

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

VOL. XV.—No. 41.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1895.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE PARSONS' PALAVER.

THE Church Congress at Norwich opened with scenes which would be regarded as utterly disgraceful at any Secular assembly. A red-hot "Protestant" contingent shouted and howled at the High Church or "Catholic" party. The leader of the row seems to have been a ridiculous person, who is also a malignant fanatic. He appears to hate Catholicism and Freethought with an equal hatred. What he publishes about Catholics is no particular concern of ours, but we have no hesitation in saying that the pamphlet he publishes about Colonel Ingersoll is one of the vilest and most disgusting libels that were ever penned.

From the official program of the opening ceremonies, we see that the clergy who joined the procession to the cathedral were to walk "three abreast;" perhaps out of compliment to the Trinity. "They will wear cassock, surplice, hood, etc," the program says, "or, being Doctors of Divinity, their scarlet robes." A pretty lot of guys they must have looked at this end of the nineteenth century; it is no wonder that the profane multitude treated them with derision.

There is an "N.B." at the end of the program, stating that, "should the weather be unpropitious," the procession "will not move through the Close." What a "should" for the Church of England! Surely the clergy might beg fine weather of God Almighty for such a special occasion. It seems, however, that our rain-doctors are as much at the mercy of the weather as their customers. We therefore suggest that their prospectus should be amended. Let them clear out the farcical petitions "for rain" and for "fine weather" in their antiquated Prayer Book.

The Congress was welcomed by the Mayor and Corporation of Norwich. It was also welcomed by the local Nonconformists, one of whom—a man of God rejoicing in the great name of Shakespeare—was allowed to harangue the assembly. This gentleman talked about "reunion," which was also the principal theme of the subsequent address by the Bishop of Norwich. But "reunion" is only a word to bandy at religious entertainments. There is no chance of its ever being realised. Dr. Sheepshanks appreciated the "kindness" of the Pope's recent message to the people of England, but declared "the notion that the Christian world will ever pass under the domination of the Roman Pontiff" to be "nothing but the baseless dream of the religious partisan"—which is a hard slap in the face for the poor old Pope. Dr. Sheepshanks was more complimentary to the Nonconformists, who are drawing nearer to the Church, and many of whom "are not unwilling that their children should join in her communion." At the same time, there was "no prospect of organic union with any of the Nonconformist bodies." Not the slightest!

The multiplicity of sects means good business for the sky-pilots. If they all united in one Church, half of them would have to go into the ordinary labor market to obtain a living.

Naturally the Congress had its annual flirtation with Socialism. The Dean of Ely advocated Trade Unionism, which has fought all its worst battles, and does not require his patronage. It was not clergymen who rallied to the support of Trade Unionism in the evil old days, when it was outlawed and downtrodden; no, it was Atheists like Bradlaugh, and Positivists like Harrison and Beesly. If the Dean of Ely is very anxious to promote Trade Unionism, he might help to establish the Curates' Union, and destroy sweating and financial injustice generally within his own Church. Reformation, even more than charity, should begin at home.

The problem of the age, it appears, is to "bring democracy into close touch with Christianity." We have heard this before. As a text it produced a fine commentary at the last elections, when the parsons all over the country acted as Tory agents. Still, we dare say the Dean of Ely's "problem" will become more and more important—to the Church. Haughty as they are, when they can afford to be so, there is a certain parasitism and sycophancy about all Churches. They never dare cross the great currents of the world. They must bow to "the powers that be," on pain of losing their wealth and privileges. They are perfectly impartial, because they are always serving their own interest. In Russia the Church fawns upon the Czar. He commands the legions and controls the money wrung from the people. In England the Church is ready to fawn upon the Democracy, because it sees that His Majesty the People is going to sit upon the throne, which has so long been occupied by kings and flanked by aristocrats. The clergy used to flatter the monarch as though he belonged to a different species from his subjects, and they are now getting ready to flatter the multitude. "Good night!" they say to the setting sun; and to the rising sun "Good day!" They crook the pregnant hinges of the knee where thrift may follow fawning.

Saint Athelstan Riley, of the London School Board, was unable to be present, and his paper on Education was read for him. We always like to see this gentleman on the war path. He is an object-lesson in the bigotry, subterfuge, and equivocation, which naturally attend the policy of spending other people's money in propagating your own religion. We wish Mr. Riley life and health; and, as the Irish say, more power to his elbow! He is one of the best friends of Secular Education. Every time he opens his mouth, or puts pen to paper, he hastens the good day when the schoolmaster will no longer be required to play the jackal to the priest.

Up to our time of going to press the Church Congress has been deadly dull; and unless later meetings are more lively we shall not trouble our readers with further comments on its proceedings.

G. W. FOOTE.

SOME CHRISTIAN TRUTHS.

In his *Notes on Christian Evidences*, page 44, Mr. Bradlaugh says: "When William Lloyd Garrison, the Abolitionist, delivered his first anti-slavery address in Boston, Massachusetts, the only building he could obtain in which to speak, was the infidel hall owned by Abner Kneeland, the 'infidel' editor of the *Boston Investigator*, who had been sent to gaol for blasphemy. Every Christian sect had in turn refused Mr. Lloyd Garrison the use of the buildings they severally controlled."

When this passage was brought before a certain reverend lecturer, who has recently been pushing himself forward as a Christian Evidence-monger, he is reported to have declared that it was "a deliberate lie." It was a serious thing to give the lie to Charles Bradlaugh when he was alive, and I trust the reverend gentleman will be made to feel it is a serious thing still. At any rate, I am in the position to cast the lie back into his teeth. Asked for his authority, the lecturer referred to Oliver Johnson's book on Garrison and the Anti-Slavery movement. Johnson's book is entitled *William Lloyd Garrison and His Times*. He was editor of the *Christian Soldier*, and devotes a number of pages to showing that the charges of infidelity urged against Garrison by the anti-abolitionist party were false. But there is no denial, in the whole of the book, of the statement made by Mr. Bradlaugh, and that statement, I am sure, was well founded. At first I thought there was nothing whatever in Johnson which could even have suggested giving the lie to Mr. Bradlaugh. But I remembered he had been quoted before in an anti-infidel paper edited by another unscrupulous reverend divine. I accordingly looked up the first edition, and discovered that at page 79 he made the statement that "during the whole history of the movement, with the single exception of that noble woman, Ernestine L. Rose, I do not remember a single prominent speaker on our platform who could truthfully have been called an infidel." This has been made much of, though the writer saw fit to withdraw the statement. If the scrupulous individual in question will turn to the latest edition of Mr. Johnson's work, revised and enlarged, he will find that he totally omits any such statements. Up to page 74 the paging is alike in the two editions; but page 75 of the edition of 1882 omits all this passage, and goes on at page 81 of the edition of 1880. It will thus be seen that Mr. Johnson not only does not contradict Mr. Bradlaugh, but that he actually withdraws a misleading statement he had given currency to. As to Garrison's own views, Mr. Johnson says, page 363: "I am not aware that Mr. Garrison ever made any systematic statement of his religious opinions. His mind was too much absorbed in the application of moral principles to the conduct of life to permit him to pay much attention to the theological speculations which are so fascinating to many."

At page 66 Mr. Johnson says: "That in later years he held the views of the Bible common among Quakers and Unitarians is not denied; but this was long after the American clergy and churches had repudiated the anti-slavery movement. Indeed, it was this repudiation on their part that led him to the investigations which resulted in the modifications of his inherited views on this and some other points." But he contends Garrison was a Christian at the last no less than at the first; and in his lax sense this may be correct. It is merely a question of terminology. Mr. Matthew Arnold called himself a Christian and a member of the Church of England, while repudiating belief in miracles, or even in a personal God. The point I am interested in is only this: Did Charles Bradlaugh write down a deliberate lie?

I had the honor of knowing intimately "that noble woman, Ernestine L. Rose," as Oliver Johnson called her, and she has more than once assured me of that very fact which Charles Bradlaugh stated—viz., that Garrison (who, Mr. Johnson notices, lectured continually on Sunday) had to go to the infidel hall in order to ventilate his opinions. On the authority of my revered friend, I challenge disproof from the reverend lecturer.

Mr. Bradlaugh made another statement, also dealing with slavery, in the same *Notes*—viz., that William Wilberforce, in the House of Commons on February 18, 1796, contrasted the conduct, in the matter of slavery, of what was then called "Infidel France," with "Christian England." The same reverend lecturer is reported as saying that

Wilberforce afterwards changed his opinion, and as giving the same book by Oliver Johnson as his authority. It happens that the only mention of Wilberforce in Johnson's book is in the following passage (p. 131): "It was while he was in England that Wilberforce died, and it was his sad privilege to participate in the obsequies of that great and good man, and to follow his remains to Westminster Abbey." It is most unlikely that Wilberforce ever repudiated anything he deliberately said before the House of Commons, and again I challenge the reverend lecturer for his authority.

Once more, the same particular man of God is reported as saying that Baur and Strauss altered their views. If they did, it was certainly not in the direction of orthodox Christianity. Here is what the Rev. P. Schaff's standard *Religious Encyclopedia* says of Baur: "He ruthlessly attacked the optimistic opinion of the Apostolic Church, and attempted to show that, so far from being peaceful, quiet, loving, and united, it was torn by opposing factions—the friends of Peter and those of Paul." So far from modifying these opinions, they are the most pronounced in his latest writings. This was also the case with Strauss. The heresy put forward in the first edition of *Das Leben Jesu* (1835) was much milder than that of the fourth edition (1840), and this in turn was supplanted by the popular edition of 1864; while in his last work, *The Old Faith and the New*, he emphatically proclaims that intellectual man is no longer Christian—calls Christ's resurrection "a world-historical humbug," and gives up Christian belief in immortality. In accordance with his will, he was buried without religious rites.

As the same reverend lecturer is reported to have said that Colonel Ingersoll is an advocate of free love, and that he fought for slavery (each statement the very antithesis of the truth), it may be wondered why I leave the even tenor of my way to take any notice of such a person. False coin may be sure of detection in the long run; but, as there is apparently a good deal circulated about the country by this individual, which obtains currency owing to his cloth, the surest plan is, when met with, to nail it down.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF MIND.

(Concluded from page 627.)

FROM what was stated in my article last week, it will be seen that in my opinion the mind represents the intellectual part of the living organism; that intelligence varies only in degree throughout the animal kingdom, and that its manifestations depend upon the character of the mental faculties wherever found. As Dr. Wigan remarks, in his *Duality of the Mind*: "The mind every anatomist knows to be a set of functions of the brain, differing only in number and degree from the intellect of animals. . . . Can the mind, then, be a thing *per se* distinct and separate from the body? No more than the motion can exist independent of the watch; and all the arguments of theologians and metaphysicians on this subject are founded on the confusion of terms." Spencer, in his *Elements of Psychology*, says: "Though we commonly regard mental and bodily life as distinct, it needs only to ascend somewhat above the ordinary point of view to see that they are but subdivisions of life in general, and that no line of demarcation can be drawn between them otherwise than arbitrarily." More recently, Professor Graham, in his *Creed of Science*, referring to Bain's *Mind and Body*, points out "that thought is fully and adequately described as the function of the brain; that it is nothing more, and nothing other (for to regard it as a case of causation amounts to the same thing), is proved, according to physiologists, by abundant and increasing evidence" (p. 156).

