

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

VOL. XVI.—No. 6.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1896.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

ANOTHER CHRISTIAN THEFT.

A CHRISTIAN may be a very decent fellow as a man, but as a Christian he may be an unmitigated scoundrel. It has been remarked by Lecky that some of the Grand Inquisitors who presided over the torture of heretics were tender-hearted men in the ordinary relationships of life. Victor Hugo has even rehabilitated the character of the great Torquemada himself. To be wicked for the welfare of religion is really righteousness. Lying is not lying when it is done for the glory of God. Fraud and forgery are quite laudable if people can only be induced by them to accept the true faith, for a thousand falsehoods are better than the eternal damnation of a single soul. Torturing a heretic is not cruelty, as it is done for his salvation; and killing him is not murder, as it is done to prevent his dragging others down with him to hell.

Never trust a Christian *as* a Christian. Depend upon it he will sell you if he thinks it to the interest of his religion or of his own immortal soul. In relation to an "infidel" he has usually as much conscience as a shark looking round for a dinner. "Infidels," as such, have in his opinion no rights. It is really a concession to let them live. He will lie to them, and about them, with a perfectly straight face. He will concoct false stories of their conversion, and stick to the same (after exposure) as a religious duty. He will tax them to teach his own children religion, and call himself a friend of religious equality. He will rob them of the commonest rights of citizenship, and call himself a lover of justice. He will smile and smile and be a villain—if it is a heretic who has to suffer by his villainy.

Until the law is altered, and Freethinkers have its protection, they must expect to be treated with injustice. If they were to found an Institution for the promotion of their principles, they would soon find it appropriated by Christians. The thieves, in such cases, being in the majority, keep each other in countenance, and help each other against their victims. Stephen Girard, in America, founded a great college, which he designed to be purely Secular. He expressly provided that no minister of religion was ever to set foot inside the building, on any pretence whatever. Yet the Christians have defeated his intentions. They teach religion and have prayers and hymns in Girard College. And when the Liberals—as they call Freethinkers in America—complain of this infamy, the Christians only smile and say, "Do you think we are going to respect *your* rights, until you can *make us*?"

A somewhat similar perversion of a trust has taken place in Scotland. The late Lord Gifford, an eminent judge, left the bulk of his estate to found Theological Lectureships at the universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and St. Andrews. The endowment amounted to £80,000—which, to quote Shylock, was a good round sum, and one that the Christians were not likely to neglect, if they could get hold of it. Lord Gifford's intentions are nothing to them, so long as they can deliver the lectures and finger the cash.

His lordship left that £80,000 for lectures on Natural Theology "in the widest sense of that term." He was not himself a Christian, in any proper meaning of the term. Whatever admiration he may have had for the character or teaching of Jesus Christ, he "deliberately rejected miracles," as Professor Max Müller tells us; and therefore he was a disbeliever in revelation. Accordingly he made the following declaration in his will: "I wish the lecturers to treat their subject as a strictly natural science, the greatest of all possible sciences, indeed, in one sense, the only science, that of Infinite Being, without reference to, or reliance upon, any supposed exceptional and so-called miraculous revelation."

This is plain enough, in all conscience; yet Lord Gifford's wishes have been violated in most of the courses of lectures. Sir George Stokes, even, who is a scientist and nothing else, plainly admitted the shortcomings of science as an aid to theology, and sang the praises of revelation as the only source of certainty in matters of religion. Principal Caird's lectures have been delivered as sermons in a religious building, indeed as part of a religious (that is, a Christian) service. Yes, the Christians have got hold of that £80,000, and they will stick to it with the tenacity of a thorough-bred bulldog.

Lord Gifford's will contained another clause, which has likewise been impudently flouted. "The lecturers," he said, "shall be subjected to no test of any kind, and shall not be required to take any oath, or to emit or subscribe any declaration of belief, or to make any promise of any kind; they may be of any denomination whatever, or of no denomination at all (and many earnest and high-minded men prefer to belong to no ecclesiastical denomination); they may be of any religion or way of thinking, or, as is sometimes said, they may be of no religion, or they may be so-called Sceptics or Agnostics or Freethinkers, provided only that the 'patrons' will use diligence to secure that they be able, reverent men, true thinkers, sincere lovers of, and earnest inquirers after, truth."

Lord Gifford did not found lectureships to promote orthodox Christianity. He did not even desire to have his own particular opinions expounded. He wanted the subject of Natural Theology, as distinct from Revelation, to be treated by able men of various views. "The lecturers," he said, "shall be under no restraint whatever in their treatment of their theme." "I am persuaded," he added, "that nothing but good can result from free discussion."

This is excellent. But it is not carried out. Lecturers are permitted to advocate the very Christianity which Lord Gifford excluded. They are selected from the ranks of "safe" men. Professor Max Müller is the worst heretic who has been allowed an innings. Sceptics, Agnostics, and Freethinkers—all of whom are expressly included in Lord Gifford's will—have been studiously ignored. His lordship's £80,000 is being used, and will doubtless continue to be used, in promoting Christianity and swelling the already excessive fees of its advocates. We shall therefore feel justified in stigmatising the execution of the Gifford trust as another Christian theft; and we shall only withdraw the accusation when the lecturers who happen to be Christians are prevented from preaching Christianity, and when a leading "Sceptic, Agnostic, or Freethinker" is called to fill one of the chairs.

G. W. FOOTE.

SNEEZING SUPERSTITIONS.

"And when Elisha was come into the house, behold the child was dead. . . . Then he returned and walked in the house to and fro, and went up and stretched himself upon him; and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes."—2 KINGS IV. 32-35.

Two years ago our editor, in a Christmas mood, wrote an article on "Noses," in which he showed that the nose had played an important part in the religious history of the world. I have collected a few more instances of what is really a prominent feature of early religion—the identification of soul and breath, and their consequent connection with sneezing. This belief is so widely extended and so deeply rooted that few superstitions serve so well to illustrate the puerile character of the early faith which lies at the foundations of modern religion.

In an article on "Holy Kissing" (*Freethinker*, Sept. 29) I mentioned the earlier salutation by smelling and touching noses, which was as much a means of communion as kissing. The 91st chapter of the Egyptian Ritual of the Dead is entitled "Of not Allowing a Person's Soul to be Sniffed out of him in the Under World." We are told in Genesis ii. 7 that when God created man he "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." The Hebrew word translated "soul," *Nephesh*, comes from a root signifying "to breathe." So when Jesus gave his disciples the holy spirit he breathed on them (John xx. 22). The first sign of life in the man made by Prometheus was a sneeze.

The involuntary character of sneezing made it considered as of a supernatural character.

Mr. Foote gave from Dr. Tylor's *Primitive Culture* a number of instances from many parts of the world paralleling the English custom of saying "God bless you." Thus, in Vienna gentlemen in a *café* will take off their hats and say, "God be with you." Germans say, "Health," and formerly the expression was "God help." Montaigne refers to the custom, and some French people still say, "*Dieu vous benisse*," when they hear sneezing. In Ireland Paddy will say, "God bless your honor," or "Long life to your honor." Jews say, "Good life"; and Samoans, "Life to you."

The Parsees say a prayer after sneezing. In Bengal they salaam to the person who sneezes; and, should a Hindu chance to sneeze when performing his ablutions in the Ganges, he makes gestures very similar to those of a Catholic when he dips his fingers in holy water. Having touched his forehead, nose, chin, and cheeks with the tip of his finger, he recommences his prayers from the very beginning, and will do so as often as they are interrupted by a sternutation.

St. Augustine, in his work, *On the Doctrine of Christ*, says: "When the ancients were getting up in the morning, if they chanced to sneeze while putting on their shoes, they immediately went back to bed again, in order that they might get up more auspiciously, and to escape the misfortunes which were likely to occur from that cause."

Sometimes a sneeze was deemed favorable. While the Athenian general, Themistocles, was offering sacrifice for the propitiation of the gods, it happened that three beautiful captives were brought him; at the same time the fire on the altar was burning brightly, when a sneeze happened on the right hand. Thereupon Euphrantides, the soothsayer, embraced him and predicted a victory, which he afterwards obtained—that of Salamis.

We also read that at the time Xenophon was addressing his army of ten thousand, and while speaking of that favor from the gods which a righteous cause entitled them to hope for against a perjured enemy, someone sneezed. Immediately the general voice addressed ejaculations to protecting Jupiter, whose omen it was supposed to be. A sacrifice to the gods was proposed, a universal shout declared approbation, and the whole army in one chorus sang the *Pæan*.

The Romans thought even more of this superstition than the Greeks. It was by no means a trivial or meaningless compliment among them to ejaculate, "*Salve!*" when one of the company sneezed. It was a requirement of polite life. Even the stern Emperor Tiberius was punctilious in complying with it, and required those about him to do so likewise.

Catullus, the Roman lyric poet, in *The Nuptials of Petrus and Thetis*, gives the following:—

The God of Love who stood to hear him,
The God of Love was always near him,
Pleased and tickled with the sound,
Sneezed aloud, and all around
The Little Loves, that waited by,
Bowed, and bless'd the augury.

It was commonly believed that Cupid sneezed whenever a beautiful girl was born, and the most acceptable compliment a Roman masher could lisp and drawl to his lady-love was, "Love has sneezed for you!"

Calabar negroes, when a child sneezes, will say, "Far from you," with a gesture as if throwing off some evil. Here the object seems plainly to be to keep foreign or evil spirits from entering. But in other cases it is likely that there was some idea of evil influences being able to operate on the part of the life which had made its exit at the sternutation. In the case of disease the sneeze may be taken as a sign of the departure of the evil spirits, as in the case of the child restored by Elisha. Josephus tells us that he saw a Jew, named Eleazar, curing demoniacs by drawing out the demons through their nostrils with a magic ring.

Connected with sneezing superstitions are a host of others concerning whooping cough, into which I have not space to enter. It should also be remembered that the fact that sneezing does accompany some dangerous disorders, as well as being a frequent attendant of colds and impaired vitality, must have largely contributed to perpetuate the custom. The historian, Sagonius, tells us that in the time of Gregory the Great (A.D. 558) there raged throughout Italy a malignant pestilence, which infected the air to such a degree that they who had the misfortune to gape or sneeze fell dead on the spot. To avert the effects of the tainted atmosphere, it became customary on these occurrences to utter an ejaculatory prayer. Among the Poles, to smell a flower growing in a churchyard is believed to destroy the sense of smell. The idea, of course, is of transference of the qualities of the dead—an idea which has led to many superstitions.

In Theodore Irving's *Conquest of Florida* it is told how Hernando de Soto, the Conquistador, in 1512 was received by the Cacique Guachora, and, on finding that the Floridians had the same custom of salutation on sneezing, remarked: "Do you not see that all the world is one?" Indeed, the general prevalence of this custom alone would go far to show that the human mind, dealing with the same facts, works out similar beliefs according to its state of culture, and irrespective of contact with other peoples.

Mr. Gerald Massey says in his *Natural Genesis* (i. 83): "It is common for people to take a pinch of snuff to cause a sneeze for the expulsion of headache, and in this connection the British custom of placing on the dead a plateful of snuff is most remarkable. If a pinch of snuff were efficacious in expelling the bad spirit, stuffiness or pain, by means of a sneeze, then a plateful of snuff laid on the breathing-place—the bosom of the dead—was typically intended in relation to the breathing of the future life, and wishing well or well-wishing."

In Irish wakes it was a custom to place a dish of snuff on the corpse, each of the wakers partaking of a hearty pinch. After this they would challenge each other to fight, sing, or dance, the idea evidently being that the spirit of the departed had entered into the partakers of the snuff.

Tobacco snuff is, of course, modern in Ireland, but I think it possible some other powder or dust may have been used before, as analogous customs have been found in other parts.* Indeed, it has been conjectured that the use of all condiments may have originally been connected with some such superstitions.

We get an early association with smelling as an indication of desire in the Pacific Islands, where it is the belief that, when a man sneezes, he is thinking of his wife; when a woman sneezes, she is thinking of her husband; therefore, they deem it fitting to say: "*Ofa!*" (Love!). The custom of perforating the cartilage of the nostrils, or, as sailors called it, "sprit-sail-yarding the nose," is allied to this belief.

An early superstition is that preserved by the Xosa

* Mr. Hartland considers "it represents the more archaic consumption of food or drink on the corpse." My idea is that anything causing sternutation might come in vogue as a demonstration of the truth of the notion that the qualities of the departed could be transferred.

Kaffirs, who, when a man sneezes, hold that his ancestral spirit is trying to speak. Mr. Massey says (*Natural Genesis*, i. 84): "It was a common belief that no idiot could sneeze, and that there was no surety like a sneeze for a newborn child having a soul." British "howdies," or nurses, held the child to be under the fairy spell until it showed signs of spirit by sneezing. "God sain the bairn," said an old nurse when the little one sneezed at last; "it's no a warlock." The ancestral soul had descended. The Maoris of New Zealand had a singular baptismal ceremony called Iriri Rohi. On the eighth day the child was taken to the side of a stream, with the family greenstones hung about it. The list of the child's ancestors was repeated by the priest, and, when the child sneezed, the name then being uttered was the one selected by the child itself, or the ancestral spirit manifesting through it. Then the child was sprinkled or immersed in the river (*Thomson's Story of New Zealand*, i. 119).

