

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

VOL. XV.—No. 25.

SUNDAY, JUNE 23, 1895.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

MRS. BESANT'S NEW GOD.

NINE months ago, in the pages of the *Nineteenth Century*, Mr. Gladstone wrote an article on the Atonement, with special reference to views expressed in Mrs. Besant's *Autobiography*. Mrs. Besant was abroad at the time, and she says that reply was impossible. But now that she has returned to England, and settled (as she thinks) the Judge difficulty, she answers the Grand Old Man in the pages of the same magazine.

Mr. Gladstone is no fool; on the contrary, he is a shrewd dialectician, with a keen eye for an opponent's weak points. Accordingly he touched Mrs. Besant on a very sore spot. He pointed out that, although her changes had been frequent, and even startling, she was always cocksure that she was right. Recognition that she had been misled brought with it no modesty or diffidence. Every time she changed she had the utmost confidence in her new opinions being the panacea for the ills of humanity. Mrs. Besant "dismisses" what she is pleased to call Mr. Gladstone's "badinage"; remarking, by the way, that he has himself been subject to "vast and numerous changes" in his political career. This is true enough, in one sense; but Mr. Gladstone's changes bear little relation to those of Mrs. Besant. His changes have been *practical*, while hers have been *speculative*. And his changes have all been in one direction, from Toryism to Radicalism; while her changes have been in several, and sometimes in opposite, directions.

Mrs. Besant does not even discuss the Christian doctrine of Atonement, though she plainly rejects it as connected with "a merely historical event"—that is, with the Passion of Jesus Christ. Instead of defending herself—or rather her old criticism of the orthodox doctrine of Atonement—she prefers to submit to the thoughtful public a new conception that "may to some prove suggestive and helpful." Well, we have read what she has to say, but we have not found it *helpful*, though we have found it *suggestive*. It suggests to us that Mrs. Besant is bent on playing Theosophy for all it is worth, and that in doing so she is leaning more and more towards "advanced" Christianity. There are prophets who declare that Mrs. Besant's intellectual career will be a parabola, and that she will ultimately return to the point where she first started. Others even predict that she will become a Catholic. But they forget that the Catholic Church offers women only suffering and silence.

In presenting her conception of atonement to the "thoughtful public," Mrs. Besant starts out hand in hand with Mr. Gladstone. They agree for once, and when they do agree their unanimity is wonderful. This is what the lady writes:—

"I need not here argue the question of the Divine Existence, whence is our world; for Mr. Gladstone as Christian, and I as Theosophist, can agree that our world and our universe result from the Will and Thought of the Logos, who was and is 'God.'"

Mrs. Besant, then, has a God. When she first put the case for Theosophy before Freethinkers, whom she now leaves to their abject destiny, she kept "God" very much in the background; in fact, she said she had no personal deity whatever. We smiled at the time, not because we thought Mrs. Besant was deceiving, but because we were struck by her surprising innocence. We felt sure that the personal deity would soon make his appearance; and here at length he is, with his attributes as well as his name dignified with capital letters. And having accepted the "God" of Theism, there is no reason why Mrs. Besant should not go to the utmost lengths of orthodox Christianity. Why strain at gnats after swallowing a camel? Nothing is hard to believe when you once have faith enough to accept the doctrine that the universe we know, with all the life of this world as it stands in the light of evolution, was planned by a wise and good Creator. If we believed that God slays people wholesale by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, famine, and disease, we should certainly find it easy enough to believe that he ordered the massacre of the Canaanites. Yes, Bishop Butler was right. If you believe in a God of Nature, you are illogically scrupulous in rejecting the God of the Bible.

Having put her "God" in evidence, Mrs. Besant goes on to explain how he began business, at least with respect to the "universe," which she seems to confine within the bounds of human knowledge.

"If the world be the work of the Logos, and the law of the world's progress in the whole and the parts is sacrifice, then the Law of Sacrifice must point to something in the very nature of the Logos; it must have its root in the Divine Nature itself. A little further thought shows us that if there is to be a world, a universe at all, this can only be by the One Existence conditioning Itself, and thus making manifestation possible, and that the very Logos is the Self-limited God; limited to become manifest, manifested to bring a universe into being; such self-limitation and manifestation can only be a supreme act of sacrifice, and what wonder that on every hand the world should show its birth-mark, and that the Law of Sacrifice should be the law of being, the law of the derived lives. Further, it is an act of sacrifice in order that individuals may come into existence to share the Divine bliss."

Mrs. Besant no doubt thinks she understands this metaphysical jargon. When she was an Atheist she laughed it to scorn, and pointed out that such phrases were unthinkable, and therefore unmeaning. Now she gravely asserts what she formerly derided. But she does not explain her assertions. She does not tell us what is the One Existence—whether it is the one of which (say) a pig or an idiot is a mode. She does not tell us how the Unconditioned could ever become Conditioned, or what it was conditioned by, or how an infinite being could possibly limit himself, or why he sacrificed himself for what he could achieve without any sacrifice. Could it be a sacrifice at all to create beings to share his bliss? Is not that the very height of enjoyment? Do parents sacrifice themselves when they bring children into the world? Do they not enrich their own lives by opening up fresh sources of happiness? It appears to us that Mrs. Besant's "God" is a thoroughly irrational conception. But all theology is at bottom irrational, Mrs. Besant's is no exception; it simply conforms to the universal rule.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

OUR SUN-GOD.*

THE connection of Christianity with ancient sun-worship was elucidated exactly a century ago by Charles François Dupuis in his great work, entitled *Origine de tous les Cultes* (Origin of all Religion). This monument of the erudition of unbelief, as the work of Dupuis has been termed, is certainly out of date, so far as finding a universal explanation of religion in solar worship is concerned. Man is, after all, ever nearest to man. In his own needs, hopes, and fears, in his dreams and in his immediate surroundings, may be found the explanation of his faiths. As a time-measurer, the moon was for a long period yet more important than the sun, and Bastholm mentions tribes who worship the moon without worshipping the sun, though there are few, if any, who worship the sun without worshipping the moon. Yet must the sun in all parts of the world have attracted the curiosity and excited the admiration of early man. With its departure came cold and darkness, and the danger which attended darkness; with its return light, warmth, activity, and joy. He observed how nature blossomed with the strength of the sun and withered at its decline. His conclusion, that the Lord of the sky controlled the destinies of earth, was a natural one. The very essence of the old Egyptian faith was the assimilation of the worshipper to Osiris, and the belief that, as the sun rose and set and rose again, so man might live on through the darkness of the grave.

Max Müller remarks: "If ethnological researches prove anything, they prove that *Heliolatry*, not of course in the sense of a worship paid to a ball of fire, but as a recognition of the supernatural character of the sun as the source of light, warmth, and life, is the most widely-spread form of early faith, meeting us at the Equator as well as near the Pole, among the Indians of the West as well as among the Indians of the East, and therefore not so entirely strange, as classical scholars imagine, when it greets us again and again from behind the thin veil of Greek and Roman mythology." When it is understood that Daphne is a name of the dawn, as Phœbus of the morning sun, the story of the maiden flying from the embraces of the god becomes intelligible.

Can such traces be found in Christianity? Most assuredly they can. The Gospel miracles are all solar in character. The supernatural birth, in midwinter, heralded by a star, the adoration of shepherds and sages, the wonder-working of the god, his cruel death and glorious resurrection, are all features attributed to the sun and vegetation gods of antiquity. The late Mr. R. A. Proctor, in a paper on "The Beginning of Christianity," in *Knowledge* (January, 1887), remarked: "Because the sun brings light it has been taught that the sun-god causes the blind to see; because the sun restores winter's dead to life, the sun-god raises the dead; because the sun restores sickly and diseased vegetation to health, the sun-god heals the sick; because the sun turns the waters which fall on the earth into the rich juice of the vine, the sun-god turns water into wine; because the sun causes the seeds which fall on the earth to bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and even a hundred-fold, therefore the sun-god feeds the world richly out of little; because the sun kills feeble vegetation, the sun-god blasts the barren tree; because the sun rises above the sea-horizon, the sun-god walks upon the water; and because the sun reappears after the darkness of storm, the sun-god stills the tempest."

The principal festivals of the Christian Church are astronomical and regulated by the sun and moon. In the very name Sunday we preserve the central object of worship. Easter celebrates the crossing over the vernal equinox and the resurrection of nature from the power of winter and of death, the bursting of the leaf from the apparently lifeless branch. Whitsuntide represents the fuller outpouring of the divine spirit in bud and blossom; Christmas the reawaking of the new light, the dawn of the longer day. In the old pictures of Christ with a halo of glory, surrounded by his twelve apostles, and distributing the sun-fruits bread and wine, we are forcibly reminded of Apollo surrounded by the signs of the zodiac; and in the orientation of churches we may see another survival of the solar cult.

* *Our Sun-god; or, Christianity before Christ*: by John Denham Parsons. Published by the Author, 7 Crawshaw-road, London, S. W.

I have before now pointed to the important passage in a letter of the emperor Hadrian, not so often quoted as the questionable testimony of Tacitus, and with much more appearance of being genuine, in which the great emperor, having visited Egypt, expressly states that the Christians were worshippers of Serapis, a development of the sun-god, and that their chief priests were known as bishops of Christ. The worship of Mithras, another sun-god, was at the same time widely spread, and probably contributed many items towards the amalgam of Paganism and Judaism found in Christianity.

Mr. Parsons, in the little book before me, dwells on these items. He points to the evidence of the early Fathers, who declared that Christianity was no new thing, but, as St. Augustine said, existed in ancient times. St. Jerome says (in Amos vi. 14): "In our mysteries we first renounce him that is in the West, who dies to us with our sins; and, turning about to the East, we make a covenant with the Sun of Righteousness and promise to be his servants." Mr. Parsons devotes several chapters to showing that the ancient Jewish deity, Malachi's "Sun of Righteousness," was also of solar character. He alludes to his descent in fire, the symbology of the bull, and the serpent of brass, as confirmatory of his theory. His book, while perhaps making somewhat too much of this, contains much matter of interest to students of that great eye-opener, comparative mythology.

J. M. WHEELER.

DID CHRIST WORK MIRACLES?

(Concluded from page 373.)

IN endeavoring to ascertain if the miracles ascribed to Christ are consistent with his alleged "divine" character, it must be remembered that acts performed by or through the dictation of an all-wise and good God should be in harmony with utility, justice, and wisdom. Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that, whatever miraculous works Christ performed, the power to perform them was, according to St. John, given to him by his father. "I can of my own self do nothing. . . . I seek not mine own will, but the will of the father who sent me. . . . For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will" (John v. 30; vi. 38). Thus, if it can be shown that certain miracles which are credited to Christ are not in accordance with wisdom, utility, or justice, the performance of them was no evidence of supernatural power. Let us see what are the facts of the case according to the "inspired" records.

It is stated in Mark (v. 2-13) that one man had "an unclean spirit," which meant that he was possessed with a host of devils; but Matthew, in relating the same circumstance, states there were two persons in this unfortunate position (viii. 28). Both statements are made upon the authority of "God's word," so it will be difficult to say which is right. Jesus, we are told, drove the devils from their human habitation; their departure, we should think, was sufficient to "play up" with the strongest constitution. Of course there could be no objection to relieving the man, or men, of the Satanic imps. But what followed? Instead of destroying the tormentors when they were outside the man or men, Jesus allowed the devils to enter "about two thousand" swine, all of which "ran violently down a steep place into the sea and were choked." This was a great injustice to the owner of the pigs, and a reckless waste of food. This miracle reflects no credit upon Jesus. We fully endorse Professor Huxley's words when he said, referring to this incident: "Every thing that I know of law and justice convinces me that the wanton destruction of other people's property is a misdemeanor of evil example" (*Nineteenth Century*, February, 1889).

The case of Jesus cursing the fig-tree is an instance of wild passion and injustice. Matthew says Christ went to lodge in Bethany, and in the morning, returning into the city, he hungered; when, seeing a fig-tree afar off, he went to it, "if haply he might find anything thereon"; but when he came to it he found nothing but leaves, for the time of figs, observes Mark, was not yet. If Christ had been a wise man, not to mention his being God, he ought to have known the state of the tree before starting to ascertain. Then Jesus said unto the tree, "Let no fruit grow on thee

henceforth for ever," and presently the fig-tree withered away. Is this an indication of divinity? If so, cultivated humanity is vastly superior. St. Augustine suggests, in one of his sermons, that it would have been better had Jesus, instead of cursing the fig-tree, caused it immediately to bring forth the desired fruit by the word of his mouth. Certainly it would have given a hungry man more satisfaction than the sight of a barren tree, besides exhibiting a greater display of "divine" power.

The miracle of turning water into wine, as related in John (c. ii.), was, to say the least, indiscreet and useless. Where is the moral lesson to be derived from this miracle? Has it tended to promote sobriety? Has it not rather afforded a pretence to weak-minded persons for them to indulge in that which, when immoderately used, "steals away the brains"? When Christ beheld his friends and relatives drinking freely, it would have been of more practical value to posterity if, instead of providing them with more wine for their use, he had given them a lesson either in moderation or abstinence. Evidently Christ did not believe with the writer of Proverbs (xx. 1) that "wine is a mocker." If he did, he ought to have known that it was wrong to provide temptation for his disciples. There are many members of the "fallen race" now living who, in this particular, are superior to Jesus the "divine."

The account in Matthew (xiv. 15-21) of feeding "about five thousand men, besides women and children," with "five loaves and two fishes," presents some curious features. If the event really occurred, one of two things must have happened: either the stomachs of the people were contracted (for we are told they "were filled"), or the provisions were more than stated. To have satisfied so many individuals, and then to have "twelve baskets full" left, the weight of the loaves and the size of the fish must have been extraordinary indeed. There is also to be considered the difficulty of dividing five loaves and two fishes into sufficient parts, to enable each one to have even a taste, to say nothing about all of them being "filled," and there being "baskets full" of fragments remaining after the repast. What a capital thing it would be if a similar event could take place to-day; and what a useful lesson it would have been if Christ had told the world how the thing was done. If professed Christians really believe what their master said, why do they not try to emulate him in such good works? He has told them (John xiv. 12-14): "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the father may be glorified in the son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." The fact is, no true believers can be found in this sceptical age, or else they are too indolent to ask "anything" in Christ's name. If this is not so, let them appeal to Jesus for power to do "greater works" than he did, and in time we shall learn the result. May it not be truthfully said to the vast majority of churchgoers to-day, "O, ye of little faith"?

