

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

HUNTED DOWN.

A YEAR ago, this very month, I had the honor of exposing a shameless fraud—the story of the converted Atheist Shoemaker, by the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes. Now that February has come round again I have the satisfaction of knowing that I have succeeded in publicly branding the vilest libel that was ever launched against our much-abused party. I do not mean that I have done this piece of work entirely by myself. I simply mean that it would not have been done without me. Others have shared in the labor, and I should be base to conceal or minimise the fact; but this matter, like all others, has required leadership, and I have not shrunk from the responsibilities of my position.

One of the responsibilities of my position is the facing of misunderstanding, misrepresentation, and detraction. Our party encourages freedom of opinion, and a good deal of it is exercised upon the President's policy. Notwithstanding the unanimous opinion of the Executive that something should be done to check the infamous slander referred to, there are persons who shook their heads, muttered misgivings, whispered that it was all a mistake, and hinted that the President had urged the party upon a rash course. Some of them prophesied disaster, and perhaps they are secretly grieved at the failure of their vaticinations. The great majority of the party, however, is always sound enough, and always generous in its loyalty. It does not expect supernatural wisdom or capacity; it only expects its officers to do their best, and it supports them in their endeavor. There was no need to incite the majority to defend its reputation. It longed to do so. Indifference to insult is all very well in its way, and some of it is indispensable; but it should never be carried to the point where it may be mistaken for guilt or pusillanimity. There is a time to bear and a time to resist; a time to be grimly silent, and a time when the sword of indignation should leap from its scabbard. And surely that time had arrived when an incredibly filthy libel upon the headquarters of the National Secular Society was circulated in a pamphlet, with an abundance of detail which gave it a very dangerous air of plausibility.

This libel will be found in the report of last Monday's trial in the Court of Queen's Bench, which has been reported verbatim for the *Freethinker* by the Press Association. Unfortunately, the whole of it could not be given in this week's issue. Neither time nor space permitted of this being done. It will be concluded next week; after which it will be republished in a permanent form, with introduction, notes, and a decisive statement about the "Leeds Orgies," which have been for so many years the theme of heated rhetoric on Christian platforms, and which, alas! have even been held up for abhorrence, as an outcome of "Bradlaughism," in a journal with pretensions to Freethought!

As the whole of the trial does not appear in this week's issue, I may briefly tell the readers what is in store for them. There is first the examination of John Snow, the Christian publisher, and his merciless cross-examination by Mr. Walton; secondly, Mr. Walton's splendid speech in reply to the defence, a speech which commanded universal admiration; thirdly, the judge's charge to the jury; and, lastly, the jury's verdict with the Court's judgment.

The trial itself occupied several hours, though the issue was, legally, a very narrow one. Mr. Harper, of the firm of Harper and Battcock, the solicitors for our side, was in

attendance with his clerk, Mr. Hurrell. It would be impossible to praise too highly the care and ability displayed by this firm in their preparation of the case. Mr. Cluer, the junior counsel on our side, is a son-in-law of Mr. R. A. Cooper, of Norwich. His capacity and attainments ought to have secured him a high position at the bar. Mr. Lawrence Walton, M.P., the senior counsel, had the case remarkably well in hand. He is a first-rate speaker, with a real oratorical faculty. I listened to him as a connoisseur, and I was delighted. His plea for freedom of thought and speech for all inquirers, his reprobation of bigotry, and his censure of the "charity" which thinketh all evil of opponents, were delivered in beautiful language and with great force and sincerity. Mr. Murphy, the senior counsel on the other side, struck me as an excellent browbeater. There was an absence of "breeding" in his whole manner. He bluntly told Mr. Smith that his opinions were important in estimating the value of his character. He had no case, and he knew it. His object was to excite prejudice, and to introduce illegitimate evidence. In this attempt he was foiled in a masterly manner by Mr. Walton. Finding the game was up, Mr. Murphy decamped, leaving the poor, battered case in the hands of his junior, Mr. Rawlinson; a gentleman of loose, shambling, but fluent eloquence, with a great gift for worrying a point, and pressing an obvious absurdity as though it were a cogent argument. Mr. Rawlinson is of a pious turn of mind. He occasionally indulges in open-air preaching. I hear that he was very interested in this case, and that he pleaded for Snow & Co. gratuitously. If this be true, he has furnished a fresh illustration of the truth that what is got for nothing is generally worth it.

Judge Lawrance did not exhibit any particular ability. What little he did display seemed rather at the service of the defendants. He never uttered a word in reprobation of a libel which Mr. Justice Wright said was about the worst he had ever read. He appeared to regard it as one of those things which a Christian disputant might be expected to say in a moment of exaltation. His lordship remarked that people forgot themselves in politics, for instance, as well as in religion; as though it were common, in political controversy, to accuse opponents of crimes like the promotion of unnatural vices! On the whole, his lordship created the impression that he would not be displeased by a verdict for the defendants. Of course an English judge is beyond suspicion of partiality; but, as a matter of fact, Justice Lawrance, when he sat in the House of Commons, was a rabid opponent of the late Charles Bradlaugh.

John Snow, the principal defendant, cut a sorry figure under cross-examination. He is evidently a Christian. You could not mistake him for anything else. His code of morality would make an Atheist shudder. Somehow or other, John Snow kept at a safe distance from his friend, W. R. Bradlaugh. As far as profane eyes could see, they exchanged no civilities; in fact, they held no communication. W. R. Bradlaugh himself I saw in court for the first time. One inspection is sufficient. He has nothing of "Bradlaugh" but the name. If there is anything in physiognomy, he is—well, fit to edit the *Anti-Injidel*.

Mr. R. O. Smith, on our side, bore the brunt of cross-examination. Owing to his legal position at the Hall of Science, in the old days, he had to figure as plaintiff—no other person having any status in an action. Mr. Smith

has had a lot of trouble in this matter, which I cordially recognise. He should not have said, however, that I solicited subscriptions on his behalf. I have done nothing of the kind. Certainly I have opened a Fighting Fund, of which I will give an account when it is prudent; probably at the next Conference. But I have not said what I wanted the money for, nor have I told anyone; still less have I authorised anyone to make any sort of statement in regard to it; and I entirely decline to endorse Mr. Smith's statement in the witness-box. Of course I say this merely out of self-defence, and not out of any discourtesy to Mr. Smith, who was no doubt under the impression that he had to state as a fact what was only his inference. I must also correct the statement that Mr. Smith built the Hall of Science with his own capital. It would never have been built at all if the Freethought party had not subscribed the initial sum of £1,298, which Mr. Smith has admitted that he received through Mr. Bradlaugh. More money was subsequently expended by Mr. Smith out of his earnings and savings; but it is a little misleading to put it, as it was put in court, that Mr. Smith built the Hall of Science entirely out of his own capital; as though the National Secular Society, and Charles Bradlaugh at its head, were simply housed there at Mr. Smith's good pleasure. I am well aware that Mr. Smith did not intend to create this impression. It was an exaggeration into which Mr. Walton fell through not knowing all the details. Nevertheless, as I am giving the report to the world, I am bound to provide the correction.

Mr. Charles Watts, Mr. Robert Forder, and Miss E. M. Vance, the other witnesses on our side, were not much cross-examined. The testimony in favor of Mr. Smith's moral and legal responsibility for the conduct of the Hall of Science was simply overwhelming.

The line of defence adopted by the other side was a singular exhibition of Christian morality. When the action was begun, the defendants boasted that they had at last an opportunity of publicly establishing the vile immorality of Secularism. They promised their dupes that when the case was tried the charges in the libel would be "proved up to the hilt." Christian evidencers went about chuckling. It was rumored that a whole army of detectives would appear as witnesses to cover the Atheists with confusion. I heard all this, and I smiled. It soon came to my knowledge that the gang of libellers were quarreling amongst themselves. W. R. Bradlaugh bitterly complained of being led into a trap by Powell. There was not a shadow of a shade of evidence obtainable; the libel was a mere malignant invention. But it was against the rules of Christian Evidence to confess an error and offer reparation. The sole desire of the libellers was to save their own skins. Accordingly they instructed their counsel to plead that they never meant their accusations to apply to the Hall of Science, but to a hall at Leeds. This was a policy of desperation. It has been a jest among Christians for twenty-five years that the Hall of Science is opposite a lunatic asylum. It is also known to be the headquarters of the Secular party. Yet although the place referred to in the libel was "the headquarters of the Secularists" and "opposite a lunatic asylum," these good Christians, these champions of virtue, these guardians of morality, set up the monstrously base and lying plea (at the eleventh hour) that the place referred to was two hundred miles away in Yorkshire!

It is easy to see what the libellers were depending upon. Their trust was in the Christian prejudices of the jury. But the libel was too gross to be countenanced by any dozen men who had no interest in its circulation. The jury returned a verdict for the plaintiff, with £30 damages. The libellers have also to pay costs, and their total bill will amount to something like £250.

Thirty pounds is not a great sum. It would hardly repay me or Mr. Smith (I should imagine) for the time and attention we have given to the case. But the great thing is the VERDICT. It is the opening of a new era. Henceforth the baser sort of Christians will know that they cannot libel Secularists with absolute impunity. All the London papers, with the exception of that ridiculous *Daily News*, have published the fact that a jury has punished Christians for libelling Freethinkers. The fellows tried to send me to prison for an article headed "Hunting Them Down," but they failed, and I have now the pleasure of putting the title in the past tense. They are now "Hunted Down."

G. W. FOOTE.

A RATIONAL SUNDAY.

THE City Corporation of London is hardly the most enlightened or liberal of bodies, yet by the substantial majority of ninety-eight against sixty-eight the Court of Common Council has decided that the forthcoming Art Exhibition at the Guildhall shall be open on Sunday afternoons. On the last occasion the Sunday opening was allowed by a narrow majority as an experiment, and the large increase of the majority may be taken as a sign that the orderly character of the attendance is quite satisfactory. Indeed, this is the universal testimony. Wherever such Sunday exhibitions are opened those who attend them are orderly. Quiet, innocent enjoyment is afforded to thousands, and sobriety and good conduct are increased. In congratulating the City upon the good sense of the majority of its Council on this question, I cannot but ask if it is anything less than a scandal that collections formed by the State and paid for out of the money of the people should be closed to the toiling thousands on their one day of leisure. Under the most despotic government on the continent such an infringement of freedom would not be tolerated. Yet in this boasted land of liberty, with a Premier who was at one time a president of a Sunday Society, and with Mr. John Morley in the Cabinet, no assurance can be obtained of a speedy removal of those restrictions which bar working men from seeing their own property in the British Museum, the National Gallery, and other national treasure-houses on the one day when they can view them with ease and convenience.

Here, as elsewhere, it is clericalism that is the enemy. The priests want no competition with their own monopoly of the Lord's Day. The Sunday Society instituted a Museum Sunday, and boasted that fifty-four sermons had been delivered on their behalf. It proved that the bulk of the preachers were Unitarians, while Ethical culturists and Positivists were included to swell up the number. The men of God, as a whole, want no such healthy competition with their avocation as is afforded by museums, art galleries, libraries, lecture and concert rooms. The shut-up Sunday is an institution preserved in the interests of this particular class of parasites on the commonwealth. If they believed in the Sunday as a commandment of God, as they preach, they should keep holy Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, the day on which the Almighty rested from his labors. They should put to death any one who as much as kindled a fire on that day (Exodus xxxv. 3, 4). As to Sunday, its very name betrays its Pagan origin, and indicates how much of sun-worship and sun-myth is interwoven in the fabric of Christianity. It is to Constantine, if to any one, that the sacred character of the first day of the week is due.

To Jesus, the Sabbath-breaker, is attributed the sensible utterance, that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. But the men of God virtually say to the rest of the world, "The Sabbath was made for us; but *you* were made for the Sabbath." They have resorted to every device to preserve the monopoly of their day. They have pretended concern for the poor attendants at public institutions; but, when shown that that objection could be obviated by the attendants having another day, they have, to put off Sunday opening, increased the hours of attendance by the needless opening of the museums in the evening, when the jaded workers, having journeyed home to rest, have no inclination to return to visit museums. They have pretended that Sunday opening is not desired by the workers, though the *élite* of them have again and again pronounced their decision from their Trade Unions. They hold up the bugbear of a Continental Sunday, especially to those who do not know what the Continental Sunday is like. One might as well pretend that, because preachers are fond of vestments and histrionic attitudes, therefore they will proceed to wear paint, powder, and wigs like actors, as to suppose that the English workmen will turn Sunday into something they do not desire.

A day of rest existed before Christianity, and would remain though all its dogmas had vanished. But the worker requires not only physical rest, he needs the best rest of recreation: the employment of new faculties, the refreshment of eye and heart by contact with the beauties of nature and the masterpieces of art; and the interested men of God, in restricting their choice between the church

and the public-house, are largely responsible for the degradation they so often lament.

