

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1894.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

SPECIAL.

Next week's "Freethinker" will contain a full report of the proceedings against Mr. Foote for alleged contempt of court. It will also contain a statement on another matter of the gravest interest to the whole Secular party.

MR. FOOTE CITED FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT.

My article in the *Freethinker* a fortnight ago, entitled "Hunting Them Down," was not to the taste of John Snow, publisher, of 2 Ivy-lane, Paternoster-row, London, E.C., who is being proceeded against for libel by the National Secular Hall Society (Limited) and Mr. Robert Owen Smith. This is by no means surprising, as he is an active enemy of Secularism, and it is no part of my policy to show any preternatural regard for his "feelings."

The article referred to was published on Thursday, October 18, and the said John Snow appears to have given a great deal of time to thinking it over. A week later, on October 25, he seems to have come to the conclusion that he had suffered a grievous injury; and the dispatch with which he set about obtaining redress was in marked contrast to his slowness in discovering his wrongs. On that day he filed an affidavit, of which I will speak presently; and on the next day his solicitors served me with the following notice of motion:—

1894. No. 522.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE, QUEEN'S BENCH DIVISION.

TAKE NOTICE that by an Order of the 26th day of October 1894 Mr. Justice Day has directed that this Motion shall be marked urgent.

Between THE NATIONAL SECULAR HALL SOCIETY and ROBERT OWEN SMITH Plaintiffs and JOHN SNOW and COOKE & Co. Defendants.

TAKE NOTICE that the Court will be moved on Tuesday the 30th day of October 1894 at 10.30 of the clock in the forenoon or so soon thereafter as Counsel can be heard by Mr. J. F. P. Rawlinson as Counsel on the part of the above-named Defendants that G. W. Foote of No. 28 Stonecutter-street in the City of London Editor of the newspaper called the *Freethinker* may be committed to prison for a contempt of this Honorable Court in writing and publishing in the *Freethinker* of the 21st day of October 1894 an article headed "Hunting Them Down" on the page numbered 672 signed "G. W. Foote." And that the said G. W. Foote may be ordered to pay to the applicants their costs of and incidental to this application and the order to be made thereon or that such further or other order may be made as the circumstances of the case may require.

Dated this 26th day of October 1894.—Yours, etc.

NISBIT DREW & NISBIT
(35 Lincoln's Inn Fields W.C.)

Solicitors for the above-named Defendants who respectively reside at No. 2 Ivy-lane Paternoster-row and No. 117 Great Saffron Hill both in the City of London.

To G. W. FOOTE of No. 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.

I was preparing to leave London when I received this notice, having to lecture at Leicester on Sunday and at Derby on Monday. Of course I was obliged to break the Derby engagement, my presence being absolutely necessary in London. Legal business is slow and tedious and a great consumer of time, and I could not afford to incur any gratuitous risk on the Tuesday morning.

John Snow, in his affidavit, set forth that the *Freethinker*, No. 693.]

according to his information and belief, was "the leading Freethought paper in this country," and was also "widely circulated in London among Freethinkers and others, including the classes from which a Common Jury is likely to be drawn." Further, that the comments in my article were calculated to damage him and his co-defendant in their defence of the libel action; and he submitted that it constituted "a contempt of this Honorable Court."

My solicitors, acting on my instructions, prepared my counter-affidavit. We then discussed whether I should be represented by counsel. My decision was to conduct my own case in person. I am a poor man who has to look narrowly at his outlay, and I do not want to throw too many burdens on my friends and supporters. A good deal of expense was unavoidable; twenty pounds more for counsel would run up a heavy bill of costs on my own side alone; and the fortune of war might saddle me with the costs of the other side in addition. I had no alternative, therefore, but to undertake the work of counsel myself.

I appeared in No. VII. Court on Tuesday morning, armed with my affidavit and other documents. Ex-parte motions were heard by Mr. Justice Matthew and Mr. Justice Charles. After these were disposed of I expected John Snow's counsel to make his "urgent" motion for my committal to Holloway Prison. But the motion was not made, and the Court went on with the Crown List. When the motion will be made I cannot say. My solicitors are watching the list for me, and I shall receive notice the night before the hearing.

I may say, though I hope it is not necessary, that no contempt of court on my part was ever intended. I cannot pretend to any great regard for John Snow, but I do believe in a fair trial, and as I never alluded to the evidence that may or may not be presented to the jury, I cannot see that I have in any way prejudiced his defence. I merely stated what appears upon the record, that he does not attempt to justify the libel. I have always shared Mr. Bradlaugh's high respect for our superior judges, and I have no doubt that juries endeavor to return a true verdict, although I hope it is no crime to believe that they may sometimes be warped by prejudice, like all the rest of us in this state of imperfect civilisation. More than this I never intended to convey; but if my words can be honestly felt to suggest more, I am prepared to sincerely apologise for my error of inadvertence.

John Snow forgets that he has himself published, month after month in a certain journal, the most emphatic comments on the action in which he is a defendant. He forgets that he has given me great provocation. He forgets that I kept silent under it until I wrote the article he complains of. He has published a distinct denial of my *bonâ fides*; he has published the assertion that the plaintiffs have ulterior motives in the suit. After the action was commenced he published something still worse. What does he think, what would the Court think, of this passage?—"When the case comes before the Court, the evidence lacking in the involved paragraph will be forthcoming, and then that too, like the others, will be proved up to the hilt." Does he think that these words, which he knows to be false, have not been read by persons who are liable to serve as common jurors? Does he think they are calculated to create no prejudice against the plaintiffs in this action? It seems to be John Snow's opinion that Christians may say what they please, while Secularists are bound to an abject silence. I scarcely believe, however, that English judges will share his opinion.

G. W. FOOTE.

MR. FROUDE'S ERASMUS.*

"ALL you who honor Christ, I pray you hate Erasmus. He is a scoffer and a mocker. He speaks in riddles, and jests at Popery and Gospel, and Christ and God, with his uncertain speeches. . . . I take Erasmus to be the worst enemy that Christ has had for a thousand years. Intellect does not understand religion, and when it comes to the things of God it laughs at them. He scoffs like Lucian, and by-and-by he will say, 'Behold, how are these among the saints whose life we counted for folly?' I bid you, therefore, take heed of Erasmus. He treats theology as a fool's jest, and the Gospel as a fable good for the ignorant to believe."

Such was the judgment of Luther, the hero of the Protestant Reformation. Catholics have been not less virulent in their invective against Erasmus. He "laid the egg which Luther hatched;"† a cowardly heretic who stood appalled at the consequences of his own heresy. Between the two the reputation of Erasmus has suffered, and only as Freethinkers have arisen, who have put off both Catholic and Protestant spectacles, has it been seen that he represented a movement that was wider, deeper, and more important than the Protestant Reformation—the movement of the Renaissance, the development of human intelligence and culture. Goethe, who himself carried on this movement of humanism, expressed the opinion that it might have been better for the world if the work of the Renaissance had gone on without the violent outburst of Luther's Reformation. But might-have-beens are ever futile. Luther was, and he did a mighty work. Erasmus, with a feebler nature, had a keener intellect, and he, too, did his work. Let us look at the man and his work for a little.

Erasmus has drawn his own life and character, and that of his times, in his numerous letters, and Mr. Froude did well in making these the substratum of his last work. The *Desideri Erasmi Epistolæ* (Leyden, 1703) are at once a biography and a mine, rich in wit, satire, and information, upon the men and manners of his time. Mr. Froude, who made the period peculiarly his own, says truly: "It is a period of which the story is still disfigured by passion and prejudice. I believe that you will best see what it really was if you will look at it through the eyes of Erasmus."

Erasmus was born at Rotterdam in 1467. Mr. Froude dismisses as uncertain the story of his being a love child, whose father became a priest—the story Mr. Charles Reade made the foundation of his fine novel, *The Cloister and the Hearth*. What is certain is that while still young he became an orphan. He was distinguished by a love of books in days when books were scarce; got up mimic debates, and challenged other boys to dispute with him on points of language and literature. His guardians and schoolmaster destined him for the cloister. They would thus save his soul, and themselves trouble. Mr. Froude says: "The kidnapping of boys and girls, who had either money, or rank, or talent, was a common method of recruiting among the religious orders in the fifteenth century." Erasmus says of his schoolmaster: "He imagined that in forcing a youth to become a monk he would be offering a sacrifice acceptable to God. He used to boast of the many victims which he devoted annually to Dominic and Francis and Benedict." Placed from school with the Collationary Fathers, a community who made their living by netting proselytes for the regular orders, he was virtually forced into a novitiate. Fasting disagreed with him; his health was always delicate. He was told his sufferings were a device of Satan to draw him from Christ. Let him defy Satan, and all would be well. Let him persevere, he would soon find Paradise. Once having put his hand to the plough, it was too late to look back. Remember Lot's wife. Erasmus did look back. He protested against this seclusion from the world before he knew what the world was like. He had been wheedled into monastic life under the expectation of indulging his tastes for books. "But once there," says Mr. Froude, "he found that he might get drunk as often and as openly as he liked, but study was a forbidden indulgence."

Erasmus protested, schemed, and at length got away as secretary to the Bishop of Cambray, who allowed him to study at Paris, where his wit soon brought him reputation. He was a fine classical scholar when such were few and in demand. He became tutor to noblemen, among others Lord Mountjoy, who brought him to England, where he became acquainted with More, Colet, Grocyn, and Linacre. He delighted in their friendship, and found the English girls "divinely pretty." "Soft, pleasant, gentle, and charming as the Muses. They have one custom which cannot be too much admired. When you go anywhere on a visit the girls all kiss you." He visited England several times, and when Henry VIII. came to the throne he desired to attach the now famous scholar to his court. But Erasmus was ever a wanderer and a free lance. He accepted a benefice in England, but resigned it in six months. He helped Colet to found the St. Paul's School, and resided with More at Chelsea, and with Bishop Fisher at Rochester. Out of their intercourse grew the wittiest of all Erasmus's writings, *The Encomium Morie*, or *Praise of Folly*, with a play upon More's name. In the Summer Number of the *Freethinker* last year Mr. Foote gave, together with a portrait of Erasmus, a pretty full account of the *Praise of Folly*, with its witty gibes at monks, preachers, theologians, and even the doctrines of the Church. Mr. Froude says: "Through the printing-press it flew over Western Christendom, through France, through Spain, through England and Germany, and, like an explosion of spiritual dynamite, it left monks and clergy in wreck and confusion, objects of universal laughter." Of course they called out Antichrist and heretic, and clamored for dungeon and faggot. About the same time appeared anonymously a dialogue between Julius II. and Peter at the gate of heaven, exposing the greedy and brutal character of the late Pope. It was generally attributed to Erasmus, and Mr. Froude evidently agrees, for he gives a complete translation in an appendix. These were the fruit of his lighter hours. For years he had devoted himself to bringing out a Greek Testament, with a new Latin translation and notes. The time was ripe. The invention of the printing-press, itself a sign of the demand for literature, enabled its rapid multiplication. A hundred thousand copies were soon sold in France alone. It came to the laity, indeed, as a revelation. They saw the contrast between the simple doctrines of Jesus and the elaborate ecclesiasticism built upon them, and this contrast was enforced by the notes of Erasmus. No wonder they took the priests' own book as a touchstone, unquestioning its age or authorship, and uncriticising its position and pretensions. Here was the glaring fact: the book taught simplicity, humility, and other-worldliness; the Church practised greed, ostentation, and selfishness. The book was a gospel for the poor, and the Church had made it an engine of oppression. To the Reformers it was too useful a weapon to be closely scrutinised. Erasmus was free enough in his running commentary. Thus he says, on that favorite text of the monks, "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" (Matt. xix. 12): "Men are threatened or tempted into vows of celibacy. They can have license to go with harlots, but they must not marry wives. They may keep concubines and remain priests. If they take wives, they are thrown to the flames. Parents who design their children for a celibate priesthood should emasculate them in their infancy, instead of forcing them, reluctant or ignorant, into a furnace of licentiousness." Ignatius Loyola once looked into Erasmus's New Testament, read a little, and could not go on. He said it checked his devotional emotions. Very likely it did.