The greatest miracle mentioned in the New Testament is the alleged resurrection of Christ; but, as we have fully dealt in a pamphlet with this subject, only a brief reference to it here is necessary. To substantiate such an improbable event as the alleged resurrection of Jesus, the evidence adduced to support it should be exceedingly clear, and above suspicion of fraud or imposture. This is not the case in reference to the allegation that Christ rose from the dead. While it is frequently affirmed in the Gospels that Jesus was seen after he was crucified, no one directly states that he himself beheld Christ in the flesh. Moreover, even those persons to whom it is supposed Christ appeared failed on those occasions to recognise him. Matthew (xxviii. 17) states that when he appeared to the eleven in Galilee some of them "doubted"; Luke says (xxiv. 16) that the two disciples with whom it is related Christ had a conversation did not know their Master; and, according to John (xx. 15), Mary Magdalene herself failed to recognise him. Where did Christ meet his disciples? According to Matthew (xxviii. 16, 17), by appointment at a mountain in Galilee; whereas Luke asserts (xxiv. 36) that it was at Jerusalem, where the eleven were gathered together, and whence, after he had partaken of fish and honeycomb, Christ was carried up into heaven. It is true against this supposition we read that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians xv. 50). Besides these slight difficulties, we are at a loss to know

who the "eleven gathered at Jerusalem" were. Thomas, says St. John, was not present. Judas had hung himself, and Matthias was not chosen till after the Ascension.

The testimony of St. Paul is anything but satisfactory. His belief in the Resurrection was based upon faith and tradition, not upon knowledge and investigation (Galatians i. 11, 12; 1 Corinthians xv. 3). Moreover, his belief in the then speedy end of the world has proved to be wrong, which shows that he was by no means to be explicitly relied upon in his statements; while his reasoning in favor of the doctrine, as contained in 1 Corinthians xv., is fallacious in the extreme, opposed as it is to experience and the facts of science. St. Paul says: "Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." But this seeing of Jesus occurred in a vision; and what is a vision? The word is used in the New Testament to convey the impression of something otherwise imperceptible to human eyesight being rendered visible by the exercise of supernatural power or influence. It is differentiated from a dream, in so far as the latter is only a mental concept, or series of conceptions, engendered in a state of semi-somnolency—or, to put it plainly, in a state "between sleeping and waking."

These visions are not objective realities, but the result of impaired imagination. Recent experiments by psychologists show that persons in a certain mental condition frequently think they see and hear things which have no actual existence. The habit among scientists is, when they come in contact with any extraordinary event, to investigate the matter with a view of discovering its why and wherefore. It is far more reasonable to seek for a natural cause of phenomena than to attribute them to supernatural sources. The one is within human experience and observation, while the other, if it exist, is outside both. Those who have studied the human mind will probably have been struck with the fact that some of the greatest intellects in all ages have been influenced by the prevailing opinions of their time. This will somewhat explain why eminent writers have so rarely attacked the superstition of their own nation. Accordingly, few popular writers in this country deal with Christianity as they do with other religions. Simply because the prevailing opinion here is that the Christian faith is more sacred than any other, and to treat it lightly, or to criticise it too severely, would be offensive to Mrs. Grundy. Attacks upon the religion of other nations are applauded; but the home article must be let alone, or handled very tenderly.

Miracles are still believed in, and professed to be worked, by the Catholic Church; but Protestants denounce them as frauds, although there is quite as much evidence of their reality as there is of those ascribed to Christ. Dr. Middleton, in his *Free Inquiry*, speaking of miraculous events, writes thus: "If either part be infirm, their credit must sink in proportion; and if the facts be especially incredible, they must of course fall to the ground, because no force of testimony can alter the nature of things." If we apply this rule to the miracles of the New Testament, the unbiased reader will readily see that all the noise made about their truth is "sound and fury, signifying nothing." Certainly the following is most incredible: that a man was born without a human father; that Lazarus should come from the grave "bound hand and foot with grave clothes," after he was dead and decomposition had set in; that saints, who had been dead and confined in their graves, should rise and go into the city; that Christ did not work miracles in consequence of the unbelief of the people; that if the miracles really took place, his disciples would have lacked faith in his power; and that Jesus should be performing a miracle at Cana of Galilee while he was in the wilderness of Judea. These stories cannot be believed except at the sacrifice of reason and common sense, and, therefore, we reject them.

CHARLES WATTS.

If God could exist without a cause, then the universe could also. If you can imagine a God who existed without the world from eternity, then you can much easier imagine a world that existed from eternity without God. If I once assume that the universe, this great organism of suns and stars, could have arisen from nothing, then verily there is also nothing to prevent me from crediting that it arose without the assistance of a God.—Karl Heinzen.

BIBLE FICTIONS.

IV.—THE HISTORY OF JOSEPH.

THE Bible "history" of the mythical patriarch Joseph thus commences: "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his other children, *because he was the son of his old age*; and he made him a coat of many colors" (Genesis xxxvii. 3). This statement reads like the commencement of a fairy tale, and is, in fact, of the same character. If Jacob loved Joseph better than his other sons, it was *not* because he was the son of his old age. According to Genesis xxix. 20, xxx. 26, and xxxi. 41, all Jacob's sons, with the exception of Benjamin, were born during his second term of seven years' service with Laban. Zebulon was born in the same year as Joseph; Asher and Issachar were only one year older, and Reuben the eldest was but six years his senior. Yet the inspired writer represents Joseph as little more than a lad, and the other ten sons of Jacob as men of mature years.

We are next told by this veracious historian that Joseph had two dreams, which foreshadowed his occupying, at some future time, such a high position that all the members of his family should "do obeisance" to him. On relating to his father and brothers the second of these dreams—one in which the sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed down before him—Jacob is represented as saying: "Shall I and thy mother, and thy brethren, indeed, come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?" (xxxvii. 10).

Now, it is evident from the words italicised that Jacob believed his wife Rachel (Joseph's mother) to be then living with him, and it is equally evident that the writer intended this to be understood; the moon in the dream symbolised Rachel. But, according to Genesis xxxv. 19, Jacob's favorite wife had long been dead. Thus we read: "And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath . . . and Jacob set up a pillar upon her grave," etc. The inspired writer, when fabricating the story of the dreams, had forgotten this circumstance. The matter is not of much importance, but it serves at least to indicate that we are dealing with fiction, not history. Of course, if the story of the dreams, and of Joseph being the favorite of his father "because he was the son of his old age," be fictitious, that of the jealousy and hatred of his brothers, which caused them to put him in a pit and afterwards to sell him, may be set down as of the same character; one is represented as the result of the other.

Jacob's sons, we are told, sold their brother to a company of *Ishmaelites*, who carried him down to Egypt (xxxvii. 25-28). These *Midianites* sold him to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officers (xxxvii. 36), and Potiphar bought him "of the hand of the *Ishmaelites* which had brought him down thither" (xxxix. 1). To this there is nothing to be said, except that the *Ishmaelites* were not *Midianites*. In the house of Potiphar Joseph was advanced to a position of trust. Though but a youth, and without the smallest experience in business matters, his new master "made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had." Here an event occurred which renders his name proverbial. Being "comely and well-favored," his master's wife conceived a violent passion for him, and made certain overtures which, as a virtuous youth, he rejected with abhorrence. In revenge, the lady falsely accused him to her husband, and Joseph was cast into prison. Here, however, "the Lord was with him," and gave him power to foresee future events. Having correctly interpreted the dreams of a butler and a baker, he was subsequently released to interpret a dream of Pharaoh's, which having satisfactorily accomplished, he was made ruler "over all the land of Egypt." In this exalted position his brothers, several years later, came and bowed themselves down before him, as prefigured in his dreams.

So runs the story; but the presence of one word in it suffices to prove it a fabrication. After the rejection of her proposals to Joseph, Potiphar's wife calls the men of her house and tells them that her husband "hath brought in an *Hebrew* unto us to mock us; he came in unto me," etc. (xxxix. 14). Later, when accusing Joseph to his master, she says: "The *Hebrew* servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me," etc. (xxxix. 17). Again, Pharaoh's butler, when speaking of Joseph to the king, says: "And there was there a young man, an *Hebrew*, servant of the captain of the guard," etc. (xli. 12).

Now, these several statements imply that Joseph was of the Hebrew nation. The expression, "an Englishman" or "an English servant," presupposes the existence of an English nation, and could not be employed before such a nation had arisen. So the term, "a Hebrew," or "a Hebrew servant," clearly implies that the Israelites were at that time a separate people. The name is employed, too, as if the nation to which Joseph belonged was well known to every Egyptian. Potiphar's wife had heard of this nation; her servants had also heard of it; Potiphar had a knowledge of it; the butler knew of its existence; so did Pharaoh. Yet, it is scarcely necessary to say, there was no nation called "Hebrews" at that time. Jacob and his sons, who were unknown to the Egyptians, were the only persons in existence who might, perhaps, be designated "Hebrews"; but they had never called themselves by that name.

We have, however, a further proof of fabrication. The inspired writer represents Joseph as saying to Pharaoh's butler: "For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the *Hebrews*," etc. (xl. 15). From this statement we can form a just estimate of the Bible word, "indeed." There was no "land of the Hebrews" in Joseph's time; there was no land of the Hebrews even in the time of Moses, who is said to have been the writer of the story. We know, also, from the Egyptian monuments, that down to the time of Ramses III. Palestine was called "the land of the Amorites" and "the land of the Hittites." The latter name further appears in Assyrian inscriptions several hundred years later.

We read in Genesis xiv. 14 that Abraham, after defeating four kings, "pursued them unto Dan," and again in Deuteronomy xxxiv. 1 that God showed Moses "all the land of Gilead, unto Dan." There was, however, no place of that name until long after Moses' time (Judges xviii. 29). A reconciliation is in this case attempted by ascribing the employment of the word "Dan" to a later writer or copyist, who is said to have inserted the name by which the city was known in his own day. But an explanation of this nature, assuming it to be satisfactory in the incident relating to Dan, cannot be applied to the matter under consideration. In the latter we have to do, not with the writer's own words (as in speaking of a place as "Dan"), but with the utterances of the chief characters in the story. If these be false—as they undoubtedly are—it must be waste of time examining the veritable "history" of Joseph further. It must not be forgotten, too, that "Joseph," like his reputed father, "Jacob," was the name of a Canaanitish deity, worshipped in Palestine as early as 1600 B.C. The fact is in itself a proof that the Bible stories of these two patriarchs are fictitious.

There remains to be noticed an Egyptian work of fiction, called *The Tale of the Two Brothers*, composed by a scribe named Enna, about 1400 B.C. This story is thought by some to have suggested to the sacred writer the incident of Potiphar's wife. Upon this point, however, I have some doubts. According to this narrative, a man, named Anpu, working one day in the fields with his younger brother, Bata, sent the latter to his house to fetch some "seed-corn." "And the younger brother found the wife of his elder brother occupied in braiding her hair." Having loaded himself with corn, he was about to leave the house, when "she rose up and laid hold of him and said to him, Come, let us enjoy an hour's rest. . . . And he spoke to her and said, O woman, thou hast been to me like a mother, and thy husband like a father, for he is older than I, so that he might have been my parent. Why hast thou spoken to me of so great a sin?" In the evening, upon her husband's return, the lady accused the younger brother, saying: "When he came to take seed-corn for thee, he found me sitting alone, and he said to me, Come, let us make merry an hour and rest. Let down thy hair. . . . And he used force with me, that I might not make a report to thee. Now, if thou allowest him to live, I will kill myself." Believing this tale, Anpu caught up a knife and went in search of his younger brother; but the latter, having been warned of his danger by the cows (whose language he understood), escaped. Later the elder brother learned the truth, whereupon he cut his wife in pieces, and gave her remains to the dogs.

The younger brother, after this, lived in a hut under a cedar tree, and received from the gods a most beautiful wife. The latter, after a time, left him to live with the king, who married her. Bata then transformed himself

into an Apis bull, and afterwards into a tree. Lastly, he was born as the son of his former wife, and when he grew up became king of Egypt.

VERITAS.

A CHANGE OF HEART.

THERE are two ways of influencing people to change their opinions. One is by an appeal to their reason, and the other by an appeal to their emotions. Upon all questions except that of religion, everybody concedes that the first is not only the best, but the only sensible and proper way; and Liberals make no exception in the matter of religion.

With them, when any proposition is offered for their acceptance, the only question is, Is it true? and the only way of settling that question is by reasoning upon the evidence for and against the truth of the proposition. If the evidence is strong enough to convince their minds of its truth, they believe in it. If it falls short of convincing evidence, then they reject it.

Christians, on the other hand, while recognising the validity of the rule of the supremacy of reason upon all other questions, ignore it entirely when they come to the matter of religion, and, through the influence of early teaching, shut off their reasoning faculties, and, giving way to emotional feelings, profess a belief in propositions that their reason would condemn as foolish and absurd, if they would but allow it to have any weight in the matter. It is for this reason that the clergy strive so hard to influence the young before their reasoning faculties are developed, well knowing that, if they can once bring these immature minds within the influence of the Church, it will be next to impossible for them to break away from it.

For this reason creeds and confessions of faith are constituted, most of them containing much that has no foundation in common sense or scripture, but which must be accepted through the fundamental principle of all religious faith. That is, suppress your reason and believe all we tell you, no matter what the evidence is; no matter if all nature and science cry aloud to your brains that it is absurd and impossible, believe it all by faith—another name for credulity.

Open your mouth and shut your eyes,
And I'll give you something to make you wise,

is the old couplet by which school children used to fool the simple ones; and revival methods are but the counterpart of the same trick to fool the simple ones who trust in the promise; but there the analogy ends; for while the little child—by the exercise of his reason—finds out that he has been tricked by the nauseous dose that has been put into his mouth, the convert is made to believe that he or she has received the Holy Ghost, or something equivalent, and through life, by faith, continues to cultivate the delusion.

Under mesmeric conditions, or hypnotism, the victim may be made to believe the worst tasting things to be delicacies, and smack his lips as if they were good. So, by the same influence, the revival preacher, by suggestions, makes the convert believe that he or she has experienced a change of heart, and thus secured his or her salvation from the never-ending torments of hell-fire.

