism insists upon logic. The working people are reasoners—their hands and heads are in partnership. They know a great deal more than the capitalists. It takes a thousand times the brain to make a locomotive that it does to run a store or a bank. Think of the intelligence in a steamship, and in all the thousand machines and devices that are now working for the world. These working people read. They meet together—they discuss. They are becoming more and more independent in thought. They do not believe all they hear. They may take hats off their heads to the clergy, but they keep their brains in their heads for themselves."

CHARLES WATTS.

THE EVIL OF MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE FROM A SCRIPTURAL STANDPOINT.

THOSE who see so much to reform and make better, and who receive so little encouragement from *friends*, and especially from the very ones they desire to uplift, have their feelings finely expressed in the words that Bacon has put into the mouth of Hamlet, when he says:—

The Time is out of joint, O, cursed spite!
That ever I was born to set it right.

And yet, long before that wail of woe was uttered, a gentle and God-like spirit solved the problem for the world at large, and particularly for the hopeless reformer, when he said: "Come unto me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

In this paper we will discuss what the Greatest Son of Palestine can do for us with the problems of marriage and divorce. In our imagination, let us be carried back to the little town of Nazareth, and, with its humble people, let us join the crowd as it followed the Galilean peasant as he went outside the town to deliver the sermon of all sermons, and with them, while listening to the Master, from that mount let us survey the world. Let us bring to bear upon these questions, that influence the human race to such a great extent as do marriage and divorce, the teachings of that gentle reformer, who from that mount enunciated doctrines that, if believed in and practised by his so-called followers, would revolutionise the world.

An action should be judged good or bad in proportion to the motive of selfishness or unselfishness that prompted it. As good a standard as could be decided upon by which one should judge what is moral or immoral is the spirit of the assertion or abnegation of one's ego.

The best definition of what is right or wrong is in the following short rule: Whenever the assertion of self predominates, that action is *bad*. Whenever the spirit of

abnegation of self is the ruling motive, then that action is *good*.

Religious or moral codes, whose object is to cultivate the spirit of self-sacrifice, are the ones that will do the most good, and will eventually outlive the superstitions that have grown around *that vital truth*, which are the result of the great curse of *priestcraft*.

Moral codes being rules for action, they necessarily teach what is contrary to the natural instinct. In this we can see how well all religious teachers know, from the codes they formulated, *that nature is immoral*. In so far as we control or subdue our natural feelings, and emotions, and desires, do we approach near to the *ideal* that is suggested or taught by the moral code which we desire to imitate. Of all ideals that have been presented by the different religions, the highest is seen in the complete and absolute surrendering of self in the subduing of all natural desires, as advocated in the precepts, and in the example of self-renunciation as taught and lived by Jesus.

If there is one thing the Nazarene taught that is beyond controversy, even though his so-called followers in this do not imitate him, it is in the killing of the strongest desire and controlling of that passion which nature is ever ready to assert—the *sexual instinct*.

It is the purpose of this paper to discuss *that* subject in connection with Marriage and Divorce from the standpoint as taught by Jesus, in the writings of the four evangelists and the great organiser, St. Paul.

Of all the flowers that have sprung into life in the religious garden of the world, none has been so sweet as was the pure white Palestine Lily that died upon the cross. And in spite of the fact that his teachings have been repudiated by his so-called followers, his influence is more largely felt, and the fragrance of his life is wafted down from age to age, causing more sweetness than has come from any other flower that ever grew in that garden.

In discussing this subject, let us see what that pure, white-souled Nazarene taught, and not what the world is willing to accept as his teachings; for between the two there is a great difference, as the world, for its gain, has always compromised where it has not repudiated the teachings of Jesus.

The keynote to, and the kernel of, his teachings is self-renunciation. There is no act in which self so predominates, in which one's ego so asserts itself, as in the marriage relation.

Renunciation being the open sesame to the teachings of Jesus, let us see, in this article, what he thought of the sexual relation, and how he regulated that natural instinct in married life, and what were his views on divorce.

So-called good society is startled and shocked now and then by a bold, outspoken man or woman, who, for the sake of truth and loyalty to that ideal rather than to society, have the courage to write upon a subject that is tabooed—prostitution. While this society will tolerate and allow that evil to exist, if not made too public, it denounces the man or woman who will mention or advocate a reformation in that respect.

Writers like Tolstoi, in his *Kreutzer Sonata*, and Helen H. Gardner, in her *Is This your Son my Lord?* and *Pray you, Sir, whose Daughter?* know too well the reception their books have had at the hands of this prudent and good society.

If the term "crank" is applied by the many to such noble men and women as are the above authors, by what name will society call the writer who will not only preach against the evils of an impure life, but call the sexual relation in marriage wrong? Until the standpoint is agreed upon from which an argument proceeds, until the promise is stated, discussion fails; and it is impossible to approach near the truth of the subject until that point is decided. Before proceeding we will state our authority upon which the statement is made, *that the sexual relation in marriage is wrong*.

Upon the theory that the Bible is the word of God, that the central figure in that book, Christ, is that God, we will argue from that position, and use that character for our authority. *This is our premise*.

Christ's teachings, summed up into one doctrine, are renunciation of this life and of all that makes it attractive from a *worldly and natural*, from a *human* standpoint.

The sexual relation of the sexes in marriage is the most natural in life, and calls forth our deepest and most human feeling. If renunciation of the world, the flesh, and the

devil tends towards spiritual things; if the struggle between the spirit and the flesh is forever going on in our natures, to renounce that feeling, whether it be indulged in *legally*-called marriage, or *illegally*-called prostitution, is but carrying out Christ's teachings. Upon this subject we can refer to Matthew xix. 8-13. After Christ had said that, on account of the hardness of their hearts, Moses suffered them to put away their wives, he (Christ) also told them that it was not so from the beginning. Then his disciples asked him this question, "Is it not good to marry?" and he answered them saying, "All men cannot receive this saying, save them to whom it is given, for there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mothers' womb, and there are some eunuchs of men, and *there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake.* He that is able to receive it, let him receive it." In other words, those who have given up *all* desires of the flesh to attain the spiritual state of the kingdom of heaven are those who have not followed those desires, whether in the union called marriage, or prostitution.

That great champion of the Church, St. Paul, in 1 Corinthians vii., answers some questions that had been asked him relating to these subjects, in these words: "It is good for a man *not* to touch a woman." And speaking of himself, who, by crucifying those desires of the flesh, had made himself an eunuch for the kingdom of heaven's sake, says, in the matter of the relation of the sexes, "For I would that all men were even as I myself." Showing beyond a doubt that to attain the state of the kingdom of heaven one must go contrary to human nature in the most imperative and ever-present desire of the flesh.

For, as this same writer says, in Galatians v. 16-17: "This, I say then, walk in the spirit, and ye shall *not* fulfil the lusts of the *flesh*. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye *cannot* do the things that ye would. *And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*"

St. Paul says, in his 1st Epistle to Timothy, chap. v., to show how the sexual union of the sexes will keep one from the full attainment of the kingdom of heaven, in regard to those who should be taken into the brethren: "Let not a widow be taken into the number under three score years old." And then explains why only the *old* ones should be allowed to join the brethren, by saying: "But the *younger* widows refuse, for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ they will marry."

Showing that the sexual union of the sexes, whether in marriage or prostitution, retards one from entering into a *perfect* spiritual state. Using the Bible for our authority, and Christ's teachings as our premise, could anything be taught plainer than that the most human passion, the *sexual union of the sexes*, IS WRONG, and retards one's progress should they desire to enter into the kingdom of heaven fully possessed of the true spirit of Christ?

Should one wonder that it is strange that so-called good society would not tolerate such ideas? So-called believers in the Galilean have long since found it to be much easier to *believe* in his *divinity* than to *accept* his *teachings*. In believing in his divinity they find they need not change the mode of their lives, while to accept his teachings they know they would have to remodel their ways of living; so they exalt him to the being of a God, and at the same time they repudiate or compromise his teachings until they lose their force, and these very believers become twofold more the children of the world than they would be without their so-called faith in their Master.

Christ, realising that the doctrine expressed in Matthew xix. 12 would be hard for most people to receive, says, "All men cannot receive this saying"; and St. Paul, knowing the struggle that that doctrine would cost most men, says: "But if they cannot contain, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to burn."

So we find, after reading the New Testament, that from the teachings of Jesus and his great apostle, St. Paul, to gratify the sexual instinct is detrimental to the growth of the spirit, and helps to retard the free entering into the kingdom of heaven.

Why should that be? Is it not for the reason that, should one marry, they would then have to divide their love between their God and another. For this God, as they have been told, is a *jealous God*, and, instead of having but the *one* duty to perform, *love to God*, in the marriage state that duty becomes *two-fold*.

So ends the first part of this paper bearing upon marriage. Without marriage there could be no divorce, and, as that *evil* exists in society, let us see in the balance of this paper what we can find in the New Testament bearing upon that subject.

—*Freethinkers' Magazine.*

GANO BRYAN.

(To be concluded.)

ABUSIVE LANGUAGE OF THE BIBLE GOD.

A TIT-BIT FOR PIOUS MR. GLADSTONE.

[Deuteronomy xix. 17.]

THE writer of the article, "Perversions of Scripture," has given but a feeble idea of the horribly disgusting utterances set down to Yaveh—viz., "Our translators have been more decent than 'the Holy Ghost, by substituting *abominations* for *dungy gods*." לל = excrement, rolled together (well-turned faex), so-called from its passing through the various circunvolutions of the guts. It is used in the plural in this verse—i.e., "Heap of —"; *vide*, also, 1 Kings xiv. 10; Job xx. 7; Ezekiel iv. 12, 15; Zephaniah i. 17.

