

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

VOL. XIV.—No. 48.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1894.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

DOWN WITH THE BIBLE.

MR. CHARLES WATTS fought a gallant battle in Finsbury, but he did not win a seat on the London School Board, and some of those who labored hard for his success are rather dejected. Well, I did not spare myself in the struggle, and I am *not* dejected. Indeed, I am going to tell my co-workers, and the Secular party generally, why I regard Mr. Watts's poll as in some respects a real victory, and why I think it should encourage us to unfurl the banner of Secular Education at the next elections in every division in London.

Let us, first of all, take the case at its very worst. Mr. Watts polled 7,642 votes; that is, about a thousand less than Mr. Forder polled in the same division three years ago. Whereat the superficial will shake their heads and say, "Ah, the Secular party has gone backwards."

A moment's examination will show this to be a great mistake. In the first place, there was a second candidate in the field running on the "secular" ticket. Mr. Hobart, the Social Democratic candidate, polled 4,065 votes, many of which were "splits" with Mr. Watts. The total "secular education" vote in Finsbury, therefore, was 11,707. And all these, and many more, will be available for a single strong candidate (who will, of course, be Mr. Watts) in the next contest.

Secondly, there is really no analogy between the 1891 and 1894 elections. Three years ago the religious question was not to the front. Mr. Forder was actually recommended to the electors by the *Daily News*, the *Star*, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and other Liberal organs. It is impossible to say how many votes were thus secured to him, but it is clear that his poll was not won in face of the most deadly and unscrupulous hostility. The "secular" vote, this time, was given on a clear issue; it is what can be absolutely depended upon as a solid nucleus in all future struggles. All those votes were cast decisively against any kind of religious instruction, against even Bible reading, in the Board schools; and cast, too, in spite of frenzied appeals to the electors not to "split the Progressive vote."

Thirdly, it is to be remarked that, while Mr. Forder was fairly well reported and advertised by the Liberal and Radical press, Mr. Watts was shamefully boycotted. Nothing could be meaner or paltrier than the action of the "Progressive" newspapers. Not only did they refuse to report Mr. Watts's meetings; during the last week of the contest they printed only the "Progressive" list of candidates. The public were thus denied the information they had a right to expect, and thousands of electors were ignorant of the fact that Mr. Watts was seeking their support. This would not have been such a great drawback in a small division which a candidate might cover with his meetings, but it was fatal in an immense division, extending for miles and including ninety thousand electors.

Fourthly, it must be borne in mind that the whole of the Liberal and Radical party machinery in London was devoted to the "Progressive" candidatures. People were implored to sink all their differences in order to defeat the "Diggleites," and the result was that many who should have been fighting for Secular Education were rushing about in support of the "Progressives." Men who call themselves Secularists, men who profess unbounded admiration for the late Charles Bradlaugh, were battling

No. 697.]

for the "Compromise"—that is, for forcing the Bible upon helpless little children in public schools. "These are the times that try men's souls," said Thomas Paine on a great occasion. And let us not regret the winnowing and sifting. We are well rid of half-hearted friends. Our army, if smaller, will fight all the more successfully for being single-minded and well-disciplined.

Fifthly, it must not be forgotten that this 1894 School Board election in London was a stand-up fight between Church and Chapel. The two great religious parties brought up all their reserves. The result was an enormous increase in the poll. The eight thousand odd of the "secular" candidate in 1891 would have been utterly useless in 1894, although *then* they nearly gave him a seat on the Board. The total poll in Finsbury rose from 96,261 to 160,216. Miss Eve headed the list with 29,124 votes, and the official "Progressive" who failed to obtain a seat polled 19,100. This gentleman was kept out by the "secular" party. "In Finsbury," the *Star* said, "we have lost a seat through Watts and Hobart drawing away support from Edwards. The votes given to both these are wasted, and the party loses a member." We accept the fact, but we dissent from the opinion. The "secular educationists" do not belong to the *Star* "party." They are entirely opposed to the "Progressives"—that is, the Chapelites, the Bible-Readers; and their votes are not "wasted" if they spoil a "Progressive." Mr. Clem Edwards, unless his opinions are much misrepresented, ought to have known better than to stand as a Chapel candidate, and attend election meetings which opened with prayer. He is out in the cold, and we hope he will remain there until he comes to his senses. Anyhow, the "secular" party have spoiled a "Progressive" seat in Finsbury, and we believe they can do so in every other division in London. And we believe they *should* do so; for, if the Nonconformists will not be true to their old principle of opposition to the State patronage of religion, they should be handed over to the tender mercies of the Church, until they cry out for help from those who never deserted the flag of religious equality.

In the stand-up fight between Church and Chapel the Catholics lost their only member on the Board. On the other hand, it is admitted by the *Pall Mall Gazette* that "the Secular and Socialist vote shows a considerable increase." Now these two are one for the occasion, as the practical point of their School Board program, which differentiates them from the other parties, is the elimination of religious instruction. The total "secular" vote in London more than trebled. It rose from 21,352 to 72,074. The *Pall Mall* gives 52,219, but this omits the 19,855 votes in Chelsea polled by Mr. Hennessey, the Labor candidate, whose program included Secular Education. Altogether it is obvious that the opposition to religious teaching in the London Board schools is growing rapidly. Our forces must be organized for the next elections. We must have a Secular Education Council for the metropolis, arrange our candidates in all the divisions, and fight our battle scientifically. If we do that, we shall win some seats, and to win even two or three will be the beginning of the end.

The "Progressives" who think the religious question can be shirked are grievously mistaken. It has been raised once for all, and it must be settled. Church and Chapel will go on fighting each other until the "secular" constable comes in to restore peace. As a matter of fact—and Mr. Diggle gloats over it—the "Progressives" have pledged themselves absolutely to Bible-reading. In

other words, the Bible is to be kept in the schools for ever as God's Word; and men like Graham Wallas are promoting this monstrous swindle! Very well then. It is a plain challenge to the party of Secular Education, and those who are found in the enemy's camp will know what to expect when we confront them. Meanwhile there is a great duty incumbent on Secularists. No alternative is left us but to show the real nature of this book which is forced upon Board-school children. We shall have to prosecute an anti-Bible campaign with all possible vigor in London, and perhaps especially in Finsbury. Lectures must be delivered, telling leaflets must be scattered, and the reticence of mere etiquette must be thrown to the winds. Church and Chapel are all one to us; so are "Diggleite" and "Progressive." They stand by an open Bible, and the Bible must be the object of our attack. Those who thought the time for "destructive criticism" was over have been living in a fool's paradise. We must do our utmost to open the eyes of the multitude, and our war cry in this great fight is "Down with the Bible."

G. W. FOOTE.

NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL MORALITY.

WE have heard a good deal of late of the necessity for religious education as a basis for the moral training of the young. The plea betrays such a lack of confidence in the natural foundations of morality that it is high time to retort on the sectarian religionists that their dogmas, so far from providing secure ground for the right conduct of life, really tend to obscure and upset the natural foundations of morality.

The leading doctrines of religion are belief in and reliance upon God. This at once sets up an arbitrary and indeterminable authority. It is assumed that the will of God is consonant with human welfare. But how are we to know this? The needs of society can be ascertained, but how can we be sure as to what is the will of God? We are directed to God's revelation, the Bible, which is not accepted as any revelation by the majority of the world's inhabitants, and which is most variously interpreted by those who do accept it. What is the use of a revelation given to other people that does not commend itself to my own reason and conscience?

Every villainy and injustice that has defiled the world has sheltered itself under the cloak of the will of God. What an example is that offered by the chosen race, who, under pretence of borrowing, robbed and despoiled the Egyptians, and who dispossessed and slaughtered the inhabitants of Canaan in order to possess their land. What atrocities have not been sanctioned by God's injunction of death against witches and idolaters and Sabbath-breakers? The injustice perpetrated against those considered the enemies of God has offered an effective example to the pious of all ages, which they have not been slow to follow.

When divine revelation was really the foundation of English law, it was a moral act to hunt down witches. The Word of God declared, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Exodus xxii. 18). It was moral to own and breed slaves. Pious Bristol and Liverpool slave traders in the last century endowed churches from the profits of their commerce. Slavery was legalised in the divine law (Leviticus xxv. 44, 46), which, moreover, declared that if the slave was beaten so that he did not die at once, but lasted a day or two, the master "shall not be punished, for he is his money" (Exodus xxi. 21). Polygamy, concubinage, and other offences against morals can be defended from the pages of this revelation which reveals nothing.

All the characters held up to special admiration in the Bible would be considered very bad examples to-day, and the only men it represents as exhibiting good moral feeling are condemned. The whole tenor of the Bible is the same. Adam and Eve were prohibited the knowledge of good and evil, and for obtaining it were punished. Abraham is extolled for his readiness to cut his son's throat in obedience to his God's commands. Jacob was approved and rewarded by God for deliberately swindling his brother out of his birthright. David committed adultery and treacherously slew the husband, yet was called the man after God's own heart. Esau and Saul, the best characters

of the Old Testament, were marked out for punishment. And this is the book which Church and Dissent alike agree should be the foundation of teaching in Board schools, paid for by the whole of the ratepayers of the country.

In the distinctive doctrines of Christianity we find the same perplexity. What lesson can be derived from the doctrine of the Incarnation, save that it was quite right for the Holy Ghost to do what it would be a crime for man to do? What wonder that loose notions of human responsibility arise in people who believe such a falsification of moral principles as is implied in the doctrine of vicarious atonement—the Christian "scheme of redemption." Punishment can only be justified on the plea that it is for the good of society. To punish the wrong person for a crime is not only villainously unjust to the individual; it strikes at the root of all social stability. To punish the innocent instead of the guilty is an unmitigated evil. It is a direct incentive to avoid innocence and punishment, and to accept guilt and vicarious atonement. Yet this is the centre and core of emotional Christianity, which may be fairly said to put a premium on crime. What crimes have followed from the belief that doubt is a sin, which will be punished everlastingly by God himself.

The crimes of Christianity have flowed naturally from its doctrines. The common notion, that the religious wars, persecutions, and atrocities which have disgraced Christianity more than any other faith, have arisen from some corruptions which crept into the Church after the days of its primitive simplicity were over, is unfounded. The spirit which led to all the mischief can be clearly traced to the fountain head.

Not simply has every villainy and injustice that has injured the world sheltered itself under the cloak of the will and the word of God, but belief in that will and that word has made persons, otherwise good, do most immoral acts. A notable instance is that of Calvin, whose conscientious character impelled him to commit an atrocity done on behalf of God, and Melancthon, and other pious people, to condone the burning of Servetus as a just punishment of an enemy of God. Roman Catholics, notoriously the most truly devout of the population, form the largest proportion of criminals. This fact alone might suggest that, so far from morality and religion being identical, they are antagonistic. Moral principles are essentially irreligious. Religious principles are essentially immoral. Morality is founded upon the duty of man to his fellows in society. Religion is based upon obedience to the arbitrary commands of a supernatural being—commands which may have no reference to our social welfare to-day, but which only consecrate the mistakes of barbarous men of old who ascribed their own superstitions to a deity.

J. M. WHEELER.

AFTER THE FIGHT.

MY fight to secure a seat upon the London School Board is over for the present; but at the next election I hope to resume the struggle. I have not won a seat on the Board; the odds against me were too great. In the first place, there were over eighty thousand electors to reach—no easy task with the limited means at my disposal. Secondly, the two powerful organisations of Church and Chapel had to be confronted. Thirdly, almost the entire London press, under the glamor of party influence, wantonly and meanly ignored my candidature. And, lastly, a despicable amount of hypocrisy upon the part of certain candidates had to be coped with. Still, despite this extraordinary combination of opposing forces, I polled nearly eight thousand votes for the cause of purely secular education. There were, for the various divisions, twenty Independent candidates, including Socialists and Labor representatives, not one of whom was returned. It is some consolation to me to know that, with one exception, I polled from three to five thousand votes more than any of them. This is very encouraging, considering that, from the first, I avowed my determination to have nothing whatever to do with any compromise in connection with theological teaching and Bible-reading in our public schools. Had I concealed my Secular opinions, or hypocritically professed views favorable to Bible-reading in schools maintained out of the public rates, as some candidates have done in this contest, there is no doubt I

should have been returned. But adherence to principle is more valuable than sham professions and pandering to popular prejudices. It is quite time that cant and lying should give place to honesty and truth among those who control the education of the rising generation.

It must not be overlooked that the speciality of my candidature was unadulterated Secular Education. This fact was made clear at all my meetings, and this principle has been endorsed by 7,642 votes, which is a striking indication that we are upon the eve of a departure from absolute theological dominance in the educational sphere. The squabble about religious instruction that has been going on, and which will still continue, is a disgrace to all concerned in the disreputable affair. It has more than aught else retarded the education of the children, whose interests have been crucified between the two thieves known as Theological Bigotry and Ecclesiastical Audacity. These are the destroyers of real education; and the only practical remedy for the monstrous evil is to eliminate all theology from Board School education. As the Rev. Dr. Aubrey stated in his sermon last Sunday week in the Barbican Congregational Church: "The plan adopted in Boston, and elsewhere in America, of prohibiting by law ministers of all denominations from being members of School Boards would work as well here as it did there, by putting an end to professional rivalries, and by banishing theological disputations, which ought to have no place in our public schools."