But what is this change of heart? The heart is but a muscle, and in no way the seat of sensation or feeling. It may be changed by ossification or fatty degeneration, but such changes signify nothing but disease, and in no way influence the opinions or character of the person who owns them. The phrase, "change of heart," was invented by ignorant men, who knew nothing of physiology, or any other science; who thought the heart was the seat of the soul, the centre of feeling, and the controller of character; but we now know that that function belongs to the brain alone, and that the heart is the least sensitive of all the organs of the body, and has less to do with the formation of the character, or manifestation of feeling, than any other. But supposing, for the sake of argument, that a change of heart means all that Christians claim for it; what is the benefit of it? and how does it influence the character and conduct of the person who has experienced it? Do they not have the same impulses and tendencies that they had before? It is true that for a time, while under the influence of religious

excitement, they may fancy that they are changed, and one mental excitement overlays and draws all others; but nature re-asserts itself, and the victim finds that he or she is just what nature made them.

Look at the ministers, who must be supposed to have all experienced the change of heart; are they not human, and subject to the temptations of "the world, the flesh, and the Devil"? Yes; and is it not proved by the records of our courts that there are more clergymen in our penitentiaries than there are of Infidels, ten to one?

Women, from their more sensitive nervous organisation, unhygienic dress and habits, and superficial education, are, in nine cases out of ten, the victims of this delusion of a change of heart, especially those of immature age, just emerging from girlhood into maturity, when they are most sensitive to nervous and emotional excitement. The revival preacher paints in vivid colors the flames of hell and the never-ending torments of those who do not experience a change of heart. All reasoning power is smothered in the deluge of emotional excitement, and the one dominant passion, for the time being, is fear, overwhelming fear. The condition of the victim is analagous to that of the delirium of fever, or the extravaganza of nightmare. It is like the hot period of fever, and, like that, is succeeded by a period of exhaustion, when the victim sinks into a semi-trance, and imagines that the work of God in her heart is complete, and that that insensible muscle has been changed. It is like the breaking of a wild horse. The will has given way under the tremendous strain of feeling, and she resigns herself to a power that she feels to be uncontrollable. Henceforth she is the docile instrument of the church and minister, and helps to decoy other immature victims into the same trap.

But in what respect has she been changed by this mythical change of heart? If she was kind and good before, she will still be kind and good. If she was irritable, malicious, and quarrelsome before, the same character will be observed after the so-called change. In one particular, however, she is changed, immeasurably for the worse. She now dares not think—that is, she dares not question the truth of the tenets of her Church, or venture into any investigation of them. To her faith has interdicted any exercise of reason upon those subjects, and denounced damnation for her if she attempts to find out whether they are true or not. There is one chamber in her mind that she is forbidden to enter—the noblest and best of all the gifts of nature, the one that constitutes man the highest of all organised beings—the faculty of reason.

Like the fatal closet in the castle of Bluebeard, any attempt to discover what the faculty of reason has to say about religion is the unpardonable sin. Bluebeard is the great "I am," the mythical God of all religion, and his murdered victims were the martyred Freethinkers who had curiosity enough to look for the truth, without regard to consequences. Freethought is the genius that shall come in due time to kill this old Bluebeard of the sky, and prevent the further sacrifice of seekers after truth.

The doctrine of a change of heart—like a great many other doctrines of the Church—derives no sanction from the Bible. Jesus never taught it, nor did any of his disciples or apostles. The only place where anything like it is mentioned in the holy book is found in the story of Nebuchadnezzar being turned out to grass. God there says (Daniel iv. 16): "Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given to him, and let seven times pass over him."

This is all that "the blessed Book" has to say about a change of heart, and this is the only case of such a change in all history. Such a case affords but little support for the modern notion of a change of heart through revival methods; but it is a fact that the revival change seems often to change the disposition to that of a beast, as it did Nebuchadnezzar's. That is, it banishes the victim's reasoning power, and leaves him or her to the operation and direction of the purely animal part of his nature; and, when such a change takes place, the proper place for the victim would seem to be, to be turned out to grass among the beasts, as was the King of Babylon in the story; or, better still, to be sent to a lunatic asylum, where scientific treatment might restore the patient to the use of reason.

Now, what is the remedy for this disease—for disease it is—of faith? It is a disease that paralyses the intellect, and interdicts the use of the only faculty that enables us to judge of right and wrong, of truth and falsehood.

As I have before shown, there is no such thing as a change of heart. From the nature of the human race the change must mean nothing but a change of mind; and such a change implies the right to change it again whenever we find that our former opinion is not true.

The brain is the organ of the mind, and its action results in what we call intellect. To the intellect, then, we must appeal to settle the truth or falseness of any opinions we have formed, hastily, under the pressure of over-excited emotion. It is the duty of everyone to hold the mind open at all times to the reception of truth; and that we may be enabled to recognise the truth, we must welcome all evidence that is convincing, whether it comes from a "Thus saith the Lord" or the speculations of men. Do this, and you shall find that peace of mind that passeth all the fabled joys of a paradise among the clouds.

—Independent Pulpit.

J. P. RICHARDSON.

UP FOR JUDGMENT.

By A. SCALLYWAG.

ST. PETER stood guard at the golden gate,
With solemn mein and an air sedate,
When up to the top of the golden stair
A man and a woman, ascending there,
Applied for admission. They came and stood
Before St. Peter, so great and good,
In hope the City of Peace to win,
And asked St. Peter to let them in.
The woman was tall, and lank, and thin,
With a scraggly beardlet upon her chin.
The man was short, and thick, and stout;
His stomach was built so it rounded out.
His face was pleasant, and all the while
He wore a kindly and genial smile.
The choirs in the distance the echoes woke,
And the man kept still while the woman spoke.
"Oh, thou who guardest the gate," said she,
"We come hither, beseeching thee
To let us enter the Heavenly Land,
And play our harps with the Angel Band.
Of me, St. Peter, there is no doubt;
There's nothing from Heaven to bar me out.
I've been to the meeting three times a week,
And almost always I'd rise to speak.
I've told the sinners about the day
When they'd repent of their evil way;
I've told my neighbors—I've told them all—
'Bout Adam and Eve, and the Primal Fall.
I've shown 'em what they'd have to do
If they pass in with the chosen few.
I've marked their path of duty clear—
Laid out the plan of their whole career.
I've talked and talked to 'em loud and long,
For my lungs are good, and my voice is strong;
So, good St. Peter, you'll clearly see
The gate of Heaven is open for me.
But my old man, I regret to say,
Hasn't walked in exactly the narrow way;
He smokes and he swears, and grave faults he's got,
And I don't know whether he'll pass or not.
He would never pray with an earnest vim,
Or go to revival, or join in a hymn;
So I had to leave him in sorrow there,
While I, with the chosen, united in prayer.
He ate what the pantry chose to afford,
While I, in my purity, sang to the Lord.
And if cucumbers were all he got,
It's a chance whether he merited them or not.
But oh, St. Peter, I love him so;
To the pleasures of Heaven please let him go!
I've done enough—a saint I've been.
Won't that atone? Can't you let him in?
By my grim Gospel, I know 'tis so,
That the unrepentant must fry below.
But isn't there some way you can see
That he may enter who's dear to me?
It's a narrow Gospel by which I pray,
But the chosen expect to find some way
Of coaxing, or fooling, or bribing you
So that their relations can amble through.
And say, St. Peter, it seems to me
This gate isn't kept as it ought to be.
You ought to stand right by the opening there,
And never sit down in that easy chair.
And say, St. Peter, my sight is dimmed,
But I don't like the way your whiskers are trimmed:
They're cut too wide, and outward toss;
They'd look better narrow, cut straight across.

Well, we must be going, our crown to win;
So open, St. Peter, and we'll pass in."
St. Peter sat quiet, and stroked his staff,
But, in spite of his office, he had to laugh;
Then said, with a fiery gleam in his eye:
"Who's tending this gateway—you or I?"
And then he arose in his stature tall,
And pressed a button upon the wall,
And said to the imp who answered the bell,
"Escort this female around to Hell!"
The man stood still as a piece of stone—
Stood sadly, gloomily, there alone.
A long-life settled idea he had
That his wife was good and he was bad.
He thought if the woman went down below,
That he would certainly have to go;
That if she went to the regions dim,
There wasn't a ghost of a show for him.
Slowly he turned, by habit bent,
To follow wherever the woman went.
St. Peter, standing on duty there,
Observed that the top of his head was bare.
He called the gentleman back, and said:
"Friend, how long have you been wed?"
"Thirty years" (with a weary sigh);
And then he thoughtfully added, "Why?"
St. Peter was silent, with head bent down;
He raised his hand and scratched his crown;
Then, seeming a different thought to take,
Slowly, half to himself, he spake:
"Thirty years with that woman there?
No wonder the man hasn't any hair!
Swearing is wicked, smoke's not good;
He smoked and swore: I should think he would!
Thirty years! with that tongue so sharp!
Oh, Angel Gabriel, give him a harp!
A jewelled harp with a golden string.
Good sir, pass in where the angels sing.
Gabriel, give him a seat alone—
One with a cushion—up near the throne.
Call up some angels to play their best;
Let him enjoy the music—and rest!
See that on finest Ambrosia he feeds;
He's had about all the hell he needs:
It isn't just hardly the thing to do
To roast him on earth and the future too."
They gave him a harp with golden strings,
A glittering robe and a pair of wings;
And he said, as he entered the realm of day,
"Well, this beats cucumbers, any way."
And so the old Scripture text stands fast:
The last shall be first, and the first shall be last.

ACID DROPS.

THE House of Commons has had a discussion over Oliver Cromwell, and the vote for the expense of a statue of the Great Protector was only carried by a narrow majority. It was no special business of the Irish members, but they rose to the occasion, and called Cromwell a liar, a hypocrite, and a murderer. Many other compliments were passed on the mighty dead, and altogether it was a good thing for a lot of brave members of Parliament that Cromwell was not handy with a company of his Ironsides. The most curious thing in the whole discussion was that nobody appeared to understand that Cromwell was the first great statesman in English history who understood, and as far as possible practised, religious toleration. Cromwell has his imperishable monument already in the history of England.

Since the above paragraph was in type the House has had another debate on this Cromwell statue, and a large majority has refused to honor the greatest of English rulers. Such is the wisdom of our National Palaver! There is some consolation for us in knowing that it was reserved for a Freethinker, Mr. John Morley, to rise above the squabble of parties and do justice to Cromwell, although he was a Christian.

A venerable professor, in moving a resolution at the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland against the "Armenian Atrocities," wound up by saying that "Britain required to speak out with all her voice, and, if necessary, with all her guns as well." That's the style! Let the Christians keep it up, and we shall have a nice big war in the east of Europe—all for the glory of the Prince of Peace.

Christians can challenge the world in talking nonsense, but when it comes to talking with guns they take the first prize easily.

Paul said, "I suffer not a woman to teach," and "Let the women keep silence in the churches;" but some hundred and fifty of them were ready to orate in the churches last week. The sacred ministry, thanks to Paul and the Christian Church, was the last resort of male exclusiveness, and now the New Woman is capturing that.

It is well that women are taking up the cause of Temperance, but there is a danger of their resorting to impossible remedies. We do not believe they will ever *force* men into sobriety. They might *lead* where they cannot *drive*. A woman's smile is ten times more commanding than her frown. When she resorts to compulsion she is playing a game in which she is sure to be worsted.

The women who are orating at the International Temperance meetings in London are all in favor of "prohibition." That is, they want to sail by the north-west passage, to take a short cut to the millennium. Well, there is *no* short cut. It may be sad, but it is nevertheless true; and the lessons of history are, after all, better guides than the unrestrained enthusiasm of lady reformers.

The Temperance ladies had a "special service" last Sunday morning at the City Temple. They were strong on "prohibition," which has nothing very "spiritual" about it. They also talked a lot about "Christ"—a gentleman who turned a large quantity of water into wine at a social party, and drank wine himself at the last meal he ever took before his unfortunate decease.

Miss Belle Kearney, a Mississippi lady, said there were "scores of Christian young women earnestly longing to do something"—which is very creditable to them; only it is a pity they haven't something to do already. She begged them to take part in this work, and wield the dagger of prohibition to slay the monster of drink. Alas! that monster is too tough to be slain in this easy fashion. In the course of time these Christian young women may learn that drunkenness is less a symptom of personal immorality than of social disease. Let the Temperance ladies work ten hours a day in a depressing atmosphere, let them live in one or two rooms in a back street or a filthy slum, let them rest at night where sleep but half refreshes, and they will soon understand the attraction of the public-house. Men will have some excitement, if it is only the excitement of drink; they will have some cheerfulness, if it is only in the gaslight of a bar or taproom.

Miss Kearney spoke of the Temperance agitation as "the most blessed work ever known." Perhaps she will tell us, as a Christian, why Jesus Christ neglected this "most blessed work." Why did he leave it for the "impostor" Mohammed to establish a teetotal religion?

Lady Somerset did not say much about "Christ," but she said a good deal about "God," who is understood to be a near relation. She declared that their efforts would be futile without "a new baptism of the spirit of God." Well, if that is what the Temperance movement is waiting for, its success is not likely to be immediate. Christians seldom take up a good cause until it has made considerable headway, and then they generally spoil it with sectarianism, cant, and sentimentality.

A model newspaper is to be published at Chicago. It will have no Sunday issue, and that of Monday will be set up on Saturday night. It will give no record of crimes. The trouble is that the model people, who call for such a model paper, will go on buying their wicked rivals in order to learn the news.

Public Opinion, of New York, reviewing a book on the Emperor Julian by Miss Alice Gardner, says: "Miss Gardner has made a book which is at once accurate and readable. Some of the traditions about Julian are indeed ruthlessly swept aside as mythical; we note with some regret that the saying, 'Galilean, thou hast conquered,' has gone the way of most other famous death-bed remarks that were never uttered." Why should *Public Opinion*, which is a very ably-conducted paper, regret the exposure of a falsehood promulgated by priests in the interest of their own superstition?

Joseph Canning, who murdered his sweetheart in Bermondsey, has all along expressed his expectation of meeting her in heaven when executed. It is a consoling faith is Christianity.