After abusing and cursing everybody and everything that does not suit him, Yaveh falls foul of other gods and calls them —. Faugh! No one but an incorrigible blackguard, lost to shame and decency, would use such language, of which even the lowest ruffian of Whitechapel must feel ashamed—when sober. The Bible God is no respecter of persons. Query, Does he respect anything?

CHARLES KROLL LAPORTE.

ACID DROPS.

"THE Free Churches," says the *Christian Commonwealth*, "are so stagnant that some observers are boldly saying that Dissent has had its day. Yet the Established Church is losing its hold on thousands of its old popular congregations. The piety of our fathers is out of date, and religious gaiety halls are in demand." Thanks.

"Who are the Christians?" asks the *Christian Commonwealth*, in a leading article, and in answering it our contemporary repudiates the idea that men like John Stuart Mill and Frederic Harrison are to be regarded as Christians on account of their characters. Character is not enough to make a Christian, and "unconverted men are reckoned as out of Christ, without God and without hope in the world." Without God, yes; but "without hope" is only a piece of Christian impudence.

John Stuart Mill and Frederic Harrison are to be accounted guilty of the sin of unbelief, and "in the New Testament this sin is regarded as the chief of all." According to this—and it is good Christianity enough—the wicked believer will go to heaven, and the best unbeliever will go to hell. Yet the *Commonwealth's* last word is "charity." Christians are to be "charitable" to unbelievers, after booking them for Sheol.

There is danger in bought sermons. A family at Folkestone, says the *Christian World*, went to a suburban church in the morning, and to a town church in the evening. The preachers were different, but the texts and sermons were exactly the same.

A gentleman called Russell advertises a cure for obesity. He appears to find the Christian papers a good vehicle for advertising his nostrum. Which is very curious, considering that the readers of such papers, being Christians, ought to macerate the flesh, instead of plumping it up to burn all the better in hell.

Charley Higgins, the new Black Champion, does not appear to have got on as well as he expected at Hastings. He complained one evening that the local men of God had not given him any assistance. He hoped to find them warm friends, but their hearts were as cold as the sea-water. The Black Champion evidently wants to bleed the shepherds as well as their flocks, which shows him to be a man of some simplicity.

A Japanese artist depicts the future state of Chinese enemies, and his illustration is reproduced in the *New York Herald*. With their characteristic banners, umbrellas,

lanterns, and pigtailed, the Chinese skeletons have gone to the infernal regions. But his Satanic Majesty, who is depicted with horns and a club, has no room for them. They are driven forth from hell, to wander through endless space.

Mr. Gladstone says his faith increases with his years. Perhaps this may be interpreted as meaning that the unswerving faith of childhood returns in old age. Certainly the G.O.M.'s literary activity is wonderful. He is now said to be writing the general introduction to *The People's Pictorial Bible History*, to be issued at Chicago next spring.

The Russian Government, not content with closing the British and Foreign Bible Society's depot in Kieff, have forbidden colportage of their publications. It is alleged, as the ground of this prohibition, that the Society's workers have been guilty of spreading the doctrines of Stundism. This, the Society declares, is without foundation; but the prohibition sufficiently evinces how the various Christian sects love one another.

The Vicar of Bredgar (Kent) knows the real inwardness of religion. In the current number of his parish magazine he tells the farmers "it is no good to grumble about the weather and the crops; if they want good returns from the Lord, they must shell out for the Church. Cheerful and liberal harvest thank-offerings are the best means of securing good harvests." That is the good old doctrine we are almost losing sight of in these degenerate times. Probably bad harvests are the result of infidelity.

He must be a hardy spiritist who denies that much rascality and credulity is mixed up with mejumship. The *Boston Sunday Globe* (Aug. 26) reports a glaring case. May and Lizzie Bangs, materialising mediums at Onset Bay Camp, offered to raise a materialised spirit to act as husband to a wealthy lady, much in want of one. She attired herself, on Aug. 6, in a bridal trousseau specially got up for the occasion. The spirit bridegroom was in the form of a late captain of the army. He could only appear in the dark to greet the woman of his choice, but he did so with resounding kisses, and his gilt buttons and epaulettes were distinctly visible.

A minister is said to have officiated at this marriage of a woman to a spirit. The ring was put on her finger with the accustomed ceremonies, but no marriage certificate was given her, the spirit not having acquired the art of caligraphy. Shortly afterwards the mejums left for Chicago, and a man they left behind confessed they wanted him to put on the uniform of the late captain, and impersonate the spirit. He refused because the lady knew him, but someone else was found to materialise in a spiritual uniform.

The *Daily Chronicle* of Thursday week devoted a column to a review of the commentary by the Rev. Robert A. Watson on *The Book of Numbers*, giving to the notice of the book the significant title of "A Tough Task." Dr. Watson makes important admissions. He has given up the Mosaic authorship, or perhaps we should say he sees it to be a mosaic not by Moses. He says: "The records are certainly not Moses's own. They are exoteric: now from the people's point of view, now from that of the priests." We should say the story of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram was very much from that of the priests.

As with so many sky-pilots who have to reconcile the conclusions of criticism with the doctrines which the clergy have hitherto promulgated to the people as divine, Dr. Watson makes his admissions grudgingly. The *Daily Chronicle* says: "Dr. Watson cannot forgive the men who have convinced his reason that the orthodox conception is untenable. This unwilling admission of an unwelcome truth prevents him from reaping the advantages of the critical view. He does not get the relief to reason and conscience which is certainly found in a courageous acceptance of the conclusion to which an unbiassed scholarship points."

The *Chronicle* mentions the war of extermination against the Midianites without noticing the worst feature of saving alive only the virgins; and Dr. Watson's curious view is that, as the Israelites had not the spiritual qualifications for converting these Bedouins, the only course to secure morality and religion was to slaughter these unbelievers wholesale. The reviewer thinks the time has surely come when one may say, "notwithstanding the frowns of orthodoxy, that such a deed of blood and fury never was commanded or sanctioned by the God whom we profess to serve."

What is this but saying, in so many words, that the Bible, which explicitly asserts that these deeds of blood and fury were by the command of God, is not the word of God. When will ministers tell their flocks this plainly, and without covering up the facts in a cloud of words?

The Right Rev. C. J. Corfe, Bishop of the Church of

England in Korea, writes to the *Guardian* for more missionaries to go out to the seat of war. He says: "To us who know the Japanese as they really are in Korea, it is strange that Japan should so long, and with such success, have deluded European nations and Governments into believing that she is either a civilised Power, or even desirous of becoming one in the Western sense of the word." We suspect that the right reverend's objection to Japanese civilisation is, that it shows no promise of ever becoming Christian, and that Christianity would have more success if it did not come into contact with an enlightened Buddhism.

The Protestant missionaries are crying out because the French are taking up a more determined stand for their protectorate over Madagascar. The Rev. Wardlaw Thompson fears that French rule will inevitably terminate Protestant mission work. These gentry usually have more reliance on bayonets than on the inherent power of the gospel. With God behind them, they always want government to also back them up.

Dr. Amory H. Bradford, whose sermon on "The Foundation of our Faith" is printed in the *Independent and Nonconformist*, says: "We should have a faith so grounded that, if criticism should take our Bible all to pieces, it would no more destroy Christianity than taking a telescope to pieces would destroy the stars." This looks pretty much as if Dr. Bradford found the old book no longer defensible. But what does he fall back on? What he calls natural religion, and our deathless aspirations, a vague Theism, only like the stars in being far off, and often lost in a mist. What if criticism takes all his supernaturalism to pieces? Perhaps he would not mind even this, as long as good billets remain for those who can clothe vague abstractions in a mist of words.

The *Christian World* says, in answer to "Perplexed," that "the statement that God made man in his own imago is in no way contradicted by the doctrine of Evolution." Only, as evolution shows that man has developed from a more stupid and barbarous animal, the image in which he was created must have been a very ugly god indeed.

The Boers are an eminently pious Bible-reading people. Even their stations in South Africa are named after Palestinian geography. Mr. J. G. Merricks, of Johannesburg, has sent to the *Christian World* an account of what the Bible belief and Old Testament methods lead to. In the Transvaal they made war on Malabok on the ground that he did not pay his taxes. Malabok states that his taxes were paid, and in some instances have been extorted from him twice over. Anyway, he was a heathen; war was declared; and Malabok surrendered with a thousand persons, including many women and children.

A council of war was held. The President, Commandant Joubert, opened it with prayer, and when the voice of prayer had scarcely died away Commandants Pretorius and Uys proposed that Malabok should be at once killed. No one really opposed this except Joubert, whose only reason for opposing the murder of this noble and plucky chief was "that it will make the other chiefs, who are to be attacked shortly, fight to the death when they hear of it, and give more trouble."

So Malabok was committed to prison. Then came the question of what to do with the captive women and children. The Bible methods were extolled at this prayer meeting, and it was at length resolved to share them out in various districts for five years. "Many could guess what this sentence of Boer slavery (which has since been carried out) would mean. Once in the power of these Boer farmers, far from all control, and in many cases twenty to thirty miles apart, who was to say when the five years should cease? It would multiply into fifteen and into lifetimes, and in civilised centres no one would be the wiser."

Application has been made to establish a brewery within the walls of Jerusalem. The holy city is as sacred to the Moslems as to the Jews and Christians, and the application was refused. The brewers may go to Jericho.