The irksome stress of the Sabbatarian Sunday, as Charles Dickens pointed out nearly half a century ago, falls mainly on the poor. The well-to-do can, and do, enjoy themselves then as on any other day. At their homes and clubs they can take any amusements and any refreshments they please. At the Niagara Hall an aristocratic crowd skate regularly all Sunday, unheeding the invitation of church bells. In summer time pleasure boats, carriages, wagonettes, and trains take out of town the well-to-do; or the rich man, if pious, can go on Saturday to his country house, and as he is walking in his beautiful gardens can turn up his eyes at the passing cyclist, who risks damnation by obtaining fresh air and change of scenery in his own way.

Children, as well as the poor, are the worst sufferers from our pious Sunday. Only those who have lived in Scotland or in religious families in England, where "keeping the Lord's Day holy" is enforced in its full austerity, can tell the suffering regularly imposed every seventh day upon little ones by their forced restraint on Sunday. Every natural impulse is set down as a sin. To play, run, jump, sing, or whistle is checked as though inspirations of the devil, instead of the spontaneous ebullition of natural, healthy life. Mr. H. Crabb Robinson, in his *Dairy*, tells how he was not even allowed to look into a picture book. To read anything save "the word of God" or pious literature was considered an infringement of the fourth commandment, as likely to be punished as an infraction of any of the other prohibitions of the Decalogue. Such teaching is largely responsible for making us, what the hypocritical nations do not scruple to call us, the most frequently had the pleasure of witnessing children, brought up in strict observance of the Sabbath, yet romping and dancing with delight when they spend the Lord's Day with a Freethinker's family.

The little progress made with the legislative enfranchisement of the Sunday shows how much work has to be done; but little by little the ice-bound creeds of the past are loosening. The sun of Freethought is rising, and the Sunday, wrested from the hands of the priests, will become a day of gladness instead of a time of gloom.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE REAL REDEEMERS OF THE WORLD

The present condition of the world is certainly not all that could be desired; still, it is satisfactory to know that it is a considerable improvement upon the past. The history of the human race has been one of progression from physical serfdom and mental darkness towards freedom and knowledge. The men who have been the principal contributors to this advancement were not founders of religious systems, but expounders of science, philosophy, and the principle of individual liberty. The real redeemers of the world are those who study the great facts of nature, learning her secrets, and revealing her power and value to the human family. While Christ devoted himself to the mysteries of theology, such reformers as Copernicus, Galileo, Bruno, and subsequently Newton, Locke, Darwin, and a host of other servants of humanity, endeavored to the best of their ability to ascertain the truths of existence, and to vindicate the principle of freedom. Copernicus and his immediate successors redeemed the world from errors which for ages had been nursed by the Church; Locke based his philosophy upon knowledge, not upon the faiths of theology; Newton contended that the universe was regulated by natural law, not by supernatural power; and Darwin exploded the Bible error of creation. These redeemers rescued mankind from the burden of ignorance and superstition that had so long prevented the recognition of truth and the advancement of knowledge. Shakespeare contributed more to the enlightenment of the human race than Christ was capable of doing; Darwin far surpassed St. Paul in bringing to view the great forces of nature, and the Freethought heroes and martyrs aided the emancipation of intellect to a far higher degree than either the "Carpenter of Nazareth" or the whole of his followers. The power that has enabled these secular redeemers of the world to achieve their glorious results was found, not in

perplexing theologies, but in the principles of Science and Liberty—the true saviors of men.

Christ is paraded as the one redeemer of the world, but his system lacks such essentials of all reform as worldly ambition, and reliance upon the human power of regeneration. If we lament the poverty and wretchedness we behold, we are told by Christians that "the poor shall never cease out of the land." If we seek to remove the sorrow and despair existing around us, we are reminded that they were "appointed curses to the sons of Adam." If we work to improve our condition, we are taught that we should remain "in that state of life in which it has pleased God to call us." When we endeavor to improve our minds and to cultivate our intellects, we are informed that "we are of ourselves unable to do any good thing." If we seek to promote the happiness of others, we are assured that "faith in Christ is of more importance than labor for man." We to-day have but a vague idea of the extent of the influence such teachings once exercised over the minds of those who believed them. These teachings have permeated the minds of orthodox Christians, stifling their reason and perverting their judgment, till they cherish the delusion that the reasonings of philosophers, the eloquence of poets, and the struggles of patriots are all worse than useless unless purified by the "Spirit of Christ." It is such delusions which foster the erroneous and retarding belief that every thought which does not aspire to the throne of Christ, every action which is not sanctioned by him, and every motive which does not proceed from a love for him should be discouraged as antagonistic to our real progress in life.

The two elements in society which are termed respectively radical and conservative have, it is supposed, been in operation in all periods and in all nations. Hence, in every country some freedom has been found; but its extent has always had to be determined by the amount of culture that existed. No doubt the conservative element in nature has its advantages; it is, however, a mischief when it is employed to retain the existing condition of things merely from a dread of change, and not because what exists is right or needful. It is, in my opinion, through this error that the notion that Jesus was a secular reformer has been so long perpetuated. In times of mental darkness and political servitude Christ was accepted by some as the "star of hope," and ignorance and fanaticism have since fostered the delusion. It is not surprising that the superstitious ideas which were imparted to the young, and encouraged by priestly influence, self-interest, and bad training in the domain of real knowledge, should have held their sway upon the human mind. Robert Owen showed clearly that men are the result of the conditions in which their characters were formed and developed. The circumstances which surrounded the early stages of societarian man were favorable to intellectual stagnation; hence the slavish prostration to the machinations of theology, and the persistent adherence to false notions of the duties of man, and of the power of the universe. It is science and liberty that have redeemed mankind from their primitive state of ignorance and slavery.

When knowledge and freedom were secured, the power of theology decreased, and men acquired faith in self-help and united effort. Men who live under the influence of science and liberty create the institutions, the government, and the sentiments of their time. They are no longer the slaves of others, dependent on doles and alms; but they become a self-supporting productive power in society. Thus is developed in the race that which is always admired—namely, dignity in character, and self-reliance in action. To call forth and sustain these features in man should be the object of all social reformers. Christ failed to do either, and his principles do not possess the power necessary for such a purpose.

If science and liberty had never been known, or if they had never operated in the improvement of human affairs, in all probability theology, with its prophets and priests, would have allowed all that is noble and best in human nature to become extinct. The policy of the Church has been to crush mental freedom and to curb all criticism, particularly criticism of its own teachings. But, in spite of all this, knowledge has become a power that, to a large extent, has deprived the Church of the position it once had. When it held uninterrupted sway true freedom was unknown. With the advent of science the emancipa-

tion of mankind commenced. The deliverance from that ignorance and slavery which for centuries degraded mankind, and which Christ and his system failed to remove, was the work of the real redeemers—Science and Liberty.

There is something sublime in the contemplation of the scientific intellect at work seeking for the solution of the problems which nature presents to those students whose minds are free from the trammels of ignorance and of prejudice. Progress is supported by, and is grown upon, the discoveries such men are constantly making. Science, the great providence of man, is not mere guess-work, but it is the investigation into, and the application of, the facts of existence. From these it learns what the possible and the actual really are. Its disciples set their affections on things below, and they are anxious for the morrow, although the New Testament advises the very opposite. Their faith rests upon the experience of the past, not upon conjectures of a future, that is hidden from the gaze of mortal man. Science and liberty are founded upon the requirements of human nature; they are the levers by which men can alone be permanently elevated; they are the stars that guide us safely through life, and that enable us to leave valuable legacies for the service of future generations.

The true redeemers of our race are those who, disregarding Bible injunctions, love the world and the things of the world; whose kingdom is of the earth, and whose yearnings are for the secular well-being of their fellows. The world's reformers are not influenced by spiritual imaginations, but by the power of reason; they are captivated, not by the allurements of theology, but by the grandeur and potency of natural truths; not by the hope of sharing mansions "beyond the skies," but by the desire to enjoy happy homes in the life we now have. With such reformers facts are more important than fiction, realities are more serviceable than fancies, and knowledge is of greater value than belief. These are the characteristics that have marked the true benefactors of all time, who have ever found in science and philosophy the resources which have contributed to personal and national progress, shedding the halo of mental freedom upon a too long neglected humanity.

CHARLES WATTS.

ACID DROPS.

"UNSCIENTIFIC SCIENCE" was the title of a rare old Hugh Price Hughes article in last week's *Methodist Times*. It was a review, or rather a laudation, of Mr. Balfour's new book. First of all, the volume is called "one of the most remarkable books this generation has seen"—meaning, of course, *produced*. But any slipshod is good enough for an excited Methodist. Secondly, Mr. Balfour is called "one of the ablest apologists for the Christian religion since the days of Bishop Butler." All the infidel arguments against Christianity may be used with "tenfold greater effect" against his own boasted science. A little lower down we read that "every objection which is made to Christianity is *equally* applicable to the dogmas of its enemies." What a state of mind the man is in, to be sure! "Tenfold" and "equally" are just the same in his boiled-rice-pudding intelligence.

Mr. Hughes declares that Mr. Balfour has shown "the hideous immorality of Naturalism." Mr. Balfour does not employ such language; the expression belongs to Mr. Hughes; who, by the way, would consider it shocking if we were to talk about "the hideous immorality of Christianity."

"Many living advocates of Naturalism are immeasurably better than their creed," says Mr. Hughes. It is a gross piece of impertinence, and abject would be the Secularist who could take it as a compliment. For our part, we don't at all think that Mr. Hughes is immeasurably better than *his* creed. He is about on its level—intellectually and morally, especially in the matter of lying for the glory of God.

Mr. Hughes winds up with the statement that "in England, at any rate, the extreme foolishness of Agnosticism is being found out." Well, if anything could exceed the extreme foolishness of the observation, we should like to see it introduced. Fancy a poor creature like Hughes, who is absolutely incapable of anything like thought, in the philosophical sense of the word; fancy a man who means the same by "tenfold" and "equally"; fancy such a fellow talking about the *extreme foolishness* of John Stuart Mill, Matthew Arnold,

Professor Huxley, and Herbert Spencer! Why, he isn't worthy to tie up the shoestrings of any one of them.

Mr. Holyoake should note that any virtue he has ever displayed, according to Mr. Hughes, is entirely owing to Christianity. This applies to all Secularists at present. None of them will have any virtue to display if "the views they advocate prevail and the existing Christian environment disappears." The Christian environment means the presence of a lot of people like the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes. Mr. Holyoake was influenced by that environment during the Atheist Shoemaker controversy, and the result was not such as to induce other Secularists to follow his example. Mr. Hughes could probably teach Secularists a good many things, but whether he could teach them anything worth knowing is quite another question.

"It is a distinctly Christian move," says the *Methodist Times*, apropos of the effort which is being made to induce the Government to "raise the British to the French standard" by fixing twelve years, instead of eleven, as the limit for juvenile labor in factories and workshops. What kind of a move was it, then, when France made it before England? Was it a Christian move then? Or did it only spring from the natural depravity of French infidels?

A Northumberland lady is reported to have given £2,000 for the sepulchre wherein Christ was laid outside Jerusalem. This, however, is not the only sepulchre of Christ, and if the price rules at £2,000 there will soon be a still larger supply in the market.

The Bishop of Winchester was addressing a Church meeting at Bournemouth. He was dealing with the necessity of keeping clear and bright the light of Christianity. Just at that point the gas went out.

Sophia Dobson, who also called herself Minerva, has been fined £25 for telling fortunes in the City of London by aid of palmistry. The fine was paid, so the business is probably a lucrative one; indeed, Sophia said she had practised it for four years in Manchester without molestation. At the same time thousands of black-coated gentry are able, not only to obtain money from the willing, but the unwilling also, by telling people's fortunes after they are dead; and the theology upon which they base their pretensions is quite as little of a science, and as much discredited a superstition, as palmistry.

Christian clergymen, and other prominent officials, have been distinguishing themselves lately. Three "reverend" Church of England parsons have figured in the Divorce Court, either as respondents or co-respondents, and have been found guilty of both adultery and cruelty; and one of them was threatened by the judge with a prosecution for wilful and corrupt perjury. A Nonconformist minister made a successful *debut* in the Birmingham Police-court, and was fined five shillings and costs for being drunk in the public streets. A superintendent of a Wesleyan Sunday-school is charged with an indecent outrage upon one of his female teachers, and a Catholic priest is accused of similar offensive practices with one of his flock. The Prophet Christ said: "By their fruits shall ye know them." Judged by this standard, Christianity must be a very corrupt tree to produce such evil fruit.—*Crescent*.

The *Behar Times* says Englishmen succeeded with apparent ease in conquering India, but there can be hardly any doubt that English missionaries have failed in conquering the religion of India.