These are my views, plainly stated, as to the nature of the human mind; and I am pleased to find that they are corroborated by the evidence of leading scientists, both of the past and of the present time. The opinions which I have here expressed, supported as they are, in the words of Professor Graham, "by abundant and increasing evidence," are thoroughly opposed to the notions entertained by orthodox Christians in reference to the nature of soul or mind. Too long has the absurd fallacy obtained that the human body possesses an ego which controls and

regulates the thoughts and actions of the bodily organisation. More and more are unprejudiced thinkers recognising, with Professor Ribot, that "the ego is not an entity acting where it chooses or as it pleases; controlling the organs in its own way, and limiting its domain according to its own wish. On the contrary, it is a resultant even to such a degree that its domain is strictly determined by the anatomical connections with the brain, and that at one time it represents an entire body less an undivided part, and at another time the half of a body, and in parasitic monsters such a limited domain that it does not suffice to support life, and accordingly is expelled prematurely" (*The Diseases of Personality*, p. 45). It appears to me that man's ego consists in his entire self, the result of his organisation and the operation of his mental faculties.

There are two general and conflicting views entertained in reference to the origin of human intelligence. The one attributes it to natural causes; and the other regards it as having emanated from a God who is infinite in wisdom and power—the one great Cause of all existences. It is supposed that this Being has endowed the human race with mental faculties that differ in some respects both in kind and degree from those found in the lower animals. I share the former view, for the reason that there appears to me to be no evidence to justify the latter. Of course, how body or mind originated can only be inferred, inasmuch as, from the very nature of the case, neither could have been the subject of human observation. I object to the dogmatism of theologians, who positively assert that there can be no reasonable doubt that their view is the correct one. I allege that their contention has not been, and cannot be, verified by facts. Moreover, while refraining from putting forth any dogmatic statement as to the origin of life and mind, it seems to me evident that the cause assigned to either by theologians is bare assumption. Basing an opinion upon the known facts of nature, I prefer accepting the theory of natural origin and evolutionary process to that of special creation and endowment. My theory, at least, has probabilities in its favor, while that of the theologian is merely a speculation, opposed to the manifestation of all natural law of which we have any knowledge. Thus I say to my readers, in the words of the late Professor Huxley: "Choose your hypothesis; I have chosen mine"; and "I refuse to run the risk of insulting any sane man by supposing that he seriously holds such a notion" as that of special creation.

Accepting the theory of Evolution as affording the best explanation of the development of man and the whole of the animal kingdom, I believe that man has reached his present condition, physically and mentally, by a natural process, and that by the struggle for existence, and by natural selection, he has acquired the mental qualities he now possesses. This view of Evolution is to-day largely accepted by many professed Christians who formerly rejected it. Such persons, however, still maintain that, whatever may have taken place with regard to physical powers and bodily organs, it is clear that the higher intellectual faculties of man could not so have originated; that those, at least, must be the result of special creation, and must have been called into existence when human beings first appeared upon the stage of life by some supernatural power. They further urge that, even if it could be shown beyond doubt that the marvellously-constructed body of man, with its beautifully adjusted parts of bone and muscle, nerve and brain, skin and mucous membrane, had its origin in evolution, yet no light whatever would be thrown upon the source of the wondrous powers of judgment and memory, understanding and will, perception and conception. I fail to see that the assumption here involved has any basis in fact; for those very powers are found existing in the lower animals. Psychological investigation has clearly shown that perception is not peculiar to man, but that it exists wherever there are organs of sense, and these extend in some form or other to the lowest phase of animal life. Volition is also met with in all the higher animals; and memory may be observed in the dog, horse, elephant, cat, camel, and numerous other mammals. Even judgment, in the form of comparison, is often displayed by the domestic animals—the dog in particular. Dr. H. Bischoff, in his *Essay on the Difference between Man and Brutes*, writes: "It is impossible to deny the animals, qualitatively and quantitatively, as many mental faculties as we find in man. They possess consciousness; they feel, think, and judge; they possess a will which determines their actions

and motions. Animals possess attachment; they are grateful, obedient, good-natured; and, again, false treacherous, disobedient, revengeful, jealous, etc. Their actions frequently evince deliberation and memory. It is in vain to derive such actions from so-called instinct, which unconsciously compels them so to act." Now, with a knowledge of these facts, is it not reasonable to conclude that psychical powers are as likely to have been evolved as bodily organs? If the mental powers of the lower animals have come by evolution, there is not a shadow of reason for supposing that those of man came in any other way; for, while Darwin says, "the difference between the mind of man and that of the highest ape is immense," he also remarks, "great as it is, it is certainly one of degree, and not of kind."

To those who persist in asserting that the lower animals differ fundamentally from man in the intelligence they exhibit, and that therefore they must possess mental faculties different from those of man in order to account for such difference, I reply that, upon the same principle, it would be equally as logical to allege that, inasmuch as the manifestations of intelligence by some animals resemble those of man, therefore the cause of each must be similar, which at once destroys the notion that there is any radical difference in the intellectual powers of man and of the animals below him. To argue that an immaterial and intelligent Being was necessary to give birth to material and thinking animals is only putting the question of origin a step backwards. It gives no explanation of the genesis of the assumed immaterial Being, or states how he became possessed of his intelligence. The same objection applies to the statement that "in the beginning" all parts of existence were "endowed" with properties and powers necessary for their becoming what they are. This assumption rests upon the error of supposing that each separate mode of existence had a special starting point from which they all proceeded.

Then we are told that reasoning from effects to causes enables us to formulate a starting point. But it does nothing of the kind, and such an attempt at argument is on a par with the method adopted by theologians, who argue from the scheme of redemption to the fall of man. They trace the first sinner to the family of Adam, and there they stop; but beyond that, according to the story, there are the garden, the trees, and the serpent, which were the very agencies that caused the deplorable event. Whence came these? CHARLES WATTS.

MARY MAGDALENE AND THE VIRGIN MARY.

IN the *Expositor* for September, Professor J. Rendel Harris writes on "The Blessed Virgin in the Talmud," reiterating his nonsense about the Roman soldier Pandira being an anagram of Parthenos, a virgin, and trying to show that, because Mary is spoken of as Megaddela, a hair-dresser, therefore the mother of Jesus was identified with Mary Magdalene. Dr. Harris, of course, cannot allow the supposition that the Christians misinterpreted the Jewish story. Yet his facts strongly confirm this. He says: "The Syrian commentators are much exercised to explain why Mary Magdalene was so called; they did not apparently know of any town of Magdala to which to refer her." Magdala, like Nazareth, turned up afterwards in answer to the demand of pilgrims. But these commentators "speculated as to what tower (migdol) she could have been named after," for there are many legends of virgins, including Mary, being, like Danae, enclosed in a tower. Bar Salibi says: "She was called Magdalene because she inhabited the tower of Astrat, or the tower of Shiloah; or from plaited, because her hair was plaited." From this Dr. Harris concludes: "Jesus, therefore, according to the Talmud, was the son of Mary Magdalene." Dr. Harris shows further "that so careful a student of the Scripture as Ephrem Syrus made the same confusion in his *Commentary upon the Diatessaron*."

Now, how came the Christian commentator to make such a slip as this? I surmise it was for the very same reason that made St. Epiphanius say that Jesus was the son of Jacob, surnamed Panthera, and John of Damascus maintain that Panthera was great-grandfather to Mary, and Barpanther her grandfather (see *The Jewish Life of*

Christ, edited by G. W. Foote and J. M. Wheeler, p. vii.). They were, like Dr. Harris, trying to reconcile the Jewish traditions with the Christian myths (see *The Historical Jesus and the Mythical Christ*, by Gerald Massey). The obvious explanation of the Miriam who bore Jeshu to Pandira being called Magdela was that the profession of hair-plaiting was a cover for harlotry. Hence, although there is nothing about it in the Gospels, it has always been the tradition of the Church that Mary Magdalene was a harlot, and she is identified with the woman who was a sinner. But this very Christian tradition proves the priority of the Jewish tradition that Mary Magdela was the mother of Jesus ben Pandira.

UNCLE BENJAMIN.

HUXLEY.

MR. GEORGE W. SMALLEY, the American correspondent of the *Times*, who had a long and intimate acquaintance with the late Professor Huxley, has a monograph, or perhaps we should call it a tribute, in the October number of *Scribner*, which is one of the best we have yet seen. Mr. Smalley declares Huxley to have been "one of the truest men who ever lived, one of the manliest, and, in all points, one of the noblest." "I believe," he adds, "I should say the same thing if I had never known him, or known him but slightly, for I have known also many of his friends and some of his enemies, and from no one of them did I ever hear a word questioning his loyalty or truthfulness of nature." Mr. Smalley thinks Huxley's advocacy of Darwinism hindered the appreciation of his own original work. He says:—

"When Darwin published the *Origin of Species*, he was denounced from every orthodox pulpit in England as an infidel. That was in 1859, not two generations ago. Huxley, who had already made a name in science, took his stand at once by Darwin. He did not affirm—he was never much given to affirming anything except that two and two made four—that Darwin's hypothesis had been made out. It was enough for him that the theory of evolution, or of natural selection, as it was first announced, had the probabilities on its side. It explained the hitherto unexplained origin of species more satisfactorily than any preceding theory. It gave, to say the least, a rational and not a merely mythological account of things, and for Huxley the use of the reason was the first condition of an approach to the truth. Until a more rational theory, better supported by facts, should be advanced he stood by this, and was content to work, and that others should work, on the lines Darwin had laid down. Darwin and Darwinism held the field. They hold it still. Twenty-one years later Huxley delivered, at the Royal Institution in London, a lecture on the coming of age of the Darwinian theory. He had very little to alter or modify."

We shall give some further extracts from this article in our next number.

W. L. Garrison and Orthodoxy.

When the great lights of the American Church—Stuart, Hodge, Fisk, and others—boldly asserted that the Bible sanctioned slaveholding, he was naturally led to consider the question of the inspiration of that book, and its authority over the consciences of men. His investigations resulted in the conviction that on this subject also the Friends were substantially right; that the revelation of God in man was older and more authoritative than that inscribed upon any parchment, however ancient, or by whatever miracles authenticated; and that if, as Stuart and other professors of theology affirmed, the Bible sanctioned slavery, then the passages containing such sanction could not be from God, but must be from the Devil.—*William Lloyd Garrison and his Times*, by O. Johnson, p. 364.

For a whole generation Mr. Garrison was denounced by the pro-slavery ministry and Church as an infidel. It was so much easier to hurl that epithet at his head than to answer his arguments against slavery.—*Ibid*, p. 366.

Obituary.

MARTHA COLE died at West Cowes on Friday, October 4th, after a lingering and cruel illness, the intense pain of which was borne with the greatest heroism. She was an ardent admirer of the late Mr. Charles Bradlaugh.

GOD'S HOBBY.

THROUGHOUT his changeful mad career,
From zero to the present year,
In raging wrath and meekness,
God showed, and shows, that all the time
He had, and has, for blood and crime
A rather strongish weakness.

He filled the world with eager life
Foredoomed to live by deadly strife,
And die in pain and sorrow;
And then—except a foolish few—
Through Hell's red night to roast and stew—
A night without a morrow.

His motto is, as all must see:
"Do evil just that ill might be,
Or else that good might follow";
A motto which we all detest,
And which, e'en Protestants protest,
Beats Jesuits quite hollow.

The major factors of his plans
Were crimes, as seen by him that scans,
With open mind, the Bible;
As "all's for best," God justifies
His means and methods: murder, lies—
Or else the Book's a libel.

He couldn't e'en devise a plan
To save his wretched creature, man,
Without a victim squealing;
And those whom Christ was killed to save
He "chastens" all, this side the grave,
To show "there's no ill-feeling."

If God thought fit his Son to slay,
He might have planned a better way
Than forcing man to do it;
He might have killed by bane, or beast,
And thus have saved the Jews, at least,
From persecution through it.

But no, He dearly loved a crime,
And liked to see it ev'ry time;
To him, 'twas sweet as honey:
Still, forcing man to do a sin,
In order sinlessness to win,
Is rather—well, it's funny!

G. L. MACKENZIE.

Samson's Locks.