The most serious obstacle with which I had to contend in my candidature was the unjust and disgraceful conspiracy of silence upon the part of the press. Not only did such Liberal (?) papers as the *Daily Chronicle*, *Daily News*, *Star*, and *Sun* refuse, with one exception, to report my meetings, but they persistently omitted my name in their list of candidates. This was an outrageous injustice that will not be forgotten in the future. I desired no favor from these would-be-thought pious editors; but I was entitled to fair play. The *Daily Chronicle*, which is continually complaining about infringement of liberty by others, and the injurious influence of the Church of England, practised towards me during my candidature the meanest kind of opposition. During the whole of my pleading for secular education I produced nothing against the Church stronger than the following, which is taken from the same sanctimonious *Chronicle*, of November 20 last: "In the name of religion and the Church, England has been condemned, in the matter of education, to follow every country in Europe at a respectful distance. Throughout the horrors of the factory fever, while little children were perishing in the mills and mines, when half of the 3,000,000 children of England were wrapped in ignorance and misery, when only 2,000 out of the 14,000 children in Bethnal Green received any education, and towns in Lancashire, with 25,000 inhabitants, had no school at all, when anybody who was no good for anything else was thought fit to teach the children, the Bishops and clergy went out against popular education as against Apollyon. The proposal to establish a Committee of Council on Education, and to make grants outside the National Society and the British and Foreign School Society, was opposed by twenty bishops in 1839, on the ground that the Church of the State should be the instructor of the people; though, when the scheme ultimately became law, the clergy managed to obtain four-fifths of the grants, and to completely nobble the inspectors. The same hatred of popular control and State inspection, the same fondness for State subsidies, the same jealousy of authority, has characterised the Church from that time to this."

If this indictment is true, were not Mr. Gladstone, Dr. Parker, and the great Nonconformist Party (before they turned traitors to their principles) correct in saying that the education given in our public schools should be purely secular? Even the *Dispatch*, from which different conduct might have been expected, ignored my meetings; yet in its issue of November 18 it says: "Mr. Charles Watts, the Secularist candidate, is a good man, and would be a desirable addition to the Board." If the *Dispatch* meant what it said, in the name of consistency why did it do its best to prevent me going to the Board? But, alas! consistency and theology are not often allied.

The truth is, the fight has been strictly a religious one, carried on principally by two theological parties, each of which has striven with all its might to secure the power to mould education in accordance with its own particular

creed. I, on the contrary, protested against the children having their minds perplexed and their intellects stultified with what even adults cannot understand. Being an outsider, I had to struggle against the two contending sections, who were fighting with a fanaticism which theology alone can inspire. Let those persons who suppose that destructive work is unnecessary ponder over the bitter and unscrupulous theological spirit that has been manifested during this election. Truth has been ignored, justice has been sacrificed, and honesty has been forgotten in a most miserable attempt to gain the power of enforcing theology upon the uninformed minds of the young. The duty of Secularists in the future is clear. No opportunity must be lost to war with this religious bigotry and impertinence. In every London district the injury that is being done to children by the serpent of theology must be exposed. It shall not be my fault if, during the next three years, the contents of the Bible are not well known amongst the electorate of Finsbury. The battle is only just begun, and, as the conflict has been forced upon us, it shall be fought out to the bitter end; for, as Professor Huxley says, "it is an absolute crime that the School Board should sanction the instilling into the minds of children statements which are not true, and which the instruction that they receive a few years later will infallibly upset." It is a recognised fact that the Bible *does* contain innumerable statements that are the opposite of the truth, and stories of the most obscene nature; and, therefore, the book must be shown to be unfit to be taught to the young in our public schools. Even the doctrines based upon its teachings are so doubtful and contradictory that many Christians themselves object to them being taught in the Board schools. Now, if this book is so good as it is claimed to be, surely doctrines based upon its teachings should be harmless. The fact is, there is such a lack of agreement among Bible idolaters as to what their book does teach that they are jealous of each other as to what interpretation of it shall be given to scholars. In consequence of this, true education is neglected, and the poor children are made the victims of religious strife.

The fight in which I have been engaged has been bravely supported by the Secular friends, who have done all that was possible to secure a victory. My friend and colleague, Mr. G. W. Foote, has worked splendidly throughout. He has been present at every meeting, and he remained with me to the declaration of the poll. His many speeches during this campaign have been models of logical reasoning and rhetorical brilliancy. Mr. Forder, Mr. Moss, Mr. Heaford, Mr. Rowney, Mr. Shore, Mr. Ward, Mr. Snell, Mr. Standing, and Mr. Guest, have all supported me in an able manner upon the platform. In the business department too much credit cannot be given to Miss Vance for her persistent and untiring efforts. Literally, she has worked night and day to achieve success. Her voluntary services deserve and have my sincere acknowledgments. She was ably assisted by Miss Brown, Miss Robins, and many other ladies. Perhaps the whole band of good and earnest workers who, during the struggle, so freely and efficiently worked will, one and all, accept my sincere thanks for their valuable co-operation.

Finally, allow me to assure my readers that our not winning in the first battle in no way disheartens me. Great victories are not easily won. The principle of Secular Education has been sanctioned by nearly eight thousand votes; it will now be my duty to further expound that principle. Having commenced the work, I shall never say "fail," but try again, and, if necessary, still again, until my efforts are crowned with success.

CHARLES WATTS.

A writer in the *Spectator* says: "I was taught some hymns before I could read them, with curious results in some cases. For instance, I remember a hymn, beginning 'I have a Father in the Promised Land,' the refrain of which ran sometimes, 'I'll away, I'll away, to the Promised Land,' and sometimes, 'We'll away, we'll away,' etc. Not understanding the elision, I had to put my own meaning to the sound, and this I did as far as I could, being perfectly content with 'Wheel away, wheel away, to the Promised Land,' for that seemed vaguely intelligible, covering all means of transport, from chariots of fire down to bicycles, though 'Isle away, isle away,' etc., was not, and much puzzled me."

“MERE SECULARISM.”

HE would be a very innocent person indeed who sought for anything of substantial value, either regarding veracity, impartiality, or logic, in the editorial articles of the *Times* newspaper. That journal, which, at one time, perhaps, merited the distinctive title allotted it of “The Thunderer,” but which now excels, like one of its idols, in the art of flouts, jeers, sneers, and jibes, has the task of catering for a class of the public who are antiquated in their ideas, conservative in their performances, and powerful in their prejudices. It cannot, therefore, be reasonably expected that the geniuses of Printing House-square can afford, even if they desired—and that is not at all probable—to touch, with a sympathetic hand, any new movement of the times, or anything that does not run in the ruts of stale custom. Thus, it is not surprising to find that in its leader of last week (Friday, November 16) on the School Board controversy, while gently disparaging the action of the Church party for disturbing “the so-called Compromise of 1871,” it champions the claims of the Diggleites against the arguments of the Nonconformists, and makes a prominent and contemptuous thrust at Secularists and Secularism. Says the writer: “Now that the issue has been joined, there can be no doubt as to the course the electors ought to take, if they really desire, as most of them undoubtedly do, to prevent the elementary schools, supported by the whole body of the ratepayers, from being reduced to the level of mere secularism.” “Mere secularism” is good. Apart from the incontestable truth, which is here unacknowledged, that the real basis and purpose of elementary education is solely secular, it will be interesting to consider the qualifying adjective, and in what manner its relation to the substantive is, and can be, maintained.

Secularism, as has been so many times reiterated—and it is a pity that public men and writers should speak and write so much in their ignorance of the subject, or with such arrant and wilful stupidity respecting it—is a religion exclusively of, and for, this world, the spirit of which pervades every human being under the sun, and which is fashioned and regulated by forces, for the most part, under the control of the earth’s inhabitants. It preaches reason, science, morality, and liberty as the fundamental principles on which human actions should be founded, and which are calculated to mould the well-being of mankind. Every succeeding age has a bearing upon its nature, the changes being effected in deference to the varied conditions and circumstances of life. Whatever may be said to the contrary, the affairs of present existence—that is, with which Secularism is concerned—are regarded by all men, excepting, probably, a limited number of religiously ascetic people, as of paramount importance, and are placed in the forefront for first consideration and care. Bodily comfort and commercial prosperity are ensured long before any trouble is taken to nurture “the soul,” let the opposite of this be feigned as much as some people please. Who is there that will assert that business success, good fortune in social life, and bliss in domesticity are not the causes of most of the concern and anxiety in the world? Such is the intimate relation of mankind with mere secular affairs. Those who have the management of the education of the young generally provide half an hour’s religious instruction per day to five or six hours of other (secular) studies. They evidently regard the children’s worldly welfare as of greater import than their “spiritual” well-being. People devote six days a week to secular affairs, and often begrudge the one day that is set apart for their soul’s nourishment; and on the face of this it cannot be otherwise but granted that they consider their real interests more bound up with “mere secularism” than with things super-mundane. They allot to their secular account six times as many days, and a thousand times as much energy, as they spare for their spiritual enlightenment.

The writer of the article says “the level of mere secularism.” That is decidedly better—but not from his point of view. The phrase implies that it is the matter of religion which is above and superior to this “level,” and that the best and highest aspirations of man can only be realised in that which is removed from the common, ordinary affairs of temporal life. Unfortunately for the validity of this specious reasoning, it is a fact that all the civilised races are content to remain on this level, satisfied with their worldly avocations, immersed in their secular

concerns, and possessing but a faint and half-hearted yearning for those things which are beyond their grasp and alien to their interests. The beauties and attractions of other worlds may be drawn above this state; as they are above the “level,” they may resemble castles in the air, and a shadowy creation of hopes for future habitation. Above, imagination plays and works its fantastic images in wondrous glories for the amazement of those beneath; below, man exists, and there are the scenes of his labors, and there is his home.

If any great advantage accrued from these ideas of other-worldism, it would be laudable to encourage the formation of such hopes, even if they had no foundation in fact. But are there such benefits? Let a Christian bear testimony. Mr. Robert Buchanan recently wrote: “It is Secularism, not Christianity, which is fighting the battle of the poor and suffering masses against the classes who would keep them for ever in ignoble chains. It is Secularism which is hastening on the cause of moral and intellectual freedom in every land, spreading abroad the good news that science is beginning to formulate the views of life, asserting in the face of all selfish institutions that human nature has a right, not merely to its daily bread, but to its daily love and joy. . . . It is only in so far as Christianity is itself secular that it is of the slightest influence upon the age in which we live.”

So much for “mere secularism.” According to this authority, it is only when religion descends to the “level” that it is of the least utility. This remarkable indictment of religion is one which is fully testified to by occurrences of every-day life, and the vindication of Secularism is as complete as its triumph. And assuredly it could not well be otherwise, seeing upon what firm grounds it is founded. What impudence it is for Christians to talk of “mere secularism” in view of their failure to capture the practical attachment of the people by their mystifying machinations; for only the religion of Secularism entails real and essential blessings by virtue of its being based on the knowledge of the world, and acquaintance with the laws of the universe. While the great majority of mankind manifest their preference for secular matters it will not be difficult to accept with amused demeanor the taunting phrase of “mere secularism”; and a recollection of their practical, if unannounced, scorn for “things above” may prompt a sigh for the despised and neglected condition of “mere religion.”

FRED. WILSON.

SOME QUEER CREATURES.

It is a curious fact that, while the Pagan Pliny seems to have had a fairly exact knowledge of animals, the Christians, down to the time of the revival of Pagan learning, appear to have indulged in nothing but the most monstrous fables concerning them. In the ages when Christianity flourished griffins, dragons, sirens, and other monsters abounded. One of the most curious animals was the phoenix, that type of the resurrection whom St. Clement, of Rome, tells us lives five hundred years, and when that time nearly expires builds itself a nest of frankincense and myrrh, which it enters and dies. “But, as the flesh decays, a certain kind of worm is produced, which, being nourished by the juices of the dead bird, brings forth feathers. Then, when it has acquired strength, it takes up the nest in which are the bones of its parents, and, bearing these, it passes from the land of Arabia into Egypt, to the city called Heliopolis. And in open day, flying in the sight of all men, it places them on the altar of the sun; and, having done this, hastens back to its former abode. The priests then inspect the registers of the dates, and find that it has returned exactly as the five hundredth year was completed.” This early Christian Father and Bishop of Rome adduced the phoenix as the great proof of the resurrection. Thus were Christian evidences presented by the head of the Church in the first century. Tertullian cites a psalm as referring to the prodigy of the phoenix. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Ambrose, St. Gregory, and St. Epiphanius, all follow St. Clement in founding the Christian dogma of the resurrection upon this misinterpretation of an Egyptian myth.

St. Barnabas is another holy father who gives us some queer natural history. The author of Leviticus makes the

mistake of making the hare chew the cud; but Barnabas says the animal is forbidden "because the hare multiplies, year by year, the places of its conception; for, as many years as it lives, so many *τρύπας* it has." Hyenas, he tells us, are forbidden "because that animal annually changes its sex, and is at one time male and at another female." The weasel, this shocking old father tells us, "conceives by the mouth."

Unicorns were as common as elephants in the Middle Ages. They date back, indeed, like so many other curiosities, to the Bible days. They are mentioned seven times in honor of the seven-headed dragon. They are spoken of in Numbers xxiii. 22; Deut. xxxiii. 17; Job xxxix. 9, 10; Psalms xxii. 21; xxix. 6; xcii. 10; and Isaiah xxxiv. 7. The mediæval unicorn was the size of a horse, with his legs shorter, and his hide of a tanned color. There are three kinds, according to Brunelto Latini, who wrote a treatise on animals in the thirteenth century. The magnificent white unicorn has a purple head and blue eyes. The horn is a cubit in length, white in the lower part, black as ebony in the middle, and red at the end. He has a stag's head, and the tail of a boar. The eglisson is like a gigantic deer, and has a very sharp horn. The monoceros is like an ox. The ordinary unicorn of the Middle Ages has a horn three feet in length, and so sharp and hard that nothing can resist it. When he prepares to fight the elephant, the animal he hates most of all, he sharpens his horn against a stone, and when the day of battle comes deals with it a fatal blow in his rival's paunch. This noble animal falls an easy prey to the fascination of innocence and virtue. In India, especially among the dwellers of the Ganges, when it is desired to tame the unicorn, a young and virtuous girl is chosen and led to his cave. The animal at once comes out and does homage, putting his head meekly on the girl's lap. Moreover, a pleasing friendship exists between the unicorn and the pigeon, who croons him asleep, singing, "This is my beloved, in whom I am well pleased." Then there are basilisks or serpent kings. They are so venomous that the air is poisoned where this dire reptile passes, and great plants are envenomed with the subtle and luminous fluid; while the birds, in turn, fall before the odor exhaled by the trees. But this monster is an easy prey to the weasel, which, however, must be white.