The city of Kief is called the Russian Jerusalem, from the number of holy places it contains, and from the fact of their being the annual resort for thousands of pilgrims from all parts of the Russian empire. It swarms with monks and nuns, and the clanging of church and cathedral bells is heard all day long. But religion does not bring morals in its train, and twenty per cent. of the children are born out of wedlock. The despised and persecuted Jews, who constitute nearly a fifth of the city, do not contribute their quota to the illegitimacy returns.

The English ministers who went to Holland to join in the Old Catholic Congress, according to the *English Churchman*

were treated "in the spirit of the old commercial jealousy of the Dutch towards the English." With Christian forbearance it says: "The English visitors to the Congress could not complain, it must be confessed, of being overwhelmed with the courtesy and attention shown them by their Dutch hosts. Indeed, it may be questioned whether any one of those hosts addressed five words to any one of their English guests throughout the whole proceedings." So much for reunion. In Holland it does not seem to have amounted even to the exuberance of the Grindelwald Conference.

Reporting the Grindelwald picnic, the *Church Times* sarcastically says that Mr. Perowne and Dr. Lunn will probably make Mr. Cook (the excursionists' universal provider) look to his laurels. One who was present reports on the strangeness of having a magic-lantern entertainment opened by prayer, and interspersed with laughter and applause, in the parish church at Grindelwald; but it appears that Dr. Lunn explained that that was thought nothing of in Switzerland, since the Swiss held their communal meetings in church. It seems the church is there regarded as communal property, as it ought to be in England.

In a finely-illustrated paper on "Vanished Rome," in the *Pall Mall Magazine* for October, Rodolfo Lanciani points out that it was not the heathen barbarians who destroyed and carried away the monuments of Pagan Rome, but Christian vandals. The barbarians took what was portable, and Rome was still rich enough to satisfy their greediness. Signor Lanciani says their share in the deed was "hardly worth consideration when compared with the guilt of others." Marbles were removed for churches in distant lands. Monasteries, like that of the Benedictines at Monte Cassino, and of Our Lady of Tergu in Sardinia, and even some parts of Westminster Abbey, were built from the ruins of old Rome. "The name of Petrus Romanus Civis is engraved in the basement of the shrine of Edward the Confessor." This was, perhaps, about 1269, when the alleged remains of Edward were placed there. Signor Lanciani says: "The materials of which the Romanesque pavement, in front of the high altar, is composed were certainly imported from Rome."

Signor Lanciani mentions that as late as August, 1822, Pope Pius VII. permitted a building contractor, named Matteo Lovatti, to destroy ancient ruins opposite the Church of St. Maria in Dominica, in order to provide materials for a house he was raising in the Piazzio del Popolo; and in 1870, a few months before Rome became the capital of Italy, the last Pope, Pio Nono, used one of the most interesting and best preserved gates of ancient Rome, the Porta Tiburtina of Honorius, to raise a monumental column in memory of the Ecumenical Council—which was never carried out. The article shows there is a large offset to the oft-talked-of vandalism of the barbarians. Should the temporal power of the Papacy be restored, we can imagine how speedily the statue of Giordano Bruno would be removed from the Campo dei Fiori.

A. R. Tuttle writes from Raleigh, North Carolina, to the *New York Herald* (Sept. 2): "The most dissolute and immoral among our Southern negroes, as a general thing, are the black preachers and the black teachers." The darkey who has learnt that preaching is an easier life than hoeing generally unites the cunning of civilisation to the low vices of barbarism.

Dr. John Hunter (of Glasgow) says that "it is the bustling activity and love of excitement of the modern generation that gives rise to the need for witticisms and dramatics in the pulpit, that degrades the church into a place of entertainment for boys and girls, and makes a mockery of what should be the most serious speech from man to man."

It is stated that, when the teetotal Bishop of London drives in his carriage from his house in St. James's-square to his palace at Fulham, he passes on his road more than one hundred public-houses and gin-palaces built on land belonging to the Church. The archbishops and bishops, in their corporate capacity as Ecclesiastical Commissioners, are indeed the largest owners of public-house property in the kingdom.

The story told in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of the imprisonment and cruel treatment as a lunatic of the Rev. Alexander Forbes, a priest of the Roman Catholic diocese of Aberdeen, should lead to a movement, both on the continent and at home, for the inspection of conventual institutions and monasteries. The Rev. Mr. Forbes was involved in some differences with his bishop, and, though there was nothing against his character, he was virtually ordered to reside at a convent abroad. At Mariaberg, where he went, he was treated as a lunatic, confined for over three years, and at last effected his escape by the aid of a good Catholic, who

saw there was no ground for the charge of lunacy. A pamphlet on the case will be published both in English and in German.

"Peter Lombard," like the other writers in the *Church Times*, objects strongly to Protestants, and claims the title of Catholic; and, by the way, the *Catholic Times* asked them, if a girl inquired her way to a Catholic church, where would they direct her? Peter, in his last "Varia," tells the following: "The curate of Nevermind where visited a house occupied by a working man and his wife, in order to ascertain why they did not attend church. In answer to the curate's inquiries as to whether they went to any church, the wife replied: 'No, sir, it's no use your coming here, we don't go to any church; we are Protestants.'" If Protestantism means the right of thinking for oneself, non-church attendance is a legitimate result.

The Anglican "Catholics" have just had a double slap in the face. The Jansenist bishops of Holland, who are members of the "Old Catholic" party, have declared that they cannot acknowledge the validity of Anglican orders; and this has been followed by the verdict of Bishop Alexander, representing the Greek Church, who agrees with them. He has published a pamphlet to show that the pretensions of the Church of England are vain, that its claim to the title "Catholic" is baseless—of course, with him the Greek Church is the only true Catholic Church—that it is without sacraments, sacrifice, priesthood, or stability of teaching; and that, while it remains in its present heretical and schismatical condition, it is quite useless for Anglicans to expect the Russian Church to entertain any proposals for reunion. So, if the Church of England does not stand on its Protestantism, on what has it to stand?

The "silly season" in the Church world is filled up with Harvest festivals, in which the churches are converted into something of the appearance of a market garden, and good vegetables are rendered stale by way of reminding the Lord of what he has forgotten to do for the British farmer.

The Rev. W. Carlile, of the Church Army, is trying to outdo Booth in sensation. According to the *English Churchman*, the suggestion is made that the congregation of St. Mary-at-the-Hill, in the ancient City of London, should be permitted to smoke at the Sunday services. Mr. Carlile is a Ritualist, and, as incense is the point now being pressed by the Ritualist organ, he may see that tobacco smoke is the most acceptable form of incense unto the Lord. Certainly old Jahveh knew no more about tobacco than he did about the telephone; but with the American Indians, from whom we took the habit, offering of tobacco to the gods was a religious ceremony of much significance.

The Rev. J. J. Methrin, reporting on the Indian Mission from Oklahoma Territory to the *Women's Missionary Advocate*, says: "The devil multiplies forces and increases efforts to stay the work of Christianity in this field. He even lays hands upon professed Christians to carry on his fell designs." And he instances other missionaries who think that the "mesal worship" of the Indians is quite suited to them. The man of God exclaims: "God pity the Indian; for coupled with all these difficulties and multiplied forces against him is his own stupidity, making him a ready victim to every evil design." We suspect that the worst designs the Indians have to encounter are those of the missionaries.

The *Banffshire Journal* gives the diary of a lady who took a Transatlantic trip eighty years ago. She was very pious, and during a storm reports the mingled prayers and oaths of the passengers. "One bold fellow, however, says he had not begun to pray yet, and when he did surely God would not be so unkind as not to hear him, for he did not trouble him often." The shocked diarist prays to be delivered from such a blasphemous wretch, "for he is enough to sink a parish besides a ship; yet he is admitted to be as kind an obliging a fellow as there is on board."

Further on is the remark: "We are a sad company singing, swearing, dancing, damning, and playing card among one half; and spewing, crying, and a kind of presumptuous praying among the rest." When the lady danced, she reproached herself for her sin, but adds the consolation, "I do not think that a good example would have any effect here, and a bad can hardly make them worse."

High Church and Low Church love each other so much at Preston that Sunday-school had to be held in the street.

At West Stafford, a village near Dorchester, there has been much excitement over a materialised ghost, who was said to walk nightly. A search party was formed, both men and women, armed with sticks. On arriving at a gate they saw a figure upon it draped in white; the crowd pressed forward, and the leaders severely thrashed the

ghost, who screamed for mercy. He was found to be a laborer of the village, whose wife was one of the attacking party. He was so bruised that he had to go to the Dorset Hospital.

The Lord has been riding on the storm with a vengeance in America, where the cyclones have destroyed hundreds of lives, as well as houses and other property.

Nellie Bly, the correspondent of the *New York World*, followed in the track of the big fire in Hinckley, and found many examples of nature's horrors and human heroism. The catastrophe made many believers sceptics, and one section of Nellie Bly's report is headed "Vain Prayers." She gives, for instance, the case of Christian Best, who thought the day of judgment had come. He prayed for mercy for his family, but when he got where his home should have been he found only seven charred bodies awaiting him.

One James Hunt said: "I tell you this fire makes me doubt God's mercy. When I went off on a scouting expedition the day after, I found the land where the fire had burned everything to a crisp within a breadth of fifty miles and of length no man can tell, and every mile or so on the way leaves from the Swedish Bible. On the first was 'Give to the poor.' On the next 'God is love.' On another 'God is merciful.' And a little further we came on fourteen bodies burned to a crisp. They were at Skunk Creek, near the railroad, and they had all died praying. They were all on their knees with their hands folded before them, and in that attitude they were burned black. I tell you, to see them so in the act of appeal to God was almost enough to make men doubt God's mercy."