We still have some sneezing superstitions, as evidenced in the Lancashire folk-rhyme:—

Sneeze on a Monday, you sneeze for danger;
Sneeze on a Tuesday, you kiss a stranger;
Sneeze on a Wednesday, you sneeze for a letter;
Sneeze on a Thursday for something better;
Sneeze on a Friday, you'll sneeze for sorrow;
Sneeze on a Saturday, you see your sweetheart to-morrow;
Sneeze on a Sunday, your safety seek,
The Devil will chase you the rest of the week!

These same rhymes are given in *The Folk-lore of Philadelphia*, by H. Phillips.

J. M. WHEELER.

CAUSE AND EFFECT.

THE terms "cause" and "effect" are employed to indicate natural events, and the relation they bear to each other. Scientific minds not only endeavor to trace the order of nature, but they also seek to ascertain the antecedents of events. Such minds do not, like men in a savage state, attribute the operations of nature to spirits, or to any other alleged supernatural powers. It is not by these crude and superstitious notions that we of the nineteenth century essay to account for certain movements in the world of matter, either in its moral or its intellectual aspects. Primitive man may have been satisfied with the assumption that natural events were caused by spirits or the intervention of gods; modern science, however, has shown the fallacy of such beliefs. True, there are some theologians and metaphysicians who still cling to the erroneous notion that phenomena are governed by what they term supernatural intervention; but, fortunately, such persons are not regarded by the intellects of our day as the true interpreters of the operations of nature. Cause and effect are only relative terms; the one is not a conditioned existence, and the other unconditioned: not that we deny absolute or unconditioned causes, but we simply say that we know nothing of them.

Causes and effects are the names of what we may otherwise denominate a succession of changes, both in time and space. The limitation of causes is no longer possible to minds with even elementary knowledge. The expansive power of heat and the contracting power of cold are but the same phenomenon under different conditions. Causes and effects depend upon, and they vary according to, natural conditions. For instance, clouds are derived from vapor, and they discharge themselves in the form of rain when the condition of the atmosphere changes. The causes of all these varying effects are in nature, and nowhere else. But theologians assert that all effects are caused by some power above, beyond, or outside the universe. They thus introduce, as a cause, a power of which we know nothing, and which we can in no manner connect with effects. This theological practice of placing the control of nature in the hands of one infinite cause induced the men of science to invent another term to stand for all scientific or calculable causes, the term being secondary causes. The reason why this became necessary is obvious: science is concerned only with the known; in fact, the word "science" implies that something is known about whatever it attempts to elucidate.

Perhaps much of the confusion of thought found in pulpit discourses arises from the fact that preachers do not

possess a clear conception of the difference scientific men recognise between a science and a theory. An example of this is found in the sense in which the term "evolution" is employed by some theologians. They speak of it as a cause, while really it is a method—that is, it describes the way in which nature works in living forms. "Natural selection" has also been construed to mean that nature makes selections in the same manner as man does, which is a wrong idea of the true meaning of the phrase. While it is quite permissible to use figurative language, there ought to be no difficulty in this case in making the distinctions between the fact that certain forms of life produce other and superior forms, and the supposition that the earlier forms intentionally selected and produced others, upon the same principle that a breeder of pigeons produces a variety of birds. It is the theological mind that so construes the meaning of results that are shown in animated nature. A learned archbishop suggested what he considered to be a valuable truth upon this point. He said that God endowed nature originally so that it might, in the course of ages, produce all the phenomena traced by Darwin and his predecessors, in a succession of superior species, and an infinite variety of new forms. Sir Charles Lyell, in his early days, favored the notion of new creations, and we believe Sir George Stokes now maintains the same opinion. An infinite intelligent will operating in nature is not by any means the same as a human will which acts through the nervous and muscular system; the human will depends upon causes, but is not in itself a first cause, as theologians claim their supernatural will to be. All the mental and physical operations in man are the results of internal and external causes anterior to their production. Man existing by himself—that is, independent of nature external to himself—is inconceivable, and any similar notion applied to any other being is equally so.

Having defined causes and effects as denoting changes in nature, the application of them to something *above* nature, to the exclusion of what we observe *in* nature, would destroy the meaning applied to the term "science." We may assent to the conclusion of the widest induction from the observed facts of existence, whereby is established an invariable order of nature, without being supposed to mean more than that such a condition is found to be the order of nature. As to *why* it is not otherwise we do not know, and neither are we aware of any power that causes any departure from that order, excepting such natural changes in nature's conditions as determined the variations observed. We are on firm ground only so long as we confine ourselves to the limits of our intelligence, and affirm only that which we know. This brings us to the Freethought view of nature and of man. We prefer relying upon what is discovered, and to allow all else to remain to be explained, if it can be, in the future. Events that occur of an unusual or of an alleged miraculous character we do not feel called upon to believe, although we may investigate them as our time and inclination permit.

The advantage that is derivable from the habit of seeking causes and effects in nature, instead of looking for causes outside the objective world, is not only a scientific habit, but it imparts a satisfaction to the human mind which theology can neither give nor take away. When we see the snow melting on the mountain side, or the breaking up of the ice upon the lake, and attribute such operations to an alteration in the temperature, or when the application of a spark to a gunpowder magazine produces an explosion, we are satisfied that the causes of such effects exist in the universe. Comte called special attention to the value of seeking for laws of phenomena in preference to looking for final causes which are beyond human comprehension. Granted that an invariable order of nature is not fully accounted for, neither are external and final causes, to which effects are by some referred. We should suppose that every reflecting person must see the advantage of accepting a natural rather than a supernatural explanation. Surely, to attribute the appearance of the rainbow to the conditions of the atmosphere and the position of the sun is more rational than to suppose that the God of Noah placed it in the skies for the foolish purpose assigned by theology. The idea that the eclipse of the moon is due to planetary motions and the relative positions of moving bodies will commend itself as being more sensible than the Turkish notion that the eclipse is caused through a dragon swallowing "the silvery orb of night."

But above all else there is this one undeniable advantage

in a rational explanation of natural causes and effects: it accords with the facts of existence as we know them, while what is called a supernatural explanation cannot have any direct known association with natural phenomena. The discovery of the laws of heat, of light, and of electricity enables us to perform what, if put into the language of our ancestors, would appear to be more stupendous miracles than are recorded in the history of any nation of antiquity, either in the wild flights of poetry, or in the amazing power of reputed prophets and saints.

The invention of the telescope and the microscope opened up to man's insight things before hidden in profound darkness, both as regards the infinite great and the infinite small. Since the time of Galileo the study of astronomy and the diffusion of knowledge by the secular press have caused the solar myths to vanish; and now, in the circle of science, cause and effect are recognised as natural agencies pervading all phenomena throughout the universe of worlds.

Thus, as time rolls on and a knowledge of science increases, the pretensions of theology are more and more discredited, and the potency in nature is more and more recognised. The intervention of any God is not required to explain the phenomena of the universe. What can be known is learnt through the indomitable researches of man, and what he fails to discover we see no reason for supposing a God will reveal.

CHARLES WATTS.

DEAD NOTIONS.

G. G. GREENWOOD, in the *Westminster Review* for November, has an article on "The Persistence of Dogmatic Theology," in which he refers to the wonderful changes wrought in human thought during the past few generations. Time was and long continued when man considered himself the centre of creation, and everything subservient to his interests. The heavens and earth were created for him; the stars were made in order to light him and guide him; the earth and all its animals and plants were intended for his pleasure and advantage.

All these old notions have been killed by modern science, or driven back and down to linger amongst the ignorant or unconquerably religious. Evolution has knocked the stupid pride out of all who are capable of understanding it; and our own race, instead of beginning at the top and falling to the bottom, is known to have begun at the lowest possible stage of existence, and climbed to its present position; instead of being a decayed family, as theologians said, a broken-down aristocracy, living upon the bounty of "God," science and philosophy show that we are a pioneer family, who began with nothing, and owe all we have, our skill and energy included, to the indomitable perseverance, pluck, enterprise, and invention of the best members of the family.

This is a wonderful revolution, especially when it is remembered that it has all been done within our own day.

We were taught in infancy that the world we live in had been created just 4004 years B.C. This we were taught, not by scientific men or historians, but by the insolent, ignorant clergy, who set up the stupid Bible as the ruling book, and forbid all men to question its statements. Out of those statements they manufactured a chronology for the world, and cut and hacked, shortened or stretched, the chronology of the Gentile nations to make it fit in with that of the Jews!

The same insolent rulers of our thoughts told us of Noah's flood, his band-box of an ark, and the descent of all existing men and animals from the pairs preserved in that craft!

Unfortunately for them, the ignorance of the Creedists has been brought face to face with the facts of archæology and science: at first they were furious, then bewildered; then they cursed facts and prayed for the support and continuance of their error; and, last of all, they are showing signs of dawning reason and common sense, though they are not yet honest enough to drop the Bible that deceived them, and follow the truth whithersoever it may lead.

Of course, it is a bit awkward to learn that King Menes, of Egypt, lived 1,000 or more years before the creation of the world, and that there were before him centuries too

many to number during which civilisation was gradually being developed. The millions of ages hinted at in geology are positively overwhelming. And thus archæology renders the Bible almost as ridiculous as astronomy does.

Mr. Greenwood gently ridicules the ancient puzzle called the Trinity in unity, a bugbear which dominated mankind in all branches of life for many generations, a conundrum that it was imprisonment to deny until quite recently, and even now it is not respectable to make too free with it. The Incarnation also is gently touched upon by this writer, and the "wonderful scheme of salvation," of which we used to hear so much; and then he reminds his readers of the conundrums of the Athanasian Creed, which declares all unbelievers shall "perish everlastingly."

The uncompromising stubbornness of the orthodox is referred to, their childish plea that all their dogmas are revealed and therefore true, whose faith can "swallow mountains, if not remove them."

Mr. Greenwood attributes the persistence of orthodox belief to the fact that extremely few people dare to think for themselves; to atavism, or the existence in us of the nature and tendencies of our distant ancestors, who, of course, were as ignorant as they could be, and, therefore, grossly superstitious. We have their nature, and that nature forbids us to think upon religious matters, and bids us follow any religious quack who promises to lead us aright. No doubt this atavism, the influence of our prenatal and our infantile periods, makes it extremely hard for the best of us to break with old-fashioned ideas. Most people are children all their lives, and require nursing as much in their prime as they ever did. Hence the flourishing dry-nursing business conducted by the priests, the wholesale baby-farming on which they flourish so well.

Early education, of course, tells in favor of orthodoxy. This is demonstrated in the patent facts that all but the few remain more or less attached to the religion of their infancy—the Mohammedan to his, the Jew to his, the Christian to his; and in all the sects of Christendom you see the same truth exemplified. Give the priest control of the infant schools, and you enthrone him in perpetuity; keep him and his poison out of the schools, and he will die out in a generation or two. Children are fond of mystery, and are easily impressed with stuff they cannot understand. They are also fully open to the bribes and intimidations the priest knows how to apply. Let a boy or girl go through the hands of a priest, and he or she is morally corrupted and enslaved for life.

All the above influences and many more favor orthodoxy and orthodox sham. I can speak more openly than Mr. Greenwood would be permitted to do, and I say that a large proportion of the orthodoxy of to-day is mere sham, pretence, downright hypocrisy. Most of the intelligent clergy know for a certainty that the Bible is not what orthodoxy represents it to be; that their profession is hollow; that social considerations are all that tie them to it; they have no love or respect for the position they occupy, except in so far as it gives them social status and a living.

Although countless millions of stupid and imbecile people sincerely cling to their early creeds—no matter how absurd—the educated and the thinking part of humanity are not sincere in their orthodoxy, nor is it possible they should be.

Let me ask in closing, Is it not time the lovers of truth everywhere formed combinations among themselves for united action against the priests and their wicked influence? If we were half as earnest to spread the truth as the priests are to disseminate wholesale lying, what a change would soon be wrought in human society! Unfortunately, the thinking part of mankind are not remarkable, as a rule, for courage; often they indulge a contempt for the inferior portions of the community; and they afford no aid or countenance to a man who openly endeavors to enlighten and emancipate the masses.

But here is a truth which all experience proves—namely, that the priest must be discredited, degraded, kicked out, before intelligence, virtue, and manliness can become the characteristics of the people. And who is to do this work? Volunteers are left to starve, and are persecuted just in proportion to their good deserts; while cowards and traitors and hypocrites are most highly honored. How long is this to last?

JOS. SYMES.

—Liberator.

FREETHOUGHT IN SCOTLAND.