At Newcastle Police-court Samuel Bryson was remitted to the workhouse as insane. He was charged with creating an obstruction in Brunswick-place by preaching from the Bible. A policeman asked him to desist, but he said he was working for God, and God should be obeyed rather than man. When examined by the doctor he quoted texts, and

said that if locked up he would pray till the gates opened and let him out. The doctor said there was no doubt of his insanity, whereby he appears to have meant that he was a genuine believer. If the old prophets and apostles could return, they would stand a good chance of sharing the fate of Samuel.

The man who edits the "Monthly Record of the New Cross and Brockley Young Men's Christian Association" should really be more careful. Under the heading of "Personal" he writes as follows: "Congratulations to our friend, Mr. H. G. Hearn, on his marriage with Miss T. Ward, which has lately been consummated." This is *personal*, with a vengeance.

Rev. Henry George Benjamin Lemoine was found guilty at the Norwich Assizes of defrauding a local tradesman. The man of God said that the "still small voice of conscience" did not accuse him. The Lord Chief Justice remarked that the still small voice of the jury did. Sentence—twelve months' hard labor, afterwards remitted to six.

Another man of God, the Rev. Allen Zechariah Grace, got into trouble at the Bow-street Police-court, London. He was charged with stealing various articles from a restaurant. Prisoner wrote a "beautiful and affecting letter" to the magistrate, who generously remanded him to "see what could be done for him." If something is *done* for him, we hope he will *do* no more restaurants. Losing four children a few years ago is really no excuse for robbery to-day, even if the money is wanted for drink.

The Rev. William Jackson Holmes has been committed for trial by the Faversham magistrates on a charge of stealing a gold watch chain and jewellery from Miss Ellen Partes, whose father entertained him while conducting a Wesleyan Mission. Prisoner had to undergo a month's imprisonment at Manchester before the Faversham police could lay hands on him.

At Ludlow, Mr. John B. Wood Henley, a J.P., was charged with using threatening language to Sir Charles Henry Rouse Boughton, Bart., of Downton Hall. The evidence went to show that the dispute took place after church on the 26th ult. The defendant admitted calling Sir Charles a bully, a coward, and a liar, and said "he thought the words adaptable for the occasion." After a long hearing the Bench dismissed the case, and ordered each party to pay his own costs.

Christian sects go on multiplying. The latest addition is the Link of Love, or the Towel and Basin Circle. This refers to J. C.'s washing his disciples' feet. By-and-by we shall have a Dish and Finger-Fork Circle, with reference to the Last Supper.

The Presbyterian Synod of Tennessee, being anxious to set the Bible up properly, resolved "that the Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God, and if there are any errors in it they do not affect its inspiration." Presently it dawned on them that they had made fools of themselves. How could an *infallible* book contain any *errors*? So the foolish resolution was rescinded.

The Rev. John Morrow, of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, is the leader of what an American paper calls a novel religion, but which, in its main elements, is a very ancient and basic one indeed. He teaches that the work of sanctification should be carried out until shame is dead and men and women appear together in a state of nudity.

The Rev. C. W. Savidge, a rival religionist, has gone to some trouble to examine the female converts of the Rev. J. Morrow. Several ladies said they had heard of it, but did not follow it out, owing, perhaps, to not having attained sufficient holiness. A Mrs. Christenson, however, acknowledged being a follower of the faith of Morrow, having sat in sessions with him. The meetings were always held at the homes of the sisters, sittings having been attended by Mrs. Christenson at her own house, and at that of Mrs. Thomas Grocox, who is also a believer. The husbands of Mrs. Christenson and of Mrs. Grocox offered no objection to the service, but did not participate. Mrs. Christenson explained that Morrow taught that the services of nudity should be held only in private in the homes of the members. In all the instances she knew he was the only man who participated, no others, we suppose, having the necessary sanctification.

Dr. Horton was unkind to a brother clergyman, the late Rev. Mr. Malthus. How absurd, he remarked, was the prediction of Malthus of a time when the progress of population would exceed the growth of the means of subsistence. Dr. Horton has never read Malthus, or is incapable of understanding him.

We notice that the *Methodist Times* is going to have a special department for "personal Holiness." The first duty of the writers in that part of the paper should be to teach Mr. Price Hughes to tell the truth. If they cannot teach him to do it, they might at least remind him of its necessity.

For some time we have watched the advertising career of a gentleman in the W.C. district of London. When we first noticed his advertisements they were of moderate dimensions. He now takes half a page, and we see his big advertisements in the Christian papers; which is very strange, for he sells a cure for corpulency, and how on earth can the followers of Jesus Christ grow fat? This "corpulency" gentleman gives opinions of the press on his specific, and these opinions have a curious resemblance to each other. Occasionally they are almost word for word. For instance, *Forget-me-Not* says: "It is marvellous how this 'Pasteur' and 'Koch' of English discoverers can actually reduce as much as 14lb. in seven days with a simple herbal remedy." The *Southport Visitor* also says: "It is marvellous how this 'Pasteur' and 'Koch' of English discoverers can actually reduce so much as 14lb. in seven days with a simple herbal remedy." It is positively certain that these two "opinions" were written by the same hand. Whose hand it is not very difficult to judge. The curer of corpulency was ill-advised to let these identical expressions of unbiased editorial opinion appear in the same advertisement; but perhaps he thought it did not matter in a journal like the *Methodist Times*.

If a Christian wants to diminish his obesity, he need not try a corpulency-curer's specific. He has only to follow the Bible injunction of "fast and pray."

An American paper says: "A. J. Blackwell, the rich and erratic Indian, who owns the city of Blackwell and David City, in the Indian Territory, has donated \$300,000 to build a temple at David City, of peculiar model, for the perpetuation of Indian religion. He says he saw God in a vision, who commanded him to erect the temple. It will be open to all Indians, but not to any other race, and will be furnished with an interior garden, to symbolise the Indians' love for nature." The Red Indian, like the white Christian or olive Jew, sees God in a dream, and leaves no description of his appearance. Probably he is not foolish enough to father another person's child on the strength of a dream, like Joseph.

The *Spectator* of last week, writing on "Herbert Spencer's Agnosticism," deals with his contention, that all our notions of deity are human, in the following manner: "It would be as reasonable to say that, because a child's conceptions must be childish, they cannot be shaped and directed and prepared for future development by the mind of the child's parent or tutor." Surely it is sufficient answer to this that the child has actual experience of his parent or tutor, while man has no such experience of God. When to this is added the fact that all notions of God betray their human origin, vary as men vary, and are of bad genesis, because springing from human animism and fetishism, the reflection follows that all interpretation of the universe in the terms of finite man must be futile and misleading, which, we take it, is Herbert Spencer's position.

Is it true that "Mr. Slater, the wonderful clairvoyant and psychometrist of California," who is now advertised in the Spiritist papers as giving *séances* in London, is identical with the medium Slade who was convicted of fraud and sentenced to imprisonment at Bow-street in 1876?

The spiritist who informed us that Slater was Slade must have been mistaken, and the spirit who told him must have been a Diakka, one of those mischievous, lying spirits from the Lord who so frequently haunt the poor mejums. For J. J. Morse, himself a leading trance mejum, says in *Light*, that Mr. Slater is, "without doubt, the most wonderful test medium, psychometrist, and psychic that the United States or any other country possesses at the present time"; that he has known this "some ten years"; and that "Mr. Slater's record as a man and a medium is all that can be desired." Now, since Mr. Slade has not only been convicted of fraud, but has more recently been in an asylum for inebriates, clearly he cannot be the same as Mr. Slater. The spirit who suggested their identity must have been of the same species that Jehovah sent to deceive King Ahab.

Light, by the way, for June 15, contains some funny letters. One is from "the leader of the circle" at a certain notorious mejum's performances in the N.W. district. He sends a spirit photograph to the editor. Two signed letters immediately follow, calling the mejum a fraud. One says: "I distinctly noticed that the female spirits all had beards under the chin, corresponding exactly with that worn by the medium. The drapery used to disguise the face failed to disguise this from my eyes."

Sir J. W. Dawson writes to the *New York Science* from Montreal to give his opinion that the four rivers of Eden are

the Kherkhat, Karun, Tigris, and Euphrates. The only trouble is that these four rivers are not one, and none of them flow through Ethiopia.

The publisher of a paper that is virulent in its abuse of the *Freethinker* issues a pamphlet on *The High Church Confessional*. Here is a specimen of its chastened language: "There is not a conceivable species of indecency in sexual intercourse which is not particularised in these 'Holy Fathers' as fit matter to pour into the ears of women of every age and degree, married and unmarried. Indeed, so minute, full, and loathsome are the instructions given to these ministers of lust in their intercourse with females that the most abandoned women in the dirtiest brothels of London would blush to read them in connection with the holy name of religion." While this is the way in which one set of religionists write of another set, we may reasonably hope that the days of Christian Reunion are still distant.

Rochefort's paper reports that the clericals are in very bad odor at the commune of Rimogne, an important place in the Ardennes. The clergy have all disappeared, and all ceremonies are conducted civically. Two Sundays ago a priest came by train from Tillette. One of the inhabitants asked him what he wanted, and he replied that he had some one to see. "That may be," was the rejoinder, "but if you are not out of the village in five minutes, the clarion will sound, and you will be conducted to the station by more than a thousand persons." The priest was off in a hurry.

It is reported that two infants, joined together like the Siamese twins, have been born at New York. Devotees of the Design Argument should try to explain this abnormality. Is the Great Designer liable to eccentric moods, or did he arrange these inseparable twins on purpose, so that their parents might earn money by exhibiting them? We might ask some more questions, but we should like to have these answered first.

The Koran forbids the use of alcoholic drinks. The Bible recommends them. How curious it is, then, to open a paper like the *Methodist Times* and to find it full of the Local Veto Bill and the best way to make the people of this country teetotalers. And the joke is that all this zeal in favor of teetotalism is manifested by Christians, and by the very Christians, for the most part, who persist in forcing their bibber's handbook into the hands of children in our public schools. Verily a Christian is a most extraordinary bundle of contradictions.

In deciding a case under the Welsh Sunday Closing Act, the judge declared that the amount of chicanery, prevarication, and perjury resorted to for the purpose of evading the law was demoralising to the country.

The Rev. John Robertson declares that, by his *Ascent of Man*, "Professor Drummond has damned the souls of thousands of young men throughout the country." This is his thanks for seeking to reconcile Evolution with Christianity by means of gush and imagination.

The Committee of the Canadian Senate, appointed to deal with the question of divorce, have resigned because nearly half of the Senate Final Court of Appeal have decided, for religious reasons, to vote against all applications for divorce, without hearing the evidence. The Senate Court consists of thirty-nine Protestants and thirty-two Catholics. All the latter, and some of the High Churchmen of the former, will have no divorce on any account whatever. The action of the committee will probably lead to the beneficial change of having a proper Divorce Court established in Canada, instead of the matter being left to the tribunal of the Senate.

Dr. Prestwich has just published a work on Geology and the Flood. He accepts what the *Christian World* calls "the now generally established view" that the Jewish story of the Flood was borrowed from Babylon. He thinks there was a big flood at the close of the post-glacial period, ten or twelve thousand years ago; and the original fact, in the course of ages, got overlaid with legends; amongst them, of course, being the story of Captain Noah and his wonderful sailing menagerie.

At a prayer-meeting in Brighton, New York, a young man got up and confessed to several forgeries. A few prayer-meetings of that kind seem to be wanted in England.

Dr. Horton, of Hampstead, has been addressing the St. Edmund's Guild—consisting, we believe, of Board School teachers, on "Earthly Joys." This is a subject which the clergy are beginning to take up with considerable zeal. They used to regard this earth as a vale of tears; but a good many of them now regard it as a big music-hall, with a fine variety entertainment, provided free, gratis for nothing by God Almighty.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

June 30, Camberwell.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—June 23 and 30, Hall of Science, London. July 23, August 4 and 11, Camberwell.—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.

GEORGE WISE.—We insert your letter. But why did you assume that the paragraph referred to you? Remember the French proverb—*Qui s'excuse s'accuse*.

A. G. LEVETT.—Thanks for cuttings.

F. BERRY (Plymouth).—Mr. Foote could not possibly pay you another visit in the spring. It was not easy for him to foresee the recent development of affairs in London, with all its worries and anxieties. You may rely upon a visit from Mr. Foote in the autumn, and he will write in a few days offering you a date. With respect to letters, you must remember that Mr. Foote does not keep a secretary, that he has to do everything with his own hands, and that he has more than he can do, though he works seven days a week.

J. M. R. B.—All right, in the special circumstances.

G. TURNER (Brighton).—Always glad of good jokes, original or selected.

F. C.—Thanks for cutting. The *Freethinker* tracts are sixpence per hundred.

C. WRIGHT.—The proportion of criminals in India is, among native Christians, 1 in 799; Mohammedans, 1 in 856; Hindoos, 1 in 1361; and Buddhists, 1 in 3,787. You will find an account of Professor Newman and his family in the biographical sketch of C. R. Newman, prefixed to his *Essays in Rationalism*.

J. GRINSTEAD (Bristol) denies that in his lecture at Eastville Park he stated that all Freethinkers were pothouse men. "I never," he states, "said or implied anything so foolish or untrue." We should be sorry to do Mr. Grinstead, or any man, an injustice, and we cheerfully publish his disclaimer. Perhaps our informant will have something to say on this matter.

REV. C. L. ENGSTRÖM sends us a letter, which we do not insert, as it does not advance the controversy. If he has anything to say in reply to our last week's article, we shall be happy to insert his communication. Small personal matters will not interest our readers. We say this, not out of any disrespect to Mr. Engstrom, but in the interest of rational discussion.

B. MUNTON.—The Parson's Hymn, "Money, oh money, thy praises I sing," appeared in the *Freethinker* many years ago, and has been reprinted in our tracts.

E. D. H. DALY.—Thanks for cuttings.

THE secretary of the Liverpool Branch wishes the workman who spoke to him at Leonard Hall's lecture to communicate, either by letter or personally.

L. LEVINE (Charleston).—We are much indebted to your constant courtesy.

E. H.—(1) It is for the Theist to define what he means by God before the Atheist undertakes to deny. The Atheist finds he cannot believe in God, as usually defined; but he does not therefore assert a universal negative. (2) The imaginations of a future existence are a prolongation of certain aspects of this one, and no more certify reality than imaginations of fabulous animals. (3) Certainly the Bible can be cited on the side of totalism, but the bulk of passages are on the other side. What is there the Bible cannot be cited for?

