

# The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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## ANOTHER CONVERTED ATHEIST.

WE have received a copy of a sermon by the Rev. J. C. Fellowes, vicar of St. James's Church, Stockton-on-Tees. It was preached to the officers and members of the local Order of Druids—a branch of a great Friendly Society which is well known in all parts of the nation. Its intrinsic merits are very slight, and we only criticise it for an extrinsic reason, which will appear as we proceed.

Mr. Fellowes went in for what is called improving the opportunity. Of course he praised the thrift which provides for a rainy day; but (although he did not use these precise words) he thought still more of the thrift which provides for the day when it will rain brimstone and fire. It is well to attend to the affairs of this life, but how about "the affairs of the life that is to follow this life—the life eternal?" Alas! they are sadly neglected. People are so careless and short-sighted. They put off joining the Church of Christ till it is perhaps too late. "Join now," says Mr. Fellowes. Be some sort of a Christian, whether Wesleyan, Baptist, Catholic, or Churchman. Any church, like any friendly society, is better than none. "There is a home prepared for you in heaven"—God Almighty's almshouse, where you may live as an eternal pensioner. In that beautiful place "there will be no more partings, no more sorrow, no sickness, no pain, but peace, happiness, and content." Very attractive, to be sure; but so is the promise of a fortune held out to a pauper. Fine promises are cheap enough. The question is, will they be fulfilled? Yes, says Mr. Fellowes, if you die in a secular friendly society, you will have a nice funeral, but if you die in our religious friendly society, you will go straight to glory. This is a promise which the priests of all religions make to those who trust them and pay up; but you must die before you can test their accuracy, and (O the lucky dogs!) dead men tell no tales; so that a priest's promise has never to be redeemed.

Mr. Fellowes' religion is of the personally prudential order. It resembles that of the late Rev. Mr. Binney, who explained "How to Make the Best of Both Worlds." There appears to be something very fascinating in it to the ordinary British Philistine. It is so individual, so egotistic. It reduces this life, and the next so far as it is involved in this life, to a nice calculation of personal advantage. If the Devil could offer better terms, there would be every reason for enlisting in his service. God happens to offer the best dividend, so it is more profitable to invest with him. Such is the philosophy of religionists who, without the least sense of humor, affect to dwell on high ethical and spiritual levels, far above the "grovelling materialist."

How curious it is that so many Christians turn their backs on the teaching of Christ. He never taught people how to make the best of both worlds. To him this life was nothing; the next life everything. Taking thought for the morrow was foolish, if not impious; wisdom, and true piety, consisted in taking thought for the hereafter. Friendly societies exist in direct opposition to the teaching of Christ—so strong and pressing are the interests of this life even in religious circles; yet, by a singular inconsistency, which it is difficult to discriminate from hypocrisy, these friendly societies get a minister of the Gospel of Christ to preach them a reassuring sermon, and he does

so with the most perfect serenity, without a scintillation of misgiving.

It is hardly surprising that such preachers—to such congregations—should stoop to every artifice of priestcraft. To induce you to patronise their business the priests offer you a seat in heaven, with the certainty of a seat in hell if you deal with the opposite house; and to silence criticism, and disarm suspicion, they have stories of converted Atheists—men who never deal with the firm to the extent of sixpence, but who wished on their death-beds that they had made all their purchases at that establishment. Every man of God appears to have one of these frightful warnings, and Mr. Fellowes is no exception to the rule. We give his account of the curiosity in his own words:—

"Again, I have sometimes been asked to go and see a sick man. I have found his wife in great distress. The doctor has ordered him to have some strengthening food; the wife has not the money to get it. I ask, 'Is he in any club?' 'No,' I am told; 'no; I wish he was.' Yes, but wishing will not make him a member. A man has to think about it before he is ill. Once again, Go to your Order, ye Druids; consider its ways and be wise. Let me draw another picture. It was in a house in this parish some years ago; I heard the man was very ill—dying, in fact. I saw his wife first, and she told me she was not sure if her husband would wish to see me, *he was an Atheist*. I asked her to go and tell him I was there, and if he was willing I would go up and see him. After a little talk with him, I said: 'You are an Atheist, I hear; are you quite sure you are right?' 'I was one,' he told me, 'when I was well, but since I have been lying here, doing nothing but think about it, I am not sure. O God! I wish I had been a Christian.' But, thank God, His ways are not as man's ways: He never refuses to receive any man who goes to him late or early. During the weeks that man lingered on he had the opportunity, and made use of it, to turn to the Savior; and that man died a Christian."

We have seen so many of these converted Atheist stories, and found so many of them to be frauds, that we decline to believe a single one without proof. It is idle to tell us, as we were told in the case of the Atheist Shoemaker, that a Christian minister is entitled to be believed upon his word. This is to put a man in the witness-box and withdraw him from cross-examination. We have yet to learn that Christian ministers are above the common frailties of human nature; and when it comes to lying, we say that they are under peculiar temptations. In the first place, veracity is not a special virtue in the New Testament; in the second place, falsehood for edification has always been regarded leniently (to say the least) in the Christian Church; and in the third place, as a mere matter of fact, the Christian Church has palmed off so many lies upon the world—lies which have been thoroughly exposed by modern criticism—that there is a presumption against, rather than in favour of, its truthfulness, whenever it states anything which is obviously to its advantage.

From this point of view, which we are amply justified in adopting, we beg to ask Mr. Fellowes a few questions. How long is "some years ago"? Will he give us the precise date? What was the name of the dying Atheist he visited? What street did he live in, and what was the number? Is the dead man's widow still living, and does Mr. Fellowes know of her whereabouts? Does the reverend gentleman keep a diary, and is the incident entered there? Did he make any sort of memorandum at the time? If so, has he preserved it, and will he produce it? Has he ever



mentioned it before? If so, when and where? And if not, why not?

We decline to consider the meaning of a fact before it is established as a fact; otherwise we might be caught in a trap, like the one that Charles II. is said to have laid for the Royal Society. Mr. Fellowes must satisfy sensible people that his story is a true one. We invite him to do so; and, if he does, we will give the utmost publicity to the case. Will he refuse such a tempting offer?

G. W. FOOTE.

### SIR WALTER RALEIGH'S OPINIONS.

SHAKESPEARE'S time was one of intellectual fermentation. Grave Burleigh complained that Queen Elizabeth's household was "a coverture for no small number of Epicures and Atheists, because the court is not comprehended within a parish, but seemeth to be a lawless place." Few in his day went further than Raleigh in questioning explanations of the soul and definitions of God. He "misliked" the clerical explanation "as obscure and intricate." He said what the soul of man is had never been resolved, and "neither could I learn hitherto what God is." Yet it must not be supposed he put himself out of communion with the Church of England, which, as a statesman, he may have regarded as a bulwark against the usurpations of Rome. The noticeable thing is that he never adverts to Christian dogmas or doctrines, and this though his writings are pervaded by a sense of the mystery of things, and of the impotence of man in presence of a power greater than his own. "God," he says, in the preface to the *History of the World*, written after he had been several years in prison, "who is the author of all our tragedies, hath written out for us, and appointed unto us, the parts we are to play." "Certainly there is no other account to be made of this ridiculous world than to resolve that the change of fortune on the great theatre is but as the change of garments on the less. For when on the one and the other, every man wears but his own skin; the players are all alike." Raleigh did not directly dispute the accepted doctrines of his time, but he evidently kept an open mind. In his *History of the World* he follows the Bible stories, but places them beside the legends and traditions of what was called profane history.

A story is told of the destruction of the second part of Raleigh's *History*. It is said that one day he looked out of the window of his upper storey in the Bloody Tower, attracted by the noise of a brawl in the court below. He witnessed the quarrel from near the beginning to the end. He saw it from a very favorable view, undisturbed by sympathy either way, and fancied he understood it. But when he came to talk over the matter with others he found that he had entirely misunderstood the nature of the whole affair. This made him ponder: If he could not understand what passed under his own eyes, how could he relate the truth of what took place hundreds or thousands of years ago, or, perhaps, never even took place at all? And in a fit of distrust Sir Walter threw the part of his history still in manuscript into the fire.

Our chivalric knight's misgivings were not without reason. A critical reader is obliged to say that, if the major portion of his first part had shared the same fate, the loss to the real history of the past would not have been great. "Bring me something that is true," Sir Robert Walpole is reported to have said to his librarian; "don't bring me history, for that I know is a lie." But the *History of the World* is, nevertheless, of great interest and value, simply because it gives the thoughts and opinions of Sir Walter himself. Many are the glances at his own time, and, perhaps, King James saw himself depicted in Ninias, "the foolish, effeminate son of a tyrannous, hated mother."

It has been contended that when Raleigh wrote his less known work, *The Sceptic*, which is professedly an apology for "neither affirming nor denying, but doubting," he may have had a never-carried-out idea of answering his own treatise by a defence of faith. But the evidence of the Rev. Ralph Ironside, already given, shows that scepticism was the natural bent of Raleigh's mind. "The Sceptick," says he, "doth neither affirm, neither deny any position;

but doubteth of it, and opposeth his Reasons against that which is affirmed, or denied, to justify his not consenting." He argues that this is the reasonable conclusion "from the consideration of the great difference between living creatures." What is profitable to one is injurious to another; what to one seems sweet and agreeable may to another be the reverse. "For why should I presume to prefer my conceit and imagination, in affirming that a thing is thus or thus in its own Nature, because it seemeth to me to be so, before the conceit of other living creatures, who may as well think it to be otherwise in its own Nature, because it appeareth otherwise to them than it doth to me?" He mentions animal sagacity, and "the dog of Ulysses, who knew his master, having been from home so many years that, at his return, all the people of his house had forgot him." The dog, he points out, "delivereth one kind of voice when he hunteth, another when he howleth, another when he is beaten, and another when he is angry." *The Sceptic*, in short, is an early argument for the relativity of human knowledge.

His *Treatise of the Soul* shows the same disposition of mind. It sets out by saying: "There are two kinds of souls—one void of reason, another endued with reason; and of those without reason there are two sorts—one which feedeth and nourisheth the body, the other which giveth sense and feeling." Men thus have three souls, the trees and herbs one, and other animals two. He cites many opinions concerning the soul, only to show their variety and uncertainty. "Some men (which is a shame to utter) have called the souls of women into question; but by what show of argument? Because God framed the woman's rib, and is not said to breathe a soul into her; as though that were not to be understood of the woman which was spoken of the man. Cyril affirms 'That the souls of women are very womanish; hard and slow to understand hard things.' But, by his leave, some women, even in this, have been able to match the greatest men." Man, Raleigh holds, begets souls as well as bodies: "How can it be but God shall be a help to such as commit adultery, if he do give the souls if they beget the bodies?" All this shows a mind given to contemplation, and not readily accepting authority.

Raleigh's mind was never brighter nor happier than when in clear prospect of death. He wrote on the snuff of his candle the couplet:

Cowards may fear to die, but courage stout,  
Rather than live in snuff, will be put out.

To some who deplored his misfortunes he observed that "the world itself is but a larger prison, out of which some are daily selected for execution." To his faithful wife, when she informed him she would be allowed to have his body, he replied: "'Tis fitting, Bess, that thou shouldst have that dead which was not much at thy disposition when living." Before he left the Gate-house a cup of sack was offered him, and he was asked if it was to his liking. "I will answer you," said Sir Walter, "as did the fellow who drank of St. Giles's bowl as he went to Tyburn: 'It is good drink, if a man might but tarry by it.'" He asked to see the axe, saying, "Dost thou think I am afraid of it?" Feeling its edge, he smilingly said to the sheriff: "This is a sharp medicine, but it is a physician for all diseases;" and, as he laid his head on the block, he said: "So the heart be right it is no matter which way the head lieth."