The monks made many attempts to avenge themselves on Erasmus. They sought to reduce him under a rule which he had deserted and ridiculed. The prior of the convent, from which he had been rescued, wrote asking how he had been employed in his absence, how he had lived, what sins he had committed, and inviting him to return. Erasmus courteously, but firmly, refused. He applied to Rome, and obtained release from his monastic vows.

J. M. WHEELER.

(To be concluded.)

* *Life and Letters of Erasmus*. Lectures delivered at Oxford 1893-4, by J. A. Froude, Regius Professor of Modern History. London: Longman, Green, & Co.; 1894.

† Erasmus said: "The egg I laid was a hen, and Luther hatched a gume-cock."

Reason cannot show itself more reasonable than to leave reasoning on things above reason.—*Sir Philip Sidney*.

THE FUNCTIONS OF BOARD SCHOOLS.

ACCORDING to etymology, education means to lead forth; therefore, care should be taken that we adopt those educational methods that will cause the leading forth to be in the right direction. The principal object to be kept in view in the instruction of children is to draw out and properly direct those faculties that are of practical value in preparing them to efficiently perform their duties as members of the general community. We have no longer to plead the rightfulness or the necessity of education. In Bentham's time it was urged that "the teaching of letters might lead to fraud"; to which he replied: "Bread fired out of a cannon might be an instrument of death."

It is now an admitted fact that the qualities which mankind exhibits in mature life are largely the result of impressions made upon the infant mind. That is, that the character of the man is, to a great extent, influenced by the education given to the child. It thus becomes of paramount importance that we should be determined to do our best to see that correct impressions only are made upon the minds of the rising generation. The course of a river does not depend entirely upon the nature of the channels through which it flows; the source and volume of the water, together with the numerous rippling rills, are factors that affect the progress of the current of the water. So it is with the youthful mind, which is affected by trivial incidents, the accumulation of which, in course of time, acts upon it with increased and increasing force. The momentous consequence of this fact was recognised by Aristotle, who remarked that "the fate of empires depends on the education of youth." This is true; and the fact must not be ignored that the future of this country of ours depends upon the nature of the instruction given in our schools.

If we desire children to understand the lessons given them, such lessons must be upon subjects that are not too great a tax upon the young brain. Facts, with their evidence, should be placed before them; not speculations upon matters which even adults cannot understand. The education in our Board schools ought to be confined to known realities of existence, unimpaired by conjectures about a perplexing theology. The State has a permanent interest in the welfare and good conduct of all its citizens, and, therefore, it should seek to so instruct the children that they may become good and wise men and women. As the lustre of the diamond is brought forth by the lapidary, so is the beauty of the mind made apparent by the process of sound education. The function of Board schools is not to grow human plants to decorate the cathedral or the conventicle, but to endeavor to promote the secular progress of the world and the development of what is best in man. The qualities that are most to be admired in the greatest servants of humanity are intelligence, industry, courage, truthfulness, honor, and self-reliance. Theological teaching is not necessary to the production or the fostering of these virtues; they spring from a well-balanced mind and a well-trained intellect—the legitimate product of true education.

It is not a duty of our public schools to waste the time that should be devoted to secular instruction in expounding sectarian views in reference to the Trinity, the Incarnation, the death of Christ, and the infallibility of the Bible. Such subjects are not suited to the youthful mind, and the belief in them is not necessary to good citizenship. They are not practical but theoretical questions, and should be discussed, if at all, by those whose age and experience would aid them in the controversy. Such doctrines cannot possibly be understood by children, and the introduction of them into our public schools can only be a hindrance to the progress of that education for which the nation pays. Whatever opinions may be entertained upon these doctrines, they are personal, and the teachers in public schools have no right to be asked to bias the minds of the children thereon. The Rev. Dr. Parker recently said: "I am entirely opposed to the religious circular. . . . The consistent attitude for a Nonconformist to take is an adoption of secular teaching in rate-supported schools. That is consistent. That is intelligible. In the end that will win the confidence of the ratepayers. What are all the clergy, ministers, Sunday-school teachers, city missionaries, and evangelists for? Do they teach arithmetic or religion? Are they algebraists or moralists? They are more than a hundred thousand in number. Will anybody tell me what they are for?"

This is outspoken and to the point. The clergy are paid to teach religion, and their duty is to keep to their legitimate avocation, and to leave the general education of the children to teachers who are qualified for such work. A significant justification of the adoption of a secular policy in our national schools was given in the famous manifesto recently issued by the teachers. They frankly acknowledged that the introduction of theology into the curriculum of children's study was a potent hindrance to the progress of that education which the measure of 1870 was intended to provide for. The teachings of the Church are objected to by a large and increasing number of the population; therefore, the injustice of applying part of their taxes to pay for the inculcation of such teachings should be recognised by every voter of common sense in the kingdom.

It is no part of the functions of Board schools to teach children the contents of a book many portions of which convey the very opposite of moral lessons. In the *London Daily Chronicle* of September 20 last there appeared a review of Dr. Watson's commentary of the "Book of Numbers," in which it was shown that the Bible contains that which cannot but have an injurious effect upon the youthful mind, particularly when it is urged that such contents are sanctioned by a God "whom we should all obey." The reviewer observes: "We feel still more bound to complain that our expositor affords us so feeble a light in the tragic story which occupies Numbers xxxi. The book records that, at the instance of the Almighty, Israel waged a war of extermination on the Midianites, and when 30,000 captive women were brought back to the camp Moses, the man of God, had the helpless creatures slaughtered in cold blood. Now, Dr. Watson's curious view is, that the Israelites had not the spiritual qualification to convert these tribes of Bedaween, and, therefore, the only course in order to secure morality and religion was to destroy them. Now, that Israel, and even Moses, should take such a view of the situation is conceivable enough. But surely the time has come when a Christian teacher may say explicitly, notwithstanding the frowns of orthodoxy, that such a deed of blood and fury never was commanded by God, whom we profess to serve." This extract from a professed Christian paper is quoted because it gives a specimen (although by no means one of the worst that could be cited) of the reading and lessons that may be found in the Bible. It is monstrous that our public schools should be made the medium of impregnating the young and tender minds with such stories of revolting cruelty as are found in what is wickedly called the "pure word of God." If adults can find pleasure or profit in perusing the records of the Bible, be it so; but it is to be hoped that at the coming election candidates will be returned who will raise their voice upon the Board against innocent children being taught that a book which sanctions the gratification of the lowest and most brutal passions of human nature is the highest authority in the actions of daily life.

Let it once for all be clearly understood that, if I win a seat upon the School Board, I shall oppose to the very last, with all the power I possess, teaching the scholars anything either for or against religion; in favor of, or opposed to, the Bible; in support of, or antagonistic to, Christian doctrines. My voice and vote will be for maintaining the true function of the Board, which I regard to be to provide the means, and to employ the same, in aiding the rising generation to become good and useful men and women, so that the world may be the better for the part they play in the great struggle of life.

CHARLES WATTS.

Religion says Humility. Humanity says Dignity.—*Emile Leclercq.*

There cannot be the slightest doubt in the world that the argument which applies to the improvement of the horse from an earlier stock, or of ape from ape, applies to the improvement of man from some simpler and lower stock than man. There is not a single faculty—functional or structural, moral, intellectual, or instructive—there is no faculty whatever that is not capable of improvement; there is no faculty whatever which does not depend upon structure, and, as structure tends to vary, it is capable of being improved.—*T. H. Huxley, "Darwiniana," p. 474.*

SUICIDE AND IMMORTALITY.

OUR American friends are generally well ahead of us in the matters of novelty and sensation, and in regard to affairs which concern the well-being of society they are seldom to be found in the rear. Pensive and passive are not their national characteristics; their existence is dependent on their intense activity, and their prime ambition is to excel what others have previously accomplished. Therefore, when England had her controversy on the attractive and important question of Suicide, it was but inevitable that, if America interested herself in the subject at all, she would "go one better"; and now that the torrent of diversified opinion has ceased to flow into the New York newspaper office, it can be judiciously affirmed that the discussion has been marked with singular vigor, sincerity, and brilliancy. While English people had to content themselves in the main with the perusal of the epistolary ebullitions of anonymous nondescripts, Westerners have been favored with the advantage of the ideas of many of their most worthy and famous countrymen. And yet the problem of why so many people prefer the spontaneous shuffling off the mortal coil to the involuntary surrender at the natural visitation of death, and whether such action constitutes an injury to society and an injustice to themselves, is not much nearer solution. It is also evident that, no matter how much is written or spoken on the ethics of the subject, or how much is done towards the persuasion of unfortunate individuals from their purposes, the number of deaths brought about by the exercise of the will will not be perceptibly affected. Like poverty, we have the suicide always with us; irrespective of geographical limitations, climatic conditions, racial distinctions, and social position, and in total disregard of sex or age, the uncontrollable loathing of life manifests itself, and instantaneously causes the despatch of the breath of existence. The starving, who drag their unhoused and emaciated bodies along the streets and by the waysides; the affluent, whose riches have abducted them to the path of vice; the man whose dishonesty has incurred his disgrace; the woman whose weakness has created her betrayal; the lover whose amorous passions have been frustrated; the outcast, the persecuted, and the weary, possess in all their vicissitudes one sovereign antidote for their cares—that sure and lightning remedy to be found in the ever outstretched arms of death.

Self-murder is not one of the most distinctive features of the present age, although it would be incorrect to allege that suicides are not numerically greater in proportion to population than in earlier times. To cite a list of those who have chosen the manner of their own exit from the stage of life would be to name many of the most distinguished and noblest characters in the world's history. Shakespeare has made a large number of the heroes and heroines of his tragedies to arrest the continuation of their own beings; and if it is allowed that this may have been done for the purpose of dramatic effect, it should also be remembered—and a slight acquaintance with the dramatist will confirm the idea—that it is equally probable the conclusions of his plays were dictated by a deep study and a comprehensive survey of human nature. Antony, Cleopatra, Romeo, Juliet, Brutus, and Othello, to mention a few, were all responsible for the termination of their existences. Even the philosophic Hamlet, in lamenting "the stale, flat, and unprofitable uses of the world," yearned that his flesh would "melt, thaw, and resolve itself into a dew"; and in his alternate passions of despair and fear regretted that the Everlasting had placed his canon against self-slaughter. Hamlet manifested quite an affectionate regard for death; for only in that direction could he foresee the ceasing of the storms which raged through his mind. Intensely remarkable, and yet consistent and logical in sequence, was the process of reasoning in which he anticipated a voluntary conclusion of his existence:—

To be or not to be, that is the question,
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die—to sleep—
No more—and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished.

To die—to sleep—no more." Hamlet was indeed a

philosopher, untroubled with forebodings of a future state—thinking not, and caring little, of what his mind could not cognize.

Unlike Shakespeare's famous character, as he is portrayed in his soliloquies, there are those who contemplate and commit suicide on impulses created by ideas of an after existence. Religious conceptions of the benefits and blessings to be achieved on the other side of the grave are frequently the primary inducement to quit the pains incident to mundane habitation and fly to that happiness which is the inviting prize held out to the merest tyro in the faith. If proof were needed of the universality of this truth, it would be sufficient to reproduce a few of the farewell letters read at coroners' inquests; and these, as representative of the nature of ninety per cent. of the suicides, would show how a belief in immortality suggests a convenient apology for shuffling out of the duties and responsibilities of life. Granted that it entails a severe trial of courage and a tax on resolution to face, with deliberate intention, the terrors of death, it is still creditable, and not beyond human potentiality, that even this vital ordeal can be cheerfully surmounted when the grave is held to be the last step on the "march nearer home," and the gates of death the entrance to a joyful eternity, compared with which the earthly life is as brief as the last fitful glimmer of a rushlight.

Only the other day a poor suicide gave, as the motive of her act, the desire that "she wished to live for ever." And why should not the weeping soul, oppressed by the hardships of the way, cut the slender thread which shuts it out from endless felicity? Why should the cursed and beaten wife arrest the cup of poison which will be her blessed deliverer? Why should she with broken honor face the taunts of a bitter world when a moment's decisive action will transport her to realms of perpetual glory? And why should the crippled traveller, on life's long road, linger longer in this vale of tears, when a little resolution can take him to his well-earned rest? In nothing is the incentive to self-destruction so marked as in that creed which paints, in beauteous colors, the charms and attractions of a life beyond, which deprecates the value of the present existence, and which triumphs in the vanity of human strivings. Is it to be wondered at that the contemplation of heavenly prospects causes many to rush wildly forth out of place and out of time, to gain the crown of joy?