The *Crescent* gives a very far from flowery account of the Armenians, whom it calls the Shylocks of the East. It says: "Although as a nation they pretend to be the gentlest and most docile of people, their creed contains the most fearful curses upon everybody who differs from them. Like the Russians, they permit no instrumental music in their churches. Their Bibles contain two books in each Testament unfamiliar to our ears—the History of Joseph and his Wife, and the Testimony of the Twelve Patriarchs in the Old Testament; the Third Epistle of the Corinthians and the Epistle of the Corinthians to Paul in the New Testament."

According to the *Glasgow Weekly Herald*, at a recent presentation of a handsome watch in the Western Highlands, the gentleman who made the presentation hoped the recipient "would not wear the watch on the Sabbath, because it might be a temptation to himself and to others by withdrawing their attention from higher things."

In the course of a lecture in Aberdeen, the other night, the speaker produced a rude kind of harp, declaring that the one used by David of Israel was probably very similar. The lecturer jangled a tune on the instrument, after which

the clergyman who occupied the chair remarked that he now knew why Saul threw a javelin at David.

At a public dining-table, the other day, a discussion arose on Bible knowledge, and one gentleman, to test a disputant's acquaintance with the sacred print, asked him if he could tell where "whisky" was mentioned in the Bible. "Whisky," was the reply, "is not referred to in the Bible; at least, if it is, I do not remember." "Look at Hezekiah iii. 4," said the first speaker, in a voice loud enough to be heard by the others around the table. No one seemed to know the passage, and there was a general reference to the Old Testament, with what result we leave our readers to find out for themselves.

The *North Bay Times* reports: "A unique method of raising money for church purposes was introduced at last Sunday morning's service in the Baptist tabernacle, Ingersol. The pastor, Rev. J. F. Barker, gave to each member attending the morning service a dollar bill, on the promise that they were to invest it, and, at the end of the year, 1895, return it along with what it had earned in the meantime. About \$100 was passed out." No doubt there will be much prayer offered for the safe investment of those dollars. But how about the Bible injunctions against usury?

The *Catholic*, of Dublin, alluding to St. Winifrede's Well, says: "Opposition being the life of trade, the wise Roman Catholics of Wales have set up an opposition shop to Lourdes." Evidently it looks at the matter from the proper commercial point of view, though it complains further on that "eighteen-pence for a tin of water is a little too much."

In the New York *Cosmopolitan* for February, Julian Hawthorne gives an account of the tortures used by the Inquisition, etc., under the title of "Salvation via the Rack." He points out that the horrible cruelties of the torture chamber flowed naturally from religious beliefs. He remarks that men then believed the Bible with an intense faith. "They read in the Bible that God punished sin; that, if it were persisted in, He punished it after the death of the body with an eternity of torments, compared with which the worst that man can inflict were as nothing. That was their precedent."

"Their excuse," he goes on to say, "was yet more plausible. Evil in man was caused by the machinations of the Devil—by the suggestion and persuasion of his angels. The Inquisition, by torturing the body, aimed to cast out these devils. This accomplished, the soul would be saved from the everlasting torments of hell. Temporal pain was the severe but merciful means of guarding against the pains to which there was no end."

Mr. Hawthorne does not mention that this belief in the agency of devils was also a Scriptural one. Jesus especially inculcated it (see Matt. vii. 22; ix. 32; xii. 27; Mark ix. 17-27; Luke xi. 14-19), and the belief led to the persecution of witches, as well as to the horrors of the Inquisition. The Pagan Hippocrates wrote a treatise with the view expressly to combat the superstition, which was sanctioned by the authority of Jesus Christ.

The Devil, on the one hand, has been a great scapegoat for religious sinners, who have ascribed all their backslidings to his temptations. On the other hand, his supposed agency has led to the persecution, torture, and death of myriads, as recorded in the annals of all Christian countries.

The Rev. M. Macaskill, of the Free Church of Scotland, is determined that the evolutionary doctrines of Professor Drummond's *Ascent of Man* shall not go before the world as the teaching of his church, and he has accordingly called the attention of his Presbytery, that of Dingwall, to the matter. He cited many passages from the work to show that Professor Drummond's views were heretical, and not in accord with the word of God.

"If," said Mr. Macaskill, "Professor Drummond's theory of creation by evolution was true, then the Bible was a mass of fables, a tissue of the most terrible falsehoods from beginning to end. Evolution, as expounded in this book, plucked up by the roots all the doctrines of grace, blotted out all hope for man of a blessed eternity, and left him in as orphaned a world and in as fatherless a universe as infidelity ever painted, and all this by a gentleman who, on taking his professorial chair, had solemnly professed his adherence to, and solemnly vowed his defence of, the confessional statement acknowledging the truth of the record of the Creation and the Fall of Man."

Mr. Macaskill emphatically gave his opinion that "the man who taught such theories could neither be a Christian nor a Professor of the Free Church." Evidently Professor Drummond is too "free" for him. It was resolved that a committee should inquire and report upon the book, the Revs.

Macaskill, Munro, and Beaton being appointed. This will be a good advertisement for the *Ascent of Man*.

Mayor Strong, of New York, proposes to settle the Sunday liquor question by allowing saloons to open between the hours of 2 in the afternoon and 11 at night. If this is done, as seems likely, despite the howling of ministers and prohibitionists, the folly of closing libraries and museums will only be more apparent.

If, instead of seeking to put a stop to all use of the Sunday except church attendance, and trying to put "God in the constitution," the American States were to raise the age at which they permit a girl to consent to her own ruin, they would have a better title to be considered civilised. According to the *Arena*, this age is fixed at ten years in Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina; twelve years in Kentucky, Louisiana, Texas, Wisconsin; thirteen years in Iowa, New Hampshire, Utah; and fourteen years in Arizona, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Vermont, and West Virginia.

"Ayjay," writing in the *Two Worlds*, says: "For the vivisectionist inquisitor Secularism had, so far as I know (I should be glad to be shown to be in error), no condemnation." "Ayjay" is in error. Cruelty to animals is expressly antagonised in the principles of the National Secular Society. It was Bentham whose motto was, "Maximise morals, minimise religion," who first spoke with effect for animals' rights in England; and among those who have worked on the same side have been many Secularists. In America Colonel Ingersoll is the most eloquent opponent of vivisection.

It appears that bishops sometimes repent, in their after life that is. At any rate, a gentleman at the Conference of Sunday Societies, in alluding to the Act of George III. against Sunday lecturing, which is said to have been inspired by Bishop Porteous, created much amusement by stating that, at a Spiritist meeting at Notting Hill on the previous night, they had the "apparition" of Bishop Porteous, who said he exceedingly regretted the use which had been made of his Act, and that, if he were in the House of Lords now, he would vote against any such measure.

A certain minister in Perthshire was very particular that the hymns sung should be suitable to his discourse, to the sometimes no small annoyance of his precentor. One Sunday morning, on the precentor appearing for his list, the minister remarked to that worthy, "Weel, John, my subject for to-day is 'Self-help'; have you anything to suit?" "Nothing," replied John, "except 'Paddle your own canoe.'"

The American Board of Missions claim to have issued five hundred millions of pages in the Arabic language. Can they claim to have converted even five Moslems?

The cause of the conservatism and hatred of progress among the Chinese is superstition. They object to developing their great resources of coal because the good-luck spirits, coming every spring from the south, would fall into the mines and be lost. They object to railways because the digging would disturb the bones of their ancestors. No improvement can be suggested that would not, in some way, make trouble between them and the spirits of the departed. There is a fine sentiment in the reverence for antiquities, but the civilised man tries to do something that will entitle him to the goodwill of his successors.—*Chicago Interior*.

We never heard of the International Tract Society before. It dates from 451 Holloway-road, London. In connection with it there is a printing business, and the Society has been summoned at Clerkenwell police-court for employing two females and one male young person on Sunday, January 27. Mr. John Gibson, the secretary, stated that the Society's object was to bring about the recognition of Saturday as the Sabbath. They gave a half-holiday on Friday, and closed their premises on Saturday. Mr. Gibson contended that this was all the law required, but the magistrate said the law would have to be obeyed as it stood. A fine was inflicted which, including the costs, amounted to nearly £4; but Mr. Gibson said he had a conscientious objection to paying—as a good many other people have, only they don't find it catch on.

Seriously, however, we rather sympathise with the International Tract Society. So long as its employees are satisfied, it does seem hard that their "Sunday" should be confined to one day in the week. If they get their day of rest, what does it matter if they take the "wrong day"? What's in a Sunday? The rest on any other day is just as sweet.

But there is a far more important point. The magistrate is a Christian, and so are the members of the International Tract Society. All of them accept the Bible as God's word. Yet they read it in different ways, and one of them punishes the others for not reading it as he does. What a pretty book the Bible is, to be sure! God wrote it, and perhaps the Devil understands it. Anyhow, men don't. They've been quarreling over it for ever so many centuries.

The Rev. Archibald Brown recently told the London Baptist Association that "things are simply going from bad to worse in Christendom." Evidently it is high time for the "second coming of Christ." And the worst of it is that, while the world is waiting, there are sceptics who unblushingly question whether he really came *the first time*.

Leeds is keeping behind the age in some things. The City Council has decided, by twenty-eight votes to thirteen, not to open the Fine Art Gallery on Sundays. Perhaps the City Fathers feel that if the inhabitants were to gaze at works of art on Sunday they might grow dissatisfied with the beauty of Leeds.

Professor Cornill, a German theologian, says he has read the book of Jonah a hundred times. He says that Jonah is one of the grandest things ever written, and he can never read it or talk about it without moist eyes and a beating heart. Professor Cornill is really too simple for this sophisticated age. He should have lived in the time of Jonah. How he would have enjoyed the prophet's company—everywhere, that is, but in the whale's belly.

At the breakfast of the Liberation Society Mr. Illingworth spoke strongly of the curse of religious disability and religious favoritism, saying that "Nonconformists feel the effects of this curse in every branch of life, whether social, political, ecclesiastical, or religious." How about the Free-thinker, then, who suffers from disabilities from which the ordinary Nonconformist is entirely free; who not only has to support a State Church of which he disapproves, but who may be legally robbed of any endowment left to further his own views?

Alarmed at the progress of civil marriage and religious liberty in Hungary, the Bishop and Magnates have formed a Catholic People's Party, with whose aid they hope to battle against the new Church Laws. In an address they appeal to the industrial classes to support them in efforts to place social reforms on a Christian basis. This appeal is now answered in the most satirical manner by the Hungarian Socialists. They publish a proclamation in which they say: "We shall certainly join the People's Party, for with its help we will abolish class differences. The Magnates will be sure to give up their ranks and titles and their property, and the Bishops will give up their rich estates for the good of the community to prove that their ideals of universal brotherhood are sincere."

The Rev. Leon Penrod, a Baptist minister, of Grassy Creek, Kentucky, argued about baptism with a layman, Mr. John Slate; and, not finding his arguments convincing, he seconded them with a revolver, shooting his obdurate opponent in the leg. Mr. Slate did not appreciate this kind of reasoning; he rushed at the man of God, who seized a butcher's knife, and was going to argue the matter out completely, when the interesting controversy was stopped by "friends."

Twenty-six inquests in one day in London on persons who had died from the effects of the cold weather make a striking item in connection with the theory of an all-controlling Providence. In most parts of Europe a similar state of things prevails, many having been killed by avalanches as well as exposure, while in the rural parts of America, where the fierce winter blizzards rage, the deaths from exposure came thick and fast.

Nonconformists at Blackburn have accepted donations for Church purposes from Alderman Rutherford, but they would have nothing to do with his £50 for the relief of local distress, on the ground that he is a brewer. It is a rule of prudence with these gentlemen to be punctilious when it costs them nothing, and to be magnanimous at other people's expense.

A college student was invited one Sunday to occupy the pulpit in a little country church. After what he considered a masterly effort on the subject of "Lazarus and the Rich Man," he called on a good old brother to pray, and was somewhat electrified to hear the following: "O Lord! we thank thee that we are not like this poor despised beggar, Lazarus, who we've just been listenin' to!"

THE HALL OF SCIENCE LIBEL CASE.

ON Monday, February 18, before Mr. Justice Lawrance and a Common Jury, in the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice, the case of the National Secular Hall Society and another *v.* Snow and another came on for trial. Mr. Lawson Walton, Q.C., M.P., and Mr. Cluer appeared for the plaintiffs; and Mr. Murphy, Q.C., and Mr. Rawlinson were for the defendants.

The officer of the court, by his lordship's direction, ordered that all women and children were to leave the court.

Mr. CLUER said the plaintiff was Robert Owen Smith, and the defendants were John Snow and Messrs. Cook & Co. The plaintiff claimed damages for a libel, printed and published by the defendants. Defendants admitted the publication, but denied that it in any way referred to the plaintiff.