HOLDING that Scotsmen and Scotswomen, once emancipated from subserviency to churches, creeds, and confessions, prove most thorough Freethinkers, I was much interested in Mr. Gilmour's sketch of the rise and progress of Secularism in Scotland (*Freethinker*, p. 67). That sketch he could doubtless himself elaborate to a much more finished picture. Personally, I should like to learn more of "Antitheos," of the Glasgow Zetetic Society, whom Gillespie acknowledged as the ablest champion of Atheism he had met, and whose examination of Gillespie is a masterly performance. I have been informed that the real name of "Antitheos" was George Simpson, and there are probably those still living in Scotland who could give account of his career. Among my Freethought pamphlets I have one on Prayer, by James Simpson, published at Glasgow in 1837, in which the incompatibility of prayer with the alleged attributes of deity is forcibly put.

Before the time of "Antitheos," Richard Carlile found many supporters, like James Affleck, among Scotsmen, and more than one of Carlile's publications were written north of the Tweed. Frances Wright, one of the first women to appear on a Freethought platform, was a native of Dundee; and a bookseller there of the name of Myles, besides issuing her life and pamphlets, published a version of the famous *Three Impostors*. Robinson and Finlay, of Edinburgh, and Love, of Glasgow—the latter firm, I believe, still flourishing—deserve mention, with brave old Robert Ferguson, as purveyors of Freethought works in the face of the boycott of the bigots. Near the present position of the Glasgow Secular Hall, in the fifties, J. H. McGuire also kept a "Freethought book and tract depôt." Brave Alexander Campbell, too, should be mentioned. He had conducted Abram Combe's social experiment at Ormiston. On June 25, 1834, he was brought before the Court of Exchequer for selling an unstamped paper, the *Tradesman*, under the infamous "gagging Act." An extract from the paper, entitled "The Freethinker," was read to prejudice the jury. He was found guilty, but was recommended to leniency. The prosecuting counsel promised no more would be heard of it; but he was thrown into prison, where he was kept for seven weeks for refusing to pay the fines. I well remember seeing his sturdy figure at the old Eclectic Institute.

Mr. Gilmour makes no mention of the gallant fight for free publication which went on in Edinburgh in 1843. The attack on Owenism by the Bishop of Exeter in the House of Lords in 1839 was followed by a vigorous attempt to suppress Infidelity. Three priests of the *Oracle of Reason*—Southwell, Holyoake, and Paterson—were imprisoned in England, and in Edinburgh Messrs. Robinson and Finlay were arrested for selling works "calculated to bring the Christian religion into contempt." For this "crime" Robinson received twelve months' and Finlay sixty days' imprisonment. The latter made a good defence. While their trials were pending, Paterson, fresh from Tothill prison, opened a blasphemy depôt at 38 West Register-street, and advertised "The Bible and other obscene works not sold at this shop." He was arrested, tried, and sentenced to fifteen months' imprisonment. Then appeared on the scene brave Matilda Roalfe, who opened a shop at 105 Nicholson-street, and published a circular in which she stated: "I neither hope nor fear anything from authority, and am resolved to supply the public with works of a controversial and philosophical character, whether such works do or do not bring into contempt the Holy Scriptures and the Christian religion." She, too, was prosecuted for selling the *Oracle of Reason* and other blasphemous works. She conducted her own defence, and considerably non-plussed the officer who gave evidence against her by asking him if he was less moral in consequence of having read those works. In her defence she told how she had been a Sunday-school teacher, and study of the Bible had made her a Freethinker. She asserted the equal right of Atheists with Christians to publish their opinions, and repeated that she should continue her course when at liberty. The sheriff sentenced her to two months' imprisonment. Upon her release she resumed the same business at her shop, and published an able pamphlet, entitled *Law Breaking Justified*. She was no further molested, and by this persistence the cause of free publication was placed on a firmer basis than ever before.

J. M. W.

PAUSE, PERHAPS; NOT REACTION.

It is freely alleged in various quarters, occasionally with regret, but more frequently with more or less exultation, that the present is a period of intellectual reaction. Science, it is said by some, has been moving too fast, and has not made good its more advanced positions. It has attacked questions which were beyond its grasp, and has had to retire in discomfiture. It has made promises to mankind which it has not fulfilled, and which evidently it is not going to fulfil. Its watchwords have lost their power—so we are assured—and the comfortable doctrines of the past are in a fair way to recover their former prestige and influence. It is needless to say that we do not accept this view of the situation. In cosmic and in human affairs there is certainly a law of rhythm, as Mr. Spencer has so copiously proved in a celebrated chapter; but rhythm is one thing, and reversal of a main movement is another. There will come times when men will in a measure tire of speculation, and seek rather to rest in a partial conclusion than to pursue further voyages of discovery into the unknown; and such a time may be expected after a period of active and theoretical advance. At such a moment of lull it is not surprising if the Philistines of the intellectual world, who had been more or less in hiding while the forward movement was at its greatest intensity, should venture from their fastnesses and indulge in a few songs of triumph; but this need not disturb the serenity of the army of progress. In due time the order to march will be given; and then the Philistines—will keep out of the way.

Such, we think, is the situation at the present time. The third quarter of the century was a period of almost, if not of quite, unparalleled scientific activity. It gave birth to the most important work of Spencer, Darwin, and the rest of the evolutionist school. It brought important discoveries in chemistry and in biology, and rendered a great deal of so-called orthodox opinion in many departments of knowledge forever obsolete. The impetus of this great movement lasted undiminished for several years longer; and, if it has now slackened in any degree, it is that the specific need of the present day is rather a careful survey and a classification of the results already obtained than a further development of theory. We want to know just where we are before we start again. To say that no opinions which were held with a good deal of confidence ten or twenty years ago have undergone any modification would be foolish. That is not the way in which science advances; but it advances through constant rectification of its observations and adjustments of its points of view. A change of opinion may involve loss, perhaps fatal loss, to a system of thought founded on authority; but it means no loss to science, whose vitality can never be impaired by additional knowledge. As Mr. Spencer has lately found occasion to say, there may be much difference of opinion as to how species originate; but this does not in the least invalidate the great law of evolution, which finds illustrations on every page of the book of nature. The heritage of Darwin may be divided; but, at least, no part of it is in possession of an anti-scientific or an anti-naturalistic school. All who to-day grapple with the question of the origin of species do so on a basis of purely scientific observation and reasoning; and even if the problem had to be given up as too obscure—and it is quite possible that we do not even yet know how obscure it is—it would still remain a problem of science, not a problem of theology or metaphysics.

One most important characteristic of science is, that it can never really be idle. If it is not doing one thing, it is doing another; and its humbler work—or what seems so—may be not less useful, may indeed be more useful, than its more ambitious efforts. There is no department of natural knowledge which is not day by day receiving accretions which all go to better in some way the position of man upon the earth. It will do no harm if, for a time, there is less vague talk in regard to the theoretical conquests of science; but there need be no abatement of the confidence with which we hold that science is the power which transforms impressions of sense into conclusions of reason, which alone throws light on the constitution of the world in which we live, and which confers upon all human effort its highest possible efficiency. Knowing this, we know that the so-called "bankruptcy of science" is a contradiction in terms, the flippant invention of those with whom the wish is father to the thought. In a word, all is well; for whether

the time be seed time or harvest, whether the field, as we see it, be lying fallow or carrying a bounteous crop, science, the one abiding power and principle of fertility, is present with mankind, and its promise will not fail.

—*Popular Science Monthly.*

GOD IN ARMENIA.

TURKISH atrocities! who is the Turk?
Deity's tool doing Deity's work!
Who is the Deity? All the fools know—
Infinite Wisdom, the "Boss of the show."
Simpletons, hypocrites, rascals, and fools
Counsel their God to get rid of his tools;
Urge him to modify all of his plans—
Strength is Jehovah's, but wisdom is man's.
God, as creator, is smart, they admit;
But, as a ruler, they doubt if he's fit;
Hence, they supply him with notions and views,
Hints and instructions, and items of news;
Statements of fact which they think he should know,
Merely to show him the way he should go.

Why they should fancy that these will avail,
Seeing that vain was the slaughter'd one's wail,
God only knows—if he *does* live, and know
Ev'rything, sideways, above, and below.

God in Armenia is doing God's work;
Foe of the Christian and friend of the Turk;
Always the same, for his present-day crimes
Match with his doings in Biblical times.
Helpless Armenians! what depth of despair!
Victims of Turkey, Jehovah, and pray'r!

Prayer to God who does ev'rything well!
Prayer for what?—will the knowing ones tell?
Something that's not in God's program or plan;
Quite overlooked till suggested by man;
Not kept in stock, but "to order" of those
Willing to wait till they get it—who knows?

"All's for the best"; but they humbly request
Something that's diff'rent from "all for the best."
"All's for the best," say the "*feelings*" on Sunday;
Brains begin work after breakfast on Monday.
"All's for the best" is the doctrine of knaves;
Syrup for fools, and narcotic for slaves.

Simpletons pray, and appear to believe,
Somehow, that God, like themselves, they deceive;
They always deny that their hints and their pray'r's
Are meant to instruct their Creator upstairs;
But still they pray on, with no trace of aphasia:
"O Lord! pay attention to Christians in Asia!
The average *man*, with no claim to perfection,
Would gladly, if able, give help and protection
To suffering creatures; so, surely to goodness!
Requesting as much from a *God* isn't rudeness.
We're not for a moment presuming to teach thee,
But, hang it, Jehovah! jee-up, we beseech thee."

G. L. MACKENZIE.

Holy Kissing.

"Salute the sistren with a holy kiss."—TIMOTHY TITUS.

One custom of the Christian wedding ceremony, which happily is passing away, is that of the clergyman who officiates kissing the bride. In days gone by the man who married a true Christian woman was rather a subordinate factor in the proceeding; for not only had his sweetheart previously pledged herself to be the bride of Christ and of the Church, but hardly were the words which made them man and wife repeated before another man kissed her—doubtless supplying the caress which neither Christ nor the Church would ever be in a position to give in other than a figurative manner. There have been some discussions as to where the custom referred to originated. Some have argued that it is really a relic of a far worse custom, the *jus prime noctes*. One thing is certain: it originated with the clergy.

ACID DROPS.

PROFESSOR FREEMAN, the historian, now knows whether Christianity is true or false; that is, if he knows *anything*, for he is dead and buried. During his lifetime he professed himself a Christian. "Christianity," he wrote to a correspondent, "went right in the teeth of all that was good and bad in the Roman of the fourth century. Yet it succeeded; and I cannot account for its success by any ordinary cause." Gibbon, however, thought he *could* account for it; and he was a greater historian than Mr. Freeman. The fact is that Christianity triumphed in the fourth century, and not in the first, second, or third, simply because it got hold of the State power in the fourth century, and used it unscrupulously to promote its own interests and crush out all opposition.

Mr. Freeman thought the "preservation of the Jews as a separate people" to be "no small bit of evidence." Well, it *is* a bit of evidence. It proves the malignity of Christianity. Persecution has kept the Jews a separate people. As they are allowed the full rights of free citizenship, they gradually merge into the surrounding populations.

Mrs. Augustus Craven, whose Memoirs have been published by Mrs. Bishop, records her meeting with Mr. Gladstone. "We talked of everything," she says, "and it certainly was most interesting. One thing he said with an energy which added to the feeling he expressed, that the growth of infidelity was the one evil to be resisted before all others, and that whoever served the cause of Faith and Christianity was doing the greatest of all the deeds to be done. In comparison with that, nothing whatever signifies much in this world." Mr. Gladstone is right, from his point of view. Christianity, if true, is the only thing of any real importance; and, if it be false, it is the most noxious thing on this planet. Freethinkers should be encouraged by Mr. Gladstone's dread of "infidelity." It shows that they are on the right track in straightforward opposition to Christianity.

"God himself," says Professor William James, of Harvard University, "*may* draw vital strength and increase of very being from our fidelity." How incorrigible is the vanity of the human species!

Do we need a fresh revelation? asks the *British Weekly*. Of course it thinks not; but it would find it hard to explain why the Jews should have one rather than the English. Revelation, it is said, was given to explain difficulties; but the Bible only raises fresh ones. Surely a new revelation is required even to explain the old. No one will say we have too much light. If more is required, should it not be given?

We referred a few weeks ago to a village in Somerset where the school children are expected to say "Father" to the parson. The parson's lady, like others of her sex, is fond of appearing at school or church dressed smartly, and the other day she donned a brand-new toque, gaily decorated with flowers, etc. When she and the parson put in an appearance at the Sunday-school, one of the boys appeared amazingly well pleased at the lady's gay appearance, and called out: "Oh, father, there's a purty bonnet mother's got on." What followed is not stated.—*Christian Commonwealth.*

At Dorchester a lad named Harold Woolley, son of a clergyman living at Burtleston, was brought up in custody, charged with arson. It was alleged that Woolley wilfully set fire to a rick, the property of a farmer named Homer. The prisoner made a statement to the police virtually amounting to an admission of the offence. He was remanded on bail.

Dr. Pullman, a leading sky-pilot at Bridgeport, Connecticut, made from the pulpit some aspersions on Mdle. Jane May, an actress. This lady decided to prosecute him for libel, and much interest will be exhibited in the suit from the fact that Colonel Ingersoll has undertaken to conduct the lady's case.