J. KEAST.—Bristol Freethinkers should certainly attend and support you.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Zoophilist—Animal's Friend—Eastern Daily Press—Yarmouth Mercury—Public Opinion—De Dageraad—Vegetarian Messenger—Der Arme Teufel—Freidenkor—Boston Investigator—Liberty—Glasgow Weekly Herald—Blue Grass Blade—Literary Digest—Philosophical Journal—Harbinger of Light—Progressive Thinker—Light—Two Worlds—New York Evening Post—Secular Thought—Forget-Me-Not—Crescent—Isle of Man Times—Liberator—Nottingham Argus—Dundee Advertiser—Johannesburg Standard and Diggers' News—Open Court—Berkshire Chronicle—Newcastle Evening Chronicle.

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 23 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.

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

ORDERS for literature should be sent to Mr. R. Fordor, 23 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS.—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—One inch, 4s. 6d.; half column, £1 2s. 6d.; column, £2 5s. Special terms for repetitions.

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.

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.

SPECIAL.

THE Directors of the National Secular Hall Society (Limited) have left the Hall of Science matter in my hands, to do what I find possible in the peculiar circumstances of the case. It appears to me that the crisis ought not to be prolonged a moment more than is necessary, and there are special reasons why midsummer should be a turning point. My appeal for £600 has not yet been adequately responded to. Donations, applications for shares, and conditional promises, only amount to about £450. Surely it should be possible to make up the required sum during the next few days. If not, I must let the matter drop, for this is the last appeal I can make upon the present basis. I hope it is distinctly understood that all the money sent in any way in response to this appeal will be returned to donors and applicants if the project is not carried to a successful issue. I pledge myself personally to the fulfilment of this promise.

G. W. FOOTE.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THERE was a good audience at the London Hall of Science on Sunday evening, when Mr. Foote lectured on "Mrs. Besant's New Views of Christianity." This evening (June 23) Mr. Charles Watts occupies the platform, and Mr. Foote will take the chair. As the occasion may be a very important one, we hope there will be a large attendance.

Mr. Putnam continued to have "a fine time" after leaving Glasgow. He had two good houses at Aberdeen, and the next day he went with a party of local "saints" to Balmoral, Mar, and Braemar. He describes it as "a magnificent trip."

The annual excursion of the London Secular Federation will take place on July 14. Clacton-on-Sea will be the place visited, per G.E. Railway. Tickets (3s. each) can be obtained from the local secretaries, from Miss Brown, 22 Pembridge Villas, Notting-hill-gate, or Mr. Forder at 28 Stonecutter-street. As the time is short, we hope this announcement will be spread widely and tickets circulated speedily. A special committee is appointed to look after details, and will probably arrange for a general tea, similar to the one provided last year at Margate. Messrs. Foote and Watts intend to join the excursion, and other well-known Londoners will no doubt be present. We want to see a good gathering at Clacton, and as the committee are reported to be powerful in prayer, there is a prospect of glorious weather for the outing.

The annual excursion of the West London Branch will take place on Sunday, June 23, by the steam launch "Countess," to Walton-on-Thames. Light refreshments can be obtained on board, and a string band has been engaged to enliven the journey. The launch leaves Hammersmith Pier at 9.30 a.m., and the tickets are 3s. for adults and 1s. 6d. for children, return. As the number of tickets is limited, and a large demand is anticipated, application for them should be made at once to the Branch secretary, F. Todd, 59 Tunis-road, Shepherds Bush, W.

The Bradford Branch has started an open-air campaign in the market-place, James-street.

A two nights' debate will take place on July 1 and 2 at the Temperance Hall, Leeds-road, Bradford, between the Rev. A. J. Waldron and Mr. John Grange. The subject for discussion is, "Christianity or Secularism: Which is the Better System for Man?"

The Battersea Branch has a brake excursion to Riddlesdown next Sunday, June 30. Adults' fares 2s. 6d., children 1s. 3d. A free tea and other refreshments will be given to the children, according to donations received. Tickets can be had at the hall, or at outdoor meetings on Sunday morning and evening. All seats must be booked to-day, Sunday, June 23.

The Metropolitan Hospital Sunday Fund acknowledge the receipt of £36 11s. 9d. collected by Miss Emmeline Robins and friends of the Finsbury Park Branch of the National Secular Society. This is an increase of £6 upon the amount collected last year.

Mr. Keast informs us that after his lecture in Eastville Park, Bristol, he, with his wife and little children and Mrs. Bracey, were attacked by a mob of the C. E. Society savages, and but for the prompt and brave action of the park-keepers would have been fit for the Christians' hospital. This is what Freethinkers have had everywhere to put up with in opening new ground in the open air, but by dint of tact and perseverance they overcome, and in several of our London parks the C.E.S. people now sing very small indeed. Bristol Freethinkers should unite to support Mr. Keast in his arduous task.

It has been decided that the annual outing of the Liverpool Branch shall be held this year on July 14, when it proposes fraternising with the Manchester Branch at Chester. Those who intend to take part are requested to give in their names as early as possible, in any case not later than the 30th of this month, in order that proper arrangements may be made.

The *Liverpool Daily Post* of June 15 devoted a leader to the career of the Emperor Julian, generally nicknamed "the apostate." It concedes that Julian foresaw in the triumph of Christianity, as it then was, the extinction of Hellenic culture and Roman discipline, to be inevitably followed by the Dark Ages.

Mr. G. L. Mackenzie's contributions to the *Freethinker* are appreciated in many quarters. The *Boston Investigator*, of May 25, gives his recent poem on Noah's Ark the first place in its columns.

Mr. J. A. Richardson's article on "Wonders in Gozo" is reprinted from our columns into the *Liberator*, of Melbourne.

Mr. Edward Clodd is about to put out a book on the story of "Joseph the Dreamer"—not the Joseph who dreamt he was to marry Mary, but the one dealt with in our columns by "Veritas." No doubt he will deal with the Egyptian Analogue in the Tale of Two Brothers; but, as the book is intended for children, the incident of Mrs. Potiphar will probably be lightly glided over.

The grave of Thomas Paine at New Rochelle was visited on Decoration Day by a crowd of Freethinkers. Dr. E. B. Foote, junr., presided, an ode to Paine by G. E. Macdonald was sung, and addresses were delivered by T. B. Wakeman, Henry Rowley, Henry Frank, and others. A subscription was opened for a bronze bust of Paine to decorate the Paine homestead.

Ingersoll is making a wide and deep impression on the public in America. This is shown by the criticism of the men of God. The more ignorant are everywhere denouncing him, while the enlightened, like the Rev. J. T. Sunderland, in the *Non-Sectarian*, confess that, "as an argument to show that the Bible is not a supernatural, perfect, and infallible revelation from God, Mr. Ingersoll's lecture is unanswerable." Of course Mr. Sunderland finds Ingersoll's view of the Bible inadequate, but he admits that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, that the Song of Solomon was almost certainly not written by Solomon, and that we do not know the author of Job, or Ecclesiastes, or Esther.

Mr. Sunderland says of Ingersoll: "He is entirely justified in saying that Genesis contradicts science. The story of the Flood is unhistoric. There never has been a universal flood. The story of the Tower of Babel, and of such an origin of the different languages of the world as is there represented, science declares to be myth, and not fact." What is this but admitting that the Christian Church has all along been in the wrong, and that, consequently, no wise God has had anything to do with it?

Signor Bovio's "St. Paul" caused great excitement on the occasion of its first performance at Naples. The local "Catholic Society" begged the Prime Minister to prohibit the performance "so as not to risk offending the Catholic sentiment of the immense majority of the citizens." A deputation also waited upon the Prefect, and asked him at the last moment to stop "this atrocious offence and serious insult to the religious sentiment of all Neapolitans." The authorities, however, felt unable to interfere. In the evening, says the *Daily News* correspondent, the theatre was crowded with students and professors, eager to do honor to Bovio and liberty of thought.

The *Blue Grass Blade*, of Kentucky, June 2, has a remarkably good article on Christianity by Miss May Collins, a Kentucky young lady, born May 1, 1876. She quotes Mill, Gibbon, Mosheim, Lecky, and Buckle, and comes to the conclusion that "if a man named Jesus really lived and spoke his thoughts, the most likely thing is that he was a monk in the College of Alexandria," and that the Christian Church has been the greatest enemy of her sex. Mr. Moore, the editor of the *Blade*, challenges all the clergy of Kentucky to meet this nineteen-year-old infidel girl in written debate.

MR. PUTNAM'S VISIT TO ENGLAND.

EXTRACTS FROM HIS FIRST LETTER.

WITH banners floating, the "City of Berlin" neared its goal from across the waters, with its wondrous freight of human hopes and joys. Intently I watched the surging multitude along the wharf to discover the stalwart Watts, for without his genial face I should be a pilgrim and a stranger indeed. He was on hand, and by his side George W. Foote; and we waved a greeting from deck and shore. After some tedious preliminaries of landing, unloading, and examining baggage, etc., we finally made out to shake hands in true English and Yankee fashion. We were soon in the railroad coach, which seemed small compared to our ponderous American cars, but it was elegant and comfortable, and we had a compartment all to ourselves, which was certainly advantageous, for we could talk to our hearts' content, as if at our own firesides. It didn't take long to become acquainted with our noble comrade, George W. Foote, who is as open as the day, and greets you with the frankness and politeness of a man of the world. The journey of ninety miles to London was a delightful one. A fresh May day it was. The golden buttercups mingled with the green grass in wide fields. The trees were in blossom. The farmer was ploughing, and villages and cities gleamed upon the view. Soon we were in the heart of London, and I was as hungry as a bear, for it was about 3 p.m., and I had not eaten since the morning on board. There is nothing like a good square meal to spice the journey and to keep your footing on this solid earth, for really I was in such a sort of ecstatic, dreamy state of mind that I felt I could almost be disembodied and not know it. I was in London; just think of it. London! the marvellous city of the world, where you are "in the swim" of the wonder and joy of the universe. In London, without doubt, the red heart of humanity sweeps its swiftest, grandest tides. Well, we had a long and joyous dinner. It was an intellectual repast along with delightful material things. Foote is an excellent caterer. He is not a dreamy philosopher. With his intellectual vitality he has a keen comprehension of the reality of life, and is a wise and witty cosmopolitan.

After dinner Watts takes me to his own home on Effra-road, Brixton. Through what a bewildering maze we pass as the great omnibus rolls along. Over the Thames, with its crowded bosom sparkling beneath you; by the great parks and hundreds of gardens, miles and miles we go, and yet the multitude does not seem to diminish. The streets are full, the shops are shining with all manner of goods, and business is evidently driving. However, Effra-road, which stretches from the Brixton thoroughfare, is almost as quiet as a country lane. It is simply beautiful in the bloom of May, grass and flowers in front of every dwelling, and here and there almost a forest of trees. In this lovely and entrancing scenery glows the fireside of our Freethought friend, Charles Watts, known in both worlds for his able and brilliant labors. What a hospitable welcome I had! Mrs. Charles Watts will never be forgotten by her many American friends. . . . What a joyous evening I had on Effra-road, where the murmur of mighty London is scarcely heard, though the great city heaves and tosses and thunders only a block away. I could scarcely realise that Watts and I, who had battled together on the frontier of the New World, were now again together in the heart of old England, thousands of miles from the scenes of our former companionship.

The next day, Saturday, I was busy writing a multitude of letters, and getting off my "News and Notes" for the *Truthseeker*, until noon. Then the hansom cab is ordered, and Watts and I take a long drive to Euston station, where he is to take the cars for Glasgow. For a week he is to lecture and debate in Scotland. We meet Mr. Foote at the station, and bid good-bye to Watts at 2 p.m.; and then Mr. Foote takes me to his own home for dinner. In going thither I catch a glimpse of the walls and towers of Holloway prison, where for twelve months Mr. Foote was incarcerated—the martyr of liberty—maintaining with unflinching courage the rights of a free press. . . .

There are four pretty children, bright as jewels, and sparkling with health and happiness. Mrs. Foote is entirely congenial with her husband. After dinner we go aloft to the top story, where is the study and splendid library of my host. What an array of books he has, worth their weight in gold! What stores of wisdom, out of which are forged the thunderbolts of Freethought, and the "Acid Drops" and "Sugar Plums" that burn and sparkle in the pages of the *Freethinker*. What a memory and a promise in these hoarded treasures, the new ever flashing from the old at the magic touch of genius.

After a smoke and wide intellectual discursiveness among books, we take a trip to the Zoological Gardens. This is a very interesting place. We pass through beautiful scenery, and we witness all sorts of curious and wonderful things, dim suggestions of man himself in a vast variety of animal life. . . .

From the "Zoo" we walked through Regent's Park—a magnificent park, vast in extent, with great sweeps of green and masses of forest. At times the city is lost in the stretches of foliage, and you can easily imagine that you are with shepherds and their flocks in some Arcadia far away from the "madding crowd."

From Regent's Park, on top of the tremendous omnibus, looking over all creation, as if from a moving tower, we thunder and rattle to our destination, and Saturday night spreads its moonlight splendors over the scene, and dream-land follows anon. . . .

Sunday evening sparkled along, and with it one of the great occasions of my life. For the first time I was to address an audience of English Freethinkers. I trembled in anticipation of it—it meant so much. England and America were to shake hands, and I hoped there might be nothing to mar the glory of the union. And there was nothing. When I reached the Hall of Science there was a great crowd in front; and by half-past seven o'clock every seat was occupied, and people were standing. I guess there were about 1,400 present, for that is, I understand, the capacity of the hall. I like an English audience. They know how to cheer. They do it with a vim, a cordiality, a thunderousness which is truly enlivening. A man who can't talk after such a cheer as they give must be somewhat like a man who has no music in his soul. It is like martial music, this glorious welcome—when we enter the hall—when President Foote arises to address the people—when the representative of American Freethought is introduced—when the names of Bradlaugh, Foote, and Watts are mentioned—when the brief and cheery message of Ingersoll is read—when the magic words, Thomas Paine, are uttered, and when finally the speaker closes. It was, I must say, a magnificent occasion and a grand success, and with all my heart I thank Foote and Watts and other English friends for their generous, beautiful, inspiring welcome. The thrill of comradeship from England to America is indeed jubilant and far-reaching, and will make the labors of the future more glorious throughout the world.