In another respect, it may be conceded, the belief in immortality may act as a deterrent to suicide, as an uncertainty of after fate may produce a hesitancy in the relinquishment of present evils, for fear of a possible worse condition hereafter. This, however, can only be said to influence those whose relation to the beyond differs but little from the position of the Agnostic; those who do not dogmatise on future happenings or probabilities, who profess ignorance of their ultimate fortunes, which, they say, will be only dispelled by the revelation of time. To such, self-destruction may be a too speedy precipitation into the dark unknown. Amongst the sane, only those who are pursued by despair, haunted by guilty consciences, or cursed by oppression, will seek to end their lives, and in their cases it may be deduced their burdens are of such incalculable weight and pain as to necessitate the resort to such a drastic cure. Thoughts of after consequences may guide the determinations of some, and never enter into the considerations of others.

From what has been written on the subject of suicide during the last few months, the conclusion may be drawn that self-obliteration is one of the noblest kinds of death it is possible for a human being to experience, and that the fatal act immediately transforms a person into a philosopher or a martyr. Nothing could be further from the purpose, at any rate, of Colonel Ingersoll, who has only pleaded, in his characteristically humane tones, for a more generous treatment of the would-be suicide, and a more rational view of the rights and privileges of the individual. If we could imagine a time when contentment shall reign in the mind of man, when happiness shall illumine the face of the earth, when enmity and malice will be no more, and all will strive for the common good, we should be able also to predicate that under such circumstances there would be but few, if any, who would take their lives, as in a state of general felicity there would exist little or no desire to terminate the only existence of which people were indubitably certain. Suicide, then, is one of the evils which

follow in the wake of misfortune. In the struggle of life many are trodden underfoot, and in the despair and misery attendant on such calamities death is chosen in preference to the continuation of a wretched existence. Such an escape from pain and suffering is the inalienable right of every individual, a right which, when exercised, constitutes no offence towards anybody or anything else but the victim. It is only when suicide is committed on little pretence or small excuse, when a difficulty has to be surmounted and a solution is sought for in the grave, when a vital stand has to be made for righteousness, and a retreat is discovered in the jaws of death, that suicide becomes an indication of cowardice and fear. Society would soon be jeopardised if individuals rushed to self-destruction at the least ripple of the river of life; the nations would soon be turned upside down if statesmen deserted their posts on the slightest realisation of discomfiture or danger. It is only in proportion as we grapple with the evils which surround us, as we fight and triumph over the many ills and vicissitudes of "outrageous fortune," as we work towards the happiness and comfort of every class of society, that we fully justify our existence and sustain our title to the designations of men and women. The prosperity of the race depends on the loyal support and exertions of individuals. To those who think of committing suicide, it will be best to reiterate the advice proffered by *Punch* to those about to marry—Don't.

FRED WILSON.

COLONEL INGERSOLL ON CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

[COLONEL INGERSOLL has addressed the following letter to the *New York World*, in reply to Mr. Brockway, superintendent of the Elmira Reformatory, who advocates corporal punishment.]

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK "WORLD."

In my judgment no human being was ever made better, nobler, by being whipped or clubbed.

Mr. Brockway, according to his own testimony, is simply a savage. He belongs to the Dark Ages—to the Inquisition, to the torture-chamber, and he needs reforming more than any prisoner under his control. To put any man within his power is in itself a crime. Mr. Brockway is a believer in cruelty—an apostle of brutality. He beats and bruises flesh to satisfy his conscience—his sense of duty. He wields the club himself because he enjoys the agony he inflicts.

When a poor wretch, having reached the limit of endurance, submits or becomes unconscious, he is regarded as reformed. During the remainder of his term he trembles and obeys. But he is not reformed. In his heart is the flame of hatred, the desire for revenge; and he returns to society far worse than when he entered the prison.

Mr. Brockway should either be removed or locked up, and the Elmira Reformatory should be superintended by some civilised man—some man with brain enough to know and heart enough to feel.

I do not believe that one brute, by whipping, beating, and lacerating the flesh of another, can reform him. The lash will neither develop the brain nor cultivate the heart. There should be no bruising, no scarring of the body in families, in schools, in reformatories, or prisons. A civilised man does not believe in the methods of savagery. Brutality has been tried for thousands of years, and through all these years it has been a failure.

Criminals have been flogged, mutilated and maimed, tortured in a thousand ways, and the only effect was to demoralise, harden, and degrade society and increase the number of crimes. In the army and navy soldiers and sailors were flogged to death, and everywhere by Church and State the torture of the helpless was practised and upheld.

Only a few years ago there were 223 offences punished with death in England. Those who wished to reform this savage code were denounced as the enemies of morality and law. They were regarded as weak and sentimental.

At last the English code was reformed through the efforts of men who had brain and heart. But it is a

significant fact that no Bishop of the Episcopal Church, sitting in the House of Lords, ever voted for the repeal of one of those savage laws. Possibly this fact throws light on the recent poetic and Christian declaration by Bishop Potter to the effect that "there are certain criminals who can only be made to realise, through their hides, the fact that the State has laws to which the individual must be obedient."

This orthodox remark has the true apostolic ring, and is in perfect accord with the history of the Church. But it does not accord with the intelligence and philanthropy of our time. Let us develop the brain by education, the heart by kindness. Let us remember that criminals are produced by conditions, and let us do what we can to change the conditions and reform the criminals.

R. G. INGERSOLL.

UNBELIEVERS AND GOD.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Your article with the above title seems to me so essentially and nobly true that, though it lashes myself with, I think, undeserved severity, I cannot but thank you for having written and published it. I have, through all my public life, constantly striven to put before Christians the very conceptions which you so ably present; and the fact that you have felt it your duty to hold me up to the scorn of your readers cannot blind me to the high ethical character of your article. I do not happen to possess the report on which your remarks are based, but I have been often enough misreported to take it for granted that there were words attributed to me which, if you saw no reason to doubt whether I had really uttered them, would justify, in large measure, your scorn of myself. I did not, however, say what the report appears to have attributed to me. On the contrary, I began by dissenting altogether from the chairman's remarks, and said that, even if it were true that any considerable percentage of unbelievers were men who were unbelievers on account of their vicious lives, the statement would be utterly false, in my opinion, of the main body of unbelievers in this country.

I then went on to argue exactly on your own lines, that the men who lived vicious lives had no need to profess unbelief as a cloak, and if they did they were to be taken, not as examples of unbelievers at all, but of men who are determined, whether there is a God or not, to follow their own way. And I added that the evil with which we are most concerned to deal is not the profession of scepticism by men who believe, but the profession of Christianity by men who do not believe.

You say, "But even this is less nauseous than the patronising way in which Dr. Harrison spoke of God Almighty." And the example you give is my statement that "God deserted no true seeker." You seem to think that in thus speaking I, perhaps, felt that I paid my maker a compliment. On this supposition, I should deserve even greater contempt than you have expressed. But I was not speaking of the character of God. I was reminding Christians that the seeker for truth was in God's guiding care as much as they were themselves—a fact they are too ready to forget.

Apart, however, from the incidental injustice to myself, you have written so wisely and well on the subject that I cannot refrain from thanking you.—I am, sir, yours truly,

A. J. HARRISON.

[*Editorial Note.*—We are delighted to find that Dr. Harrison was misreported. We always entertained a high opinion of his character, and should be sorry to alter our estimate. The "incidental injustice" we did him was occasioned by the misreport of his speech in the local newspaper. Dr. Harrison may rest assured that no difference of opinion will ever cause us to speak unkindly of him while he keeps to his old policy of respecting our intentions. That is half the battle when we want to find the truth in common. People may shake hands when their heads are working in different ways, and we beg Dr. Harrison to receive the assurance of our sincere regard.]

The Pessimist—"Do you really think the world will ever be Christianised?" The Optimist—"You bet I do. And at the rate the heathen are being wiped out by these machine guns, nowadays, it won't be long, either."

ACID DROPS.

Mr. W. T. Stead is always riding on a wave of "good business." On Sunday last he tried to make the most of the London Reform movement by calling a Conference in the West-end. It was numerously attended, but it appears to have ended in smoke. Amongst those present was Mr. G. Bernard Shaw, who left the Conference when Mr. Stead proceeded to offer up a prayer. Mr. Shaw and his friends don't deal in that line. They made the mistake of supposing that Mr. Stead was going to be sensible.

The *Methodist Times* (Price Hughes's paper) makes the discovery that Christian London is "utterly behind pagan Paris" in something. Fifty thousand children in London attend school "habitually in want of food," whereas in Paris, "by wise and humane co-operation between the municipality and voluntary philanthropists, every starving child is fed before he is driven to his school books."

The Rev. Hugh Price Hughes is the author of that convicted lie, "The Atheist Shoemaker." Mr. G. W. Foote is the exposé of that same falsehood. Mr. Hughes is having a six months' holiday, and in last week's *Methodist Times* he writes: "Here we are, back once more at the comfortable and most central hotel, which Signor Marini calls by his own name, in the Via del Tritone (Rome)." Mr. Foote, on the other hand, is hard at work, and the only hotel he is being invited to is known as Holloway Prison.

Mr. Hughes is in raptures over the ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, where was accommodation for sixteen hundred bathers at once. After which he puts a note of admiration. The poor man does not see that Rome went in for cleanliness, while Christianity went in for godliness—and dirt.

Mr. Hughes was disappointed by the statue of Flora. She seemed to him "a strapping and brawny female, but to lack the gentleness and sweetness of the best womanhood." Mrs. Hughes, however, greatly admired Flora, as did their hostess at Naples, and it was to their credit. Mr. Hughes seems to admire the Christian type of woman brought up on green tea and prayer meetings.

Here is another discovery made by Mr. Hughes. "How astonishing it is," he exclaims, *apropos* of the Vestal Virgins, "that woman occupied all through the history of Rome a position of such commanding influence and authority"—and he puts in another note of admiration. But there is nothing at all astonishing in the matter. Paganism honored motherhood. Christianity reviled it, and taught that the first baby born in the world was the offspring of "sin." Nothing is clearer, as Principal Donaldson admits, than that Christianity degraded woman from the proud and honorable position she had attained to under the pagan law of the Roman empire.

Christian Evidence speakers at Wimbledon went about declaring that Mr. G. J. Holyoake was "subsisting upon Christian charity." Mr. L. D. Hewitt, the N.S.S. Branch secretary, wrote to Mr. Holyoake on the subject, and received the following answer, which has been read out to meetings in the district: "What you tell me is entirely untrue, as the statements of peripatetic Christians usually are. Three Christians—the Rev. Stopford Brooke, the Rev. J. R. Green, and the Rev. Joseph Parker—were subscribers to the annuity given me; whose generosity I am always pleased to acknowledge. I think they were the only Christians, whom I knew as such, that gave subscriptions. There were doubtless other Christians who, on public grounds, aided. But the whole was a very small proportion to that given by friends of Free-thought and Co-operation. A very large subscription was collected by the late Mr. Bradlaugh, and a still larger proportion from personal friends of my own among the Co-operators, who were mostly of my way of thinking. Many sums came from foreign countries and America."

Father Ignatius has again been fulminating against Canon Driver, whom he accuses of flatly contradicting the word of Jesus Christ. Ignatius endorses Pusey, who said if Daniel was not written by Daniel "then the book is one huge lie uttered in the name of God." Then Father Ignatius got at the Broad Churchism of Canon Fremantle, who, he says, "tries to show clergymen how, without believing in a God, they can speak of him as loving and kind." "Such argument is bosh, rot, and devilish humbug," said the Father, who evidently copies his Savior in the use of strong language.

Mr. Keir Hardie, the Christian Socialist, has taken to lampooning Mr. John Burns, who is a Socialist, but not a Christian. His action is severely condemned by Mr. Robert Blatchford ("Nunquam" of the *Clarion*), who is a Socialist and a Secularist.