The Rev. E. Belanovitch, of the Russian Church, New York, called Mrs. McGahan "a literary prostitute." She is seeing if the law will award damages against the man of God.

It is well to see what others think of us. Here is what the New York *Sun* has to say of the English universities: "Oxford and Cambridge have been endowed with the incongruous privilege of sending representatives to Parliament. This has involved them in party politics, while their close connection with the Established Church has hitherto made them handmaids of Anglican ascendancy and battle-fields of ecclesiastical strife. American universities happily are free from such influences, and are at liberty to serve the

Republic impartially at once by prompting a higher treatment of political subjects, and by instilling a regard for principle such as may elevate the tone of public life. This there seems to be little doubt that they are doing."

Dean Hole is a very genial sky-pilot, who has done something to loosen the shackles of Sabbatarianism; but in his *Little Tour in America* he shows that orthodoxy has left its taint, for with amusing severity he remarks that "Harvard has not been faithful to her original dedication, *Christo et Ecclesie*. It has, on the contrary, been desecrated by the heresy most repulsive to the Christian faith, by that subtle form of Antichrist, the foe who pretends to be a friend—Unitarianism." Well, Oxford and Cambridge were once dedicated to Christ and the Church, but the old tests have had to be removed.

Here is the refrain of a sweet hymn that is good enough for evangelical street itinerants just now:—

It's a good old thing, religion;
It's good enough for me;
'Twas good enough for Peter
When he walked upon the sea;
'Twas good enough for Daniel
When in the lion's den;
And surely it is good enough
For common working men.

Somebody wrote—

There was an old preacher of Hull,
Who had nothing at all in his skull;
His flock came before him
And said, Cockolorum,
Your sermons are awfully dull.

Well, could there be anything more dull than the average sermon? Was not the pulpit invented, or, rather, taken over by the Christians and baptised, for the express purpose of keeping sleepers asleep, or sending those awake into the land of dreams? And did ever invention half so well succeed as the pulpit in these respects?—*Liberator*.

In Westchester, U.S.A., a Christian parson, the Rev. J. Pearce, conducts, and is superintendent of, a home for destitute children. On the building is inscribed, "Suffer little children," and Mr. Pearce sees to it that the children do suffer. The *New York World* says that Dickens's picture of the treatment of children by Wackford Squeers and Bumble pales before the facts regarding this man of God and his Christian "home." One child was chained, shackled, and beaten, wearing his chains by day and night. He broke the shackle from one leg, and dragged the chain by the other leg for ten miles, and into Connecticut. He, like another runaway girl, begged on his knees not to be sent again to this "home."

Rev. Henry Sandwith, a Yorkshire clergyman, has committed suicide at Upton Grey Lodge, near Basingstoke, where he was staying at the time.

Though Crosby, the Baptist Church Mission pastor of Battersea, and now of Langham, swore in the witness-box that he did not commit adultery with Mrs. Cantello, the jury believed that he did, and the judge pronounced a decree *nisi*, with costs, against the co-respondent Crosby, who had advised the petitioner to marry the lady. All were members of the same church, and the petitioner stated that Crosby called to his God, time after time, denying that there was ever anything improper in his conduct with the respondent. As he had a great respect for his pastor, he believed him. Miss Waller, who gave evidence against the man of God, admitted that she was turned out of the church because she would insist on telling the truth, and because she would not contribute to the Pastor's Sustenance Fund.

"Nemo" writes to the *Glasgow Herald* on the Gifford Lectures, citing the broad basis of Lord Gifford's will, which expressly declares that the lecturers may be of any or "of no religion, or they may be so-called Sceptics, or Agnostics or Freethinkers, provided only that the patrons will use diligence to secure that they be able, reverent men, true thinkers, the sincere lovers of, and earnest inquirers after, truth." The lectures only were to deal with Natural Religion, but Dr. Caird has been bringing in the Incarnation. "Nemo" asks: "Can any reasonable man imagine that Lord Gifford ever intended these lectures to be delivered in a sandwiched form as part of a Christian Church service? I think that in this respect also Lord Gifford's wishes have not been sufficiently taken into account."

How they love one another! Here is the way in which the *Catholic News* speaks of Protestant missions: "That most pernicious of all pernicious sects, the Protestant Bible Society, is again at its murderous work. Its false prophets are galvanised into temporary activity, and this time it is the 'benighted' Catholics of Spanish America who are to have the peace of their homes invaded and the sanctity of

their religion vilified by psalm-singing twaddlers, gospel tramps, and ignorant hirelings, who are about as competent to explain the word of God as a Hottentot is to lecture on bimetallism."

After some more strong language on "these self-constituted apostles," who live on "addle-pated dupes," the *Catholic News* says: "The priests and people of Spanish America will not remain passive while the slimy serpent of Heresy endeavors to imprint its poisonous fangs in the souls of their little ones. If the Venezuelans are ignorant of anything, it is of the use of tar and feathers, a judicious application of which would be sufficient to keep the brawling ranters of the Bible Society at a safe distance from their shores." Some people fancy that the Christian religion is all treacle. The *Catholic News* gives us a glimpse of its real composition, as seen in history.

The missionary societies and the missionaries are anything but Malthusian in principle. In India, China, and Madagascar the humble pioneers of the blessed Gospel are allowed a house and £300 a year, extra pay for a horse and trap, £14 per year for every child, and £12 per year for its education. The missionaries are notoriously prolific, and their families are no small item in the expense.

The Rev. W. Bayard Hale denounces in the *Forum* modern religious methods of drawing in the cash at church bazaars, fancy fairs, and strawberry sociables. In one case he mentions a female negro minstrel show, the black-faced merry-makers indulging in jokes too profane for the pages of the *Forum*.

Mr. Hale says: "I charge, then, that, besides its hundred other sins, the division of the Church has desecrated holy places and holy days; has assaulted all reverence; has given thousands who might have been won to the higher life an utterly ignoble conception of religion; has reduced Christian congregations to the level of fakirs and poor actors; has turned clergy into scrambling mountebanks; and has dishonored Christian womanhood."

Providence Journal, writing on Mr. Hale's article, says: "If sinners cannot be turned from the error of their ways by the simple preaching of the Gospel, perhaps it is better to leave the responsibility to their Creator than to degrade all religion by using skirt-dances and comic operas as instruments of salvation."

According to the *Boston Transcript*, the commercial enterprise of most of the religious papers is quite remarkable, and the secular appearance of their advertisements is noticeable. But the climax of this sort of thing seems to be capped by a letter seen recently. It was addressed to a business man by the manager of a religious weekly, and it solicited an advertisement on the ground that the paper "not only had a very large circulation, but a very credulous class of readers." We should say our own religious papers could offer the same inducement, and the patent medicine dealers seem to know it.

The other Sunday a lady called at one of the City churches after the afternoon service was over, and asked the officer if he had found an umbrella. The church officer had, and he promptly brought it forth for inspection, and the young lady as promptly claimed it. On the following morning, when the rightful owner put in an appearance, and innocently asked for her umbrella, the beadle naturally received a shock, and tossed some picturesque language around. It now turns out that the enterprising young lady makes a good thing out of this latest religious work.—*Glasgow Herald*.

After reprinting from the *Freethinker* our account of the late Victor Lennstrand, the *Liberator*, of Melbourne, says: "It seems such a pity that useful, heroic men should die in the very prime of life, while so many useless drones, priests, parsons, capitalists, pensioners, and vermin of all sorts, live on to old age. If there were any good and wise God about, things would be managed, I won't say better, but somewhat rationally. If such a God can be found, I for one will vote for him to be ruler of the universe, or as much of it as he can well manage. But the idea of setting up old Jehovah, a mere Jewish tribal God, to rule even this world, not to mention the universe, was the maddest thing this mad world ever did. Of course, they took the old balloon and blew it up with gas and faith; and this promised to succeed for a time. But then the texture wouldn't stand the strain, and it 'bust'; and there was an end of Jah and Co. Ever since the Jews and Christians have had to put up with the ghost or the bare name of their ancient absurdity; and they wonder the said absurdity doesn't rule the world better!"

Hindus and Buddhists are still disputing about the possession of Budh-Gaya in Bengal, the sacred temple erected on the spot where Gautama is said to have attained

Buddhahood. The disputes there last year led to legal proceedings, which have simply left the matter *in statu quo*. The Buddhists have a moral claim to the place, and the Hindus should be ready to sell whatever legal claims they have to the custody of the shrine.

The Protestants of Australia are in arms because Cardinal Moran was given precedence, at a reception by Viscount Hampden, over the Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, Dr. Saunarez Smith. The incident shows the pushing character of Catholicism, and that the powers that be do not much care which is to the front.

Christ has had his left leg amputated—at least, Joseph Mayer, the Christ of the Passion Play at Oberammergau, who goes by the name of his impersonation, had his leg crushed while placing a heavy tree-trunk on a waggon. He was, like Jesus, a carpenter.

Ministers of the Gospel are so ready in calling for the law that they evince a lack of faith in the power of their own preaching. Here is the Presbyterian Church of England issuing a Pastoral Letter on "Gambling." Presbyterians are urged to use their influence to have the laws against gambling enforced, to support the movement for prohibiting the use of the post-office, the telegraph, and the press "for spreading the infection." Where does the wonderful influence of religion come in? It does not even prevent raffles at church bazaars.

Gambling, like many other vices, was once under the direct sanction of religion, which taught that everything was in the hand of God, who always favored his own. To this day they raffle for Bibles on the altar at St. Ives. In Bible times they drew lots, even to determine who should be the twelfth apostle. Proverbs xvi. 33 says: "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."

The American Sunday Observance League prosecuted Walter Wilmot, and others of the Chicago base-ball team, for breaking the Sabbath by playing on a certain Sunday. The jury returned a verdict declaring that Wilmot did not break the Sabbath. As a consequence, Sunday base-ball will be in force more than ever during the coming season, and the Sunday Observance League may, by paying, look on from the grand stand.

The Rev. T. Wolstencroft, rector of Moston, has a dispute with his parishioners owing to his dismissal of the Sunday-school superintendent and closing the school. Mr. Wolstencroft is eighty-two years of age, and hangs on to his living, but has an afternoon instead of an evening service. As a consequence, his congregation, exclusive of his own family, is said to consist of one person.

The authorities of Milan are wisely desirous of preserving lunatics in asylums from the religious ministrations of nuns, whose work is often in a contrary direction to that of the physicians. The Catholic journals regard this as persecution.

In the *Animals' Friend* for February Mr. H. S. Salt, author of *Animals' Rights*, has a slashing reply to the defence of "blood sports" by Bishop Bagshawe, on the ground that "the suffering they inflict resembles the suffering universally inflicted on one another by animals since God caused all creation to 'travail and groan' because of the sin of man." Mr. Salt says: "Consider the sequence of the argument—so fearfully and wonderfully made that the thinking mind stands aghast at it. Man sins. Therefore God causes all creation to 'travail and groan.' Therefore the animals prey on one another. Therefore it is right for man to inflict unnecessary suffering on the animals. That is to say, it is right for man to kill for sport, because the animals kill for sustenance; and the 'travail of creation,' which was due in the first instance to man's own sin, now justifies this further infliction of pain on the innocent animals! Was there ever such a 'vicious circle' of reasoning as this, in which man is made out to be morally inferior to the animals, and God scarcely better than man; and this by a writer who has just said that, 'as God is loving and merciful to all his creatures, we must be so always, not for their rights, but for the love of their Maker!'"

The Aborigines of North Siberia, according to the *Quarterly Review*, excel Christians in that first element of commerce, common honesty. The merchants of Mobolok, returning from their annual excursion to the North, leave unprotected what remains of their provisions for the following year. Should a Samoyese take a portion for his use, he leaves his I O U, a duplicate stick, to show that he is a debtor, and in the fishing season he comes to his creditor and discharges his obligations. There is thus, when people are all honest, little need for precious metals, and no apprehension of a

drain of gold. Eighteen hundred years of Christianity have not improved common truth, because faith has been insisted on, irrespective of works.

Another example of heathenism is given in the Christmas number of the *Auckland Weekly News*, which depicts a real incident of the Maori war, in which one of the New Zealand "savages" brought, at the risk of his own life, water for his enemy, Colonel Booth, of the 43rd regiment, who lay wounded on the field of battle.

Cardinal Vaughan lays down the monstrous assumption that every English parent has a right to have his children taught, at the public expense, the religious faith in which he believes. As for the unbelievers, let them build schools for themselves. Some day this teaching may be retorted on Vaughan's Church.

When it was announced in the London School Board, the other day, that sixty new schools were to be built, Mr. Riley burst out with shrieks of "Shame!" It is all very well to say that Mr. Riley is not intellectually responsible for his acts and words. Do not let us forget what Sydney Smith said about the value of a "foolometer." Mr. Riley blurts out the hatred of education which less candid fanatics keep to themselves.—*Daily News*.

Professor Hall has been reading a paper before the Victoria Institute on the location of Mount Sinai. In opposition to Sayce, he contends that the traditional Jebel Musa is the veritable Sinai. All that is certain is, that Jahveh has long given up that locality.