A story, which in some points resembles that of Samson, is told in the island of Nias, off the west coast of Sumatra. A certain chief, Lanbo Maros by name, was taken prisoner by his enemies and condemned to death. It was resolved to drown him; so they flung him into the sea, and kept him there for a while. But when they hauled him up by the rope he was quite alive. Next they tried him with cold steel, stabbing him in every part of the body; but he took no harm by it. Surely, they thought, fire will do the business. So they tied him to a stake, and set fire to it. But, though the wood was consumed, he was not even singed. Then they took counsel with his wife, and she revealed her husband's secret. On the middle of his head he had a hair as hard as copper wire, and with this hair his life was bound up. So they pulled out the hair, and immediately he gave up the ghost.—*Frazer, "Passages from the Bible,"* p. 430.

IS THE WORLD INDEBTED TO THE BIBLE FOR MORALITY?—
"The wisdom of the Egyptians" was summarised in various compends of proverbial philosophy. One of these—written centuries before the time of Moses—is termed by M. Chabas "the most ancient book of the world." In common with other papyri of a similar character, it inculcates the study of wisdom, the duty of honoring parents and superiors, of respecting property, of being charitable, peaceable, contented, humble, chaste, sober, truthful, and just.—*The Rev. James Dodds, D.D., "The Faiths of the World,"* pp. 175, 176; 1882.

MR. PUTNAM'S VISIT TO ENGLAND.

Extracts from his Letters to the New York "Truthseeker" (August 31).

AFTER my visit to Stratford-on-Avon a few Birmingham Freethought friends gathered at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Armfield for a farewell gathering, hoping that, as the age rolls on, we shall meet again and bivouac on the fields of time, and join forces for further struggle. Mr. Ridgway leads off with an address both of welcome and good-bye, and Mr. Armfield, Robert Taylor, Mr. Cattell, and others, add their hearty good wishes, while the American visitor responds to the best of his ability. It was a joyous occasion, after the inspiration of Shakespeare, to thus realise the universal genius and comradeship of Freethought.

The movement formerly carried on so strenuously by Mr. Watts in Birmingham is sure to make itself felt in future years. My faith is ever in the progress of humanity. After a swift journey, for they can go in England if they only try, I am again in London, and am refreshed with a chat on all the things that interest a Freethinker, from politics and religion to art and literature, with my friends, Foote and Watts. The next day, Thursday, July 25, I again meet my American friends, Dr. Darrow and Dr. Morton, and we put in the time at the Crystal Palace. I find that while I was on my tour my friends, in usual Yankee fashion, in a little over a week had visited Scotland, the North of England, and also Paris. I was rather astonished at the rapidity of their course, but, being busy, professional men, and obliged to return soon, they determined to enjoy as large a glimpse of Europe as possible, and they certainly made the most of every minute. The Crystal Palace is one of those places that the traveller must behold, for it contains a vast variety of interesting objects. In art, in science, in history, are displays that one could study for months. The varied riches of many countries are here. In the evening, especially, with the myriad lights, the animated crowds, the sparkling waters, the solemn and sprightly music of organ and stringed instrument, and, to wind up, the vast and brilliant rush of fireworks, where every sort of color and fiery particle blazes and sprinkles through the heavens, the Palace is like an enchantment, and, for the time being, we seem to be walking the mazes of romance. It is impossible to describe the thousand-and-one exhibitions that throng upon the view. After this visit to the Crystal Palace I have to say good-bye to Dr. Darrow. He leaves the following day for America.

On Friday Mr. J. M. Wheeler takes me to the Tower of London. What a sad history is unfolded here! The heart aches to think of it. How many a bright life has been quenched in these gloomy buildings. Here are the mighty armors of the olden time that once made men invincible. These cumbrous suits appear foolish now. It makes one thankful that he can wear a modern suit of clothes and snap his fingers at these doughty knights, who must have had a hard time of it travelling about in these stupendous habiliments. By the way, all these suits of armor here and elsewhere are very small, showing that the average height and size of man have increased since the Middle Ages. Once in a while you come across a suit that might do for a six-footer, but very seldom. The modern man, in strength, grace, skill, and virility, surpasses King Arthur and his famous knights. There is no question but that man to-day is nobler physically than he ever was before. Judging from the armor, the warriors of old were a rather poor lot; and as for the horses, they were "slow coaches" indeed. They could not go much above a jog trot, and the jousts of chivalry would be very tame affairs at the present time. The heaviest man was sure to win, merely because of his weight. In this old-time royal residence and prison-house I wander in the chapel built by William the Conqueror, where he himself worshipped. I stand in the dungeons where many a prisoner has pined in agony, and on the spot where the scaffold was erected for the execution of Anne Poleyn, Lady Jane Grey, and other illustrious victims. How cruel and barbarous those times appear whose shadow oppresses us to-day! I can never enter these ghostly buildings, with their record of crime, without a thrill of horror. I can but think of the awful injustice that has existed in the universe. And there seems no help for it. The strong arm has triumphed, while man is both good and evil, and makes and mars his own destiny. Somehow, out of the everlasting turmoil we have won the vantage ground. The terrific deeds of the past are no more. In them, however, we see the evolution of man and the annihilation of the deity.

Passing from these dark towers—a huge, strange relic in the bustle and glamor of to-day's civilisation, seeming like a great ship stranded on a foreign shore, a wreck of the ages, freighted with the wealth of kings, jewels and crowns, swords and regalia, and the glistening instruments of war—I walk to the Tower Bridge, which arches the Thames near

by, in glorious contrast with the ancient palace of kings, a modern structure, built for the people, and not for a despot. It is the noblest bridge over the Thames, with massive towers. Between these swings the enormous drawbridge through which the great ships pass. The traffic over this bridge, as over London Bridge, is a marvel to those who first see London. One wonders where all the people and the teams and the crowded carriages come from, and would think that the great metropolis was pouring itself into this one highway. Still, if he went to London or Blackfriars Bridge, he would find the same vast mass of tidal business.

I must confess there is an occasional stupidity in the English mind that is quite exasperating. Here are the great towers of the bridge, which we are invited to climb to the extent of two hundred steps or more, with the expectation that, as we pass aloft from tower to tower, we shall have an extended view of the Thames and the city. Alas! you are doomed to a disgustful disappointment. Disgust is the only word that can express your feeling when you reach the top to find that you pass from one tower to the other through a closed archway. I was over the bridge before I knew it, and could scarcely believe that I was on the other side until I went back and looked through a few little crevices upon the broad stream beneath. It made me swear a prayer or two to think I had been so thoroughly deceived by the massive stupidity of Anglo-Saxon conservatism. If French or Greek genius had built this lofty highway, it would have been a light and airy structure, through which might be seen vast and glittering prospects of the river and the busy traffic. A noble panorama would have greeted one, instead of this dungeon-like path, through whose crevices you catch the sunlight while you stand on tip-toe, and wonder that the mind which built such a stupendous bridge should crown it with such a solid piece of folly. I say to every traveller, Do not climb the stairs of the Tower Bridge. You will be humbugged if you do. Walk over it, take a good look from the outside, see the great drawbridge rise and the stately ship pass through and the tide of traffic roll on again, and that is all that you can do. The splendid view from the top is shut out by an almost inconceivable blunder.

It is curious what you will see in London at times, a grotesque and yet romantic mingling of art and dilapidation. Just on the verge of Billingsgate—the dirtiest portion of London I guess—is St. Mary's Church-on-the-Hill, a humble-looking edifice, with an air of desolation in the outward view that would make one think that the inside must be as gloomy as a grave. A change, however, passes over the vision as we enter, for within are perhaps the most exquisite and beautiful carvings in all England—a very gem of art in the slums of London. This church must have been on a favored and fashionable spot to be so nobly decorated, yet in process of time the debris of Billingsgate flowed around its site, and imprisoned its precious ornaments with the environments of poverty. This is an evidence of the vastness of London life and its perpetual changes, like those of the sea itself.

After these wanderings, Mr. Wheeler and myself sit down for dinner in the famous Crosby Hall. This is where Richard III. received the crown, and within it, in the dining-room and smoking-room, are memorials of the dim and dusty past, paintings, armors, carvings, etc. However, the ghost of the bloody Richard does not disturb our appetite. We eat heartily, and think that kings are no better than common clay, and a crown is a poor bauble compared with a healthy stomach.

Saturday is my busy day for mail, "News and Notes," etc., for America. But after these labors I wander over to King's Cross and meet my friend, Mr. G. W. Foote, and spend the evening with him and his family, with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Watts, and Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler, and others. It was delightful to sit out in the garden, on the green sward, with the flowers in perfume and bloom about you the trees making soft music, the rich sunlight glancing on roof and wall, and making a mellow radiance over the scene; while the children play, and the elders talk philosophy. It was a charming place for thought, for reverie, for imagination. It was one of those resting places for the mind, where we forget the strife of the world, the injustice and falsehoods, and the stern duties that must be met. We rejoice for the moment in the ideal life, and poetry touches our heart with its imperial sceptre; as Alexander Smith says, "It clothes us with kingdoms." Our host is not simply the sceptic, the reformer, the warrior, the iconoclast; he is a lover of poetry, in all its moods of glory and of song. Especially is he a student of the supreme and universal Shakespeare, through whose domains he has wandered many a joyous day, and gathered from wide experience the noblest fruitage of the immortal bard. So the evening passes, and music adds its marvel to the occasion, and the soul of Freethought touches the heights of human excellence. It flashes the promethean fire, the forethought of humanity, the glory of the future, the budding of beauty and delight, after the destruction of misery and the wrong.

I am indebted to Mr. Victor Charles Jackson, one of our

young Freethought workers in London, for a delightful visit to Canterbury on Sunday, July 28, when I am for the first time free from the harness. Canterbury is an old and orthodox town. The spirit of the past broods over it. Its cathedral is one of the most ancient in England, and one of the most beautiful and impressive. It, indeed, charms the eye with its massive yet graceful glory. Its arched roof, its painted windows, its columned aisles, present a scene of sweet attraction, mingled though it may be with the superstitions of a dead age. Glorious music was pealing through the vast space as we entered. It was a solemn religious service preparatory to the installation of Dean Farrar, a somewhat advanced theologian, who has just been appointed to the place. I enjoyed the music; the singing was delightful. Some of the voices are the finest in England, for they take especial pains at this cathedral to secure first-rate musical ability; and certainly the music was in harmony with the magnificence of the cathedral. But the formalities of worship, the stiff, artificial ceremonies, the dry prayers, and still drier preaching, did not conduce at all to elevation of mind. They were like a bitter pill which we had to swallow in order to get the real good of the occasion, which was simply in the masterful effects produced by the genius of man in the decorations of the building, in the superb and unmatched beauties of the windows, that flushed with soft yet splendid effulgence that must charm the imagination which delights in color, however critical the mind, and in the waves of music that flowed on and on as if the cathedral itself were a fountain of melody, and all its beautiful forms and hues were melting into ethereal joy and splendor.

In the afternoon, in fortunate conjunction with a party of American visitors, and by the courtesy of Mr. Jackson, I had the pleasure of viewing the cathedral under the guidance of Canon Holland, who is a most cultivated gentleman, and who has made a faithful study of the cathedral and its wonderful history. This was the place where Thomas a Becket was murdered. The canon described the scene with dramatic felicity, so that a vivid picture was presented of the theatre of the crime. We could see the crowding monks, the heroic prelate, and the relentless knights. We saw the very spot where the stubborn priest received his death wound; where he fell and poured out his life blood upon the pavement. Beneath, in the crypt of the cathedral, we saw the tomb of Becket, and the place where the king, in penance for the murder, received three hundred and twenty stripes upon his bare back. The canon remarked, with a somewhat subtle smile, that here was a case in which the value of penance was displayed, for before the king received the stripes he was defeated on every hand; but when he went forth from the cathedral after the penance he was greeted with news of victory after victory. He was a lucky king without doubt. As usual, God was on the side of the heaviest battalions, penance or no penance, and the twinkle in the canon's eye meant as much; but I am afraid he didn't apply his logic to the whole case of Christianity.