Thus, after keeping him fourteen years in the Tower, and then liberating him to go to Guiana and gather wealth for the Crown, did, upon his return, that "most dread sovereign" and most dreadful pusillanimous pedant "whom God Almighty, the Father of all mercies, bestowed upon us, the people of England,"\* devote to death the greatest of living Englishmen.† His objects were but to gratify his own spite and the enmity of Spain. Between the hours of the resolve and the execution King James spent his time in writing *Meditations on the Lord's Prayer*: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgave them which trespass against us" were words upon his lips that had never sunk into his callous heart.

Lady Raleigh buried the body in the chancel of St.

\* *Dedication of the Holy Bible.*

† Shakespeare, of whom Raleigh was an evident admirer, had died two years previously.

‡ E. Edwards, *Life of Sir W. Raleigh.*



Margaret's, Westminster. The head she had embalmed, a precious souvenir of the perfidy of a King. She lived on till 1647, thus witnessing the ruin of the dynasty which had destroyed her happiness. Raleigh remained on in the hearts of the people. He desired no other monument; and he needs no better epitaph than his own magnificent apostrophe to Death, saturated with thought and feeling as the sea with brine, sonorous as the incessant rush of rolling billows on the resounding shore.

"O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none have dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hast flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised; thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet.*"

J. M. WHEELER.

## THE FALLACY OF ALLEGED CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES.

(Concluded from p. 739.)

PROFESSOR STEWART assumes that "the preparation for Christ in Israel," and his appearance at the time he was expected, afford valuable evidence of the truth of Christianity. This, however, is nothing more than bare assumption, for, if we admit the expectation, the question then arises, Did Jesus, in his character and mission, realise what was expected from him? It is evident that he did not. The Jews were, prior to the advent of Jesus, looking for a king, or temporal ruler, which Christ never was. They had been for a century under the Roman yoke, and their national spirit was nearly crushed out. Hence they were expecting and longing for the appearance of some one to deliver them from their state of political and social submission. Even after his supposed resurrection some of Christ's followers asked him: "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts i. 6). They appeared to have no idea that the kingdom he promised was a spiritual, not a temporal, one. Here the expectation and realisation differed, for, while a secular sovereign was anticipated, Jesus frankly stated: "My kingdom is not of this world. I am not of this world."

But, even if it were granted that the Messiah of the Jews did come in the person of Christ, he failed to accomplish his expected mission, which was supposed to be the breaking up of the Roman power and the establishment of a new faith upon the ruins of Paganism. Christ achieved neither of these results. As Clarke says in his *Ten Great Religions*, the decline of Rome was caused by Caesarian despotism and the increase of philosophy. "So ended the Roman religion, in superstition among the ignorant, in unbelief among the wise." James Cotter Morison, in his *Service of Man*, writes thus: "It may with reason be doubted if the fact is as often remembered as it should be, that Christianity arose amid the corruption and decay of the greatest civilisation which the human race had seen amid the death-throes of the ancient world.....It is often assumed that this proud heathenism and Pagan glory were overthrown by the meek and unlearned disciples of the Galilean prophet of God. Nothing can be less true than this assumption.....The fall of the Empire, including the loss and ruin of the old philosophy and knowledge, was an indispensable condition of the spread of Christianity.....The birth of Christianity being on this wise—viz., having taken place in an era of decay and death of art and philosophy, of knowledge, of wealth, of population, of progress in every form; and the absence of these things having been one of the chief negative conditions of its growth and prosperity, we must look for the sources of its nourishment in another direction than these; not in knowledge or the eager questioning spirit which leads to knowledge, but in the humble spirit which believes and accepts on trust the word of authority; not in regulated industry, which aims at constant increase and accumulation of wealth, but in the resigned poverty which, scorning this world, lays up riches in heaven; not in political freedom and popular government, which aims at the progressive well-being of all, but in the stern rigor of arbitrary power, which coerces the vicious and refractory into a little order during their brief sojourn on earth. In the decline and

fall of Rome, or, as it would be better to say, in the final ruin of ancient civilisation, the conditions favorable to this order of beliefs or doctrines spontaneously emerged" (pp. 174-5, 178-9).

The fact that the profession of Christianity "is co-extensive with the civilisation of the world" is no evidence that Christian pretensions are based upon fact. Freethought is co-extensive with progress, but orthodox believers will not admit that the former is the cause of the latter. The description of the world before Christianity dawned should be accompanied with a fair account of it when it was under the supreme control of the Christian rule—before science, liberty, and general knowledge changed the entire condition of society. It is said that the evidences converge towards one centre, which is the character of Christianity and its influence upon mankind. To fully understand this claim we should remember that the points upon which this convergence bears are: the abolition of war; the brotherhood of man, regardless of creed; the equality of the sexes; the abolition of slavery; the fostering of mental freedom; the establishment of justice; and the growth and spread of education. Now, after diligent search, we find no references in the New Testament to any proposals whereby, either separately or combined, the above reforms could be effectually obtained. We think it most improbable that Jesus would have been silent upon these questions if they formed a part of his program. It seems absurd to attribute the desire to secure liberty to one who never protested against slavery; or to credit the abolition of persecution and of the other evils of life to him who actually gave injunctions to bear with the one, and not to resist the other.

As an example of an advanced nation, in which Christianity appeared in its earliest times, let us take England. Has the Christian faith in this favored land shown itself to be the power that rids the world of its manifest and detestable blemishes? What has progressed more rapidly in this "Christian" country, under the very shadow of the cross, than Mammon worship, commercial unscrupulousness, extravagant love of military glory, and slaughter? Instead of abolishing war, instruments of destruction are being constantly improved, so that they may accomplish their deadly and savage object the more readily. Where is the brotherhood of those Christians who refuse to worship in the same church, or to be buried on the same side of the cemetery with other Christians? Persecution has not been practised by Christians upon heretics only, but it has been prominent in the fold of the faithful. In twenty years preceding 1688 it is estimated that 50,000 Dissenters suffered, of whom 5,000 died in prison. The power of Christians to issue writs for the burning of those who differed from them was blocked by law only as late as 1677, while the legal prohibition of the burning of witches is dated 1736. True education of the masses was unknown before the year 1870, and individual opinion upon matters of theology was not permitted when the Church was in full power. It is only within the last few decades that the position of woman has received any proper consideration, and even to-day brutality to wives and cruelty to children are frequently the subjects of inquiry in our police-courts. The lack of purity of married life is revealed in our divorce courts, even among the clergy and their aristocratic supporters. In the face of these painful facts, what evidence of the beneficial influence of Christianity does its history afford?

It is idle for Christians to be continually boasting that Christianity has saved the world. It has done nothing of the kind. In its earliest ages it left the evils that then cursed society untouched; despotism, slavery, ignorance, and mental subjection flourished for centuries under its very wings. If Christ has come, the question still to be answered is, Whence comes salvation? Nothing is more melancholy to-day than the fact that devout defenders of the historical faith are crying, in the words of Tennyson, "Ring in the Christ that *is to be.*"

CHARLES WATTS.

If revelation is lost to us, manifestation remains, and great manifestations appear to be opening on our view. Agnosticism is right if it is a counsel of honesty, but ought not to be heard if it is a counsel of despair.—*Goldwin Smith, in "North American Review," August, 1895.*



## A PARSON'S DIARY.

GLIMPSSES of our ancestors are invariably interesting, and when peeps into the past, by other means than the ordinary official records, afford close and detailed presentments of certain phases of our social history, they are rightly regarded in the light of entertainment and instruction. One of the best channels through which knowledge, not otherwise so fully revealed, can be obtained of the customs and practices of former generations is that of private diaries. Diarists are now almost an extinct class; their vocation mainly existed from the time of the Reformation, when the middle classes more generally acquired the ability to read and write, up to the period of the advent of the newspaper press. The verbatim reports, the minute descriptions, and the concise registers of the modern journalist have supplanted the tedious notes, the erratic entries, and the egotistic writings of compilers of private journals. There is now no opportunity for a Pepys or an Evelyn. Our descendants will not have to depend for their acquaintance with local history on the diaries of industrious country gentlemen, humble village tradesmen, or unlearned schoolmasters. The files of their favorite newspaper, or the volumes of parochial historians, will supply them with all the information they require of the habits, wisdom, and folly of their forefathers. We to-day, however, are compelled to rely on diaries compiled during the last three or four hundred years, if we are desirous of acquiring knowledge of former conditions of particular localities. A country clergyman's diary, extending from 1655 to 1679, which has come under the writer's attention, is of unusual interest and value as rendering a capital picture of the daily life and experiences of a typical rural parson who lived both under the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell and the sovereignty of the second Charles. His diurnal notes form the first sixty pages of the first volume of the Sussex Archæological Society's Collections.

The Rev. Giles Moore, rector of Horstead Keynes, Sussex, left behind him a diary remarkable for its methodical manner of entry and its characteristics of frankness and conciseness. Herein are frequently made manifest the puritanical practices of the times, which, compared with more recent records, enable us to determine the great decrease of religious observance. From his interesting notes we learn that Mr. Moore had, on an average, 180 persons to three communions at his church. In the last three years preceding 1848 the average number of communicants at eight sacraments at the same place had been 148, which is a good deal less than the number which attended those communions in Mr. Moore's time. During the reign of Cromwell religious rites and ceremonies were, of course, most strictly observed by the people, not from any real conviction of their value certainly, or on account of the religious sincerity of the observers, as the succeeding events of the Restoration clearly showed. Signs were not wanting during the time of the Commonwealth, and even in Mr. Moore's own household, of the supremacy of the great passion in those good days, for under date of November 8, 1659, the diarist writes:—

"Thomas Dumbrell came to mee as servant to dwell with mee, with whom I agreed to give after the rate of £5 a yeare. On December 22 I payed him up to that time £1 8s.; that same night I found him sleeping with my mayd Mary, and I packed them off. January 2—I married Thomas Dumbrell and Mary, his wyfe, gratis, and I gave him on his wedding eight stone of beefe, 16s. 8d.; a hind quarter of mutton, 3s. 4d.; and a lambe, 7s. 6d.; besides butter, wheate, and fewell."

Thomas Dumbrell's and "my mayd Mary's" moral delinquencies did not receive such severe castigation as they would unquestionably have done in later days by rev. gentlemen. The public mind is pretty well acquainted with cases in which clergymen have refused to marry couples who have not loved wisely, but too well. To such as these the tender toleration of the Rev. Giles Moore for the weakness of the flesh may be recommended. Our forgiving country cleric had more than one experience of the troublous adventures of his domestics, as witness the following item of his diary:—

"13th October.—I married Henry Place and Mary Holden [another erring Mary!], my two servants, and spent at theyr wedding 20s. I gave the fiddlers 1s. I also gave them a large cake, all theyr fewell, and the use of my house and stables for two dayes, with a quart

of white wine; being in all not less than 40s., or one yeare's wages. On the 6th of February following shee was delivered of a daughter, so that the—[here the rev. diarist uses a very strong expression]—went but fifteen weeks and five days after her marriage."