MR. LAWSON WALTON: Gentlemen of the jury,—As, no doubt, you have gathered from the announcement just made by the officer of the court that all women and children are to leave the court, this is a somewhat painful and distressing case. Mr. Robert Owen Smith, the plaintiff, has come into court to meet a libel, published (as he thought and you will probably have no doubt) of him, possibly in common with other persons, of a most flagrant kind. The defendants are the printers and publishers of the paragraph which Mr. Smith impugns, and they are responsible for having given to the world one of the most atrocious charges which, perhaps, can be launched against the character of any individual. The libel appeared in a publication which professed to be a report of a public discussion which took place in the city of Leeds between a Mr. Powell and a Mr. Fisher. The pamphlet was headed "Is Secularism Degrading?" and it placed into the mouth of one of the controversialists the charge of which Mr. Smith complains. It runs thus: "Now, sir, in the Hall of Science in the Dancing Academy, the headquarters of the Secularists, which is built just opposite a lunatic asylum—(laughter)—they had held meetings—and this is vouched for in the daily *Standard* of August 11, 1879—where they got boys together and taught them the act of self-abuse, in order, so they said, to make muscular and strong the organs of procreation. I am in a mixed audience, and cannot open my mind freely." I think, notwithstanding the mixed audience, that disputant had opened his mind freely, and had used his tongue with equal freedom. That charge, of as horrible a course of instruction for the young as the human mind can conceive, was fixed to a class of persons, not designated by name, but sufficiently designated by description to lead every person acquainted with the facts to come undoubtedly to the conclusion at whom it was directed. They have had meetings. They have established a dancing academy, and in that academy they have given this atrocious and horrible instruction. The question which arises, and which appears to be the only question involved in the inquiry, is the identification of the persons against whom the charge was launched. Who were the individuals referred to in the expression as "they"? Who was responsible for founding the National Hall of Secularism which existed in the City of London? Who had organised, at the headquarters of Secularism, the meetings for the purpose of propagating Secularist opinions? Who established the Dancing Academy in connection with the hall, and who organised these classes for the young in which this horrible doctrine was supposed to be propagated? Unfortunately, Mr. Robert Owen Smith has had to come forward, because, undoubtedly, to every person who is acquainted with his relationship with this Hall of Secularism, and his connection with the classes, there can be no doubt that, if anybody was responsible, Mr. Smith was responsible; and if anybody was to come forward and clear his character from these odious accusations, that person was Mr. Smith; and I will tell you why. Mr. Smith, in the year 1868, purchased the site upon which the Hall of Science, in Old-street, was built. That was the very year in which Mr. Bradlaugh, perhaps one of the best-known lecturers at the Hall of Science, first stood for the borough of Northampton. Mr. Smith built the hall with his own capital, and conducted it at his own expense. The lecturers were paid by him, and any receipts from them were received by Mr. Smith, and were applied by him to meeting the expense of the venture. Mr. Bradlaugh, Mrs. Besant, and various other persons of Secularist opinions, lectured from week to week at the Hall of Science; and, after a while, Mr. Smith established in connection with it a Club and Institute. Classes were opened for the instruction of the young, entertainments were given of a special character, and among other classes was one for teaching dancing. Mr. Smith organised these classes, superintended them, and some of them he actually conducted himself. Under his supervision the art of dancing was taught to young people by dancing masters whom he employed, and I hold in my hand the public bills which were issued, and the tickets which were issued; and on the face of them Mr. Smith was publicly described as the Secretary and Manager of the hall, and of all the undertakings and

classes held in connection with it. Therefore, the Hall of Science which was referred to in the paragraph owed its origin to Mr. Smith's enterprise, to his capital, and its operations to his supervision and personal management. Therefore, if it is suggested that, at that Hall of Science, practices which outrage human nature took place at classes actually superintended by Mr. Smith himself, the person who came forward to meet an accusation of that sort, and the only person against whom it can be levelled, and popularly regarded as such, is Mr. Smith, the plaintiff in this action. When this paragraph appeared a letter was written to the defendants, who had given it to the world, and to the defendants alone. The obscure libeller and slanderer, who said what he had to say in some obscure hall in a provincial town, is a comparatively unimportant person, and the slander was a comparatively unimportant matter. But here, in the City of London, under their own names, the two defendants, as publisher and printer, gave to this slander the prominence of print, and the currency of a pamphlet scattered broadcast over the whole country. Mr. Smith therefore wrote to these two defendants, and called upon them for some explanation and retraction of this horrible accusation. They met that appeal with absolute silence. Neither of them deigned to answer the letter which was written to them. Absolute silence on the part of both of these defendants. But some third person, who had not originally uttered the slander, and to whom no letter was written, voluntarily put himself into the breach, and made himself responsible for the charge. Mr. Smith had, under advice, sought to hold the two defendants—the printer and publisher of this pamphlet—as primarily answerable; and it was from them alone he was determined to have some retraction, as public as the original charge was which had been made. Unfortunately, the matter does not rest there. This accusation was not met by silence, but it was met by persistent repetition; and I shall be able to show you that another publication, which was issued by one or both of the defendants, and which describes itself as the *Anti-Infidels*, made an appeal for subscriptions from the credulous public—who, I suppose, are willing to believe any foul thing, in their wealth of charity, of anybody who does not share their own religious opinions. An appeal was made for contributions—for the purpose of retracting? No; but for the purpose of proving the charge up to the hilt; and in this publication an assurance is made that the charge is going to be proved up to the hilt. What is their course now? They originally start by bluster, and they now meet us in this Court of Justice with the cowardice of the person who would make such a charge, and then say that they will prove it to be true. Now, do they say it is true? Do they use the subscriptions raised by the credulous public for the purpose of proving it is true? No! The appeal, I presume, resulted in the flow of the money they desired; and, having obtained these funds, they put them into their pocket, and come into court, and try and back out of it, and escape their responsibility for having made it; and the defence, and the only defence, that they have put upon the record is this: It is true it was said—we don't say whether it is true or false; but we certainly say we did not say it of Smith. I doubt not that you will deal with such a defence in the way that it merits. If they did not say it of Mr. Smith, of whom did they say it? If they did not speak of the person who organised the classes, and who personally superintended them, then who was the man responsible for this outrage? Why did they not care to take the first chance of exonerating him, and repudiating the suggestion that he was the person referred to. Instead of meeting the challenge, they tell the world, when Mr. Smith is suing them, that they are going to prove the truth of the charge up to the hilt. The defence has only to be set out for you to grasp the true situation, that there is, and can be, no answer to the action. Why are the defendants here if all this could not be proved, as they did not suggest it could? Why, if it cannot be seriously denied that Mr. Smith is seriously reflected upon, are the defendants here in a public court of justice to resist the accusation? I think you may guess. They are here because they think there are persons so steeped in religious prejudice that they will believe to be true any gross accusation made against persons who do not share their views, and because they think that, on the jury, there may be a man so biased by his religious opinions that he cannot do justice to a fellow citizen who does not happen to share his opinions. I hope they will be defeated by your verdict, and that you will show that spirit of justice which shines among the highest virtues. On behalf of Mr. Smith, I ask you by this action to clear his character from a stain cast upon him for which there is no sort of justification; a stain on a long record of an honorable life, and to give him the only reparation which the law allows for such an injury. Mr. ROBERT OWEN SMITH, the plaintiff, then went into the witness-box and made affirmation, giving his address as 81 Ridge-road, Hornsey. He was examined by Mr. Cluer. In 1868 did you take a lease of the premises on which the Hall of Science in Old-street is built?—I did. Did you yourself have the building erected there?—I did. And paid for it?—Yes. What position did you hold from 1868 to 1892 with

reference to the Hall?—I was the leaseholder and proprietor. I was also secretary and manager of the Club and Institute, which was established by myself, up to 1881. Through ill-health I gave up the secretaryship and management, and was the treasurer of the Club; and I was the sole proprietor and organiser of the lectures given there.

Was the Hall of Science the headquarters of the Secularist party?—It was; and their council meetings were held there.

Is it an annual meeting you refer to?—No; monthly.

And they meet there regularly?—Regularly.

Were there lectures delivered at the hall?—Yes; every Sunday evening, and sometimes Sunday mornings and week nights.

Who arranged the lectures?—I did.

Did you pay the lecturers?—I did.

Had you control over the hall and the meetings that took place there?—I had.

And did you personally attend to it during the years from 1868 to 1892?—I did.

When was it that you started a series of dancing classes there?—In 1869.

Would you look at this? Is that an advertisement of the dancing classes?—Yes.

Was that inserted by your authority?—It was; and my name is at the bottom of it.

The JUDGE: What is the book?—It is the North London College and School Guide.

Mr. CLUER: Is it a fact that every day in the week there was dancing carried on under your superintendence?—There was.

Did you personally supervise those classes and see to them?—I did.

For how many years did you personally look after them?—From 1872 to 1881.

At that time did you actually yourself give dancing lessons with assistance?—I did.

Was any instruction given there during that time without your supervision?—There was no instruction given there that I was not responsible for. I did not give instructions in science, because I was not a duly-qualified teacher. All the classes held there I was responsible for, and for everything that took place in the building. Science classes were taught by Dr. Aveling.

Were there classes in which the pupils were examined by a Government department?—In connection with South Kensington.

And examinations were held on the subjects taught in the science classes of the subjects prescribed by the South Kensington school?—They were.

And lectures delivered by responsible, qualified persons?—Yes.

I believe the Rev. Stewart Headlam was one of the lecturers?—Yes; he has given lectures there, and he was a member of the Science Classes Committee, who were responsible for the teaching. The authorities at South Kensington insist on having a committee on which there must be one clergyman. I was also on the Committee.

With reference to the club, did you establish a club and institute?—I did.

Were you daily on the premises?—Daily.

That was your business, you had no other?—Yes.

What date was it that the club was established?—1870.

Were you a member of the club yourself?—I was secretary and manager.

Did you see yourself what went on from time to time among members of the club?—I did.

Will you just look at this copy of the libellous pamphlet, *Is Secularism Degrading?* Will you tell me, with regard to the paragraph in question, first, was the name of the building in Old-street the Hall of Science?—It was.

Had you there a dancing academy?—I had.

Is St. Luke's Lunatic Asylum nearly opposite your place in Old-street?—Yes.

Your place is on the South side, and that is on the North?—Yes.

Before you saw that pamphlet, had you ever heard of any such report, as is there vouched, in any paper called the *Daily Standard* or any other paper?—Never.

Mr. JUSTICE LAWRENCE: What is the *Daily Standard*?

Mr. CLUER: There is no such paper, I believe. (To the witness) Is there a word of truth in the suggestion that is made in this libel?—There is not.

Cross-examined by Mr. Murphy, Q.C.: This pamphlet purports to be a debate between Mr. Walton Powell and Mr. Greaves Fisher. Is that so?—Yes.

And the preface seems to be in these words: "In October last Mr. Walton Powell, President of the Liverpool Branch of the National Anti-Infidels League, conducted a crusade in Leeds; and as the debate, of which the following pages contain a report, arose out of that discussion, it is now published in the belief that it will excite thought on matters of importance to society, and enable readers to answer for themselves the question, 'Is Secularism Degrading?' and that appears to be signed by W. R. Bradlaugh, President of

the Anti-Infidel League. Is there such a person as W. R. Bradlaugh?—There is.

The next thing we find is this: A reporter's certificate, dated January 1894, certifying that it is a correct transcript of the debate between Walton Powell and Greevz Fisher, at St. James's Hall, Leeds, October 17, 1892, signed by two reporters. Then there is the debaters' certificate as to accuracy, signed by Mr. Powell and Mr. Fisher. Then follows what purports to be a verbatim report of this debate, as it is called. When first did you hear of this pamphlet?—I cannot tell the exact date.

Shortly after it took place?—Yes.

And you knew the name of Powell, who used these words, and you knew the name of Bradlaugh too?—I knew of Bradlaugh, but not Powell.

Did you make any complaint of the publication at the time?—I did not.

Although it was published in the papers. Have you made any complaint to Mr. Powell, the utterer of these words?—I have not.

The debate took place at Leeds?—Yes.

Had there been, to your knowledge, in the year 1878, a great scandal about some immoral proceedings at a hall in Leeds?—I heard something.

Very disgusting proceedings had taken place there?—I don't know.

Did not you ascertain that? Was it not a matter of discussion, to your knowledge, of this trial that took place in 1878?—There was a trial.

And evidence was given of very disgusting proceedings at a hall there?—I was not aware of it.

Do you seriously say that you did not know the trial was with reference to certain obscenities at a hall in Leeds?—I was under the impression that it was for disorderly conduct; but I did not read the trial.

And had never heard it discussed?—I had heard that proceedings were taken.

And that evidence was given of disgusting conduct in the hall?—No.