We saw the tomb of Edward, the Black Prince, and the armor he wore in battle, and the tomb of the king and queen, Henry and Eleanor. I must express my thanks to Canon Holland for his genial politeness, and for the wealth of scholarly information which he furnished of the great cathedral and its centuries of existence.

After visiting the cathedral, we wandered to St. Martin's, which is said to be the oldest church building in the land. It is, indeed, an antique structure, and looks as if it might have floated down from the flood. It is situated in the midst of an old cemetery, where wild grasses and flowers flourish over the graves. Services are going on as we approach, and soft and solemn music fills the air. It is said that this was originally a temple of the Druids, built 100 A.D. It afterwards became a place of Roman worship, and then a Christian church in 370 A.D. This is the legend. Whatever may be the facts, the "corridors of time" stretch far away to the foundation-stones of this quaint little church, and we need not dispute the story as it is given.

Canterbury is also famous as the place where David Copperfield lived, and I think that David will be remembered as long as St. Thomas a Becket, and with much more delightful associations. *David Copperfield* is, to a certain extent, an autobiography of Dickens, and on that account is intensely interesting, as also are Canterbury and its surroundings, connected with the genius of the great story-teller, who has so much of the wonderful exuberance of Shakespeare. Mr. Jackson, who is an enthusiastic student of Dickens, pointed out the house where Agnes used to sit sewing by the window, and where Uriah Heep used to look forth with his cunning eyes; and also the tavern where Micawber gave his farewell gorgeous banquet, for which he never paid the bill; and there was the butcher's shop, etc. All these things, associated with the immortal story, gave to ancient Canterbury the brilliant light of modern humanity and glorious romance. I shall not forget my excursion to this venerable place, and must thank Mr. Jackson for his kindness and generosity.

On Monday I have to write "News and Notes" again, but find a pleasant relief after these literary labors in a social

reunion at the home of Miss Edith M. Vance and Miss Annie Brown. Our women friends do not fear to put on the harness and work for reform, notwithstanding danger and ostracism. Since I have arrived in England, in many places in the field work there has been bitter opposition, and, but for the protection of policemen, there would have been bloodshed and riot. The cruel nature of the Christian religion is thus exposed. In these emergencies we find that woman does not lack in courage and devotion.

On Tuesday, July 30, I sail with Dr. Morton down the Thames to Greenwich, and visit its museum and hospital and observatory. The voyage along the river is one of constant animation, so varied are the scenes, the vessels, the bridges, the shores, etc. The great hospital at Greenwich extends magnificently on the sight as we approach. In the museum and gallery are the portraits and relics of Nelson, and the melancholy remains of the Arctic expedition under the gallant Franklin. Time forbids a further description.

In the evening, with Mr. Jackson, I visit the India Exhibition, where the great wheel, three hundred feet high, rolls around, and where there is a most brilliant exhibition of oriental life, its trade, its skill, its art, its wild and luxuriant animal world; its temples of worship, its thousand gods. It was a resplendent scene, ten thousand blazing torches, ten thousand people, bands playing by the dozen almost, beautiful gardens, cascades and flowing waters. One need not travel to India to see its vivid and superb variety of human genius.

On Wednesday evening I went with Dr. Morton to the magnificent Royal Aquarium, where music and the drama add their charms to a display of curiosities from every age and clime. I also visit, with Dr. Morton, the "Old Curiosity Shop" of Dickens. It is still standing in the heart of London, a little, crooked building, with old books and papers for sale, pictures of Dickens, relics, etc.

On Thursday, with my genial and learned friend Wheeler, who is interested in all that pertains to literature, we visited Chelsea, the home of Carlyle, and the house where he used to live and work, and the garden where he used to smoke and muse. Carlyle has been a great influence in this century, a kind of thunderbolt of reform and sincerity. He was tremendously in earnest, and, although he believed in God, he found fault with him also, and muttered: "He does nothing, he is asleep." Though Carlyle could not waken the deity, he did waken man, and set him to thinking and doing. Carlyle was a rugged old fellow, but he wielded the hammer of Thor and made the sparks fly. I plucked some jasmine planted by the wife in the garden. In this case I honor the woman more than the man. She was equally heroic, equally genuine; a woman of fine devotion and splendid nobility of character. I honor Carlyle, but Jane was the better man of the two, and deserves a more shining crown.

On Thursday evening I end my week's London experience at the home of Charles Albert Watts, the son of Charles Watts, who is engaged in scientific and Freethought publishing business, is editor of the *Literary Guide*, etc. Around his hospitable table are Mrs. Watts, his wife, the twin children, and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Watts, who can rejoice in seeing grandchildren gather about them. How old we are getting to be; yet no one would know it by our looks, only by our children, who grow up so fast about our pathway. We spend a delightful evening, and are loth to part when train time arrives; but we cannot afford to be "left"—we must keep up with time and tide.

SAMUEL P. PUTNAM.

(To be continued.)

ACID DROPS.

MRS. CHANT is in America, trading on the notoriety she gained by her crusade against the Empire Music Hall, the license of which has just been restored without restriction, at least so far as the recommendation of the Licensing Committee is concerned. Mr. Price Hughes, however, is still here to save London from outrage. Last Sunday afternoon he had a meeting of Good Templars in St. James's Hall, and asked them if, in their name, he might send a message to the Chairman of the London County Council, requesting it to overrule its Licensing Committee's decision. Of course the meeting said Yes. No doubt this highly impartial opinion will have great weight with the County Council.

Max Nordau's *Paradoxes* has long been known to Freethinkers in England through the American translation. A new translation is now issued in London by Heinemann, and the *Methodist Times* says it "will find many readers." In another part of the same paper we notice that "infidelity in this country has had its day." Our pious contemporary is evidently ignorant of Max Nordau's irreligious opinions.

Considering that "infidelity" has had its day in England, it is curious that Mr. Price Hughes is imploring the Dissen-

ters to join the Church of England in opposition to Secular Education. He begs them not to "make themselves the cats'-paws of agnostic journalists," and warns them against letting the School Board system be "worked in the interests of infidels and agnostics." We have had our own day, but somehow it is not night with us, and Mr. Hughes knows it.

Mr. Hughes is one of the loosest writers and speakers in this country. He refers to the "millions of workmen" who have received the Salvation Army preachers with open arms. How many millions of workmen does he think there are in England?

The *Church Times* protests against the heretical proposals of the Women's Total Abstinence Union for the use of "unfermented wine in the eucharist." It says: "A liquor that is not fermented is not wine, and without wine the original command to do this cannot be obeyed." The question is fully dealt with in Mr. Foote's new pamphlet on *The Bible and Beer*.

A writer who has travelled in China comments in the *Melbourne Argus* on the folly of letting young Christian women go about preaching in that country. To go unattended in the way they do is only practised by the lowest class of Chinese women, with whom they are thus naturally confounded. What, he asks, is the sense of "sending ladies out at all? If only for pity's sake, and in the cause of humanity, this system of luring inexperienced girls to die in agony and horror amid the yellow savages of China ought to be at once put an end to."

Dr. Griffith John, of Hankow, a well-known missionary, also strongly objects to female missionaries going about in strange districts, sometimes accompanied by male evangelists. This presents a picture to the eyes of the Chinese which is not calculated to heighten their respect. "I think," he says, "the women are of very great service as nurses and teachers, and they should only, I think, work from thoroughly organised centres, and under every possible safeguard."

It appears that in China, wherever there is a Christian mission established, Chinese parents are afraid of letting their children go out, lest they should be kidnapped by the foreign devils. At Cheng-tu, where the massacre took place, a placard was issued warning parents to keep their children within doors. However false and erroneous such a notion may be, no one can wonder that where it exists there must be a feeling of enmity and hatred against the foreign devils, "the followers of the *chu* Jesus."

The Church Missionary Society is sending more ladies out to China to take the place of the martyred ones, who are supposed to have a safe seat in glory. We very much question if these ladies know the real state of native feeling; and, should further massacres result, the pious parties who induce these ladies to thus devote their lives to martyrdom are really accessories before the fact.

Cardinal Gibbons, a Yankee red-hatted priest, has been to Rome. Unfortunately he did not stop there. He has returned to the United States, where he informs the people that the Pope "believes fully" in the custom of opening Congress with prayer. Of course he does. We know that without asking. Who ever heard of a butcher running down beef?

There is a good deal of sham liberty in "free and independent" America. A wretched fellow called Comstock, secretary of the Vice Society (as old Cobbett used to call the original body in England), pretty well decides on his own hand what literature shall pass through the United States mails. It now appears that the Postmaster-General of Canada has prohibited the transmission of our gallant contemporary, the New York *Truthseeker*. By a stroke of his pen he stops the circulation of this paper in the whole Dominion, and there is absolutely no appeal against his decision. It is really astonishing that "free" people should hire a man to carry their letters, and let the fellow dictate what they shall read. Yet so it is, and they submit to it like a lot of sheep—all but the Freethinkers.

The *Christian Reformer* calls for the suppression of the *Truthseeker*. This is to "induce" its readers to "seek something more wholesome." The *Truthseeker* remarks that "The prescription is a very simple one, but it is not new." Of course not. It is as old as the first rogue who joined the first fool to hunt down the first honest man.

The revival of the curfew in many parts of the country is an indication of the stern way we are now making towards mediævalism. A curfew is a bell rung at candle-lighting. If, after the prescribed hour, a child under the age of consent is detected in the act of being upon the public street, by or in default of its parents' permission, a fine of

one hundred dollars, more or less, is incurred. The custom, of course, has its origin in the hen-roost, though its present adherents are insensible of that fact. They take a hint from Mohammed, who prayed that the mountain might come to him, but, learning that that natural object was sedentary in its habits, he went to the mountain. The clergy, who are the volunteer herders of the populace, seeing that a penitentiary cannot at present be erected in every town without exceeding the legal indebtedness, have started in with the material at hand, and propose to make every child's home its own jail. Parents are honored by appointment as assistant jailers over the fruit of their loins. It is superfluous to inquire, Whither are we drifting? We are hell-bent for Puritanism.—George Macdonald, in "*Truthseeker*" (N. Y.).

High Church and Low Church are likely to have some nice squabbles during the Church Congress at Norwich. Father Ignatius intends to be present, and the Protestant Alliance will muster in force to disseminate anti-Catholic literature.

The *Church Times* declares that the Board school system, as at present practised, "is nothing more or less than the endowment of Dissent." There is a simple remedy—secular education only to be paid for out of public funds. Until this remedy is adopted there will always be squabbling as to the character of religious teaching, and teachers who should be employed in teaching what they know, instead of what they believe, will be jealously watched lest they lead the children in the direction of their own beliefs.

Some of the School Board Reports are somewhat misleading. Thus from Lenham, Kent, they report: "Nothing doctrinal is taught." Yet in another column we read that all divisions learn the Apostles' Creed. If that venerable forgery is not "doctrinal," what is?

According to the *Tablet*, the Archbishop of Santiago, in Chili, has pronounced an interdict upon two Atheistic journals "which had distinguished themselves by their blasphemies and scandalous attacks upon the Church, and excommunicated all connected therewith, including sellers and readers." The *Tablet* seems to recognise that all this may be laughed at, for it adds, most impressively, as the climax, that "The two leading banks have stopped their advertisements."

Sir Richard Church, who was Commander-in-Chief of the Greek forces during the War of Independence, afterwards accepted a commission from King Ferdinand to put down the brigands who infested and terrorised the kingdom of Naples. "Worst of all," the *Westminster Gazette* says, "were the Decisi, under Ciro Annichiarico, a bloodthirsty priest who generally prefaced a crime by a mass, and at his execution confessed to sixty or seventy murders." Quite a King David! The man after God's own heart always twanged his harp when he was bent on an extra-special crime.

