

# The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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PRICE TWOPENCE

## THE NEWER LIGHT.

A NEW heresy hunt is going on in Scotland. The Dunoon Presbytery has solemnly decided that the Rev. Alexander Robinson, parish minister of Kilmun, Argyshire, teaches what is clean contrary to the Standards of Faith, and is therefore a damnable heretic. Mr. Robinson has written a book; worse still, he has printed it, and published it, yea, and sold it, and thus put it into circulation, to the danger of many immortal souls. His book is entitled *The Savior in the Newer Light*, and professes to be "A Present-Day Study of Jesus Christ." But the Presbyterian Church does not want the newer light, or any light at all, except the old darkness which it lights up with a farthing candle and calls a divine illumination. Mr. Robinson is of opinion that "It cannot be a right state of matters that the clergymen of a national Church, attaining new points of view through instruction and study, should either keep silence about these points of view or else resign their charges." This is not the opinion, however, of his clerical brethren. They act on instinct, which is superior to reason as an agent of self-preservation. Religion is a matter of faith and authority, not of intellect and free judgment. Ministers of a Church must hang together, like Alpine climbers, or they will sink separately in crevasses or fall separately over precipices. All of them going one way, and all saying exactly the same thing, imposes on the average man, who finds himself differing from his neighbors on all sorts of subjects. The unanimity of clerical teaching staggers him. There must be some superhuman influence, he thinks, to keep all these ministers in agreement. But if ministers all think for themselves, they will think differently; there will be a various multitude of opinions, and each will be the notion of an individual, instead of the historic doctrine of a Church. "If that is the Church's teaching (a man says), I accept it; but if that is only Mr. Robinson's opinion, I beg to differ." The Presbyterian Church, therefore, is acting on sound business principles in telling Mr. Robinson that he must join in the chorus; for if each minister is to sing solo as he pleases, there will be no concert, and no gate-money.

Mr. Robinson's "newer light" is too strong for Presbyterian eyesight, but not overpowering to the vision of Freethinkers. Let us glance at his Preface and his Appendix on the Gospels. The body of his work need not engage our attention. It is simply another effort to paint a portrait of Jesus Christ. All the artists who engage in this enterprise follow one and the same method. They take what they please as "historical," and what they please as "characteristic," and in this arbitrary way they produce what (to use the language of Whistler) may be called "Studies in Ideal Features."

Jesus is a man, and not God, to Mr. Robinson, who hesitates, however, to call himself a Unitarian. "Jesus," he says, "is here looked at not as identical with the Eternal Divine Soul, but as revealing the Eternal Divine Soul." But we dare say that Mr. Robinson would, if pressed, admit that the Eternal Divine Soul had been revealed by others as well as by Jesus Christ.

Mr. Robinson hears "the voice of the True God" in the Bible, but he objects to reading it "slavishly"—which (apparently) means believing what it says. And this applies to both halves of Scripture. "Looked at slavishly," says Mr. Robinson, "the New Testament must, in these days of education, arouse distrust in the mind of the most

cursorial reader. And are not many of our people, in the face of the glaring incongruities which literal reading of it brings before the intelligence, setting aside both itself and the religion which it represents as wanting in evidence?" The way to avoid this danger is to steer a middle course. Mr. Robinson objects to "the cruel blows dealt by Strauss and others" at historic Christianity; still more to later books "which deny almost all history in the gospels, and would steep the whole origin of our religion in darkness." The gospels have been badly knocked about, in Mr. Robinson's judgment, but not quite annihilated. Let us gather up the fragments that remain, he says, and make unto ourselves a new Jesus Christ. Mr. Robinson's criticism is "reverent and reconstructive." It is reverent, we presume, because he never smiles; and reconstructive because he exclaims, "All is lost but Jesus."

The four Gospels are not treated "slavishly" by Mr. Robinson. Some people would say that he treats them cavalierly. He makes them prove what he likes. He reads out of them, and into them, just what he pleases. Still, he is resolute in disowning their apostolic origin. He thinks the first Gospel written was the "Gospel according to St. Mark," the author being John Mark, a disciple of Paul—although, according to Papias, Mark was a disciple of Peter. This Gospel is "from a mind of the oriental kind which mixes up imagination with fact." Of course it "requires to be read critically."

The "Gospel according to St. Matthew" follows the footsteps of Mark. It originated amongst the Judaizing Christians, and "may have had several authors." Probably (O that *probably*) they possessed a record that had come from the apostle Matthew; but they let it perish, and placed their own composition on the literary market instead. They "boldly made up the earlier part of the life of Jesus." But their action "must not be called dishonest." Why, certainly.

Luke, the author of the third Gospel, worked from the other two, and "freely made alterations." Taken all in all, his Gospel is the best; yet he had no "very strict notions of the boundary lines" between history and allegory.

The fourth Gospel is later than the others. It has "been by modern criticism cast down irrevocably from the high pedestal on which piety used to place it." Mr. Robinson endorses the judgment of Keim, that the author of the fourth Gospel is "the most incredible of all the witnesses of Jesus." After a summary of "John's" account of the last visit of Jesus to Jerusalem, and his death and resurrection there, Mr. Robinson adds severely: "Such is the story that has for centuries been accepted by multitudes as historical fact. It is difficult to take up a position of criticism upon it. Its very boldness and detailedness hold us bound in admiration of it. But it is not history. It neither gives the true history of Jesus's life on earth, nor presents the true picture of Jesus's character."

This is what is seen in the "newer light." But in the "newest light" the synoptical Gospels are no more "true history" than is the fourth Gospel. Mr. Robinson is obliged to reject all the birth-stories of Jesus. The story of the temptation is "an imaginative narrative." All the dead-raising stories are dismissed. They must not be "taken literally." "At the bar of Reason," Mr. Robinson says, "we modern Christians cannot maintain the accounts of such violation of all experience and all scientific ideas on the trifling evidence which we possess. We have, indeed, no evidence that does not crumble away in our own hands."



The three stories of the kind that the Gospels contain have no organic connection with the rest of the narrative; the other events recorded seem in no way affected by the tremendous circumstances which these stories relate. Their being historical, therefore, is inconceivable." Mr. Robinson points out the absurdity of supposing that Jairus, a ruler, whose son Jesus raised from the dead, would do nothing for him when he was attacked; or that the raising of Lazarus should have been the signal for the execution of Jesus. Of course this has all been urged repeatedly, and in still more decisive language, by professed Freethinkers. There is nothing new in it. The only novelty is its coming at last from the lips of a Christian minister—who, however, will probably soon cease to occupy a pulpit. It is idle to call oneself a Christian after rejecting all the supernaturalism of the Gospels. We do not doubt that Mr. Robinson means well, and there is a certain courage in his challenge to the kirk. What we wish him is more logic. A little logic is a dangerous thing. The newer light is, after all, a twilight. We hope Mr. Robinson will yet step into the clear light of day.