I like George W. Foote. He is a born leader. He has a penetrating and independent judgment. He has clear insight. He understands the situation. He comprehends Freethought. There are no clouds or mists in his intellectual horizon. He has breadth as well as concentration and energy. He is an all-round man, level-headed, brave, determined, uncompromising, yet intellectually charitable; far-seeing, for he beholds in the principle the inevitable result; and therefore he is never swung off his balance. He does not fall into side issues. He keeps straight on to the goal. He is the man of the hour, and the movement in England is broadening and deepening and strengthening through his wise conduct.

America knows Watts, vigorous and splendid, and still in the prime of his powers. Fortunate it is that we have such men as Watts and Foote to lead forward the great Freethought enterprise in England. They are admirably adapted for co-operation; masterful in their way, and winning the confidence, support, and affection of the Freethought army all along the line. Amidst a thousand difficulties and disappointments, this great army is moving on. Robert Forder, Arthur B. Moss, and others, whose names I shall hereafter mention in connection with more full details of this great movement, are enthusiastic and talented co-laborers and standard-bearers, constantly pushing onward the banners of our hope, fearless and advancing at every point of the mighty conflict.

I do believe that Ingersoll would have an audience of 20,000 people the first night he spoke in London. The English people do love and admire him; and no man in the wide world would secure such a welcome as he. Everybody inquires, "When is Ingersoll coming?" It is in the air that America must contribute its noblest flower of genius to the struggling hosts of freedom in other lands.

Monday morning I find the office of Charles Watts the younger, who, as publisher, is doing a splendid work for Freethought, for culture and advancement, for science and literature.

I ventured into the wonderful Cathedral of St. Paul's—a sublime structure, indeed; gloomy, however, as a grave. A beautiful service was going on as we entered. The music was preaching—well, when it came to that dull stuff, we retreated. In such a place as St. Paul's there should be only music. That only can accord with the glory and vastness of its architecture.

So far as I can judge, London is the most beautiful city in the world. It is not simply immense, a huge bee-hive, a whirl of business, a rush of millions of people, a rattle and thunder of thousands of vehicles; it is a city of gardens, of flowers and grass and trees, entirely in contrast with Chicago, Boston, New York, or any other city that I know of. No other city can boast of so many and such large parks as London; and besides the parks there are innumerable gardens in front and rear of the houses on almost every street. Every Londoner wants a garden, and he will scarcely rent a house without a garden. There is, therefore,

a charming mingling of country life with this great city. There are many quiet nooks where you are embowered with green foliage and flowers of all hue; and in the busiest streets verdant spaces flash upon the view. Wherever there is a chance to put a tree, there a tree grows. At this season of the year, with the glorious sunshine of May flooding all, the views are simply enchanting. The sweetness and beauty of nature greet you amidst the art and splendor of man's achievement. Along with the thousands of gardens and hundreds of parks and squares, there is the Thames river, with its ever-changing magnificent water views, its bridges, its boats, its ships and barges, the vast and splendid architecture on either side—historic buildings, towers and domes, far as the eye can reach.

I like the great omnibuses. How they roll along crowded with passengers on top. There is where I like to get. It is something of a climb, but you feel quite elated when you sit down twenty feet in air and go bowling along as if you were riding a comet. What sights are presented as you dash through the surges of London life!

The hansom cabs are fine, too—easy and cheap. There are thousands of them, and they glide merrily along like gondolas on a river. No matter in what part of the city you may be, these cabs are always at hand.

They keep the streets clean here. Boys and men are all the time at work with shovels, "dust-pans," etc. If a particle of dirt accumulates, it is instantly brushed away. The streets are like a floor.

The rush of traffic is enormous. Oftentimes, at a crossing, a long array of vehicles awaits the passage of another array. The police, by a simple motion of the arm, regulate the passage. There is no talk or dispute. Now one procession moves on, and then the other. You have to take a good look when you cross the street, and then make a dash. Every day in London you would think that nobody was at home, and that everybody was on the go. It is like an everlasting festival day. It beats New Jerusalem all to pieces. Nobody would want to go to heaven so long as he could stay in London and see the sights. The angel Gabriel might blow his trumpet, and it would not disturb a single soul. They are used to all sorts of noises here. Even the resurrection would not be a very surprising affair in such a cosmopolitan place as London. SAMUEL P. PUTNAM.

—*Truthseeker.*

MR. PUTNAM'S ENGAGEMENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS has made the following lecturing engagements for Mr. S. P. Putnam:—

June 23, Manchester; 24, Derby; 25, Nottingham; 30, Sheffield.

July 6, Chester-le-Street Branch (lecture held at West Pelton Co-operative Hall at 6.30); 7, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 14, Bristol; 16 and 17, Plymouth; 21, Birmingham.

August 11, Failsworth; 18, Leicester; 25, Liverpool.

Special Note.—Through an error Mr. Putnam has July 28 at liberty. Any Branch requiring that date should write to Mr. Watts at once.

Mr. Putnam will return to New York on Sept. 7, therefore friends who have not engaged him should communicate with Mr. Watts at once. Societies near any of the above towns requiring week-night lectures should arrange for Mr. Putnam to visit them when he is in their district on the Sunday.

Is Man a Religious Animal?

We do not share the idea that "man is by nature a religious animal," or that we have "a religious sense" that must be accommodated at the expense of the truth. Man is no more a religious animal than he is a whiskey-drinking animal. A little child possesses neither the fear of God nor the thirst for liquor, and but for certain environments would neither pray to God nor drink whiskey. He learns from association and example to do both. The most that can be admitted is that the habit of praying through a long series of generations has, by heredity, implanted in us some susceptibility to superstition, by means of which association, example, and persuasion may the more easily develop in our minds the religious sentiment.—*J. D. Shaw.*

It was on a Sunday afternoon, and the little boy had just come home from church. Seating himself in the chimney corner, he burst out crying, and would not eat his dinner. "What are you crying for, my boy?" asked his father. "The minister's text was, 'Ye must be born again,' and I am afraid that I shall be a gall next time," replied the precocious youngster.

SOME LITTLE-KNOWN FREETHINKERS.—IX.

JAMES WATSON.

THE subject of my present sketch was one of those quiet, unassuming, unobtrusive workers, whose services to the good old cause are too little known, but, where known, should be highly appreciated. Born of poor parents in an obscure town, Malton, in Yorkshire, September 21, 1799, a taste for reading led him in a Freethought direction. Employed at Leeds, he became acquainted with such Radical works as Wooler's *Black Dwarf*, Cobbett's *Register*, and Carile's *Republican*. When Carile was imprisoned with his wife and sister for selling blasphemous publications, he appealed to lovers of free discussion to serve in the shop. Humphrey Boyle was the first volunteer from Leeds. He was arrested, tried, and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment. When sentenced, May 27, 1822, Boyle remarked: "I have a mind, my lord, that can bear such a sentence with fortitude." Of similar stuff was James Watson, the second volunteer from Leeds. He, too, was arrested in February, 1823, for selling Palmer's *Principles of Nature*. His trial took place on April 23. In his defence he endeavored to prove from the Bible that Palmer was justified in what he had written, but the judge told him he "might quote from the Bible, but not comment upon it." He was convicted and sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment in Coldbath Fields Prison, and to find bail for good behavior for two years. In prison Watson read Hume, Gibbon, and Mosheim, which he said "would have made me a Freethinker if I had not been one before." He afterwards conducted Richard Carile's business until Carile's liberation from Dorchester Gaol in November, 1825, and then became a compositor on Carile's *Republican*. Attacked by cholera, he was nursed by Julian Hibbert, who employed him on his own projects, giving him his own type and presses, and at his death leaving him a legacy of £500. In the meantime Watson suffered another six months' imprisonment for selling Hetherington's unstamped *Poor Man's Guardian*. With the legacy from Hibbert, James Watson constituted himself a sort of society for promoting useful knowledge. He set up as bookseller and publisher, issued many Freethought works, such as D'Holbach's *System of Nature*, Volney's *Ruins of Empires*, Paine's *Age of Reason* and *Common Sense*, Palmer's *Principles of Nature*, Francis Wright's *Few Days in Athens* and her *Lectures*, R. D. Owen's discussions and pamphlets, Shelley's *Queen Mab* and *Masque of Anarchy*, Byron's *Cain* and *Vision of Judgment*, J. Clarke's *Letters to Adam Clarke*, Godwin's *Political Justice*, Lamennais' *Modern Slavery*, Evans Bell's *Task of To-day*, Powell's *Bible of Reason*, *Yahoo*, *Ecce Homo*, *Human Origin of Christianity*, Hume's *Miracles*, Diderot's *Thoughts on Religion*, Lawrence's *Lectures on Man*, Engledue's *Physiology*, Dr. T. Cooper's *Rights of Free Discussion*, T. Cooper's (the Chartist) *Purgatory of Suicides*, Southwell's *Impossibility of Atheism*, Holyoake's *Rationalism*, *Logic of Facts*, etc.

The list is a goodly one, though far from complete. It represents valuable works, tending in the direction of mental emancipation and of political and social reform; works tabooed by the privileged classes, and many of which they had sought to suppress. Let it be remembered, too, that the cheap publication of such works was the direct incentive to that rivalry of new cheap literature intended to counteract the supposed pernicious effect of the dissemination of "infidelity and sedition." I do not scruple to say that, by his publications, James Watson did more for the real education of the people than some vaunted societies and wealthy firms with all the influence of respectability at their back. His publications, though cheap, were not of the "cheap and nasty" order. They were neat, well printed, and showed throughout a publisher who loved sound thought and sound work in every department. Mr. W. J. Linton, his friend for forty years, says: "There was no mistaking an edition by J. Watson. To him life and all its circumstances were to be kept in wholesomeness, though means of beautifying might fail him. The pride of the poor man was his. His honesty should be clean skinned and pure, if his clothes were threadbare; his public appearance, as his home, ever dignified, made worthy of respect. Serving in his shop, he had pleasant and informing words for all who sought his wares; the character of this or that book about which you asked might be trusted to his judgment. His conversation, if you cared to make acquaintance with it, supplemented what he sold—what he had given, if apostles in his day had been able to print and live without death. . . . He was of the stuff of those old martyrs who smiled when they were flayed alive; who thrust their hands into fire to pluck out unharmed their more tender souls. For the respect in which his probity and his business qualities were held, his name as treasurer of subscriptions in aid of political sufferers may be voucher enough. He was one to whom you might have trusted untold gold; he could not have wronged you of the smallest coin." Mr. Linton gives a pleasant instance of how principle was more than profit with Watson. In '38 Linton projected

a cheap library, for the people, of extracts from works beyond the purchasing reach of working men. Watson laid before him the difficulties, and, finding him resolute, offered him (a nameless stranger) his books and services. When the account was made up he found there was no charge for folding and stitching. Watson had been sure the book could not pay, and he and his wife had folded and stitched every copy to save Linton so much expense.

By judicious investments in works of solid value, James Watson served the cause in perhaps the most effective way in which it can be served—by the spread of its literature. He did this more for the sake of propaganda than for profit, but by economy he was able to retire when between fifty and sixty. On January 23, 1854, a public tribute was paid to him at the Literary Institution, John-street, Fitzroy-square, at which Mr. W. D. Saull presided, and Messrs. T. Cooper, R. Moore, W. J. Birch, R. Le Blond, and G. J. Holyoake testified to his great services to the Freethought cause. He lived at Norwood until November 29, 1874, and in Norwood Cemetery a plain granite obelisk bears the following inscription: "James Watson, 1874. Erected by a few friends as a token of regard for his integrity of character and his brave efforts to secure the right of free speech and a free and unstamped press." A Memoir, by his friend, W. J. Linton, to which I am indebted for most of these particulars, has a copy of Watson's photograph as frontispiece, and is a modest, yet not unworthy, memorial of a sterling though little-known Freethinker.

J. M. WHEELER.

IS THE BIBLE A FIT SCHOOL BOOK?

ARE there really obscene passages in it, passages obscene and indecent that teach no moral? If it can be proved there are such, there can be no question as to its being unfit for a school book. If there are errors and contradictions that a thoughtful student can easily see, it is unfit for a school book, as it is a part of his education to be right and trace errors. If the book in all its parts is not instructive and decent—that is, if it cannot be read without dictation as to what parts, it is not a fit school book. For instance, if the book cannot be opened at random and read from, by and before an assembly of children of both sexes; it is unfit for a school book.

If any passage cannot be intelligently and satisfactorily explained to a pupil of inquiring mind, it loses its value as a school book. To say that certain passages were made purposely obscene to teach us a moral would be the same as giving a boy a lot of cheap detective and love stories in order that he might not follow in the steps of the characters in the stories. In young minds it is very often the reading of such that puts the wrong ideas in their heads.

That some of the Old Testament stories of wars, rapes, murders, etc., are more degrading than the cheapest of our novels, goes without saying. Was there ever a more degrading and obscene expression or command than that contained in Numbers xxi. 17, 18? I say that any man that would even have such thoughts in his head, not speaking of putting them in execution, is not fit to be copied, nor his writings read anywhere. To have such put in the way of pure and innocent children, whose minds are not matured, and whose reasoning powers are already dwarfed because of being compelled to believe the doctrines taught in this book, without any intelligent explanations, is an outrage that a really moral parent or guardian should forbid. Keep all indecent books from the schools; if the Bible has indecent passages, it should not be excepted.

BELMONT.

How to Help Us.

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

Some English, French, and American missions in China have been wrecked, and the religious press are crying out for "a firm policy." Some of the apostles of the religion of peace do not contrive to commend themselves where they go, and always want the gospel backed up by gunpowder.

BOOK CHAT.

IAMBlichus ON THE MYSTERIES.

MR. BERTRAM DOBELL, of 77 Charing Cross-road, has published a second edition of *Iamblichus on the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Assyrians*, translated from the Greek by Thomas Taylor. The first edition was issued in 1821 from the printer at Chiswick, "for the translator, Manor-place, Walworth." The work is worth some attention, both on account of the author, the translator, and the present publisher.