Another queer creature is the cockatrice, a sort of viper hatched from the egg of a cock. Cocks' eggs being scarce, this variety of serpent is rare. They were, however, known to the inspired writers (Isaiah xi. 8; xiv. 29; lix. 5; Jeremiah viii. 17). Cocks having obstinately refused to lay since the time of Peter, any collector of curiosities who wishes to obtain a sample of cockatrices must journey to the New Jerusalem. Wonderful are the sights there. John describes extraordinary preparations for the supper of "a lamb having seven horns and seven eyes" (Rev. v. 6); white, red, black, and pale horses (chap. vi.); locusts shaped like horses (ix. 7); horses having heads "as the heads of lions, and out of their mouth issued fire and brimstone. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt" (ix. 17-19). John, who had swallowed a book which did not agree with him, also saw "another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads" (xii. 3); likewise a beast "having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns." And unclean spirits, like frogs, came out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast (xvi. 13). To the supper of the aforehead lamb, fowls were respectfully invited, being promised to eat the flesh of kings, and, indeed, of all men (xix. 17, 18).

Dragons are frequently mentioned in the Bible. Thus Isaiah, prophesying woe against Edom, says its palaces "shall be an habitation of dragons and a court for owls" (Isaiah xxxiv. 13). Jahveh encourages the Psalmist by saying he shall trample under feet the "young lion and the dragon" (Psalm xci. 13). Jeremiah says of the wild asses, "they snuffed up the wind like dragons" (xiv. 6). He threatens that Jerusalem is to be a den of dragons (Jeremiah ix. 11), and the cities of Judah, Hazor, and Babylon are to have a like fate (Jeremiah x. 22; xlix. 33; li. 37). Ezekiel compares Pharaoh to "a great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers" (xxix. 3); and Deuteronomy xxxii. 33 speaks of the "poison of dragons." They also appear to swallow people, as Jonah's whale and the dragon

of Wantley did, for Jahveh Sabaoth, the Lord God of Israel, says the king of Babylon has swallowed him up like a dragon (Jeremiah li. 34). Malachi lets us know that dragons dwell in the wilderness (i. 3), while the author of the Apocalypse, as we have seen, has dragons galore in his menagerie.

The first animals specifically mentioned in the precious Jew-books are great whales (Genesis i. 21). These were created out of nothing, we presume, a day before cattle and creeping things were done up out of the same material. As ancestors of the obliging mammal who found Jonah a berth for a three-days' voyage, they probably had large gullets and stomachs devoid of gastric juice.

The next animal mentioned is man—male and female; the most surprising creatures of the whole collection. The man was made of dust, and the woman from his rib. They were naked, and these curious creatures were ashamed of their maker seeing them; but "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them" (Genesis iii. 21). We are not informed if he also manufactured soap and combs for them. Then entered on the stage the serpent, "more subtil than any beast of the field." He presumably perambulated on the tip of his tail, as he was condemned afterwards to go upon his belly for telling the truth to the rib-made lady.

We are then introduced to "cherubim," placed at the east of the Garden of Eden. These are a kind of feathered fowl with no place to sit upon—all stem and no stern. The inspired prophet, Ezekiel, however, gives a different, but equally accurate, description of these animals, between whose wings old Jahveh sat when he got out of his box of shittim wood (Exodus xxv. 22; Numbers vii. 89; 1 Samuel iv. 4; and 2 Samuel vi. 2).

"And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And everyone had four faces, and everyone had four wings. And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like the color of burnished brass. . . . As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle. Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of everyone were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies. . . . When they went, they went upon their four sides: and they turned not when they went" (Ezekiel i. 5, 6, 7, 10, and 17).

How plainly does the eye of faith discern these cherubim! They were as extraordinary as the bear in Daniel vii. 5, that had "three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it." Huxley himself could not be more graphic in their anatomical description. They dwelt in heaven together with somewhat similar beasts "full of eyes before and behind" (Revelation iv. 6, 7). Oh, what must it be to be there!

Some of the Bible animals were remarkably pious. Need we mention Balaam's ass, Daniel's lions, or Jonah's whale? When Jonah went to Nineveh, the King was so convinced of the importance of animal piety that, in the blessed words of Scripture, "he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; let them not feed, nor drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God" (Jonah iii. 7, 8). Then there were the pious ravens, who, when the prophet Elijah was in the desert, brought him regularly two square meals of bread and flesh every day. Equally pious and indeed inspired were the two she-bears who, when Elisha was going up to Bethel and the little children mocked him saying, "Go up, bald head," came out from the wood immediately the testy prophet cursed them, and summarily executed vengeance upon forty and two of them. Similar ministers of God's vengeance were the fiery serpents, or rather seraphim, who, when the Jews were squeamish at the light bread which Jahveh sent them from heaven, he sent as a warning that they should not speak "against God and against Moses." Equally divinely inspired were the two milch kine spoken of in 1 Samuel vi., who, when they had Jahveh's travelling trunk in the cart, took the straight way to Bethshemesh, "lowing as they went, and turning not aside to the right hand or to the left." Still more marvellous were the lions who slew the disobedient prophet, but could not think of eating his sacred carcase, but who, with an ass, mounted guard over the body. Of all

the pious animals commend me to the fish, who obviated the necessity for Peter and Jesus Christ shelling out to pay their own taxes. This kind of fish would be worth rearing. What a pity that the story, like so many others in the Gospels, is somewhat fishy.

LUCIANUS.

ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS!

IN FOUR ACTS.

(Dedicated to our African exploiters.)

I.

ONWARD, Christian soldiers,
To some foreign lands;
March with pious faces—
Bibles in your hands.
Teach the sinful heathen
We were brothers made;
Scatter tracts and blankets,
Open up for trade.

II.

ONWARD, Christian soldiers,
With your caravan,
Taking gin and whisky
To the savage man;
Taking shot and powder—
Weapons made to slay.
Show them how to use them,
Teach them how to pray.

III.

ONWARD, Christian soldiers,
With your Maxim guns,
Treaties in your pockets
For those heathen ones.
If they will not sign them,
Start a righteous war,
With the mounted rifles
Going on before.

IV.

ONWARD, Christian soldiers;
Let your banner wave
Proudly and triumphant
O'er a nation's grave.
Then, by prayer and praises,
Make them understand,
Through God's gracious mercy
You annex their land.

V.

ONWARD, Christian soldiers,
Thus the trick is done;
Yours the loot and plunder,
Theirs the joy to come.
Preach the gladsome tidings
Under every clime,
Till the name of Jesus
Stands for blood and crime.

SAM. SODDY.

ACID DROPS.

THERE was some rare religious fooling at the marriage of the Czar. By way of keeping up the divine right of kings, the priest placed two crowns of gold and precious stones (what an uncomfortable hat!) on the heads of the bridegroom and bride, and blessed them in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Old Nick was left out, but he will look in soon enough. Afterwards the priest took hold of their hands and led them three times round the Holy Table. Some couples seem to take a lot of splicing.

Ben Fuller, who foolishly dived from the Tower Bridge and killed himself, is said to have been egged on by the "spirits." He believed himself to be under their special protection. The unfortunate man attended Spiritist séances at Peckham Rye. If he was conscious at the catastrophe, he might have exclaimed, "O spooks, spooks, why have you forsaken me?"

Japan and China are still at it, slaughtering each other after the most approved methods of Christendom. Missionary societies ought to make more progress in those countries when the war is over. "If we resemble you in all else, we will resemble you in that."

The Queen and the Prince of Wales have each "graciously accepted" a copy of *Memories of Gospel Triumphs Among the Jews*, prepared by the Rev. John Dunlop, the secretary of the "Propagation" Society. It would be more to the purpose if the Society could show Victoria and Albert Edward a single genuine convert from Judaism. There are a few suspicious cases knocking about, but what is wanted is a real one that will stand investigation.

The late Lord Gifford left by his will a sum of money to be devoted to courses of lectures on "Natural Religion." He was himself so liberal that by the terms of his will even an Atheist might be selected as lecturer. But it is, of course, administered by trustees who would not think of such an outrage to Scotch conventionality. This year they have invited lectures from Professor Campbell Fraser, who has taken as his subject, "Three Postulates of Existence: Self, World, and God." We have read the report in the *North British Mail* without discovering where he brings God in. Indeed, his words, "Finite data only yielded a finite conclusion," seem to indicate that Professor Fraser sees a difficulty himself; but he is certainly versed in the great metaphysical art of talking round and round a subject without getting any "forrarder."

From the Kenyon papers of the Historical Manuscripts Commission it appears that Sabbath observance was fully enforced in Lancashire in the seventeenth century. All persons found walking, talking, or standing about idly during the time of divine service were ordered to be fined, bound to good behavior, and appear before the Justice of Assize.

The *Freeman* has an article on "Mahomedanism in England," in which it mentions that at Liverpool there are on the Islamic roll 137 members, besides from 25 to 30 children. It sneers at the many sects, mentioning "Comptism," which it knows little about, or would not spell it with a *p*, and congratulates itself that no Baptist has turned Mahomedan. Well, Baptists are fond of water, but some take whiskey too, and of these perhaps a few would be none the worse for following the temperance precepts of the Arabian prophet.

It is always amusing to see the Christians hoist with their own petards. In several towns they have invoked the old Act of George III. to stop Freethought meetings on Sundays with a charge for admission. Imagine our pleasure, then, at learning that a Christian Evidence lecturer was served with the same sauce recently at Manchester. It was a member of the very set which this man belongs to who stirred up the Hull police against Mr. Foote two years ago. We hear that the biters are very indignant at being bitten.

Floods in Cyprus have left many homeless, and done damage to the tune of a hundred thousand pounds. They had not specially been praying for rain, but the rain may have come in answer to prayers made last summer.

Several hundreds of deaths are reported through the earthquakes in Italy, and a still larger number are injured and homeless. A religious procession was one of the means used by the priests to cope with the disaster. The man who advertised pills for earthquakes was hardly more senseless.

Another convert to Rome!—the Rev. A. Wentworth Powell, a member of the Liberal Churchman's Union, and a well-known advocate of Welsh Disestablishment. He has resigned his vicarage, and we presume he now stands a better chance of landing in Abraham's bosom.

We shall always have a certain affection for Mr. Speaker Peel. He put his foot down and sternly stopped the baiting of Bradlaugh when the Tory bloods were expecting fresh sport in that direction. Still, the Speaker is not infallible, and we beg to dissent from the views he expressed on Monday at Leamington. In distributing the prizes at a Wesleyan School he sang the praises of the Bible, and declared that morality was not possible without religious sanctions. "They must have a deeper motive," he said, "than the mere utilitarian doctrine of going through life with some plausible principle of living and dying an honest man." Mr. Speaker forgets that the "law of honor" has always been more stringent and effective than the laws of religion. He also forgets that there is enough filth in the Bible to pollute all the children in this nation—if it were only administered to them undiluted.

According to the Press Association, the police are investigating a mystery in connection with the rectory of Billingsley, a village eight miles from Bridgnorth. Mr. Jones, the late rector, having died, his successor decided to make some structural alterations. One of the workmen found a box in a water tank over the bedrooms, which contained the skeleton of a child. Another little skeleton was

found in a box in a lumber room. A third was found in one of the soil pits; it was wrapped in cloth, the skull and brains being in a chamber utensil. The affair has "caused a profound sensation in the neighborhood." We should think so.

Thomas Richards, who smothered his sister-in-law at Borth, near Aberystwith, having to be hung on Thursday (November 29), felt "great contrition," and received the sacrament from the chaplain. Two letters written by him to his family are full of pious expressions. He says he will soon be with Jesus, and asks them to meet him in heaven. There is not a word in these precious epistles that shows any pity for the murdered woman. It is the nature of religion to make men egoists.

The Rev. Father Owen King has been sending abusive letters to the Archbishop of York, and Cardinal Vaughan has found it necessary to announce that Father King is not his chaplain.

Dr. Buckley leads the opposition to women preaching in the American Methodist churches, and is reported as saying: "If the mother of our Lord were on earth, I should oppose her preaching here." Dr. Buckley has Scriptural authority, and is, indeed, only following Paul, who says: "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression." Good old Paul! He, too, appeals to the Scriptures, just like Dr. Buckley.

"Do you believe Moses wrote the Pentateuch?" inquired the South Carolina Presbytery, lately in session, of a candidate for the ministry. "Most of it," was the prompt reply. "What portion do you think he did not write?" "The account of his own death." His fitness for the ministry was considered questionable. A person with brains enough to see that it was improbable that even an inspired teacher wrote the account of his own funeral is always in danger of turning out a heretic.

Father O'Donoghue, a member of the Boston (Lincolnshire) School Board, was astonished to find that the plan of religious instruction for the children did not include the teaching of the Apostles' Creed. He moved its insertion, and remarked that its exclusion could only lead to something worse than infidelity—namely, Atheism. The motion was seconded by the Rev. J. Stephenson, vicar of Boston. On being put to the vote it was supported by three members and opposed by four. Father O'Donoghue, however, is not satisfied. He is on the war path. He says he will bring forward his motion again and again, and keep the Board sitting till midnight.