G. W. FOOTE.

### JEWISH IDEALS.\*

It is peculiarly fitting that, when the *Quarterly Review* gives up its pages to a paper on "The Modern Jew," by some Christian writer who sees no proper place in the world for any other faith than that of Christendom, a man of letters of Hebrew birth should let the public know what Jewish ideals are. Mr. Joseph Jacobs shows this not simply by dilating upon the subject—for his lecture upon Jewish ideals, delivered before the Ethical Society, occupies but a small portion of the volume—but by infusing those ideals into his work, which always impresses the reader with the sense of dealing with a scholar and a gentleman.

It is now nearly seventeen years since Mr. Jacobs gave us in the *Nineteenth Century* a most notable contribution to the rational history of Judaism, entitled "The God of Israel: A History." This essay occupies the second place in the volume, to which it alone would suffice to give permanent value. I could well wish that Mr. Jacobs had re-written the essay with the additional light which later studies in Biblical archæology have brought. That so painstaking a writer allows it simply to stand is a proof of how thoroughly he went over the ground at first.

The essay on the Mordecai of George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*, which follows, is Mr. Jacobs's earliest magazine work, and bears marks of youthful enthusiasm, easily understood and sympathised with, while not fully shared, by a non-Jewish writer. Then Mr. Jacobs gives us a paper on "Browning's Theology," chiefly considered in relation to Judaism. Another interesting paper is that on "Jehuda Halevi, Poet and Pilgrim," who, as Mr. Jacobs pointed out in his "God of Israel," marks a turning-point in Jewish thought. Great as a poet—"Das Lied, das der Levit Jehuda gesungen—ist als prachtiliadem um der Gemeinde Haupt geschlungen—als Perlenschnur halt es ihren Hals umrungen"—he was greater as a man, and one of the most romantic figures of the Middle Ages.

Mr. Jacobs's impartiality is well seen in his treatment of the story of Little St. Hugh, of Lincoln, the boy martyr, said to have been stolen and crucified by Lincoln Jews, in derision of the story of Jesus Christ. Nineteen Jews were executed, and many more imprisoned and plundered, as the result of this story, which is analysed by Mr. Jacobs with all the light which history, archæology, and tradition can cast upon it. He comes to the conclusion that the boy probably fell into a cesspool attached to the house of a Jew. When the body was recovered, instead of announcing the discovery to the proper officials, they attempted to conceal it. Hatred and readiness to plunder did the rest.

With all due respect to Mr. Jacobs, I am not convinced that the blood accusation originated in England, or that "it sprung fully armed from the vile imagination of an apostate Jew of Cambridge, named after his conversion Theobald." J. B. Levinsohn, who, in his *Efés Dammin*, went pretty fully into the matter before Strack, says "the accusation was first raised in Spain and Portugal." Mr. Jacobs says, in the face of Lev. xxvii. 29, 1 Sam. xv. 33, 2 Sam. xxi. 9,

\* *Jewish Ideals, and Other Essays.* By Joseph Jacobs. (London: D. Nutt, 270, Strand.) 1896.

2 Chron. xxviii. 3, xxxiii. 6, Jer. xix. 5, Ezekiel xx. 25, 26, and Micah vi. 6, "human sacrifice has been unknown in Israel since at least the time of the Judges." If this were so, it was at least a matter of common tradition that the sacrifice of a lamb at Passover was substitutionary, as Mr. Jacobs's folk-lore studies must, I think, have convinced him. Nothing is gained by denying that cruelty and credulity were common among all in ancient times.

The extent of Mr. Jacobs's researches as a folk-lorist is seen in his paper on "Jewish Diffusion of Folk Tales," which, as might have been expected, was chiefly through the medium of literature. Equally careful are his determination of the boundaries of "The London Jewry, 1290," his study of "Aaron, Son of the Devil," and his paper on "Jewish History: its Aims and Methods," chiefly directed to the history of the Jews in Spain.

Mr. Jacobs is distinctly right in turning to Jewish history as the key to the Jewish problem; and, though he is urbanely reticent as to the sufferings his race has undergone at the hands of Christians, it is easy to discern the serious undertone which shows that the wrongs of the past, if forgiven, are not forgotten.

It is worse than absurd, it is brutal, for Christians to point to the tribalness, the cunning, or the avarice of Jews. The Jew is what centuries of Christian love have made him.

By the torture prolonged from age to age,  
By the infamy, Israel's heritage;  
By the Ghetto's plague, by the garb's disgrace,  
By the badge of shame, by the felon's place,  
By the branding tool, the bloody whip,  
And the summons to Christian fellowship.

No chapter in the *Crimes of Christianity* is worse than that which records Christian treatment of the people to whom they owe their God and Savior. Treated worse than dogs, hunted, abused, and driven to despair, the wonder is not so much that Jews sometimes show the vices of the desperate as that, wherever fairly treated, they evince so much kindness and culture.

A semi-humorous contribution to the *Jewish Chronicle*, entitled "The True, the Only, and the Complete Solution of the Jewish Question," is, to my mind, one of the finest papers in the whole book. It is an old saying that it takes a wise man to be a fool; and in the form of a jest, telling the Jews "make fools of your children," Mr. Jacobs gives his people some of the wisest advice possible. May they read and profit by it. When the Jew cultivates that noble folly or true wisdom which regards welfare as the best wealth; when he is content to say with Mordecai in *Daniel Deronda*, "Let my body dwell in poverty, and my hands be as the hands of the toiler; but let my soul be as a temple of remembrance where the treasures of knowledge enter and the inner sanctuary is hope," the Jewish question is solved, so far as the individual is concerned.

Judaism, as represented by Mr. Jacobs, is distinctly a higher faith than Christianity. It rests not on faith, but on works, seeks no salvation through the blood of the innocent, and has a full eye on the amelioration of man in this world. It is capable of improvement by gradually dropping the untenable and unverifiable, which is of the essence of Christianity. We need not point to Spinoza, Heine, Brandes, Darmesteter, or Lassalle. Mr. Jacobs himself is witness that the Jew, undenyng, even glorying in his birth, can be as truly the apostle of culture as of commercialism. The simple fact is that the Jew, for over two thousand years of suffering and struggle, has had to use his brains on everything save religion. That was the bond which held him to his fellows, and it was a social necessity that it should be unquestioned. The Jew can use his brains with effect—which is the secret of much of the hatred he has incurred—and when he uses it on his religion, he will see how much of it was only temporarily serviceable, how much can now be put aside with advantage.

My solution of the racial question would somewhat differ from that of Mr. Jacobs. I believe here, as elsewhere, in freedom and freethought. All lovers of their kind must peremptorily say "Hands off" to those who seek to stir up race and religious prejudices. These repressed, and frank and friendly intercourse being proffered, the Jew will gradually emerge from the voluntary ghetto which long ages of outrage and ostracism have made a second nature to him. Free intercourse slowly but surely removes the prejudices of race and of religion. "Every country," it has been said, "has the Jews it deserves to have." If



the Russian Jew is a bad specimen, it is just because intolerance has made him so. The persecuted Jew is the orthodox, bigotted Jew. The Jew who is treated as a man and a brother is, as may be seen in France, England, and America, on the fair way to become a Freethinker.