Under the heading, "Shocking Case of Depravity," the *South Australian Register* (August 27) reports the arrest, at Oakleigh, Melbourne, of the Rev. James Frank Gannaway, who has filled various Congregational pulpits in England and Victoria, for getting children by his own daughter. He is an elderly man, and is said to have six children, who are his grandchildren also.

At the sensational trial of a Sunday-school teacher for murdering a girl in a chapel at San Francisco, an incident was the infliction upon the secretary of the Y.M.C.A. of a fine of 250 dollars for having told a jurymen that the people would hang him if they did not hang Durrant, the accused.

An order of half-a-crown a week has been made on the Rev. Jonathan Crossland, late vicar of Kilham, near Driffeld, for the purpose of maintaining the illegitimate child of a girl of sixteen, who was in his service.

The monks of Athos rigidly exclude all female creatures, including animals, from their domains. Yet travellers complain of fleas. Why do they not excommunicate feminine fleas, as the bishops of old solemnly excommunicated locusts and other vermin?

Bowen, in his work on Mount Athos, mentions a superstition that any women who presumed to land on the holy peninsula have always been struck dead for their impiety. One of the monks asked him, "What sort of human creatures are women?" He answered, "Have you never seen a woman?" "When he assured me he had only seen his mother, and that he had forgotten even her appearance." These monks do not make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake; but perhaps it would be just as well if they did.

A straw showing the way the wind is blowing in America on the New Woman question is the announcement that the

Catholic University, of Washington, this month opens its doors to women. They will not receive degrees, but will be brought under priestly training, and receive such higher education as the Church has to offer. It is satisfactory to see the Church, which is built on the necks of women, obliged to give them a little more opportunity, for fear lest they drift where education of a non-priestly character may be obtained.

An American Catholic magazine, *Self-Culture*, has the impudence to write: "Had Thomas Paine's mind been clear in his last moments, he would undoubtedly have died in the communion of the Catholic Church." Now, it happens that Paine's mind was clear in his last moments, and he deliberately rejected the offices of all men of God. If there was one faith more than another which he disliked, it was the set of priestly institutions and superstitions called Catholic.

Benton Ridge, Ohio, has recently suffered from a furious revival of religion, and one of the converts is building a large tank, which he will fill with water, so that another convert can show the depth of his faith by attempting to walk upon its surface. He is likely, incidentally, to show the depth of water.

Christian civilisation wants a little toning up (or perhaps toning down) in some parts of America. Monday's papers reported a horrible lynching incident at Cole City, Tennessee. A negro, alleged to have assaulted a white girl, was dragged from the jail by a furious mob. The father of the girl then mutilated him in an unspeakable manner, after which another man pounded the joints of his fingers until his hands were reduced to a jelly. The poor wretch was then shot in different parts of the body, and his corpse was burnt to ashes.

Sunday before the Church Congress at Norwich was taken advantage of by the local Bishop, who addressed a meeting in the Agricultural Hall on Christian Socialism. "It would seem," says the *Daily News* correspondent, "that he expected the audience would largely consist of working men; but there did not seem to be many of that class present." We should think not, indeed! Working men are not fond of listening to harangues on "Labor" by rich dignitaries of a purse-proud Church.

The Wesleyan Missionary Committee having decided to stop the supplies for South African Missions, the churches over there have appointed a week of self-denial throughout the entire body, in order to make up the deficiency.

In 1852 it is believed there were about 150 native Christians, but it is doubtful if there were one hundred Muslims, in the whole of Lagos. To-day there are at least twelve thousand followers of Islam, with fifty Mosques. Christianity, in the same period, although State-aided and recognised, and protected by treaty rights, can only boast of twenty-eight churches and chapels of all denominations, and about five thousand nominal followers. With these striking figures before them, Christians continually declare that Islam is *only* promoted by the sword, and cannot succeed when opposed by Christianity.—*Crescent*.

Actual investigation shows that more outrages are committed by Americans upon Chinese than by the latter upon the former. It is also clearly shown that, while the Americans have no decent excuse for their barbarities, the Chinese generally act under great provocation. Yet these facts will not deter the newspapers from claiming all the virtues for the Americans, and condemning the Chinese as inhuman fiends unfit to live.

The Rev. H. T. Chapman, of Leeds, addressing the congregation of the Orchard Chapel at Preston, reproved them hotly for using their handkerchiefs as fans, and said that cooling themselves made it all the hotter for him. He perspired in the pulpit, but that was nothing to what some will have to undergo hereafter.

Matthew Arnold said that God was usually conceived as a magnified non-natural man, and Herbert Spencer holds that all gods are the ghosts of ancestral chiefs. This may be too summary an account of the deities, but it is borne out by what missionary Taylor reports of the Kafirs. When told about God, they asked how many wives he kept. A chief's status was determined by the amount of luxuries he could afford; and when they heard that God had but one son and no wife, they thought he was not much of a sovereign.

Polygamy has always proved a trouble to the missionaries. Jesus said nothing about it, while the heathen read in their Bibles how Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon, and other favorites of God, practised it. If the missionary insists on all the wives being put away except the first, this usually means that the polygamist is left with the oldest, while the others are cast adrift. One Central African is said to have

qualified himself for baptism by eating up all his wives save the one permitted by the messenger of Christ.

Herbert Burrows, who is currently credited with converting Mrs. Besant to Theosophy, has left the Theosophical Society, and, in doing so, writes a letter to the papers, in which he says: "The recent disclosures of fraud which have split the Society led me to further investigations, impossible before, which have thoroughly convinced me that for years deception in the Society has been rampant, deception to which Madame Blavatsky was sometimes a party." Mr. Burrows adds that he leaves the Society because "as it exists I believe it to be a standing danger to honesty and truth, and a perpetual open door to superstition, delusion, and fraud." The curious thing is that Mr. Burrows, who, according to a famous inscription by H. P. B., was "my friend in a former incarnation," has been so long in finding this out.

Our Ritualistic churches now go in much for Harvest Thanksgivings, and turn their altars into the resemblance of a greengrocer's shop. All this is an attempted modification of the old Pagan rites of harvest time. One of the most significant of these was the custom kept up by Catholics on Lammass (*i.e.*, Loaf-mass) day, of celebrating the sacrament with bread made from the last cut sheaf of the newly-taken harvest, in which the corn-spirit, or old John Barleycorn of the song, was supposed to have entered, and which found its way into the safe receptacle of the stomachs of those who partook of the Holy Sacrament.

Of course, the real inner meaning of the old spring and harvest festivals was that God (*i.e.*, his priests) should have the first fruits of the sheep, cattle, and harvest. But with every advance of civilisation God's (*i.e.*, his priests') share gets less and less, and now, instead of taking tithes of all, he has to hand over the big pumpkins to the sexton.

A recent attempt has been made to back up the legends of Noah's flood, by referring to the evidences of some catastrophe which swept away palaeolithic man and the great beasts of the palaeolithic period. Assuming this to be correct, it is yet certain that the neolithic period lasted for an immense time after the palaeolithic period; while the races which dwelt in Egypt, long prior to Noah, were not in a stone age, although doubtless they preserved remnants of it, but were acquainted with, and made utensils of bronze and copper.

It was found from the Parliamentary Returns on Religious Teaching in Board Schools that eight schools, despite the express terms of the Act under which they sit, taught the Church Catechism *en bloc*. Only fifty-seven dispense with religious teaching altogether, and of these only seven are in England, though sixty Welsh and nearly twenty English Board schools fight shy of Bible-teaching. Some of them open with a hymn.

Colonel Ingersoll's pocket was picked the other day in Missouri, whereat the *Richmond State* rejoices. "Go for him again, slick-finger!" exclaims this elegant representative of Christian piety. Once it was right to burn a Freethinker—now it is right to rob him. Even this is an improvement. If they only let the Atheist live, he will teach them to be honest.

There are still over ten thousand parishes in which there is no Board school, and where the inhabitants are forced to send their children to the Church schools. Of course, the Church people say there is the Conscience clause, which they well know is a fraud and a snare, leading to the persecution of the children withdrawn.

The men of God at Johannesburg, S.A., have a Ministers Association to protect their own monopolies. The said Association has brought an action against the lessees of the Theatre of Varieties and Empire, charging them with contravening the Sunday Act by having their houses open for Sunday Concerts. No doubt the L.D.R.A. would like to do something similar here.

Most church attendants now are women. They go to see and be seen, to get out once a week, and keep up with the latest styles of dress-fitting. The married men go occasionally to please their wives, and the young men to see the girls, while possibly a few old fogies go because they think God will damn them if they don't.—*Independent Patriot*.

The corner-stone of a church was being laid at Lorain, Ohio. A thousand persons assembled on a platform to witness this function. Somehow the structure collapsed. Five persons were killed on the spot, eleven fatally injured, and many others hurt. Some were trampled to death in the panic. Such is the sustaining and elevating influence of the religion which conquers the fear of death.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

October 20, Foresters' Hall.

November 17, Leicester.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—October 13, Foresters' Hall; 14, 15, 16, 17, debate at Newcastle-on-Tyne with the Rev. A. J. Waldron; 18, North Shields; 20, Glasgow; 21, Paisley; 22, Cupar; 24 and 25, Dundee; 27, Edinburgh; 28, York. November 17, Liverpool; 24, Manchester.—All communications for Mr. Watts should be sent to him (if a reply is required, a stamped and addressed envelope must be enclosed) at 81 Effra-road, Brixton, London, S. W.

R. DOWDING.—It is, as you say, a great victory at Walthamstow. Many thanks for your action in the matter.

W. STRASSHEIM.—Mr. Foote will probably visit Newcastle again shortly. The matter you complain of shall be looked into. Thanks for your good wishes.

W. WALKER hopes we shall have a New Year's Gift week after Christmas.

J. HINDLE, a veteran Freethinker, writes: "Could you not extend the time to a Shilling Month Fund? I approve your method of propoganda, and wish ten thousand shillings may be sent you. The Freethought party could do this and more."

J. W. F.—We also wish your shilling were "a hundred times as much," but the deficiency might easily be made up by ninety-nine others sending a shilling each.

A. STANLEY, subscribing to Shilling Week, says: "I wish you could extend your leading articles in the *Freethinker*; they are sweet, sweet, but far too short." The difficulty is that Mr. Foote has work enough for two or three people already. Besides, he has always aimed at putting "the cream of the matter" into his articles; and if the reader gets that, he need not trouble very much about the skim-milk left over.

W. B. THOMPSON.—Your communication is too long for insertion this week, as we are overcrowded with matter at present. We note your explanation of why you voted for once with the Church party on the Gillingham School Board. The Dissenters would not help you in any way to carry out their own boasted principle of "religious equality," so, having the odd vote that turned the scale, you left them at the tender mercy of the Church party, with its Apostles' Creed; telling them that, as the Conscience clause was good enough for the Secularists, it would have to be good enough for the Dissenters. We quite understand your action, and hope it will show Dissenters their folly and hypocrisy.

A. STAIGER.—Thanks for your letter and the newspaper. See paragraph.

JAMES HART.—Glad to receive your appreciative and encouraging letter. Mr. Foote has for some time had his eye on Cardiff, Swansea, and South Wales generally, as a likely place for Free-thought propoganda. Perhaps something could be done there this winter.

HUMANITARIAN.—Would the lady inflict injury upon another mother's child because it was not baptised? If not, why should she think God (if such a being exist) is more cruel than herself? A child is passive at its baptism; knows nothing about it in fact. Would it not be monstrous, therefore, to punish it for not being baptised, when the omission is no fault of its own?

A. J. NEWTON.—Your money is transferred, as requested. It was the Queen's secretary who officially denied the truth of that story about her declaring the Bible to be the source of England's greatness. It is an imposition to hang that picture up in a Board school.

W. COLE.—Accept our sympathy.

T. FISHER.—The far east of London requires waking up, and we hope to do something there this winter. Freethinkers exist in West Ham, Walthamstow, etc., but they want uniting for a common effort. The passage you refer to is not to be found in the words given; but see Judges ii. 20-23.