This is a good illustration of priestcraft. Father O'Donoghue will strain every nerve to pervert and distort the minds of the children, in order to make them dutiful sons and daughters of holy Mother Church. Of course he knows that the Apostles' Creed was not composed by those gentlemen. But what does that matter? Why should a priest stick at trifles?

One of the queerest stories we have ever heard of answered prayer comes from Omaha, where a parson named Campbell sues a banker for \$50,000 damages for alienating the affections of his wife. Johnson, the banker, was a leading member of Campbell's church, and it is generally understood that he gave Mrs. Campbell a fine house and lot, and a good deal of money, with the husband's consent. The latter, in his cross-examination, admitted that "he had prayed for three days for the Lord to give him a home on earth; that he then confided this fact to Mr. Johnson, who gave Mrs. Campbell an elegant home in Council Bluffs; but he would not have taken the place only that he had promised the Lord that he would take a home in whatever way it came, and he thought this gift was the Lord's." Of course, the judge would believe all this stuff about prayer. Mr. Campbell was a preacher, and therefore an honorable man.

An amusing incident of the Chelsea election was that posters of the clerical party read:—

VOTE FOR
DAVIES HUGGET RILEY

—AND—

Christian Teaching, Efficiency, Economy.

In some places only the latter half appeared, and read:—

FOR
GET RILEY

—

Efficiency, Economy.

The *Burnley Express* reports a really remarkable lecture by the Rev. Thomas Waugh on "Christ and the Present Life." Mr. Waugh "went for" the Atheists and Agnostics of the democratic movement who dared to attack Christianity. They said the Church was a selfish schemer, but he told them that the Church was like Atlas with a whole world of social problems upon her back. What wonder, therefore, if she staggered? As for the "men in the labor movement," some of them had hearts that "throbbed at the name of Christ"—but Mr. Waugh did not produce a sample. There were others who "only deserved to be exalted sixteen feet above the ground with an eight-foot rope round their necks." No doubt this was a specimen of what the reporter describes as Mr. Waugh's "humorous manner." There is a lot of fun in these men of God, especially when they intend to be serious. Finally, this "humorous" gentleman remarked that Utopias would all come to nothing unless they "put Christ into the program." Which means, of course, that the democracy of the future must find good places for the preachers of Kingdom Come.

"Conscience Money" to the amount of £5 has been received by the Chancellor of the Exchequer from "Praise the Lord for all His mercies." The *Westminster Gazette* presumes that this includes the crowning mercy of not being found out.

It is high time that some of our judges were admonished to show a little more respect for the Oaths Act. Sir Henry Hawkins is about the worst offender. He never loses an opportunity of flouting the Act, and (metaphorically speaking) of kicking it round the court. Only a few days ago, in one of the Queen's Bench Courts, a jurymen who spoke with a foreign accent objected to be sworn on the Bible, as it was a book in which he did not believe. This gentleman was well within his legal right, and he should at once have been "affirmed." But the bigot upon the bench said "he would not argue the matter"—which the law does not permit him to do; the gentleman would be excused from serving on that particular jury, but he would have to remain in court, as he might be wanted. Whereat there was much "laughter." Sir Henry Hawkins should remember, or be made to remember, that a court of law is not a sporting ground.

Mr. W. Q. Judge, backed up by his Mahatma (every Theosophist will soon run one of his own), has solemnly deposed Mrs. Besant from her headship. All that now remains is for Mrs. Besant, backed up by her Mahatma, to solemnly depose Mr. W. Q. Judge. We like to see these dabblers in humbug imitating the Kilkenny cats.

Why does not a Mahatma appear upon the scene and put an end to all this quarreling? It is a fine opportunity for a "Master" to assert his superiority. But, alas, Mahatmas are only visible to the eye of faith.

Colin Edmund Campbell, hailing from a certain address in the City of London, has applied for a patent for a "new and improved means for the communication of automatic, telepathic, and spiritistic messages." This ought to be a fine opportunity for the Theosophists, who are sadly in need of something of the kind at present. Mr. Campbell should make Mrs. Besant an offer immediately. It would be the making of the lady whom Mr. Judge has "deposed" if she could only be put in communication with the defunct Blavatsky or the living Koot Hoomi.

This Mr. C. E. Campbell is a genius who has on more than one occasion afforded food for mirth to audiences at the Hall of Science. Some time ago our sub-editor assisted him to get at some books on astrology at the British Museum. In return Mr. Campbell was good enough to send prognostications of the weather for a month in advance. The predictions were useful, for when it said fine it was always best to take an umbrella, and when it said rain none was needed.

Mahomet said that he once saw engraved on the wing of a locust, in Hebrew, the words: "We are the legions of God on high. We bear but ninety-nine eggs. Did we bear a hundred, we should devastate the world." Professor Kunckel, however, finds that the female locust, in the course of a year, lays nearer nine hundred than ninety-nine eggs. Which makes the Christians sneer at Mahomet's inspiration. But they forget the mistakes of their own prophets. Jesus Christ himself said that God looked after the sparrows, which every student of ornithology knows to be a very bad blunder.

The earliest known statue is one that has been recovered from an Egyptian tomb. It is that of a sheik, or head man of a village, is made of wood, with eyes of glass, and is evidently a portrait. Egyptologists say that it is at least six thousand years old, or contemporary with Adam.

The *Church Times*, in an article on Voltaire's bi-centenary, alluding to the phrase, *ecrasons l'infâme*, says: "Perhaps it would be unjust to say with Lacordaire that he definitely meant our Lord. It is true, however, that all revealed religion and the ceremonies of the Church, together with Jesuitry and Jansenism, he ridiculed over and over again." After deploring these attacks the *C. T.*, however, says: "As a philanthropist, as a keen inquirer, and as the enemy of persecution, Voltaire has claims on everyone's respect." This from the *C. T.* shows some progress has been made in the estimate of the earlier Freethinkers.

Truth tells of a method of evading the Sunday Closing Act, which, it says, has come into favor in Scotland. The would-be evader goes to an inn on Saturday night, books a bedroom, and departs. No law compels him to sleep in the engaged bed. On the Sabbath he returns to take his ease at his inn, and invites all the thirsty souls he knows. So difficult is it to make people sober by Act of Parliament.

The *West Meath Examiner* is a Parnellite paper, and is therefore obnoxious to Bishop Nulty, who has forbidden his flock to read it, and threatened them with excommunication if they do. Another dignitary of the Catholic Church in Ireland has been denouncing Mr. T. P. O'Connor as editor of the *Weekly Sun*. In the opinion of this anathematiser the insults to religion in that journal are worse than the sins of Charles Stewart Parnell. It is fortunate for "Tay Pay" that the Irish constituency he represents is not situated in Ireland.

It is worthy of notice that not a single Catholic candidate has gained a seat on the new London School Board. Michael Davitt, who is a professed Catholic, told the Catholics of London that it was no part of their duty to obey the directions of Cardinal Vaughan, and many of them seem to have voted "Progressive." The dispute, of course, is a domestic one; still, we are pleased to see a little anti-clerical spirit even in the ranks of Catholicism. Disputing the authority of the priest in political and social affairs is the first step on the road to complete emancipation.

When the new London School Board begins business we suppose there will be another shindy over the Atonement. The children are to be stuffed with this doctrine, though it is not intelligible to their elders. Divines are still at loggerheads about it after the lapse of eighteen hundred years. When one of them explains it, another says he doesn't understand it a bit. A few months ago Mr. Gladstone took a turn at the job, and made it about as clear as the river Thames at Barking. Now we have before us a printed sermon on the Grand Old Man's article by the Rev. A. Nicholson, incumbent of St. Albans, wherein we read of "Mr. Gladstone's mistakes," "Mr. Gladstone's obscurity and confusion," "His first argument proves nothing," etc. Of course the Atonement is true. Only a blasphemer would deny it. But it is still a mystery, and nobody will ever be sure of understanding it until Jesus Christ comes again and "explains his explanation." Meanwhile we must possess our souls in patience.

M. Victor Duruy, the French historian, is just dead at the age of eighty-three. From 1863 to 1868 he held the post of Minister of Public Instruction, during which period he inaugurated some notable reforms. It is almost needless to say that his efforts to promote popular education were bitterly opposed by the clerical party.

A parent writes to the *Daily News* that at a National school at Lee, Kent, the class was asked by the teacher "to hold up their hands those who had no godfathers and godmothers, in which number were my two children; after which they were told they were not children of the kingdom, but children of the Evil One." This is a specimen of the beautiful spirit of charity inculcated by religion.

Archdeacon Farrar has been lecturing at Newcastle on "Early Christian Art." He might have told his audience some very curious and suggestive facts. Among these we count the absence of any pictures of Jesus Christ in the first three centuries; the fact that the crucifixion is not found in the earliest Christian art; that, when it is found, the figure on the cross is clearly mythological, with the moon on one side and the sun on the other; that the so-called Christian representations in the catacombs, such as the Good Shepherd and Orpheus, are all Pagan; and that the cross and all other symbols of Christianity can also be traced to Pagan emblems.

What Archdeacon Farrar does say is merely suggestive. Thus he remarks: "They only ventured in the catacombs to shadow forth the idealised Christ, and not to picture or to actually represent him. First of all, Christians only represented Christ symbolically." This suggests that the early Christ may have been symbolical, like Mithras, Apollo, Horus, or Orpheus.

Archdeacon Farrar told them that the fish was a chief symbol of Christ, but he did not inform them that the title *Ichthus*—a fish—was applied to Bacchus and Horus as well as to Christ, and that it probably came into use about 263 B.C., when the sun entered Pisces. There is surely something funny about the comparison of the celibate Christ to the fecund fish.

Another suggestive passage was the following: "The fathers of the earlier centuries, arguing, probably, from *à priori* reasons, thought Christ was ill-favored to look upon; but, after the third century, the fathers began to say that it was impossible to suppose that Christ was not of a commanding and beautiful appearance."

One more suggestive point made by Archdeacon Farrar was that for 1,400 years nothing whatever was known of the "stations of the cross," now found in all Catholic Churches. Yet these incidents are as firmly believed by Catholics as anything told in the Gospels, and, indeed, are probably quite as true.

Two thieves concerned in a robbery from a grocery store in Abingdon-street, Northampton, were arrested at a prayer meeting in the town.

In the divorce case of Worrall *v.* Worrall and Jones the husband presents a petition against his wife on the ground of her adultery with the Rev. Hugh William Jones, formerly curate of St. Mary's, Hulme.

Lady Georgina Fullerton, a Roman Catholic, endorses the claims of a miraculous medal as having wrought some wondrous cures between 1832 and 1836. Wonders, like wine, improve with age.

It is said that not less than 13,000,000 human beings have perished in earthquakes since the beginning of the historical era. This is but a small item in the murder bill of the heavenly Father.

A recently-published book on St. James's Palace says that in Queen Anne's time it was customary for the chaplain to read prayers in the outer room while her Majesty was dressing. Once, when Queen Anne was changing her things, she ordered the door to be completely shut; whereupon the chaplain stopped. The Queen immediately sent to ask why he did not proceed, to which he replied that he could not whistle the word of God through the keyhole.

Dr. Parker objects to reporters taking notes of his sermons, and publishing them in penny papers. It spoils the sale of his three-and-sixpenny volumes. Dr. Parker doesn't see why his gospel should be offered without money and without price to whosoever will.

There has been a controversy in the *Times* on the subject of free and open churches. One man of God relates that at Ashbourne the church had to be closed because the working men resorted to it in their dinner hours, not to pray, but to eat their dinners.

Every one knows that they have one holy coat of Christ at Trèves, and another at Argenteuil. There used to be about twenty garments extant. But these two are genuine; one being his day shirt, and the other his night shirt. Some stains on the coat at Argenteuil have recently been subjected to microscopic examination, and, according to an article in the *New Science Review*, they have been pronounced to be blood stains. After this, who can doubt that this is the robe in which Christ was crucified and ascended to heaven? Trèves will have to take a back seat.

The Lord Mayor, speaking on behalf of the London Philanthropic Society, said it was sad to see so many good people suffering from poverty through no fault of their own, while wicked people with plenty of money enjoyed all the luxuries of life. They had to believe in the dispensation of an all-wise Providence that good might come out of this, but he wished he could see it.

The pious *Quarterly Review*, in its last number, has a paper on "Early Babylonian History," in which it very guardedly says not a word on chronology, lest we suppose it be found to conflict with holy scripture. Professor Henzey has, however, been lecturing on the same subject, and states that the excavations made by M. de Sarzec at Tello, in Asia Minor, reveal ruins extending back to about 4000 B.C. So it appears that the early kings of Chaldea were contemporary with Adam.

According to telegrams received in Rome from Sardinia, the leader of the brigands who, at the recent attack near Tortoli, was shot by the carabinieri, and whose body was purposely mutilated by the other brigands, turned out to be the priest of the neighboring village.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, December 2, North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road, Camberwell:—7.30, "Did Jesus Christ Ever Live?"

December 9 and 16, Hall of Science.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—December 2, Newcastle-on-Tyne (Sunday Society); 3, West Auckland; 4, York; 9, Manchester; 10, Derby; 16, Plymouth; 23 and 30, Hall of Science.—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 Efra-road, Brixton, London, S.W.

FINSBURY ELECTION FUND.—The outlay in connection with Mr. Charles Watts's candidature having been in excess of the income, we appeal to Freethinkers to make up the deficiency, which amounts to from £20 to £30. There really ought to be no difficulty in this respect, when it is remembered that the press boycott was responsible for a good deal of Mr. Watts's expenses.

BIRTLEY.—The "cup" in the communion means the wine. It is a legitimate expression, common enough in poetry.