In the current number of the *Historical Review* is given an account of an Armenian visit to Jerusalem in the seventh century. The Armenian visitor says Bethlehem is 220 parasangs from Jerusalem towards the west. It is now 6 Roman miles nearly due south, and seems to have miraculously changed its site since the seventh century.

The *Presbyterian Review* says there is a gate on the eastern wall of Jerusalem supposed to have been the "Beautiful Gate" of the Temple, and which the Turks are said to have hidden with a wall. If this gate still exists, how about the prediction that "not one stone should be left on another"? What will not people swallow who firmly believe in the Trinity?

During the celebration of Mass in a church near Angers, last Sunday, a portion of the roof fell in. The whole congregation was seized with panic. Not one wanted to be "for ever with the Lord," and in the stampede four were killed and some fifty injured. Religion hardly gives more confidence than common sense.

There is another candidate for heaven. The negro preacher, Jacob S. Johnson, of Somerville, N.J., who murdered Annie Rogers, a mulatto girl of Newark, has been sentenced to be hanged on March 11.

In the State of New York they have fined a blacksmith, named Apfelbaum, five dollars for shoeing a horse on Sunday. The plea of necessity or mercy was of no avail against Sabbatarianism.

The London Unitarians are having a "forward movement" by the simultaneous delivery of a number of lectures on "Protestant Principles." These principles have the defect of looseness—some interpreting them as meaning subordination in all things to the Bible, others as implying the exercise of private judgment on all things. If Unitarians would frankly tell the people to follow their judgment, even though opposed to the Bible, they might have a better chance of a forward movement among the masses.

The Rev. C. H. Wainwright, of the British and Foreign Bible Society, says that he had never yet heard of a single case where a person had been made an infidel through reading the Bible. Mr. Wainwright's experience differs from our own. We have heard of many such cases. Like Mr. Wainwright, we recommend people to read the old collection of books, but we also recommend them to think over the contents for themselves.

The *odium theologicum* has, of course, turned up at the Montrose Burgh election. The Rev. A. Douglas, preaching at the Abbey Church, Arbroath, on Sunday, on "The Folly of Infidelity," said that Mr. Morley was a man whose mission was to transplant, if he could, into this country those principles of French Atheism enunciated by Voltaire, Diderot, and Rousseau. The doughty Douglas evidently does not know that the first and last named were Theists.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, February 9, Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street, Glasgow.—11, "The Curse of Creeds"; 2.30, "How and Why was Jesus Born?" 6.30, "What has Become of the Devil?"

Monday, February 10, Dunoon.

Tuesday, February 11, Tannahill Hall, Mars-street, Paisley, at 8, "A Search for the Soul."

Wednesday, February 12, Greenock, at 8, "Why I Reject Christianity."

Thursday, February 13, Lesser Town Hall, Motherwell, at 8, "Can We Follow Jesus?"

Friday, February 14, Kilmarnock.

February 16, Hull; 18, Memorial Hall; 23, Camberwell.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—February 9, Camberwell; 11, Wellington Hall, Islington; 16, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road, London; 23, Manchester. March 1, Camberwell; 15, Leicester; 16 and 17, debate with the Rev. James Hyde at Derby.—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.

J. G. HUNT.—Colonel Ingersoll's address is not Washington, but New York. Direct your letter to Colonel R. G. Ingersoll, Fifth Avenue, New York.

E. G. TAYLOR.—Thanks. But nothing turned upon it in the hearing of the petition.

R. GIBBON.—Gainsboro' shall not be forgotten.

H. C. S.—You are wrong as to the date.

ATHEIST (Glasgow).—Thanks for the *Herald*. You will see that we have written on the Gifford Lectures.

ILLITERATE.—If you ask our opinion on any particular point, you shall have it; but we do not feel called on to take up any book and mention all its errors. All books dealing with matters of conjecture have some errors.

E. SMEDLEY.—(1) Statistics do not confirm the view that those places are most moral where Sabbatarianism reigns. (2) The Puritans of Massachusetts are shown by Adams, in his History, to have been a most intolerant, bigoted set. (3) There are still in existence laws against Sunday labor and Sunday meetings for discussion, and prosecutions have been carried on by the Lord's Day Observance Society. (4) We have heard of, but do not know, the person named.

J. HOOPER.—In our next. Delayed in consequence of Mr. Foote's absence from London.

MANY correspondents must wait for answers till the editor returns home.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Nya Sanningar—Post—Echo—Humanity—Newton Heath Reporter—Chicago Tribune—Animals' Friend—Freidenker—Two Worlds—Glasgow Herald—Truth Seeker—Boston Investigator—Isle of Man Times—Progressive Thinker—East End News—Sun—De Dageraad—New York Public Opinion—Worker's Friend—Blackpool Gazette—Southern Echo.

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

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

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

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, 28 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.

How to Help Us.

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

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE had capital audiences at Liverpool on Sunday. Both the morning and afternoon meetings were exceptionally good, and the hall was crowded in the evening. Special appeals were made on each occasion for new members and increased support to the Branch. Liverpool is a difficult field for Freethought propaganda, and it is to be hoped that all the local Freethinkers will rally round the old standard. There are some very earnest and capable workers on the Branch committee, but they require assistance from the rank and file. Readers of the *Freethinker* in Liverpool are earnestly invited to become members of the Branch, if they are not already enrolled. Those who hesitate to join, for personal reasons, might at least give a little financial aid, and send it promptly to Mr. Roberts, the secretary, 99 Saxony-road.

Mr. Foote delivers three lectures to-day (February 9) for the Glasgow Branch. During the week he will be delivering free lectures in south-west Scotland, at places that are being cultivated through his lecture scheme. On the following Sunday he delivers three lectures at Hull on his way home from Scotland.

Parsons read the "Lesson for the Day" before their sermons, and Mr. Foote has taken to reading a poem before his Sunday evening lecture. At Liverpool he read Tennyson's "Rizpah," which the audience highly appreciated. He will read this poem again before his evening lecture at Glasgow.

The London Freethinkers' Annual Dinner was held at the Holborn Restaurant on Wednesday, January 29, and was a most successful function. A large company—larger, indeed, than was expected—did justice to an excellent repast. Mr. Foote was in the chair, and was supported by Messrs. Watts, Moss, Heaford, and Snell. Mr. Daniel Baker, of Birmingham, who was present, received an enthusiastic greeting when he rose, in response to the chairman's invitation, to say a few words on behalf of the Midlands. Mr. George Anderson, who could not be present in person, was there in spirit; and the chairman conveyed his good wishes to the assembly, with special references to the toast of "The Memory of Charles Bradlaugh," with whom Mr. Anderson was for many years on terms of intimate and steadfast friendship. In addition to the speeches by the gentlemen already mentioned, and a bright one by Miss Vance, there were songs by Miss Williams, Miss Stafford, and Mr. Cheeseman, and a scene from *Lady Windermere's Fan* by Miss Brown and Miss May. The assembly broke up before twelve with "Auld Lang Syne."

Mr. George Anderson, 35a Great George-street, Westminster, S.W., draws our attention to an error in our last week's announcement of the pamphlets he is endeavoring to circulate. This is how the matter really stands. Mr. Anderson will send 10 copies of Winwood Reade's *What Christians Believe* post free for 1s. 8d., and 6 copies of Charles Watts's *Claims of Christianity* post free for 1s. 6d. The former is published at 3d., the latter at 6d. Mr. Forder, on Mr. Anderson's instructions, will supply applicants at the same rate—of course, not for sale, but for distribution.

The Athenæum, in Tottenham-court-road, was successfully opened for Sunday evening lectures last Sunday, by Mr. Charles Watts. There was a capital audience, many strangers being present; and everybody evidently enjoyed the lecture, judging from the repeated applause. Three opponents presented themselves, and an interesting debate took place. We are glad to learn that Mr. Watts was in good form. Mr. Harry Brown presided. As the hall is otherwise engaged for to-day, February 9, our meetings will not be resumed until next Sunday, February 16, when Mr. Watts will again lecture.

Mr. Watts lectures this evening (Sunday, February 9) at the Secular Hall, New Church-road, Camberwell, taking for his subject "Theology Tested at the Bar of History." We hope our London friends will muster in good force on this occasion.

The Finsbury Park Branch starts the new year with about £2 in hand, after paying £4 to the Treasurer in settlement of indebtedness to him. This is very satisfactory when it is remembered that Branch lost over £40 in connection with the Rock-street Hall, which had to be closed owing to notice from the District Surveyor that extensive alterations would have to be carried out. Religious meetings had been held in this hall without let or hindrance for some time previous to the Branch tenancy. There is an adjourned meeting next Sunday at the Bradlaugh Club at 4 o'clock, when the officers will be elected, and other important business transacted.

The Annual Ball of the Camberwell Branch takes place at

the Hall, 61 New Church-road, on Tuesday, February 11, and lasts from 8.30 until 2 a.m., so dancers will have a lengthy period of enjoyment. Though the price is moderate (one shilling), these dances are always very select.

On Sunday night the ordinary half-yearly General Meeting of the Westminster Branch was held. A very satisfactory balance-sheet and report were adopted. Messrs. Tanner, Burrell, Wheeler, and Stace were respectively elected Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and M.C., and most of the other officers were re-elected. At the conclusion of the ordinary business an artistically-designed Memorial Grave Board, in memory of the late greatly-respected member, Sergeant R. Bell, was unveiled. It will be placed over the grave at Brompton Cemetery, and will take the place of the destroyed memorial wreath. The Secretary gave a few reminiscences of the deceased. The execution of the memorial had been carried out by Mr. E. Stace.

The Finsbury Branch of the National Secular Society has for many years carried on open-air work during the summer on Clerkenwell Green, and it will continue to do so, in spite of the opposition of a clique of the old Hall of Science Club malcontents, who never pardoned the N.S.S. Executive for effectively protesting against the Club letting the hall for objectionable "boxing contests." It will be remembered that the Club persisted in this course, in spite of the protests of the Executive and the Board of Directors, and also in spite of warnings from Mr. Foote, who had received a hint as to the real nature of these performances. But the advertisement of the second entertainment was of such a character as to justify Mr. Foote's warnings, and the Club had to shut the doors on the crew who ought never to have been allowed to enter the place. The active spirits in this outrage on decency got into the Finsbury Branch, for other reasons than the welfare of the Branch itself. For some time they played a factious part through their delegate on the Executive, and through ridiculous correspondence; but, finding that they could make no impression in that way, they decided to commit *felo de se*. They determined to work independently of the N.S.S., which is exactly what the N.S.S. wishes them to do. But it is a delusion on their part to suppose that they have broken up the Branch. A Branch of the N.S.S. cannot be wound up against the wish of the Executive. The Finsbury Branch is just as it was, except for the absence of the would-be wreckers, whose absence is far preferable to their company. There are enough loyal members remaining to carry on the work: and these are the old members, the members who used to do the work before the malcontents joined the Branch (as the nearest to the Hall of Science) for the purpose of mischief. The Finsbury Branch will have a lecture-stand on Clerkenwell Green this summer, as usual, from which the N.S.S. lecturers will speak as they have spoken before. Adequate support will be given to the Branch in every way, and the station will be properly maintained. If the factious clique aforesaid like to go on the Green and air their eloquence, of course they are free to do so, as the place is open to all comers. We leave them, having explained them, to the common law of gravitation.

Five new Branches of the N.S.S. have just been formed at Paisley, Heckmondwike, Leeds, Bingley, and Newark. These are the first fruits of Mr. Foote's lecture scheme. Several more Branches will probably be formed before the Conference.

At the last meeting of the National Secular Society's Executive, on Thursday, January 30, it was decided to send out the usual notices with regard to the next Conference, which takes place on Whit-Sunday. As there has been some misunderstanding on previous occasions, it may be well to emphasise the fact that Branches which invite the Conference to assemble in their towns must comply with the conditions, or their invitation will not be placed upon the final voting paper. These conditions are: (1) A suitable hall for the Conference, morning and afternoon; (2) a suitable hall for the public meeting in the evening; (3) reasonable hotel accommodation for delegates and visitors; (4) the local expenses of the Conference hall to be borne by the Branch.

It is ten years since a Conference was held in Scotland, and it has been hinted to us that England ought not to monopolise these gatherings. For our part, we should not be sorry if Scotland were favored this year. Of course the only place for the Conference in Scotland is Glasgow. That is the seat of the strongest Branch, and there is no difficulty (as in Edinburgh) in obtaining suitable halls.

The Freethinkers' Children's Party will take place early in March. All who wish to contribute to the enjoyment of the youngsters should send to Miss Vance as soon as possible. She will be happy to supply friends with collecting cards.

In view of the acknowledged need of reform in our Criminal Law and prison system, the Humanitarian League

is starting a special department to deal with that subject. The organising secretary and lecturer is Mrs. C. Mallet, to whom communications should be addressed, at 132 Cromwell-road, London, S.W. Mrs. Mallet is prepared to give a lantern lecture on the prison system before any club or institute that may desire it.