You say that? Think! You never heard it alleged that evidence was given of disgusting proceedings in a hall between boys and young men. Have you ever heard of it? I beg for a distinct answer to a plain question.—I have not.

Do you know Mr. Foote?—I do.

Has it been discussed in his presence and in yours?—I don't know.

Come, do yourself justice in this matter. Do you say you never heard alleged that evidence was given of disgusting conduct in the hall in the year 1878?—I am not aware of any of the proceedings in relation to the matter.

I am not asking whether you are aware; my question is whether you heard it discussed.—Not to my knowledge.

How can you have heard it if it was not to your knowledge?—I will say no more than that.

Do you persist in saying you never heard the matter discussed?—I don't remember on any occasion it was discussed, in my presence, with Mr. Foote.

With anyone?—Or with anyone.

You never heard of it before?—I have heard of the proceedings.

Have you heard it suggested before that evidence was given of disgusting proceedings in the hall at Leeds?—I have said I believe it was for disorderly conduct, but I really don't know any more about the matter.

Have you never heard until this moment?—I have heard that evidence was given.

Never heard it suggested?—No.

Have you not seen the report in the public paper of what occurred there?—No, I have not.

Have you never seen the report?—No, I have not.

Did you ever hear of a place called the Secular Hall, Leeds?—I have heard of a hall at Leeds used for Secular purposes and lectures.

Lectures in connection with gentlemen of your opinions?—Yes.

And owned and leased by gentlemen connected with them?—I have no knowledge who was the owner.

Well, leased by persons of your opinions?—I believe so.

Did you hear there was a prosecution about something that occurred there?—I did hear there was a prosecution in connection with proceedings held at that hall. I do not know whether the proceedings were against the persons who leased it, or against other persons.

Did you never hear of this charge?

Mr. WALTON: I object. My friend is referring to a matter extremely remote, because we are dealing with a hall specifically described; and now he is travelling to some other matters in another part of the country. The witness has already said he saw no report relative to that prosecution. My friend is not entitled to suggest that such a report did appear, unless he can prove it by his witnesses. He is not entitled to hold by this witness that there was a report after the witness has said he did not see it.

Mr. MURPHY: I disagree entirely with my friend. My friend says the article here points to his hall. I say, Nothing of the sort. The debate was carried on at the Secular Hall at Leeds, which is another hall entirely. I am going to put to the witness —

Mr. WALTON: My friend is not entitled to read a document with the object of suggesting to the jury certain facts (of course that is his object), after witness has said no such paper was ever seen by him.

Mr. JUSTICE LAWRENCE: Yes; but he may put it to him.

Mr. WALTON: The opening out of a newspaper is a way to suggest facts which he is not entitled to prove. I think it is most irregular. If the witness says he did not see these reports, that is the end of it.

Mr. MURPHY (to witness): Have you not been present when the report of these trials has been discussed?—I may have been present when the matter was talked about.

The report of this trial?—No.

Never in 1878?—No; I don't know the date. I have never been present when the report of the trial was discussed.

Nor about what was reported to have occurred then?—I have said before that I have heard this matter talked about.

Have you never heard it suggested that disgraceful proceedings took place there?—No, I have not.

Do you read the *Secular Review* sometimes?—No; I have seen it.

Did you ever see the passage speaking of the unspeakable, obscene character of the orgies seen in the Leeds Branch of the National Secular Society?—No. You are speaking from the *Secular Review*?

Yes. You have never taken pains to ascertain what took place at Leeds?—No.

We have heard something about subscriptions. Have you and Mr. Foote been applying for subscriptions in support of this action?—I have not.

Has Mr. Foote, with your knowledge?—Yes; on my behalf.

Was it with your authority that this passage was written: "The London Hall of Science, for instance, has been the constant object of calumny. It is said to be opposite a lunatic asylum, though it is not. It is really midway between the church and the asylum, and on the opposite side of the road. The position is a good one, as it gives us an opportunity of intercepting persons whose wits may be disordered by the House of God"?—No, not on my authority.

Is the *Freethinker* one of your party's papers?—Yes, it represents the Society's views, but it is Mr. Foote's paper.

It was one of the papers in which you advertised for subscriptions to conduct this trial?—Yes.

And on the 15th April it contained the passage I have just read?—Yes.

Without any protest from you?—Yes.

And the same number contained an appeal for subscriptions?—Yes, I believe so.

Mr. MURPHY: I did not read the whole of the quotation, to do Mr. Foote justice: "It gives us an opportunity of intercepting persons whose wits may be disordered by the House of God before their arrival at the house of imbeciles."

Mr. WALTON: I submit my friend is not entitled to read this, unless he has called evidence to connect it with the plaintiff. Mr. Smith says it was not issued by his authority.

Mr. MURPHY: I entirely disagree. The witness has said this paper was issued for the purpose of obtaining subscriptions for this trial, and was issued by the Society.

Mr. SMITH: No, not by the Society.

Mr. WALTON: That does not make the witness responsible for the language Mr. Foote may have used. The paper was not issued by the plaintiff, and it does not belong to the Society.

Mr. JUSTICE LAWRENCE: I do not understand it.

Mr. WALTON: The witness went on to say it was not the property of the Society, but belonged to Mr. Foote, and that it only represented the views of the Society.

Mr. MURPHY: He saw the article, and used the paper to collect subscriptions.

Mr. WALTON: My friend is not entitled to use this. The article is published by some other person without being submitted to Mr. Smith. It is true it contained an appeal for subscriptions, but that does not make Mr. Smith responsible for the language used in it. Until my friend shows that Mr. Smith authorised the publication of the article he cannot be held responsible.

Mr. JUSTICE LAWRENCE: I understood him to say he saw it.

Mr. WALTON: Yes, after it was published.

Mr. MURPHY: He saw it, and used it for the purpose of obtaining subscriptions.

Mr. SMITH: I did not use it to get subscriptions.

Mr. WALTON: I think it was in October that this appeal for subscriptions went out?

Mr. MURPHY: No; you are wrong.

(Continued on page 122.)

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

March 3, Camberwell; 10, Sunderland.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—February 24, Newcastle-on-Tyne. March 3, Manchester. April 7, Sheffield.—All communications for Mr. Watts should be sent to him (if a reply is required, a stamped and addressed envelope must be enclosed) at 81 Effra-road, Brixton, London, S.W.

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

OPENSHAW.—We presume so.

R. GREEN.—Nothing can be sillier, in a public debate, than to quote a passage from a great historian, which agrees with your own view, and to call it "an authority" on your side. It may be an authority on a mere matter of fact; it cannot be an authority on a matter of opinion. If it is so, you are confronted with this dilemma. One "authority" says one thing, and another "authority" the very opposite. You cannot bow to both, and if you choose between them you set up a third authority, namely yourself.

S. HOWARD.—Ingersoll is not alone in regarding parts of the book of Ecclesiastes as interpolations. See Canon Driver's *Literature of the Old Testament*, pp. 447-449. Of course no Christian scholar now regards the book, or any part of it, as the writing of Solomon. The statement to that effect in the opening of the book is a piece of imposture; or, as "the wise call it," a "literary artifice." See also Dr. Giles's *Hebrew Records* and Canon Cheyne's *Joh and Solomon*.

H. L. SUMNER.—We handed your order to Mr. Forder. Kindly send to him direct in future at 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C. Glad to hear you are "much pleased" with our writings.

C. GLENDINNING.—Thanks for cuttings. Always pleased to receive such useful bits.

N.S.S. BENEVOLENT FUND.—Miss E. M. Vance acknowledges:—H. F. S., 8s. 6d.

E. P. 42.—The want of pence which vexes public men is always acute in an unpopular and comparatively poor party like ours. Still, there are a good many, as you suggest, who could subscribe more liberally to Freethought if they would.

A. SPENCER.—There is no Freethought paper in France like our own. Some of the leading Paris journals contain Freethought articles from time to time, so there is less need for a special Freethought organ there.

L. C. H.—Thanks for cutting.

J. K. MAAGAARD.—Shall appear as early as possible.

J. BARNES.—Hardly up to the mark. Writing poetry does not come by nature like sucking milk. It requires deep study and hard training.

MR. FOOTE'S FIGHTING FUND.—E. P. 42, £1.

R. MELLON.—Sorry we are unable to give you the information.

E. HOWARD.—The obituary of the late Jonathan Taylor shall appear in full in our next issue. We are sorry to delay it, but we are short of space this week. Mr. Charles Watts would have attended the funeral had he not been kept waiting at the Law Courts day after day as a witness in the Hall of Science libel case.

C. DORG reports that the great distress at Liverpool has been mainly coped with by the Socialists. The clergy and religious organisations have been almost unheard of in the crisis. The *Daily Post*, speaking of the Central Relief Society, says that, "with its army of highly-paid officials, it is barely equal to the cooking of a boilerful of soup."

MR. WATTS made a slight mistake in his evidence on Monday. He omitted to mention the second Hall of Science outside London—the one at Grimsby.

E. H.—Dr. Coit was referring to Mr. Foote's pamphlet, *A Virgin Mother*—one of the "Bible Romances," but he did not say what the journal you mention ascribes to him. Anyone who can find "filth" in that or any other of Mr. Foote's pamphlets must have a nose of preternatural sensitiveness. Of course, it is impossible to write at all about the miraculous birth of Jesus without giving offence to some persons; but that is the fault of the doctrine itself.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Armagh Standard—Birmingham Gazette—Ironclad Age—Secular Thought—Progressive Thinker—Two Worlds—Open Court—Crescent—Islamic World—Brisbane Telegraph—Echo—Lucifer—Newcastle Weekly Chronicle—Glasgow Weekly Herald—Isle of Man Times—Las Dominicales—Church Reformer—Munsey's Magazine—Cosmopolitan.

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.

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

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

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

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

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE's lecture at the London Hall of Science on Sunday evening dealt with Mr. Balfour's *Foundations of Belief*. His criticism of the book was highly appreciated. In the next issue of the *Freethinker* we shall begin a lengthy reply to Mr. Balfour's attack on Naturalism from the pen of Mr. Foote.

Mr. Foote managed to keep his engagement with the Humanitarian League on Thursday evening, February 14. For several days he had been kept indoors with a bad cold, and it was a bitter evening when he went westward to lecture on "The Shadow of the Sword." Mr. Ernest Bell presided, and was supported by Mr. H. S. Salt, the League's honorary secretary, who cannot be too highly praised for the steady devotion he has given to a noble cause. The attendance was only fair, partly owing to the weather, and partly to the press boycott. It seems hardly credible that not only the press, but even the most "advanced" people, would not tolerate a lecture by the President of the National Secular Society, even in favor of Peace. One part of the boycott, into which we are not free to enter, was simply disgusting.

A Church of England clergyman present spoke in the highest terms of Mr. Foote's discourse, and there was marked applause at the announcement that it would soon be published by the Humanitarian League. This clergyman assured the audience that he would never consecrate a military banner, even if he lived to sit on the episcopal bench.

There was a report of Mr. Foote's lecture in the *Westminster Gazette*. It now remains to be seen whether the general press boycott will be maintained when "The Shadow of the Sword" is published by the Humanitarian League.

A national Humanitarian Conference, called by the Humanitarian League, will be held at St. Martin's Town Hall, Trafalgar-square, on the afternoons and evenings of Thursday, February 28, and Friday, March 1. The subjects of discussion are "The Criminal Code," "The Public Control of Hospitals," "Slaughter House Reform," and "Cruel Sports." The National Secular Society has been invited to send delegates. The general public may obtain entrance by tickets.

Mr. Charles Watts lectured three times last Sunday in the Co-operative Hall, Plymouth. The audiences were most enthusiastic, and there was a large number of ladies present. The proceedings in the evening had to be abbreviated to enable Mr. Watts to catch the night mail for London, in order that he might be in Court on Monday morning.

To-day, Sunday, February 24th, Mr. Watts lectures three times in the Amphitheatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne. An interesting debate is expected, as several clergymen have been invited, and a well-known Christian debater has intimated his intention to be present to oppose the lecturer. We hope the friends from the surrounding districts will rally on the occasion, as Mr. Watts intends giving his impressions upon the result of the trial of Monday last.

The Hall of Science platform will be occupied to-day (February 24) by Mr. Oswald Dawson in the morning, and by Mrs. Frederika Macdonald in the evening. Mr. Dawson, who is Honorary Secretary of the Legitimation League, holds views on the question of marriage and children which most people would regard as peculiar; but he is entitled to a hearing, and his views must be opposed in a reasonable way. Mrs. Macdonald is already known to the Hall of Science audience, and is sure to be well received.