A. F. WALTER.—It is pleasant to receive a family subscription for Shilling Week. We like to see Freethought permeating the whole household.

W. MARTIN.—We think you may depend upon Mr. Gott as an honest tradesman, anxious to do justice to his customers as well as himself. The goods ordered for our own household have always given satisfaction.

E. JENNINGS.—Mr. Foote will be glad to pay Ipswich another visit. Lectures in such a place should for some time be of a decidedly militant character. It is no use tickling the surface of hard soil; it must be ploughed up.

J. SCOTT.—Pleased to hear from you. Did not know you had removed to Manchester.

HUGH THOMPSON.—Thanks for your kind letter and good wishes.

H. A. G.—Shall appear, with slight alterations.

W. BOX.—Hope your wish that we may receive "many thousand shillings" will be realised.

W. A. ARGALL.—Glad to know you appreciate our lecture scheme. It is pleasant to hear of the ex-local preacher newsagent, away down in Cornwall, exhibiting our contents-sheet and selling a dozen copies weekly. Our compliments to him.

R. CARROLL.—Your letter to hand. It confirms our suspicions. We will write you on the subject in a few days.

D. G. LINDSAY (Glasgow).—Both remittances received, and names acknowledged.

JOSEPH TAYLOR.—Convey our thanks to the Staleybridge subscribers.

F. P. COOPER.—Particulars of membership of N.S.S. forwarded. We hope you will see your way to join.

A. B. MOSS.—It was good of you to subscribe, especially after your recent heavy domestic expenses. Hard workers like yourself ought not to be taxed financially in addition.

W. A. JONES.—Glad to hear you are so pleased with our "racy articles in the *Freethinker*."

J. DRAPER.—We thank you for obtaining us a new subscriber. Change of address notified to our publisher.

J. HOCKIN.—The second volume of the work you mention has been delayed by Mr. Foote's multifarious duties. We hope to publish it next year.

B. WATERHOUSE, who sends ten shillings from a little Kentish town, says of our scheme: "I think it is about the best way you can lay out money at present."

J. KIMBERLEY.—Thanks. Will see, and if possible acknowledge next week.

W. F. DOBSON.—Letters for insertion must be written on one side only of the paper. Your communication is, besides, too long and too impertinent.

W. H. SPIVEY.—Glad to hear the Huddersfield Branch is prepared for fresh active work, and hope you will be able to obtain a suitable hall for lectures.

A. WAYMARK.—(1) The statement in *Was Jesus Insane?* that his friends thought him mad, is supported by Mark iii. 21. (2) We cannot undertake to substantiate the statements of writers in the *Clarion*, who, we dare say, are well able to defend themselves.

W. DAVIES, who sends ten shillings, says: "Your Shilling Week is a move in the right direction."

G. A. K.—You point to a real drawback. Mr. Foote is bent on reducing this chaos to order. Easy-going muddlers will not like his action, but he is resolved to proceed.

T. THELWALL.—Pleased to have your "hearty sympathy" in our "efforts to spread Freethought." Mr. Wheeler's new volume will not deal with the God question in the way you desire; the essays in it will be mostly anthropological; but we believe you will find it both interesting and useful. Ecclesiastical history, especially up to the fourth century, is gangrened with fraud.

J. PROCTOR, who sends ten shillings, writes: "I hope you will get more this time than you did last Shilling Week, which was a disappointment to me, as I hoped you would get a thousand pounds at least."

E. D. H. DALY.—Amount divided as you suggest. Miss Vance will send you receipt for the N.S.S. subscription. Exceptionally glad to have your "best wishes and sincere admiration" for our "conduct as leader of the party."

C. H. SHELDON.—Mr. Foote will certainly visit York if a decent hall can be obtained.

H. JONES (Blackburn).—List received with thanks. Glad to hear you are sending Miss Vance the names of six new members.

T. WOMBWELL.—(1) The Barnsley Branch, with its poor members, has done well. You have a right to "hope the rich will do better." (2) It is absurd to say that Hebrew was as easy without the vowel points as with them. Why then were the vowel points adopted? Professor Bruce says, in his *Christian Apologetics*, that the man who wrote the old Hebrew would have difficulty in understanding himself after a time long enough to allow of a lapse of memory.

J. FULTON, subscribing to Shilling Week, writes: "I am sorry to see the apathy that exists among well-to-do Freethinkers with regard to your heavy and useful work. I am doubly astonished that the very wealthy do not occasionally present you with a thousand or two out of their profusion."

F. NELSON (Sheffield) writes: "It is with great pleasure I support Self-Denial Week. I trust the funds raised thereby will enable you to carry on a vigorous propoganda. I think this is just what the Freethought movement requires. We want more 'push.'"

R. JOHNSON (Manchester) thinks Shilling Week should be quarterly or half-yearly, and says every Freethinker should give one shilling at least.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Walthamstow Reporter—Freidenker—Post—Orcadian—Walthamstow Guardian—Blue Grass Blade—Referee—Crescent—Norwood Weekly Herald—Kaffarian Watchman—Port Elizabeth Advertiser—Chatham and Rochester News—Scribner—Rochester and Chatham Standard—Two Worlds—Dublin Saturday Herald—New York Public Opinion—Secular Thought—Newcastle Chronicle—Progressive Thinker—Dundee Courier.

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

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

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

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

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

SHILLING WEEK.

ACTING on the suggestion of a correspondent, I have resolved to do what I did on a previous occasion—namely, to keep this Fund open a little longer. This will give the laggards—and they are many—an opportunity of subscribing; and really it is better late than never.

The great majority of subscriptions, up to the present, are for small amounts. Of course more of these are wanted, as it is well to see "the rank and file" interested in the success of the movement. But those who can send larger amounts are requested to bestir themselves. Cheques are welcome, as well as Postal Orders.

My own share of this enterprise is simply work and loss. I have not taken a single penny for any lecture at Milton Hall, St. James's Hall, or Foresters' Hall; and I am personally responsible for the deficit.

A few facts will show, better than columns of abstraction, at what I am aiming.

Mr. Watts has formed extra engagements under my scheme during his approaching northern tour. He will visit York, Coupar, Perth, and Paisley. Mr. Cohen is also making a number of similar engagements. In each case I undertake to recompense the lecturer, leaving the Branches or committees to see to the purely local expenses, which can be met, or met partly, by collections.

Mr. Gott wrote to me a few days ago from Bradford, stating that the local friends at Bingley, Shipley, Staningley, Farsley, Heckmondwike, Keighley, and Halifax, were too timid or indolent to move; but himself, Mr. Grange, and other Bradford friends, were willing to organise lectures by Mr. Cohen, and perhaps by Mr. Snell, in these places in November, if I would take the financial responsibility, which they would make as light as possible. I replied that I *would*, and said "Go on."

Mr. Heaford is just back from a lecturing tour in Scotland, and in this case I thought it right to promise assistance. I do not believe our party wants a good man to work hard and lose at the finish.

It is high time this matter were taken in hand, and I have stepped into the breach, as the President should. Our party wants a forward movement in every part of the country. It is no use mincing matters. I mean to advance, with those who will trust me and work with me. I will not be held back by critics and cavillers. Something must be done, and I will try to do it.

For the present, at least, I do not mean to be trammelled by committees. I want help, in money and in work; but I do not want people looking over my shoulders, and trying every minute to control my activities. Committees are never good at initiative; their time comes afterwards, when the enterprise has had a successful youth and has passed into a steady middle-age. Perhaps this enterprise will help to build up a strong party, with a strong organisation, capable of conducting its affairs successfully on purely democratic lines. Meanwhile the work must be done as it can be done. There is no alternative.

G. W. FOOTE.

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Per Miss Vance:—A. W. Marks, 13s.; Mrs. Marks, 5s.; S. M. A., 2s.; W. H. Kemp, 1s.; Marie du Bois, 5s.; C. Heaton, 2s.; E. Gotthed, 2s. 6d.; J. Hargreaves, 1s.; T. Shore, 1s.; F. Wood, 2s. 6d.; Mr. Wilson, 5s.; G. Bowman, 5s.; C. Hippack, 2s.; D. Young, 1s.; R. Green, 2s.; E. Cruttenden, 1s.; W. Johnson, 4s. 2d.

Corrections:—W. F., 2s., in last issue, should have been 2s. 6d.; M. Christopher, 1s., should have been 2s.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THE course of indoor lectures organised by the Wood Green Branch opened most encouragingly on Sunday evening. The Masonic Hall was crowded, and Mr. Foote's lecture on "Life, Death, and After" was to all appearance very highly appreciated. There was a considerable sprinkling of ladies, who appeared to be much interested in the "naming" of a baby boy. Mr. Thompson's child, who *was* to have been named, was unfortunately indisposed; but Mr. and Mrs. Wood took advantage of the opportunity to have their child named instead. The little one acted in an exemplary manner. He was evidently occupied in making out who it was that held him, and before he settled the problem the ceremony was over.

Some courteous opposition was offered by "Captain" Potts, of the Salvation Army, who was answered in the same spirit. The chairman then invited the audience to come again on the three following Sundays to hear Mr. Touzeau Harris and Mr. Robert Forder. We hope the invitation will be responded to, and that the present course of lectures will be the precursor of many more in that populous suburb of London.

Mr. Charles Watts had a good audience last Sunday evening at Foresters' Hall. His lecture on "The Bible and Dramatic Literature" was enthusiastically received. Miss Brown made an excellent "chairman." Mr. Watts again occupies the same platform this Sunday evening, October 13, when he will speak upon "Atheism and Christian Theism: Which is the More Reasonable?" Mr. Foote will preside, and he hopes to see a good audience on this occasion. Now that the admission is free, Freethinkers should try to fill the seats by bringing as many as possible of their friends and acquaintances.

To-morrow, Monday, October 14, Mr. Watts starts for a sixteen days' tour in the North of England and Scotland. The first four nights he debates with the Rev. A. J. Waldron in Ginnett's Amphitheatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne. We hope our friends in the North will muster in full force, and give our colleague a hearty support.

Mr. Cohen follows Mr. Parris at Leicester, and lectures this Sunday on the Theistic question. Mr. Gimson reports that the opening of the winter season by Mr. Parris was very successful. He says: "We expect an intellectual treat when Mr. Parris comes, and we always get it."

J. Partridge reports that Mr. Cohen's last lecture at Birmingham was the best attended of all, that he has won unstinted praise for his work in the town, that several new members have joined, and that several other accessions are expected.

The members of the Finsbury Park and Islington Branches are requested to attend an adjourned meeting at 91 Mildmay-park on Tuesday next, October 15, at 8 o'clock. Every member is invited to be present.

Mr. A. B. Moss is submitting the following motion to the Bermondsey Vestry: "That this Vestry do petition Parliament to amend the law which now exempts the places of worship of the Church of England as by law established from rates and other parochial charges."

Miss Vance is organising a dramatic performance at the Camberwell Secular Hall for Wednesday, November 13, in aid of the Lecture Scheme Fund. Mr. Charles Watts will be one of the performers, and Mr. Foote will attend and give a reading. Full particulars will appear next week.

The Camberwell Branch will have a Tea and social reunion on Sunday, October 20. These gatherings are always enjoyable, and are attended by friends from all parts of London. The Camberwell Science Classes, at the Secular Hall, reopen under the able conduct of Mr. Coppock on Friday next (Oct. 11). Chemistry at 8—teacher, Mr. W. J. Clark; Hygiene at 9—teacher, Mr. E. Watkins. The classes are all free, and are in connection with South Kensington.

Mr. Dowling, of Walthamstow, offered a weekly copy of the *Freethinker* to the local Public Library, and whoever drew up the report stated that it would not be accepted. The matter was, however, brought before the Library Committee by Councillor McSheedy, and an amendment declaring that Mr. Dowling's offer should be accepted was carried by 8 votes to 2, Councillors Cropley and Geary alone opposing.