Humanity, the organ of the Humanitarian League, under the heading of "The Shadow of the Sword," gives the notice which appeared in the *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, and says: "When we published Mr. Foote's pamphlet a few weeks ago, we little foresaw what a new and terrible significance its title would receive from the war-scare which has overclouded Europe and America with the shadow of the darkest calamity that the mind of man can conceive."

Edgar Fawcett, the poet and novelist, in writing about Ingersoll in *The Conservator*, resents the disposition of some persons to emphasise the Colonel's gifts as an orator. He thinks that more attention ought to be paid to the substance of Ingersoll's teaching. Mr. Fawcett finds the "essence of wisdom and mental power" in Ingersoll's matter, and he is delighted and convinced by it.

William Archer has, in the February *Fortnightly Review*, an article on "George Henry Lewes and the Stage," which will interest all admirers of the Freethinking philosopher.

In the *Popular Science Monthly* for January, Professor Angelo Heilprin gives "A Student's Recollections of Huxley," whom he describes as an excellent draughtsman, believing only in drawing from the actual object. Mrs. Thomas Collier, *née* Huxley, ranks high as an artist. Professor Heilprin says, too, that, though an excellent public speaker, Huxley suffered from nervousness whenever he had to speak in public. A good story is told of a bishop who used many magazine pages and many columns of the daily press to decry "the undernurse of Darwinism." Finding Huxley took no notice, he wrote to him, calling his attention to the articles, and asking advice as to how to improve his own scientific studies. Professor Huxley's full and laconic answer was: "Take a cockroach and dissect it." The bishop asked no more.

Huxley, so Professor Heilprin assures us, thought very highly of the German Freethinker, Karl Vogt, whom "he regarded as a tower of strength, and, in a certain sense, a genius." Vogt, even more than Huxley, was fearlessly outspoken in his utterances, living in voluntary exile at Geneva to preserve the integrity of his intellectual conscience.

Mr. J. W. Spencer computes the age of the Niagara Falls at 31,000 years. The river, he holds, is another thousand years older.

An endowment by the Hon. Henry W. Sage established in Cornell University, under Professor A. D. White, a school of philosophy "devoted to the free and unhampered quest and propagation of truth in psychology, ethics, metaphysics, and the history and philosophy of religion." Six scholarships and three fellowships are open to graduates of Cornell and other universities. A psychological laboratory is attached to the institution; a philosophical class has been formed; and a periodical—the *Philosophical Review*—is published under the editorial direction of two of the professors.

The Rev. R. L. Nail, of Hooversville, Pennsylvania, for years a minister in the Campbellite Church, has given up his ministry and religion and become "an infidel." The *Blue Grass Blade*, the editor of which contributed to his conversion, gives prominence to a letter in which Mr. Nail assigns his reasons.

The Paine Exhibition, held at the Bradlaugh Institute, Ball's Pond, was fairly attended on each night. Although the exhibits were not quite as numerous as those at South Place, they were varied and interesting. Among many items which were not at the former exhibition may be mentioned a striking oil painting of Paine by Dalton; a portrait of Carlile lithographed by his son; and the table which Carlile had with him during his imprisonments. This last relic is, we believe, now the property of Mr. George Anderson.

The *Christian Commonwealth* of January 30 reports an interview with Mr. G. J. Holyoake. It begins by saying: "Mr. Holyoake has a distinguished record of public service. As no attempt will here be made to follow his career in detail, it is desired to make this acknowledgment at the outset. He is universally respected; for, happily, it is possible to recognise his zealous labors on behalf of humanity and his high moral principle, without subscribing to his opinions." A brief sketch of Mr. Holyoake's life is given, and the friendly talk seems to have aimed at minimising difference.

LECTURING NOTES.

ELEVEN lectures in eight days, delivered in seven different towns, is not a bad record. On Saturday, January 18, I left St. Pancras Station for Glasgow, where I lectured three times on the following day. My audiences were large and exceedingly enthusiastic; but, unfortunately, there was no debate at any of the meetings—only a few questions were submitted. It is a significant fact that discussions at my lectures have become the exception, not the rule. The “defenders of the faith” have given up their attempt at “defence” as hopeless, which is not surprising, considering the results that have followed previous controversies. The truth is manifest that the claims of Christianity cannot be successfully maintained in an intellectual combat. During thirty-five years of my public labors I have met all the leading Christian exponents in discussion, and it would be to me a pleasure once more to engage in a set debate with an able opponent upon the relative merits of Christianity and Secularism; but, alas! there is no prospect of finding such an antagonist.

The greater part of my time and work, during my recent tour, was devoted to Scotland, where, it is pleasing to know, Secular principles are rapidly extending. Doubtless this is due, in a large measure, to the efforts of the Glasgow friends, who are persistent in their endeavors to extend Freethought propaganda. Mr. Gilmour is a most able and consistent exponent of Secularism, and his administrative ability is as valuable to the “good old cause” as are his platform efforts. He has the advantage of the co-operation of such staunch toilers as Mr. Forrester, Mr. Black, and a host of brave and earnest young men, who are devoted to the task of fighting the enemy and defending the citadels of Freethought.

On January 20, 23, and 24 I broke new ground in Kilmarnock, Motherwell, and Cambuslang. On the 21st I lectured in Paisley. Mr. Gilmour made all the arrangements for these meetings, and, with other Glasgow friends, accompanied me, every evening, to the different places. These week-night lectures were given under Mr. Foote's Lecturing Scheme, and the good results cannot be over-estimated. Hundreds of people heard of the Gospel of Freethought for the first time, and at all the meetings the greatest attention was manifested, without the slightest interruption from the Christian portions of the audiences. Questions were put, and many inquiries were made to me privately as to the nature of our movement, and how Secular literature could be obtained. This was a gratifying feature of my tour, as was also the presence of so many ladies and young men at most of the meetings. No pains should be spared to enlist into our ranks our wives, sisters, daughters, and sons. They impart an interest and energy to our movement that are absolutely necessary to its success.

The Paisley Branch of the N.S.S., which was formed at my previous visit, has considerably increased its membership. Other Branches are in course of formation at the places where I recently lectured.

On Sunday, January 26, I lectured at Edinburgh, where I found such veterans as Mr. Dewar and Mr. Brown as active as ever. Unfortunately, a gloom prevailed among the members in consequence of the death—which took place on the previous day—of Miss Brown, the daughter of the President of the Society. The deceased lady had been for years a pronounced Secularist, and, through a long and painful illness, she exhibited an amount of patience and fortitude which fidelity to principle alone can command. At her special request, no religious ceremony was observed at her funeral, the Secular Service taking its place. Much sympathy was expressed for Mr. Brown by my audiences on the Sunday. Despite his bereavement, he presided at both lectures.

On Monday, January 27, I lectured at Stockton-on-Tees, under Mr. Foote's scheme, to a crowded audience; and on the following day I returned to London, to be in time to attend the Annual Dinner of the N.S.S. It was a most successful gathering, and everybody was delighted. Joy and happiness illumined the countenances of all present.

CHARLES WATTS.

“An off-tolled tale.”—The complaint about the church-bell-ringing nuisance.

THE CHRISTIANS.

AN IMPRESSION.

- Who ransack the whole world for gold—
Their root of evil—uncontrolled?
The Christians!
- Who lend their gold to “Heathen” thrones,
Taking great usury for their loans?
The Christians!
- Who build great fleets for murderous war,
Making *vae victis* their chief law?
The Christians!
- Whose armies increase year by year?
Who bully all they do not fear?
The Christians!
- Who lip of peace, yet live in strife,
Playing the hypocrite all their life?
The Christians!
- Who scorn the God they made above,
Giving to Satan their true love?
The Christians!
- Who drink, and whore, and go to war,
Add field to field, oppress the poor?
The Christians!
- Who burnt each other at the stake,
Except when fear did curb their hate?
The Christians!
- Who, when they fear to burn each other,
Rob, cheat, and kill their pagan brother?
The Christians!
- Who cant of love, yet live in hate,
Betraying their God's early state?
The Christians!
- Who send their priests to tame the savage,
And then his lands and chattels ravage?
The Christians!
- Who, in the race for cent. per cent.,
Impoverish each continent?
The Christians!
- With rotting slums whose cities reek?
In palaces who pleasures seek?
The Christians!
- Who is it hate with hate so fell
That each his brother damns to hell?
The Christians!
- Who is it that—so “meek and mild”—
You scratch and find a savage wild?
The Christians!
- Who, whilst they of “forgiveness” boast,
Build gallows, jail, and whipping post?
The Christians!
- Who for two thousand years have sold
Their fellow men for slaves—for gold?
The Christians!
- Whose kings and priests, the “great and good,”
Have drenched the whole wide world with blood?
The Christians!
- Who teach that each should love the other,
Yet live by swindling one another?
The Christians!
- Whose rich oft die of constipation,
Whose poor of foodless inanition?
The Christians!
- Who made their Heaven, and made their Hell,
And then into the latter fell?
The Christians!
- Who have the whole black gamut run
Of sin and crime since A.D. ONE?
The Christians!
- For wars and murders, lust and hate,
Hypocrisy, and greed its mate;
Theft, lying, and false witness, too,
With modern sins added thereto;
Who a first place do clearly take?
The Christians!

DOGGERELIST.

BOOK CHAT.

JOHN KENDRICK BANGS has written an amusing book, which he has called *A House-Boat on the Styx* (Harper and Bros., New York). The humor of the work lies in the fact that the characters delineated are of every era in history, from Adam and Noah to P. T. Barnum and Artemus Ward. The janitor of the house-boat is Charon, the ferryman of the River Styx. Here is Mr. Bangs' theory of snakes, put in the mouth of Dr. Johnson: "The serpent was the tail. Look at most snakes to-day. What are they but unattached tails?" "They do look it," said Darwin, thoughtfully. "Why, it's clear as day," said Johnson. "As punishment for swinging by their tails in the forbidden tree, Adam and Eve lost their tails, and the tail itself was compelled to work for a living, and to do its own walking." "And the snakes of the present day?" queried Thackeray. "I believe to be the missing tails of men," said Johnson. "Somewhere in the world is a tail for every man and woman and child. Where one's tail is no one can say, but that it exists simultaneously with its owner I believe."

* * *

Mr. Percival Lowell, in his book on *Mars*, published at Boston, does not endorse the opinion of the *Sunday Companion*, which discovers that God has written his old name of Shaddai on the canals. He, however, thinks these lines evidence handicraft, with an intelligent mind behind it. Mr. Lowell says: "To talk of Martian beings is not to mean Martian men. Just as the probabilities point to the one, so do they point away from the other. Even on this earth man is of the nature of an accident. He is the survival of by no means the highest physical organism. He is not even a high form of mammal. Mind has been his making. For aught we can see, some lizard or batrachian might just as well have popped into his place early in the race, and been now the dominant creature of this earth.....Amid the surroundings that exist on Mars, surroundings so different from our own, we may be practically sure other organisms have been evolved of which we have no cognisance. What manner of beings they may be we lack the data even to conceive."

* * *

Collected Papers on Some Controverted Questions in Geology, by Professor Joseph Prestwich, deal with the antiquity of man in Western Europe. The author holds that man probably lived on the Thames and the Somme in pre-glacial times, a period he would put at only from 30,000 to 50,000 years ago. The discussion of the questions involved is able and satisfying.

* * *

A memoir of G. J. Romanes, edited by Mrs. Romanes, is on the point of publication. It is known that marriage made a considerable alteration in the once promising scientist, and perhaps we shall be allowed to see how it came about. It is announced that an important correspondence with Darwin will be included in the volume.

* * *

Anarchy and Moribund Society, a translation of the famous *La Société Mourante et l'Anarchie*, for which Jean Grave was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, is shortly to be published at the office of the *Torch*, 127 Ossulston-street, London, N.W. The price will be 3s., or in twelve parts at 3½d. each, post free.

* * *

The *Christian Commonwealth*, in a belated notice of Dr. Stark Munro's *Letters*, says: "The reader who runs through the fascinating pages of this book feels that the author probably wanted to air his own devout scepticism. If the opinions of 'Stark Munro' are not Dr. Conan Doyle's own, the book gives a vivid impression of the wrong kind. We feel in every chapter that the author is preaching at us very earnestly."

* * *

The *Daily News*, reviewing a new edition of Dr. A. R. Wallace's *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*, says: "Of Dr. Wallace's sincerity no one will entertain a doubt; but it is evident that he is far too confiding a man for a deceitful world."

* * *

Russian Politics is the title of a work designed to aid the cause of freedom, by Herbert M. Thompson, M.A., published by T. Fisher Unwin. The prospectus states that the author has been helped by the constant advice of Mr. Felix Volkovskiy, and it appears that a chapter is devoted to a description of the religions and religious prosecutions of Russia.

* * *

Cardinal Vaughan is a fairly wily ecclesiastic, but he shows a puerile tendency to whine over spilt milk. Purcell's *Life of Cardinal Manning* cannot be recalled, and putting it on the *Index* will only increase its circulation. Mr. Purcell, a good Catholic, showed from Manning's own letters the intriguing, ambitious, self-seeking character of the Cardinal. The picture is altogether too truthful for his successor, who

lets out that, having previously given Mr. Purcell unconditional access to the Cardinal's papers, his executors tried to prevent the publication of facts thus divulged in their true light. Cardinal Vaughan, finding that the real Manning, by his appointed biographer, demolishes the mythical Manning of the Catholic press writer, cries out that the publication of the book is "almost a crime."