* * *

The author Iamblichus, of Chalcis, N. Syria, was one of those neo-Platonists who, about the time of Constantine, vainly sought to stay the progress of the Christian superstition by an eclectic Theosophic philosophy drawn from the earlier faiths. He was a pupil of Porphyry, one of the early opponents of Christianity, but did not altogether follow his master. His followers called him "wonderful" and "most divine" teacher, while the Emperor Julian said of him, in his fourth oration, that "he was posterior in time, but not in genius, to Plato." His Platonism was much mixed up with oriental ideas and speculations. He lets us see the philosophical notions with which the later Egyptian and Chaldean priests explained their religion. Iamblichus was probably more indebted to Pythagoras, whose life he wrote, than to Plato.

* * *

Iamblichus teaches a kind of Theosophy, but it is not the modern Blavatskyite Theosophy of "esoteric Buddhism," but the genuine ancient wisdom religion, the inner doctrine of the priests, to whom mysticism was philosophy. Its doctrine was essentially Pantheism. In the words of Thomas Taylor, the translator (pp. xii. and xiii. of Introduction): "All beings proceed from, and are comprehended in, the first being; all intellects emanate from one first intellect; all souls from one first soul; all natures blossom from one first nature; and all bodies proceed from the vital and luminous body of the world. And, lastly, all these great monads are comprehended in the first ones, from which both they and all their depending series are unfolded into light."

* * *

The Theosophy, or, as Taylor more properly calls it, *Theurgy*, of Iamblichus consists in his teaching how union with the divine is to be obtained. The work is prefaced by "The Epistle of Porphyry to the Egyptian Anebo," in which he inquires and expresses his doubts as to the relation of men to the gods. The work itself purports to be "The Answer of the Preceptor Abammon" to this epistle, and a solution of the doubts contained in it. The solutions of this Pagan decadent will hardly satisfy the modern mind; but they are most interesting as exhibiting a curious stage in human thought, combining an attempt to account for the gradations of being in the universe with the hope of obtaining a supernatural elevation to the powers of man, and with a defence of the principles and practices of Polytheism.

* * *

It is curious to note the attention given to Iamblichus at the time of the Pagan Renaissance. Editions of this work on the Mysteries were published in 1483, 1497, 1516, 1556, 1570, 1577, 1607, 1641, and at Oxford, with a Latin translation by Gale, in 1678. Giordano Bruno refers to it in his *Heroic Enthusiasts*, and Taylor, the translator of Iamblichus, says that his modern critics "perceive only his little blemishes, but have not even a glimpse of his surpassing excellence. They minutely notice the motes that are scattered in the sunbeam of his genius, but they feel not its invigorating warmth, they see not its dazzling radiance."

* * *

The translator, Thomas Taylor, the Platonist (1758-1835), was a remarkable man, both for his scholarship and his independence of thought. He professed himself a Pagan, and wrote an argument in defence of Polytheism, entitled *A New System of Religion*. He devoted his life to translating and defending the works of Plato, Aristotle, Porphyry, Plotinus, Proclus, and Julian; and is said to have been so thorough a Pagan that he sacrificed a bull to Zeus. This report is probably unfounded, for he was a vegetarian. Certain it is that he was a modern Pagan, and one of considerable powers of mind and elevation of character. He also contributed important articles to *Valpy's Classical Journal*. All his works are now extremely scarce and dear. The *Dissertation on the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries* has been recently reprinted at New York, and the publisher of the present volume holds out the hope that it may be followed by the republication of other works by Thomas Taylor. We would especially commend to his attention *The Arguments of Celsus and Julian against Christianity* and *The New System of Religion*, upon which last Mr. Wheeler contributed some articles to the *National Reformer*.

* * *

Mr. Dobell, the publisher, is a bookseller of taste. He not only knows a good thing when he sees it, but the fact that

it is *caviare* to the multitude does not prevent his trying to get the literature he appreciates before the fit, though few. This is seen in his publication of the works of James Thomson (B.V.), and the pains he has taken in many ways to make that gifted poet known. The present volume is a *fac simile* of the original edition, which is so rare that the British Museum copy is imperfect. It reflects credit on the publisher, and we trust it will meet such success as to encourage him to reproduce other, and, as we think, more important, works of Thomas Taylor.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A WISE DENIAL.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Kindly do me justice by publishing this letter in the next issue of the *Freethinker*. In the present issue I find the following: "Is it true that a Christian Evidence lecturer at Liverpool is in the habit of asking opponents their names and addresses? Is it true that an opponent gave his name and address a few Sundays ago? Is it true that on the following Tuesday he was dismissed from his employment on a certain railway?"

If the above insinuations refer to myself, let me say that they are absolutely false. There is not an iota of truth in the whole matter.

GEO. WISE.

MUTUAL HELP.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Mark Twain, or somebody else, said: "If you want to get on, join the Methodists and start a shop," the meaning of which is obvious. Let us Freethinkers learn of the enemy to help each other. I think we ought to go out of our way to put work in the hands of our brother and sister Secularists, and if they keep a shop a quarter of a mile farther away than the nearest of its kind we ought to deal there. Known Freethinkers are avoided by religious bigots, and their brothers-in-arms should endeavor to make up for what they lose in this way by their steady support.

A. GUEST.

PROFANE JOKES.

A clergyman, named Fiddle, refused to accept the title of D.D., because, as he said, he "didn't want to be called the Rev. Ichabod Fiddle, D.D."

Parker—"I would join the church if it wasn't full of hypocrites." Tucker—"Oh, you are mistaken about that. There's always room for one more."

Tired Child (at church)—"Mamma, how much did you put in the collection?" Mother—"A penny, my dear." Tired Child—"Well, the preacher gives an awful lot for his money."

School Teacher—"If you had your choice, Willie, would you rather be as wise as Solomon, as great as Julius Caesar, as rich as Croesus, as eloquent as Demosthenes, as tall as Goliath, or as good as the prophet Elijah?" Willie—"I'd rather be a drummer in a brass band."

THE LONDON SECULAR FEDERATION.

COUNCIL meeting held at the Hall of Science, June 13; the President in the chair. Present: Messrs. C. Watts, J. M. Wheeler, R. Forder, G. Standring, W. H. Baker, G. Ward, M. Loafer, W. G. Renn, F. Schaller, S. R. Thomson, G. J. Warren, A. Wheeler, Miss Vance, and the Secretary.

Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed. Treasurer's report received. The information obtained by the Secretary re Annual Excursion was discussed, and on the motion of Mr. Renn, seconded by Mr. Forder, Clacton-on-Sea was decided upon, price of return tickets to be 3s., children half price. Messrs. Ward, Renn, Schaller, and Miss E. M. Vance were then elected as an Excursion Committee. It was decided that the Annual Collection by Branches in aid of the funds of the Federation should take place in July, the actual Sunday to be left to the discretion of the Branches. Monthly lists for July were ordered to be printed, particulars for which must be received by June 24.

N.B.—The President having kindly undertaken the responsibility of providing the heavy deposit required by the Railway Company on account of the Excursion, it is particularly requested that all secretaries will push the sale of tickets, and remit to the undersigned at their early convenience.

ANNIE BROWN, *Hon. Sec.*

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

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

LONDON.

HALL OF SCIENCE (142 Old-street, E.C.): 7, musical selections; 7.30, Charles Watts, "A Christian's Delusions: Christ and Death."
BATTERSEA SECULAR HALL (back of Battersea Park Station): 8.30, social gathering for N.S.S. members and friends. Tuesday, at 9, dance.
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, R. Forder, "A Chat with the Devil and a Peep into Hell."
FINSBURY PARK BRANCH (91 Mildmay Park): Monday, at 8, Meeting of members.
WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Princes' Hall, Piccadilly): 11.15, Dr. Stanton Coit, "John Keats and the Sense of Beauty."
WEST HAM SECULAR ETHICAL SOCIETY (61 West Ham-lane): 7, Henry Spence, "Practical Evolution."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 11.30, J. Fagan, "Is there a God?" 7.15, A. G. Hertzfeld, "Secularism and Social Questions."
CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "Tales from the Gospels."
CLERKENWELL GREEN: 11.30, C. James, "Christianity the Foe of Liberty and Progress."
DEPTFORD BROADWAY: 6.30, Stanley Jones will lecture. Thursday, at 8, C. James will lecture.
EDMONTON (corner of Angel-road): 7, A. B. Moss, "Modern Shams and Delusions." (Collection on behalf of Sam Standing.)
FINSBURY PARK (near the band-stand): 11.15, George Standing, "Christianity v. Humanity"; 3.15, A. Guest, "Missions Unglorified."
HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE (Middlesex side): 7, J. Fagan will lecture. Thursday, at 8.30, S. E. Easton, "What must I Do to be Saved?"
HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 3.30, F. Haslam will lecture. Wednesday, at 8, Stanley Jones will lecture.
ISLINGTON (Prebend-street, Packington-street): 11.30, A. Guest, "Recipes for Happiness."
KILBURN (High-road): 7, M. Pack will lecture.
KINGSLAND (Ridley-road, near Dalston Junction): 11.30, S. E. Easton will lecture.
LAMBETH (Kennington Park): 3.30, a lecture.
MILE END WASTE: 11.30, F. Haslam, "Mohammed and his Bible."
OLD PIMLICO PIER: 11.30, W. Hearford, "The Historical Basis of Christianity."
REGENT'S PARK (near Gloucester Gate): 3, a lecture.
VICTORIA PARK (near the fountain): 11.15, Stanley Jones, "The Origin of the Bible"; 3.15, W. Hearford, "Christ and His Teachings."
WOOD GREEN (Jolly Butchers' Hill): 11.30, A. B. Moss, "The Old Faith and the New"; 7, C. James will lecture. Thursday, at 8, C. Cohen will lecture.

COUNTRY.

CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school; 7, T. Thurlow, "Jesus v. Home."
HULL: Monday, at 8.30, members' meeting at Mr. Simpson's, 134 Great Thornton-street, to arrange annual picnic
LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 7, Mr. Hammond, "The Metamorphosis of Christianity."
MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 11, S. P. Putnam, "Freethought and Morality"; 3, "Christianity and Woman"; 6.30, "Christ and the Nineteenth Century."
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, "Nunquam's Confession—a Criticism of *The Hammer*," by a Clarionette.
SOUTH SHIELDS (Sailors' and Firemen's Union Hall, Coronation-street): 7, R. Mitchell, "The Atonement."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BRISTOL (Eastville Park, lower end): 7, W. Treasure will lecture.
CHATHAM (corner of the New Brompton-road, High-street): 11.15, T. Thurlow, "The Unpardonable Sin."
DERBY (Market-place): 11, Mr. Briggs will lecture.
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Quayside): 11, C. Cohen will lecture.
SOUTH SHIELDS (Market Place): 3, R. Mitchell, "The Fall."

Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—June 23, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 27, Wood Green; 30, m. Victoria Park, a. Regent's Park, e. West Ham.

STANLEY JONES, 53 Marlborough-road, Holloway, London.—June 23, m. Victoria Park; 26, Hyde Park; 30, m. Battersea, a. Victoria Park, e. Deptford.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, Rotherhithe, London.—June 23, m. Wood Green, e. Tottenham; 30, m. Clerkenwell, a. Finsbury Park.

T. THURLOW, 350 Old Ford-road, E.—June 23, Chatham. July 17, m. Kingsland.

THE JERUSALEM STAR. A Novelty

Reports of Biblical Events Up to Date. No. 1 Now Ready. Original Report of Noah's Flood; "Milk and Honey" by Le-vitty-cuss; Etc. One Halfpenny. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.

Price Twopence,

Satan, Witchcraft, and the Bible.

By J. M. WHEELER.

A Demonstration of the Biblical Doctrine of Devils, suitable for circulation among Christians.

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

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

A CHAPTER FROM

Strauss's Original "Life of Jesus."

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

G. W. FOOTE.

(A Most Thorough Analysis and Exposure of the Gospel Story by a Master Hand.)

Price Sixpence.

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

Freethought Publications.

Crimes of Christianity. Vol. I. By G. W. Foote and J. M. Wheeler. Hundreds of exact references to Standard Authorities. No pains spared to make it a complete, trustworthy, final, unanswerable indictment of Christianity.

Chapters:—1, Christ to Constantine; 2, Constantine to Hypatia; 3, Monks; 4, Pious Forgeries; 5, Pious Frauds; 6, Rise of the Papacy; 7, Crimes of the Popes; 8, Persecution of the Jews; 9, The Crusades. Cloth, gilt, 216 pp., 2s. 6d.

The Jewish Life of Christ. Being the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu*, or Book of the Generation of Jesus. With an Historical Preface and Voluminous Notes by G. W. Foote and J. M. Wheeler. Paper covers, 6d.; superior edition, superfine paper, cloth, 1s.

Bible Studies. Essays on Phallic Worship and other Curious Rites and Customs. By J. M. Wheeler. Illustrated, superior paper, 2s. 6d.

Biographical Dictionary of Freethinkers of All Ages and Nations. By J. M. Wheeler. Handsomely bound in cloth, 7s. 6d.

Darwin Made Easy. By Dr. Edward B. Aveling, Fellow of the London University. This is the best popular exposition of Darwinism extant. Cloth, 1s.

Essays in Rationalism. By Charles Robert Newman (Atheist Brother of the late Cardinal Newman). With a Preface by George Jacob Holyoake, and a Biographical Sketch by J. M. Wheeler. 1s. 6d.

Bible Handbook for Freethinkers and Inquiring Christians. Edited by G. W. Foote and W. P. Ball. Complete, paper covers, 1s. 4d.; superior edition, on superfine paper, bound in cloth, 2s.

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

Works by Colonel R. G. Ingersoll.

SOME MISTAKES OF MOSES. The only complete edition in England. Accurate as Colenso, and fascinating as a novel. 132 pp. 1s. Superior paper, cloth 1s. 6d.

DEFENCE OF FREETHOUGHT. A Five Hours' Speech at the Trial of C. B. Reynolds for Blasphemy. 6d.

THE GODS. 6d.

REPLY TO GLADSTONE. With a Biography by J. M. Wheeler. 4d.

ROME OR REASON? A Reply to Cardinal Manning. 4d.

CRIMES AGAINST CRIMINALS. 3d.

ORATION ON WALT WHITMAN. 3d.

ORATION ON VOLTAIRE. 3d.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN. 3d.

PAINÉ THE PIONEER. 2d.

HUMANITY'S DEBT TO THOMAS PAINE. 2d.

ERNEST RENAN AND JESUS CHRIST. 2d.

TRUE RELIGION. 2d.