If the entire house and stables were given over to the wedding party for two days, we should not be surprised if the rector had cause to deplore in forcible language a number of other hastily-arranged marriages and the premature arrival of several little cherubs. Mr. Moore included in his diary references to other matters on which his near relations would doubtless have had him more reticent. What were the personal peccadilloes of the Sussex rector are almost wholly left to our imagination, as not unnaturally his note-book was more concerned with the sins of other people than his own faults, and studded more with the records of his own good deeds than the virtues of other people. But we will charitably suppose that this really represented the moral superiority of the shepherd to his flock. It was a little ungracious of Mr. Moore, however, to hand down to succeeding generations a reference to one of his wife's little indulgences as instanced in such an entry as this: "Tobacco for my wyfe, 3d." Perhaps this will shock the virtuous spouses of clergymen to-day who have not yet advanced so far as the scented cigarettes of the new woman.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, according to the point of view, wine was very cheap in the days of Mr. Moore. Claret and dry sherry were chiefly drunk, the former being 1s. per bottle, and the latter but a trifle more. The rector was evidently not a teetotaler. "1st April, 1662.—I had 5 bottles of claret, and as many of sack from London, for which I payed, and for the bringing them down at 2d. the bottle, in all 12s. For a pint of old sack, 6d.; two quarts of muscadine, 3s.; two ounces of tobacco, 1s. For a sugar loaf weighing 4 pounds, 1s." It must not be supposed that Mr. Moore was unduly intemperate; indeed, when, presumably from want of care or thought, he had imbibed a trifle more than was his wont, his pious sorrow is touching to read of. In an entry in February, 1668, he says:—

"This evening, between nine and ten o'clock, when I had began prayers with my family, I was so overpowered with the effects of some perry which I had taken, not knowing how strong that liquor was, that I was obliged to break off abruptly. O God, lay not this sin to my charge!"

It is a nice word, "overpowered." Ruthless critics would perhaps say that the rev. gentleman was drunk or slightly inebriated. He was not so; only "overpowered." And parson Moore also exercised prudence in the notification of his frivolity, in that the entry was made in Latin! Another paragraph of this diary, in which amusement and instruction are so deftly combined, instances the beneficent qualities of its writer: "I gave Mr. Salisbury, a begging minister, 4d." The individual here indicated was presumably one of those unfortunate clergymen of the Church of England who, admitted to benefices during the Commonwealth, could not stretch their consciences like others to conform to the new doctrines introduced after the Restoration, and so went out one "black Monday" to the number of two thousand.

One entry which, if unexplained, would doubtless perplex modern readers is this: "26th December.—I gave the howling boys 6d." These were not the waits with which we are made familiar at Christmas time. On New Year's Eve, says an explainer, it was, and it still continues to be, the custom to wassail the orchards. At Horstead Keynes and elsewhere the ceremony retains the name of "Apple Howling." A troop of boys visit the different orchards, and, encircling the apple trees, they repeat the following words:—

Stand fast root, bear well top,  
Pray the God send us a good howling crop;  
Every twig, apples big;  
Every bough, apples enou';  
Hats full, caps full,  
Full quarters, sacks full.

They then shout in chorus, one of the boys accompanying them upon the cow's horn. During this ceremony they rap the trees with their sticks. This custom is alluded to in Herrick's *Hesperides*, page 311:—

Wassail the trees 'hat they may beare  
You many a plum and many a pearo;  
For more or less fruits they will bring,  
As you do give them wassailing.



The practice is not confined to Sussex, but it prevails in Devon and in Herefordshire. Investigators more experienced than the writer may trace the custom back to its origin. The reference to it in the Rev. Giles Moore's diary, together with other curious entries, may perhaps be held to justify the extraction of a few of its choicest *morceaux*.

FRED WILSON.

### THE REVISED APOCRYPHA.

It is over twenty-five years since Convocation decided on a revised version of the Bible. The revision was to be within the narrowest limits, the first rule laid down being "To introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the Authorised Version, consistently with faithfulness." Nevertheless, the alterations were so important that, although the Revised New Testament was published in 1881, and the Old Testament in 1885, little or no attempt has been made to substitute the new version for the old. The books called Apocrypha formed an integral portion of the Authorised Version of the Bible of 1611, and no edition of it was published without them till 1629. Accordingly, the revision of the Authorised Version of the Apocrypha was included in the scheme. The translators have been a long while about their task; but perhaps that doesn't matter, as comparatively few people care a jot about the Apocryphal books, although the sixth article of the Church of England says the Church doth read them for example of life and instruction of manners. The Council of Trent declared them (with the exception of the books of Esdras) an integral and inspired portion of God's Holy Scriptures; and, for my part, I am fully prepared to believe they are just as much the Word of God as any other part of the Bible, and I am sure they are to the full as interesting reading.

The books of Tobit, Judith, the end of Esther, and the additions to Daniel, all throw light on Bible folk-lore; while the two books of the Maccabees, if not trustworthy historical documents, at any rate exhibit the Jewish version of what was, on the whole, the noblest period of Jewish national life. But it is the books of Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon which most clearly show that Christianity was only a development of germs already in the Jewish soil. The wisdom of Jesus, the son of Sirach, is, indeed, of a more practical order than that of Jesus, the son of nobody knows who. The Wisdom of Solomon is of a more elevated cast than that of the mass of the New Testament. It will be, for instance, hard to beat the following passage from the description of Wisdom in the seventh chapter:—

For there is in her a spirit quick of understanding, holy,  
Alone in kind, manifold,  
Subtil, freely moving,  
Clear in utterance, unpolluted,  
Distinct, unharmed,  
Loving what is good, keen, unhindered,  
Beneficent, loving toward man:  
Steadfast, sure, free from care,  
All-powerful, all-surveying,  
And penetrating through all spirits  
That are quick of understanding, pure, most subtil:  
For wisdom is more mobile than any motion;  
Yea, she pervadeth and penetrateth all things by reason of her  
purenness.

If this is not as much inspired as the barbarous cracked-brained nonsense which John the Divine poured forth on Patmos, I wonder wherein inspiration differs from insanity. The books of Esdras, which were expressly exempted by the Council of Trent in its claim of divinity for the Apocrypha, are specially important for the light they throw both on the Old and New Testaments. The second book (chap. xiv. 21) expressly says that the law of God was burnt, and that Ezra re-wrote it. In verses 42-44 of the Revised Version we read: "The Most High gave understanding unto the five men, and they wrote by course the things that were told them, in characters which they knew not. And they sat forty days: now they wrote in the day-time, and at night they ate bread. As for me, I spake in the day, and by night I held not my tongue. So in forty days were written fourscore and fourteen books." Here "the characters which they knew not" are an evident allusion to the tradition, recorded by Jerome, that Ezra was the inventor of the "square" Hebrew characters

which superseded the alphabet in use previously; and the "ninety-four books" are the twenty-four books of the Canon, together with the seventy esoteric books which were to be delivered only to such as were wise among the people. What became of the seventy esoteric books God, the Kabbalists, and Mahatma Koot Hoomi alone know.

This second book of Esdras is now for the first time presented to the English reader in its complete form. It was found that the Oriental versions contained a long passage of seventy verses missing in the Latin text, and in 1865 Professor Gildemeister discovered that a leaf had been deliberately cut out of the MS. which had been taken as the authority for Western MSS. Since then Professor Bensley discovered the passage in a MS. in the Bibliotheque Communale of Amiens, which had once belonged to the neighboring Benedictine Abbey of Corbie. By letting this manuscript drift to a Republican Library, the Benedictines let out one of their many literary secrets. J. M. W.

### HOW LINCOLN PRAYED.

At the commencement exercises at Summitville the class address was delivered by Benjamin F. Phemister, one of Van Buren's teachers, who illustrated the spirit of his subject in the following story of Lincoln:—

"On the first day of January, 1864, while a blinding snowstorm swept with untold violence through the Northern and New England States—while thousands of our brave defenders were suffering upon the gory fields of the South, a man, tall, gaunt, and homely, was seen standing in Pennsylvania-avenue, in the City of Washington. A woman, with her head bared to the hurricane of heaven, with her feet naked to the frozen ground, with her gown tattered and torn, saw him. She, supposing him to be a minister of the Gospel, ran to him, and, falling at his feet, addressed him thus: 'Oh, sir! if you are a minister of the Gospel, if you serve the God who fed Elijah by ravens and Israel with manna, pray to Him to provide me a shelter from the storm and food for my poor starving children! I am a widow. My husband sleeps in the bloody bosom of Gettysburg. I'm sad and forlorn. Oh, pray to the Master till He hears my cry, that he may shelter and feed us, or pray we may die.'

"The tall, ugly man, with his heart overflowing with sympathy, and his eyes flooded with tears, extended both his hands to the dirty kneeling woman and said: 'Woman, get up; you are mistaken. I am not a minister of the Gospel. Jehovah never appears to hear my prayer. For four long years I have been praying for the restoration of our Federal Union and the cessation of this cruel, bloody war. Not until a petition was sent to the States in rebellion in the form of two of the most magnificent armies that ever shouldered a musket, under the guiding hands of Gens. Grant and Sherman, was there ever the remotest resemblance of an answer. My prayers have finally been answered through the instrumentalities of these two armies, under the matchless and daring skill of these two generals. Now, if I had any idea that a prayer would shelter, feed, and clothe you, I would bow down; but I think that the best prayer I can make in your behalf is a prayer to that groceryman on yonder corner.'

"Suiting the generous act to the kind and sympathetic words, that ugly-beautiful man took from his pocket a small order book and wrote: 'Washington, January 1, 1864.—Mr. Groceryman, Sir,—You will please supply the bearer with \$25 worth of provisions as she may direct, and charge the same to—Yours truly, ABRAHAM LINCOLN.'

—*Freethought Ideal.*

Bridget O'Hoolihan, an elderly Irish cook, had taken a situation in a wealthy family living in a quiet suburb, but at the end of two weeks gave "notice." "Why do you leave us, Bridget?" asked the mistress; "we pay you the very highest wages." "Ye do, ma'am, an' yer a perfect leddy. Oim not laven troo ony fault av the famly, but this is such a dead old place, wid no chance to do onything loively in it, that, begorry, oi have to mek up a pack o' lies iv'ry toime oi go to confession, or oi'd have nothing to confesh at all at all!"



## LET HEBREWS REMEMBER THE DAYS OF OLD.

Tune—"Let Erin remember the days of old."

LET Hebrews remember the days of old,  
Ere their faithless God betrayed them;  
When prophets all future events foretold,  
And the heav'ns and earth obeyed them.  
The glorious days when the earth was flat,  
And the sun went wheeling round it,  
With special reversible gear so pat—  
But the days are gone. Confound it!

The days when the Red Sea was folded back,  
At wish, without a parley,  
And over its bed was revealed a track  
Like a path through waving barley;  
When Moses, 'twixt motionless, spellbound "falls,"  
Walked across with his companions;  
'Twixt vertical sections of sea, like walls  
Of the Colorado cañons.

Let Israel remember the good old day  
When the foemen fell "a cropper,"  
Through Joshua forcing the moon to stay  
With his "Ease 'er, back 'er, stop 'er!"  
The day when the sun had to stop his flight,  
Ere he reached the spot's horizon,  
And helped to continue the finest fight  
That a brigand ere set eyes on.

The days when the walls of a leaguered town,  
That had stood 'gainst rams and missiles,  
Would, all in a moment, come tumbling down  
At the sound of horns and whistles.  
The days when a word could dispel disease  
That had baffled all the "sawbones";  
And one could an army destroy with ease,  
With the help of God—and jawbones.

The days when a dream about ghosts was proof  
That the dreamer's girl's *bambino*  
Was got by a ghost for the world's behoof;  
But they knew not then what *we* know.  
The days when this ghostling gave splendid wine  
To a set of guzzling drinkers;  
Religious mania to a herd of swine;  
And a threat of hell to thinkers.

The days when, for harness, Effect and Cause  
Were by far too wild and mettled;  
And long ere the notions called Nature's Laws  
Had become sedate and settled.  
Now Cause and Effect have agreed to go  
In a steady manner, tandem;  
And "Laws" have now settled in business, so  
We begin to understand 'em.

But oh! for the days that have passed away,  
When a loaf increased by eating;  
Alas and alack! for the days that stay,  
For the saints still live by cheating.  
Let all of us think of the godly past,  
With its crime-begetting virtues;  
The blight that its horrible virtues cast,  
And its ignorance and terrors.