* * *

Jesus Nassar: the Story of the Life of Jesus the Nazarene, by Peter von F. Mamreov, Anna F. Mamreov, and B. A. F. Mamreov (Sunrise Co., New York), is one of those many books which, like *Plutochristus*, *Hafed*, *Ben Hur*, and *The Unknown Life of Christ*, pretend to give a full, true, and particular account of the real life of the Christian idol. *Jesus Nassar* is a book of seven hundred pages, and goes into a lot of legendary detail, of which the following is a sample: "There was a dyer called Kirman who sometimes allowed Jesus Nassar to experiment with small quantities of dyes in his shop. 'Kirman,' said the noble boy one day, 'why don't you make some new colors for the cloth that you dye?' 'I use all the known dyes, and I don't think any other colors could be produced,' replied Kirman. 'Well, Kirman, see here,' said Jesus Nassar, getting out of his pockets where, boylike, he had kept what he intended as a surprise for the dyer. Kirman looked up from his work and was astonished: for Jesus Nassar held in his hands some strips of cloth of beautiful shades and color such as Kirman had never yet seen in any of the bazaars, where there was an almost bewildering variety. When he found that these were the results of the noble boy's own combinations and experiments, Kirman became anxious to learn, and Jesus Nassar quite as eagerly and gladly showed how he had succeeded in making the new dyes. Kirman succeeded so well that in a short time all the other dyers came to learn of him; and when he told them who had been his inspirer and teacher, the guild of dyers prayed permission to name Jesus Nassar their patron. Thus it came about that the Persians honor Jesus Nassar as their patron, and call a dye-house the 'Shop of Christ.'" We should fancy there is a beautiful allegory in this scripture. At any rate, Christ's followers, like the poets, according to Byron—

are such liars,

Their hands take all colors like the hands of dyers.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

THE Executive meeting took place on Thursday, January 30, at the Club Union Buildings, Clerkenwell-road, E.C.; the President in the chair. Present: Messrs. Charles Watts, J. M. Wheeler, W. Heaford, E. Bater, J. Potter, F. Wood, E. W. Quay, H. J. Stace, J. Wood, P. Sabine, A. F. Taylor, T. Gorniot, and E. M. Vance, secretary.

Minutes of previous meeting were read and confirmed. Cash statement received. Correspondence from certain members who had seceded from the Finsbury Branch was read, and it was resolved that the meeting pass to the next business.

The President reported that he had addressed a meeting of the loyal members of the Finsbury Branch, when new officers were elected, and arrangements made to carry on the outdoor work on Clerkenwell-green. He had also promised the Branch support from his Lecture Scheme Fund. The Executive adopted the report, and passed a resolution remitting all fees due up to the end of the financial year.

The success of the President's Lecture Scheme in the provinces is self-evident, seeing that the Executive granted permission for the formation of new Branches at Heckmondwike, Bingley, Todmorden, Leeds, and Newark.

No reply having been received from Mr. R. O. Smith, it was formally moved by Mr. Watts that his name be now removed from the Society's books. The President here intervened, and, after some discussion, the following resolution was drawn up and carried unanimously, and ordered to be sent to Mr. Smith: "That Mr. R. O. Smith be informed that his name will not be proposed by the Executive, at the Conference, for re-election as a Vice-President, and that he will not be allowed to renew his membership of the Society after the expiration of his current year's subscription."

A resolution was submitted from the Bolton Branch, asking the Executive to "issue a manifesto calling public attention to the inconsistency of the Nonconformist section in not contending for purely secular education in our Board schools, and thus put an end to the religious squabbling and difference of opinion existing upon the payment out of public funds of any monies to denominational schools," and further requesting that the same be forwarded to all Branches of this Society, and an endeavor made to secure its insertion in local papers. It was resolved to comply with this request.

The President reported a highly successful dinner at the Holborn Restaurant. The Secretary was instructed to send out the invitation circulars for the Conference, and the meeting closed.

E. M. VANCE, Assistant Secretary.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EVIDENCE: REAL AND IMAGINARY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I was much interested in Mr. Watts's article on this subject; but, in the cause of truth, I must venture, with your permission, to traverse some of his statements. He says, in regard to ghosts, that unbelievers never see them. Whether the term "unbeliever" applies to those who do not "believe in ghosts," or is used in the sense of disbelief in the doctrines of Christianity, is not clear; but I venture to say that there are on record many instances of persons who at one time would have stoutly denied the existence or power of return of ghosts, who have seen apparitions whom they certainly recognised beyond possibility of doubt. As an instance, I may refer to the account given by Lord Brougham of the appearance to him of the spirit of an old fellow student with whom he had made a promise that whichever passed first from earth should appear to the other to give proof of the continuity of life after the change called death. Many years afterwards, when Brougham had forgotten the solemn promise, and the existence of his friend (who had gone out to India while young) had faded from his memory, while enjoying a bath after an excursion he suddenly saw beside the bath the form of his old friend regarding him steadfastly. So alarmed was Brougham, he fainted; and, some years afterwards, he learnt that his friend had died about the same time he saw the apparition. Lord Brougham was not the kind of man to imagine he saw "spooks," and, as the whole circumstances connected with the compact made with his friend had completely faded from his recollection, "mental suggestion" will not avail as an explanation of the phenomenon.

In the late Robert Dale Owen's *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World* are many authenticated instances of ghosts appearing, and Owen was certainly not a sufferer from religious mania, or by predilection a believer in ghosts.

It is very easy for men to make assertions such as those quoted from Buchner and Burmeister, but the weight of evidence is dead against them, and I would like to ask Mr. Watts what he would think if a person with whom he was perfectly unacquainted were to describe to him forms of persons, friends, or relatives of Mr. Watts, whom the clairvoyant had never seen in earth life; if he were to give such accurate description of little traits or incidents as left no possible doubt of the identity of the forms described, and perhaps were to give a message relating to some matter unknown at the moment both to Mr. Watts and the clairvoyant, but afterwards verified by the former; what would be the opinion of Mr. Watts, then, as to the soul of a deceased individual continuing to exist? Would he agree with Buchner that the soul is dead, never to return?

These circumstances which I have supposed with regard to Mr. Watts have actually happened to myself, and I would like to know whether I should be reasonable in protesting, in the face of such evidence, that there is no continuity of life beyond this earth life? I should be just as blind a bigot as any production of a credulous and cruel Christianity.

Why should there not be a continuance of life under conditions differing from these? What an utter waste of time and effort to the individual who labors assiduously to store his mind—and benefit his fellows—with knowledge, if at the expiration of a few years he—and they—pass away for ever!

Is it not an unjustifiable inference to conclude that that which we don't happen personally to see does not exist? There are many persons color-blind, unable to distinguish musical sounds; may there not be, at the other end of the scale, so to speak, persons with perceptions of sight, hearing, and feeling abnormally developed? and should we be justified in denouncing them as impostors because their powers are greater than ours?

As a Spiritualist subscriber to your paper—which is sometimes somewhat severe upon "mejums"—I venture to ask for space for the insertion of this letter, so as to let the "other" side have a word.

A. W. ORR.

[I suggest that Mr. Orr reads once more, very carefully, the last paragraph but one in my article, "Evidence: Real and Imaginary." Therein I state my reasons for doubting the sufficiency of the "evidence" adduced in favor of the belief in ghosts. I applied the term "unbeliever" to those who do not believe in what are termed "apparitions." As to the cases of the alleged appearances of ghosts to which Mr. Orr refers, I give no opinion, as I was not present on those occasions. If our friend has had "evidence," that does not affect my position. For five years I studied what is called Spiritualism, and found no evidence whatever in favor of its pretensions. Of course, I do not dogmatically deny the existence of ghosts, for it would be illogical to deny that of which I have no knowledge. But I cannot believe in their

existence, inasmuch as the continuation of life after death is opposed to natural law as known by me. To put it briefly, I regard life as being necessary to consciousness, and material organisation as necessary to life. When that organisation is destroyed, experience teaches me that life ceases, and the conditions requisite for consciousness do not exist.—CHARLES WATTS.]

PROFANE JOKES.

They had just finished singing, "I'm Glad Salvation's Free," when the minister asked: "John, how much did you get on my salary to-day?" John—"\$100, sir." M.—"How much for the Elder?" J.—"\$30, sir." M.—"How much for foreign missions?" J.—"\$50, sir." M.—"And how much on our church debt?" "\$500, sir."

Deacon Sassafras (a Hardshell Baptist)—"I have just been reading about a man who was killed by lightning while playing base-ball on Sunday in Kentucky. There's a judgment for you!" Hiram Oateake—"I don't know about it's bein' a judgment; a church near by was struck and destroyed at the same time." Deacon Sassafras—"That doesn't cut any figure. It was a Presbyterian church."

A north countryman had been converted from his sins into the Salvation Army. He was known by his comrades as "Bandy Legs," from the fact that his legs were bowed and otherwise of a strange and ugly construction. "Wilt thou have a drink?" asked a companion of his sinful days. "Nay, lad," was the response; "I don't drink any more." "No? how's that?" the other asked. "I've joined the Salvationists." "Thou hast, hast thou?" "Ah, lad, I've been born again." "What!" shouted his friend; "with them legs?"

A conundrum current in the States is: "Why cannot Bostonians go to heaven?" The answer is: "Because they are so mighty proud of their birthplace that they never think of getting born again."

When Dublin Cathedral was reopened, after restoration at the expense of a Mr. Wise, the archbishop took for his text, "Go thou and do like Wise." Not to be outdone, a clergyman in his diocese, when opening a church built by a brewer, said that his text was to be, "He brews xxx."

Last Moments.

"Shall we send for a priest?" was asked of the dying Duke of Buckingham. "No," he replied; "these fellows eat their God. If you know anyone who eats the Devil, you can send for him."

"I must apologise, gentlemen, for being so unconscionably long in dying," said the urbane though licentious Charles II.

"Come one on each side," said l'Hopital to his priest and confessor. "Now I can die, like Jesus Christ, between two thieves."

"You shall receive a diadem on high," said the minister to J. B. Lear. "I don't want to die-a-dem bit," he replied.

Tim Turner, a Lincolnshire yokel, attended in his last moments by the vicar, observed: "Wut wi' feath, grease, an' sanctification, an' wut wi' the new machines, the new wumun, an' them old Bible yarns, I'm clean muddled, stoned, an' beten." So saying, he turned to the wall and expired.

What a Different Purpose.

On board a steamer a clergyman stepped up to a fellow passenger and began talking to him about the dangers of a sea voyage. "Has it ever occurred to you how near every living person stands to the gates of death?" "I am always thinking about it." "Should not the thought of eternity admonish us ever to keep ourselves in readiness? and ought we not so to live that we may depart hence in peace?" "That is exactly my idea. I am constantly preaching that doctrine, yet the infatuated people will neither hear nor take heed." "What, are you a brother minister? Judging from your dress, I should have thought—" "I am an agent for a life insurance company."

THE INFIDEL LED ALL THE REST.—Of the nineteen millionaires who have contributed \$61,000,000 for colleges and universities in the United States, it should always be remembered that Stephen Girard, when dollars were not as plentiful as now, gave \$8,000,000. And don't forget that one condition of his gift was that no clergyman shall be permitted to cross the threshold of that great college he founded.—*Progressive Thinker.*

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.

BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (86 Newington Green-road, Balls Pond, N.): 7.15, Dr. E. B. Aveling, "Darwin and his Teachings." Wednesday, at 8.30, R. Forder, "The Signs of the Zodiac—Lecture V., Taurus the Bull."

BATTERSEA SECULAR HALL (back of Battersea Park Station): 7.45, special entertainment by the St. Clair Combination Company for the benefit of the Branch.

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, Charles Watts, "Theology Tested at the Bar of History." Tuesday, 8.30 till 2, annual ball.

EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (78 Libra-road, Roman-road): 3, Sunday-school; 7, E. Williams, "Is Socialism a Religion?"

EAST LONDON BRANCH (Swaby's Coffee House, 103 Mile End-road): 8, C. James, "The Decay of Belief."

ISLINGTON (Wellington Hall, Almeida-street): Tuesday, at 8.30, C. Watts, "The Bible and Civilisation."

LAMBETH BRANCH (Liberal and Radical Club, 108 Westminster Bridge-road): Thursday, at 8, G. S. Combes will lecture.

PENTON HALL (81 Pentonville-road—Humanitarian Society): 7, Joachim Kaspar, "The Greek Orthodox Idolatry."

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Westminster Town Hall, Caxton-street): 11.15, Dr. Stanton Coit, "The Evolution of Religion."

WEST LONDON BRANCH ("Sun in Splendor," Portobello-road, Notting Hill Gate): Tuesday, at 8.30, business meeting.