This truth will not be relished by the orthodox Jew, and its sequence will be still less palatable. Free intercourse and intercommunion will in the long run lead to intermarriage. Detestable to the traditionalist, this will be satisfactory to the rationalist and humanitarian, for there is no better progeny on this earth than the joint offspring of Freethinking Aryans and Freethinking Semites. Perhaps, after all, the mission of the Jew may be to infuse a strain of antique oriental culture, finely sifted in the mills of affliction, into the coarser fibre of the European races.

J. M. WHEELER.

### REASON THE TRUE GUIDE FOR MANKIND.

REASON, when properly cultivated and aided by experience, we consider to be the best guide known for mankind. Of course, it is not perfect, inasmuch as perfection is not an attribute of humanity. That human actions are too seldom controlled by reason is an unfortunate fact; but this is often the result of neglecting mental discipline. A lamp is intended to give light; its illuminating power, however, would speedily cease if the lamp were not trimmed and supplied with oil. So it is with the lamp of human reason, for, in order to secure from it a sufficient light to guide us in our daily actions, it must be supplied with the oil of wisdom, and trimmed by intellectual cultivation.

We define reason as being man's highest intellectual powers—the understanding, the faculty of judgment, the power which discriminates, infers, deduces, and judges, the ability to premise future probabilities from past experience, and to distinguish truth from error. Reason, says Morell, is that which gives unity and solidarity to intellectual processes, “aiding us at once in the pursuit of truth, and in adapting our lives to the state of things in which they exist” (*Mental Philosophy*, p. 232). “It is the guide and director of human activity” (*ibid.*, p. 235). Hooker, in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, says reason determines “what is good to be done”; and Chillingworth, the eminent Christian writer, in his *Religion of Protestants*, observes: “Reason gives us knowledge; while faith only gives us belief, which is a part of knowledge, and is, therefore, inferior to it . . . . it is by reason alone that we can distinguish truth from falsehood” (quoted by Buckle in his *History of Civilisation*, chapter vii.). Bishop Butler remarks: “Reason is indeed the only faculty we have wherewith to judge concerning anything, even revelation itself” (*Analogy of Religion*, p. 176). The Rev. Thomas Scott, in his *Christian Life*, refers to reason thus: “He that follows its advice has a mind that is elevated above injury.” Thus, it is admitted, even by Christian writers, that reason is our highest guide in all things, not excluding religion itself.

It is true that many professed Christians allege that there are many things above reason, which, it is said, of itself is “a blind guide,” and that it requires faith to make it a trustworthy authority. We admit that there is much in nature that is above our comprehension, and that we lack the ability to explain certain phenomena; but that is not what is meant by the above allegation. The orthodox position is not simply the limitation of human capacity; it is that reason is inferior to a faith in supernatural agencies as a monitor in daily life. If there are things above reason, we have a right to ask how the knowledge of such things is obtained. When Christians assert that they have a better guide than reason, how do they attempt to prove it? Simply by professing to appeal to reason. They thus resort to our guide to test the value of theirs. Men may draw wrong inferences from facts, or right inferences from wrong conceptions; but it is, in both cases, the work of reason. We do not contend that reason is infallible; it is one thing to allege that reason is the highest faculty that man has to enable him to form conclusions, and quite another to claim that such conclusions are accurate. False reasoning is, perhaps, one of the greatest misfortunes from which the human race suffers. But what is the cause of this evil? Not that reason is necessarily defective, but that its cultivation has not been duly attended to. Doubtless it is as

true that reason may lead us astray as it is that it is a guide to truth and virtue. It must be remembered that our reason is largely influenced by our feelings, our habits, and our associates; still, it is the ultimate arbitrator of truth and honesty.

The great contest in all ages has been more or less between Reason and Authority. J. S. Mill says, in his *Utility of Religion*: “It is by authority that the opinions of the bulk of mankind are principally, and not unnaturally, governed. . . . But to a thinker the argument from other people's opinions has little weight. It is but second-hand evidence, and merely admonishes us to look out for and weigh the reasons on which this conviction of mankind or of wise men was founded” (pp. 155, 156). Some persons arrive at certain conclusions because they suppose them to be based upon revelation; others accept principles because they deem them true from a human standpoint. In either case reason is involved. Any alleged supernatural religion depends for evidence of its truth upon “divine” revelation; but, inasmuch as such revelation is very doubtful in its character, the evidence derived therefrom is certainly not of the highest order. If there be such a thing as religious truth, it must be, like scientific truth, discovered by the senses. Reason seeks the truth; it does not make it. Secularists, Atheists, Agnostics, Deists, and Rationalists can accept only the revelation of human genius; they pay no heed to inferences that do not admit of being tested by reason.

It is urged by some that this process of reasoning may be right when applied to human affairs, but that it is of no avail in reference to “divine” matters. The question here arises, Why not? Take the various conceptions professed of God, and the different views entertained as to the nature and meaning of the Bible; is it not by reason that the correct views are supposed to be discerned? The same method is adopted in judging of the claims of any church or of any authority, let it be human or “divine.” If this were not the case, the mind would be passive, and it would accept any dogma without reason, or for the same reason as Paley signed the Thirty-nine Articles—for the sake of peace and quietness. In this age of intellectual discrimination no subject should be deemed too sacred for investigation, and no belief too venerable for honest and fair criticism. If man is not allowed to exercise his “puny reason” upon all matters, even those of the highest and most revered importance, then such things will remain to him an unknown *x*. The critical faculty exists in the human race, and nothing in the nature ascribed to God, or in anything found in his supposed commandments, can arrest reason in its efforts to solve problems, to avert calamities, or to relieve pain. The old orthodox plea that it is presumptuous in man to criticise the alleged mode of God's dealings with the world has no force with persons in whom reason exercises its legitimate sway.

But it may be asked, Why should we rely upon reason? We answer, Because it is the power we possess whereby we are enabled to detect the true from the false. To abandon reason would be to allow ourselves to be overcome by terrors that would fail to alarm any educated child of our Board schools. If reason is not accepted as an authority in matters of opinion and practice, there is no check upon the evils that may overtake us. Any authority that has not reason for its basis furnishes the greatest enemy to truth and rational argument that the world could be cursed with. The Test and Corporation Acts that once existed in England were an example of the pernicious effects of authority without reason. They were the offspring of ignorance and timidity, and they formed a potent agency in obstructing the advancement of society. The repeal of them was one of the greatest triumphs of reason and justice over intolerance and superstition. If reason is ignored or suppressed, the tenets taught as sacred may be but oracles of the nursery, or the traditional legacies of men in whom fanaticism predominated.

If the authority of reason had not proclaimed liberty for speech and pen, it is impossible to estimate the number of errors and abuses that might have been consecrated by time, and held to be the incontestable axioms of human wisdom. There is no device that hypocrisy and tyranny have not employed to thwart the force of reason, and to impose silence upon mankind. And, unfortunately, wherever the would-be destroyers of reason have been successful, ignorance and gloom have filled the minds of men, and choked the seeds of that liberty which gives to life its force and lustre.

CHARLES WATTS.