And let us unfeignedly seek for truth  
In the fields of sense and reason;  
A quest that makes manhood to bloom like youth,  
And protects from mental treason.  
Though facts may extinguish the hopes of youth,  
And, at times, give rise to terror,  
'Tis better to learn a vexatious truth  
Than to nurse a pleasing error.

G. L. MACKENZIE.

SOUL THEORY.—"Savages," says the Abbé Raynal, "wherever they see motion which they cannot account for, there they suppose a soul. All men may be considered as savages in this respect until they are capable of instruction and of using their faculties in a more perfect manner than savages do."—*Dr. Reid, "Essays on the Active Powers,"* iv. 3.

## ACID DROPS.

THE Conservatives have had a Conference at Brighton. Of course it was resolved to defend to the death the glorious union between Church and State. One of the speakers—a Mr. Foster, of Carlisle—assured the meeting it was not a question whether there should be various creeds, but whether Atheism should "flourish rampant in this land." "Rampant" is perhaps a Tory synonym for "openly." We dare say it is Mr. Foster's wish to make the Church strong enough to slay Atheism with stronger than spiritual weapons. We know what to expect from these gentlemen when they have the opportunity.

The Bible Revisers have finished their work by giving the world a new translation of the "Apocrypha," which is referred to in a Nonconformist paper as "those strange books, once regarded as sacred by the Church of God." *Once* is distinctly good. Those "strange books" are still "regarded as sacred" by the Catholic Church, and it is not so long ago since they were frequently included within the covers of the Protestant Bible. As for their "strangeness," we fail to see in what they differ from some of the books in the Protestant canon of the Old Testament.

A Yankee book-agent has hit upon a brilliant idea. Finding the Bible hang fire down South, he had all the angels in the illustrations done black to look like niggers. He is now selling Bibles as fast as he can get them delivered. When that line gets slack, he might have Jesus also done in black, and work up a fresh trade in New Testaments.

Dr. Henson, of the First Baptist Church of Chicago, says: "If there be no wrath to come, then every pulpit ought to be demolished, for the Bible is nothing but a tissue of lies..... The Bible proclaims a hell, against which it is the business of the pulpit to warn men." Yes, and just because the Bible proclaims this monstrous fiction, it is entitled to the designation suggested by Dr. Henson.

Not a single one of the Christian papers to which a copy of Mr. Foote's *Bible and Beer* was sent has (so far as we are aware) even included the pamphlet in its list of "receiveds." They dare not answer the pamphlet, and they cannot afford to let their readers know of its existence. Still, it is having an excellent sale, and we hope there will soon be a call for a second edition. Freethinkers should circulate it amongst their orthodox friends. It is a veritable eye-opener to those who have been deluded by the bold pretensions of modern Christianity.

Meanwhile the Churches, with the drinker's text-book in their hands, calling the same the Word of God, are pushing forward with their intemperate crusade against intemperance. The Nonconformists have practically decided, at a great representative assembly, to support the Church of England Temperance Bill. Sunday closing, of course, figures conspicuously in this projected legislation. That is a point on which all Churches are naturally agreed, as it touches their professional interests. Another part of the new program is "drastic legislation" for clubs. In other words, these silly reformers mean to throw all the clubs in the country on the side of the publican. Such is their statesmanship!

A sky-pilot called Bennetts has a Temperance article on the front page of last week's *Methodist Times*. It is full of cant and unction, and is often self-contradictory. Mr. Bennetts goes in for Prohibition as one of the means of inaugurating the reign of Christ; the Jewish gentleman, that is, who was so partial to liquor that he turned a tremendous quantity of water into wine to keep a marriage fuddle going. At the same time, Mr. Bennetts sees no "human probability" of the "eradication of the vice of drunkenness from amongst the human race." It will have to be done, if at all, by supernatural power. Very well then, why not go in for the supernatural remedy and let legislation alone?

For our part, we believe the vice of drunkenness can be eradicated by human means. Apart altogether from religion, drunkenness has been chased out of decent society. The heavy drinker was once a hero; he is now a nuisance. Sanitation, both physical and social, is doing its work, and giving us a healthier and cleaner population.

The Queen approves the exclusion of strong drink from Kham's country, and is "glad to see the chiefs have determined to keep so great a curse from the people." Curse! Ahem! Her Majesty is said to take a little of the "curse" herself. But these little utterances, of course, are only intended for the newspapers.

The *Sunday News*, of Charleston, S.C., shows that the



ministers of the New England States in the seventeenth century kept, sold, and bequeathed slaves, and defended the practice from the Bible. They, however, made up for it by calling them freed men of Christ, and expressing the belief that they often had a better chance of heaven than their masters.

The Rev. E. R. Donahoo, pastor of the Eighth Presbyterian Church, Pittsburg, who has been identified with Chinese mission work for years, has stated in an interview that he believes the efforts to convert the Chinese are futile.

Bishop Durnford prided himself on being laconic in writing. To a chaplain who asked for leave of absence for a trip to the Holy Land he wrote: "Go to Jericho, by all means."

A paper which calls itself "the only aggressive Christian Evidence journal in existence" has the following amusing item:—

#### THE GREENLAND WHALE.

The following are the average dimensions of this sea monster:

Total length of the animal.....	95 feet.
Height of ditto .....	18 feet.
Length of the head .....	22 feet.
Diameter of the throat closed .....	3 feet.
Length of the vertebral column .....	69½ feet.
Weight of the animal .....	480,000 lbs.
Quantity of oil extracted from one.....	4,000 gals.

And in the face of this evidence infidels assert the whale could not have swallowed Jonah.

Such aggressive Christian Evidence as this is perfectly irresistible.

At the Conference of Quakers Dr. T. Hodgkin pointed out that George Fox and the early members of the Society of Friends protested against the Bible being called the Word of God, and elevated the inner light above all outward or book revelation. As the Quakers got respectable they became more orthodox, but now that the old book is much discredited the younger section are ready to fall back on the earlier and more rational position.

Mr. Justice Wills, at the Winchester Assizes, sentenced a soldier to twenty years' penal servitude for an exceptionally brutal and cowardly outrage on a girl of eighteen. This soldier, the judge said, acted like a beast, and "others had passed by like the Pharisee of old and refused to help this courageous girl."

We ask our readers to recollect that this is a Christian country, that every regiment has its chaplain, that every soldier must belong to some denomination, and that Free-thinking soldiers are compelled to attend "divine service." The soldier who outraged Lizzie Walker had heard plenty of preaching; so had the other soldiers who refused to help her when she was fighting desperately for her honor.

Christian England has so much fighting to do that she keeps up a large army, and upon the majority of her soldiers she enforces the rule of celibacy. What this means in the way of vice is well understood by every man gifted with common sense. The crime of Michael Cagney is only an outrageous illustration of a horrible truth, which is winked at by the Christian Churches.

The Bishop of Wakefield has been preaching at Holmfirth on religious education. Of course it was special pleading in the interest of the black army of sky-pilots. The nation would go to ruin unless children were brought up in the fear of the Lord, and then, if they supported the Church schools, they might save the rates and make the Government shell out more in their support. A self-respecting man, other than a sky-pilot, would be ashamed to put forward such an interested plea for his own class under pretence of moral and religious instruction.

The *Financial Times* tells a good story of a country sky-pilot who wrote to Barney Barnato in terms something like the following: "Respected Sir,—As the vicar of —, my aim has always been investment, and not speculation. When your Bank came out I regarded the shares as an investment, and I purchased 400 at £4, sinking my little all in them—and a good deal more. They have now fallen to £2, and I am undone. My parish I cannot face as a bankrupt, and what am I to do? I throw myself on your mercy." Barney, so the story goes, was deeply moved by this touching appeal, and wrote back that in the painful circumstances of the case, he would buy back from the clergyman the 400 shares at £4—the price he had paid for them. Immediately on receipt of this generous reply, the guileless country parson at once wired to his brokers: "Buy 400 Barnato Banks at 2, and send round to Barnato Brothers, who will give you 4 for them." Here endeth the first lesson.

A respectable young woman in the service of a Chatham

tradesman's family was found, on Thursday in last week, walking barefooted through the streets with an open Bible in her hand. The police took charge of her as a monomaniac. The open Bible has been declared the secret of England's greatness. It seems to have been the secret of this poor girl's insanity. What a noise there would have been had she walked about with an open copy of Ingersoll's lectures!

The anti-infidel crusader, who has brought an action against H. A. Long, has himself just been ordered by Sheriff Spens, of Glasgow, to repay £95 to Mr. Thomas Edward Mills, of 20 West Cumberland-street, Glasgow, which money he obtained from him to receive him into "full and equal partnership of the Anti-Infidel Crusade."

Macaulay, when bored by a sermon, used to withdraw his attention and read the Prayer Book. Other literature now seems occasionally to be within reach. Witness this from a correspondent of the *Church Review*: "Whilst staying in a provincial town recently I attended the parish church, and on entering discovered that I had omitted to provide myself with service books. Upon informing the courteous attendant of the circumstance, he promptly supplied the deficiency; but imagine my amazement, on opening the supposed Prayer Book at the Psalms, to find that it was an old cookery book, and the first thing that met my gaze was 'How to Jug Hare!'"—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

J. R. Willardys writes from New Orleans to the *Daily News* on the lynching of negroes. He says: "Here in New Orleans, in broad daylight, have we not seen hundreds of assassins hunting and killing a few poor negro screwmen only because they wanted to earn an honest living? And this is a 'civilised city,' a 'Christian city'! What has civilisation or Christendom said of all those crimes? Not a word! The disfranchisement of the negro will not be worse for him than his assassination or roasting him alive." This writer declares: "A thrill of horror would pass through humanity if the history of the bloody massacres and butcheries that have taken place in the Southern States could be related." And he asks that a Commissioner should be sent from England to investigate. Apparently he has no trust in the Christians of America.

The Rev. W. Bolton, Vicar of St. Mary's, Penzance, is sending a circular to his parishioners asking that they shall sign a form declaring that their children shall be brought up in the faith of the Church and prepared for Confirmation, and further promising that they shall attend punctually and regularly at school and obey those in authority. This is not quite enough, for the parent further declares: "I will take care that my child says daily private prayers, and learns what is appointed from the Catechism and Holy Scriptures." We trust that all Cornish parents are not so servile as to wish their children brought up in the state of subordination desired by their spiritual pastors and masters.

Mr. Gladstone, though retired from public life, still fills the thoughts of the coming generation. On Sunday last the rector of a rural parish in Kent was examining a class of boys of ages averaging from five to twelve. "Who is the patron saint of England?" the rev. gentleman asked, his thoughts fondly dwelling on St. George as a symbol of "Unionism." With one accord the class broke out in loud response, "Mr. Gladstone."—*Daily News*.

As some compensation for the libel case which is detaining him from Queensland, Mr. H. A. Long's Glasgow admirers are getting up a testimonial for this distinguished Orange Calvinist. According to the *Helenburg Times*, Harry is not going out on spec, but to conduct an agitation against secular education, and in favour of having the Scriptures re-instated in the schools by Parliamentary enactment. We hope our Australian friends will give a good account of him.

The Church School party's deputation to Lord Salisbury was an amusing business. Not the least amusing part of it was the Premier's reference to the Nonconformists. He said that he quite understood why they were satisfied with Board School religion, because it was *their* religion that was taught there. Precisely so. His lordship hit the nail on the head. We have been saying the same thing all along. The Nonconformist game is twofold: first, to keep the Bible in the schools, and, second, to prevent its being interpreted in any way favorable to the Church of England. It must not be supposed, however, that we have any preference for the Church party. We detest them both alike. Instead of siding with either of them, we cry, "A plague o' both your houses." Each is trying to teach its own religion with other people's money. In this respect there is not a pin to choose between them.