WEST HAM SECULAR ETHICAL SOCIETY (61 West Ham-lane): 7, W. Banham, "Can We do Without Government?"

WOOD GREEN (Club and Institute, 4 Lawn-villas, Stewart-crescent, opposite Wood Green Church): 11, business meeting; 7.30, social for members and friends.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 12, F. Haslam will lecture.
HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30 and 3.30—lectures, weather permitting.

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM (Alexandra Hall, Hope-street): 7, G. Bayliffe, "Christianity and Socialism."

BRISTOL (Shepherds' Hall, Old Market-street): 7, "Gleams from the Devil's Pulpit."

DERBY (Pollicott's Dining Rooms, Market-place): 6.45, Mr. Whitney, "Philosophy of Secularism."

DUNOON: Monday, G. W. Foote will lecture.

GLASGOW (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 11.30, G. W. Foote, "The Curse of Creeds"; 2.30, "How and Why was Jesus Born?" 6.30, "What has Become of the Devil?" Musical recital before the evening lecture, and Mr. Foote will read Tennyson's "Rizpah." Tea and light refreshments.

GREENOCK: Wednesday, at 8, G. W. Foote, "Why I Reject Christianity."

HULL (Cobden Hall, No. 4 Room, Storey-street): 7, Mr. Ackroyd, "The New Learning, the New God, the New Conscience."

LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, musical and literary evening.

LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 7, Laurence Small, B.Sc., "Hamlet." Committee meeting after lecture.

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, H. Simpson, "Cremation" (illustrated by oxy-hydrogen lantern).

MOTHERWELL (Lesser Town Hall): Thursday, at 8, G. W. Foote, "Can We Follow Jesus?"

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Northumberland Hall, High Friar-street, near Grey's monument): 11, C. Cohen, "The Great French Revolution"; 3, "Voltaire"; 7, "What's Left of Christianity?"

NORTH SHIELDS (Spiritualists' Hall, Camden-street): Monday, at 7.30, C. Cohen, "Is the Belief in God Reasonable?"

PAISLEY (Tannahill Hall, Mars-street): Tuesday, at 8, G. W. Foote, "A Search for the Soul."

PLYMOUTH (Democratic Club, Whimble-street): 7, W. F. Rean, paper on "Socialism."

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, a Local Gentleman, "Evolution and Dissolution."

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, business meeting; 7.30, D. Bow, "Rate v. Tax-paid Salaries."

STOCKTON-ON-TEES (32 Dovecote-street): 6.30, G. Yates, recital of Hamlet.

Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—February 16, Newcastle; 19, Chester-le-Street; 23, South Shields. March 1, South Shields; 8 and 15, Glasgow.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Oredon-road, Rotherhithe, London.—March 1, Balls Pond.

NEW LEAFLETS.

Published by R. FORDER, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.
Price 6d. per 100; post free 7d.

WHAT WAS CHRIST?

THE CHRISTIAN BUTTON-HOLER CORNERED. Dialogue.

CHRISTIAN DIFFICULTIES ANSWERED. Dialogue.

THE TRUTH ABOUT FOREIGN MISSIONS.

THE CONSOLATIONS OF RELIGION. A Story.

VIOLIN.—Magnificent Solo Fiddle; very handsome; suit lady or gentleman; lovely, rich, ringing tone. Also fully haired-lined case, inlaid bow, mute, resin, tuning-fork, etc. Sell lot for 18s. 6d. Special opportunity for securing genuine bargain. Approval with pleasure: references given. Graham, College Buildings, Ipswich.

Price Twopence.

WHO WAS THE FATHER OF JESUS?

BY

G. W. FOOTE.

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

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

THE GRAND OLD BOOK.

A REPLY TO THE GRAND OLD MAN.

BY

G. W. FOOTE.

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

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

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

PRICE THREEPENCE,

THE

SECULAR ALMANACK FOR 1896.

EDITED BY

G. W. FOOTE AND J. M. WHEELER.

Among the Contents are:—Notes on the Year, by G. W. Foote; A Note on the Calendar, by J. M. Wheeler; The Work of To-Day, by Charles Watts; God-Making, by G. L. Mackenzie; The Bishops and their Wealth; Information Concerning the National Secular Society; Freethought Work and Organisation; Lecturers; Etc.

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

Read "THE TRUTH SEEKER."

MONTHLY, PRICE 1D.

Edited by JOHN GRANGE.

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

ALLINSON FOR HEALTH.

IF YOUR BABY WON'T THRIVE,
YOUR BOY OR GIRL IS DELICATE,
YOU ARE ILL AND CAN'T GET WELL,
YOU WISH A SOUND BRAIN IN A HEALTHY BODY,

Consult DR. T. R. ALLINSON,

4 SPANISH PLACE, MANCHESTER SQUARE, LONDON, W.
Fee 10s. 6d. from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. To working classes, 5s., from 6 to 8 p.m.
DR. ALLINSON cures without drugs or operations. He has 10,000 consultations yearly. Send 10s. for his "Book of Health."

50 VISITING CARDS GRATIS.

Our superb Stationery Cabinet contains—Art Tinted Notepaper printed with any customer's address with envelopes to match, and is sent anywhere post free for Nineteen Stamps. The visiting cards presented are alone worth the money. This is an absolutely genuine advertisement. ABBEY PRESS, NUNEATON.

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

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

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

The Bible Handbook

FOR FREETHINKERS & INQUIRING CHRISTIANS

BY

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

Sold also in separate parts as follows:—

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

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

Price Twopence,

"A Letter to Lord Ellenborough"

OCCASIONED BY THE SENTENCE WHICH HE PASSED ON

MR. D. I. EATON,

AS PUBLISHER OF

THE THIRD PART OF PAINE'S "AGE OF REASON."

BY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

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

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

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

IMPORTANT CAUTION.

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

LOOK FOR AUTOGRAPH REGISTERED TRADE MARK

W. J. Rendell
No. 182,688.

IN RED INK ON EACH BOX, WITHOUT WHICH NONE ARE GENUINE.

Higginson's Syringe, with Vertical and Reverse Current, 3s. 6d., 4s. 6d., and 5s. 6d. Dr. Palfrey's Powder, 1s. 2d. Quinine Compound, 1s. 2d. Dr. Allbutt's Quinine Powders, 3s. per doz. All prices post free.

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

THE BEST BOOK

ON NEO-MALTHUSIANISM IS, I BELIEVE,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT

BY

G. W. FOOTE.

First Series (cloth), 2s. 6d.

CONTENTS:—Old Nick—Fire!!!—Sky Pilots—Devil Dodgers—Fighting Spooks—Damned Sinners—Where is Hell?—Spurgeon and Hell—Is Spurgeon in Heaven?—God in Japan—Stanley on Providence—Gone to God—Thank God—Judgment Day—Shelley's Atheism—Long Faces—Our Father—Wait Till You Die—Dead Theology—Mr. Gladstone on Devils—Huxley's Mistake—The Gospel of Freethought—On Riddle—Who are the Blasphemers?—Christianity and Common Sense—The Lord of Hosts—Consecrating the Colors—Christmas in Holloway Gaol—Who Killed Christ?—Did Jesus Ascend?—The Rising Son?—St. Paul's Veracity—No Faith with Heretics—The Logic of Persecution—Luther and the Devil—Bible English—Living by Faith—Victor Hugo—Desecrating a Church—Walt Whitman—Tennyson and the Bible—Christ's Old Coat—Christ's Coat, Number Two—Scotched, Not Slain—God-Making—God and the Weather—Miracles—A Real Miracle—Jesus on Women—Paul on Women—Mother's Religion.

Second Series (cloth), 2s. 6d.

CONTENTS:—Luscious Piety—The Jewish Sabbath—God's Day—Professor Stokes on Immortality—Paul Bert—Converting a Corpse—Bradlaugh's Ghost—Christ and Brotherhood—The Sons of God—Melchizedek—S'w'elp me God—Infidel Homes—Are Atheists Cruel?—Are Atheists Wicked?—Rain Doctors—Pious Puerilities—"Thus Saith the Lord"—Believe or be Damned—Christian Charity—Religion and Money—Clotted Bosh—Lord Bacon on Atheism—Christianity and Slavery—Christ Up to Date—Secularism and Christianity—Altar and Throne—Martin Luther—The Praise of Folly—A Lost Soul—Happy in Hell—The Act of God—Keir Hardie on Christ—Blessed be ye Poor—Converted Infidels—Mrs. Booth's Ghost—Talmage on the Bible—Mrs. Besant on Death and After—The Poets and Liberal Theology—Christianity and Labor—Dueling—An Easter Egg for Christians—Down Among the Dead Men—Smirching a Hero—Kit Marlowe and Jesus Christ—Jehovah the Ripper—The Parson's Living Wage—Did Bradlaugh Backslide?—Frederic Harrison on Atheism—Save the Bible!—Forgive and Forget—The Star of Bethlehem—The Great Ghost—Atheism and the French Revolution—Piggottism—Jesus at the Derby—Atheist Murderers—A Religion for Eunuchs—Rose-Water Religion.

Mr. S. P. Putnam says:—

"I do not know of anyone else in England who has gathered together a larger store of information than Mr. Foote, or who uses it with more happy effect. Taking all these editorials together, they exhibit an abundant knowledge of history, of literature, and of philosophy. Mr. Foote is a dweller in libraries, as well as a man of the world. He browses among books; he gets the best they contain, and he gives it to his readers in a most available and interesting manner. These editorials are short, always to the point, fresh with illustrations, clear cut from beginning to end. Mr. Foote's language is like an arrow; it moves straight to the mark. There is no flourish, no involution of sentences, no fireworks. When you read Mr. Foote you know exactly what he is driving at; there is no obscurity.

"Flowers of Freethought are good books to take along on a journey. They are like a friend with whom you can talk for a while, and then keep a golden silence. You can pluck a 'Flower of Freethought' here and there, and read according to your own sweet will. You are not obliged to read continuously. You do not have to tackle a whole volume. You have a hundred articles to pick from, on a wide variety of subjects, and in every article you will find the philosophy of Freethought keenly and lucidly expressed. . . ."

"These are just the books to put into one's travelling bag. They are better than a summer novel, for, while equally entertaining, they are also profoundly and variously instructive."—*Truthseeker* (New York).

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

Vol. I., cloth gilt, 216 pp., 2s. 6d., post free,

CRIMES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY

G. W. FOOTE AND J. M. WHEELER.

Hundreds of exact References to Standard Authorities. No pains spared to make it a complete, trustworthy, final, unanswerable Indictment of Christianity.

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

"The book is very carefully compiled, the references are given with exactitude, and the work is calculated to be of the greatest use to the opponents of Christianity."—C. BRADLAUGH, in *National Reformer*.

"The book is worth reading. It is fair, and, on the whole, correct."—*Weekly Times*.

"The book has a purpose, and is entitled to a fair hearing."—*Huddersfield Examiner*.

"The work should be scattered like autumn leaves."—*Ironclad Age* (U.S.A.).

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

REDUCTION IN THE PRICE OF BRUNO CLOTH.

To clear the remainder of our Stock, rather than keep it over till next season, we have decided to offer the same at

9s. 6d. per Dress Length (6 yds., 50 in. wide), or 3 Dress Lengths for 27s. ; 6 for 50s.
ALL CARRIAGE PAID.

During the Winter Season this was the Cheapest Ladies' Cloth Dress Material offered at 10s. 6d. per Dress Length.

ORDER AT ONCE, THEY WILL SOON BE ALL SOLD.

Colors in Stock :—Black, Dark Navy, Light Navy, Myrtle, Olive, Brown, Cardinal, Maroon, Fawn, Grey, Drab, Strawberry, Slate, Tobacco, Oxford Grey, and Smoke.

Three Cloth Dress Lengths (splendid material) for 21s.

Colors—Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Maroon, or Grey.

Gentlemen's Scarborough' Mackintoshes

MUST BE CLEARED. 45s. quality for 30s. 30s. quality for 21s.

Colors—Greys, Fawns, Browns, Navys, Plain or in Checks. All Perfect. Give chest measure and full length at back.

Every parcel will contain MR. JOHN M. ROBERTSON'S pamphlet, "THE FUTURE OF LIBERALISM."

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

N O W R E A D Y .

BIBLE AND BEER

BY

G. W. FOOTE.

CONTENTS :—

Drink Traffic and Local Veto
Christian Methods of Reformation
Old Divines on the Lawfulness of Drinking
Paley and Sydney Smith
Church Opposition to Temperance Movement
Bible Drinks
Scriptural Praises of Wine
Jesus and the Wine Miracle
The Last Supper

Communion Port
The Two-Wine Theory
Religion and Intoxication
Religious Drinking in the Bible
Water-Drinking Heretics
Christianity and Mohammedanism
Church Drinks
Absurdity of Bible Temperance
Appeal to Common Sense

This pamphlet should be in the hands of every Freethinker for constant use against the upholders of the absurd claims of the Bible and Christianity in regard to Temperance. No pains have been spared to make it complete and unanswerable.

Price Fourpence.

LONDON: ROBERT FORDER, 28 STONECUTTER STREET, E.C.