## THE NEW WOMAN.

In olden times (says the *New York World*) of paganism women enjoyed rights and privileges of value and distinction which, under another régime, were taken from them. History declares that the ancient Teutonic tribes treated women with respect—great respect. Women sat in the halls of state, were consulted in affairs of government, and their opinions were sought in matters of war, in settling disputes, and in all important questions relating to the management of human business. These ancient pagans were monogamists, marrying but one wife, and acknowledging the equality of women in religious, political, and secular matters generally.

And so it was in pagan Rome. The women were educated, respected, and honored in the family and in the government.

Hortensia, daughter of Hortensius, was a student of law with her father, and when she was admitted to practice at the bar won many plaudits for her masterly exposition of the Roman laws. So happy were the conditions of the family under pagan rule that a divorce was not known in Rome for five hundred years, and thus the river of life flowed peacefully and happily.

Among other ancient nations women were with the rulers guiding and conducting affairs. They acquired property, and when married kept their own names, their children bearing the same.

The advent of Christianity has been generally supposed to have brought more light into the world, especially to have lifted woman into a wider sphere, to have given her prominence and crowned her with a nobler grace.

The majority of people believe this to-day. Women themselves who have been brought up in the Church do not doubt it. They have not asked, Is it true? but have accepted as fact that which a little examination would have revealed as pure fiction.

The accepted authorities, the makers of Christian theology, brought no message of hope to the women of that other period, or to the women of any period. There was no uplift for woman in anything they had to say—not one word of hope, encouragement, or good cheer; not one.

The book of Genesis portrays how sin got into the world, how misery fastened its fangs upon us. How, then, was it? Does it not tell woman that she did it? that she is responsible for all the distress, sorrow, and agony of life? that she brought sin into a world of happiness and bloom?

It is a dreadful charge, cruel and humiliating beyond expression.

There is the record, the foundation, upon which is built the yoke of inferiority which was fastened upon the neck of woman. Read it, and tell me if there ever was, or could be, anything in the universe more to the hurt and injury of woman, more damning to her progress, more detrimental to her best interests, than the accusation brought against her in the book that is the superstructure of the prevailing fashionable folly of Christian countries to-day.

What is the reason women are not considered the peers politically of their brothers in this free land of ours? Why are they in the same category, politically speaking, with paupers, criminals, idiots, and the insane? Why are they not found in the council chambers framing the laws by which they are governed, and to which they are amenable?

Is it that they are indeed inferior, immature, lacking in good sense, reason, or judgment? Nay, nay, friends, such is not the case. The real reason that woman occupies a position inferior to that of man is due wholly, solely, and altogether to the ban put upon her by the great religious authority, the "Holy Scriptures," on account of the alleged original sin of the alleged original woman. It is that, and that only.

According to the accepted authority in Genesis relative to the advent of woman, she was simply an addendum, an afterthought, a supplement, a spare-rib.

We know, of course, that woman existed on the earth long prior to the last six thousand years; but we will simply trace the account of her miraculous coming according to scripture. Made from a bone cut from the skeleton of a man, and endowed with life, she appears on the scene of action. The first thing she did was to bring knowledge to the surface. Bless her for that.

Knowledge went by the name of sin in that olden day,

and there are those living who give it the same name now. Knowledge was below par, and very unfashionable.

Paul said with emphasis that the woman was "first in the transgression"—that is, she had learned something.

The canon law emphasised with almost paralysing force the Biblical statements concerning woman's part and lot as chief actor in the story of the fall of man.

Never were there more scathing words against woman than the sentences uttered and written by Christian saints and rulers, and which have conspired to keep her in the valley of humiliation and despair.

Among the old Latin fathers of the Church was Tertullian, a lawyer, who became a Christian priest in the year 190. He wrote several books, and one telling women how they ought to dress, and that they should hide their features behind a veil whenever they entered the house of God. Let me quote some of his compliments to the sisterhood. "Woman," he says, "thou shouldst ever be clothed in rags, and in mourning, appearing only as a penitent, drowned in tears, expiating thus the sin of having caused the fall of the human race." He goes on to say: "Woman, thou art the gate of the Devil. It is thou who hast corrupted those whom Satan dare not attack face to face."

It was, probably, Tertullian's books and letters that helped Milton when he drew the portrait of a woman, making her a woman to the waist, and the rest of her body a scaly serpent, representing her as the embodiment of sin and doorkeeper of the bottomless pit.

A serpent armed with mortal sting.

Among the many atrocious cruelties perpetrated by the early friends of Christianity is the murder of the beautiful and accomplished Hypatia, in the year 415.

Why, at the great Christian Council, at Maçon, in 581, the good old saints solemnly debated whether woman was a beast or a human being. St. Jerome said she was a wild beast of a dangerous species. The conclusion, however, was that, being the mother of men, she must be human, because men did not like to think themselves the offspring of beasts. They let her take communion, but not in her naked hands; oh, no! She was considered too vile, although her hands had made the bread.

Read Lecky's *History of European Morals*. He says: "She was represented as the mother of all ills. She was taught that she should be ashamed of the very thought that she was born a woman—that she should live in continual penance on account of the curses which she had brought into the world."

The ecclesiastical law-makers seemed to take a fiendish delight in trampling woman in the dust. Augustine declared that a husband had a perfect right to slap his wife in the face. John Wesley did not doubt it. The old English statutes allowed it, but the stick must not be bigger than a man's thumb. What sort of a cudgel it was aforesaid no one knows—probably a cordwood stick or a birchen log. Does it seem incredible? Go into the city courts to-morrow morning, and behold the remnant of that same savagery in the bruised and bleeding forms and faces of helpless wives in the hands of brutal lords and masters.

I hate to tell these things, but, in showing the obstinate causes that have obstructed the advancement of women, it is my duty to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

The stigma of original sin was fastened upon woman with the branding-irons of Holy Writ. She inhaled obedience with every breath. She absorbed submission and subjection at every turn—for these confronted her everywhere. The Church had proclaimed her guilt. Could the Church lie? Could it deceive and falsify? Alas and alas, she had no power to learn, for learning was to her a forbidden thing. She was not allowed to read. She could not write. She was told her duty was simply to accept what her master deemed proper. Thus was she relegated to her condition of servitude—a kitchen-maid, a ministering angel in times of need, a ministering servant at any time and all times. The bearer of burdens and the bearer of children, she suffered the martyrdom of motherhood; but she could not, under the law, own her children, unless their father repudiated them. And it was considered that she had failed in her duty as a woman unless she had become the mother of from ten to fifteen children.

Woman in the past lived in the emotions. Man possessed the world and all therein. Woman had—love and religion. Her emotional nature was cultivated to the



utmost, and to the neglect of her other faculties. Man's love was, indeed, "of his life a thing apart; 'twas woman's whole existence." It made her morbid, often capricious. Man had the schools, colleges, libraries. Woman had the Bible; later she had the old farmer's almanack and the sloshy novel, and she had—the chimney corner. This was the boundary of her kingdom. There she lived, loved, suffered, died, and made no sign.

The New Woman has changed all that. The scales have dropped from her eyes.