The Rev. Lewis Price, of Llanelly, was seized with paralysis in the pulpit, and died the same evening. Of course he is gone to heaven, yet the news has thrown "a deep and distressing gloom over the neighborhood." There is a lot of human nature, if very little logic, even in Methodists.

A court in Hungary sentenced the Greek Oriental priest, John Gertman, to serve a term of four and a half years in a dungeon, for the crimes of usury, forgery, perjury, mutilation, etc. The Lord blessed him with plunder to the amount of \$60,000.

The Church is always, like Mrs. Partington, trying to mop out the ocean; but it hardly has as much faith as actuated some Hindu priests. Refusing to believe that the sacred waters of the Holy Ganges would consent to enter a canal made by unbelievers, they stationed themselves in a solid body in front of the intake of the water, until a very speedy abandonment of their position was necessary.

At the Bolton Rural Deanery Conference a paper was read on Sunday schools as Educational Factors. Mr. Howart, the writer, thought they were not so at present, but he made so, and the scepticism of the present day made it very necessary. In the discussion the Rev. T. Taylor Evans said, with regard to the better classes being absent from Sunday-school, he preferred his teachers from the working classes, who got a better religious training than public school-boys.

When it comes to getting at the root of things, the Rev. T. De Witt Talmage is right on hand. He has estimated the dimensions of heaven, measured the whale which Jonah inhabited, and figured out Solomon's estate to have been worth \$191,528,006,032. Now, if T. De W. T. will give us the length of the snake which caused that fall in apples, the kind of fuel used in the fiery furnace, and what system of ventilating was used in the Ark, it will be time for him to take up another contribution for the tabernacle fund.—*Arkansas Traveller*.

The Rev. Mr. Burnaby, vicar of St. Mary's, thinks that if the Church of England is disestablished there will be an end of religion in England. We should "see this land a creedless and godless kingdom." How horrible! After all there is nothing like leather.

The Mahdi is reported to have a force of twelve thousand men prepared for the holy war against the Italians. More fanaticism, folly, and atrocity in the name of religion.

The following announcement was recently made by an elder in a church on the West Coast—not of Ireland, but Scotland: "Dear friends,—An open-air meeting will be held in the vestry on Tuesday night to consider what color the church will be whitewashed."

Enormous loss of life is reported as the effect of an earthquake in the Argentine Republic. Two thousand are said to have perished, and twenty thousand are homeless. The worst doings of the worst villains are excelled in atrocity by the alleged doings of our heavenly father.

The revival of well worship at Holywell reminds a correspondent of a well at Wavertree which bore the monkish inscription, "*Qui non dat quod habet, Dæmon infra ridet,*" implying that the Devil will take those who don't give. The Devil below served all the purposes of a loaded pistol to intimidate the visitor out of his money.

It is curious if St. Winefride's Well does not communicate disease as well as cure it, if it be true, as reported by several visitors, that diseased people bathe there and others drink of the water.

"A Missionary from China" writes to the *Record* that the hand of God "is to be plainly discerned in the issues of the war now being carried on between China and Japan. For nearly a century now China has had the Gospel presented to her by means of the steady and exhaustive labors of many missionaries, and how has she received it? Except in a few places, and that chiefly among the poor and ignorant peasantry, with unmitigated and haughty scorn, suspicion, and hatred manifested both towards God's message and his messengers." The missionary even confesses that the cry arose from his heart: "Lord, shall thy Son be thus dishonored, and wilt thou hold thy peace? Wilt thou not be avenged on such a nation as this?" So China's disasters are due to its rejection of Christianity, or possibly to the missionary's prayer.

Nonconformists and Churchmen are quarrelling finely over the forthcoming election. The *Guardian* accuses the Progressives of wishing to abolish Christian teaching, and the *Daily News* says: "That so iniquitous a lie should have

got currency in a religious journal of the standing and importance of the *Guardian* is a feature in the contest of which every honest and truth-loving citizen should make careful note."

A letter written in defence of "Church Education," and signed by Lord Bath and the Dean of St. Paul's, appeared in a contemporary. It begins with the following gem of a sentence: "The most critical School Board election that has taken place in London will be decided in a few weeks." If this be the result of "Church Education," it seems a pity that the Marquis and the Dean had no opportunity in their youth of attending a Board school.—*Daily News*

Mr. Diggle says he will resist every attempt to reopen the religious question on the part of his opponents. This means, of course, Mr. Stanley, Mr. Copeland Bowie, or any Secularist who may chance to be on the Board. But what in the event of a reopening by Mr. Riley? Mr. Diggle knows, none better, that the Church party are so receding with their own schools that they are bound to make every attempt to capture those supported by the whole of the ratepayers.

In an examination recently held in a German public school, the pupils were asked to state the value of the widow's two mites which are spoken of in the New Testament. One of the pupils gave as his answer: "Twelve marks forty-two pfennigs" (about twelve shillings and fourpence). This proved very puzzling to the examiner, until he found that the lad responsible for the explanation had, in the book he was learning from, the reference: "Widow's mite, Mark 12, 42"; this being, of course, a reference to the Gospel of St. Mark, and not to the German currency.

The charge of obscenity against Mr. J. B. Wise, of Kansas, for sending a post-card with a verse of the Bible to the Rev. Mr. Vennum, has been adjourned to the April term of the court at Topeka.

Here is a charming advertisement from the *Christian*: "A Lady is in want of a Woman to conduct a school for village children and manage a Mother's meeting. None need apply but earnest Christians. Cottage, coals, and 5s. per week." This village Lady Bountiful evidently considers earnest Christianity means poverty of spirit, and probably poverty of flesh as well.

Mr. Lyulph Stanley writes to the *Times*, accusing the Bishop of London of attributing to him and his colleagues sentiments "which our recorded speeches condemn." He adds: "Such modes of controversy remind me of the reply of Hobbes to Bishop Bramhall when, after exposing a misrepresentation of the Bishop, Hobbes says: 'If any will call it pious fraud, he will have to prove the piety as clearly as I have here explained the fraud.'"

Father Beauclerk is making a nice thing of the gate money at the exhibition of St. Winefride's Well at Holywell, and the local Council want some share of the proceeds. They have given him notice to deliver up his tenancy by next May, after which, we suppose, miracles will cease.

This seems to be a counterpart to the stoppage which was put by the French Government to the doings of the *convulsionnaires* and their miracles at the tomb of the Abbé Paris early in last century. A proclamation against the assembling of the crowd was put up, and it was versified as

De par le roi—défense à Dieu,
De faire miracle en ce lieu—

By order of the king God is forbidden from working miracles at this spot.

Mr. Emanuel, the Mayor of Portsmouth, has called attention to the fact that the Royal Seamen and Marines' Orphan School, which is supported generally by public subscription, is only open to children of the Church of England. Of the seamen and marines themselves, only seventy per cent. are enrolled as members of that Church, and everyone knows that those who hold no particular opinions are registered as members of the National Church. The facts ought to be known as widely as possible, and, indeed, the boxes which are placed in every ship, asking for donations, should state that the Schools and Homes are exclusively for members of the Church of England. Jack would then know what he was doing.

At Colwyn Bay, Wales, they have the likeness of Shakespeare over the platform of the Public Hall. This has outraged the feelings of a pious inhabitant, who writes to the local paper to inform its readers that this Shakespeare is "a man whose works every enlightened Christian would deem it his duty to put away as far as possible"; and "in the name of Jesus" he entreats that these things shall be blotted out from the Public Hall, "and so, perhaps, many souls may be

saved from everlasting ruin." Religion has evidently put this writer in a parlous state.

The *Edinburgh Review*, in an article on "The Educational Crisis," says: "From their own point of view the majority [of the London School Board] would have been better advised if, instead of laying their 'prentice hands' to the task of drafting a confession of faith, they had adopted the Apostles' Creed." We understand that Mr. Athelstan Riley himself was of this opinion, and only abandoned the attempt to utilise the Apostles' Creed in deference to the strenuous opposition of his colleagues.

The colleagues seem to have been wise. To ask teachers to inculcate such nonsense as the virgin birth and the descent into hell would have probably provoked more resistance than the vaguely worded circular, and would have drawn attention to the fact that the children were having put before them, for reverence, a creed which is a palpable forgery. Moreover, the line between catechisms and creeds is so narrow that the introduction of the Creed is a violation of the spirit, if not of the words, of the Education Act.

The *Edinburgh Review* confesses its anxiety for the future teaching of religion in our schools. "In the disgust with which they have witnessed the recent controversy, many moderate men have come to regard, with perilous complacency, the notion of secular schools." This is a good reason for our wishing the controversy to continue. In America and Greater Britain the secular system has triumphed by the conflict of the sects, and it is this which will open the eyes of the public, who are indifferent to religious squabbles, but anxious for the practical education of their children.

Margate Town Council elections are approaching, and the Rev. John James, a Nonconformist minister, writes to a local journal hoping that the popular choice of candidates will not be governed by "party politics or sectarian prejudices." What the reverend gentleman hopes, as a professional soul-saver who does his chief business on Sundays, is that the new Town Council will see that he and his like have the smallest possible amount of rivalry. There should be no Sunday trains or boat excursions to attract people from the gospel-shops. Don't let us drift into a Continental Sunday, he exclaims, with that air of alarm which is common to men whose trade is threatened. We quite believe the reverend gentleman when he says that he is "no fanatic." He hopes that "the new Council will have our best interests at heart"—which shows him to be a plain man of business.

God is taking it out of the Japanese in earthquakes. In the province of Akita, the town of Sakata was almost entirely destroyed and many persons were killed. So far as at present can be ascertained, 260 persons lost their lives, and a great many were injured.

In *English Whist and Whist Players* a story is told of Bishop Bathurst, who said: "I have served the Whigs all my life, and now they send me down a Canon who does not know clubs from spades."

Father Ivan, the "miracle worker," who is praying for the Czar, says he is sure that God is producing a change for the better; yet the medical bulletins declare that the Czar is getting worse. Father Ivan should pray without prophesying, which is always dangerous.

The *Cornhill* having given a story of an old lady who said she didn't expect to go to heaven, but, if she did, she would put in a word for the doctor, a correspondent of the *Westminster Gazette* caps it with an old *Freethinker* chestnut of a lady who, when lying ill, and being asked by the minister whether she was prepared for death, and knew the difference between heaven and hell, nonplussed the man of God by replying, "It nary matters; I have friends in both places!"

An excited appellant stood before Lord Justice Lopes, the Master of the Rolls, and demanded, "in the name of the God who reigned over earth, heaven, and hell, over angels, men, and devils," that his case should be investigated. The Master of the Rolls dismissed the application, and censured the appellant for uttering "nonsense" in "a loud voice." "That little trick doesn't impose on the authorities as it used to in the old 'Thus saith the Lord' days.

An over-dose of religion impelled an attendant at the Seacombe Parish Church, near Birkenhead, to run out of his pew, jump on the altar, pull down the brass cross, double it across his knee, and shout, "No Popery!" He was arrested, and a doctor certifying that he is suffering from religious mania, he has been remanded to the workhouse infirmary.

The *Westminster Gazette* has been having a series of articles on Theosophy, entitled "Isis Very Much Unveiled." The

writer exposes the fraudulent character of Madame Blavatsky's career, and says: "Poor, indeed, is the late Besantine period of mythological architecture beside its gorgeous predecessor."

Writing on the *Westminster* exposure of Theosophy, the *Pull Mall* says: "Whereas none but the infatuated has ever believed that the late-lamented 'H. P. B.' was anything but a conscious impostor, the world will be generous enough to accept Mrs. Besant's past history as a proof that she is only an unconscious dupe."

A meeting at Reading, organised by the Central Association for Stopping the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday, was very stormy, and an amendment was carried by a large majority. The people are seeing that in this question the parsons are working, not in the interest of temperance, but of monopoly. Let them offer to support the Sunday opening of libraries and museums if they want to prove their real interest in social welfare.

Some time ago the Rev. B. Waugh lent his authority to the assertion of the Bishop of Chester that Secularism was responsible for cruelty to children. Quite a different representation is now made by Mr. Waugh, in his pamphlet on *Our New Protectorate of Children*. He mentions among culprits, ministers of religion, university men, and lay preachers in the Church and the Salvation Army, but not a single word of any Secularist accused of ill-treating a child.