THE THREE PHILANTHROPISTS. 2d.

LOVE THE REDEEMER. 2d.

IS SUICIDE A SIN? 2d.

LAST WORDS ON SUICIDE. 2d.

GOD AND THE STATE. 2d.

WHY AM I AN AGNOSTIC? Part I. 2d.

WHY AM I AN AGNOSTIC? Part II. 2d.

FAITH AND FACT. Reply to Dr. Field. 2d.

GOD AND MAN. Second reply to Dr. Field. 2d.

THE DYING CREED. 2d.

THE LIMITS OF TOLERATION. A Discussion with the Hon. F. D. Coudert and Gov. S. L. Woodford. 2d.

THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH. 2d.

ART AND MORALITY. 2d.

DO I BLASPHEME? 2d.

THE CLERGY AND COMMON SENSE. 2d.

SOCIAL SALVATION. 2d.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE. An Agnostic's View. 2d.

SKULLS. 2d.

THE GREAT MISTAKE. 1d.

LIVE TOPICS. 1d.

MYTH AND MIRACLE. 1d.

REAL BLASPHEMY. 1d.

REPAIRING THE IDOLS. 1d.

CHRIST AND MIRACLES. 1d.

CREEDS & SPIRITUALITY. 1d.

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

Read "THE TRUTH SEEKER."

MONTHLY, PRICE 1D.

Edited by JOHN GRANGE.

Of all Newsagents to order. Wholesale, Mr. Forder.

ALLINSON FOR HEALTH.

HOME CONSULTATIONS—10 a.m. to 1 p.m., 10s. 6d.;
6 p.m. to 8 p.m., 5s. Patients Visited.

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

Contains Articles on Management of Infancy, Health, Longevity, The Teeth, Tobacco, The Drink Question. Also the Cause and Cure of Disease, Constipation, Biliousness, Eczema, Blackheads and Pimples, Nervousness, Coughs and Colds, Chest Complaints, Deafness, Thread Worms, Long Worms, Tape Worms, The Itch, etc.

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

Contains Articles on The Healing Power of Nature, Urine, Saline Starvation, the Hair and its Management, Sleep and Sleeplessness, Want of Energy, etc. Advice for the Thin, for the Stout; Simple Fever, Measles, Scarlet Fever, Whooping Cough, Ringworm, Hypochondria, Bloodlessness, Diarrhoea, Ulcerated Legs, Tumours, etc.

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

Contains Articles on No More Death, Management of Young Children, Un-suspected Domestic Poisons, How to Grow Tall, to Keep Warm, to Live One Hundred Years, to Improve the Memory, and to become Beautiful and Attractive. On the Cause and Cure of Stomach Troubles, Flatulence, Sleepiness, Varicose Veins, Bolls and Carbuncles, Sebaceous Tumors and Wens, Hay Fever, Winter Cough, Chilblains, Epilepsy, and on the Diseases Produced by Taking Mercury.

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

Contains Articles on Hardening, Work and Overwork, Sugar and its Abuse, Milk as Food, the Tomato, Poulitices, Quinine, Against the Knife, Arsenical Poisoning, Tonics, Against Stimulants in Disease, about Swallowing Pins and other Articles. Also Cure of Sunstroke, Dog Bites, Pains in the Back, Pediculi or Lice, Chicken-Pox, Synovitis or Inflammation of the Joints, Tonsillitis or Quinsy, Herpes (Tetter or Shingles), Erysipelas, Ulcer of the Stomach, Epidemic Influenza, Scatica, Psoriasis or English Leprosy, etc.

MEDICAL ESSAYS. Vol. V. For Postal Order for 1s. 2d.

Contains Articles on Pure Water. The Mouth, Its Use and Abuse; Rules for the Aged, Training, Blood Letting, Nose Bleeding, Felon or Whitlow, Ingrowing Toenail, Gun Boil, Cold in the Head, a Red Nose, Flushing and Blushing, Toothache, Sore Mouth, St. Vitus' Dance, Goitre, Mumps, Inflamed Eyes and Eyelids, Fits, Fainting, Apoplexy, Spitting and Vomiting of Blood, Vomiting, Wounds, Burns, Scalds, Bruises, etc.

The Five Volumes, strongly and neatly bound, price 6s. 9d., post free.

HYGIENIC MEDICINE. For Postal Order for 1s. 1d.—An Eye Opener to Drug Takers.

RHEUMATISM: ITS CAUSE AND CURE. Post free for 7d.

DIET AND DIGESTION. Post free for 7d.

CONSUMPTION: ITS NATURAL CURE. Post free 7d.

All these Books, bound in One Vol., post free, 9s. 6d. Send Postal Order.

THREE PAMPHLETS FOR YOUNG MEN. For Postal Order for 1s. 1d.

A BOOK FOR MARRIED WOMEN. For Postal Order for 1s. 2d.

All communications to be addressed to—

DR. T. R. ALLINSON,

4 Spanish-place, Manchester-square, London, W.

THE BEST BOOK

ON NEO-MALTHUSIANISM IS, I BELIEVE,
TRUE MORALITY, or THE THEORY AND
PRACTICE OF NEO-MALTHUSIANISM.

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

160 pages, with portrait and autograph, bound in cloth, gilt lettered.
Price 1s., post free.

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

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

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

The Trade supplied by R. FORDER, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.

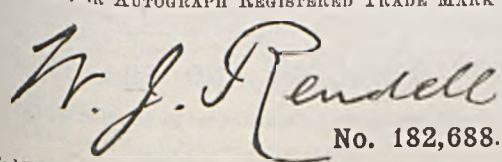
Other orders should be sent to the author.
J. R. HOLMES, HANNEY, WANTAGE, BERKS.

W. J. Rendell's "Wife's Friend"

Recommended by Mrs. Besant in *Law of Population*, p. 32, and Dr. Allbutt in *Wife's Handbook*, p. 51. Made solely by J. PULLEN, 15 Chadwell-street, Clerkenwell; 2s. per doz., post free (reduction in larger quantities). For particulars send stamped envelope.

IMPORTANT CAUTION.

Beware of useless imitations substituted by some dealers and chemists, the words "Rendell & Co." and "J. W. Rendell" being speciously and plausibly introduced to deceive the public.

LOOK FOR AUTOGRAPH REGISTERED TRADE MARK

No. 182,688.

IN RED INK ON EACH BOX, WITHOUT WHICH NONE ARE GENUINE.
Higginson's Syringe, with Vertical and Reverse Current, 3s. 6d., 4s. 6d., and 5s. 6d.
Dr. Palfrey's Powder, 1s. 2d. Quinine Compound, 1s. 2d.
Dr. Allbutt's Quinine Powders, 3s. per doz. All prices post free.

W. J. RENDELL, 15 Chadwell-st., Clerkenwell, E.C.

64 pp., price 3d., by post 4d.,

THE HALL OF SCIENCE LIBEL CASE.

WITH A
FULL AND TRUE ACCOUNT

OF
"THE LEEDS ORGIES."

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION,

BY
G. W. FOOTE.

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

Works by G. W. Foote.

Flowers of Freethought. First Series. 221 pp., bound in cloth, 2s. 6d.

Flowers of Freethought. Second Series. 302 pp., bound in cloth, 2s. 6d.

Bible Heroes. Cloth, 2s. 6d.

Letters to the Clergy. First Series. 128 pp., 1s.

The Grand Old Book. A Reply to the Grand Old Man. An exhaustive answer to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone's "Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture." 1s.; bound in cloth, 1s. 6d.

Christianity and Secularism. Four Nights' Public Debate with the Rev. Dr. James McCann. 1s.; superior edition, in cloth, 1s. 6d.

Is Socialism Sound? Four Nights' Public Debate with Annie Besant. 1s.; superior edition, in cloth, 2s.

Infidel Death-Beds. Second edition, much enlarged, 8d. On superfine paper, in cloth, 1s. 3d.

Darwin on God. 6d.; superior edition, in cloth, 1s.

Will Christ Save Us? A Thorough Examination of the Claims of Jesus Christ to be considered the Savior of the World. 6d.

Reminiscences of Charles Bradlaugh. 6d.

A Defence of Free Speech. Three Hours' Address to the Jury before Lord Coleridge. With a Special Preface and many Footnotes. 4d.

Comic Sermons and Other Fantasias. 8d.

Rome or Atheism—the Great Alternative. 3d.

Letters to Jesus Christ. 4d.

Interview with the Devil. 2d.

Philosophy of Secularism. 3d.

Atheism and Morality. 2d.

My Resurrection. A Missing Chapter from the Gospel of Matthew, discovered by G. W. Foote. 2d.

The Folly of Prayer. 2d.

Ingersollism Defended against Archdeacon Farrar. 2d.

Was Jesus Insane? A Searching Inquiry into the Mental Condition of the Prophet of Nazareth. 1d.

Christianity and Progress. A Reply to Mr. Gladstone. 2d.

The Impossible Creed. An Open Letter to Bishop Magee on the Sermon on the Mount. 2d.

What was Christ? A Reply to J. S. Mill. 2d.

The Bible God. 2d.

Salvation Syrup; or, Light on Darkest England. A Reply to General Booth. 2d.

Is the Bible Inspired? A Criticism on *Lux Mundi*. 1d.

The Dying Atheist. A Story. 1d.

The Rev. Hugh Price Hughes's Converted Atheist. A Lie in Five Chapters. 1d.

Mrs. Besant's Theosophy. A Candid Criticism. 2d.

Secularism and Theosophy. A Rejoinder to Mrs. Besant. 2d.

The New Cagliostro. An Open Letter to Madame Blavatsky. 2d.

Bible Romances. New Edition. Revised and largely re-written. (1) The Creation Story, 2d.; (2) Eve and the Apple, 1d.; (3) Cain and Abel, 1d.; (4) Noah's Flood, 2d.; (5) The Tower of Babel, 1d.; (6) Lot's Wife, 1d.; (7) The Ten Plagues, 1d.; (8) The Wandering Jews, 1d.; (9) Balaam's Ass, 1d.; (10) God in a Box, 1d. (11) Jonah and the Whale, 1d.; (12) Bible Animals, 1d.; (13) A Virgin Mother, 2d.; (14) The Resurrection, 2d.; (15) The Crucifixion, 1d.; (16) John's Nightmare, 1d.

The Shadow of the Sword. A Moral and Statistical Essay on War. 2d.

Royal Paupers. Showing what Royalty does for the People, and what the People do for Royalty. 2d.

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

FRIENDS,—

My message to you this week is brief, but full of truth and very important. I have just secured over 10,000 yards of Trouserings in First-class Worsteds and Woollens. It has been a rather big speculation, but the goods were extremely cheap, less than two-thirds their ordinary value.

I have now some grand bargains to offer you. *Don't delay, but send in your orders at once.* I know the goods will please you, and you cannot spend your money on clothing to greater advantage.

PRICES.

Trousers to Measure 9s. per pair.
 Three Pairs Trousers to Measure for 25s. 6d.
 Six Pairs Trousers to measure for 48s.
 One Trousers' Length for 5s. 6d.
 Three Trousers' Lengths for 15s.
 Six Trousers' Lengths for 27s.

TROUSERS.

INCHES

A, Round Waist over Trousers
 B, Round Seat.....
 E to D, Inside Leg Seam
 F to G, Full Length of Trousers.....
 H, Round Thigh
 I, Round Knee.....
 J, Round Bottom
 Please say Lined or Unlined.....
 (Lined 6d. extra.)
 Side or Cross Pockets.....

Solicit orders from your friends; you will not only be doing them a good turn, but you can make profit for yourself. Send on your cash, and I promise you a most wonderful bargain.

2 and 4 Union-street, Bradford.

Yours very truly,
J. W. GOTT.

“The Clacton Tea-Table,”

TOWN HALL BUILDINGS, CLACTON-ON-SEA.

Specialité—1s. ORDINARY, 12.30 to 3.

Tea fresh for every customer. Furnished Apartments.

Also “Brunswick Confectionery,” Pier Avenue.

Proprietor, H. FOYSTER.

COALS! COALS! COALS!

MESSRS. FRANCIS E. WOOD & CO. are supplying good Parlor Coal, suitable for all purposes, at 16s. 6d. per Ton. Hot Kitchen Coal, 14s.

R. Forder says: “They are remarkably cheap and good.”

W. J. Ramsey writes: “I am well satisfied with your Parlor Coal.”

Orders to 206 York-road, King's Cross. Depôts all over London.

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

ANTON, the People's Dentist, 335 Strand (opposite Somerset House).—TEETH on VULCANITE, 2s. 6d. each; upper or lower set, £1. Best Quality, 4s. each; upper or lower, £2. Completed in four hours when required; repairing or alterations in two hours. If you pay more than the above, they are fancy charges. Teeth on platinum, 7s. 6d. each; on 18 ct. gold, 15s.; stopping, 2s. 6d.; extraction, 1s.; painless by gas, 6s.

**Colonel Ingersoll's Great Lecture
 ABOUT
 THE HOLY BIBLE**

Price Sixpence.

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

Freethought Headquarters

AND

BRADLAUGH MEMORIAL.

In order to provide Suitable Headquarters for the Secular Party in London, which shall also be a worthy Memorial of its late leader, CHARLES BRADLAUGH, the

NATIONAL SECULAR HALL SOCIETY (LIMITED)

has been formed under the Friendly Society's Acts. Of this Society Mr. G. W. FOOTE, *President of the N.S.S.*, is Chairman, and every one of the Directors is, and must be, also a member of the N.S.S.

This can only be done by the assistance of the whole Secular Party, who are hereby appealed to earnestly. The shares are £1 each, payable in easy instalments of 2s. 6d. on application, 2s. 6d. on allotment, and 2s. 6d. on each call, of which two months' notice must be given.

FORM OF APPLICATION.

GENTLEMEN,—

Please allot me.....Shares in the “National Secular Hall Society, Limited,” on account of which allotment I herewith hand you the sum of.....pounds.....shillings, being a deposit of.....pounds.....shillings per share thereon. And I hereby agree that, if admitted a Shareholder in the above-named Society, I will conform to its rules, and to such of its byo-laws as may be from time to time in force.

Name (in full).....
 Postal address
 Occupation (if any)

CUT THIS OUT AND FILL IT IN,

and forward (with remittance) to the Secretary—

MISS E. M. VANCE,

28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.