The people persecuted Galileo and tried to kill him when he told them that the world moved. They didn't believe it, and many are not aware of the fact even to-day. They fancy the world is standing still. But the New Woman knows that the world moves, and she is moving along with it. The printing press, like sunshine, has beamed upon her, and on her brow sparkle the words—intelligence, intellectual activity.

Colleges and scientific schools have yielded their prejudices, and she has grasped the knowledge so long withheld.

Theology gave to the woman of other days a gown, long, untidy, and dragging around her ankles. It said: "Put that on—'tis a memorial of the Fall." She meekly obeyed, and went around mopping the streets. When she rebelled it said: "'Tisn't modest to wear short dresses; you'll be talked about."

The New Woman looks her contempt, and declares that she is for comfort and convenience. Attired in shorter skirts, in a rational dress, she goes about her business unfettered by garments that signify and keep in mind a foolish and ridiculous old myth.

The old husband told the old wife that she must mind him; that Paul commanded wives to be obedient; that no wife had power over her own self, but the husband owned her absolutely. And the old wife believed it.

The New Woman brings to society a breeze of purity and cleanliness. She looks with scorn upon the worse than barbarous sociology, with its one-sided code of morality—with its one estimate for the morals of man, and another totally different for woman.

The New Woman sees with horror the disgraceful spectacle of women hand in hand with the libertine and betrayer, and shrinking in disgust from his victims.

Yet this practice is but an offshoot of Biblical teaching, which makes woman criminal and dependent, a subordinate, an obedient slave and minister to man's caprice and pleasure.

The world has dealt with results; is still dealing with results. The new order of things will treat causes. The Hercules of education and enlightenment will seek, find, and destroy the sources of crime, cruelty, and injustice. Then, and not until then, may we expect to see a moral uplift of which reformers hitherto have only dreamed.

The last great enemy to be destroyed is theology. The women of old were taught to accept without investigation.

The New Woman applies the test of science to all things; to theology the same as anything else. She does not make up her mind without investigation. She works out problems in the crucible of honest reason. She has studied theology as she studies geology and astronomy, with the same freedom and with as little intention of fastening upon her mind anything but truth, and with the resolve to follow truth wherever it leads the way. She has placed theology in the scales along with common sense, and theology has kicked the beam.

In place of the church there will be halls of science, academies, hospitals, homes for the homeless, reading-rooms and libraries, schools, lecture-rooms, open every day, instead of one day in seven, and to which she will be welcome.

The New Woman is the daughter of Freethought. She belongs to Freethought, and nowhere else. Every step out of the poisonous past, every period of her growth, is due to the influence of liberal teaching. For years Freethought has been dealing sledge-hammer blows at the decaying fabric of ancient mythology and religious romance. Under the names "progress," "scientific development," "enlightenment," it has sent javelins of truth through the withered heart of superstition. It has repeatedly called to women to come forth from the caves of ignorance.

The New Woman is sent, not by the Church, but by the nobler civilisation, the angels of love, liberty, and justice, and she is adorned with knowledge, wisdom, and reason, bright and shining as the jewels in the belt of Orion. Her mission is to alleviate, instruct, uplift, and bless.

—Progressive Thinker.

SUSAN H. WIXON.

## THE KING JAMES VERSION.

ALTHOUGH there may be many editions of the Bible and various translations of the so-called Scriptures, as a rule the King James version is referred to when one to-day speaks of the Bible. When a youth, I was led to believe that this James was a saint, and one chosen by the Almighty to give the world a Bible. Too young to read history, I depended for what information I could obtain upon the ministers. So my ignorance ought to surprise no one. When older, I began to look up the record of James, and endeavored to become as well acquainted with him, as it is possible to do with a person who had been dead as long. There had been five James's before this Bible James came on to the stage of action. These men were kings of Scotland, and Bible James was James VI., or James I. of England. He appears to have endeared himself to the Protestants by his persecution of the Catholics. The translators of the Bible (the clergy) were abjectly servile; so characteristically flattering and so really sycophantly sickening in their praise of this hardly ordinary man that, to use a modern phrase, they just covered him with "taffy." The orthodox serpent wished to swallow the crowned rabbit. Before doing this they completely lubricated him with the saliva of hypocrisy. They stated in their dedication that he was "king by the grace of God." They flattered him by calling him the "defender of the faith"—i.e., the defender of their faith. He is spoken of as the "most dread sovereign," which God had placed over the people. In those days God had more to do with the affairs of men than now-a-days. He once took part in wars, but always favored the stronger party. He never appeared upon the weak side. He sent famine until man invented steamboats and railroads, so that food could be brought from remote places; then he retired from the famine business. When men learned the secret of rotation of crops, God stopped the business of making grub worms and dry rot. He used to send small-pox into wicked places and thin out the inhabitants; but after vaccination was discovered he resigned.

The people have advanced since James was king "by the grace of God." Men dare to look up. They are not afraid of the clouds or of the silent stars. They at least understand that the wrath of Jehovah had nothing to do with an eclipse. They have found out that a boy who skates upon thin or rotten ice will break through as quickly Tuesday or Friday as he will Sunday. They have observed that lightning strikes a church spire as often as it does a dancing hall. As the people have grown more intelligent, God has less control of earthly matters. But these ministers crawled in the dust before King James. They flattered him to an extent that would have made an average American President sick to his stomach. Anyone who will take the pains to read his history will not for one moment pretend that he had the ability of James G. Blaine, the solid honesty of Gladstone, or the magnificent liberality of Colonel Ingersoll.

These ministers make no mention of the fact that he drove the Catholics out of the country, and three years afterwards, either from dire necessity or from policy, called them back and restored their castles and estates. They make no mention of the fact that he sacrificed the life of Sir Walter Raleigh. They do not even speak of his sending Buckingham and Charles to Spain to carry out his dirty intrigues, which resulted in a declaration of war with Spain. But these same ministers compare James with the sun. They state that "great and manifold" were the blessings when James took the throne. They declared that he had dispelled the mists, and had given great comfort. Comfort to whom? To the clergy. Why? Because he favored and promulgated the same doctrine which they believed. His "very name is precious among them." "Their eye doth behold you with great comfort." They bless him "as that sanctified person" who, under God, is the author of their true happiness. These ministers called James a "learned and judicious prince," and express the hope that he may be the "wonder of the world." The men who wrote this rot compiled the Bible. If they were not any more honest and more sincere in the translation than in the dedication, did not have any more backbone and honest independence (and how can we suppose that they had), what is the King James Bible worth?

—Boston Investigator.

A. E. FARNHAM, M.D.



## GOD'S BOOK.

WE'RE told that God Almighty's book  
Is absolute perfection ;  
Inspired or written by his spook,  
And needing no correction.

The book correct ? " God save the mark !"  
Say scholars that are ripest ;  
A Ghost's no good unless his clerk  
Is skilful as a typist.

The book, though bad, is not so bad  
For gods unused to writing ;  
Skylarking was the Spirit's fad,  
Jehovah's fad was fighting.

Let God his rambling book revise,  
For, goodness knows ! it needs it—  
The precious work's so full of lies  
"That none with judgment heeds it.

And let him trust no flighty ghost,  
Nor prophet, seer, nor warlock,  
But shorthand clerks that work the " Yost,"  
Or " Remington," or " Barlock."