Here is an extract from the pamphlet: "Even the kind of people from which early communicants are recruited may contain hard and savage natures towards a frail, tiny child. A lady, the daughter of a well-known clergyman, had the care of a small, nervously-strung boy of Indian birth of five years old. On the festival of the Resurrection, on returning from early Communion at her parish church, with a new birch rod, she birched the thighs of the child. On returning from a second service at 10.30, she again birched the already scarlet, tingling member, with what effect may be gathered from the wreck she had made of her new birch rod. The housemaid testified that she swept up half a dust-panful of its broken twigs."

The pamphlet declares that, "in base inhumanity and cowardice to tiny helplessness in a nursery, some of those who celebrate the holy office can excel"; and it tells of horrible treatment, by a man of God, of a sixteen months' old child.

Mr. Waugh says: "Still further, the more a harsh man who dares to imagine himself in favored relations with the Great Mystery we call 'God,' no matter in what land or century he lives, or what the creed chances to be on his tongue, the more absolutely and entirely wicked is his harshness. Not only is he incapable of conceiving the sentiment of mercy—not only does he lend highest sanctions to his injustices, but, what is worse, he is cut off from the last hope of the wicked—he is incapable of the minute virtue of shame."

Mr. Waugh instances "a well-known champion of justification by faith; once the flaming editor of a militant Protestant journal," who kept an orphanage in a most disgraceful state of filth. "For stockings, swathings of rags sufficed. Of one child both great toes were dead; the other toes were livid, but not yet dead. The feet, to use the doctor's words, were "mummified"—some of the toes fell off. The surroundings of the squalid building were in keeping. The cesspool and the well were close neighbors. The yard was filthy as a pigstye. Having been exposed to the public, and condemned by the law, and looked after by a gaoler for six months, most cruel men reform, or become silent about their shame; but, after all, the man in this case glories in his shame. The burden of a convicted hypocrite's cry is, 'How long will the wicked triumph?'"

Another horrible tale is of a pious woman who, having starved a girl into begging a crust, charged her with it, and, the girl denying, said she should taste what "the hell of liars was like." She put the poker in the fire, and, when hot, forced it into the girl's mouth. The doctrines of religion are very beautiful, and have such an ennobling and humane effect on conduct.

COLLEGE DIVINITY.—An examiner in divinity in Trinity College, Dublin, who delights in badgering blockheads, gives the following as a treat which he once enjoyed from a student from Connemara:—Q. It is recorded in Scripture that a beast spoke—what was the beast?—A. A whale.—Q. To whom did the whale speak?—A. To Moses in the bulrushes.—Q. What did the whale say?—A. Thou art the man.—Q. And what did Moses reply?—A. Almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian

THE FINSBURY ELECTION.

THE fight in the Finsbury division is now becoming acute. My friend and colleague, Mr. Charles Watts, is the "secular education" candidate, and it would be an immense advantage if he could secure a seat on the London School Board. His excellent address is being widely circulated, some public meetings have already been held, and many others have been arranged for, including two or three open-air demonstrations. I feel as much interested in Mr. Watts's candidature as if it were my own, and I shall fight by his side (I hope) throughout the campaign. The funds hitherto subscribed are nearly exhausted. Finsbury is an enormous division, with no less than 80,000 electors. To work it with any degree of efficiency will require at least £100. Up to the present about £45 pounds has been subscribed. I appeal to the Secular party, especially in London, though by no means exclusively there, to subscribe the full £100 *immediately*. Donations should be sent to the Treasurer, Mr. George Ward, 91 Mildmay-park, London, N. I may add that Mr. Watts enters upon this contest at the special invitation of the National Secular Society's Executive.

G. W. FOOTE (*President N.S.S.*).

Further Subscriptions Received:—

E. Truelove, £1; Glasgow Branch, £1 5s. 2d.; G. S. Ryer, 5s.; J. Vick, 1s.; W. Putz, 2s.

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

Spacious and prominent Committee Rooms have been engaged by the Committee at 191 St. John-street-road, Islington, N., a few doors from the "Angel," where I shall be in attendance each day.

On Monday next, at 8.15 p.m., Mr. Watts will address a meeting at the Banner-street Hall, St. Luke's, E.C., when he will be supported by Messrs. G. W. Foote, G. Standring, R. Forder, J. Rowney, and others.

On Sunday morning, November 4, an open-air meeting will be held on Clerkenwell Green, at 11.30 a.m., by Messrs. G. Standring, J. Rowney, F. Haslam, W. J. Ramsey, and members of the Finsbury Branch.

On Saturday, November 10, at 3 p.m., a meeting will be held in Finsbury Park, and addressed by Messrs. C. Watts, G. W. Foote, G. Ward, R. Forder, J. Rowney, and others, at the usual N.S.S. meeting-place.

On November 7 another meeting will be held at Bloomsbury Hall (late Newmayer Hall), Hart-street, Bloomsbury, at 8 p.m. Friends in Holborn and Bloomsbury are requested to assist in advertising this meeting by handbills to be obtained from me.

Meetings will also be held as follows:—

November 9.—Board schools, Buckingham-street, Caledonian-road, 8.15 p.m.

November 13.—Board schools, Queen's Head-street, Essex-road, 8.15 p.m.

November 14.—Board schools, Church-street, Stoke Newington, 8.15 p.m.

November 15.—Board schools, Yerbury-road, Upper Holloway, 8.15 p.m.

November 16 and 19 yet to be arranged.

November 20.—Board schools ("Hugh Myddleton"), Corporation-row, Clerkenwell, 8.15 p.m.

The nomination paper was delivered by me on Tuesday at the Vestry Hall, Islington, and the list will be published by the Returning Officer on Friday, after which time we may hope to break the silence of the press. Although due notice was given, two newspapers only, the *Star* and *Sun*, announced the Blackstock-road meeting, and no notice of its having taken place appeared in any other papers. Messrs. Foote, Forder, and Standring delivered most effective speeches, and Mr. Watts's address was received with much enthusiasm. The meeting was crowded, and a resolution passed in favor of the candidate.

Mr. G. H. Baker has, I regret to know, met with an accident; and there is good authority for stating that he will, in consequence, be unable to stand for election. I therefore invite everyone who had promised support to Mr. Baker to work now in real earnest for Mr. Watts.

Ratepayers will please note that Monday, November 12, is the latest date for them to get their names inserted on the Ratepayers' List, if they are not already on.

I require still more help in the distribution of literature, and, after Monday next, shall be glad of a little clerical assistance in the evenings at the Committee Rooms.

EDITH M. VANCE (*Election Secretary for Mr. Watts*).

Committee Rooms, 191 St. John-street-road, N.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, November 4, Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, All Saints, Manchester:—11, "Evolution, Design, and God"; 3, "Is Immortality a Blessing?"; 6.30, "Did Jesus Christ Ever Live?"

November 11, Birmingham; 18, Hall of Science; 25, Ipswich.
December 2, Camberwell.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—November 4, Hall of Science, London. November 11, Hall of Science; 18, Liverpool. Dec. 2, Newcastle-on-Tyne (Sunday Society); 3, West Auckland; 4, York; 9, Manchester; 10, Derby.—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.

F. SMITH.—Thanks. See paragraph.

LIBRE PENSEUR.—We are obliged. See "Sugar Plums."

H. HUGHES.—Mr. Parris's list of lecturing engagements has not lately appeared in the *Freethinker* simply because he has not sent it. Of course we should insert it gladly.

F. ATTWOOD.—Thanks for the item.

C. WRIGHT.—The State schools of France have been completely secular since 1882. Paul Bert and Jules Ferry share the honor of their secularisation.

W. P. BALDWIN.—Impossible to deal with such private matters. Besides, you forget the law of libel.

MARTIN WEATHERBURN.—Glad to have the practical sympathy of a sturdy veteran like yourself. It will be seen from the new turn of events that our appeal for funds is more urgent than ever.

J. P. SOUTTER.—Mr. Charles Watts's pamphlet on Education should be of use to you. Mr. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, will send it post-free for 2½d.

N.S.S. BENEVOLENT FUND.—Miss E. M. Vance acknowledges: Hanley Branch, 3s. 2d.; C. C. M. Jacob, 10s.; Mrs. Penny, 2s. 6d., and a parcel containing cast-off clothing, and that most useful gift—i.e., boots.

A WESLEYAN.—Mr. Charles Watts's father, Mr. George Watts, was a minister of the Methodist body in Bristol and Newport about thirty-five or forty years ago.

S. ELSTEIN (Leeds).—The *Freethinkers' Magazine* is published at 213 E. Indiana-street, Chicago, U.S. America.

E. SIMS.—Pleased to hear you have perfect confidence in us with respect to the appeal for a special fund, and that you think every *Freethinker* should contribute. Mr. Foote is in good health.

W. WILBEE.—Thanks for enclosure and good wishes.

J. CLOSE.—Glad to hear you appreciate the "high standard" we are maintaining in this journal. We share your opinion of Mr. Ryan's articles.

J. P.—We note your view that the article on "Philology," in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, is more up to date than M. Lefevre's work on *Race and Language*. We did not pretend to give a criticism of that work, but merely mentioned it as a new one of an important series.

J. M.—We do not know the address of any newsagent who sells the *Freethinker* at Hereford. Perhaps this may meet the eye of a reader who does know, and who will send us the information.

J. C. WELCH.—Thanks. But it appeared many years ago in the *Freethinker*, and since then has frequently been printed in ordinary newspapers.

M. O. R.—Professor Bain's *Moral Science* gives an admirable historical account of ethical philosophy. Professor Sidgwick's *History of Ethics* is a good book, though less elaborate than Bain's. Wake's *Evolution of Morality* (2 vols.) is also worth consulting. Spencer's *Principles of Morality* is a fine work, though as yet but partially completed.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Hull Times—Eastern Morning News—Chat—Isle of Man Times—Beverley Recorder—Two Worlds—Western Figaro—Westminster Gazette—Open Court—Boston Investigator—Truthseeker—Hull Mail—Progressive Thinker—Freidenker—Secular Thought—Fur Unserer Jugend—Ironclad Age.

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

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

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.

THE FIGHTING FUND.

READERS of my leading article this week will see that I have been put to some expense, and may be put to more. It is absolutely necessary that I should be provided with ample sinews of war. I appeal as President of the National Secular Society, in virtue of the authority I derive from the annual Conference. I have given pledges of my devotion to the Secular cause, and in this matter I claim to be trusted. At the next annual Conference I will give an account of my stewardship. The fund I am now asking for must be regarded as secret-service money. I will state how much I have expended, and pay over any balance to the National Secular Society for the general use of the movement. Those who do not trust me are not asked to subscribe.

G. W. FOOTE.

Subscriptions Received—Third List.

J. Fish, 5s.; G. E. Lupton, 10s.; W. R. Lupton, 5s.; H. A. Lupton, 5s.; W. C. Dorking, 10s. 6d.; H. Mainwaring, 5s.; Martin Weatherburn, 2s. 6d.; W. F. Jope, £1 1s.; E. Jagger, £1; G. R., £1; E. Sims, £1; J. Stapleton, 5s.; Friend, 10s.; W. W., 2s.; A. B., 1s.; W. Baker, 1s.; Southport, 2s. 6d.; Martin Bell, 10s.; J. Close, 2s. 6d.; W. C. Stuart, 10s.; A. A. Watts, 1s.; R. H. Side, £2; M. A. (per L. Balck), £1; Special, 1s.; Arthur, John, and George, 3s.; R. Weightman, 1s.; J. Bowey, 1s.; H. Duncan, 1s.; J. Lee, 1s.; J. Hall, 1s.; C. B. Hyde, 5s.; collection at Mr. Watts's lecture, £2 5s. 8d.

Correction.—Per W. H. S., £4, should have been £4 4s.

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE met with a very hearty reception at Leicester on Sunday. There was a good audience in the morning, when Mr. Pinder presided, and a crowded house in the evening, when the chair was taken by Mr. Sydney Gimson. Both lectures were highly appreciated and much applauded. A few questions were put on each occasion, and some curious opposition was offered by a well-known local Christian named Dyson.

Mr. Foote was unable to fulfil his engagement at Derby on Monday evening, in consequence of his citation to appear in the Court of Queen's Bench early on Tuesday morning. Mr. Hooper, of Nottingham, who was to have taken the chair, kindly occupied Mr. Foote's place. Derby friends may expect a visit from the President at an early opportunity.