The Rev. F. Lawrence, who is secretary of the Church Society for the Promotion of Kindness to Animals, advertised for an assistant, offering, among the attractions of his place at Westow Vicarage, Kirkham Abbey, York, shooting and fishing. He explains that he does not consider these cruel. The C.S.P.K.A. seems something like the Church of England Temperance Society, which admits drinking parsons, but recommends total abstinence to other people.

The Rev. James Johnston, an Indian missionary, brings a strange charge against Professor Max Muller and his colleagues in bringing out the *Sacred Books of the East*. It is that they have not translated any of the impure productions which passed as sacred. He complains that young Hindus thus obtain a better idea of their old faith than it deserves. But have not the Bible translators toned down the Song of Solomon, and do they not omit much from the child's Bible? Do they thus give a better idea of the Bible than it deserves?

It is said that Ulfilas, who translated the Bible into Gothic, purposely omitted the books which were calculated to rouse the warlike passions of the Goths, and one would fancy the verse, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," would be better omitted from a version intended for races who believe in witchcraft.

Missionaries are always boasting of the progress of Christianity in India. They omit to say how slow it has been, or to explain its causes and limitations. Here are some facts. Christianity is said to have been taken to India by St. Thomas. It certainly has received missions from an early period. In the sixteenth century St. Francis Xavier is said to have converted hundreds of thousands. Now, out of 288 millions, less than two millions and a quarter are Christians. The majority of these are Catholics.

The converts are mostly of the lowest castes, or the aboriginal non-Aryan inhabitants of India, who are generally devil-worshippers. Their conversion only hinders that of educated Brahmins and the higher castes, as well as Moslems, making Christianity appear a degraded and low-caste kind of religion. New districts being continually opened up, and more missionaries put in the field, they easily make "rice Christians" of the devil-worshippers. But when they gather up all the non-Aryan inhabitants, they will probably come to the end of their tether. This is indicated by the case of Tinnevely, in which Christianity made marked progress among the devil-worshipping Shanars in the first part of the century, but where no progress has been made during the last decade, the fact being that Christianity in India, like the Salvation Army at home, is recruited only from the residuum of the population.

High Churchmen are highly incensed at the Lord Archbishop of Dublin having, with the assistance of the Bishops of Clogher and Down, consecrated Senor Cabrera as Protestant Bishop of Madrid. They regard this as an unwarrantable intrusion on the rights of the Catholic Church.

Another convent scandal is reported from La Paz, where many of the nuns lately eloped from. The people of the town were startled to hear sounds of revelry proceeding from the convent of the Sisters of God, and an investigation led to the discovery that the nuns were drinking, smoking, dancing, and otherwise enjoying themselves with leading young men of La Paz, who had gained entrance to the convent through a secret passage. When remonstrated with for their un-nun-like conduct, they shook their fists in the faces of the disturbers of their fun, and threatened to fight them, with the aid of their lovers, for interfering with their amusement. This second scandal has caused great excitement, and it is believed will lead to the banishment of nuns from Bolivia.

A report of a Lourdes cure made Dr. Fouleton say: "She suffered from ulcers in the stomach, which are the cause of great suffering, and are incurable." The doctor writes to the *Weekly Register* to say the last three words were not used by him, and would be absurd from any medical man. This shows how easily an ordinary cure gets magnified into a miracle by sheer priestly perversion.

The *Australasian Star*, for a copy of which we are indebted to Mr. G. J. Holyoake, reports a prosecution of a Seventh Day Adventist, named Robert Shannon, a builder at Leichhardt. This gentleman believed it right to work on Sunday, and he had a perfect moral right to do so, provided he did not compel others to join him in such superfluous labor. But the magistrates thought otherwise, and, under the old Act of Charles II., of pious memory, the culprit was fined and ordered a two-hours' dose of the stocks in default. Yet they call Australia a free country.

An editorial in the *Australasian Star* remarks that, if Robert Shannon did stand in the stocks, it would not be himself, but the law and those who enforced it, that would be liable to the laughs and jeers of the public.

Alsager Church is in need of funds. Naturally. And the pious intellects of the place, no doubt including the parson's, have devised a Rummage Sale to take place in the school-room in October. The natives are to pay twopence to go in. How much they pay to go out will depend on their purchases. The committee are open to receive any articles that can be turned into cash, from underclothing to chairs and tables. What a pity it is that Jesus Christ did not hit upon this plan of raising the wind. Had he done so, Judas the cashier would never have rattled for thirty white-boys. But in that case there would have been no crucifixion and no salvation; so that, after all, it is perhaps as well that J. C. did not try a Rummage Sale.

Mr. Sam Standring writes from Rochdale: "It was stated here on Sunday that a Liverpool paper (not produced) stated that Mr. G. W. Foote did, on the landing stage at Liverpool, pull out his watch and call upon God to do terrible things, etc. I promised to have Mr. Foote's denial of the allegation. Do you know anything of the paragraph?"

We do not know anything of the paragraph. That old watch story has been told of every Freethought leader for the last fifty years. And denials do not kill it. It will flourish as long as one Christian is a liar and another is a fool.

Mr. Standring says another sensation was caused by the statement that "Mr. Foote advocates Free Love." If this means that Mr. Foote is in favor of promiscuous sexual intercourse, it is another lie. Mr. Foote believes in the marriage of one man with one woman, which is not taught in the Bible. He holds that the violation of the marriage contract is a most abominable offence, more particularly as it involves a gross breach of trust. But he also holds that marriage without love is a degradation. For that reason, he is in favor of a reasonable law of divorce.

So much for this brace of lies. We do not, however, share Mr. Standring's view that a denial will be of "immense advantage." Contradicting Christian falsehoods is like punching a pillow. Settle it in one place, it bobs up in another. Men may come and men may go, but lies go on for ever.

"What can you tell me about Esau?" queried the pedagogue. "Esau," responded the youth, with the glib alacrity of one who feels himself, for once, on safe ground, "Esau was a writer of fables who sold his copyright for a bottle of potash."

A girl of eight years of age, who had been listening to a Salvation Army preacher, on being told by her mother how dirty she was, said: "Well, mummy, why don't you wash me in the blood of Jesus, and then I shall be clean for ever."

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, September 30, Co-operative Hall, Courtenay-street, Plymouth.—11, "Lord Salisbury on Evolution, Design, and God"; 3, "Who Wrote the Bible?"; 7, "Is Religion the Cause of Progress?"

October 7, 14, 21, Hall of Science, London; 28, Leicester; 29, Derby.

November 4, Manchester; 11, Birmingham.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHAS. WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—Sept. 30, Dundee. October 3, 4, and 5, Aberdeen; 7, Edinburgh; 14, Glasgow; 21 and 22, Bradford; 28, Hall of Science, London. November 4, Hall of Science; 11, Hall of Science, London; 18, Liverpool. December 2, Newcastle-on-Tyne (Sunday Society); 9, 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.

LECTURE NOTICES must reach 28 Stonecutter-street by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

S. HOLT.—A translation of Herodotus is published by G. Bell & Sons, York-street, Covent-garden.

DURBANITE.—In the English Book of Common Prayer, lying before us, Genesis xxxviii. is appointed to be read as the morning lesson on Jan. 20; Genesis xxviii. is the evening lesson on Jan. 15.

C. BRIDGER.—We will look the matter up for you.

H. CALDWELL.—The price of Smith and Milman's edition of Gibbon is three guineas.

G. W.—Rather too long, but may be utilised when stewed down.

C. SCHRAMN.—The office of *La Raison* is 26 Rue Lens, Ixelles, Belgium.

S. RHUANTIN.—We hope we have your signature correctly. Ernest Renan was not a professed Atheist. He is a very difficult writer to label. Sometimes he seems a reverent Theist; at other times he treats Theism with cruel banter.

J. TOMKINS.—Thanks for the reference.

J. TOMS.—The *Life of Charles Bradlaugh* is announced to be ready in October. The price is one guinea. Mrs. Bradlaugh-Bonner offers to supply copies to members of the N.S.S. at 17s. 6d.

G. SMITH.—We believe the Board is quite within its right in paying a sky-pilot to examine the children on religious subjects. If you want to stop this kind of thing in Bolton, you must go in for Secular Education. We do not see what you can do with the auditor. The question you had in view is not one for his decision.

A. HINDLEY.—We have not forgotten the articles, but are only waiting for the opportunity to write them. Hallam's *History of the Middle Ages* is perhaps the best general view of the subject. If you wish to read in a special direction, let us know, and we will advise you more precisely.

CEPHUS.—(1) We have noticed the inactivity of the Nottingham Branch, but we believe there is a difficulty in obtaining a hall for lectures, unless the admission to them is entirely free. (2) We have not the slightest interest in tombs. A verse or a letter of Byron's is one thing; his dead bones, or the erection above them, is quite another. (3) The other matter shall be seen to.

FARMER'S LAD.—We adhere to our statement that the weather on this planet could be better arranged by a decent committee. You ask us to publish our plan. We will do so when the committee controls the resources. Meanwhile we beg to say that the English summer this year has been quite disgraceful. Perhaps, as a farmer's lad, you will agree with us in that.

C. MEADOWCROFT.—Thanks. See paragraph.

B. BRODIE.—Such cuttings are always welcome. See "Sugar Plums."

T. REID.—That "suppressed poem by Robert Burns" has been printed hundreds of times, and was not first given in the Dumfries paper you refer to. What you send us is only a small part of it. We do not believe it was written by Burns.