G. L. MACKENZIE.

## SPIRITUALISM AND FASHION.

OUR readers may be interested to learn that the inhabitants of the "spirit world" are beginning to take note of dress and fashion, and are, apparently, willing to act as our "guides, philosophers, and friends" in such matters. Here is a note received by a felt-hat manufacturer last week ; but the advice it contains will be equally valuable for other branches of trade : "At the earnest request of my guides, I write to ask you not to make black goods, but those of curative colors, such as blue, violet, red, yellow, and white. Black is the symbol of death and decay. It came into the world through evil agency, and is against God's divine laws. Your guides earnestly pray that you will help us in this important matter.—Yours faithfully, SNOWDROP." The grammar of the note is a little "mixed," as is not uncommon, we believe, in communications from the "spirits"; but, perhaps, we may be permitted to make a conjectural emendation, and read "them" for "us," and then the message will be clear. It is not, surely, the intention of our "guides" to confine their attention to colors, and we may reasonably expect ampler communications in a short time. They will doubtless have something to say about the respective merits of "all wool" and linen and cotton underclothing, tight lacing, "murderous millinery," the width and length of skirts, and a host of other matters ; and then, if the "spirits" have not yet exhausted their capacity for wonder, they will probably be surprised at being told to mind their own business—which, it will be said, is neither dressmaking and millinery, nor the supervision of fashion generally. Poor human nature ! to what depths of folly it does sometimes descend. Is there a lower depth than Spiritualism ?

—Warehouseman and Draper.

## Priestcraft in Thibet.

Buddhism, as practised in Thibet, is (says the *Graphic*) very different from the creed as it is found in other parts of the world. The people of Thibet do not believe in only one Buddha, but they are taught by their lamas, or priests, to worship several lesser Buddhas, the creed having been mixed up with the old Hindu gods. The people are priest-ridden to an extent that is difficult to credit. From the cradle to the grave the Thibetan is never free from the lama. At birth his horoscope is cast by a lama, and at death a lama finds the way for him to that region in which his soul shall be re-born. "Nothing," the Earl of Dunmore tells us in his admirable diary of his travels in Central Asia, "can be done in Thibet without a lama, from the ploughing of a field to the betrothal of a couple ; for if the lama, to whom reference must be made, pronounce them unsuited to each other, the marriage cannot take place. Such are the powers of the priesthood. The priests put on hideous masks on certain festivals. They also make use of a prayer wheel. Thousands of prayers are put into cylinders attached to the wheel, which is kept revolving, either by hand or, more frequently, by water power. Innumerable prayers are thus offered up for the souls of the departed, with the least possible trouble to the bereaved relatives."

## ACID DROPS.

BORIS is baptised. And who the deuce is Boris ? A Bulgarian "kid," who doesn't know one religion from another. At first he was baptised in the Greek Church ; he is now baptised in the Roman Church ; and each proceeding was dictated by political reasons. Could there be a better illustration of the truth that religion is mainly a matter of accident ? Reason and evidence have nothing to do with it, in the case of nine hundred and ninety-nine persons out of every thousand. Parents say, "Here's my child. Make him a Catholic, a Protestant, a Jew, a Moham-medan—or whatever it may be." And it is done.

The baptism of baby Boris in the Greek Church has resulted in the separation of the child's mother and father. All this is fulfilment of prophecy. Did not Jesus Christ say he came to set families at variance ? The priests take care that the saying is fulfilled.

The editor of a London comic weekly has been asked by a lady to send her a trifle for the Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews. He replies that he has only just forwarded a subscription to the Society for Promoting Christianity among the Christians.

The terms of the Queen's Speech, or Lord Salisbury's address, in regard to further assistance from public resources for denominational schools, convey really the admission that the supporters of so-called *voluntary* schools do not care enough for religious education to pay for it voluntarily. Their condition, says the speech, is "in many places precarious," which could not be if religionists were prepared to pay for efficiency. Instead of this, they want the general public to pay for their religion.

At the Bolton School Board Mr. Shufflebotham moved an amendment to the payment of £21 per year to Canon Doman as Scripture examiner. Such payments were unnecessary and unjust, as taxing all for the benefit of one sect. Dean O'Brien (Catholic) remarked that, logically, Mr. Shufflebotham was right. The State had no right to teach religion, and the Board, as representing the State, should not make any offerings of money in this direction. Nonetheless, he should vote for the payment, because he was pleased that Protestants were willing to spend money in the teaching of what they believed to be religion. The Rev. T. A. Clarke naively expressed regret that such discussions should be raised by Mr. Shufflebotham, "because he knew they were exceedingly unpleasant to Canon Doman." And the rest of the men of God and their followers seemed to take this view of their public duties.

Just as in some parishes attempts are made to collect Church rates by official-looking but illegal notices, so support is acquired for provincial Voluntary schools by voluntary rates, which some people imagine are perfectly legal. It is not only a right, but a duty, to refuse to pay such rates unless the demand comes from a body which the ratepayer has had a voice in appointing, and whose use of the money is under public control.

The Jewish population do not seem to be so much concerned in religious as in secular education. The Religious Education Board sent out an urgent appeal for £1,400 to give children free instruction in religion and Hebrew. In response only £300 was subscribed by the wealthy community, of which sum five individuals contributed £245.

Dr. Edward Berdoe says that he was reclaimed by Robert Browning's poems from Agnosticism to Christianity. Perhaps he was. The point is hardly worth discussing. But the cream of the joke is that Browning himself was *not* a Christian. Mr. Robert Buchanan asserts that Browning plainly told him so, and Mrs. Orr, the poet's biographer, admits that he was not a believer in the supernatural part of Christianity—which is the only part that makes it a religion, or even a system.

"The next day the Jew, tied to the tail of a savage mule loaded with nuts, was broken into as many pieces as there were nuts upon the mule's back." This is the last sentence of the first tale in *The Blue Fairy Book*, translated by Andrew Lang from the French, *Traditions Populaires de l'Asie Mineure*. The Jew, by the way, was not guilty, like pious Jabez Balfour, of ruining widows and orphans ; nor did he, like the Rev. Mr. Crosby, commit adultery with another man's wife ; but he was—a Jew. Of course, Mr. Lang does not introduce such tales to Christian children to perpetuate the persecution with which throughout the ages Christians have treated the people to whom they owe their God and Savior. His interest is in the folk-lore. And so, in a sense, is ours. What a lurid light such a sentence as this casts on the whole history of the boasted religion of love !



A more amusing illustration and a fact, not a fairy fiction, is told by the learned Salomon Maimoon. A Christian nobleman entered his church in a state of intoxication, and, on approaching the altar, conducted himself indecently. As a penance, the priest ordered him to supply the church with a large quantity of wax candles to light the church and burn before the violated altar. The nobleman promised to comply, and did. He immediately issued an order that all the Jews on his estates should contribute so many wax candles. This nobleman knew the correct interpretation of the so-called Messianic prophecy: "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

There is no more specious application of prophecy than this of Isaiah liii. to the person of Jesus. Yet a simple reading of the preceding and following chapters suffices to show that this one but personifies "Israel my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen." Moreover, Jesus did not "see his seed" nor prolong his days, as the poem promises the servant of the Lord. Anything does as a prophecy of Jesus, though the Jews, who ought to know their own books best, could never find a single one.