It is some time since Mr. Foote lectured at Manchester. He is billed to deliver three lectures there to-day (Nov. 4) in the Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, All Saints. The subjects should attract large audiences. In the evening Mr. Foote hopes to make a report and announcement as to certain matters of litigation.

The Hall of Science, London, was well filled in every part last Sunday evening, when Mr. Charles Watts lectured upon "Theology at the Bar of History." Having pointed out the dangerous nature of theology, Mr. Watts showed from history how injurious it had been to individual and national progress. Mr. Forder presided. There was no discussion.

Mr. Watts again occupies the same platform this evening (Sunday, November 4), taking for his subject "If Christ came to London—What then?"

It will be seen from Miss Vance's report, which appears in another column, that Mr. Watts is now in the thick of the fight for his election upon the School Board. The time is getting short, as the election takes place on the 22nd inst.; our colleague therefore wishes that those friends who intend helping, pecuniarily or otherwise, will do so at once.

A Benefit Concert has been arranged to take place at the Hall of Science, Old-street, on Wednesday, November 14, on behalf of an active and well-known worker in the Free-thought movement. It is hoped that a substantial response will be made by all friends of our cause. Tickets, price 6d. and 1s. each, may be had of Miss Vance or Mr. Forder at 28 Stonecutter-street; of Mr. J. Anderson at the Hall; at the book-stall of the Hall, on Wednesday and Sunday evenings; of all Branch secretaries; or the secretary of the

Committee, Mr. E. Pownceby, 9 Finsbury-street, E.C. A really excellent program is being arranged, and friends may depend upon receiving an entertainment well worth the price of admission, and at the same time will have the satisfaction of knowing that they are assisting one who has worked long and honorably for our cause.

Mr. F. J. Gould, whose able and spirited tract in favor of Secular Education provoked the indignation of the *Daily Chronicle*, is to lecture at the London Hall of Science next Wednesday evening (November 7), on "Religion in Board Schools," and we hope he will have a good audience, as he certainly deserves a most cordial welcome. Mr. Gould is engaged in one of the Board schools, and has had the courage for a long time to get himself exempted from giving religious instruction to the children.

The Guild of St. Matthew, of which the Rev. S. D. Headlam is warden and Mr. F. Verinder secretary, has issued a manifesto on the London School Board elections. The Guild is opposed to every kind of religious teaching in Board schools, believing that such work is the duty of the Church; yet it rather plainly hints, for all this, that the electors should vote for the so-called Progressives. This advice is no doubt well meant and quite sincere, but it is an act of stultification. We hope Mr. Headlam and his friends will be prepared, at least three years hence, to act up to their principles.

The Bristol Public Hall Company was started, we believe, for the purpose of providing a place where Freethought and advanced views generally might find a hearing. One gentleman, who was under this impression, took up some shares in Mr. Foote's name; and great expectations were entertained by the local Secularists. But, somehow or other, the Directors have always pursued a timid policy, and St. James's Hall has been of very little service to the Secular cause. Under a most gratuitous dread of the old Act of George III., the Directors have disallowed discussion after Sunday lectures. That is, they have disallowed it after Secular lectures, but permitted it after Christian lectures! Nor has this policy been a financial success. The new balance-sheet shows a loss of £129 15s. 9d. during the past year, and a total loss of £1,011 12s. 3d. since the opening of the hall—a sum which is actually in excess of the amount of share capital. The shareholders, therefore, have lost every penny of their investment, except so far as the ground value may have increased, which is a point that could only be tested in the open market. On the whole, we venture to put it to the Directors whether it is not better to perish (if you must perish) gloriously than to die of mere inanition. If you are to lose £129 a year, would it not be better to lose it in doing something for your principles?

A writer in the *Echo* having said that Materialists were indifferent to vivisection, one of our readers, under the *nom-de-plume* of "Libre Penseur," sent the editor of that journal an extract from the Ingersoll interview which has just appeared in the *Freethinker*. The extract was inserted and this journal mentioned.

Mr. Lemuel K. Washburn, who has edited the *Boston Investigator* in a very able manner since the death of Horace Seaver in 1889, has now retired, and the paper will be under the direction of Mr. Ernest Mendum, son of J. P. Mendum, its proprietor for half a century. We are pleased to note that Mr. Washburn will continue to contribute, and we send our best wishes to his young successor.

On November 1 *Nature* will enter on its fifty-first volume, and Professor Huxley, who contributed to the first number twenty-five years ago, will have a paper therein on the subject of the "Past and Present of Science."

The practice of cremation is spreading, though slowly. Crematoria have been proposed in Liverpool, Southampton, and Paddington.

George Eliot and George Henry Lewes have often been the subject of calumny at the hands of the ministers, and it is therefore comforting to know that one of them, the Rev. W. Mottram, who knew all the circumstances of their union, has written to the *Review of Reviews* in their vindication. Mr. Mottram says "there was no injured wife in the background." It was Mr. Lewes who would, by our law, be entitled to a divorce. But divorce then was not only costly and most troublesome, but a special Act of Parliament had to be obtained and paid for. George Henry Lewes was then poor. George Eliot rebelled against a law like that, and felt her union with Lewes strictly moral. She considered it one of the chief blessings of her life, and the source of inspiration which, in all likelihood, we should never have had otherwise in George Eliot at all. Mr. Cross, her second husband, thought her union with Lewes "the noblest act of a very noble life."

The Battersea Branch finished its out-door lecture season last Sunday morning; but lectures and discussions on interesting topics will take place in the Battersea Secular Hall on Sunday mornings. Mrs. McKillop (Fabian) will occupy the platform on November 4, at 11.30, her subject being "The Evil and Good of Competition." Mr. J. B. Coppock gives a scientific lecture in the evening, illustrated with the lantern. All seats are free, morning and evening.

Mrs. Besant and the Rev. E. Schnadhorst were both returned on the "secular education" ticket to the London School Board. This was in the Tower Hamlets division in 1888. In 1891 Mrs. Besant went after Mahatmas, but Mr. Schnadhorst was returned again on the old ticket. Now, however, he is supporting the "Compromise," and the East London Branch of the N.S.S. has decided to give its support to another candidate, Miss Annie Thomson. She is straight and sound on the matter of Secular Education, and is said to have a good prospect of success. Secularists in the division who mean to vote for her, or to support her in other ways, should communiante with Mr. G. J. Warren, 20 Rhodeswell-road, Limehouse, E.

The North London Progressive Society has taken Milton Hall, Kentish Town, for a series of Freethought and Social lectures. This Sunday (November 4) Mr. B. Desmond opens with an address on "Diggleism at the School Board."

Mrs. Thornton Smith is announced as the Labor and Secular candidate for the Southwark School Board election. The Secularists of the district are working hard for her success, and write in hopeful terms of her prospects of election.

A debate between Mr. James Rowney and Mr. W. J. Clark takes place at St. George's Hall, Wimbledon, on Sunday (November 4) at 7. Subject, "Secularism or Christianity."

Members of the Finsbury Branch are desired to note that a general meeting will be held to-day (Nov. 4) at 12 o'clock noon in the minor Hall of Science for the consideration of important business.

The Chester Branch is gallantly carrying on its work amidst difficulties. On Sunday, Oct. 21, Mr. Cummins, of Liverpool, delivered an excellent lecture on "What Secularism Teaches." To-day (Nov. 4) Mr. Lewis will deliver the first of a course of lectures on the French Revolution. We hope all our readers in the district will rally round the Branch.

The Hungarian House of Magnates has at length passed the Bill of the Lower House for granting freedom of religious worship, including, it appears, the clause as to persons professing no particular form of faith.

JOSEPH, MARY, AND JESUS.

ACCORDING to the Moslem scriptures, Joseph, the son of Jacob, married the widow of Potiphar, in Egypt. The same scriptures tell us a richer story of a later Joseph, the reputed husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Allah had granted to Zachariah the gift of prophecy and authority over the holy temple of Ailia (Jerusalem). Zachariah was old and childless. He had a cousin Imram, who served in the temple, and whose wife was Hanna. She had several children, and, being about to have another, her husband and herself consecrated the child to God, provided it should be a male. But it was a female, and they were sorry. They named the child Mariam.

Allah said to Zachariah in a vision, "Tell the mother of Mariam I accept from thee this girl as a boy; take her into the temple and consecrate her." Never before had a girl been consecrated. The right of Zachariah to do this was disputed, but was decided in his favor by casting lots. He constructed a cell for Mariam, and kept her there from the age of five to twelve years. No one else had access to her, and he, having lost all hope of having a child of his own, treated her as a father.

But at last Allah sent Gabriel to announce to him that he should have a son whose name should be Yahya. In due time Yahya was born, answering to John the Baptist.

When Mariam was in her thirteenth year she was visited by Gabriel. Her father was dead, and her cousin, Yussuf (Joseph), thirteen years of age, son of a deceased carpenter, was serving in the same temple, doing carpenter work. Yussuf was suffered by his uncle, Zachariah, to carry water into Mariam's cell. She had finished washing herself, and had put on her garments, when Gabriel appeared in the form of Yussuf, the young carpenter. She had seen no man except Zachariah and Yussuf, and, thinking this was the

latter, she said, "I implore the protection of Allah against thee, if thou fearest him." Gabriel replied, "I am the envoy of thy Lord to give thee a holy son." When she understood it was not a man who spoke to her she became calm and said: "How should I have a son, seeing that no man hath ever touched me, and that I am not a sinner?" He answered, "Thus shall it be; thy Lord hath said, It is easy for me." In the Koran it is said that Gabriel spoke to her further, saying, "Allah announces to thee his word, he shall be called the Masich, Isa, son of Mariam." The name Masich is a symbol, implying power to cure the sick by the laying on of hands, and to restore the blind to sight. Isa (answering to the Christian's Jesus) was to be a prophet, illustrious in this world and the next; he was to speak to man in his cradle, and to become Allah's apostle to the children of Israel.

Mariam believed Gabriel, and Gabriel breathed upon her. By this pure breath Mariam conceived and gave praises to Allah.

There are sectaries who pretend that Isa was the illegitimate son of Yussuf and Mariam; but they are condemned by the following passage in the Koran: "Isa remained in the womb of his mother, and when she prayed he offered his praises to Allah."

Others pretend that Allah is Isa, son of Mariam; that he came down from heaven into the womb of Mariam, went forth and was shown to men under the human form, and then returned to heaven. Thus their opinion has sprung from ignorance of the true power of God.

When the pregnancy of Mariam was far advanced she was ashamed to show herself to Zachariah, and told Yussuf of the message she had received. And Yussuf, knowing that no man had approached her, believed her word.

As her hour drew near she went out alone from the holy temple and the city. She directed her steps to a withered palm tree, and there beneath it she brought forth Isa. In shame she cried out: "Would to God I had died before this, and been utterly forgotten!" A voice responded, "Be not grieved, for Allah hath provided a stream beneath thee; and shake the trunk of the palm tree, and ripe dates shall fall for thee."

Allah caused a spring of water to burst forth on the spot, that Mariam might wash herself and the babe. Then she shook the tree, and dates fell therefrom, which she ate and recovered strength.

Gabriel instructed her not to answer any questions that day. When she brought the child to her people they said: "O Mariam! now thou hast done a strange thing. O sister of Harun! thy father was not a bad man, neither was thy mother a harlot." (Her brother Harun was a pious man.) Mariam answered not, but pointed to Isa, as it is written in the Koran. They said, "How shall we speak to an infant in the cradle?" Then the infant spoke, saying, "I am the servant of Allah; he hath given me the Book, and hath made me a prophet."

Thus the infant Isa purged Mariam, Zachariah, and Yussuf, the carpenter, from the accusation which weighed on them. No one before had been made a prophet in his infancy. It is written, "Such was Isa, son of Mariam, according to the Word of Truth. It is not for Allah to have any son; Allah forbid! When he decrees a thing, he only saith, Be, and it is."

At the birth of Isa all the demons gathered about Eblis (Satan) and said: "There has passed an event upon the earth; we know not what it is." Eblis travelled three days and nights until he came near Isa. He undertook to exert his power on the infant, but was repulsed by angels.