E. SELF.—See our leading article. We are not at all dismayed at the result. Mr. Watts will probably visit Ipswich in the new year.

W. C. DORKING sends us £1 for the N.S.S. Benevolent Fund. Now the winter is upon us we venture to press this Fund on the attention of Freethinkers who can spare a trifle for their necessitous brethren.

W. H. TAYLOR.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

C. E. SMITH.—Thanks.

J. G. BARTRAM.—See paragraph.

A. J. MARRIOTT.—As you say, it is amusing to see Tolstoi, and the *Chronicle* after him, treating the Bible as God's Word, and at the same time speaking of bread-labor as a blessing, when the Bible represents it as a curse. Christians were always inconsistent.

T. E. MAYNE.—Thanks for enclosures.

ANONYMOUS correspondents are warned that their letters cannot be answered.

W. THOMSON.—See "Sugar Plums." We hope Mr. Broadbent will win a seat on the Oldham School Board.

A. WHEELER, secretary, calls the attention of the Finsbury Branch members to an important meeting to-day (December 2) at 12 noon in the minor Hall of Science. Officers and committee have to be elected.

N. C.—Shall appear.

NEMO.—Celsus wrote against Christianity in the second century. Of course he had no personal knowledge of any of the "miracles" of Jesus Christ. Nor is there any "admission" in his argument that the wonders ascribed to the Nazarene were wrought by magic. The Christians said the same of the "miracles" of Paganism.

J. POLLITT.—It is inserted.

E. SMEDLEY.—(1) What you say is ingenious, but it seems clear enough that the Jews, as a race—or rather a species of the Semitic race—did live in Palestine. We do not believe they were ever in Egypt. (2) Some of our Branches make collections for Hospital Sunday. Others prefer to give in the ordinary way on Hospital Saturday, or on other occasions.

W. BIRTWISTLE.—See "Acid Drops."

QUIZ.—It is a plagiarism. That epitaph is two hundred years old.

MR. FOOTE'S FIGHTING FUND.—E. Self, 1s.; Wellwisher, 1s.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Western Figaro—Daily Chronicle—Freidenker—North British Daily Mail—Open Court—Glasgow Herald—Secular Thought—Truthseeker—Echo—Midland News—Isle of Wight Observer—Sun—Irish Weekly Independent—Isle of Man Times—Weekly Bulletin—Two Worlds—Progressive Thinker—Der Arme Teufel—Liberty—Boston Investigator—Birmingham Gazette—Hull Daily News.

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

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

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

CORRESPONDENCE should reach us not later than Tuesday if a reply is desired in the current issue. Otherwise the reply stands over till the following week.

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. Fordor, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

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

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

SUGAR PLUMS.

It is a long time since Mr. Foote lectured at Camberwell. He is to lecture there this evening (December 2) in the Secular Hall, New Church-road, his subject being, "Did Jesus Christ Ever Live?" South London Freethinkers will no doubt take the opportunity of hearing what he has to say on this profoundly important question.

It will take some time to work up first-class Freethought audiences in Ipswich. Mr. Foote's lectures there on Sunday were fairly well attended, and a good deal of literature was disposed of at the bookstall. Friends came in from smaller towns in Suffolk, and all seemed pleased to meet the N.S.S. President. The lectures were apparently highly relished, and will no doubt serve as an advertisement for the next Freethought speaker who visits the town. The Branch is fortunate in having the use of the Co-operative Hall for its meetings; it is also fortunate in having some active and zealous young members, as well as a few veterans; and if it only keeps pegging away, as Lincoln used to say, we venture to predict for it a really successful future.

Mr. Parris had a good audience at the London Hall of Science on Sunday evening. He occupies the same platform again this morning (December 2). Mr. W. Heaford lectures in the evening. He is a very earnest worker in our movement, and we hope he will meet with a hearty reception.

Mr. Charles Watts lectures this evening (December 2) for the Newcastle Sunday Society in the Tyne Theatre, his subject being, "The French Revolution: its Horrors and its Excesses." The chair is to be taken by Mr. Ralph Young. No meeting will be held at the room of the Newcastle N.S.S. Branch, as the members are going to hear Mr. Watts. There is a chatty account of our colleague in the Sunday Society's "Weekly Notes," in which he is said to be "personally popular with thousands who dissent from his views." Mr. Watts also lectures at West Auckland the following Monday evening, and at York on Tuesday evening.

Ingersoll's new lecture, "About the Holy Bible," will be issued next week from our publishing office. It is a splendid effort, and we earnestly appeal to Freethinkers to circulate it as widely as possible among their orthodox friends and acquaintances. The question of the future for School Board elections in this country is "Bible or No Bible?" and this lecture of Ingersoll's ought to win lots of votes for Secular Education.

The bi-centenary of Voltaire was, of course, celebrated in Paris. In a paper called after him *Le Voltaire* a number of leading French writers gave their opinion of his work and his genius. Father Didon, the eloquent but shallow and sophisticated Dominican, naturally "abhors the anti-Christian spirit" of the Heresiarch. M. Vacquerie says that Voltaire was great in mind, but greater still in heart. M. Jules Simon calls him "a journalist who wrote upon all literatures, all sciences, and all arts." M. Mellarmé decides against all his tragedies and epic poems, but places his "Contes" and Letters in "the pure tabernacle of French books." "Voltaire," says the Paris correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "had a perfect genius of contempt, and he laughed a thousand absurdities out of life, for which inestimable service he has won scant thanks."

Our readers should possess themselves of the monograph on Voltaire which Mr. J. M. Wheeler has written with some assistance from Mr. Foote. Mr. Wheeler has produced a very interesting and useful little volume, which should find a place in every Freethinker's library.

Mr. J. E. Broadbent, who was many years ago the secretary of the N.S.S. Oldham Branch, is a candidate for the local School Board. He polled well at the last election, and he hopes to gain a seat on this occasion. As he is in favor of Secular Education, we have no doubt he will receive the support of the local Freethinkers. Some of them may not agree with the "Free Maintenance" part of his program, but this could not be carried out at the expense of the rate-payers. The law would have to be altered first; that is, the question would have to be decided in the Parliamentary constituencies and in the House of Commons.

The *Progressive Thinker*, of Chicago, appears to adopt Professor E. Johnson's views of chronology, in a leading article on "A Chasm in History," in which it contends that the period of the Dark Ages, say from the fourth to the fourteenth century, instead of covering a thousand years may be compressed into a far less space of time, and that nearly all is uncertain in chronology until the art of printing arose.

M. Alexandre Dumas fils, the *Athenaeum* says, has written a letter addressed to the shade of his father, for the new

edition of *The Three Musketeers*. It is "by no means destitute of tenderness and seriousness," and "not without quaintness is the fact revealed in this letter that the son admits it to be a problem whether Death does, or does not, annihilate those he snatches from us."

In *Open Court* Mr. Moncure D. Conway writes on "The Pilgrimage of Anthony Froude," dealing with the journey of the historian from High Churchism to Freethought, which is illustrated by his early anonymous works, *The Shadows of the Clouds* and *The Nemesis of Faith*.

At the Gateshead School Board election Mr. James Ford, who stood on the Labor and Secular Education ticket, stood second on the poll, polling over eleven thousand votes.

Our frequent contributor, Mr. G. L. Mackenzie, had some verses addressed to the sainted Athelstan inserted in the *Echo* just before the election. They began in this style:—

Now, really, Riley! really now!
You surely must with us agree
That children ne'er should doubt the fact
That three times one are always three,
Don't you, really, Riley?

Branches and newsagents should be making up their orders for the *Secular Almanack for 1895*, issued by the National Secular Society, and edited by Messrs. Foote and Wheeler. The new number of this publication will be of a different size and shape from its predecessors; it will contain some novelties, and be bound in a handsomely designed wrapper. Altogether it should command a large circulation.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A CHRISTIAN AND A RATIONALIST.

Arranged by Rationalist.

(CONCLUDED.)

CHRISTIAN: It is evident you do not love God, or you would not be at heart so obdurate.

RATIONALIST: Love God? Come now, let's be honest; do you love God?

C.: Of course I do. What a question to ask me. I love God better than I love or ever can love any earthly thing.

R.: Well, I must confess that you surprise me. For my part, I find it simply impossible to love—mind, now, that I do not say respect, revere, esteem—anyone whom I have never seen, never heard, never known. If you can, then you are indeed more susceptible than I had thought.

C.: It is a different sort of love.

R.: Love is love the world over, and has ever been, is now, and will be till the end of time. It is one and the same thing when or wherever found. To love, one must love some tangible, sentient being; and tell me when you are loving God so hard what picture of him do you draw upon the canvas of your thoughts?

C.: What a foolish question; I declare you are actually becoming childish.

R.: Do you think so? If so, I speak with the honor and candor of youth; but, to return to my question, what is the nature of the being you devoutly love?

C.: An all-wise, all-loving being.

R.: A man, a spirit, a substance, a force, an intelligence, or what?

C.: A man, of course, but one who embraces all the qualifications of a perfect being—one who is perfection itself. An infinite being.

R.: Can you conceive of such a thing as an infinite man? Can you picture to your most fervid imagination a man who has no limits, no shape, no form, no end, as must be the case in order to be infinite? I cannot.

C.: It is not intended that we should know such things. We can never know the infinite.

R.: Precisely so. That is just the point I have been trying to make; still, you love that which you do not and cannot know—that which is a man and yet no man. Isn't that also a trifle childish?

C.: But, sir, we are no longer required to try to fathom these perplexing mysteries of the Creator, since God the father has given himself in his only begotten son—Jesus Christ—whom we are to love and worship.

R.: There! I thought that, like all others of your religious persuasion, you would have to fall back on that much mooted and most illogical topic.

C.: What do you mean by that? Christ is the symbol of God, so when you worship Christ you must, of necessity, worship God himself.

R.: Well, you people reason with a logic that, to say the least, is very peculiar and very absurd. You poke fun at the Catholics for worshipping images which are merely symbolic; you call the Chinese and two-thirds of the human race heathens because they worship their manufactured Joss; you abhor the Hindoos and others because they too have their idols; yet still you, great and grand, and only rightful believers, claim to worship God through the symbol of Jesus Christ.

C.: Do you deny that Jesus and God are not father and son—one and the same?

R.: I will tell you what I believe about Jesus Christ, the so-called Redeemer. I do not believe such a person ever existed. It is a myth, derived from the East. It is an allegory—a personification of the sun, just as Buddha, Bacchus, Adonis, Mithras, Hercules, Osiris, Horus, are all personifications of the sun. There is no historical evidence apart from the four gospels—and that is not history—to prove that such a person ever lived. Christianity is modern paganism. The idea of a man being born of a woman and conceived by a Holy Ghost, and not according to the infallible laws of nature, is a myth, unworthy the belief and credence of reasonable creatures.

C.: A myth? Why, I am shocked to hear you talk so. Do not mix up matters sacred with those profane. Remember, the Bible is emphatic on this matter.

R.: There you go again with the Bible. That is what we call in logic the begging of the question. It is the Bible that is in dispute. Yes, I repeat that the Jesus Christ of the Gospels is a myth. I believe you have studied ancient mythology. You know as well as I that during the time the Bible was written mythology was believed in almost universally. The people knew no better, and in their ignorance believed many things which to us, in the light and experience of education and mental progression, would seem absurd. Among those senseless beliefs was one to the effect that the deities or gods of Olympus were frequently in the habit of leaving their nectar and their celestial abodes for a time, in order to keep an assignation or liaison with some pretty and favored mortal. I do not know how many, many times I have read of such heavenly, or rather Olympian, escapades, and of Jupiter himself leaving the bed of his white-armed goddess, Juno, to go on just such business, and of his having children by dozens of different women. Of course, I do not for a moment believe there ever was a Jupiter, much less that he had a fondness for female mortals, or that the children attributed to him did not belong to some earth-born Lothario. I only speak of this in order to show you that the idea of the gods cohabiting with earth-born females, and the whole scheme of the immaculate conception, was neither new nor strange at the time the Bible was written, and universally believed by the poor deluded and ignorant barbarians. This I believe to be the origin of the so-called immaculate conception; for, after all, say what you will, religion is nothing but one of those many myths which have died out only to assume another shape. The Pagans worshipped in heathen mythology one god with three heads; while the Christians have reversed the myth so as to make it read three gods with One Head.—*Progress.*

How to Help Us.

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

HEAR ALL SIDES.

HONEST and sturdy old Ben Franklin, when in doubt as to a question of opinion, or when hesitating upon what course of conduct he should pursue in any given case, used to state the question in writing at the head of a sheet of paper, and underneath, in opposite columns, he wrote the words "pro" and "con," and then he went to work to study up all he could find in favor of the question, which he wrote in the pro column, and all that was against it he set down in the opposite or con column. Then, when he had exhausted the subject and put down every argument he could find, or think of, on both sides, he read them over, carefully comparing one with the other, and then made up his mind upon the weight of the evidence for both.

Few people, I imagine, take so much trouble to determine in their own minds the truth or the right, as did Franklin; but all of us practise something equivalent to it, upon all questions but one.

No man invests his money in any business until he has examined the risk from all sides, pro and con, and thoroughly understands the true condition of it. Even the clergyman who has a call from one parish to another hesitates until he has carefully examined, pro and con, all the advantages and disadvantages involved in the change, the amount of salary, the social environment, the chances for literary culture in local libraries, and the character of the surrounding population for generosity in marriage fees and donation parties. All these questions have to be carefully considered before he decides to obey the mandate from the sky. He must be satisfied by reliable evidence that all the advantages that are claimed for the proposed change are true, and not merely the guess of his friends or the brag of interested parties who are trying to boom their new church.