We dare say the Voluntary schools, as they are facetiously called, will get a large sop from the Tory government, and



when it has to be divided the Nonconformists will greedily take their share. Next, we shall see a Catholic University set up in Ireland; and then the landlords—poor devils!—will get *their* consideration. Really the head of the Tory government ought to be our old friend Barabbas.

We say that the Voluntary schools are called so facetiously. What is contributed voluntarily to their maintenance is insignificant in comparison with what is contributed by the State. Here are a few figures from the *Daily News* of November 21, relating to the so-called voluntary schools of Chatham:—

SCHOOL.	TOTAL INCOME.	SUBSCRIPTIONS.
Chatham Parish School	£911	£90
Luton Schools	1,389	122
St. John's Schools	1,324	47
St. Paul's Schools	874	16
Hards Town	204	22
	£4,702	£297

The *voluntary* part of nearly five thousand pounds is a paltry £297, or about 6 per cent—that is, £6 in every hundred is contributed by the friends of these schools, and £94 from school fees and grants from the imperial exchequer. And on the strength of that miserable £6 the "voluntary" people not only clamor for still more money—in consequence of what the Archbishop of Canterbury calls the "intolerable strain" upon them—but strenuously insist on their right to dispense with any sort of public control. Of all the impudence in the world, there is none like the impudence of religion.

How many of the so-called "Voluntary schools" are really entitled to that designation? The annual report of St. John's National School, Birkenhead, for instance, shows that, while £1,850 5s. 5d. was received from the public purse, £7 7s. only was contributed in voluntary subscriptions. Lord Chatham said "taxation without representation is tyranny," yet the Church taxes the public pretty heavily to support schools over which the public have no control.

The last number of Mr. Stead's Spiritualistic quarterly, *Borderland*, said: "Eusapia Paladino has been the unexpected instrument of driving conviction as to the reality of psychical manifestations by the invisibles into the minds of many scientists, whose testimony can be neither pooh-poohed nor explained away." What will Mr. Stead say now that the tricks of Eusapia have been exposed, and the "scientists," like Professor Oliver Lodge, shown to be far more incompetent to deal with such "phenomena" than the conjurers like Mr. Maskelyne?

Richard Stanton, the married choirmaster at the "Christian Church," Ashington, has been sentenced to nine months' imprisonment with hard labor for offences under the Criminal Law Amendment Act with two Sunday-school girls whom he assaulted in the pulpit. Mr. Justice Grantham remarked that but for the conduct of the girls the punishment would have been much heavier.

Dr. Matthew Campbell, who committed suicide last week at Rugby, had been suffering from religious mania.

Alice Esther Carr seeks a dissolution of her marriage from the Rev. George Henry Carr, a Baptist minister, whom she accuses of adultery, and of throwing her baby across the bedroom.

Father Black declares that, if the Archbishop of Canterbury will not call the Bishop of London to account for permitting the re-marriage of divorced persons, he will apply to the Privy Council to direct the Archbishop to hear the case, as they directed him to hear that against the Bishop of Lincoln.

The Sunday-school Union had a bazaar in the Birmingham Town Hall, and Mr. J. S. Dugdale, Q.C., the City Recorder, made an appropriate opening speech. He ventured the assertion that the number of persons who "came before courts of justice" might have been "diminished if they had come under the influence of Sunday-school teachers." Mr. Dugdale appears to be ignorant of the fact that more than ninety per cent. of prisoners in English gaols have been Sunday-school scholars.

Mr. Dugdale went on to justify prosecutions such as those which are raging at Walsall. He did not want to see a Continental Sunday in England; it was not a day for amusement, but for rest and meditation. Well, for our part, we have no objection to Mr. Dugdale's spending Sunday in meditation, for he seems to need it. What we object to is the ridiculous idea that other people should meditate just when he does. Surely they might be allowed to choose their own time, and no doubt meditation on Monday is as good as meditation on Sunday.

George Bishop was once a Secularist lecturer. He was rather lazy, and so he became "converted" to a less exacting faith. Finally he entered the Church of England as a curate, and really found his true level.

Lecturing recently at Hucknall, the Rev. George Bishop delivered himself as follows: "I believe, according to the New Testament, it is a decided sin for any person to worship in a place not connected with the Church of England." Gods, angels, devils, and little fishes! What cheek! It is just a paraphrase of the old exclamation, "Come to my gospel-shop or be damned." Some people would prefer to be damned.

The Government of the Transvaal ordered November 2 to be observed as a day of humiliation and prayer on account of the prolonged drought. One of the Dutch ministers declined to pray for rain because, in his belief, God was sending punishment on the country on account of the evils which were daily committed, especially on Sundays. While God is withholding his rain, firework-makers are trying to bring it down by shooting rockets at the clouds. One pious Dutchman denounced the godless operation. "Hij steek zijz vinger in die oog van die Heere!"—"He is poking his finger in the eye of God!" shrieked the shocked Boer.

An anti-infidel propagandist, whose whole fortune consists in his family name, is visiting Stockton-on-Tees, and the walls of the town are placarded with a warning to the inhabitants to "Beware of Infidelity." A number of hypocritical questions are asked as to the number of "infidel" hospitals, almshouses, and reformatories; the whole winding up with a barefaced, horrible lie about "the foul system of sensuality and free love" advocated by the National Secular Society. Altogether the bill is worthy of the fellow who promised to prove that libel on the Hall of Science "up to the hilt," and so ignominiously failed to do so that the court made him and his "dear friends" pay something like three hundred pounds.

Thomas Sackville Sedgwick has been handed over by the Scotch authorities to the English police. He is charged with embezzling £30 as treasurer of the Wells Wesleyan Sunday School.

A good many clergymen, it is said, have been watching the female bicyclists at the Aquarium. Well, why not? Clergymen are as much interested in anatomy as laymen.

### Priest and ex-Nun Arrested.

For a robbery committed some little time ago (says the *Telegraph's* Paris correspondent) a priest, and a young woman who had formerly been a nun, have been arrested and incarcerated pending a judicial examination. The ex-réligieuse, it appears, was admitted into the service of an elderly widow, and, by her engaging manners, speedily won her way into the old lady's good graces. The widow did not hesitate to confide to her new servant the keys of her various cupboards and desks. The unworthy domestic made good use of her opportunities, for, on moving into another house about four weeks ago, her employer discovered that she had been robbed of railway bonds to the value of £800. The police were apprised of the fact, and the maidservant, on her avowal that she had taken the bonds and thrown them into a cesspool, was arrested. One day, however, the widow was surprised to receive a letter from a curé to the effect that, for a commission of £300, he would restore the missing securities. This communication was forwarded to the police, who discovered that the priest had carried on relations with the female prisoner whilst the latter was in her convent. On being again examined, the ex-nun confessed that she had handed the papers to the curé, who was at once arrested, the bonds being found in his possession. In his defence, the ecclesiastic said he intended using them for charitable purposes.

We have no right to believe a thing true because everybody says so, unless there are good grounds for believing that some one person, at least, has the means of knowing what is true, and is speaking the truth so far as he knows it. However many nations and generations of men are brought into the witness-box, they cannot testify to anything which they do not know. Every man who has accepted the statement from somebody else, without himself testing and verifying it, is out of court; his word is worth nothing at all. And when we get back at last to the true birth and beginning of the statement, two serious questions must be disposed of in regard to him who first made it: was he mistaken in thinking that he *knew* about this matter, or was he lying?—*William Kingdon Clifford.*



### Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, December 1, Oddfellows' Hall, Thornton-road, Bradford: 11, "How the Bible Stands Now"; 3, "Life, Death, and After"; 7, "Did Jesus Christ Ever Live?"

December 8, Foresters' Hall; 15, Newcastle; 22, Manchester; 29, Camberwell.

January 5, Camberwell; 12, 19, and 26, St. James's Hall.

February 9, Glasgow.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—December 1, Wood Green; 7, Blyth; 8, South Shields; 15 and 22, Foresters' Hall.—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.

H. LEES SUMNER.—Thanks for cutting.

J. WOOD.—See paragraph.

J. G. DOBSON.—Mr. Foote is writing you with respect to hall and date. W. R. Bradlaugh's visit will do you no harm; quite the contrary. We like to see Christian Evidence people active; it sets the public inquiring after Freethought.

J. F. HAMPSON.—Pleased to hear you made three new members after Mr. Watts's lecture at Bolton.

R. MORGAN.—Thanks. See paragraph. The little pamphlet you refer to will be amplified, as you suggest, when Mr. Foote finds time to do the writing.

G. F. DUPLAY.—Your suggestion that Mr. Foote's article does not express his real opinions renders discussion impossible. We have received an envelope containing a postal order for 3s., but no letter. Will the sender kindly tell us how the remittance is to be applied?

H. C.—All right. Thanks for cuttings.

P. S. PENGELLY.—We are obliged. Will use it next week.

J. DUNSMORE.—We are on the watch. All in good time. It is bad policy to give the ruffian gratuitous advertisements.

E. HOWARD.—We note your satisfaction.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURE SCHEME (Shilling Month).—Per C. Watts: F. S., £1; W. Gregory, 1s.; Jas. Leipper, 10s.; L. Hewitt, 2s. 6d.

H. W. JONES.—We are pleased. See paragraph. All the week-night lectures under Mr. Foote's scheme should be free. You must drop the idea of charging for admission.

MANCHESTER.—Mr. Foote has no sort of connection with the Bradlaugh Club at Balls Pond, neither has it any official connection with the National Secular Society. Mr. Foote simply gave the opening Sunday evening lecture by special invitation of the two local Branches that are co-operating in the Freethought propaganda carried on there. Mr. Forder is acting as a member of the Finsbury Park Branch in this matter, not as Honorary Secretary of the N.S.S. Of course there is plenty of room for all sorts of efforts in so huge a place as London.

J. W. GOTT.—See paragraph. Kindly send us any further notes of Mr. Cohen's tour.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH.—How is it we do not receive your lecture notices weekly?

L. J. B.—Any good bookseller would supply you with Canon Driver's *Introduction*. It is published at 12s. You might order through Mr. Forder.

G. CLANEY.—Glad to hear that Mr. Cohen's visit to Huddersfield has put new life into the Branch. We wish you all success.

J. P. GILMOUR.—Thanks for cutting, also for the new leaflet of the Glasgow Branch, which is excellent. We hope it is being widely distributed. Syllabus filed.

E. SMEDLEY.—(1) Church theology is taught in Church schools. That is the reason of their existence. (2) Nonconformists have persecuted when they have had the power. They did so in Scotland, in England under the Commonwealth, and most vilely in New England. (3) We do not know of any satisfactory book on English Church History, such as you require.

N. S. S. BENEVOLENT FUND.—Miss E. M. Vance acknowledges: W. C. (Dorking) £1; D. Young 2s.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Cape Times—Sunday Chronicle—Irish Daily Independent—Dundee Advertiser—Glasgow News—Standard and Digger's News—Johannesburg Times—Johannesburg Star—Irish Times—Echo—New York Herald—South Shields Free Press—Midland Counties Express—Cornishman—Helensburgh and Gaveloch Times—Secular Thought—Truthseeker—Torch of Anarchy—Freidenker—Progressive Thinker—New York Public Opinion—Two Worlds—Liberty—New York World—Freedom—Boston Investigator—Freethought Ideal.

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

LECTURE NOTICES must reach 23 Stonecutter-street by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

LETTERS for the Editor of the *Freethinker* should be addressed to 23 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.

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

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

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

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

### SUGAR PLUMS.

DELICATE and elderly people were, most of them, kept indoors on Sunday evening, when a bitter wind swept through the streets of London. There was an excellent audience, however, at Foresters' Hall, where Mr. Foote lectured on "Huxley and Agnosticism." The chair was taken by James Rowney, who, on the previous Sunday, occupied the platform at a very short notice, and acquitted himself most creditably.