The once famous anti-Semite, Dr. Stöcker, Court Chaplain of Berlin, has been expelled from the Conservative party, and has broken with the Christian Socialists. He can now join Ahlwardt in his anti-Jew crusade in America.

Herr Noske, one of the members of the Austrian Reichsrath, says that the priests from the pulpit excite the people against the Jews. A poor woman, living in the country, had adopted a foundling from Vienna who happened to be a Jew. She informed the parish priest of the circumstance, and was roundly abused by him for bringing a Jew to the locality. The child subsequently died. The priest refused to bury it in the graveyard. It was consequently interred in a field, and only transferred to the graveyard through the intervention of the authorities. Herr Noske asked when some primate of the Church would raise his voice against such practices, and preach that religion which taught men to love their neighbors as themselves. Herr Lüger, in response, declared that not a single bishop would be found to condemn the anti-Semites.

In a lecture on "The Church of To-morrow" the Rev. J. G. Birney, of Gateshead, fairly admitted that the Church had got to secularise and adapt itself to the times. He said: "The question that the modern Church was now called upon to answer was largely that one of method and adaptation of presenting Christianity to the present times. They would have to adapt their preaching to the life and thought of the age, and the Church would not have to be in its teaching like unto Augustine, who thought only for his time, or Luther and Calvin, for theirs, nor even as John Wesley thought out for his, but Christianity would have to be brought in the channels of modern thought—adaptable to modern life and modern progress." Now, has Christianity spontaneously come to this attitude? No; it has been forced to it after eighteen centuries.

Mr. Birney stated that "numerous crimes had been committed by religious persecution and theological controversies in the past," and remarked that, happily, the age of religious terrorism was passing away, and that they were now rejoicing in the light of a better day in regard to human liberty and Christian toleration. Christian toleration was a minus quantity until heretics were strong enough to compel it.

Mr. Birney says the Church will become less theological and creed-bound, and become more and more humanitarian. What is this but admitting that it will have to resign the vain worship of God for the fruitful service of man?

Rev. Edward Everett Hale is of the opinion that "the people of America have learned to suspect the ecclesiasticism of America. They look upon the clergy, by and large, as a lazy set of men, and they believe that what is called religion is a thing manufactured and put up for sale on Sunday mornings in these churches by these lazy ministers." We fear it is only the few who have thus much penetration.

Mr. Funk, of the *Voice*, the leading Christian Prohibition organ of America, made a bouncing offer of \$10,000 reward to anyone who could "contrive any way to take the saloon out of politics without taking it out of existence." *Liberty* claimed the cheque, saying: "It has been repeatedly demonstrated that it is possible to take the saloon out of politics without destroying it. That way is—absolute non-interference with the liquor trade. Let anybody who chooses open a saloon and sell liquor at any time he pleases. This will keep all liquor dealers, big and little, out of politics." Funk funk'd.

Walton Powell sued another infidel-slayer, Harry Long, of

Glasgow, for libel, claiming large damages. Harry Long has returned the compliment by suing Walton Powell for £5,000 damages for slander. We look forward to the trial of these actions with the expectation of much amusement.

Lucy Mallory, noticing the *Freethinker's* comments on Father Tyrell's utterance on vivisection, says: "It seems very inconsistent for a priest to claim that animals 'have no rights' because they have 'no radical capacity for pure reason,' for in all times priests have considered it the worst of heresies for anyone to have 'the radical capacity for pure reason'; and they have tortured and killed untold numbers for possessing this capacity. For this they burned Bruno at the stake."

It was hoped that Brunetiere's visit to the Vatican had Christianised him. But not much evidence of this appeared in his speech of welcome to Henry Houssaye at the Academie Française. He is reported as saying: "We professors are accused of having invented antiquity to make of it a livelihood; and the fact is that we make a living of it—a frugal living, it is true, but still a living. Consequently, our good faith is doubted when we say that Europe, if it had not been for the Greeks, would not be Europe; that Europe owes the place which it occupies to the Greeks; that in the immortal days of Salamis and Marathon they saved us, our arts, our sciences, our entire civilisation, from ruin that Oriental barbarism threatened."

The Rev. C. O. Brown, D.D., pastor of the first Congregational Church in San Francisco, California, who recently accused a certain Mrs. Mary A. Davidson of extorting from him the sum of \$500, was placed upon the witness stand at the trial on the 4th inst., and, after giving his direct testimony, he was subjected to a rigid cross-examination by the defendant's counsel concerning his relations with a Miss Martha Overman, during which he lost his temper, and attempted to assault the said counsel, but was prevented from doing so by the officers of the court.

The Rev. Joseph Pullman, of Bridgeport, Conn., charged with slandering the actress, Jane May, has been ordered to furnish \$7,000 bail to protect a judgment, in addition to the \$25,000 already furnished to secure his appearance.

At the Glamorgan Assizes at Cardiff, John Walter Moore, a Nonconformist minister from Rhondda Valley, South Wales, was sentenced to fifteen calendar months' imprisonment for assaulting a little girl named Fanny Ludlow, between Porth and Trealaw.

The *Labor Leader*, of Glasgow, devotes several columns to a scandal in that city concerning the visitors to a Mrs. Pollock, who is described as the cast-off mistress of an Established Church clergyman, and whose more recent patrons are among the *élite* of the pious and respectable.

Horatio Nelson Irving bears a noble name. His wife, however, has got a divorce from him and custody of her children, whom Horatio deserted. When last heard of he was a member of the Bowery Branch of the Christian Association in New York.

Mr. Charles Funk, of Cleveland, Ohio, writes to inquire: "Did R. G. Ingersoll say at the death of his daughter, 'My God'? Please answer." Great Ananias! what next? Ingersoll never lost a daughter by death or otherwise; he has no "god," and is not on speaking terms with anybody else's deity. No; he did not say, "My God."—*Truthseeker*.

As one of the most malignant of pious liars, the Rev. C. O. Brown, formerly of Dubuque, Iowa, will be remembered. In 1888 he made from his pulpit a dastardly assault upon the prominent Freethinkers of the country, including Ingersoll, charging them with leading immoral lives, teaching immoral doctrines, and corrupting the youth of both sexes—all of which he attributed to the influence of unbelief. In view of this, no one will be surprised to learn that the Rev. C. O. Brown, now of San Francisco, has just paid a woman \$500 down, and promised her \$35 dollars monthly for ten months, in order, as it is alleged, to avoid exposure as a seducer of a female member of his church. The *Star* of that place refers to him as "a self-convicted debauchee and libertine." About every sort of villainy and cowardice may be expected of that brand of pulpit-pounder who expects to win his own case by vilifying opposing counsel.—*Ibid*.

Presbyterian vigor in invective has not degenerated in Scotland. A Glasgow minister, who opposed total abstinence, was described lately in the pulpit as a "white-chokere blasphemer engaged in raising a sign-post to hell."