Freethought has penetrated as far North as Orkney; indeed, a Shetlander, Mr. L. J. Nicholson, has published, in the South, a volume of Freethought poems. But in Orkney itself the *Orcadian* inserts a letter, signed "Brinstone Billy," making fun of that great prop of the churches, Satan himself, and, moreover, satirising the Bible references to his devilship.

The *Aberdeen Journal* can safely advocate free inquiry when pitching into Cardinal Vaughan. It says of his warnings against the works of Huxley and Spencer: "Any such cramping doctrine is wholly out of place to-day. We live in an age of inquiry and speculation. All our beliefs—scientific, philosophical, theological, and historical—are undergoing strict and careful scrutiny; and this spirit of investigation is not by any means the worst sign of the times. It is only the timid or the half-convinced that can fear an honest examination even of cherished beliefs."

In an article on "The Religion of the Undergraduate," in the *October Nineteenth Century*, the Rev. A. C. Deane says: "The writer has himself known more than one instance in which this ill-advised use of Paley's evidences by the University has done a great deal to overthrow the very faith which it was designed to strengthen."

Mr. Deane says that the prevalent attitude towards religion on the part of the university undergraduates is Agnosticism. "With sorrow and reluctance it must be confessed that the majority of Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates are without, or, at least, profess to be without, any religion at all!" Most horrible!

Clarence Waterer writes in the *October Westminster Review* on "The Dawn of the Trinity," pointing to the evidence of divine triads in Egypt long anterior to the rise of Christianity. He holds that the idea arose from the type of the ideal human family as father, mother, and offspring.

The *New York Truthseeker* of September 28 reproduces Mr. Foote's article on the farewell dinner to Mr. Putnam, and a portion of his article on the "Missionary Martyrs" in

China. Mr. Putnam continues his "News and Notes," parts of which will reappear in our columns.

The *Independent Pulpit*, of Waco, Texas, reproduces Mr. Wheeler's article, "Is Christianity Useful?" Where Mr. Wheeler, however, uses the word "Freethinkers," the *I. P.* prints "Liberals." We do not consider the American nomenclature an improvement.

Bible and Beer is the title of a large new pamphlet by Mr. Foote, which is now in the press and will be on sale next week. It is a thorough-going examination of Bible Temperance, dealing with Old and New Testament drinks, and showing the absurdity of the contention that Jesus Christ was a teetotaler, or that the wines recommended in Scripture were unfermented. The pamphlet also gives a brief, but sufficient, history of the drinking habits fostered by the Church, and shows how the religious bodies opposed the Temperance movement in its infancy. The pamphlet will, we believe, be not only interesting to the general reader, but of great service to Freethought propagandists in exposing the pretensions of Christianity.

Mr. Forder reports that the International Congress of Freethinkers at Brussels was a very successful gathering. The question of education was brought prominently to the fore, and it was hoped that by a union of Liberals the clerical party in Belgium will yet be defeated. The children's entertainment in one of the largest halls in the city was a great success, and a good collection was taken up for carrying on the work.

CHRISTIANITY AND WAR.

In speaking of the chief evils which afflict the human race we might adopt the phraseology used by the author of the Pauline epistles, and say: "Now remain these three—poverty, disease, and war; and the greatest of these is war." Not only is war the chief of these ills, but it is also a principal cause of the other two. The wealth wasted in senseless struggles of nation against nation and man against man would feed all the hungry and clothe all the naked on the globe. The wounds, exposure, and privation incident to military service, the brutal passions kept alive by indulgence in the spirit of combativeness—which is the survival in man of one trait of his former ancestor, the ferocious beast—and the neglect of home duties while the energies of a people and of their rulers have been consumed in planning the destruction of their neighbor, have been the fruitful parents of diseases. Vultures fatten on the rotten carcasses of the dead; vermin swarm where pestilential vapors poison the blood and filth engenders pestilence. Human vultures and human vermin thrive in times of war; but universal prosperity is only possible when first shall have been firmly established a condition of universal peace.

It is no wild Utopian dream that such a condition will at some future time be established. It should be already a recognised essential of civilisation. War is only possible where primitive barbarism is not yet wholly extinct. The evolution of humanity would have raised all but savage tribes above it, and perhaps might have had sufficient influence to instil even into those tribes a milder spirit and gentler practices, but for one opposing element, the worst foe mankind has ever known—Christianity.

"I came not to send peace upon earth, but a sword," is the one fulfilled prophecy of the New Testament Scriptures. All religions ever preached on earth have promulgated errors, and, more or less, have misled their votaries; but let us be just. All religions have not been equally cruel, bloody, and barbarous. All have not been equally tyrannical, equally given to the infliction of injustice and agony. The foulest monster of the number bears the symbol of a man dying the death of a tortured slave; and she flaunts it upon her banners as the mark of the beast by which she may be known.

Christianity did not originate in a stable at Bethlehem, in the companionship of a peaceful ox and an ass. It was not first promulgated by honest, however ignorant and deluded, fishermen. It was not first accepted by sincere investigators after truth, seeking knowledge by night or by day. Everyone who has examined the subject with any approach to unprejudiced criticism knows that these statements are entirely false. It was originated by men who desired through its means to retain or to increase their power over their fellow men. It was promulgated by a

savage warrior and murderer who did not scruple to imbue his hands in the blood of his own kindred. It was accepted by those down whose throats it was thrust at the sword's point.

From the days of Constantine to this year E. M. 295, Christianity has been the more or less direct cause of all the wars which have devastated the world. Always has she been found on the side of the oppressors, though sometimes, for a brief season, wearing an ill-fitting mask of liberty. The missionary of Christ has always been to the heathen the pioneer of the soldier, the rum-seller, and the commercial robber. The silly and wicked war of some thirty years ago between England and Abyssinia would never have been but for the missionary. The present Chinese trouble, and whatever may result from it, spring from the same poisonous root before our eyes. If men and women will go to people whom they call heathen to induce them if they can to change a possibly bad enough religion for one certainly worse, by all means let them go, provided always that those heathens do not object to the impertinent intrusion, and that they go at their own expense. But if they attempt to raise money at home under pretence of converting those who never were converted and never will be, let them be considered as no better than other swindlers who endeavor to live at the cost of others. And if they get into trouble abroad, let no nation raise a finger in their defence, or send so much as a postal-card pleading their cause, under penalty of being adjudged a partner in their crime.

Let it be understood that the Christian missionary in heathen lands is there to make a better and easier living than he can make in his own country; and that, whether he knows it or not, he is usually the tool of the civilised Christian government, who, when he has succeeded in driving a long-suffering people to take measures to protect themselves against the annoyance of his presence, will step in, ostensibly to rescue him, but really to plunder the defenceless heathen, who are assumed to have no rights which Christians are bound to respect.

—*Boston Investigator.*

E. J. BOWTELL.

EARLY FAITH.

PRIMITIVE man saw everywhere manifest a world of phenomena of which he was wholly ignorant, and concerning whose cause and purpose he could only imagine, guess, and speculate. And who has not been amazed at the facility with which ignorance accounts for and explains every mystery it encounters, as well as the dogmatic persistence of its belief and its ever-ready reason—*because?*

To primitive man, the earth appeared to be the most ponderous of all things, and he naturally guessed it was so. For a similar reason, he guessed it was flat and the great primal and central body around which the universe revolved. He guessed that the sky was only a little distance above; was a solid arch spanning the earth and separating it from heaven, where he fancied was the abode of the great Unknown. He guessed that the sun, moon, and stars were, as they appeared beneath the solid arch, trivial in size, and mere furnishings of the inconceivably great earth. He guessed the clouds to be the hiding place of the Deity; thunder his voice, and the lightning his messenger. He guessed that earthquakes, plagues, and famines were manifestations of his anger, while sunshine and plenty betokened his pleasure. He guessed that rain was capriciously poured from reservoirs above the sky. And thus ignorance guessed respecting the *cause* and *purpose* of every phenomenon it beheld or experienced.

With the great unknown power which man saw everywhere so mysteriously manifested, he very naturally came to associate not only his own origin, purpose, and destiny, but all the good he enjoyed and the evil he encountered. And how natural, led by his own conceit, that he should ultimately fashion it in his own image and enthrone it in the mysterious realms above as *his* God and the creator and ruler of the universe. Thus man it was who fashioned a creator in his own image, rather than a God so creating man.

If good came, the gods were propitious, and were rewarded with praise and sacrifice; if evil came, they were angry and resentful, and were besought with prayer and sacrifice. Thus, man came to alternate between belief and doubt, hope and fear, ever presenting the strange anomaly of being compelled by an inexorable necessity to supply his physical wants through the operation of natural law under the guidance of his own reason and experience, while at the same time he was led to importune heaven for every desired good.

As to which of these sources he was most indebted, although he had bewildering doubts, yet, fearing lest, through some mistake, offence should be given to and vengeance taken by the great unknown and higher power, he usually adopted what appeared the safer alternative of giving to it the benefit of all doubts, and according to it all praise and reward. Under such belief in, and dependence upon, an arbitrary and capricious God as the almighty controller and giver of all things, how natural that some plausible, crafty, aspiring leader should come forward and, under the pretence of being the specially appointed agent of this almighty God, usurp his accredited power, and in his name levy tribute, dispense favors, inflict judgments, and, through threats of his almighty vengeance upon the transgressor, compel unquestioning and slavish submission to his alleged heaven-directed decrees. D. T. AMES.

CHRIST.

II.

If to have suffered, loved, and died
For sins of others, not our own,
Were to be crowned and deified,
Would Christ be God alone?

Red human blood has fed the rack,
The block, the cross, the writhing flame;
The tramp of martyrdom gives back
No thunder at his name.

Waited the world for light so long,
Through centuries of rayless light?
Came he to make wrong aught but wrong
Right different from right?

Came God to suffer life and death,
Through thirty bitter years to groan,
And all to tell with human breath
Half-truths already known?

Truth waxes clearer day by day;
But yesternight a truth was born,
Which died and rotted to make way
For newer truth this morn.

And Truth is old; since first the dawn
Of conscience made men pause and brood,
The human mind was strongly drawn
Upon some goal of good.

Spake Epicurus all in vain?
Epictetus or Sokrates?
Aurelius? Did this God maintain
A truth unknown to these?

Nay, where in all his mystic lore
Dwells there an inference so true
As that, two thousand years before,
The great Lucretius drew?

A dream inscrutable, sublime,
And welcomed as the truth to-day,
For aye invincible to time,
Corruption, or decay.

Yet one of all is called divine,
The meanliest-minded, smallest one;
While reason only will resign
That name to all or none.

From the best words this God could say
What niggard crops of good have grown:
Pure love and tenderness to-day
Are scarcely better known.

But for the evil that he spake,
The devils may account it well;
And envy him his power to make
The human heart a hell.

PYRITES.

A lady writes to a religious paper suggesting that a Sunday should be set apart to the advocacy of pure literature. Just fancy pure literature advocated with a text taken from the unexpurgated Bible. Some civet, good apothecary.

Christians sometimes take us to task for speaking lightly of their superstitions, yet they are given to such things themselves. Not long ago we read in a Methodist paper some reference to a Baptist preacher, whom it dubbed "The great apostle of the water god."—*Independent Palpit.*

BOOK CHAT.

THE second volume of Mr. Edwin Sidney Hartland's *Legend of Perseus* has just been issued by David Nutt. Mr. Wheeler, who noticed the first volume recently under the title of "Virgin Births," will shortly review this volume, which, in his opinion, is of high importance for the light it casts on the customs and beliefs of early man.

Planets and People is a quarterly journal of astrology, issued from Chicago, and illustrating how hard these old beliefs are in dying. As it, however, contemplates coming out as an annual in future, it hardly appears to thrive as well as its friends might desire.