G. L. MACKENZIE.—Thanks. It has been handed over to the Almanack editors.

A WESLEYAN.—Sister Lily, of the West London Mission, is Miss Lily Dowhirst, as we discovered in investigating the "Atheist Shoemaker" case. Mr. Hughes called her Sister Boatrice to conceal her identity, even from their friends. Mr. Charles Watts will, no doubt, answer your question as to his father in our next issue. We are sorry to say he has returned from Sheffield unwell, and is nursing himself at home.

A LABOURER.—It is against our rule to notice anonymous letters, but we break the rule in this case. The incident you refer to was very regrettable, but it will have to be considered by the N.S.S. Executive before we feel at liberty to say anything further about it; although, in a general way, we have no hesitation in saying at once that a public meeting is not the proper occasion for ventilating such a grievance, not to add that the auditors are at the mercy of a one-sided statement.

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

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.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Der Lichtfreund—Boston Investigator—Der Arme Teufel—Freidenker—Two Worlds—Liberator—Western Figaro—Ironclad Ago—New York Truthseeker—La Verité—Progressive Thinker—Freedom—Für Unsere Jugend—Crescent—Secular Thought—Isle of Man Times—Echo—Banffshire Journal—Weekly Bulletin—Woman's Missionary Advocate—Glasgow Weekly Herald—New York Herald—Public Opinion—New York Sun—Sunday School Magazine—Puck—Boston Globe—Irish Times—La Raison—Freethinkers' Magazine—Donahoe's Magazine—New York World—Blue Grass Blade—Electrician—Seaman's Chronicle—Progress—West Sussex Gazette—Dover Observer.

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.

ORDERS for literature should be sent to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

IT being contrary to Post-office regulations to announce on the wrapper when the subscription is due, subscribers will receive the number in a colored wrapper when their subscription expires.

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 lectures to-day (Sept. 30) at Plymouth, which he has not visited for a considerable time. He hopes to meet all the "saints" in the three towns, and to talk over with them the matter of local organisation.

Mr. Touzeau Parris delivered a fine lecture to a good audience at the London Hall of Science on Sunday evening, and met with a very hearty reception. This evening (Sept. 30) the platform will be occupied by Mrs. Frederika Macdonald, the lady who debated Theosophy with Mrs. Besant at St. James's Hall. Her subject is "Seven Other Devils." Some gentlemen from India are expected to take part in the discussion.

The Sunday morning lectures at the Hall of Science will be resumed on October 7, when Mr. J. W. Martin (Fabian) will discourse on "Secularism and Socialism," with especial reference, we understand, to the forthcoming School Board elections.

Mr. Charles Watts writes in another column on his School Board candidature for Finsbury. The following fresh subscriptions have been received for this object:—W. H. Domville, £3; J. D., £2; Gerald Massey, £1; J. Hart, 5s.; George Abbey, 5s.; E. V. Sterry, 5s.; J. Chevalme, 4s. The treasurer of this fund, specially started by the N.S.S. Executive, is Mr. George Ward, 91 Mildmay-park, London, N.

Dundee and Aberdeen friends will note that Mr. Charles Watts is billed to lecture in their cities. They will of course give him a hearty reception.

The next issue of the *Freethinker* will contain a report of the unveiling of the marble bust of Charles Bradlaugh at Manchester.

Charles Bradlaugh's birthday was celebrated by the Secularists of the Blyth, Bedlington, Ashington, and Cramlington districts. About eighty persons met at the Grey Horse Inn, Cowpen Quay, including Dr. James Trotter and Martin Weatherburn. Interesting speeches were delivered by Dr. Trotter and Mr. Edward Key, and the toast of the immortal memory of Bradlaugh was drunk amid profound silence. A good report of the proceedings appeared in the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle*.

The Rev. S. Barrows, of Adrian-street Chapel, Dover, seems to be a very liberal-minded man. It appears, from the report in the *Dover Observer*, that he prefaced a discourse on Ibsen's *Enemy of Society* by reading a lesson from Havelock Ellis's book on *The New Spirit*, and declared that the teaching of Ibsen was the much-needed lesson of individual Freethought.

Puck, of New York (Sept. 5), has a capital double-page cartoon on the Pope, whose shadow is seen extending over America. In an article on the subject, it says that it is "just a little more impossible than ever for a man to be a good Catholic and a good American."

The *Electrician*, of September 14, devoted its leader to Hermann von Helmholtz, the great German scientist recently deceased. It was Helmholtz who said, according to

Professor Tyndall, that if eyes such as we find in human heads were sent to him by an artificer, he would have to send them back with the severest censure. No wonder that a scientist like Helmholtz was detested in orthodox circles. "There are not wanting prophets," says the *Electrician*, "who foresee a critical period for science in the near future, writers who suggest that, unless scientific men band themselves together, the hostile powers of dogmatic theology on the one hand, and of aggressive ignorance on the other, will close in and temporarily destroy it." With all respect to the writer, we hope the prophecy is false.

The Literary Guide, which has been for many years conducted by Mr. Charles Albert Watts, a son of our colleague Mr. Charles Watts, appears this month in a new form. The number of pages is increased from eight to twelve, and the articles are all unsigned—a feature which we do not consider an improvement. On the whole, however, we congratulate the editor on the improved appearance of his little monthly, which is now (at any rate) a cheap pennyworth. The present issue contains, among other things, an appreciative review of Mr. Foote's *Flowers of Freethought* (Second Series). There is some interesting "Gossip" and a page of well-written "Jottings." The writer of this page finds fault with Ingersoll's article on Suicide, which is published as a pamphlet at the *Freethinker* office. But what he says is only an expression of his own opinion; it is no answer to Ingersoll.

The fund raised for a monument in honor of the late Ramon Chies has reached the sum of 5,000 pesetas. The Freethinkers of Portugal have started an active campaign among the working classes. Lectures and meetings are held almost daily in all large cities.

The Newcastle Branch has again secured a suitable hall for their meetings and lectures, which commence on Sunday, Sept. 30, in the Irish Literary Institute, Clayton-street, E. There will be a business meeting at 3 p.m., at which the committee hope to see every member present. At 7 Mr. R. Mitchell opens the lecture course on "The Objects and Principles of Secularism."

On Sunday, Oct. 6, Mr. Ernest Newman commences an afternoon Philosophy Class at the Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street, Liverpool. Young students, of both sexes, should take advantage of this opportunity of becoming acquainted with the thoughts of the best thinkers.

The Battersea Branch holds its quarterly tea to-day (September 30), and it will be under entirely new management. Tickets are only sixpence each, and can be had at the door. The committee hopes to see old members and friends present on this occasion. After the tea there will be some vocal music, a sketch by the Marlowe Dramatic Club, and plenty of dancing.

A series of Children's Entertainments are being arranged for the winter season in London under the auspices of the Hall of Science Club. The program will consist of vocal and instrumental music, conjuring, shows, dissolving views, sketches, and other amusements likely to please the youngsters, and perhaps to enable their parents to pass a pleasant hour or two. The first entertainment will be given on Thursday evening, October 11, from 8 till 10 o'clock. Admission will be free to children (under 13) of members of the Hall of Science Club or of the National Secular Society. Children over 13 will be required to pay a penny. Members will be admitted free into the gallery; they can also introduce a friend on payment of twopence. Tickets for the younger children can be obtained by members from Mr. James Anderson any evening at the Club.

Jews will celebrate their "Yom Kippur" on October 12. The Freethinking Jews in London intend to celebrate it in heterodox fashion at the Hall of Science. The proceedings commence at 2 p.m., and addresses will be delivered by speakers of different nationalities.

Mr. A. B. Moss has prepared a new lecture on "Freethought and Education," with a view to propagandist work before the coming School Board election.

The *Seaman's Chronicle*, the organ of the National Association of Seamen, is not quite pious enough to please Miss Weston. It says: "There can no longer be any surprise that two Oriental nations are waging a relentless war against each other when we find that both countries are suffering from the influx of the British missionary, more especially when, as in China, the infliction takes the form of that most terrible of all inflictions—the British Bible Woman."

Mr. G. W. Foote, President of the British Secular Society, who has been taking a short holiday in the Isle of Man, called upon Mr. Quilliam last Friday at his sea-side residence

at Peel, and both gentlemen went a short walk together. Doubtless the goody-goody Christians in Peel were much edified and astonished at seeing the English Shiekh-ul-Islam and the Editor of the *Freethinker* on such friendly terms.—*The Crescent*.

In his brochure, *Anthropopithecus Erectus*, the Dutch scientist, Eugen Dubois, M.D., announces the discovery, on the island of Java, of what he considers the long-desired "missing link," a human species bridging the space between present man and the pleistocene. The skeleton found is well preserved.

Mr. C. Cohen begins a six months' engagement at South Shields on October 7. He will preach the Gospel of Free-thought at Shields on most of the Sundays, but he will have many week-nights to spare, and is anxious to do all the work he can in the district. He will be happy to lecture where Branches of the N.S.S. exist, or to visit places where Branches might be established. We hope the Secularists from Newcastle to Stockton and Middlesborough will make use of Mr. Cohen's valuable services. His address at present is 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.