Mr. Foote lectures to-day in the Oddfellows' Hall, Bradford, better places having been denied him. We hope the weather will permit of Freethinkers attending from the surrounding district, as well as from Bradford itself.

Mr. Parris occupies the Foresters' Hall platform this evening (Dec. 1), his subject being "More Bible Symbols, and their Meaning." We hope there will be a good attendance.

The Wood Green Branch has been holding very successful Sunday evening meetings at the Masonic Hall, which is connected with a principal hotel in the High-street. These meetings have incensed the bigots, who have resorted to surreptitious practices. The landlord has received an intimation from the Middlesex County Council that he is violating the conditions of his licence. We do not believe that he is, but he is justified in not incurring the wrath of official tyrants. Of course the Branch has to go elsewhere. It has decided to open a Club and Institute at 4, Lawn-villas, Stewart-crescent, opposite Wood Green Church. Mr. Charles Watts will lecture there this evening (Dec. 1), and there ought to be a good gathering. The tickets (1s. and 6d.) can be obtained of Mr. J. M. Wood, 71, Gladstone-avenue.

Mr. Charles Watts had two very successful meetings, under Mr. Foote's lecture scheme, at Bolton and Blackburn. The hall was filled on both occasions with a most attentive audience, many of whom would not otherwise have heard our principles expounded.

Mr. Cohen has been lecturing under Mr. Foote's scheme in the Bradford district. He has had good audiences, and has succeeded in starting two new Branches of the National Secular Society. On Sunday last Mr. Cohen lectured for the Labor Church at Bradford on "The French Revolution." He had large meetings and an enthusiastic reception.

The *Secular Almanack*, issued by the National Secular Society, and now published at threepence, is having an improved sale. We have already expressed a hope—and we repeat it—that every copy of the *Almanack* may be sold by Christmas. We also venture to repeat the information that any profit derived from the publication will accrue to the Society.

Mr. H. J. Stace, for six years President of the N.S.S., Westminster Branch, was on Sunday evening presented by the members with an illuminated address. Mr. W. Wheeler, who is a member of the local Vestry, made the presentation, and short speeches were added by Messrs. Burrell, Martin, and Littleton. Mr. Stace said he was proud of the honor conferred upon him, though, after all, he had only tried to do his duty. The testimonial, which was much admired, was most artistically executed by a friend, Mr. R. J. Thompson.

Mr. F. Wilson, in his article on "A Parson's Diary," notices the custom of wassailing orchards. This rite, which is not yet quite extinct, is adverted to by Mr. Wheeler when dealing with Christmas customs in his *Footsteps of the Past*. He considers it a most interesting survival of nature-worship, the libations being originally poured to the earth and tree-spirits.

*Daylight*, of Norwich, says of *The Shadow of the Sword*: "Mr. Foote's plea for peace is most eloquent; his appeal ought really to open the eyes of some of the people who talk of war as if it were simply a pastime."

Mr. John Morley does not mean to sequester himself in order to pursue his literary enterprises. He has accepted an invitation to stand for the Montrose Burghs, and as the seat is considered "safe," he will probably be soon back in the House of Commons. When he is there we shall



expect him, if the opportunity arises, not only to vote, but to speak, on behalf of the claim of Freethinkers to the common rights of citizenship. Not being a member of the Government, Mr. Morley will be unmuzzled; and what is the use of having principles if you never do anything for them?

The irrepressible Rev. W. W. Howard returns to the charge in the *Leek Times*, and declares that he is still willing to debate with Mr. Foote. "It remains, however, to be seen," says our contemporary, "whether Mr. Foote will consent to forget Mr. Howard's remarks that he does not understand the meaning of that which he writes, is asinine in wit, and hog-like in grunt." Mr. Foote begs to say that he has no further civilities to exchange with Mr. Howard, and he declines to exchange incivilities. He is positively tired of reading Mr. Howard's diffuse and bombastic epistles. All he has to say now is this—if Mr. Howard wants a public discussion he can have it, but he must accept his opponent's proposition as it stands. Let him plainly and definitely say "Yes," on this condition, and the business details can be easily arranged by a joint-committee. This is Mr. Foote's last word on the matter—however many letters Mr. Howard may indite in his apparently too ample leisure.

November 12 was the eightieth birthday of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and it was celebrated in New York by a demonstration and banquet of the National Council of Women. Mrs. Stanton has given her voice and pen for Freethought as well as for the emancipation of her sex, and is deserving of all honor.

We are informed that the exhibits for the Paine exhibition at South Place Institute (Dec. 2 and 3) exceed in number and variety all expectation. Mr. Conway is busy preparing a catalogue. Among the exhibitors will be Mr. E. Truelove, who sends the table on which Paine wrote *The Rights of Man*, and other relics; and Mr. Wheeler, who sends a number of books.

There is an interesting story about Froude in Mr. G. W. Smalley's *Studies of Men*, and it is very much to that great writer's credit: "When he began to feel that he was drifting away from the Church, he told his father. His father was the Venerable Archdeacon Froude, not only a Churchman, but a dignitary of the Church, and something of a devotee. The father naturally sought to dissuade the son. Presently he added the weight of paternal authority to his entreaties. Finding this also ineffectual, he told young Froude plainly that, if he renounced the Church, he must renounce his expectations of fortune. The father was rich; wealth lay within the son's grasp; poverty was the price of resistance. Froude told the story very simply. He never said whether he hesitated. He only said: 'I gave up the fortune. I thought I could earn my own living, and I have earned it.' Yet when he threw off the frock he resigned his fellowship, and resigned the headmastership of a school which had just been offered and accepted, and began life over again as a man of letters. He had no income, and no certainty of pay for his writings."

The memorial to Huxley will take the shape of a statue to be placed in the Natural History Branch of the British Museum, and medals to be awarded by the Royal College of Science at South Kensington.

The *New York Morning Journal* gives a portrait of Stephen Girard and an account of this philanthropic merchant of last century, who was a stout Freethinker. His principal ship was named "Voltaire." He had a silent funeral, attended by the Freemasons of Philadelphia. By his will he left a noble college for the education of orphans. In it he prohibited the entrance of any ecclesiastic, missionary, or minister, as he wished the orphans educated in secular instruction only. Yet the black parasites have contrived to over-ride the Freethinker's will, and the children's minds are warped with the pernicious dogmas of the Churches. American Freethinkers should never cease their endeavors to obtain a reversal of this iniquity.

### SOMETHING LIKE A FORGERY.

THE story of the woman taken in adultery (John viii. 1-11) is a pretty good instance of what could be done in the way of after-insertion into the Gospels. A yet more striking instance is that of the last twelve verses of Mark. Here Eusebius tells us expressly that accurate copies ended at the eighth verse. And here, in point of fact, do end the two oldest manuscripts, the Vatican and the Sinaitic, though these manuscripts cannot be pretended to be earlier than the fourth century, and are possibly later. Here,

then, was Mark, generally thought to be the oldest gospel, pitchforking Jesus into the world like Melchisedek without any account of his birth, father, or mother, and leaving him crucified and buried without any resurrection. Evidently that would never do. Accordingly an ending was supplied with the promise that believers should take up serpents and drink poison with impunity, but he that believeth not shall be damned. When, where, and who perpetrated this forgery is a matter of speculation. The Rev. Heber Evans argues it was Paul; others assign it to Ariston. Whoever the forger was, he did not manage the business well. The preceding writer had just mentioned Mary Magdalene three times as a party presumably well known; but he, very unnaturally, in the ninth—his first—verse explained that the hysterical lady who was the first to recognise her beloved when he got up out of his grave, and threw away the linen in which he had been wrapped, was the same party "out of whom he had cast seven devils."

Dean Alford cancelled the forgery in his Testament. It is rejected by Tischendorf and T. S. Green. The Revised Version detaches the verses, and has the marginal note: "The two oldest Greek manuscripts and some other authorities omit from verse nine to the end. Some other authorities have a different ending to the gospel." This different ending is notable because it has been argued, with some plausibility, that the ending of the gospel at verse eight is too abrupt for the close of any narrative, unless the Holy Ghost at this point suddenly took St. Mark up to heaven, and a cloud received him out of sight. Now, the Codex Regius at Paris, which is assigned to the seventh century and the margin of the later Syriac, has this verse: "And all these things they reported to Peter's companions. And afterwards Jesus himself, from the east to the west, sent forth by them the holy and incorruptible preaching of eternal salvation"; which, of course, makes a satisfactory wind up to the blessed gospel, but would never have been written in the seventh or any other century if the other verses had been known to be the genuine words of St. Mark, inspired by the Holy Ghost.

LUCIANUS.

### A Heathen Death-Bed.

The *Philadelphia Times* reports the death from consumption in that city of a Chinaman, Hong-Toi, whose friends came to his death-bed and read to him from the works of Confucius and Mencius:—

"He confronted death with all the calm courage of the true fatalist, evidently in full possession of all his mental faculties, and firm in his Oriental faith. There was not the faintest evidence of any fear in his manner or his words, nor did there seem to be any longing for life or desire to supplicate for it. To an American whom he knew well, and whom he had learned to regard as a good friend, he said, as he grasped his hand the day before he died: 'Mayhap die one week, maybe one month; die alle same. No solly myself. All light. Solly my mothee, my mothee.'

"To one of his Chinese friends he said, only a few hours before he breathed his last, and when he was almost unable to articulate: 'I think I see the dragons.' It was the last he said. Soon after he sank into what seemed a peaceful sleep, and save for his labored breathing he gave no further evidence of suffering. Slowly and more slowly he breathed, until with a long, gasping sigh he gave up the struggle and rested.

"There was no lamentation, nor any evidence of grief, though it was plain enough that to many of his friends his going was a real sorrow. Five or six of these friends were in the room when he passed away, and as soon as they saw that he was dead they began the preparations for his final disposal."

The Rabbis were proof against serpent bites; and Jesus was by no means original (nor were the Rabbis) in regard to the superstition of taking up serpents with impunity. The Talmud relates that a certain district was infested by an arud. An arud was a cross between a serpent and a lizard, and none the better for that. Well, Rabbi Chanana ben Dosa put his heel upon the hole of the reptile, and was bitten by it; but, like Goldsmith's mad dog, the reptile died, while the Rabbi was none the worse. It must be admitted that, in this instance, it was the Rabbi that was the poisonous animal. A proverb sprang out of this incident, "Woe to the man who encounters an arud; but woe to the arud which encounters Rabbi ben Dosa." Yet the Christians, who have no such power to kill reptiles, want to convert the Jews!—*J. Symes, in "Liberator."*



## IS THERE A GOD?

To any man of strong and healthy mind, there is nothing plainer than that there cannot be any such being as the God the Christians and Jews believe in; but whether any kind of an intelligence brought into existence this universe, and still controls it, is a question about which I am unable to form any definite opinion. I have never read a sound argument in favor of such an existence or against it.

It must be true either that the universe has existed always, or that there was a time when it began to exist. It is absolutely impossible for our minds to conceive of a time without a beginning or end, or of space without a beginning or end. No man, therefore, can intelligently believe that the universe has existed always, or that God has existed always. He cannot believe either of these propositions, because they are propositions that cannot be grasped by the human mind. The man who says that he believes the universe has existed always, or that God has existed always, is bound to realise that he does not say this having clearly before his mind the meaning of his words, as he does have when he says he believes the earth is round, or that Chicago has more than a million inhabitants.

And yet, if we do not believe that the universe or that God existed eternally, it seems that we are forced to believe that one or both of them had a beginning, as there is no other alternative; and yet it is simply impossible for us to conceive how God or the universe could have had a beginning.