Orthodoxy v. Evolution is the title of a printed lecture delivered by Daniel T. Ames before the Brooklyn Philosophical Society and the Manhattan Liberal Club. Mr. Ames is vigorous and convincing. He hits at orthodoxy straight from the shoulder, and we hope his pamphlet will have a good circulation.

A big book on *The Life and Writings of Turgot*, by W. Walker Stephens, has been published by Messrs. Longmans. Coming after Mr. Morley's monograph, it nevertheless gives much further information on that great statesman, who turned from the Church to politics.

Mr. George Meredith's new novel, *The Amazing Marriage*, will be published by Messrs. Archibald Constable & Co. in the course of the season.

A pamphlet on *Old Age Pensions*, issued at the *Sunday Chronicle* office, Manchester, gives a description of several schemes before the public. It should not be forgotten that the original purpose of tithes eminently suit them for appropriation to this object.

Those who delight in a spirited exposure of sophistry can be recommended to *Reaction*, a little fourpenny pamphlet by Karl Pearson, published by William Reeves, 185 Fleet-street, in his neat "Bijou Library." It is chiefly directed against the theological obscurantism of Mr. Balfour's *Foundations of Belief*, and the polemic is carried on in a pointed and vigorous style. Our statesman finds his cue in a deerying reason; but Mr. Pearson points out that "the race of life is now to those who educate and foster thought—to the reasoners among the nations." "Was it," he asks, "Mr. Balfour's hydra-headed authority, habit-tradition-custom, which proved a better national fulcrum than reason when Japan met China? And when our modern statesmen term the reason anti-social, will they venture to recommend the policy of China to the inhabitants of Great Britain? Consciously or unconsciously, Mr. Balfour teaches this policy philosophically, and preaches it emotionally."

The Night of the Gods, by J. O'Neill, is a work of vast erudition, by an Oriental scholar, giving a new view of the symbols and mythologies of the past. Mr. O'Neill did not claim to have found the sole key thereof. On the contrary, he said there was a whole bunch. But he did find a new key in the worship of the heavens and the polestar as the most high, and the first volume of his work, all that is published, shows a scholar of wide reading and insight.

Mr. O'Neill died early in the present year, and his death has left his widow without funds for publishing the completion of his work, the first volume of which is got up in very handsome fashion. A committee, of whom it is only necessary to mention the names of Drs. Budge and Garnett and Professor R. K. Douglas, of the British Museum, have issued an appeal for donations or subscriptions for this purpose, in which they say: "We believe that the loss of half Mr. O'Neill's book would be a calamity, as it would deprive students of the use of a large portion of the unrivalled collection of Greek, Latin, Celtic, Hindu, Semite, Persian, Chinese, Japanese, and American-Indian mythology, astronomy, and symbolism, collected and focussed by a traveller and scholar so keen-eyed, discriminating, careful, and devoted as Mr. O'Neill. We are convinced that the preservation and transmission to posterity of these researches will, whether they agree with the author's conclusions or not, be permanently useful to all who wish to set before themselves and others a life-like picture of the hitherto obscure past."

In France or Germany such a work as *The Night of the Gods*, recommended by scholars of the eminence of the committee issuing this circular, would be printed out of national funds. But there is no endowment of research in England, and a scholar may starve, or his manuscripts be sold for butter-paper, unless he can pay for printing them himself, and trust to be found out by a public not too apt to

quickly discern merit which runs out of the ordinary rut. We have a wealthy Association for the Advancement of Science, and flourishing Antiquarian, Anthropological, and Folk-Lore Societies; but none of them would think it within their province to publish a work of research into the religious beliefs of the past. So an appeal is made merely to individuals interested. The price of volume ii. to subscribers will be 18s., or £1 16s. for the complete work, which will, when completed, be raised to £2 12s. 6d. Subscriptions will be received by the publisher, Mr. D. Nutt, 270 Strand.

The Free Review for October, the first that has been sent to our office, appears under the editorship of Mr. G. A. Singer. The opening article is an outspoken and sensible one by "Cato" on "King Alcohol and Liberalism." The writer is in favour of Free Trade in drink, as more conducive to temperance than is our licensing system. "Democritus" contributes a bright article on "Ideal Husbands," showing that the group of ladies who have just been writing on the subject are rather poor empirics. Mr. J. M. Robertson's article on "Huxley and Agnosticism" is very unflattering, but it presents a view of Huxley and his work which is entitled to consideration in the midst of the general eulogy. Mr. Robertson always writes with knowledge and great ability, and for our part we quite share his dislike of the "Agnostic" ticket, especially when we hear of "reverent" Agnostics and even "Christian" Agnostics. Mr. Ernest Newman's article on "Amiel" is delightful reading. Other articles and items make up a very interesting number.

The Agnostic Annual for 1896 (Watts & Co.) opens with a capital criticism of Mr. Balfour's *Foundations of Belief* by the veteran Samuel Laing. Another important article is "The Man, Christ Jesus," by Mr. J. Allanson Picton. We call it important because it presents, in clear and eloquent language, what may be called the advanced Unitarian view of the Prophet of Nazareth. Mr. Picton is not scientific. He discards the miraculous, and then constructs a Jesus of his own out of arbitrary selections from the Gospel narrative. He imagines that "the time has gone by" for any doubt as to the historical existence of the man Jesus; but his references to Tacitus, Josephus, and the Mishna show that he has not mastered the subject. It is idle to speak of the famous Josephus passage as merely corrupted; as Warburton and Gibbon (two very different critics) said without hesitation, it is a rank forgery. On the whole, the "rationalists of the workshop and market," who have had "no opportunities of high mental training," may smile at Mr. Picton's loose argumentation. Constance Plumtre's article on "Mind as Controlled by Matter" is lucid and sensible. Our readers know what they may expect in Mr. Charles Watts's "Faiths of our Forefathers." Dr. Bithell writes as an Agnostic in the service of God on "Theism and Monism." Mr. F. J. Gould has an interesting and well-informed paper on "The Old Testament Library." The only fault we find with him is that he speaks too tenderly of the priestly imposition of the Books of Moses upon the Jews, and, through them, upon sixty generations of Christians.

PROFANE JOKES.

"Pa, can God do everything?" "Yes, my boy." "Can God ride a bicycle?"

First Boy—"My mother's got a new baby." Second Boy—"That must be our kid that died last week."

"Little boy, does your father fear the Lord?" asked the new pastor. "Yessir, I guess he does, 'cause he takes his gun whenever he goes out on Sunday."

Little Manie read on her Sunday-school card: "God makes, preserves, and keeps us." Looking up suddenly, she said: "Mamma, what do you s'pose he does with 'em all?" "With what, my dear?" "Why, all those preserves."

Clergyman (to little boy)—"I suppose you say your prayers, my boy?" Boy—"Yes, sir." Clergyman—"Does your father say his?" Boy—"He doesn't have to; his father's dead."

Clergyman (dining with family)—"I noticed during the sermon you were very quiet, Tommy; a very good boy, indeed." Tommy—"Rather! 'Cos I was afraid of waking pa. Last Sunday, when I woke him up, he said he'd half kill me if I did it again."

Mankind has never groaned under the yoke of a more atrocious combination of moral, mental, and physical despotism than at the period when the Christian hierarchy had reached the zenith of its power.—*Dr. F. L. Oswald, "The Bible Controversy."*

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

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

LONDON.

FORESTERS' HALL (Clerkenwell-road, E.C.): 7.30, Charles Watts, "Atheism and Christian Theism: Which is the More Reasonable?"
 BATTERSEA SECULAR HALL (back of Battersea Park Station): 7.45, Mrs. Thornton Smith, "The Meaning of Secularism." Tuesday, at 8, social gathering
 CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, Herbert Burrows, "Why Secularists Should be Socialists." Friday, at 8, science class.
 EAST LONDON (Swaby's Coffee House, 103 Mile End-road): 8, J. T. Blanchard, "Secularism from a Matter-of-Fact Point of View."
 FINSBURY BRANCH: Monday, at 8.30, Dinner and entertainment in the large hall of the Eldorado Club, 23 East-road, E.C. Tickets from Mr. Forder.
 FINSBURY PARK AND ISLINGTON BRANCHES: Tuesday, at 8, meeting of members at 91 Mildmay Park.
 WEST HAM SECULAR ETHICAL SOCIETY (61 West Ham-lane): 7, G. Spiller, "The Need of a Science of Ethics."
 WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Princes' Hall, Piccadilly): 11.15, Dr. Stanton Coit, "Genius and Sanity."
 WOOD GREEN (Masonic Hall, adjoining the Nightingale Hotel, High-street): 7.30, Touzeau Parris, "The Certainties of Religion Worthless."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 11.30, St. John, "Christianity and Progress."
 CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, a lecture.
 DEPTFORD BROADWAY: 6.30, C. James, "Christianity as a Guide to Conduct." Thursday, at 8, C. James, "Morality in the Ages of Faith."
 HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE (Middlesex side): 7, W. Heaford, "The Christian's Faith, Hope, and Charity."
 HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, W. Heaford, "The Creed of an Unbeliever"; 3.30, "A Rational View of Religion."
 KINGSLAND (Ridley-road, near Dalston Junction): 11.30, S. E. Easton, "Some Old Tales Re-told."
 OLD PIMLICO PIER: 11.30, Stanley Jones, "Christianity Critically Examined."
 WOOD GREEN (Jolly Butchers' Hill): 11.30, W. J. Ramsey will lecture.

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM (Alexandra Hall, Hope-street): 11, W. J. Russell, "Never Spoke Man Like This"; 7, John Watts, "The Causes of the Wreck of the Liberal Party."
 CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 7, W. B. Thompson, "The Apostles' Creed—Why I Voted for its Retention."
 GLASGOW (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12, Discussion class—J. Cassells, "The Unemployed Problem"; 6.30, W. King, "Thomas Paine, the Reformer."
 HULL (St. George's Hall, Story-street): 7, Mr. Fryer, "Lessons from the Late General Election."
 LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, O. Cohen, "Is the Belief in God Reasonable?"
 MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, Mr. Cooke will start a discussion on "Old Age Pensions."
 NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Northumberland Hall, High Friar-street, near Grey's monument): 7, J. Selkirk, "Did Jesus Christ Rise from the Dead?"
 SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 3, Members' quarterly meeting; 7, Mr. Axe, "Coral and Coral Islands." Tea at 5.
 SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, a reading.
 STOCKTON-ON-TEES (32 Dovecote-street): 6.30, Mr. Scott will read a paper on "Vaccination."

Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—October 13, Leicester; 20, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 23 and 24, Chester-le-Street; 27, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 28 and 29, Stockton-on-Tees; 31, Blackburn; November 1, Blackburn; 3, Sheffield; 4, 5, and 6, Barnsley; 10, Foresters' Hall, London; 17 and 24, Bradford. December 1, 5, and 6, Edinburgh; 8, Glasgow; 15, Blackburn.

STANLEY JONES, 52 Davenant-road, Holloway, London—October 13, Pimlico Pier; 14, Edmonton; 20 and 27, Kingsland.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, Rotherhithe, London.—October 20, m. and a. Hyde Park, e. Hammersmith.

TOUZEAU PARRIS, 32 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, London, W.—October 13 and 20, Wood Green; 27, Foresters' Hall. November 3, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

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Sunday, October 13—MR. TOUZEAU PARRIS, "The Certainties of Religion Worthless."

Sunday, October 20—MR. TOUZEAU PARRIS, "Some Bible Symbols, their Origin and Meaning."

Sunday, October 27—MR. R. FORDER, "Who is the Devil? What is the Devil? and Where is the Devil?"

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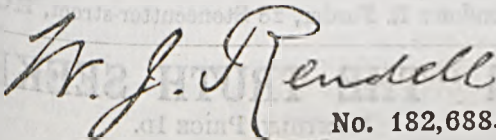
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