Mr. George Standring once contributed a series of articles to the *National Reformer*, something after the style of his articles under the general heading of "A Freethinker at Large" in our own columns. Some of those "sketches" he has just reprinted in the form of a fourpenny pamphlet. "Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner," he says, "has very kindly given me permission to reproduce them"—which is a pretty compliment, but very bad law; for, unless the copyright of an article is expressly bought in full by an editor, the judges hold that he has only the right to its use in that particular journal, although the author cannot republish (without consent) so early as to injure the sale of the journal that paid him for the contribution. But this is only by the way. The sketches are, of course, interesting, being written by Mr. Standring, who wields a clever and humorous pen. We think he is less than just to the Quakers, and more than just to the Salvationists. But that, again, is only by the way. Differences of opinion will obtain, but may they never, etc. We heartily commend Mr. Standring's pamphlet to our readers' attention. They will find it entertaining, and possibly instructive.

THE SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION.

HAVING received several communications asking me how I propose conducting my candidature for a seat on the London School Board, I desire, with the permission of the Editor of this journal, to state in its columns what my plans are.

As my "Address to the Electors" states, I am appealing to the constituency as a representative of secular education pure and simple. Under no circumstances shall I, if elected, fail to oppose any scheme that may be submitted for the incorporation of Bible or theological teachings with the instruction given at our Board schools. The inculcation of sound moral principles, and the promotion of a broad and liberal education, free from all religious doctrines, will have my earnest and persistent support. This is my platform, and upon its merits I shall go to the poll and solicit the support of those who share with me the wish that our national system of education—which is supported by the rates and taxes of the public—shall not be marred by priestly intervention.

At the latter part of October I shall commence a month's hard platform work, when several addresses will be delivered each week in the various parts of Finsbury by Messrs. G. W. Foote, R. Forder, George Standring, A. B. Moss, W. Hearford, and myself. This will bring me, as the candidate, in direct contact with the electors, to whom my views and intentions will then be explained in detail. In the meantime useful and necessary work will be done by my committee, such as circulating thousands of copies of my Address and other suitable printed matter, and canvassing on my behalf.

I shall shortly commence a series of articles in these pages upon "Education and the Board School"; these will probably be printed in a separate form, and distributed among the inhabitants of Finsbury. In due time committee-rooms will be engaged in the various districts of the constituency, and, so far as our pecuniary means will permit, nothing will be left undone to secure a triumph at the poll.

I have to fulfil a three weeks' engagement in Scotland

and the North of England, but during my absence Mr. Foote has kindly promised, with the assistance of Miss Vance, as secretary, and my committee, to carry on the work. Immediately on my return I shall devote myself entirely to the struggle. Miss Vance will be pleased to supply printed matter to any friends who are willing to distribute the same throughout Finsbury; and she will be also glad to give any instructions as to canvassing.

CHARLES WATTS.

QUOD ERAT DEMONSTRANDUM.

WHEN the sages trace our history in an ethnologic way
They get up wondrous theories on which they have their
say;
Sometimes they'll throw them overboard, like Jonah to the
whale,
And sometimes they will help them on, and give them plenty
sail.

Now, taking as a precedent the workings of these men,
We'll follow in their footsteps, a bit at least, and then
From the premises selected we'll deduce a point or two
(A point or two is somewhat vague, but not too vague to do).

From what we know of human kind we're safe to say that
most
Of those who go "mid nodings on"—whose shirt studs
ne'er are lost,
Because they never wear them, are the blackest of the
black,
Who've never felt the itching of new flannel on their back.

Next, the scribe who penned Genesis averred that Eden lay
Beside the fair Euphrates, and we know that at this day
The folks who are indigenous to that part of the earth
Are very dusky colored, and of clothing have a dearth.

(Referring to the scribe again) Père Adam never wore
That bifurcated garment which is buttoned down before;
In fact, went mostly naked from the time he saw the light;
And so, deducing from these facts, Père Adam was not
white.

(Again we to the scribe refer.) In Genesis 'tis said:
Adam was Jehovah's image, from his great toes to his
head.
So it follows in due order—if this Genesis is fact—
If Adam was a nigger, then the Lord Jehovah's black.

THE GABERLUNZIE.

William Tyndale on the Sabbath.

The French Revolutionists have been much censured for altering the day of rest to one in ten. Had they made it one in five, there would have been less reason for blame. Doubtless they made a mistake. But they might have found a defence in the words of the martyr Tyndale, the first English translator of the Bible. In his *Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue* (book i., chap. xxv., p. 97, "Parker Society Reprint"), he says: "And as for the Saboth, a great matter; we be lords over the Saboth; and may yet change it into the Monday, or any other day, as we see need; or may make every tenth day holy-day only, if we see a cause why. We may make two every week, if it were expedient, and one not enough to teach the people. Neither was there any cause to change it to Saturday, than to put difference between us and the Jews; and lest we should become servants unto the day after their superstition. Neither needed we any holy-day at all, if the people might be taught without it."

How to Help Us.

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

THE DEVIL'S WIFE.

SATAN has a new wife. It is not Lilith, who is supposed to have been a consort of Adam as well as of the evil one, but a fresh article supplied to him in alabaster by Kuelino Beveridge, the sculptor. The bust is reproduced in the *New York Herald*, which declares it the best work this young woman has done. It says:—

On entering the room and coming face to face with "The Devil's Wife" you don't need to be told that she's of Satanic origin. She bespeaks Hades in every curve and smirk. This woman looks neither hideous nor malevolent; the leading impression she conveys is that of a veteran coquette. She is the true wife of Henry Irving's conception of a man-about-town devil, and, like unto her husband, seems conscious of her own power. She is perked up and prinked up, conscious, smirking; no longer young, but very well preserved, a born mistress of the arts of seduction, old in the practice of every flirtatious grace. Her features are long and pointed, the chin and forehead running to narrow curves of about equal size, which, together with eyebrows arched to an extreme, and deep eyelids, which are half closed, above the eyes, give to the face an expression of peculiar languorous subtlety and self-consciousness.

From the shoulders start a pair of wings—flippant, diabolical wings—that produce a highly modern effect. Those wings are a rare combination of tints of fiendish things, and a modish, piquant grace. Taken in conjunction with the face above, they suggest the whirr of the dark angels. Above the narrow-peaked forehead, with its frivolous ambition, the hair is drawn back and coiled up high, finishing in a genuine erect devil's horn. Topping this devilish, suggestive, superannuated siren face, the horn becomes only an ensnaring twist, and seems necessary part and parcel of an intensely modern make-up. She is nothing if not an "up-to-date" woman, this devil's wife, and the well-worn sinner, with her air of high breeding and alluring simper, might well befit late hours and a Parisian opera box.

The cleverness of the conception lies in the skilful blending of human outline, the fascinations that obtain on earth with the positive attributes, and a thousand suggestions of the kingdom below. Fire and brimstone are not thrust upon you; only their aroma, faint enough to be seductive, lingers in the droop of the lady's lids, the curve of her lips, and the devilish twist of her hair. The bust is draped across one side only, and represents a slender woman. A strange, fantastic type is she, unique and fascinating in a degree.

Episcopal Example.

The *Daily Chronicle* remarks that it seems strange that, out of an income of £15,000 a year, the Archbishop of Canterbury should not be able to pay his own episcopal curate. Yet it appears that the Bishop of Dover, who does much of the Archbishop's diocesan work for him, gets his income of £1,000 a year from a canonry, and so saves his fortunate superior's pocket. In the same way, the Bishop of London pays his two suffragans out of two fat livings. Here was a splendid opportunity for their lordships to commence the reform of that disparity of clerical incomes which they so much deplore! It seems incredible that they should not have gladly seized the opportunity of lessening an abuse that is so great a hindrance to the work of their Church. Yet it is reckoned that £11,849 per annum is thus raised by various bishops for episcopal assistance—that is, for getting work done that they are paid (and overpaid) to do, or get done, themselves.

A Real Christian.

As for the real teachings of Christianity, there is not a priest in existence who teaches it, and not a man or woman—not even Count Tolstoi—who practises it in its entirety. It is not practicable, and the man who calls himself a Christian and fancies he practises Christianity is only self-deceived. The nearest approach to a Christian I ever met was my old Bantam rooster. His little spouses had so hen-pecked and dominated him that when snapped at on one side he literally turned the other. His wives were always tormenting him, and he was ever ready to pay them back with good for evil. I used to call him "the first true Christian I ever met." But he is dead—the first and the last of the Christians. Surely in his next incarnation he will be an heir of glory in the mansions of the best.

UNCLE BENJAMIN.

The Rev. Mr. Harpe (solemnly)—"And the wicked shall be cast into the lake of torment, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." Alkali Ike (appreciatively)—"That must be hell."

A LETTER OF KOSSUTH'S.

EARLY in December, 1890, it was reported that Louis Kossuth, the great Hungarian patriot, was in a state of destitution. Mr. George Anderson, whose name will be known to most of our readers, at once forwarded him a cheque for £5, with a letter conveying the sender's reverential esteem. Kossuth's reply has just been made public, in part, by Mr. G. J. Holyoake in the *Westminster Gazette*. The omitted portions are very interesting, but rather uncomplimentary to ordinary journalism. We have seen the original, which is written in a small, clear, firm, and regular hand. What is now made public by Mr. Holyoake runs as follows:—

"Turin, 22 Via dei Mille, December 8, 1890.

"George Anderson, Esq., London.

"DEAR SIR,—I am in receipt of your kind note of 3rd, with cheque for £5 adjoined, which, with grateful sentiments for your benevolent intentions, I herewith return.

"I have not seen the *Times* for many years past. Have no occasion to read that paper. I am, therefore, not quite sure of the meaning of your allusion to it; but I am inclined to guess the object to which it refers. A friend called upon me who was pained at seeing me bent on my writing-desk working, spite of my eighty-nine years, eight to ten hours each day, in order to gain by honest labor. An account of that visit, written by the visitor to a friend in America, was shown to an American editor, who published its purport, and thus it went the round of the papers. I presume your allusion to an 'On Dit,' reported in the *Times*, refers to this, and that you, prompted by your benevolent feelings, meant to give me pecuniary assistance.