All of this care will the clergyman or the average Christian take to find out the actual truth about the things that pertain to his temporal or financial welfare; but for his religion he is content to accept it upon the word of some old barbarian who lived thousands of years ago, of whom he knows nothing, not even his name; but of whose ignorance he should be reasonably certain, not only from the time and place of his origin, but also from the manifest ignorance displayed in his ideas and language.

This ignorant old barbarian may never have written a word, may never have known how to read or write, or perhaps never saw a written word, or knew that there ever was such an art as reading or writing; but some other men, equally unknown to us, have written a book which they pretend contains the exact words of the original old barbarian, and this book is accepted as absolute truth, and the measure of all truth, without any inquiry as to who wrote it, when it was written, whether it contains the words of the original barbarian, or whether he ever spoke any words at all, or whether he ever existed.

This book is not only accepted as authority without any evidence upon any of these points, but Christians resent any inquiry about them, and damn any person to endless torture who ventures to ask if the book can be true. Now, I venture to say that there is not a Christian in all this broad country who would risk an investment of one hundred dollars in any other scheme so utterly without evidence to support it as this is. And yet they stake the eternal welfare of their immortal souls upon it, which shows how infinitely less in value their souls are than their money.

In all the ordinary affairs of life the Christian reasons as rational men should; he believes nothing without evidence; but in this one matter of religion he asks for no evidence; he believes because his mother did—or at least he says he believes, which amounts to the same thing as far as the Church is concerned. The Church has adopted a rule that there are two kinds of truth: one is truth absolute, which is proved by evidence so strong that it cannot be disputed, and the other is Gospel truth, which is supported by no evidence, and must be believed by faith. It is a serious fact that no Church creed requires belief in matters of fact, or truth absolute; but the creed is entirely made up of propositions that are not proved, and, from their nature, cannot be proved, which the candidate for admission to the Church is required to assent to by faith. Whether he really believes it or not is of no consequence; he must say he believes, and that is sufficient if he only sticks to it, like the man who said the horse was sixteen feet high.

A few days ago I attended the funeral of a friend who was buried from the Catholic Church. The priest commenced his address by saying, "It is appointed unto all men to die; and after death the judgment. Now," he said, "the first part of this proposition is not an article of faith. Everybody knows that all men must die, and, therefore, it is no merit to believe it. But nobody knows what happens to a man after he is dead, and, therefore, the Church requires that you should believe in the judgment by faith."

If an infidel had made this statement, a majority of the Christians would have held up their hands and sworn that he was maliciously ridiculing sacred things; but the priest was only stating the true position of the Church—that is, that in all statements manifestly true she does not require belief. In such matters you go as you please; but that which is untrue, or at least unproved, must be believed on the authority of the Church under penalty of damnation here and hereafter, so far as the priests have power to execute the sentence.

The position of the Church upon evidence and belief is tersely set forth by that holy father, Tertullian, who says: "I maintain that the Son of God was born; why am I not ashamed of maintaining such a thing? Why! but because it is itself a shameful thing. I maintain that the Son of God died; well, that is wholly credible, because it is monstrously absurd. I maintain that, after having been buried, he rose again; and that I take to be absolutely true, because it was manifestly impossible."

Tertullian occupied the true Christian position, that evidence and common sense counted for nothing with him who would save his soul. He must believe what the priest tells him to believe, no matter how absurd it may be.

J. P. RICHARDSON.

—*The Independent Pulpit.*

(*To be concluded.*)

WOMAN AND THE CHURCH.

IN *Liberty*, of Boston, Mr. F. C. Walker has a notable article on the new attitude that is being taken towards the woman's movement by ministers of religion. The first advocates of woman's emancipation were all Infidels. In America, Frances Wright, Ernestine Rose, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony united the assertion of the rights of their sex with repudiation of the religion which says, "Let every woman learn in silence," "The head of the woman is the man," and "Wives, be in subjection to your husbands in all things." Fifteen years ago the man of God who favored giving the ballot to woman was an exception. Now the movement is receiving the support of many ministers. Mr. Walker explains how the change has come about. He attributes it to the growth of the Prohibition, God in the Constitution, and similar semi-religious movements. Mr. Walker points out that, were it not for the women, more than half of the Protestant Churches would have to close their doors. They are sustained by the moral and pecuniary support which the women bring to them. Many of the men who do go to church attend only because their wives and sweethearts are generally there on Sunday, while the number is still larger who give money to the Church simply because their wives are members thereof, and they must help support the conventicle if they would have peace at home.

Of course, the clergy know well where their friends are, and which sex it is that they have the most influence over; and hence it was very natural that they should early grasp the idea that the ballot in the hands of woman would immediately and vastly augment their power and enrich the Church. The first political use they had for woman was in the fight for prohibition, and they realize that they are likely to be ultimately beaten there if they do not arm her with a vote. Next came the Sunday question—if it was not primary in the thought of the preacher—and from that point the vista of tyranny widened out until, at this time, the militant branch of the Church expects nothing less from the assistance of "enfranchised woman" than the establishment of a theocracy in which religion, morals, and politics will be absolutely dominated by the reactionary principles of the most orthodox wing of Protestant Christianity.

Before the clerical influence was enlisted on the side of the woman suffragists the ballot for woman was demanded on the ground that it was her right to vote because she was amenable to the criminal laws, because she was a taxpayer, and because one sex cannot legislate justly for another. But it was not long after the ministers came to her side before the tone of the woman-suffrage advocates changed, and from that time on we heard less and less about equality of rights, and more and more concerning what woman would do in the suppression business when once she got her hands on the reins of authority. She would suppress the liquor traffic, she would legislate the social evil out of existence, she would preserve the "Sabbath" from "desecration," and now she is prepared to Christianise the Constitution and outlaw Freethought. Mr. Walker thinks the time approaching when the Catholic Church may adopt the woman's platform in order to ensure her support in putting down divorce. Evidently, as Robert Lowe said, "we must educate our masters."

THE BIBLE IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

(From the "Westminster Gazette.")

PAGES might be filled with the answers given by the Board school scholars. Here are a few specimens of the humor, conscious or otherwise, of these young folk:—

Faith is belief in what can't happen; Hope is belief in what won't happen; and Charity is belief in what does happen. Does not this sound like an example of the new humor? It is in reality a genuine School Board answer culled from an examiner's note-book.

"The Act of Uniformity," said a little girl, "was to make everybody go to bed at the same time." "The Kings of Israel," said a budding theologian to a rev. examiner, "must have been poor, because it is stated that they slept with their fathers. If they had been rich, they would have had beds of their own."

"Why is it wicked to cut off dogs' tails?" asked the teacher. "Because what God hath joined let not man pull asunder," came the quick reply.

"Jerusalem was surrounded by walls to keep the milk and honey out." "The Cities of Refuge were intended for those who had unintentionally committed suicide." "Titus was an apostle who wrote epistles. He was the Emperor of Rome, and his surname was Oates."

"The hydra," said a little maid of five once, "was wedded to Henry VIII. When he cut off her head another one sprung up." "The United States is governed by machinery" (who can deny it?). "St. Peter was crucified head downwards, because he mentions it."

"Esau," remarked a sturdy little youth of ten, "robbed his father and sold the copyright to a publisher for a bottle of potash." Mixed ideas here, surely. "What is the meaning of *carte blanche*?" "Please, sir, it's putting the horse before the cart."

"Where was Magna Charta signed?" asked a teacher in a South London Board school. "Please, sir, at the bottom." It is not stated what the examiner replied to this unlooked-for reply; but this answer reminds us of an examiner, of a somewhat stern aspect and with an abrupt manner, who asked a little boy, "Who signed Magna Charta?" "Please, sir, it wasn't me," replied trembling Tommy.

"What were the Jewish feasts?" "Beanfeasts," was the prompt reply. "Mention an instance of charity in the Bible." "They brought Him a penny, and he said, 'Whose subscription is this?'"

How Pagans were Converted.

Gibbon tells how Christians were made in Thrace and Asia Minor during the reign of Constantius. We quote: "The rites of baptism were conferred on women and children, who for that purpose had been torn from the arms of their friends and parents; the mouths of the communicants were held open by a wooden engine, while the consecrated bread was forced down their throats; the breasts of tender virgins were either burnt with red-hot egg shells, or inhumanly compressed between sharp and heavy boards."

Such were good Church methods, according to current history, full five centuries before the Inquisition was called into service. Given the power, and similar means would be still employed.

BOOK CHAT.

A Modern Layman's Faith, by Walter Bradford Woodgate, M.A., Oxon (London: Chapman and Hall), is a curious product of the education of the day, which seeks to combine a belief in the old Bible records with modern science. The outcome is a very peculiar kind of rationalism, which appears to accept the statements of the Bible, while really viewing them from a totally distinct standpoint from that of the Bible writers. Mr. Woodgate, for instance, believes in pre-Adamite man; but he takes the story of the making of man, in the first chapter of Genesis, as referring to these, and the story of the making of Adam, in the second chapter, as the record of another and later event. Again, he believes in the story of the Deluge, but does not think it exterminated all mankind except the family of Noah. On the contrary, he holds that a race of pre-Adamites still existed, while the Bible only concerned itself with the later and divine race of Adam.

* * *

The most characteristic results of the application of this pseudo-rationalism to the old Jew books appear in the chapter on Old Testament miracles. Assuming that the Adamite race were masters of secret science, he, by this means, would explain much of their miraculous record. Thus the yarn of the burning bush is explained as "Moses observed a phosphoric appearance in some vegetation." The Jews crossed the Red Sea when an east wind caused the receding of the sea. The pillar of cloud which went before the Jews "may have been the fume of some scientific apparatus of the commander." Moses may have produced the thunders and lightnings of Sinai by the same apparatus.

* * *

Mr. Woodgate suspects "that the destruction of the Korah rebels was accomplished by the agency of an explosive." Moses may have got water from the rock "by some engineering operations tapping a spring of an upland subterranean reservoir in the hill." The mysterious and deadly effect which the ark of the covenant produced upon the uninitiated who meddled with it (1 Sam. vi. 19; 2 Sam. vi. 7) suggests to our author "a possibility that some electric battery may have been contained in the receptacle." Elijah made a fire for sacrifice on Carmel by the aid of naphtha ignited through a burning glass, and reviled the god Baal because his priests did not understand science.

* * *

Mr. Woodgate may have derived some of his explanations from the Comic Bible Sketches published years ago in the *Freethinker*. For he gravely says of Elisha's causing the axe-head to swim (2 Kings vi. 5): "He apparently was conversant with the use of the magnet, and astonished his followers by this experiment with one." Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not mind the fiery furnace because clad in asbestos; and the writing on the wall which frightened Belshazzar "could have been done with phosphorus, unobserved when a glare of light fell on the spot, and plainly visible when that portion of the room became darkened"; while Daniel kept the lions at bay by sheer magnetism of will.

* * *

After this, we are not surprised to find a chapter devoted to girding at "materialistic science," and to advocating the truth of clairvoyance and occult science generally. Mr. Woodgate is even prepared to believe in the inspiration of the Pagan oracles, and, altogether, his book is a pretty sample of irrational rationalism. The priests will have little occasion to quarrel with this modern layman, though he plays such havoc with their book. He has evidently sufficient faith to form a foundation for a new priesthood.

* * *

Mr. Hall Caine appears to have derived the inspiration of his new romance from his fellow Manxman, Mr. W. H. Quilliam, the English Moslem. It is entitled *The Mahdi: A Story of Love and Heroism*. Mr. Caine treats the Mahdi as a hero and a patriot, outdoing Saladin in prowess and Solomon in wisdom. The story will appear in the Christmas number of the *Christian World*.

* * *

Mr. A. Lillie, the author of *Buddhism in Christendom*, *Modern Mystics and Modern Magic*, etc., is bringing out a work on Madame Blavatsky. He follows that wonderful lady's alleged adventures in Thibet, her actual career as spirit medium in Egypt and America, and as Theosophist in India and England. From Colonel Olcott's *People from the Other World*, from his "Diary Leaves," and from the Coulomb correspondence many extracts are given, throwing light on the doings of this unprincipled adventuress.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—For several years I have annually, with the approach of Christmas, sent (by the agency of Mr. Forder, Freethought bookseller, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.) small parcels of pamphlets to the army and navy, especially abroad. Already letters from foreign parts are arriving to-day. I have one from H.M.S. "Barham," "Phalexum Bay," "Greece," as follows: "Many thanks for the books and pamphlets received through Mr. Forder. I have distributed them through the ship to my messmates and shipmates, many of whom I found very pleased to receive them." We read in the papers of the trash sent in vast quantities by all religious sects everywhere abroad. A few pamphlets by Bradlaugh, Ingersoll, Foote, etc., would just provide the grain of salt to season the Christmas literary pie of our "Jacks" abroad, and render things a little lively. I throw out the suggestion to friends on shore to think of their brothers far away in distant lands. Mr. Forder will do all—only send him the cash.

GEORGE ANDERSON.

CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES AND MIRACLES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

IRREVERENT SIR,—My attention has been called to the frivolous scribblings of a correspondent in your last issue, in which he audaciously compares the alleged conversions effected by irresponsible laymen to the real miracles which have taken place at Holywell, under the auspices of our Holy Church. Your correspondent asks for evidences. I furnish him with some, taken from the columns of the *Liverpool Daily Post* of November 21: "THE CURES AT HOLYWELL.—Recovery of a Liverpool Patient.—A report is current in Kirkdale that Mrs. Margaret Kennedy, residing at 37 Orwell-road, who had been suffering from acute rheumatism for the past six years, went to Holywell on Monday, and, after bathing in the well three times, was restored to a perfect state of health, and has not felt a pain or an ache since. She is very thankful for her recovery, and wishes it to be made known to the public."