Ryhope is the place where Mr. Foote had such a stormy reception, which nearly ran to riot and bloodshed. The stirrer-up of the excitement was the fellow Powell, who uttered that filthy libel on the Hall of Science which has just been branded by a jury in the Court of Queen's Bench. This fellow is a most reckless liar; among other things, he stated as a fact of his own knowledge that Mr. Foote was the author of the *Elements of Social Science*! By working upon the baser sort of Christians he made Ryhope warm

for a time for the little band of Secularists there. They were turned out of their meeting-place, and the newsagent refused any longer to sell the *Freethinker*. Still they persevered, and the cloud has lifted. For some time the *Freethinker* has been allowed a place on the table of the Miners' Reading Room, and now it is to be paid for out of the Miners' funds.

Mr. Bertram Dobell sent us a few weeks ago a book which we intended to notice at considerable length, and which we shall thus notice as soon as we find the time amidst our multifarious duties. We refer to the *Poetical Works of James Thomson (B.V.)*, in two handsome volumes, with a portrait and a memoir. The work is published by Messrs. Reeves and Turner at 5 Wellington-street, Strand, and Mr. Dobell at his shop in Charing-Cross-road; the price of the two volumes being twelve shillings. The second volume will be of special interest to Thomson's admirers. It contains several poems never before published, including a long one entitled *The Doom of a City*, which has passages of great power and one or two really splendid lyrics. There should be a fair demand for this collected edition of Thomson's poems, though we fear it will yield little or no profit to Mr. Dobell, who, however, has never looked for that kind of satisfaction. His efforts to obtain recognition for Thomson's genius have always been a labor of love.

Mr. Louis Levine, of Charleston, to whom we are indebted for many American papers and periodicals, publishes an excellent circular letter on the Sunday Laws of the United States, intended and well calculated to promote more liberal and rational views of the day of rest.

Dr. Lyman Abbott, the successor of Henry Ward Beecher at Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, is an evolutionist, who seeks to reconcile evolution with Theism. But he confesses that it cannot be reconciled with the story of the Fall of Man as given in Genesis, and distinctly says so in a sermon reported in the *New York Press* of January 29: "I am an Evolutionist. Frankly, I believe Genesis iii. to be an ancient legend, which a great writer took, as Tennyson took the Arthurian legends, and rewrote it, in order that he might write into it a moral and spiritual lesson. I think that the Hebrew people believed that the Fall of Man affected the whole human race. I think very likely Paul believed so; at all events, Paul used that belief in his arguments and teachings with the Hebrew people in his writing."

Here, too, is pastor B. A. Elzas, of the Beth Elohim Synagogue, Charleston, who tells his Bible-class that the Bible story of Creation is based upon a similar story in Babylonian literature, and that the only rational way of regarding it is as apocryphal. "The world does move," though the Freethinkers who move it often have to suffer at first; while the sky-pilots afterwards say, "Just what we told you."

GIORDANO BRUNO.

NEARLY three hundred years ago
A hero in the cause of man
Was seen to pass the streets of Rome,
To die upon the Field of Flowers
(Fit emblem of his purity),
And bear alone the agonies
Of fire, without a murmur.
The only man amid those Christian fiends
Who piled on wood to scorch and feed on flesh;
The truest, bravest in the world,
So soon to mingle with the winds
And permeate all following days
With spurs to valor in the fight for truth,
And overthrow of that same faith
Which from its birth has stamped on liberty.
One speck of manhood in that motley crowd,
Towering above his torturers
As zenith above horizon,
To calmly end a valiant life,
More nobly than a Christ.
Dying for what?—for bigots' creed
To gain a heaven? No! Spurn such thought.
It was for Reason, Truth, and Victory!

J. W. C. STAFFORD.

Would you subject all other things to yourself? Then first subject yourself to Reason.—*Seneca*.

Easy men dream that we live under a government of law. Absurd mistake! We live under a government of men and newspapers. Your first attempt to stem dominant and keenly-cherished opinions will reveal this to you.—*Wendell Phillips*.

THE HALL OF SCIENCE LIBEL CASE.

(Continued from page 120.)

Mr. WALTON: Well, they are Mr. Foote's views, and not Mr. Smith's. The whole object of my friend is to prejudice this gentleman. If he says, I have not published it, it is clear my friend can't use it.

Mr. MURPHY: The whole object is to make this gentleman responsible for their opinions.

Mr. WALTON: My friend must prove that Mr. Smith published this article.

Mr. MURPHY (reading): "The solicitor is instructed to accept no offer of compromise. The case must be determined in court, where all the circumstances can be clearly understood"—was that with your consent?—No, it was not.

Was this with your consent: "There happens to be a man of reckless scurrility—"

Mr. WALTON: I object to this. He cannot produce this till he has shown Mr. Smith is responsible for the publication.

Mr. MURPHY: I am going to ask him if he authorised this.

Mr. WALTON: But before you can read the passage you must first show the witness published it. You are not entitled to get the advantage of reading the passage, and then ask the witness was that published with his authority. If it is his publication, you must first show the witness was responsible for it, instead of taking it as the foundation of your question. The witness said he never saw it before it was published. It was not published by him, but was published by Mr. Foote.

Mr. JUSTICE LAWRENCE: I did not know he said he did not see them before they were published.

Mr. SMITH: I had not seen these things before they were published, my lord.

Mr. MURPHY: Did you see them after they were published?—Yes.

Did you afterwards agree with Mr. Foote that he should write in the same *Freethinker* and invite subscriptions for this case?—I did not agree with him in anything. He did not consult me.

Did you know he was doing it?—I did not know until the articles and paragraphs appeared; but I knew he was going to solicit subscriptions in the *Freethinker*.

And you thought it right that he should do this?—I could not help myself. It is his own paper.

You left him to write what he thought proper, and to ask subscriptions for your case?—Yes; of course he would write what he thought proper.

I will put the matter in another way. Does this passage represent your opinions? "It is said to be opposite a lunatic asylum, though it is not. It is really midway between the church and the asylum on the opposite side of the road. The position is a good one, since it gives the opportunity to intercept persons whose wits may be disordered by the House of God before they arrive at their destination in the house of imbeciles." Does that represent your opinions?—Are my opinions under discussion?

Yes; your character is at stake.—My character? Does that represent your opinions?—They are not my opinions.

You are not shocked by them?—No, I am not shocked. (Laughter.) Abuse is given on both sides in this question. That was in the course of the debate, was it not?—I was not at the debate.

You have read it?—I have read it.

You have not applied to Mr. Powell, or to Mr. Bradlaugh, I understand?—No.

Here is a book called *The Elements of Social Science*. Are you familiar with it?—Yes.

Is it sold by your Society?—Yes; by members, not by the Society.

I see in the book the passage: "Prostitution is a valuable substitute until we have reached a better state of things, by banishing the marriage laws." Are those your opinions?—No.

But it is one of your books, which you sell?—No, it is not sold by the Society. It is sold only by members of the Society.

Is it sold at a shop over which your Society has control?—No; our Society has no control over any shop.

Is it sold at the hall?—Yes.

By the Society of which you are a committee-man?—Yes.

Is this a passage from that book: "The laws of exercise, and the health of the reproductive organs and emotions, depend on their having sufficient means of normal exercise; and the want of this tends to produce diseases in men and women"?—I have read that.

Is that one of the books you sell?—It is one of the books sold.

Have you seen advertisements of this pamphlet?—I have not.

Re-examined by Mr. Walton: Have you any connection with either the printing or the publication of this work,

The Elements of Social Science?—No; all the books we sell we do not approve of. We do not approve of every doctrine. We sell books containing all sorts of doctrine; but it does not follow we approve of them.

You do not hold yourself responsible for the opinions of every professor of Freethought?—Certainly not.

Freethought means freedom of thought on the part of every member of society?—Yes.

And this book my friend has referred to, which is written by a doctor of medicine, has on its frontispiece this quotation from J. S. Mill: "The diseases of society cannot be prevented or cured without being spoken of in plain language." How many years has that book been before the world?—I have known it for thirty years.

Has any effort been made to suppress this book as immoral or illegal?—Not so far as I know. I do not agree with the writer of the book.

But he is entitled to his own opinions?—Certainly.

And the law allows him to sell the book?—Yes, but they are not my opinions.

Have you ever made any charges of immoral misconduct or any accusation of that kind against your opponents?—I have not. I am not in the habit of making charges.

It is now suggested that this pamphlet had reference not to what took place at the Hall of Science in London, but at the hall in Leeds. Have you ever, till this moment, heard the suggestion?—No, I was not aware that there was a Hall of Science in Leeds. I do not think there is a hall called the Hall of Science there.

Did you instruct your solicitors to write to the defendant before the action commenced?—Yes.

Mr. MURPHY: The only one I know of is the one issuing the writ.

Mr. WALTON: In answer to that letter, or at any time during this action, have you ever heard it suggested by anybody that the Hall of Science here mentioned was the hall in Leeds?—I have not. I am informed there is no Hall of Science in Leeds.

Is there any other headquarters of Secularism except that with which you and the late Mr. Bradlaugh were connected?—No.

Is there any other Hall of Science opposite a lunatic asylum?—No.

Is there any Hall of Science in the kingdom to which this description can apply except your own?—No; it has been specially spoken of as being opposite a lunatic asylum. It is some twenty-five years since I first heard the expression.

Have you any sort of connection with what has been described as the Hall of Secularism at Leeds?—No; and I am not aware of what goes on there.

Or any responsibility for what happens there?—No.

You are told fifteen years ago there was a prosecution of some persons at Leeds in connection with the hall. Do you know anything about it? Have you ever heard it suggested that that prosecution referred to disgusting conduct in the nature of that imputed?—I never knew any of the facts. I knew there was a prosecution there, but I did not know the facts connected with it.

Do you happen to know if the prosecution was withdrawn?—I do not know how it terminated.

Suppose there had been a conviction, would you have expected to hear of it?

Mr. MURPHY: You may have expected a good many things.

Mr. WALTON: Did you ever hear of anybody being convicted in connection with it?—No, I did not.

By Mr. MURPHY: Have you seen the advertisement of this pamphlet in the *Torch*, under the head of "The Leeds Orgies. Full account of the Abominable Proceedings in the Leeds Secular Hall. Demoralising Result of Secular Teaching"?—I never saw the *Torch*, and never heard of it.

Mr. WALTON: The date is significant. It is February 1, 1895, and the writ was issued April, 1894.

Miss EDITH VANCE was the next witness. She made an affirmation, and was then examined by Mr. Cluer.

Are you the secretary of the National Secular Society?—I am.

Did you, on April 14, go to the defendant Snow's place of business?—I did.

Five days after the writ in this action?—Yes.

Did you purchase there, from his place of business, a copy of the publication of this libel?—Yes.

Mr. MURPHY: I have nothing to ask the witness.

Mr. ROBERT FORDER, examined by Mr. Cluer: Have you known the plaintiff since 1868?—I have.

Have you constantly been at the Hall of Science yourself from that time?—From 1868 to 1870 there was a break, but I came back in 1871. I became committee man in 1873, and I was elected paid secretary.

Mr. JUSTICE LAWRENCE: We don't want all this history.

Mr. CLUER: In 1873 you were a committee man?—Yes.

From that time had you an intimate connection with the hall?—Yes.

Was Mr. Smith there?—Yes, as a rule, every night.

Who was the person responsible for the meetings, lectures, and classes that went on there?—Mr. Robert Owen Smith.

Did you know that science and art classes went on there?—Yes; I was secretary of them.

Did Mr. Smith supervise what went on at the Hall?—Yes.

Was he known among Secularists generally as the manager?—Yes, of the hall. We hired the hall for the science and art classes of him.

Was he known generally as the person who conducted the dancing academy there?—Yes.

By Mr. MURPHY: Who were you who hired the hall?—The Society engaged the hall every Sunday.

Were you your own manager?—No; Mr. Smith managed them all.

He was the lessor of the hall and manager of it?—Yes; on Sundays.

It was only on Sundays you held it?—Yes; but we were entitled to it on Good Fridays, Christmas Days, and every Sunday, and generally also on Wednesday evenings.

He managed the dancing?—Yes; with lady assistants.

Mr. CHARLES WATTS, examined by Mr. Cluer: Have you for many years known the Hall of Science?—Yes; and Mr. Smith in connection with it.

Who was responsible for the conduct of the classes?—Mr. Smith.

He would be regarded as responsible for the conduct of the classes of the Dancing Academy and for the Society's meetings held there?—Just so.

By Mr. MURPHY: What did you say you were?—I am a journalist and lecturer.

Lecturer for any particular body?—No.

A general lecturer?—Yes.

What connection, if any, have you with the Hall of Science?—I was on the committee.

How long have you been so?—Since my return from America, about two years ago. Formerly I was there for ten or twelve years.

Where were you in 1879?—In London.

It is suggested you were in America?—No; I went to America in 1884.

Then you were in London at the time of the Leeds trial?—Yes.

Did you hear of the trial?—Yes, I heard of it.