"If so, I certainly feel myself infinitely obliged to you. I appreciate fully the moral value of the benevolence which prompted you, and beg you to rest assured of my grateful sentiments; but, at the same time, I have to declare that I never accepted pecuniary assistance for my own person from anyone on earth, and, whatsoever may befall me, I never shall, never, under no circumstances, from nobody on earth, not even from my own nation, nay, not even from my own sons; they would feel happy should they succeed in their constant endeavor to induce me to allow them to do what they consider to be their duty towards their father. I am not to be moved. That is a matter of principle with me. When political circumstances allowed me to trust that I may be instrumental to the revindication of my native land's right to independence, I felt no shame to act the part of a beggar in behalf of my country; but for my own person I never in my life touched a single penny which I had not earned by my own honest work, nor ever shall. This ought to be known in England, because I declared it and published it in all the English papers repeatedly—even in the *Times*. In the first volume of my *Memoirs* (translated in English also, and published in London) I reported the fact that the late Emperor of the French, having disappointed me by the unexpected peace of Villafranca, in a letter, written to excuse himself of cutting short the war, and contrary to his engagements frustrating the legitimate expectations he induced me to entertain, he added that, though for the moment he finds it impossible to help Hungary, as to my own person and as to the interests of my family he, the then mighty Emperor, entreated me, the poor exile, to dispose of him at will. The answer I sent to him was that the Emperor of the French is not sufficiently rich to offer alms to L. Kossuth, and Kossuth is not mean enough to accept it.

"I mention this fact, to which I could add many similar facts, in order to convince you that I did not mean to offend you by not accepting your offer, and by returning your cheque. I can suffer want, I may starve if need be, but I never shall have recourse to the 'date Higem Belisario.'

"You mention the scone of Copenhagen field of times of old. Full well do I remember, but I repeat the question which the 'Little Peterkin' of one of your great poets asked about the battle of Blenheim, 'What good came of it at last? And you may repeat the answer, 'Well, that I cannot tell.'.....

"I renew the assurance of my grateful feelings, and remain, Sir, your obedient servant, "KOSSUTH."

"Excuse my faulty English. I am out of practice."

Four centuries before the dawn of Christianity Hippocrates, the father of medicine, was born, and practised on an island in the Turkish Archipelago, where clinical cases were treated in little houses adjacent to the temples of Æsculapius. Two centuries later the Buddhists established hospitals in India. The Romans had *valetudinaria* in their cities. Julius Cæsar used chariots as ambulances in the rear of his armies. The Arabs restored hospitals and medical science after the burning of Alexandria. Bagdad had flourishing medical schools, hospitals, and laboratories.—*Dr. J. Roosa.*

Religious Tolerance.

Deacon Pettybone (to twenty-year-old-son)—"James, you know my love of liberty, right of conscience, freedom of speech and worship; you have heard me proclaim them in public time and time again. You seem to prefer the other church to our own, notwithstanding my arguments and persuasions. Well, this is a free country, you are a free citizen; far be it from me to coerce or influence you in any way. Go, my son, go; if your heart tells you you are seeking the right path, go! But if you do go, may I be struck deaf, dumb, and blind if I don't drive you from my house like a dog. I'll follow your path, and take from you all means of earning an honest livelihood. I'll drive you to want and crime, and I'll die cursing you with my last breath. I am determined to do my whole duty as a Christian."—*E. Reed, "Harper's Monthly."*

The Sabbath.

"The Sabbath is nearly as old as man's observation of the phases of the moon. Professor Sayce quotes from the cuneiform tablets of Assyria this inscription, 'The moon causes a rest on the 7th, the 14th, the 21st, and the 28th day.' We read on the creation tablets, discovered only a few years ago at Nineveh: 'He made the year. Into four quarters he divided it. Twelve months he established, with their constellations: three by three. And for the days of the year he appointed festivals. On the seventh he appointed a holy day, and commanded to cease on it from all business.' That is not Genesis, or Leviticus, or any part of the Old Testament or New Testament Scriptures. It is a translation, by H. Fox Talbot, of the famous so-called creation tablets, dug up at Nineveh, and showing how ancient and how wide the observance of one-seventh portion of time for rest and worship has been in the human family."

This is not from Tyndall, Cox, Higgins, or any of the heretics who have written on the Sabbath. It is a part of a discourse by the Rev. Joseph Cook against opening museums on Sunday, showing how ancient, heathen, and lunar is the superstition which the clergy find so beneficial to their own interests.

Ingersoll at Saratoga Springs.

Robert G. Ingersoll and family have been stopping for the last few weeks at Saratoga Springs. While there, some of the most intelligent citizens invited him to give a lecture on Sunday evening in the Town Hall. This hall is usually occupied Sunday evenings by the Young Men's Christian Association, and is, of course, deemed holy ground. The announcement, therefore, that the platform was to be occupied, on a Sabbath evening, by the noted heretic caused a great sensation in that godly town. The *Saratogian*, edited by a pious numskull, declared that this was "Sabbath desecration of the most abominable character; blasphemy against the Lord of the Sabbath"; called Ingersoll a "blatant infidel," a "ribald scoffer," and did much other Christian swearing; but, nevertheless, Ingersoll gave his noted lecture, "Liberty for Man, Woman, and Child," to an audience larger than ever before came together on a Sunday night in that town, and the general verdict was that more and better religion was then and there preached by Colonel "Bob" than had been preached in all the Saratoga churches for the last ten years.—*Freethinkers' Magazine.*

The Babis of Persia.

Professor M. Y. de Gæze has been writing in the Dutch *De Gids* of the Bâbis, of whom Mr. Wheeler recently treated. He regards them as essentially a reforming, and even Freethinking, sect. He says: "The Bayân, (the Bâbis Bible) says in so many words that there is no hell after death, but that unbelief is hell, and belief Paradise. The Bayân also says that the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Koran, all had a mission to perform; but now human intellect is able to receive a better creed and a better religion. The ritualism of the Mahommedans has been largely changed by the Bâbis. The *kibla*, or direction in which to turn during prayer, is abolished. A fast is however, ordered in the last month of the year, exempting only travellers, children, and pregnant women.

One of the most notable reforms of the Bâbis is the higher status they confer on women. Their women may take part in festivities, and appear in public without their veils. Brotherly love, courtesy to inferiors, and charity are insisted upon. Begging is strongly prohibited. The Bâbis hope for the inauguration of the Millennium. But while the Western Utopians hope to attain this object through the State, the Bâb looks to religious means. The Bayân is also very inimical to an ignorant, superstitious, and overbearing priesthood. Auricular confession is an abomination to the Bâb, slavery is against God's will. Outward distinction in dress is not admissible. The most radical dogma of the Bayân is, however, this: 'We know nothing whatever of our state after death; God alone knows it.'

BOOK CHAT.

In the third volume of the Portland Manuscripts, published by the Historical Manuscripts Commission, full particulars of the life of Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, the famous minister of Queen Anne, are given. His mother thus describes how his young days were haunted by religious forebodings: "Roddin last night waked in the night and prayed and was troubled, and it was a good while before he went to sleep again. I was asking him this evening what it was that troubled him, for Nan told me he prayed that God would rebuke the tempter. He said it was sin. He had heard of the sin against the Holy Ghost, which was unpardonable, but did not know what sin it was, and was afraid to ask lest he had committed it, or the devil should tempt him to commit it. The poor child, with tears, told me he was afraid if he died he should go to hell. He asked me whether he should think oftener of scripture at prayer, for he said then he was tempted to vain thought which he could not help." It is in such passages that we discover the true inwardness of the Christian religion, whose course through history is not only to be tracked in blood and fire, but also in terror and tears, the deranged nerves and futile fears of the feeble, as well as the persecution of the strong.

Mrs. Isabella L. Bishop has written *Among the Thibetans*, whom she found a hospitable people. She did not come across any Mahatmas.

M. Paul Sabatier, a French Protestant, has written a very successful and highly-spoken-of *Life of St. Francis d'Assisi*. It has been compared to the *Life of St. Bernard*, by the Positivist, Mr. James Cotter Morison, author of *The Service of Man*.

In the High Heavens, by Sir Robert Ball, gives no description of God's angels and archangels, but devotes fifteen essays to the latest results of scientific research in astronomy, in popularising which Sir R. Ball is carrying on the work of that good Freethinker, the late R. A. Proctor. In one of his essays Sir Robert tackles the question of the infinitude of the universe, and has a wrestle therein with the old athlete, Euclid, who has given so many a tumble.

The Cambridge University Press announces *The Four Gospels in the Old Syriac Version* and *The Coptic Apocryphal Gospels*.

J. M. Dent will shortly publish *Essays of Mazzini*, mostly translated for the first time into English by T. Okey, edited with an introduction, by Bolton King.

Zola's *Lourdes* has been definitely placed upon the Roman *Index Expurgatorius*. It will thus get a good free advertisement, and Zola's name will be ranked with the many illustrious ones who have had the honor to incur Rome's condemnation.

Among the names considered objectionable by the Church are some of the most eminent in every department of literature. Our historians are represented on the *Index* by such names as Hume, Robertson, Gibbon, Hallam, and even Oliver Goldsmith. Froude seems unknown. Among foreign historians: Macchiavelli, Guicciardini, Raynal, Sismondi, Mosheim, and Ranke. Philosophy is represented by all the illustrious names, from Bruno to Comte, Hegel, and Mill. Among novelists are George Sand, Balzac, Murger, Hugo, and Flaubert. So Zola is in the best of company.