Let your frivolous correspondent ponder this testimony carefully. "A report current in Kirkdale" is surely sufficient evidence to satisfy the demands of even such an arch-sceptic as David Hume.—I am, Irreverent Sir, yours, etc.,

FATHER FLATCATCHER.

Monday next before St. Andrew's Day, 1894.

DEATH OF MR. C. J. HUNT.

WE regret to record the death of Mr. Charles James Hunt, a well-known Secular lecturer, and one of the vice-presidents of the N.S.S., who died last week, at the age of 39. Mr. Hunt had been a chorister at a Roman Catholic church, but, while still young, took interest in the open-air meetings in Hyde Park, and became an earnest Freethinker. He was for twenty years in the Railway Clearing House, where he was much respected. He was extremely active in propagating his Freethought and Radical opinions. It is to be feared that he worked too hard in public movements, and thus considerably shortened his life. His death was caused by an abscess on the brain, which destroyed his intelligence for several days before it terminated his existence. His helplessness enabled his Christian relatives to deny his Secular friends access to him during his illness; they also gave him the mockery of a Christian burial, hiring a clergyman to tell falsehoods over his coffin; and the Freethought friends who attended the funeral were treated with open contumely.

Obituary.

THE remains of the late William Aspinall, of Hurst, Ashton-under-Lyne, were interred in the New Cemetery, Hurst, on Monday, November 19, 1894. Mr. Henry Clough, superintendent of the Failsworth Secular Sunday-school, read the funeral service in a very eloquent and impressive manner, many being moved to tears. The deceased was a very earnest and sincere Freethinker, and a great admirer of the late Mr. Bradlaugh, whose portrait adorns his sitting-room. He was a successful business man, and highly respected in the township. He leaves a widow and grown-up family to mourn his loss. Large numbers of relatives and friends (conveyed in ten coaches) attended the funeral. The deceased was sixty-six years of age.—A. F.

A TEST OF BELIEF.

PARSON TALMAGE, in his lecture on Evolution, declares, with the dreadful cocksureness of a well-paid Amurikan preacher, that whoever does not believe in the story of the Creation, as told in Genesis, is "an infidel." Also, whoever does not believe in the literal interpretation of everything else that is asserted in the Scripture is "an infidel." The *Bulletin* here rises to say, without any unnecessary discourtesy, that it does not believe that Talmage believes in Genesis himself. Also, it would like to put that hoarse expounder to the test. It has certain ideas of its own as to the most appropriate way to apply that test. It would like to have Talmage kidnapped at midnight by two masked men, and shoved into a carriage covered with crape and drawn by four black horses. It would drive him along furiously for a vast distance till it arrived at a lonesome ruin, and then it would take the great pastor under a crumbling archway, and down one hundred and fifty stairs into a subterranean vault, where one or two candles shed a glimmering light, and the water dripped from the rock-hewn roof and fell with an eerie sound into the pools on the rock-hewn floor, and where long, hollow echoes reverberated through black side caverns, and came back in strange groans out of fissures.

Then it would take off all the preacher's clothes, and cut his hair short, and give him a shower-bath, and dry him with a horse-rasp. When this was over he would be led, with nothing on but a misfit bell-topper jammed down over his ears, and with a broken feather sticking out of the brim, through a maze of corridors, until at last he was ushered suddenly into an illuminated cavern, where forty-three masked men, dressed in red, sat in a semi-circle with a skeleton and an open grave and a coffin in front of them. A large executioner—the very largest executioner who could be got for the money—would be sharpening a jagged axe on a grindstone. And there we would make the naked preacher take a dreadful oath on a skull, and when the oath was finished we would ask him in a dreadful voice, while the executioner made the grindstone whirl furiously, and the masked men all stood up and waved their swords, or their pickaxes, or their halberts, if he really and truly and unreservedly believed in the Mosaic story of the Creation. And down there, in that dank cavern, Talmage, in a state of absolute nakedness—barring the misfit bell-topper—and with his hair cut to a stubble, would acknowledge in a shaky voice that the Mosaic creation was all bosh. So would almost any other preacher, for that matter.—*Sydney Bulletin*.

The Decalogue.

A very curious thing about these Commandments is that their supposed author violated nearly every one. From Sinai, according to the account, he said, "Thou shalt not kill," and yet he ordered the murder of millions; "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and yet he gave captured maidens to gratify the lusts of captors; "Thou shalt not steal," and yet he gave to Jewish marauders the flocks and herds of others; "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, nor his wife," and yet he allowed his chosen people to destroy the houses of neighbors, and to steal their wives; "Honor thy father and thy mother," and yet this same God had thousands of fathers butchered, and with the sword of war killed children yet unborn; "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor," and yet he sent abroad lying spirits to deceive his own prophets, and in a hundred ways paid tribute to deceit. So far as we know, Jehovah kept only one of these Commandments—he worshipped no other god.—Colonel R. G. Ingersoll, "*North American Review*," p. 480; 1881.

An old woman, on the day devoted to Saint Michael the Archangel, going to a church in Paris where there was a representation of that saint discomfiting the devil, put one large taper close to St. Michael and another close to the fiend. "Woman!" exclaimed the priest, "you are making an offering to Satan; you know not what you do." "I know what I am doing well enough," was the reply; "but, as I do not certainly know where I am going, it is as well to have a friend in both places."

Bishop Wilberforce, it is said, was once asked to remonstrate with a vicar in his diocese for driving tandem. He did so, and the vicar retorted: "What difference can it make whether the horses are driven on each side of the other, or one in front of the other?" To this the Bishop replied: "Position does make a great difference sometimes. If I place my hands with the palms together and raise them to my face, a devotional effect is produced. If I extend them with the fingers out from my nose, an entirely different impression is conveyed."

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, Touzeau Parris, "The Independent Labor Party—the Causes Leading to its Formation." (Free.) 6.30, musical selections; 7, W. Heaford, "A Freethought Commentary on the Lord's Prayer." (Admission free; reserved seats, 3d. and 6d.) Wednesday, at 8.30, Arthur B. Moss, "Man and Evolution."

BATTERSEA SECULAR HALL (back of Battersea Park Station): 11.30, discussion; 7.45, Mrs. McKillop (Fabian), "Industrial Competition." (Free). Tuesday, at 8, social gathering. Wednesday, at 8, dramatic club—members wanted.

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 17.30, G. W. Foote, "Did Jesus Christ Ever Live?" Thursdays, at 7.30, free science classes.

HAMMERSMITH CLUB (1 The Grove, Broadway): Thursday, at 8.30, Touzeau Parris, "The Mystery of the Birth of God." (Free.)

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Princes' Hall, Piccadilly): 11.15, Dr. Stanton Coit, "The Whence and Whither of Human Life."

WALTHAMSTOW (Working Men's Hall, High-street): 6.30, R. Rosetti, "Is Christianity of Divine Origin?"

WOOD GREEN (Star Coffee House, High-street): 7, business meeting; 8.30, social.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, St. John will lecture.
WOOD GREEN (Jolly Butchers' Hill): 11.30, F. Haslam, "The French Revolution and Atheism."

COUNTRY.

ABERDEEN (Crooked-lane Hall): 7, Mr. Maitland, "Dr. Stewart, Christians, and Temperance."

BELFAST (Crown Chambers' Hall, 64 Royal-avenue): 3.30, Thos. Millar, sen., "The Guilty God."

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

CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 11, T. Garner, "The Light of the World"; 2.45, Sunday-school; 7, T. Garner, "The Mighty Search for Truth."

CHESTER (Old Chapel, Commonhall-street): 7, Ernest Newman, "Modern Christianity."

DERBY (Coffee Tavern, Friar Gate): Monday, at 7.30, business meeting. DUNDEE (City Assembly Rooms): 11, discussion class; 2.30, lecture by a Member, "The Devil"; 6.30, concert, vocal and instrumental.

FAIRFORTH SECULAR SUNDAY-SCHOOL: 6.30, R. Law, F.G.S., "How Planets are Weighed, and their Distance from the Earth Measured."

GLASGOW (Ex-Mission Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12, class—business and impromptu speeches; 6.30, Zosimus, "The Social Purity Sham."

HULL (St. George's Hall, Storey-street): 7, Mr. Ackroyd, "Advancing Science and Retarding Theology."

LEICESTER (Secular Hall, Humberstone-gate): 6.30, Rev. F. W. Ford, "Law, Wealth, Religion." (Free.)

LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 11, tontine society; 7, Mr. Chapman, "Good Health, and How to Keep It."

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 11, Philip Braham, F.C.S., "Science and Education"; 3, "Our Solar System"; 6.30, "Fixed Stars and Astro-Measurements."

NEWCASTLE (Irish Literary Institute, Clayton-street East): 3, C. Cohen, "Christianity and Woman."

PLYMOUTH (Democratic Club, Whimble-street): 6.45, Mr. Smith, "Ancient and Modern Christianity." (Free.)

PORTSMOUTH (Wellington Hall, Wellington-street, Southsea): 2.30, class on "Origin of Species"; 7, limelight entertainment. Wednesday, at 8, dancing.

ROCHDALE (Working Men's College, 4 Ackers-street); 7, magic lantern lecture, singing, and recitations. (Free.) Classes now open.

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

SOUTH SHIELDS (Thornton's Variety Hall, Union-lane): 11, O. Cohen, "The French Revolution"; 7, "Christ as a Teacher."

SUNDERLAND (Lecture Room, Bridge End Vaults, opposite *Echo* office): 7, The Secretary, "What Did Jesus Teach?"

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BARNSELY (Mayday Green—weather permitting): 11, W. Dyson, "The Evolution of God."

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Quayside—weather permitting): 11, a lecture.

ROCHDALE (Town Hall Square): 11, Sam Standring, "The Witch of Endor"; 3, "Christ Feeds Five Thousand."

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.—Dec. 16, Chatham.

SAM STANDRING, 6 Bury-road, Rochdale.—Dec. 16, Hall.

NOW READY.

Last Words on Suicide

A REPLY TO THE CRITICS

OF

"IS SUICIDE A SIN?"

BY

COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

London: ROBERT FORDER, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

Now Ready, Price Twopence,

IS SUICIDE A SIN?

BY

COLONEL INGERSOLL.

Together with the Reply of MONSIGNOR DUCEY.

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

Price 2d., by post 2½d.

AN ESSAY ON SUICIDE.

BY

DAVID HUME.

With an Historical and Critical Introduction by
G. W. FOOTE.

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

NEW PAMPHLET by CHARLES WATTS.

Just Published, price 2d., by post 2½d.,

The Existence of God; Or, Questions for Theists.

London: Watts & Co., 17 Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, E.C.

MARRIOTT, CLOTHIER,

311 EDGWARE ROAD, W., near Metropolitan Music Hall (same side), six doors from Church-street. TROUSERS, good wear, 5s. 9d., 7s. 6d., and 9s. 6d.; Blacks, 7s. 6d. and 10s. 6d. Thirty sizes kept in stock. OVERCOATS from 12s. 6d.

CYRIL BEDE, M.A., is open to Lecturing Engagements in town and country. Subjects:—History, Literature, Theology, etc. Views:—Tolerant Scepticism. Manner:—Cynicism, Satire, Pathos. For terms write to 16 Ossian-road, Stroud Green, N.

W. J. RENDELL'S "Wife's Friend."

Recommended by Mrs. Besant in *Law of Population*, p. 82, and Dr. Allbutt in *Wife's Handbook*, p. 51. Made solely by J. PULLEN, 15 Chadwell-street, Clerkenwell; 2s. doz., post free (reduction in larger quantities). For particulars send stamped envelope. Higginson's Syringe, with Vertical and Reverse Current, 3s. 6d., 4s. 6d., and 5s. 6d. Dr. Palfrey's Powder, 1s. 2d. Quinine Compound, 1s. 2d. Dr. Allbutt's Quinine Powders, 3s. per doz. All prices post free.

W. J. RENDELL,
CHADWELL-ST., CLERKENWELL, E.C.
(near the "Angel.")

STANTON, the People's Dentist, 375 Strand (opposite Somerset House).—TEETH on VULCANITE, 2s. 6d. each, upper or lower set, £1. Best quality, 4s. each, upper or lower, £2, completed in four hours when required; repairing or alterations in two hours. If you pay more than the above they are fancy charges. Teeth on platinum 7s. 6d. each, on 18 ct. gold 15s., stopping 2s. 6d., extraction 1s., painless by gas, 5s.

MARGATE. — TERRACE HOTEL, Marine Drive. Bed and Breakfast from 2s. 6d. A large room to seat 600. Banquets and other parties liberally treated.

TO FREETHINKERS, Ladies and Gentlemen requiring SUPERIOR OUTFITTERS at moderate prices. First-class Style and Fit Guaranteed.—H. HAMPTON, Artiste Tailor, 14 Great Castle-street, W. Three doors from Regent-street. [Patronised by leading Freethinkers.]

Mr. Foote's Portrait. By AMEY.

CABINET SIZE, 1s. Post free, carefully packed, 1s. 1d.
IMPERIAL SIZE, very fine, 3s. Post free, carefully packed, 3s. 2d.

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

VOLTAIRE:

HIS LIFE AND WORKS.
With some Selections from his Writings by
J. M. WHEELER and G. W. FOOTE.

Price 1s. Superior edition for Subscribers.
bound, numbered, and signed, 2s.

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

Price 1s., post free,

Is Socialism Sound?

VERBATIM REPORT OF A
FOUR NIGHTS' DEBATE BETWEEN
ANNIE BESANT and G. W. FOOTE.
R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter street, E.C.

Price Twopence, SALVATION SYRUP;

OR,
LIGHT ON DARKEST ENGLAND.
A REPLY TO GENERAL BOOTH,
By G. W. FOOTE.

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

WHY BE ILL ?