Mr. WALTON: I object to this. This cannot be relevant to the question of damages—what he may have heard about the Leeds trial—until my friend is in a position to make the evidence at the Leeds trial pertinent to this matter.

Mr. MURPHY: I really don't know what the meaning of this objection is. The question is whether these words uttered in the reports pointed to something in London. All the surrounding circumstances must be taken into account, in order to see what the words meant. One of these things was whether there was a trial at Leeds immediately before, and what occurred at it. My friend assumes that this relates to the Hall of Science in London. My case is that it does not.

Examination continued: You have heard of the trial at Leeds?—Yes.

Did you hear evidence was given there of abominable practices?—I did not.

Never heard it suggested till to-day?—Never.

Do you know a paper called the *Secular Review*?—I have not read it lately, I used to.

Were you not editor of it?—I was.

In what year?—Up to 1883.

And not after that?—Not after that.

Had you a kindly interest in it after that?—No, no interest directly, kindly or unkindly.

On June 26, 1886, will you undertake to say you did not see a paragraph in that paper about the obscenity alleged to have occurred at the Hall of Science at Leeds?—In 1886 I was in America.

Was it never discussed in your presence?—Never.

There are many of these Halls of Science in different parts of England, are there not?—I only know of two; one in London, and one in Sheffield.

One in Leeds?—No, that is not a Hall of Science; it is never known by that name.

So far as you know?—That is all I can say.

Mr. WALTON: I put in a paper called the *Anti-Infidel* of May, 1894. It is printed by the defendant Cook, and is published by the other defendant, J. Snow & Co. The letter appears on the first page of the paper. The passage I rely upon is the last paragraph in the first column [stating that when the case came into court the libel would be proved up to the hilt].

Mr. MURPHY insisted the whole article should be read.

Mr. WALTON thereupon read the whole of the letter, and upon concluding said that was the plaintiff's case. The Court then rose for luncheon.

After the luncheon interval Mr. MURPHY proceeded to open the case for the defence. He said: That the statement which is contained in this paragraph is untrue I am not here to dispute. My client does not pretend to justify it. It was set out in this book as having been stated publicly at this debate—about that there can be no sort of doubt; but to say that it was true at present is a thing my clients have not said, and do not say. That they are legally

responsible I do not also dispute. One is the publisher and the other the printer of the pamphlet. The publisher's position in this particular matter seems to be this. He allows his name to be used as the publisher of the pamphlet, and he gets a commission, which, in this particular instance, if the number which had been sent to him had all been sold, would have produced the magnificent remuneration of 16s., and in respect of that matter he stands his trial for libel. The printer, on the other hand, has had his remuneration for printing the pamphlet, and I think you will find it is not of an extravagant character. The one was employed to print, and the other to publish, by Mr. Bradlaugh, whose name has been mentioned; and it has been known to the plaintiff and to the committee of this National Secular Hall Society ever since the time of the discussion, when Mr. Powell was the person who uttered these words, subsequently that Mr. Bradlaugh was the person who authorised their publication in the shape which they are at present. For reasons best known to himself, the plaintiff, who is most anxious to vindicate his character, which he says has been assailed, but which I deny, has passed by the man who used the words and the man who authorised their publication, and has come upon the printer and publisher, neither of whom, it will be proved, ever had any idea that there was any libel contained in the words at all, much less that the plaintiff was the person designated by them. It is a lawful course for a man to take; whether it is a just or a fair one is another question. It has been said that the plaintiff came into court without the slightest idea that there could be any question that the Hall of Science in London was not the one designated by Mr. Powell when he spoke at Leeds. Do you believe it? Do you believe that these gentlemen, one and all, have come up here and told you the full truth as to whether or not they ever heard of a disgusting trial at Leeds in the year 1878? What do you think of the way in which the plaintiff answered my questions? Had he answered them in a straightforward way? Do you think you got his whole mind? Do you think he told you all he knew about the trial? Do you think he ever heard it suggested there was a scandal attached to the proceedings of 1878 which came before the public, and published in the newspapers of the time in reference to the occurrences in the Hall of Science, or the hall connected with the Association, whatever it might have been called, in the year 1878? You are men of the world. I could not force them to say more than they did; but was the impression left on your minds that they were telling the whole truth about the matter? Judge for yourselves. The President of the Society (Mr. Foote) is, for aught I know, in court, sitting in front of my learned friend. Does he know nothing about it? Why was not he called? His name has been frequently mentioned, and he is the person who was employed to collect subscriptions in support of the action. Where is he? He is a gentleman whose opinions on the subject of the proximity of the lunatic asylum to the place of worship you have just heard would be valuable. Where is Mr. Foote? Does he know too much about the Hall of Science, or the hall at North-street, Leeds, about which it is suggested this trial took place? Do you think this discussion has been going on all the time without any inquiry being made by the authorities as to what took place at the trial? Gentlemen, don't believe it for a moment. Bring your own good sense to bear on the matter, and then you will be in a position to see whether the article points to anything that occurred in London, as distinguished from what occurred in Leeds. The pamphlet purports to give an account of a public discussion, not in London, but in Leeds, between two advocates of the two systems. The subject was whether or not Secularism was degrading, and you won't expect me to attempt to justify the course of that debate upon the one side or upon the other. If there are people who think that the cause of religion, upon the one hand or upon the other hand, is advanced by discussions of the character you have heard, let them have their opinions. You won't get me to express an opinion favourable to the one or to the other. What I have got to do is to defend my client as best I can against the proceedings in this libel action, which neither of them ever contemplated or intended. They may be legally responsible, and, in one sense, may be morally responsible in not having read this article and pamphlet, and inquired what was referred to, and justify the statements made before they published them; but as regards any feeling in the mind of either of them, either against the National Secular Association or against Mr. Smith, before the end of the case you will be satisfied. I am certain, that they had no malice of any sort or kind. Of Mr. Smith I believe they never heard until this action, and certainly it is a very strange thing that it should be in the year 1895 that Mr. Smith should emerge from his comparative obscurity in order to fight the battle of this Secular Association. When this action was commenced, it began as one would have expected. It was an action brought by the National Secular Hall Association, Limited, and another. That another was Mr. Smith, but the real plaintiffs in the matter were the Association. It was found, as the action

went on, that they had no *locus standi* in the matter, and their names were struck out, so that they had to fall back on the "another." Mr. Smith nobody had heard of until this matter was brought to its present shape. What is the answer to this case? It is this. It is made on behalf of my client, who knew nothing about the facts. That the debate at Leeds took place in reference to matters that were familiar to the audience, we have proved. They all knew about the trial of 1878. Somebody has got the name of the *Daily Standard* in, showing the muddle that Mr. Powell must have got into. He was obviously referring to the Leeds *Daily News*, which did contain a report of the trial—a trial which disclosed, if the evidence was to be believed, the existence of obscenity and filthy practices in this hall, and which was disclosed in the course of the prosecution. It was a prosecution against licensed premises, and the license was opposed by the police; and it was the subject of discussion, not merely in Leeds, but all over the country. Perhaps that is the reason why we do not see Mr. Foote. He is a journalist, and is familiar with the subject of Secularist literature, and would know how far discussion went at Leeds. He is not called, and you can draw your own inference. I have been wondering to see whether they would call witnesses to say: "We have read this article. We know Leeds, and we know London; and, when we read the article, we saw at once that Mr. Smith was the person pointed to." No such person is called, and you are left in the dark. Every attempt has been made to exclude me from throwing any light on what took place in 1878, in order that you might be invited to take a leap in the dark, and find a verdict for the plaintiff. I shall ask you to keep your judgment open, and say whether or not it is more probable that the people were talking in Leeds to a Leeds audience, and were referring to matters that took place at the North-street Hall, Leeds, and not in London. That is the main question, and the one upon which I propose to address you. I shall lay before you, as one of the surrounding circumstances in the case, the papers from the British Museum containing an account of the trial. I shall also lay before you such papers referring to the Leeds scandal in order to enable you to form a judgment as to whether the speech of this gentleman pointed to the plaintiff. No doubt it is a very convenient matter for the proprietors of the Hall of Science to come here and obtain a cheap popularity, with the assistance of other people's money, by bringing an action of this sort; and, if it ever becomes a question of damages, I beg you will remember some of the views expressed by the champion of this hall, and say what damages ought to be awarded to persons of such a character. People who sell such a book in their own hall as the one that I have read passages from to you, admitted by the plaintiff to be part of the current literature of this sect—what title have they to come and ask for damages, even if they are unjustly assailed? Let them sue Mr. Bradlaugh or Mr. Powell, the people who are responsible; but don't let them go and make victims of the printer and publisher, even though, perhaps, they ought to have exercised some supervision, even although the name of Smith was not known to them at the time, and they never anticipated, for a single moment, the feelings of him or his friends could be affected by the paragraph in question.

Mr. GRAVES was then called. He said he was an officer of the British Museum, and produced from their custody a file of the *Leeds Daily News*.

Mr. WALTON: I take your Lordship's opinion whether it is admissible evidence to produce the file of a newspaper. I do not see on what issue this has bearing.

The JUDGE: I understand Mr. Murphy's case is that this matter had reference only to what took place in 1878.

Mr. WALTON: My friend says that the Hall of Science referred to is the Hall of Science so called at Leeds. That is the first proposition, and that is evidence which can be proved by calling persons who will describe the situation of this hall in Leeds, and tell us how it is known; but it cannot be proved by producing the file of a newspaper.

The JUDGE: This witness only produces a file of the paper. The use made of it after is a different thing.

Mr. WALTON: I object to the file going in at all as evidence.

The JUDGE: This is the paper which I suppose Mr. Murphy means is referred to as the *Daily Standard*.

Mr. WALTON: Of course London should be Leeds, and *Daily Standard* should be *Daily News*. His friend could not put in the *Daily News*, and say it was meant instead of the *Daily Standard*.

Mr. MURPHY: The view I present is this. The question for the jury is: Has the plaintiff made out that the pamphlet refers to the London Hall of Science, and to the orgies there? I propose to prove, not the facts of what occurred in the Hall of Science at Leeds, but that it was a matter of discussion amongst newspapers at the time referred to in the pamphlet; that there had been in the hall at Leeds orgies of a scandalous description. That will enable the jury to decide one way or the other.

Mr. WALTON: My learned friend is trying to draw a herring across the scent. When the question as to whether

the Hall of Science described here as the headquarters of the Secularists, and the situation in which it is in reference to a well-known public institution, is the London hall, how could his learned friend propose to show, not that it was an accurate description of the Hall of Science at Leeds, but that certain proceedings, which he does not propose to prove, took place in another institution, which is not this institution, and to which this description does not apply? I submit we have nothing to do with any proceedings except those in the Hall of Science, which corresponds to the description.

The JUDGE: This took place in October, 1892. Was he clearly referring to something which took place in 1879?

Mr. WALTON: At a place indicated. If his learned friend could prove that the place indicated was not the place I have referred to, let him do so.

The JUDGE: It may be that the paper is not sufficient proof.

Mr. WALTON: That is my objection. The production of the paper is evidence of nothing, and I submit is irrelevant. The contents of the paper are not proved, and can have no bearing on the inquiry. I object to its production.

The JUDGE: Well, I think the paper had better go in now. What use is made of it is a different matter.

Mr. MURPHY: I may as well meet the matter now. I have got no witnesses from Leeds, but I press the paper upon these grounds. It would have been open for me to have proved that during the meeting someone called out: "Oh, you are referring to the hall at Leeds." That would be evidence to satisfy the jury that the speaker was referring to what took place in Leeds. In the same way, publication of the paper is known to the audience that was being addressed at Leeds.

Mr. JUSTICE LAWRENCE: That is a long way from producing the paper, saying you put everything in it.

Mr. MURPHY: I don't put it in as evidence of what occurred there, but as evidence of what the speaker was speaking about. The paper shows there is a scandal at Leeds.

Mr. WALTON: Let him call Mr. Powell, and ask him what he was referring to.

Mr. MURPHY: My friend is inviting me to call a person whom he won't bring an action against. I decline to do it. I propose to read an account of a trial in 1878, dated September 6, 1878.

Mr. WALTON: The paper referred to in the libel is August 11, 1879.

Mr. MURPHY: I am quite aware they were wrong dates, wrong names, and wrong towns.

Mr. WALTON: I ask your Lordship to rule that it is not evidence.

The JUDGE: I think not.

Mr. MURPHY: I tender it as containing an account of a trial in which obscenity took place at the Hall.

Mr. WALTON: My friend is not entitled to use that description, because I don't agree with him. There is no suggestion in this report to which the term "obscenity" can apply. He is not entitled to describe an article which he is seeking to prove, bearing on the case.

The JUDGE (to Mr. WALTON): Your people knew nothing about it, except that there was a charge of disorderly conduct.

Mr. WALTON: They do deny that they ever heard the conduct was obscene.