We cannot imagine that once there did not exist any such being, or intelligence, as that which we commonly call God, and yet that in one minute after there existed a being something like that called God.

We cannot imagine either how this existence came instantly into the fully-developed God, nor can we understand how a being or intelligence might have started at a small beginning and grown into a fully-developed God.

All orthodox Jews and Christians claim to believe that God has existed always, yet that the matter or material of which the universe is made has not existed always, but that God created this matter absolutely out of nothing.

I have never heard from any intelligent Jew or Christian whether he believes God made in an instant all the matter of which the universe is formed, or took more or less time to make it; though they must know that, if God is omnipotent, he could have made it all instantly just as easily as he could have done it in a long time; and they must know that, if an omnipotent God took six days, or six seconds, to create the world, it must have been simply because he preferred to occupy some time in making it, when he could just as easily have done it instantly.

But if we admit that there was a time when matter did not exist, then we are forced to admit that before the existence of matter there were endless cycles of ages when God was doing nothing; for we can no more imagine a God doing something, with no matter of any kind in existence, than we can imagine a man doing something without something with which to do it.

Before God created matter there was nothing but space. We cannot conceive that there was ever a time when there was no space, so that space must have existed eternally.

All religions are compelled to make their gods more or less like men, and the Bible speaks of the hands and feet and arms and ears and eyes of God, and of his seeing and hearing and loving and pitying and hating and being angry, more or less as men do. But, in order to have hands and feet and arms and eyes and ears, and to see and hear, or to have anything like these, or to do anything like these, there must be some matter or material thing in existence.

If, then, God existed before matter existed, it must have been that at that time God had nothing anything like hands or feet or arms or eyes or ears, and that he could do nothing at all like seeing or hearing, because there was nothing for him to see and nothing for him to hear. And, further, if there was no matter in existence, it was impossible that God could have had any form, or size, or weight, or dimension; and, as there was nothing but space, there could not have been any particular place, or any kind of place, and it therefore would have been impossible that God could have been at any place, or could have been anywhere.

It would be simply absurd to say that, before the exist-

ence of matter, God was everywhere, as is now commonly said by religionists; for, if there was nothing but space, there could have been no place; and if there was no place, there was no where? It was impossible for God to be everywhere when there was nowhere; and it was folly to say he was at every place when there was no such thing as place, because place cannot exist without matter, and the very idea of place is inseparably linked with matter.

I am, then, perfectly free to confess that I cannot understand how the universe could have existed eternally, or how it could have had a beginning; and yet it seems that one or the other of these must be true.

—*Blue Grass Blade.*

C. C. MOORE.

## THE APOSTLE JUNIA (?).

How many disciples Jesus had, how many apostles or messengers he sent, cannot be ascertained. The general opinion is that they were twelve in number; but there must have been more.

1. Paul or Saul was an apostle, it is said; and he was not one of the twelve.

2. Barnabas was another apostle (Acts xiv. 14; 1 Cor. ix. 5, 6).

3. Epaphroditus was also an apostle. See Philippians ii. 25, where he is called your messenger. In Greek it is your apostle.

4. Certain parties (in 2 Cor. xi. 13) are called false apostles; but the writer himself may have been of that character, as Paul must be admitted to have been.

5. Lying apostles are mentioned in Rev. ii. 2.

None of the above were members of the twelve, unless the false ones are of that group, which seems quite likely.

6. In Romans xvi. 7 we have a peculiar passage: "Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow prisoners, who are of note amongst the apostles, who were in Christ before me."

Who was Junia? Man or woman, Junia was related to the writer; was amongst the apostles—that is, was one of the apostles. Was Junia man or woman?

Irenæus says: "For after the twelve apostles, it is found our Lord sent seventy others." Tertullian states: "And he chose other seventy apostles besides the twelve." Clement of Alexandria speaks of "The apostle Barnabas, who was one of the seventy." Origen speaks of the seventy apostles.

Cyprian took the seventy disciples to be Apostles, and calls Church rulers the successors of the seventy. Ambrose and Jerome spoke of other apostles besides the twelve; and Augustine regards the five hundred mentioned in 1 Cor. xv as apostles also.

Chrysostom took the seventy to be apostles; and he regarded Junia as one. He exclaims: "Oh! how great is the devotion of this woman that she should be even counted worthy of the appellation of apostle!" Calmet, in his *Dictionary*, under Junia, says: "St. Chrysostom, Theophylact, and several others, take Andronicus for a man, and Junia for a woman, perhaps his wife." The Greeks and Latins keep their festival day May 17, as husband and wife.

Theodoret says apostles were numbered by myriads.

If Junia was an apostle, who can grumble? Surely, it is as likely that a woman should be an apostle as that one should be the mother of God! Those who worship one woman as the mother of God need not begrudge Junia the title and honor of apostle. But Christians are so prejudiced. There is little else but prejudice about them.

If Junia was the first pope now, what of that? Rome was never any worse for that, nor is the Romish Church. A woman is better than a neuter any day.

JOSEPH SYMES.

## How to Help Us.

- (1) Get your newsagent to take a few copies of the *Freethinker* and try to sell them, guaranteeing to take the copies that remain unsold.
- (2) Take an extra copy (or more), and circulate it among your acquaintances.
- (3) Leave a copy of the *Freethinker* now and then in the train, the car, or the omnibus.
- (4) Display, or get displayed, one of our contents-sheets, which are of a convenient size for the purpose. Mr. Forster will send them on application.



## THE JAPANESE OPINION OF RELIGION.

The following may be most fitly prefaced by Burns's lines :—  
O wad some power the giftie gie us  
To see oursel's as ithers see us.

It was at a lecture given on Tuesday week, before members of the Aldershot Military Society, of which His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught is the esteemed President, that the following remarkable and important statement—one fraught with much import to all Freethought readers—was made, and one that we should be lacking in discernment if we did not find a prominent position for in the *Freethinker* itself. It is a fair criterion of what many great nations think of the religion of so-called Christian countries (*sic*). H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught was unable to be present, but his place as chairman was ably filled by Sir William Butler, who, in a neat speech, introduced Surgeon-Colonel W. Taylor, M.D., the principal medical officer of the South Eastern District, to the assembly. The title of the lecture was that of "The Medico-Military Arrangements of the Japanese Army in the Field." With the general subject-matter we have little or nothing to do; suffice it to say, however, that the lecturer clearly proved—and it was admitted on all hands—that the arrangements of the Army Medical Organisation in the field were far and away more complete and valuable than those of England, or even Germany herself, although, forsooth, Western civilisation had up till the outbreak of almost every ology; yet it was only in the year 1869 that Japan made up its mind to bring itself into Western civilisation! It was related to him by high authority that, at this time, a commission was sent forth from Japan on a visit to the chief cities of the world for the purpose of determining four things, which should decide the future of Japan. The first great point to be decided was to determine which of all the armies of the world was the best and most suitable for Japan to base the formation of its own army upon; secondly, to determine which was the best navy of the world; thirdly, to decide which was the best system of education in the world; and, fourthly, which was the best religion in the world. The commission executed their mission, and then returned to their beloved Emperor and reported that they found that the French had the best army system, the British navy was the best navy, and the American system of education commended itself most to their minds; but, said Colonel Taylor, with regard to the deciding of the fourth question, the commission reported that, although they had visited the chief cities throughout the world, they had not in all their travels been able to find any religion that was worth following! Much hilarity was caused by this statement by the lecturer, and the risible faculties were still further tickled when Colonel Thompson added that all the so-called religious feasts were a complete farce, and the result of starting an American mission in Japan had been that the intended theological college had now become the greatest centre for Freethought! Yet, added the lecturer in conclusion, and after extolling the virtues of the Japanese mothers, "I have no hesitation in saying that Japan must necessarily become a nation of soldiers, composed of brave, loyal, and ideal men—men who, like the women of the country, esteem it an honor and a privilege to lay down their very lives in the service of their emperor, and for their love of liberty."

Such is the opinion of a great and successful nation of the religion of Western civilisation. Truly a clear manifestation that neither the Japanese commission, its emperor, nor its nation regard religion (save the mark!) as being calculated to bring about that balderdash of universal brotherhood, as enunciated by the people's poet—

The time will come when man to man, the world o'er,  
Shall brothers be.

Common sense is evidently the line that the Japs prefer to rely upon.

In Boston, in 1660, Mary Dyar was hung on the old elm on Boston Common by the Puritans on the following charges: She said magistrates had no right over the conscience of men; that God made revelations now as much as ever, was just as near to George Fox as to Moses and Paul, and just as near to her as to Jesus Christ; that priests had no right to bind and loose; that we should call no man "Master" on earth; that sprinkling water on a baby's face did it no good, and gave no pleasure to God. Besides, she said that woman had just as much right as man. And when we bade her hold her peace, impudently declared that she had as good a right to publish her opinions as we had to publish ours. So we hanged her by the neck in the name of God and the Puritan Church of New England. It is an act of religion. Glory to God and the vine he has planted in the wilderness.—*Rev. John Norton.*

## WHAT THEN?

As I gaze at the fathomless sky,  
And travel with thought through the past,  
As I think of *what* is when I die  
I oft wonder if "I" will still last—  
The "I" that is thinking this out,  
The "I" that men say is a "soul,"  
The "I" that is ever in doubt  
Of what the Unknown can unroll.  
If 'tis true that we all are a part  
Of a thinkingless, fathomless *all*;  
If 'tis true that the broken in heart  
When dead have no future recall,  
What then! Ah, what then?

Suppose it is true that the sod  
Will contain all that forms now the "I";  
Suppose it is true there's no God  
As that told by the priests (they *can* lie);  
Suppose that the future as told  
By the priest for his bread is a snare,  
A tale but for gathering gold,  
Or to coax men wrong burdens to bear;  
Suppose that the future is *nil*  
For the toiler now crushed by our laws;  
Suppose that the future is *nil*  
For those who are crushed without cause.  
If so, ah, what then?

How shall be paid the poor wretch  
Now crushed by our cruel social laws?  
How shall be paid the brave men  
Now fighting for truth and her cause?  
How shall be paid the poor slave—  
The laborer sweating his brow  
To feed the fat belly of cant?  
The answer is—Never, or Now.  
For if God's unconscious, what then?  
If the future for man be but death,  
If God be unmindful of men,  
And the "soul" be a beating of breath,  
What then! Ah! what then?

Wealth says 'tis the tale of a fool:  
To say there's no future or God;  
That men could not hope to e'er rule  
If the "soul" was dispersed in the sod.  
Cant says 'tis a tale of a fool  
To say there's no heaven or hell.  
She teaches the poor in her school  
That all after death will be well.  
But still there's the dark, dreary doubt.  
Which through ages and ages has ran  
That future may mean *ever* sleep,  
And that God is unmindful of man.  
If so, ah, what then?

Are we to wait 'til the "trumpet sound"  
To solve the problem I here propound?  
Too long has Poverty bowed to Wealth;  
'Tis time she tried to help herself.  
Ah, see ye not, ye blinded poor,  
The priestcraft yoke you do endure!  
In spite of every parson's bray,  
They cannot *prove* a word they say.

—*Reynolds's Newspaper.*

JOSEPH TROPWEN.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## A REAL TRINITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I have for the last sixty-three years, as a confirmed Freethinker, considered the Christian idea of a Trinity or three-part God to be a most absurd and ridiculously crazy idea. Notwithstanding this, sir, you are well aware of the fact that for centuries past the clergy of the twin Churches of Rome and England have vastly enriched themselves by forcing these irrational ideas down the throats of their millions of dupes, amongst whom I feel proud to say that the daily increasing number of Freethinkers are not to be included. But I must here, with your permission, admit of the fact that the above-named clergy are in joint possession of a real, substantial, and tangible *Trinity* which I must term the Three C's—viz., the Cash, Cant, and Candlegrease Trinity.