MEDICAL ESSAYS. VOL. I. For Postal Order for 1s. 2d.

Management of Infancy, Health, Longevity, Teeth, Brown Bread, Bread Making Food, Vegetarianism, Tobacco, Drink Question, Fruit, Fresh Air, Exercise, Bathing, Light, Holidays, Cause and Cure of Disease, Constipation, Biliousness, Eczema, Blackheads and Pimples, Nervousness, Coughs and Colds, Chest Complaints, Deafness, Thread Worms, Long Worms, Tape Worms, Itch, etc.

MEDICAL ESSAYS. VOL. II. For Postal Order for 1s. 2d.

The Healing Power of Nature; Clothing; Electricity in Disease; Apparent Health; Vegetarian Experiments; The Pig as Human Food; Popular Fallacies about Flesh; The Beef Tea Delusion; Salt; Saline Starvation; Tea Drinking; The Hair and its Management; Sleep and Sleeplessness; Want of Energy, etc.; Health Hints for Workers, Shop Assistants, and Servants; Advice for the Thin; for the Stout; and on the Proper Treatment of Simple Fever, Measles, Scarlet Fever, Whooping Cough, Ringworm, Hypochondria, Bloodlessness, Diarrhoea, Ulcerated Legs, Tumors, etc.

MEDICAL ESSAYS. VOL. III. For Postal Order for 1s. 2d.

Health and Wealth; No More Death; Youth; The Necessity for Pure Air, and How to Get it; The Management of Young Children; Hunger and Appetite; Effects of Fasting; Perfect Foods; Green Foods; Suppers; Jnsuspected Domestic Poisons; Thirst; Perspiration; Sea Bathing, etc. HOW—to Eat Properly, to Eat Fruit, to Judge Wholemeal Bread, to Breathe Properly, to Grow Tall, to Keep Warm, to Live, to Live One Hundred Years, to Improve the Memory, and to become Beautiful and Attractive. On the Cause and Cure of Stomach Troubles, Flatulence, Sleepiness, Varicose Veins, Boils and Carbuncles, Sebaceous Tumors or Wens, Hay Fever, Winter Cough, Chilblains, the Diseases Produced by taking Mercury, Epilepsy.

MEDICAL ESSAYS. VOL. IV. For Postal Order for 1s. 2d.

New Year Resolutions, Prevention better than Cure, Health Savings Banks, Hardening, Rubbish, Work and Overwork, Sugar and its Abuse, Macaroni, Salads, Wholemeal Cookery, Porridge, Celeraic or Celery Root, Milk as Food, The Tomato, Against Butter, Poulitices, Quinine, Against the Knife, Arsenical Poisoning, Tonics, Infant Mortality, Against Stimulants in Disease, Stays and their Substitutes, About Swallowing Pins and other Articles, also the Cause and Rational Cure of Sun Stroke, Dog Bites, Pains in the Back, Pediculi or Lice, Chicken-pox, Synovitis or Inflammation of the Joints, Tonsillitis or Quinsy, Herpes (Tetter or Shingles), Erysipelas, Ulcer of the Stomach, Epidemic Influenza, Sciatica, Psoriasis or English Leprosy. Appendix.

The Four Volumes, strongly and neatly bound, for 5s. 6d.

HYGIENIC MEDICINE. An Eye-Opener to Drug Takers. Post free

from the Author for Postal Order for 1s. 1d.

RHEUMATISM: Its Cause and Cure. Post free 7d. — CONSUMPTION: Its

Cause and Cure. Post free 7d. — DIET AND DIGESTION. Post free 7d

THREE PAMPHLETS TO YOUNG MEN. Post free 1s. 1d.

All these books (except Pamphlets to Young Men) bound together in cloth in one volume. Post free 8s. 6d.

All the above can be got from DR. T. R. ALLINSON, 4 SPANISH PLACE, MANCHESTER SQUARE, LONDON, W.

HOURS OF CONSULTATION are—Morning from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; fee, 10s. 6d. Evening from 6 to 8; fee, 5s.

Patients visited in London for a fee of 10s. 6d. Patients visited in the country. Fee according to distance and the time occupied in going and returning. Advice Given by Post.

ADVICE TO THE MARRIED

All persons whose circumstances will not permit them to maintain a large family should send for

"PRUDENCE AND PLENTY,"

an interesting dialogue, which should be read by all who wish to maintain and improve their position in life.

Copy, together with our Illustrated List of all the MODERN APPLIANCES as recommended by Dr. Allbutt and Mrs. Besant, sent on receipt of stamped envelope to—

E. LAMBERT & SON,

Manufacturers of Hygienic and Malthusian Appliances,

60 AND 62 QUEEN'S ROAD, DALSTON LONDON, N.E. or from R. FORDER.

THE BEST BOOK

ON NEO-MALTHUSIANISM IS, I BELIEVE,

TRUE MORALITY, or THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF NEO-MALTHUSIANISM.

By J. R. HOLMES, M.M.L., M.V.S., M.N.S.S.

160 pages, with portrait and autograph, bound in cloth, gilt lettered.

Price 1s., post free.

In order to bring the information within the reach of the poor, the most important parts of the book are issued in a pamphlet of 112 pages at ONE PENNY, post free 2d. Copies of the pamphlet for distribution 1s. a dozen post free.

The *National Reformer* of 4th September, 1892, says: "Mr Holmes' pamphlet . . . is an almost unexceptionable statement of the Neo-Malthusian theory and practice . . . and throughout appeals to moral feeling. . . The special value of Mr. Holmes' service to the Neo-Malthusian cause and to human well-being generally is just his combination in his pamphlet of a plain statement of the physical and moral need for family limitation with a plain account of the means by which it can be secured, and an offer to all concerned of the requisites at the lowest possible prices."

The Council of the Malthusian League, Dr. Drysdale, Dr. Allbutt, and others have also spoken of it in very high terms.

The Trade supplied by R. FORDER, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C. Other orders should be sent to the author.

J. R. HOLMES, HANNEY, WANTAGE, BERKS.

Works by Colonel R. G. Ingersoll.

- SOME MISTAKES OF MOSES. The only complete edition in England. Accurate as Colenso, and fascinating as a novel. 132 pp. 1s. Superior paper, cloth 1s. 6d.
- DEFENCE OF FREETHOUGHT. A Five Hours' Speech at the Trial of C. B. Reynolds for Blasphemy. 6d.
- THE GODS. 6d.
- REPLY TO GLADSTONE. With a Biography by J. M. Wheeler. 4d.
- ROME OR REASON? A Reply to Cardinal Manning. 4d.
- CRIMES AGAINST CRIMINALS. 3d.
- ORATION ON WALT WHITMAN. 3d.
- ORATION ON VOLTAIRE. 3d.
- ABRAHAM LINCOLN. 3d.
- PAINE THE PIONEER. 2d.
- HUMANITY'S DEBT TO THOMAS PAINE. 2d.
- ERNEST RENAN AND JESUS CHRIST. 2d.
- TRUE RELIGION. 2d.
- THE THREE PHILANTHROPISTS. 2d.
- LOVE THE REDEEMER. 2d.
- GOD AND THE STATE. 2d.
- WHY AM I AN AGNOSTIC? Part I. 2d.
- WHY AM I AN AGNOSTIC? Part II. 2d.
- FAITH AND FACT. Reply to Dr. Field. 2d.
- GOD AND MAN. Second reply to Dr. Field. 2d.
- THE DYING CREED. 2d.
- THE LIMITS OF TOLERATION. A Discussion with the Hon. F. D. Couderc and Gov. S. L. Woodford. 2d.
- THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH. 2d.
- ART AND MORALITY. 2d.
- DO I BLASPHEME? 2d.
- THE CLERGY AND COMMON SENSE. 2d.
- SOCIAL SALVATION. 2d.
- MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE. An Agnostic's View. 2d.
- SKULLS. 2d.
- THE GREAT MISTAKE. 1d.
- LIVE TOPICS. 1d.
- MYTH AND MIRACLE. 1d.
- REAL BLASPHEMY. 1d.
- REPAIRING THE IDOLS. 1d.
- CHRIST AND MIRACLES. 1d.
- CREEDS & SPIRITUALITY. 1d.

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

WILL CHRIST SAVE US?

BY

By G. W. FOOTE.

A Thorough Examination of the Claims of Jesus Christ to be considered the Savior of the World.

Price Sixpence

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

Handsomely bound in cloth. 7s. 6d., post free.

BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY

OF

FREETHINKERS OF ALL AGES AND NATIONS.

BY

J. M. WHEELER.

"The Dictionary has involved enormous labor, and the compiler deserves the thanks of the Freethought party."—*National Reformer*.

"The work will be of the greatest value."—*Freethought*.

"At last we have the long-wanted means of silencing those Christians who are continually inquiring for our great men, asserting that all great men have been on the side of Christianity."—*Truthseeker* (New York).

"The most important Freethought work published this year."—*De Dageraad* (Amsterdam).

"A good and useful work that was much needed."—*Commonweal*.

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

THWAITES'S LIVER PILLS

Are acknowledged to be the Best Family Medicine in the World by the many thousands that are using them in preference to all others. It is almost impossible to enumerate in an advertisement what they are good for; it would take up too much of your time to read it, and after you had read it you might think it was only an advertising puff; but I ask ONE TRIAL of the LIVER PILLS. If not better than any you have tried before, I cannot expect a continuance of your custom. A few of the diseases that I recommend them for, viz: Indigestion, Loss of Appetite, Dizziness, Biliousness, Costiveness, Nervousness, Palpitation of the Heart, Piles, etc., all of which are, in many cases, caused by the Liver being inactive, or what we call a sluggish Liver. If you feel any of these symptoms, try some of the LIVER PILLS as soon as you can, as they are Pure Herb Pills, and they may be used at any time by anyone without any change of diet or danger of taking cold.

Sold at 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. per Box; by Post 15 and 36 Penny Stamps, by

G. THWAITES,

2 CHURCH ROW, STOCKTON-ON-TEES.

"GOTT" IN A FIX.

I HAVE a very Large Quantity of CLOTH REMNANTS, any of which would make A PAIR OF TROUSERS.

They are all Pure Wool, Good Designs and Colorings, and when made up are honestly worth from 15s. to 18s.

per pair. In order to make a quick clearance of these odd lengths, I am prepared to make them up to

customers' own measurements at 10s. 6d. per pair. I guarantee fit and satisfaction in every way ;

failing which I will return every penny paid for them. Now the fix that I am in is this :

that personally I know that such value is not met with hardly once in a life-time ;

but how to convey that knowledge to the readers of the *Freethinker*

(with my very limited command of words) is my great difficulty.

Each reader of the above will see the particulars

of the Special Line I have to sell.

I WILL GIVE ONE PAIR OF THE TROUSERS, FREE OF COST,

to the person who sends what I consider to be the Best Advertisement (to occupy half a page of the *Freethinker*) advertising the above Special Line. Suggested advertisements to reach me before December 8. The accepted one will appear in the *Freethinker* dated December 16.

TRY YOUR HAND AT DRAWING UP ADVERTISEMENTS.

Hundreds make their living by it.

J. W. GOTT, 2 & 4 UNION-STREET, BRADFORD.

ASK YOUR GROCER

FOR THE

ROYAL CHISWICK TABLE JELLIES

EXPERT'S OPINION—

"The Perfection of Jelly."

"Certainly far superior to all other Jelly Tablets—in transparency, strength, and in flavor utterly beyond comparison."

TOUZEAU PARRIS & CO.,

ENFIELD WORKS, ACTON, W.

Price 1s., post free,

SATIRES AND PROFANITIES

BY

JAMES THOMSON (B.V.)

(Author of "The City of Dreadful Night").

Contents:—The Story of a Famous Old Jewish Firm (Jehovah, Son, and Co.)—The Devil in the Church of England—Religion in the Rocky Mountains—Christmas Eve in the Upper Circles—A Commission of Inquiry on Royalty—A Bible Lesson on Monarchy—The One Thing Needful.

"It cannot be neglected by any who are interested in one of the most pathetic personages of our time."—*Academy*.

"As clever as they are often profane."—*Christian World*.

"Well worth preserving."—*Weekly Dispatch*.

"Reminds one of the genius of Swift."—*Oldham Chronicle*.

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

Price 1s.; bound in cloth, 1s. 6d. post free,

THE GRAND OLD BOOK.

A REPLY TO THE GRAND OLD MAN.

BY

G. W. FOOTE.

An Exhaustive Answer to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone's "Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture."

CONTENTS:—Preface—Preliminary View—The Creation Story—The Fall of Man—The Psalms—The Mosaic Legislation—Corroborations of Scripture—Gladstone and Huxley—Modern Scepticism.

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

Price 1s. 6d.; superior edition, superfine paper, cloth, 2s., post free,

The Bible Handbook

FOR FREETHINKERS & INQUIRING CHRISTIANS.

BY

G. W. FOOTE AND W. P. BALL.

Sold also in separate parts as follows:—

- 1.—**Bible Contradictions.** The contradictions are printed in parallel columns. 4d.
- 2.—**Bible Absurdities.** All the chief absurdities from Genesis to Revelation, conveniently and strikingly arranged, with appropriate headlines, giving the point of each absurdity in a sentence. 4d.
- 3.—**Bible Atrocities.** Containing all the godly wickedness from Genesis to Revelation. Each infamy has a separate headline for easy reference. 4d.
- 4.—**Bible Immoralities, Indecencies, Obscenities, Broken Promises, and Unfulfilled Prophecies.** 4d.

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

One Penny each, by post Three-halfpence,

LETTERS FROM HEAVEN AND LETTERS FROM HELL.

By J. M. WHEELER.

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

Printed and Published by G. W. FOOTE, at 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.