Mariam took Isa and transported him to Egypt, where he dwelt thirty years. Then he returned to Palestine and made known his mission.

The cause of the flight was the wrath of Herod, the king. When Isa was ten days old he was visited by certain astrologers who had found in their books that on such a day a child was to be born of a maiden. They brought presents of gold, myrrh, and incense. Herod sent and inquired of them the reason of their coming and the significance of their presents. They told him that the child would become great, and Allah would raise him to heaven. These three objects, gold, myrrh, and incense, were his symbols.

Then Herod became jealous, and resolved to slay the infant. But Mariam was warned by an angel to remove her child. She mounted an ass, took Isa before her, and caused Yussuf, the carpenter, to accompany her. She took up her abode in one of the villages of Egypt, and brought up her child with great care. She and Yussuf gleaned ears of corn.

At the age of twelve Isa began to perform miracles in Egypt, and he continued to do so until he was thirty years of age. Then King Herod died, and was succeeded by his son, Archelaus. A revelation came to Isa from Allah to return to Ailia (Jerusalem), and preach the law and the Gospel.

Zachariah had been slain by Herod on a charge of fornication with Mariam. His son, Yahya (John), remained hidden until Herod's death. Yahya taught the Law and the coming of Isa, who would work miracles and bring

from heaven a Book and a Law. The first who believed in Isa was Yahya, as it is said in the Koran: "Verily, Allah promised thee Yahya, who shall confirm the word of God."

It does not appear that Mariam was married to her cousin, Yussuf, though they lived together for thirty years in Egypt. Perhaps, under the guidance of Allah, they were Dianists. Anyhow, Yussuf was not an old widower with sons and daughters.

—*Irenclad Age.*

ANTICHRIST.

HOW THE SUN STOOD STILL THE SECOND TIME.

It is not, I think, generally known that Joshua's miracle was repeated at the capture of Oran by the Spaniards under Cardinal Ximenes, May 17, 1509. "To accommodate the Christians, as the day was far advanced when the action began, the sun was permitted to stand still for several hours—most authorities make it four. There is no miracle in the whole (Roman Catholic) budget better vouched than this. It is recorded by four eye-witnesses—men of learning and character. It is attested, moreover, by a cloud of witnesses, who depose to have received it, some from tradition, others from direct communication with their ancestors present in the action, and who all agree that it was a matter of public notoriety and belief at the time" (*Prescott, Ferdinand, and Isabella*, vol. iii., p. 272). The shallow objection noticed by Prescott that "so astounding a miracle could not have escaped the notice of all Europe, where it must have been as apparent as at Oran," might equally be alleged against the miraculous darkness during Christ's passion, which, though it extended "over all the earth" (Luke xxiii. 44, 45), is mentioned only by the evangelists. If we believe that the sun stood still upon Gibeon on the authority of Jasher, who lived at least five hundred years later (2 Samuel i. 18), surely we must believe that the sun stood still upon Oran on the evidence of four eye-witnesses, etc.

A further proof of the second miracle having been wrought by the same divine author is that the object of both was the same—that his people might be "avenged upon their enemies." The Israelites spent the prolonged daylight in butchering the Canaanites. The Spaniards did likewise when they stormed Oran by the light of the stationary sun. "Most of the Moors fled into the houses and mosques for protection; but resistance and flight were alike unavailing. No mercy was shown—no respect for age or sex; and the soldiery abandoned themselves to all the brutal licence and ferocity which seem to stain religious wars above every other. It was in vain Navarro [Ximenes's lieutenant more merciful than Joshua] called them off. They returned like bloodhounds to the slaughter, till at last, wearied with butchery, and gorged with the food and wine found in the houses, they sunk down to sleep promiscuously in the streets and public squares. The sun [it at length "moved on"], which on the preceding morning had shed its rays on Oran, flourishing in all the pride of commercial opulence, and teeming with a free and industrious population, next rose on a captive city, with its ferocious conquerors stretched in slumber on the heaps of their slaughtered victims" (*Prescott*).

Let the infidel tremble. God's wonders and God's people are the same in every age and land.

JAMES A. RICHARDSON.

THE CRISIS.

HARD was the road I trod,
Starless and cold the night;
My spirit cried to God,
"My Father! give me light!"

Vain was that heartrung prayer.
I rose up from my knee;
I felt, if God were there,
He must have answered me.

Nor, in the hour of need,
Would faith in Him be found
A worthless, broken reed,
The bursting heart to wound.

I turned me from the creeds,
And since that hour I dare
Resolve to win by deeds
The light denied to prayer.

—*Percy Greg.*

SECULAR EDUCATION.

[THE following letter was sent by Mr. George Anderson to the *Times*, in the hope that all sides would be heard in the controversy which is going on in that journal. Its insertion was refused, however, and it now sees the light in the *Freethinker*.]

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES."

October 25, 1894.

SIR,—The approaching School Board election is engaging much attention, chiefly on the question of how much Bible instruction is to be given in the schools, and I see a lady has joined in as a candidate with some gentlemen who have addressed the electors of Finsbury.

Surely the lady has not read the Bible, which many consider an improper book to put into the hands of a child. Some portions of it are so indelicate that no lady would dare to read it aloud in any company of grown-up people. Many portions of it relate wholesale slaughters of mankind, and allege them to be done by the command of the *Almighty*. Other portions of it describe the mode in which, by the command of God, prisoners were to be treated, especially women, which must raise a blush of shame on the face of any decent woman.

These matters may be all historically correct for what we know, for they relate to people who lived thousands of years ago.

We know from the reports of travellers that in uncivilised countries great barbarities are practised even yet; but what good can it do to read or explain to young children the slaughters, the incests, and the wholesale forced debaucheries related in the Bible, the more especially as they are alleged to have been done by the command of God?

Such things may be true, but to say they were done by the command of *God* is an insult to the Creator, and to instil them into the minds of ignorant youths is infamous.

Such teaching is apt to confuse the minds of children in distinguishing good from bad actions, and calculated to make them cruel and vicious.

A thousand times better to entirely remove the Bible from the schools, and leave it to parents and clergymen to teach it in the home and in the church.

Causes which raise disputes between people should be removed if possible, and there is no other book of science which causes so much heartburning between man and man as does the Bible; and while there is so much to learn and so little time to do it, on subjects on which all agree, and which children can be usefully taught, it would surely be better to leave a contentious subject to more mature years.

For sake of brevity I pass unnoticed the science of the Bible—which is now disputed by scientific men—as to the period of the creation of the world, the creation of man, an universal flood, and many other points, which the child being taught at school he will have to afterwards unlearn, all which must be detrimental to the child.—I am, Sir, yours,

GEORGE ANDERSON.

35A Great George-street, Westminster.

God and the Devil.

To admit that God created the Devil, knowing the evil he would set on foot, and what a terror he would become to his agents, is to make God himself the author of the malignant work charged upon the Devil, and the latter only the agent employed to work out the mischief. And to deny that God made the Devil and foreknew the evil he would inflict on the world would be to admit that God is not the author of all and that he did not foreknow, and, therefore, is not omniscient. And, furthermore, if God is all-powerful and does not kill the Devil, and thus destroy evil, it is an admission either that he cannot, or that he approves of Satan's work and does not want to kill him and end it.

Bible Worship and Bigotry.

Wherever bibliolatry has prevailed, bigotry and cruelty have accompanied it. It lies at the root of the deep-seated, sometimes disguised, but never absent, antagonism of all the varieties of ecclesiasticism to the freedom of thought, and to the spirit of scientific investigation. For those who look upon ignorance as one of the chief sources of evil, and hold veracity not merely in act, but in thought, to be the one condition of true progress, whether moral or intellectual, it is clear that the biblical idol must go the way of all other idols. Of infallibility, in all shapes, lay or clerical, it is needful to iterate with more than Cato's pertinacity, *Delenda est.*—*T. H. Huxley, "Science and Hebrew Tradition," Pref., p. iv.*

BOOK CHAT.

IN the just-issued fortieth volume of the *Dictionary of National Biography* is an account of James Nayler, the Quaker who was punished for blasphemy because he rode into Bristol, in 1656, on a horse—not on an ass and a colt the foal of an ass; and the women, by whom he was idolised, cried Hosanna, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Israel. This is how he was treated: "On December 20 he was pilloried for two hours at the Exchange, his tongue pierced with a hot iron, and the letter B (for blasphemer) branded on his forehead. Afterwards he was taken to Bristol, ridden through the city with his face to the horse's tail, and whipped. He was so lashed that no part of his skin was left unlacerated and wounded." This was Christian treatment of a Christian, after sixteen hundred years of the divine faith. The Rev. Alexander Gordon, who writes the notice of Nayler, says that his writings, "for depth of thought and beauty of expression, deserve a place in the first rank of Quaker literature."

* * *

Another early heretic, very fairly treated in the monograph by Miss C. F. Smith, is Henry Nicholas, or Nicolaes founder of the Family of Love, a religious sect, which excited as much consternation in their day as the Anarchists do now. Nicolaes taught an Anabaptist mysticism, entirely without dogma, yet of exalted ideals. The reign of the Church and law was to give place to the reign of love. Of course he and his sect held themselves above sin, and the licence they claimed for the spirit led to their being classed as libertines. They took little root in England, save in East Anglia, where there were Dutch and Flemish settlers. Indeed, they were rooted out. Bills for the suppression of the sect were brought in, and passed on Feb. 27, 1580. Francis Kett, M.A., of Cambridge, who was burnt alive near Norwich, in 1588, Stowe says, for "divers detestable opinions against Christ, our Savior," was of the Family of Love.

* * *

This volume of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, by the way, although extending from Myllar to Nicholls, has no other mention of Charles Robert Newman, the Atheist, than the brief words in the life of John Henry Newman (written by that virulent Catholic, Mr. W. S. Lilly): "The second son, Charles Robert Newman, died at Tenby in 1884." For any further account of this second son readers will have to turn to Mr. Wheeler's biography, prefixed to C. R. Newman's *Essays on Rationalism*.

* * *

Mr. Stead, in *Borderland*, exposes the exaggerations and contradictions in Miss Marryat's *There is No Death*, and says: "Miss Marryat is a romancer by profession; she is also the last woman in the world who would be suspected of either scientific accuracy in statement or intense spirituality of thought." Unfriendly critics say much the same of Stead. We, however, believe, with an implicit faith, in the intensity of his spirituality of thought, without being able to see that it brings with it scientific accuracy. But this, doubtless, comes from defective vision.

* * *

The Ancoats Skylark, and Other Verses, by W. E. A. Axon (John Heywood; 1s.), is a volume not of the morbid, decadent school of poetry, but distinguished by tenderness, sweetness, and undogmatic piety. The poem which gives the title is on an incident at the inspection of a school at Ancoats, when the only boy who ventured to say he had ever seen a skylark had seen one in a cage at a public-house. Various mediæval legends versified, and a number of translated epigrams, show Mr. Axon's wide reading and happy turns of expression.

Miracles, Old and New.

The Bible is equally a record of miracles; but as from other histories we reject miracles without hesitation, so of those in the Bible we insist on the universal acceptance: the former are all false, the latter are all true. It is evident that, in forming conclusions so sweeping as these, we cannot even suppose that we are being guided by what is called historical evidence. Were it admitted that, as a whole, the miracles of the Bible are better authenticated than the miracles of the saints, we should be far removed still from any large inference, that in the one set there is no room for falsehood, in the other no room for truth. The writer or writers of the Books of Kings are not known. The books themselves are, in fact, confessedly taken from older writings which are lost; and the accounts of the great prophets of Israel are a counterpart, curiously like, of those of the mediæval saints. In many instances the authors of the lives of these saints were their companions and friends.—*J. A. Froude, "Short Studies of Great Subjects," vol. i., p. 149.*

LISTENING TO THE GOSPEL.

"WHAT are the bells a-ringin' for?" said Roderick Macdade.
 "To call you in, to call you in," the solemn sexton said.
 "What makes you look so glum, so glum?" said Roderick Macdade.
 "It's very serious sort o' work," the solemn sexton said.
 For they're listenin' to the gospel, you can hear the organ play:
 The worshippers are on their knees—they're full of grace to-day,
 For they've cast their sins on Jesus, who will bear the same away,
 While they're listenin' to the gospel in the mornin'.