T. DUNBAR HARRIS.

"I don't see much difference between your sacred concert programs and your secular concert programs." "The sacred concerts are given on Sunday."



## BOOK CHAT.

It is a healthy sign of the spread of music and musical criticism in this country to see so handsome a volume as that of *Gluck and the Opera*, a study in musical history, by Ernest Newman (London: Bertram Dobell, 77, Charing Cross-road; 1895). Germany has an abundance of philosophical musical critics, and in France Saint-Saëns himself—"the French Bach"—does not disdain the office of study and criticism of his predecessors. Mr. Newman's book opens with a sonnet to Gluck, by David Friedrich Strauss, who found in music one of the chief elements wherewith to replace the effete influence of religion. It is, indeed, the merit of the work that it does not merely study Gluck and his productions, but views them in relation to the whole intellectual tendencies of the time. Mr. Newman says: "Everywhere we see that music has not developed along its own lines without reference to the other arts, but that these and the general culture of the times have helped to shape its course." He deals with his subject from a scientific, not a metaphysical, point of view.

Gluck, the great reformer of the opera, is a figure of interest to all music lovers, though the quarrels of the Gluckists and Piccinnists, which made a great noise in the third quarter of last century, have almost passed into the limbo of oblivion. The rival schools, however, provoked much discussion, in which men like Rousseau and Diderot joined. The path of reform was, as Mr. Newman shows, led by another Free-thinker, Algarotti. Mr. Newman traces and analyses Gluck's own genius to its culmination in *Iphigenia in Tauris*. Mr. Newman adopts throughout the comparative method. He traces the course of the opera in Germany, Italy, and France, and does not suppose it has made its last effort in Wagner any more than in Gluck. His work is well written, and may be warmly commended to all interested in musical history. Indeed, as we have already indicated, it may claim a higher place as a part of the history of the development of culture.

From Gluck to Diderot is an easy transition. If the first was master of music of his time, the second was as certainly master of letters. Voltaire alone could compete his supremacy, and, in some respects, his work was more fecund than that of the greatest of modern wits. While Voltaire was crushing *L'Encyclopédie* with a thousand little darts and stings, Diderot, in the *Encyclopédie*, was uprearing the edifice of modern science and culture, which is slowly superseding the old superstitions. To this great work Diderot gave thirty years of his life, and Voltaire himself recognised that there was no other man in Europe who could have successfully achieved the colossal task. This, too, may be said that, while the Deist Voltaire was for ever fretting at the stupidity, superstition, and bigotry he encountered, the Atheist Diderot pursued his path, ever amiable, ever generous, with a supreme serenity, worthy of a philosopher.

*Diderot sa vie, ses œuvres, sa correspondance*, by A. Collignon (Paris: F. Alcon; 1895) is one of many signs that the great Encyclopedist is still an influence among his countrymen. And well indeed it is that it is so. The twenty volumes of his complete works, edited by J. Assezat, is a larger monument, and the greatest of all is *L'Encyclopédie* itself, for the impress of a genius like Diderot is not only in that which he writes himself, but as clearly stamped on all that comes under his direction, as was the *Times* when under the editorship of John Delane. But M. Collignon's book of 300 pages is a good introduction to the man and his work. M. Collignon has that happy style which makes French criticism more readable than many an English novel. It is far lighter in tone than Mr. John Morley's study in two volumes; yet it is, on the whole, quite as satisfactory. There is no beating about the bush with M. Collignon. He tells how Diderot, "at the outset of his career, had not raised himself above the Spiritualist theory and the feeble arguments with which it is satisfied," and also how he afterwards had the courage and sincerity to refute his Theistic errors. He shows that he was the first of moderns to broach the theory of evolution, remarking, in his *Rêve de d'Alembert*, "Organs produce wants, and reciprocally wants produce organs." M. Collignon cites many passages to show that the true precursor of "transformisme" was neither Lamarck nor Robinet, but Diderot. So in art he finds that Diderot was the precursor of Stendhal, Sainte Beuve, and Merimee.

*The Country House* is a new sixpenny illustrated magazine (30, Fleet-street). Mr. Grant Allen contributes a story, "The Luck of Kamouska," which is certainly not a hill-top novel. Therein a wrecker's home is called "God's Providence House." Mr. F. Lancaster Lucas has a silly story in which an Atheist is converted by seeing at night a post painted with luminous paint. Mr. Lucas must appraise the intellect of his readers

at a very low level. Mr. R. Barr (Luke Sharp) has some really funny remarks on "The Common or Domestic Hen."

In an account of Verdi, the composer, we read that in 1814 the village of Roncole, Italy, was sacked by the invading Allies. Then the frightened women took refuge in the church—safe, as they thought, under the image of the Virgin; but the soldiers forced the door, and slew women and children until the floor ran with blood. One mother, with an infant at her breast, flew to the belfry and hid there, so saving herself and her child. This child was the infant Verdi.

Ten thousand copies of the first part of *The Woman's Bible* have been issued at New York. The *State Journal* of Ohio declares that this New Bible of the New Woman is the work of the Devil.

The *Free Review* for December opens with an article "On Compromise," by J. M. Robertson, which is very interesting on its critical side, but not particularly helpful on the side of practical suggestion. Arthur Lynch's article on "Herbert Spencer" is good reading, though not quite up to the writer's best level. "Salvation Army Charity" is trenchantly dealt with by R. Wheatley, with special reference to "Shelters," which are shown to be a form of philanthropy which earns a handsome dividend out of the worst necessities of the destitute. There are some well-written economical papers, and a peculiar article by a lady, entitled "A Woman's Right," which is marked by all the crudity of the free-love school. J. A. Nicklin contributes a bright, original literary article on "Marlowe's 'Gaveston.'" We also note a two-page review of Mr. Foote's *Bible and Beer* pamphlet.

The recently-published Letters of Matthew Arnold contain some references to Miss Harriet Martineau, who says Matthew Arnold "blasphemes frightfully." This was written at a time when Arnold never contemplated that he would be accused of "blaspheming frightfully" by his reference to the "three Lord Shaftesburys." He applauded Miss Martineau's courage even when, owing to the publication of *The Letters on the Laws of Man's Development*, she was in high disrepute, and says thereabout: "The want of independence of mind, the shutting their eyes and professing to believe what they do not, the running blindly together in herds, for fear of some obscure danger and horror if they go alone, is so eminently a vice of the English, I think, of the last hundred years—has led them, and is leading them, into such scrapes and bewilderment, that I cannot but praise a person whose one effort seems to have been to deal perfectly honestly and sincerely with herself, although for the speculations into which this effort has led her I have not the slightest sympathy. I shall never be found to identify myself with her and her people; but neither shall I join, nor have I the least community of feeling with, her attackers." In later years he speaks of Renan, "between whose line of endeavor and my own I imagine there is a considerable resemblance."

## PROFANE JOKES.

Sunday-school Teacher (solemnly)—"Every one must be born again." Tommy Traddles—"Please, teacher, I was born again, the first time." Sunday-school Teacher—"What do you mean?" Tommy Traddles—"I'm twins."

Sunday-school Teacher—"What is faith?" Small Boy—"Taking an umbrella to church when the minister's goin' ter prey fer rain."

Mother—"I don't know what in the world to do with my son; he is a born rover." Neighbor—"Why not make a Methodist minister of him?"

Mrs. Watts—"Why were you not at the church Thursday night?" Mrs. Potts—"I was out of the city. What was going on?" Mrs. Watts—"We celebrated the silver anniversary of the boy evangelist's work in the missionary field. Oh, we had a lovely time."

A Portuguese artificer, who was suspected of Freethinking, was at the point of death. A Jesuit who came to confess him, holding a crucifix before his eyes, said: "Behold the god whom you have so much offended; do you recollect him now?" "Alas! yes, father," replied the dying man; "it was I who made him."

Mrs. Gray—"Was your prayer-meeting good last night?" Mrs. Green—"Rather uninteresting. None of the men who spoke had ever done anything very bad." Mrs. Gray—"But wasn't Mr. Graybeard there?" Mrs. Green—"Oh, yes; but you don't expect he'd confess any of his real crimes, do you?" Mrs. Gray—"Well, he might run a risk of being arrested."



## 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, Touzeau Parris, "More Bible Symbols and their Meaning"—with diagrams.

BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Balls Pond, N.): 7, H. Snell, "Was Jesus Christ a Socialist?" Tuesday, at 8, social party. Wednesday, at 8, public discussion—Miss Lanchester Case.

BATTERSEA SECULAR HALL (back of Battersea Park Station): 7.45, F. Haslam, "The Lord's Day: Past, Present, and Future." Tuesday, at 8, social gathering. Friday, November 29, at 8, meeting of members and friends.

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7, conversazione. Friday, at 8, free science classes.

EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (78 Libra-road, Roman-road): 3, Sunday-school; 7.30, Dr. Kaines, "The Religion of the Knowable."

FINSBURY BRANCH: 12, members' general meeting.

ISLE OF DOGS PROGRESSIVE CLUB (72 Stebondale-street, E.): 11.30, E. Calvert, "Does the Bible Sanction Slavery, and is it a Woman's Friend?"

PENTON HALL (81 Pentonville-road): 7, J. Kaspary, "Parseism or Persian Priestcraft."

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Westminster Town Hall, Caxton-street: 11.15, Dr. Stanton Coit, "The German Emperor and German Socialism."

WEST HAM SECULAR ETHICAL SOCIETY (61 West Ham-lane): 7, Harry Sadler, "The Vital Virtues."

WOOD GREEN (Club and Institute, 4 Lawn-villas, Stuart-crescent, opposite Wood Green Church): 7.30, opening lecture by Charles Watts, "Secularism in Modern Thought."

### OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 12, F. Haslam, "Feed my Lambs."  
HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30 and 3.30—lectures, weather permitting.

### COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM (Alexandra Hall, Hope-street): G. Bayliffe, "Creation v. Evolution."

CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school.

DUNDEE (Tally-street Hall): 2.30, discussion class; 6.30, adjourned debate, "What do Socialists Want?"—opener, Mr. Munro.

FAIRSWORTH SECULAR SUNDAY-SCHOOL (Pole-lane): 6.30, Robert Law, F.G.S., "Volcanoes and Earthquakes, their Origin and Distribution."

GLASGOW (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12, discussion; 6.30, Zosimus, "The Christ of Myth, Mystery, and Mummery."

HULL (Cobden Hall, Storey-street): 7, Mr. Monro, "The Bible God."

LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Rev. F. W. Ford, "The Foundations of Religious Belief."

LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 7, L. Small, B.Sc., will lecture.

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, Mr. Wainscott, "Free Trade and Competition v. Socialism."

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Northumberland Hall, High Friar-street, near Grey's monument): 7, R. Mitchell will lecture; 8, monthly meeting—urgent business.

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 11, W. Heaford, "Was Jesus a Socialist?" 3, "The Dual Character of Christ"; 7, "The Dream of Immortality." Tea at 5.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, business; 7.30, Wm. Bowie, "The History of a Piece of Coal."

STOCKTON-ON-TEES (32 Dovecote-street): 6.30, W. Elcoat, "The First Liberal."

### Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—December 1, Edinburgh; 2 and 3, Dundee; 4, 5, and 6, Edinburgh; 8, Glasgow; 11 and 12, debate at Newcastle-on-Tyne; 15, Blackburn; 22, Wood Green; 29, Ball's Pond.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Creden-road, Rotherhithe, London.—Dec. 22, Leicester.

TOUZEAU PARRIS, 32 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, London, W.—Dec. 1, Foresters' Hall; 8, Balls Pond; 15, Wood Green; 29, Foresters' Hall.

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