Mr. MURPHY: Your lordship rejects it.

The JUDGE: Yes.

Mr. MURPHY: I ask your lordship to take a note of the objection.

Mr. RAWLINSON (to witness): Do you also produce another Leeds paper?

Mr. MURPHY: You need not go through the form. I have another witness on another paper, but the objection will be the same.

(To be concluded next week.)

Rough work, iconoclasm; but the only way to get at Truth.—O. W. Holmes.

The moral amelioration of man is the principal mission of woman.—Auguste Comte.

To be able to discern that what is true is true, and that what is false is false—that is the mark and character of intelligence.—R. W. Emerson.

Theology is nothing more than a science of words, which by dint of repetition, we accustom ourselves to substitute for things.—D. Holbach.

In synagogue and cloister, mosque and school,
Hell's terrors and heaven's lures men's bosoms rule;

But they who pierce the secrets of "The Truth"

Sow not such empty chaff their hearts to fool.

—Omar Khayyam; E. H. Whinfield, Trans.

Carlyle and the Church.

His (Carlyle's) destination was "the ministry," and for this, knowing how much his father and mother wished it, he tried to prepare himself. He was already conscious, however, "that he had not the least enthusiasm for that business; that even grave prohibitory doubts were gradually rising ahead." It has been supposed that he disliked the formalism of the Scotch Church; but formalism, he says, was not the pinching point, had there been the preliminary of belief forthcoming. "No church or speaking entity whatever can do without formulas; but it must believe them first if it would be honest."—J. A. Froude, "The Early Life of T. Carlyle."

Religious Prejudices.

If your nurse has told you that Ceres presides over corn, or that Vishnu or Sakyamuni became men several times, or that Odin awaits you in his hall towards Jutland, or that Mohammed or some other travelled to heaven; if, moreover, your preceptor deepens in your brain what the nurse has engraved, you will hold it all your life. Should your judgment rise against these prejudices, your neighbors, above all your female neighbors, will cry out at the impiety and frighten you. Your dervish, fearing the diminution of his revenue, may accuse you before the Cadi, and this Cadi impale you if he can, since he desires to rule over fools, believing fools obey better than others; and this will endure till your neighbors, and the dervish, and the Cadi begin to understand that folly is good for nothing, and that persecution is abominable.—Voltaire, "Dictionnaire Philosophique."

Why Infants Ought to be Damned.

If we want to see Christian theology at its best, we must go to the old divines. A famous Presbyterian of his day was Dr. William Jameson, who occupied the post of Professor in Glasgow University. In his *Vetus Patroclus*, published in 1689, he explains why children are damned in the following manner (pp. 147-8): "Certain it is, from the whole tenor of the Scriptures, and, in special, Revelation xxii. 25, that those who in the sight of God are dogs are guilty persons, and to be excluded from heaven, and, therefore, to be thrust into hell; but whole nations, without exception, are such (Matthew xv. 26). Therefore, infants, being a part of these nations, deserve to be excluded from heaven and sent to hell.' . . . 'None can enter into the kingdom of heaven except they be born again' (John iii. 7). But surely this new birth is the gift of God, and a privilege which he may withhold from whom he will; and, therefore, without prejudice to his justice, may exclude whosoever hath it not from the kingdom of heaven; but none are excluded from it but guilty persons, which, I believe, none will deny; therefore infants may well be accounted guilty persons."

The Second Epistle of Peter a Forgery.

Jude is copied or imitated by Peter, a fact inconsistent with the position and character of an apostle. Is it likely that Peter would follow Jude's letter as it is followed? Had Jude been an apostle, Peter might, perhaps, have adopted his sentiments and words; but even in that case it would be improbable. There is a visible anxiety on the part of the author to identify himself with the apostle Peter. Thus, in i. 1, he uses the double name, Simon Peter. He has a three-fold allusion to his death (i. 13, 14, 15). In i. 16-18 he refers to the transfiguration on the mount, wishing to show that he was present. In iii. 1 he identifies himself with the author of the first epistle, and in iii. 15 he wishes to appear as an apostle. A self-prominent air and conscious effort are visible. "I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things." "I think it meet to stir you up," etc. "I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease," etc. "In both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance." The language is an echo of Jude's. "I gave all diligence to write unto you . . . it was needful for me to write unto you." "I will, therefore, put you in remembrance." Those expressions are hardly consistent with the conscious authority of an apostle.—Dr. Samuel Davidson, "Introduction to the New Testament," vol. ii., pp. 539, 540.

They have stormed the stars with their passion-cry
For hope or mercy or justice here,
Plead that their darlings should never die—
Plead with many a sob and tear.

Folly! for never an answer came,
And never an arrow was turned away;
It sped to its beautiful mark the same,
Whether they prayed or scorned to pray.

—Kenneth Lamar.

PROFANE JOKES.

"Ah, Charley, old boy, off to church? You go to St. Highjinks, don't you? Very High, isn't it?" "Yaas; candles, crosses, confession; ah, everything except—burning pastilles."

"I want to be an angel,"
Sang the choir, sweetly solemn;
An editor in the audience said,
"Put an ad. in our 'want' column."

A Yorkshire clergyman had been taking an eager part in a cricket match on Saturday, and next morning thoughts of the stirring contest would creep in; for, much to the amusement of some hearers, he said, very solemnly, after the first lesson, "Here endeth the first innings."

"Are you the Judge of Reprobates?" said an old lady of the Malaprop school, as she walked into the Judge's office. "I am the Judge of Probate," was the reply. "Well, that's it, I expect," said the old lady. "You see my husband died detested and left me several little infidels, and I want to be their executioner."

Country Parson—"You have no idea how hard it is for me to perform my duties here." Visiting Bishop—"What are some of your difficulties?" Country Parson—"Take this week, for instance. Just as the piece of swamp they allow me for a garden got dry enough to make my potatoes thrive, the congregation requested me to pray for rain."

A small youth is just now deeply interested in the mechanical arts, and especially devoted to the various forms of the steam-engine. His aunt was recently instructing him in Bible history, and dwelt, at some length, on the story of Abraham. "He was a very rich man," she told the boy; "he had a great many horses and cattle and sheep; he had a great deal of land, and ever so many servants; and he had a dear little boy whom he loved very much. But he was a good man, and there was something he loved more than all else—even more than his little boy." "I know!" interrupted the youth, with enthusiasm. "What was it?" asked his aunt, pleased to have led him up to the right point. And the boy's eyes sparkled with sympathy for Abraham when he answered, "An engine!"

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, Oswald Dawson, "The Bar Sinister and Licit Love." (Free.) 6.30, musical selections; 7, Frederika Macdonald, "The Rights of Childhood according to Jean Jacques Rousseau." (Admission free; reserved seats 3d. and 6d.) Wednesday, at 8.30, a lecture.

BATTERSEA SECULAR HALL (back of Battersea Park Station): 7.45, musical and dramatic entertainment. (Free.) Tuesday, at 8, dancing for N.S.S. members and friends. Thursday, at 8, committee.

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): Tea and Soiree. (Tickets 1s., members 9d.) Thursday, at 7.30, free science classes.

MILTON HALL (Hawley-crescent, 89 Kentish Town-road): 7.30, Enid Stacy, B.A. (I.L.P.), "Modern Shams." (Free.)

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Princes' Hall, Piccadilly): 11.15, Dr. Stanton Coit, "The Corruption in the Church before the Reformation."

WESTMINSTER BRANCH (Mr. Stace's, 42 Vincent-street): 8, members' meeting.

WOOD GREEN (Star Coffee House, High-street): 5.30, tea; 7, musical and dramatic entertainment.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, a lecture.

COUNTRY.

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

CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 11, W. D'Mattos (Fabian), "The Blight of Dogma"; 7, "Municipalisation of Industries."

EDINBURGH LABOR HALL: afternoon, Stanley Jones, "The Soul and Science"; evening, "Woman: Past, Present, and Future."

GLASGOW (Ex-Mission Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12, discussion—James Woodburn, an essay; 6.30, social meeting. (Tickets 6d.)

HULL (St. George's Hall, Storey-street): 7, Gustav Smith, "Social Movements in Ancient Rome and the Triumph of Caesarism."

LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 11, tontine society; 3, philosophy class—Ernest Newman, "Kant"; 7, John Walter, B.A., "Herbert Spencer."

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, Robert Law, F.G.S., "My Journey to the Rocky Mountains and Visits to the Camps of the Blackfoot Indians." (Free.)

NEWCASTLE (Amphitheatre, Northumberland-road): 11, Charles Watts, "The Bible Not the Cause of Modern Civilisation"; 3, "Christ Not a Political and Social Reformer"; 7, "Why Should we Live Moral Lives?—the Christian and Secular Answer."

ROCHDALE (Working Men's College, 4 Acker-street): 6.30, Sam Standring, "Charles Bradlaugh and his New Critics"; 8.30, members' meeting.

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 3, H. Ancketill, "The Land Question and the Drink Question"; 7, "The Abolition of Poverty." Tea at 5.
SOUTH SHIELDS (Thornton's Variety Hall, Union-lane): 11, C. Cohen, "The Awakening of Modern Europe"; 7, "Christianity: Its Decline."
SUNDERLAND (Lecture Room, Bridge End Vaults, opposite *Echo* office): 7, the Secretary, "Man's Place in Nature."

Lecturers' Engagements.

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

STANLEY JONES, 53 Marlborough-road, Holloway, London, N.—Feb. 24, Edinburgh. March 3, Hull; 10, Sheffield; 11, Chesterfield.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, Rotherhithe, London.—March 24, Camberwell.

SAM STANDRING, 6 Bury-road, Rochdale.—Feb. 17, Failssworth. March 26 and 27, Sheffield.

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From the "Bradford Weekly Telegraph," Saturday,
February 16, 1895.

GREAT FIRE IN BRADFORD.
EXTENSIVE DAMAGE.

Early on Saturday a big fire took place in the warehouse, No. 2 Union-street, Bradford, occupied by Mr. R. Higgins, who occupies a large part of the ground floor, and numbers the following tenants occupying the other offices and rooms: Mr. Ernest Hahnel, Messrs. Schmidt & Co., Mr. J. W. Gott, Messrs. G. D. Wright & Co., and Mr. J. Pepper. The damage done is very extensive, and is roughly estimated at a figure between £8,000 to £10,000. It certainly cannot be less than £8,000, as many of the firms occupying the building had large and valuable stocks stored in the various rooms. Mr. R. Higgins had a big stock of woollens, stuffs, and yarns, and estimates his loss at over £4,000. He is insured up to £4,000. Messrs. Wright & Co., stuff merchants, have had fully £1,000 damage done to their stock and premises, but it is completely covered by insurance. Mr. J. W. Gott, cloth and stuff merchant, had a stock valued at £1,500, and it is partially destroyed, chiefly by water. The other firms, with the exception of Mr. J. Pepper, have suffered in like manner, a lot of stock being destroyed by water. The cause of the fire is unknown, but, judging by appearances, it broke out in the packing-room of Mr. R. Higgins.





To the Readers of "The Freethinker."

WE had just got the New Spring Goods ready for Sale when this unfortunate fire took place, and, although we have sustained no damage by the fire itself, most of our goods have been soaked in water. We have taken immediate steps to have all the goods dried, and for all practical purposes they are not worth one penny less than before the fire took place. The finish which is put upon new goods has, of course, been disturbed, but that always takes place in making garments up. So that if you get a length of this cloth, or stuff, and have it made up, there is not the slightest difference between that and any other new goods you might buy, when made into garments.

We have got a Big Allowance from the Insurance Company,
and to make room for New Goods, which we have already ordered, and which will be ready for
sale in one month,

We now offer all our Present Stock at HALF PRICE.

We are making the goods up into the following lots:—

<p>Parcel for 21s. carriage paid.</p> <p>A Lot of GOODS for GENTLEMEN'S WEAR, worth at warehouse prices 42s.</p> <p> State what will be most useful. </p>	<p>Parcel for 21s. carriage paid.</p> <p>A Lot of GOODS for LADIES' WEAR, worth at warehouse prices 42s.</p> <p> State what will be most useful. </p>
<p>Parcel for 21s. carriage paid.</p> <p>MIXED LOT OF GOODS, Worth 42s. For Ladies' and Gentlemen's wear.</p>	<p>Parcel for 21s. carriage paid.</p> <p>Mixed Lot of Goods, such as BLANKETS, SHEETS, QUILTS, TABLE-CLOTH, APRON, BELT, PURSE, Etc.</p>

We have engaged 25 additional Tailors to
make up Trousers. Price during Salvage Sale,
7s. 6d. per Pair to Measure.
Fill up form and state Color preferred.

Round waist
Round seat.....
Inside leg seam.....
Outside leg seam
Thigh
Knee
Bottom
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(Lined 6d. extra.)
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SEND AT ONCE.

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