"What makes that front man snore so hard?" said Roderick Macdade.
 "He's out all night, he's out all night," the solemn sexton said.
 "What makes that rear man look so meek?" said Roderick Macdade.
 "No nickel piece, no nickel piece," the solemn sexton said.
 They are listenin' to the gospel, they are hearin' of the word,
 They're devotin' Sunday mornin' to the service of the Lord;
 Their remarkable devotions have collapsed the spinal cord,
 And they're listenin' to the gospel in the mornin'.

"What makes the preacher shout so loud?" said Roderick Macdade.
 "He's earnin' of his salary," the solemn sexton said.
 "He's very quiet through the week," said Roderick Macdade.
 "He does his laborin' sabbath-day," the solemn sexton said.
 They are listenin' to the gospel, they are 'umbled in the dust;
 The preacher he's on trial for a recent breach of trust,
 And none can throw a stone at him unless they really must,
 So they're listenin' to the gospel in the mornin'.

"I'll get along, I'll get along," said Roderick Macdade.
 "It's just as well, it's just as well," the solemn sexton said.
 "They're hypocrites, they're hypocrites," said Roderick Macdade.
 "And I'm another one myself," the solemn sexton said.
 They have finished their devotions, they are passin' round the hat—
 You can hear the nickels droppin' for the missionary fat;
 They will lengthen the messiah craze, and that is what they're at.
 While they listen to the gospel in the mornin'.

G. E. MACDONALD.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LIVING PICTURES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I read your leading article in last week's *Freethinker*, and I can scarcely realise the fact that a gentleman, with a noble, fearless, and pure mind as you most certainly possess, could write in defence of this subject, which I believe is, and always will be, very detrimental to the moral advancement of the whole world. You speak of Mr. Coote as if he were doing something very wrong in asking the authorities to put an end to what he believes to be demoralising conduct on the part of the performers at the Empire Palace. Well, where else should he go? If, as you say, he devotes himself to what he doubtless regards as the practical side of human morality, is he not right in appealing to the proper quarter for assistance to stop what he believes to be detrimental to the best interests of the community? It is no answer to say that he differs from Mrs. Chant, who could not see anything at all objectionable in the exhibition of these pictures, as it would be very difficult to find a society who could agree upon every subject. You say a woman's figure may be painted naked, and yet be as chaste as the driven snow. Certainly so; but that is no reason why we should always be holding that figure up to public gaze. We know quite well there are certain parts of the human body necessary, but we must admit that there is a proper time and place for their use. The nude may or may not be in itself indecent; but it certainly does become indecent when exhibited under certain circumstances, and very suggestive indeed, or it is very difficult to see where the question of decency ends and indecency commences, without which the system of morality would be a gigantic farce. You say you pity the man who could look upon the Venus of Milo, Paris, with an impure thought; but do you not think that the great majority of mankind have no alternative under such circumstances, when works of art of this kind are placed so clearly in front of them; and, I ask, is it at all necessary to have a female figure stark naked on purpose to admire her beauty? If so, then all I can say is, the sooner we learn

to look upon woman under very much better and more suitable circumstances, the better it will be for all mankind. The noble profession of Art surely does not depend for its success upon the exposure of certain parts of the human body, which experience has taught us are much better covered from public gaze, as they only tend to excite the passions of thousands of men who would, undoubtedly, be better able to look upon woman with a much purer mind, and then woman herself could command the proper respect, the love and honor, which is her right to demand, instead of subjecting her to the humiliation of being exposed and made a public exhibition of.

Now, sir, I will ask you a question with the uttermost respect. What would you think if you were in an assembly, and your daughter or son made their appearance void of clothing? Would you pity the man or woman who would have an impure thought? They may be perfect in body and mind, but could they help their feelings at such a scene? Of course, these feelings may be due to the customs of our country; but are not these customs of clothing our bodies in a proper manner the result of ages of careful study on the question of decency, and best calculated to assist humanity to a far better state of civilisation in the years to come? Mrs. Chant's visit to the Empire promenade passed unnoticed when she was plainly attired, but when gaily attired she was accosted. You say: Moral, don't go gaily attired. Perfectly right; but would not this apply to the performers and visitors alike? And the moral is, dress and act in a decent manner as men and women should do, and then there would be no cause for complaint; then parents could take their children to the Concert Hall or Theatre in safety.

As to the question of prostitution, I do not think it possible for any reformers to make any progress towards the abolition of this great curse to the community so long as performances as those above mentioned are permitted by law, and women can be found who will lend themselves to be inspected in the manner described by a class of people who can find pleasure at the expense of woman's virtue.

Trusting that the noble flag of Freethought may not be soiled by a defence of subjects that would find a more suitable place in the pages of the Holy Bible.

A FREETHINKER.

[*Editorial Note.*—We insert this letter in a spirit of fairness, but we do not think "the noble flag of Freethought" is "soiled" because we happen to differ on this topic from our correspondent. We never advocated the exhibition of "stark naked" women on the stage, nor have we ever witnessed such a spectacle. Our correspondent is mistaken. With respect to the Venus of Milo, we say that the man who could view that noble figure with impure thoughts must be hopelessly corrupt already.]

OBADIAH ONCE MORE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—"Lucianus" appears to me to be trying to prove too much.

(1) I am by no means a blind believer in Mr. Sayce, who has made several serious mistakes in his time. I only quoted his words because he writes in the orthodox interest, and, therefore, his interpretation cannot be cavilled at. The real authorities are the cuneiform tablets, which mention Sepharad; and Dr. Strassmaier, their interpreter.

(2) I do not recall any statement of Mr. Hormuzd Rassam regarding Sepharad. Perhaps "Lucianus" means Sippara. Mr. Rassam is not an Assyriologist, and does not profess to read the cuneiform texts. The only Assyriologist that has formulated a counter-theory to that of Professor Hitzig is E. Schrader, who has sought for Sepharad in Media, for the avowed purpose of supporting a Babylonian date for the Book of Obadiah.

(3) The reasons for dismissing the Jewish identification of Sepharad with Spain were given in the article. Zarephath is stated, in 1 Kings xvii. 9, to belong unto Zidon; from which one would infer that it was a Canaanitish city. Unless we take the mystical interpretation that Zidon is England, as has been urged by several writers, in which case the Book of Kings must have been written in the time of Henry VI., when Zarephath belonged to Zidon (or France to England), until the appearance of Joan of Arc, who may be the original widow of Sarepta (*verb. sap.*).

(4) That there was once such a place as Edom in Palestine appears certain from the Egyptian and Assyrian monuments written before the Roman Empire was founded. If Edom be Rome, why does Obadiah talk of his "brother Jacob" (v. 10)? The reference to the "eagle" in v. 4 is merely a quotation from Jeremiah. Job xxxix. 27 has the same expression. Habakkuk i. 8 refers the "eagle" to the Chaldeans. Jerusalem was destroyed, and the house of Jacob dispersed by Nebuchadnezzar the Great, and by Antiochus Epiphanes.

(5) The Jews of Phrygia or Sepharad do not denounce Edom.

CHILPERIC.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

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

LONDON.

HALL OF SCIENCE (142 Old-street, E.C.): 11.30, W. Catmur, "Vaccination: Is it Necessary?" (Free.) 6.30, musical selections; 7, Charles Watts, "If Christ Came to London—What then?" (Admission free; reserved seats, 3d. and 6d.) Wednesday, at 8.30, F. J. Gould, "Religion in Board Schools." (Free.)

BATTERSEA SECULAR HALL (back of Battersea Park Station): 11.30, Mrs. McKillop (Fabian), "The Evil and Good of Competition"; 7.30, J. B. Coppock, "The Evidences of Evolution" (with lantern illustrations). Tuesday at 8, dancing. Saturday, at 8, social gathering (3d.).

BERMONDSEY (Gladstone Club): Thursday, at 8.30, C. James, "Christianity, the Foe of Liberty and Progress."

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, Mrs. Thornton Smith, "Ethics of Freethought." Thursdays, at 7.30, free science classes.

HAMMERSMITH CLUB (1 The Grove, Broadway): Thursday, at 8.30, S. E. Easton, "The Church, the School, and the Bible." (Free.)

KINGSLAND: 12, meeting of Ridley-road friends at Mr. Davey's, 21 Castle-street, Kingsland.

MILTON HALL: 7.30, B. Desmond, "Diggleism on the School Board."

WIMBLEDON (St. George's Hall): 7, debate between J. Rowney and W. J. Clark, "Secularism or Christianity: Which is Better for Man?"

WOOD GREEN (Star Coffee House, High-street): 7, a lecture; 8.30, members' meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

DEPTFORD (Broadway): 6.30, O. Johnson, "Religion in Board Schools."

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, St. John, "Religion in Board Schools."

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

WOOD GREEN (Jolly Butchers' Hill): 11.30, debate between Messrs. Stewart and Armstrong, "Christianity v. Secularism."

COUNTRY.

BELFAST (Crown Chambers' Hall, 64 Royal-avenue): 3.30, E. Martin, "Gleanings from Dickens."

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

BLACKBURN: 3, meeting at secretary's house.

CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 11, A. B. Moss, "The Old Drama and the New"; 2.45, Sunday-school; 7, A. B. Moss, "Christianity on Trial."

CHESTER (Old Chapel, Commonhall-street): 6.30, O. Lewis, "The French Revolution—to the Fall of the Bastille."

DERBY (Coffee Tavern, Friar Gate): a meeting.

DUNDEE (City Assembly Rooms): 11, discussion class—"Christian Socialism v. Secularism," by a Christian; 2.30, G. Painter, "Prayer"; 6.15, debate between Messrs. Harkis and Johnstone, "Is there Sufficient Evidence to Prove the Existence of a God?"

FAIRFORTH SECULAR SUNDAY-SCHOOL (Pole-lane): 6.30, Stanley Jones, "Special Creation and Evolution." Saturday, Nov. 10, at 6.30, "East Lynne" will be repeated.

GLASGOW (Ex-Mission Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 11.30, T. Ritchie, "Jewish Tradition and Modern Assyrian Discovery"; 6.30, "Spiritualism Criticised."

GRIMSBY SUNDAY ASSOCIATION (Hall of Science): Sunday afternoon, G. E. Conrad Naewiger, "Is Over population the Cause of Industrial Depression?"

HULL (St. George's Hall, Storey-street): 7, Mr. Fryer, "Freethought and Modern Literature."

LEICESTER (Secular Hall, Humberstone-gate): 11 and 6.30, J. M. Robertson will lecture.

LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 11, Tontine Society; 3, Philosophy Class—Ernest Newman, "Spinoza" (continued); 7, L. Small, B.Sc., "Evolution and Design." Committee meeting after lecture.

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 11, G. W. Foote, "Evolution, Design, and God"; 3, "Is Immortality a Blessing?"; 6.30, "Did Jesus Christ Ever Live?"

NEWCASTLE (Irish Literary Institute, Clayton-street East): 3, C. Cohen, "What the Universe Teaches." (Free; reserved seats, 3d.) 7, R. Mitchell, "Creation." (Free.)

PORTSMOUTH (Wellington Hall, Wellington-street, Southsea): 3, Class in "Origin of Species"; 7, a meeting. Wednesday and Saturday, at 8, dancing.

READING (Foresters' Hall, West-street): 7, members' meeting—important business.

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, entertainment. Wednesday, at 8, dancing.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Thornton's Variety Hall, Union-lane): 11, C. Cohen, "Socrates"; 7, "The Fruits of Christianity."

SUNDERLAND (Lecture Room, Bridge End Vaults, Bridge-street): 7, The Secretary, "What is the Soul?"

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

DERBY (Market Place): 6.45, Mr. Briggs, "Christian Fraud No. 1—Non-Forgiveness."

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Quayside—weather permitting): 11, R. Mitchell, "Why Secularists should Lead a Moral Life."

Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—All Sundays until April, 1895, South Shields.

STANLEY JONES, 53 Marlborough-road, Holloway, London, N.—Nov. 4, Fairfirth; 5, 6, 7, Rochdale; 11, Hull; 18, Leicester. December 16, Chatham.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—Nov. 4 New Brompton; 18, Bolton.

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