The first official *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* was published in 1557 by Pope Paul IV. It included all Bibles in modern languages, enumerating forty-eight editions, chiefly printed in countries under the rule of the Church. Sixty-one printers, among them Stephens and Oporinus, were put under a general ban; all works, of whatever description, from their presses being forbidden.

For a long time the *Index* was itself a forbidden work. It showed the nature of the forbidden fruit and what it was the Church really feared. But profane bibliographers having published unauthorised lists, the Society for the Propagation of the Faith issues an *Index* with the Papal *imprimatur*, to which new books are occasionally added.

A little boy was coming home with his mother from church when he heard her saying that the sermon was not worth much. The little boy immediately turned round and said: "Oh, mother, what could you expect for a halfpenny?"

PROFANE JOKES.

"What do you think of your new minister?" And Sandy, scratching his paw, answered: "I dinna think muckle o' him. Six days he's cenvisible, and the seventh day oencomprehensible."

Mrs. Elderleigh—"Do you love your teacher, Johnny?" Johnny—"Yes, ma'am." Mrs. Elderleigh—"Why do you love her?" Johnny—"Cause the Bible says we're to love our enemies."

Wife—"George, I wish you belonged to my church. The new minister is a man you would like." Husband—"Not such a bigoted Methodist as the other, then, is he?" Wife—"No; he's very broad! He believes that Episcopalians, if they repent, can be saved."

The following conversation is given as having occurred between a plain-spoken Scotch woman and her pastor: "Good morning, Janet. I am sorry to hear you didn't like my preaching on Sunday. What was the reason?" Janet—"I had three verra guid reasons, sir. Firstly, ye read the sermon; secondly, ye didna' read it well; and, thirdly, it wasna' worth readin' at a'!"

The late Bishop Wilmer, of Louisiana, was renowned for his witty rejoinders. On one occasion a Baptist minister insisted that there were several places in the Bible where immersion was unquestionably referred to. "Yes," replied the Bishop, "I recall two such instances, where there can be no doubt as to the mode: one is where Pharaoh and his host were immersed in the sea, and the other where the Gadarene pigs were drowned in the deep."

THE MORMON HYMN.

FATHER ABRAHAM of old, father of the Jewish race,
Had his Sarah and his Hagar, and others had a place
In his harem, and old Jacob was united to four brides,
And by them he had twelve sons, fathers of the Jewish tribes.

There was Judah with his Tamar, and Boaz with his Ruth:
The saints of old kept concubines; you know I tell the truth,
For all the ancient Hebrows kept just as many women
As they had any wish for, and never thought of sinning.

You all have heard of David, that man after God's own heart,
Who had many wives and concubines, and would not with them part;
And David's son, king Solomon, seven hundred women married,
Besides three hundred concubines, with whom he often tarried.

Men are just the same to-day as in Bible times of old,
And children just as innocent, and women no more bold.
Nature never varies, and nature never can;
One God made every animal, and that same God made man.

Now, modern legislators, to the Bible pray you go,
There learn how weak the women are, and why God made them so.
Then don't disturb the Mormons, but let them have their way,
Or all your churches will bust up, and hell will be to pay.

—Ironclad Age.

A Candid Nigger.

Rev. Melancthon Fish, a colored divine, received a call from a colored congregation, provided he gave satisfaction. He preached his trial sermon. After it was over he walked home with Uncle Mose, who is celebrated for being the most candid nigger in Austin, Texas, where this incident occurred.

"Dat ar' congregation," said the Reverend Fish, patronisingly, "am composed ob de finest-looking body of men I ebber saw."

"Ef dat am your candied opinion, you should nebber hab called 'em belubbed bredren," remarked Mose, quietly.

"Why not, uncles Mose?"

"Bekase you don't look like you belonged to the family. You ain't fine enough lookin' to be more den a forty-second cousin, much less a brudder."

There now exists a polar wave, or a glacial period, between Uncle Mose and the new pastor, and there is some talk of a hostile meeting.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

LONDON.

HALL OF SCIENCE (142 Old-street, E.C.): 6.30, musical selections; 7, Mrs. Frederika Macdonald, "Seven Other Devils." (Admission free; reserved seats, 3d. and 6d.)

BATTERSEA SECULAR HALL (back of Battersea Park Station): 5.30, tea, entertainment, and dance (6d.). Tuesday, at 8, dancing class. Wednesday, at 8, dramatic club. Thursday, at 8, meeting of Social Reform Wing.

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, C. James will lecture.

ISLINGTON (19 Alwyne-road, Canonbury): adjourned quarterly meeting. WIMBLEDON (Liberty Hall, Broadway): 11, members' meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 11.15, A. G. Herzfeld, "By their Fruits ye shall Know Them."

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, C. James will lecture.

CLERKENWELL GREEN: 11.30, H. Snell, "Under which Lord?"

DEPTFORD (Broadway): 6.30, A. G. Herzfeld, "Religion and Education."

FINSBURY PARK (near the band-stand): 11, T. Thurlow will lecture; 8, A. Guest, "What Religion Does and Does Not Do."

HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE (Middlesex side): 7, W. Heaford, "Religion without Superstition."

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, W. Heaford, "Religion without Superstition"; 3, W. Heaford, "Belief, Unbelief, and Make-Believe."

ISLINGTON (Prebend-street, Packington-street): 11.30, E. Calvert, "The Resurrection of Jesus."

KINGSLAND (Ridley-road, near Dalston Junction): 11.30, a lecture.

LAMBETH (The Green, Kennington Gate): 6.30, a lecture.

LEYTON (High-road, near Vicarage-road): 11.30, Lucretius Keon will lecture.

MILE-END WASTE: 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "The Devil."

REGENT'S PARK (near Gloucester-gate): 11.30, J. Rowney will lecture; 8, F. Haslam will lecture.

TOTTENHAM (corner of West Green-road): 8.30, Mr. Thompson, "The Holy Bible."

VICTORIA PARK (near the Fountain): 8.15, a lecture.

WALTHAMSTOW (Markhouse-road): 6.30, R. Rosetti, "Russian Gods."

WESTMINSTER (Old Pimlico Pier): 11.30, C. J. Hunt, "Crimes of the Christian Church."

WIMBLEDON (Broadway, near Railway Station): 7, a lecture.

WOOD GREEN (Jolly Butchers' Hill): 11.30, A. Lewis will lecture; 7, S. E. Easton will lecture.

COUNTRY.

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

CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school; 7, A. E. Rowcroft, "The Old Trade Unionism and the New."

DEPTFORD (Friar Gate Coffee Tavern): Monday, at 7.30, O. Ford, "Secularism."

DUNDEE (City Assembly Rooms): 11, Charles Watts, "Why Should we Live Moral Lives?—A Secularist's Answer"; 2.30, "New Tactics of Christianity" (with special reference to the Rev. D. Macrae); "Secularism and Christianity Contrasted."

GLASGOW (Ex-Mission Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): Stanley Jones will lecture.

HANLEY SECULAR HALL (61 John-street): 7.30, quarterly meeting—important business.

LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 7, John Roberts, "James Thomson (B.V.)."

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 11, C. Cohen, "Humanity's Outlook"; 8, "Christianity or Secularism"; 6.30, "The Dream of Immortality." (Admission, 3d. and 6d.)

NEWCASTLE (Irish Literary Institute, Clayton-street East): 8, monthly meeting of members; 7, R. Mitchell, "The Principles and Objects of Secularism."

PORTSMOUTH (Wellington Hall, Wellington-street, Southsea): 7, a meeting. Wednesday and Saturday, at 8, dancing.

PLYMOUTH (Co-operative Hall): 11, G. W. Foote, "Lord Salisbury on Evolution, Design, and God"; 8, "Who Wrote the Bible?"; 7, "Is Religion the Cause of Progress?"

SHIFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, vocal and instrumental music, recitations, etc.

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, D. Bow, "Woman's Gain from Unbelief."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BARNSELY (May Day Green): 11, W. Dyson, "The Bible and Strong Drink—A Challenge to Teetotal Christians"; 1, meeting of members; 6.30, "The Credulity of the Early Christian Fathers."

CHATHAM (corner of New Brompton-road, High-street): 11, F. J. Boorman, "Special Creation and Evolution: Which is True?"

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Quayside): 11, C. Aarstad will lecture.

ROCHDALE (Town Hall-square): Saturday, Sept. 29, at 7, Sam Standing debates with J. Smith, "Is God Unchangeable?" Sunday, at 11, "This Century's Record"; 3, "Creation Visualised—Day VI."; 7, "St. Michael and the Angels." Tuesday, debating class. Wednesday, Spotland. Thursday, Heywood. Saturday, 1.46 train, pilgrimage to Owan's College, Manchester.

SUNDERLAND (near the Miners' Hall, Silkworth): 11, Wm. Cook, "Miracles."

Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—September 30, Manchester. October 1 and 2, Bradford. All Sundays until April, 1895, South Shields.

STANLEY JONES, 53 Marlborough-road, Holloway, London, N.—Sept. 30, Glasgow. October 7, Belfast; 14, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 21, Huddersfield; 28, Sheffield. November 4, Failsforth; 5, 6, 7, Rochdale; 11, Hull; 18, Leicester. December 16, Chatham.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 41 Credon-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—Oct. 14, m. and e., Camberwell. Nov. 4, New Brompton.

TOUZRAU PARRIS, 32 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, London, W.—October 7, Leicester.

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