Father Fitzgerald, a Roman Catholic priest, of Rochester, New York, has been sentenced to ten years' imprisonment for insuring the parish school-house, and then attempting to burn it down to defraud the insurance companies.



Canon Boulaye, of the Roman Catholic Church at Rochdale, is immaculate as a priest, but contemptible as a man. Mrs. Kenny, one of the attendants at St. John's Roman Catholic Church, died in childbirth with her stillborn child. The father placed the child's body in the cold arms of its mother, and wished them buried together. Canon Boulaye was firm that such a proceeding could not be allowed. The child, he said, not having been baptised, was not a Christian, and could not have Christian burial with its mother. He refused to budge, and the funeral arrangements had to be carried out according to the will of the priest.

Mr. Crosby, the Battersea pastor, who has been found guilty of adultery, had been whitewashed by his "Protestant Church." The members declared that the accusations against their "beloved pastor" were false, and expressed their "deep and heartfelt gratitude to their Heavenly Father" for giving them such a good shepherd. Let us pray!

Is it not monstrous that people may leave any sum of money they like for priests to pray their souls out of purgatory, yet may not bequeath money for the purposes of uprooting protected superstition? Some time ago a lady left £4,000 for masses for the repose of her soul. Her relations contested the will on the ground that this was too large a sum. The Chief Baron of the Exchequer asked the counsel, "How much do you think would bring her out of purgatory?" The counsel suggested ten pounds or so, but the court held that the old lady was the best judge of the extent of her own sins.

There are 135 grog-shops in Jerusalem, all kept by Jews or Christians, and they derive their principal support from European and American Christian pilgrims, who visit the sacred place where they believe the "Son of God died for their transgressions." The local Muslims term these grog-shops, by way of reproach, "the Christian pigsties."—*Crescent*.

The Church has lost one of its graces. The Bishop of Norwich pronounced sentence of deprivation against the Rev. Allen Zachariah Grace, rector of Thwaite, St. John, in consequence of his having been convicted in London of larceny, while he had also been convicted in 1869 of gross intemperance, and was now unable to bring any testimony as to his having reformed his habits.

Tom Campbell, who was formerly secretary to Cardinal Manning's League of the Cross, but has since turned Protestant, made some references in Hyde Park to Mr. Purcell's recent *Life* of that prelate, which were taken in bad part by one John Monaghan, who knocked his hat off. Monaghan has been fined 10s.

Mr. W. T. Stead, or his subliminal consciousness, or his spook Julia, is responsible for the statement that a certain Congregational speaker saw the double of one of his congregations in church, while the original lady was lying at home ill in bed. It is lucky full particulars are not given, or the congregation might suspect that the preacher was somewhat too familiar with spirits.

Mr. G. Dolman, who was collector to the Hampstead Provident Dispensary, has sent in his resignation. He states in the local *Express* that the treasurer objected to his being collector on the ground that he is an Atheist. Mr. Dolman reminded the committee that "many of your subscribers are of the same rational school of thought as your collector."

The New Woman who bykes is a portentous phenomenon to the Rev. Dr. Hawthorne, of Atlanta. He says that when a girl returns from a good lively spin on the wheel she finds that "it was not the love of pleasure, but a personal devil, Satan, entered into her that he might degrade and get her picture into the columns of some sensational paper, and make her the subject of obscene comment in every clubhouse and gathering of filthy sensationalists."

The Rev. John Rusk, of the Church Militant, Chicago, has invited Colonel Ingersoll to occupy his pulpit some Sunday. Should the Colonel accept, there will doubtless be a full house, and a good advertisement for Rusk; and probably we shall hear that the Colonel has joined the Church Militant, whatever that may be.

*Tit-Bits* for February 1 has the following "Advice to Witnesses":—"It cannot be too widely made known that nobody is bound to 'kiss the Book' at all. Any witness may, if he chooses, elect to be sworn in the Scotch manner, which consists in uplifting the right hand. The extraordinary thing is that so many of the judges and magistrates of the inferior courts do not seem to be aware of this right; but we counsel any witness who desires to assert it to persist in doing so, whatever may be said to the contrary. It

is his absolute legal right, and if the magistrate attempts coercion he will fail."

A gas explosion in Doncaster Parish Church has resulted in damage estimated at over two thousand pounds, some fine stained glass windows having been blown to smithereens.

Originality as well as local color seem to characterise the methods of money-raising adopted by exigent Protestant pastors in the United States. If we are to credit the author of a paper in the *Forum*, who does not hesitate to describe them as "ingenious devices for raising money by false pretences," the humdrum bazaar, jumble-sale, or picnic of the old country has been liberally improved upon by our Transatlantic cousins. Thus we have the clam-cake sociable, the strawberry sociable, the pink tea, and the broom drill. The first Baptist Church in New Jersey had a successful "Poverty Sociable," at which, apparently, its members appeared in cast-off rags. We are told, too, that the Baptists of another city had a war concert, the Universalists a lawn *fête*, the Free-will Baptists a chocolate drill, the Congregationalists a Jarley waxwork show, the Swedenborgians a maypole frolic, the Episcopalians a *café chantant*, and the Zion Church a cake-walk.—*Daily Chronicle*.

The Rev. F. G. Widdows, the ex-Franciscan monk, Brother Aloysius, who is reported as saying how much in cash Jesus Christ was worth to him, sends out a circular from the Church of Martin Luther, South Hackney, announcing that "£50 is needed at once."

Rudyard Kipling is in trouble. "The profanity of some of their characters" is such that several of his books are excluded by the Board of Education from the Philadelphia Free Library. This is very sad! Still, it has its compensations. It is an excellent advertisement for Rudyard Kipling.

Du Maurier's *Trilby* is excluded from the Philadelphia Free Library on account of its "immoral teaching." The heroine actually shows her feet. Well, there are people who should be ashamed to show their faces; and some of them are on the Philadelphia Board of Education.

The Rev. Alex. Robinson, of Kilmun, published a very heretical book, entitled *The Savior in the Newer Light*. But the Presbytery of Dunoon means to keep the Savior in the old light—which is better for weak eyesight. Accordingly the Presbytery has decided that Mr. Robinson's book is subversive of all the fundamentals of the Presbyterian faith. That is settled unanimously. It now remains to be seen what will be done with Mr. Robinson himself. His fate is postponed till the first week in March.

The appointment of Miss Munday and Miss Wallis as Government inspectors of schools is a step in the right direction. Paul did not suffer a woman to teach; but we now suffer a woman to inspect the results of teaching.

Mr. John Morley has been well supported in his election campaign by the clergy. The black gentry are reconciled to him now. They see that his mouth is closed on the subject of religion.

The *Tablet* admits the statement of the *Daily Chronicle*, that Cardinal Manning left a document in relation to the Society of Jesus in England, but says "it was intended for the information of his successor, and certainly not for publication." The trouble is that it fell into the hands of Mr. Purcell, Manning's biographer, who is being so badly used by his co-religionists that he may divulge it.

Captain Pfoundes says of the Japanese converts to Christianity: "It is all too true, and more the pity it is that it is so, that the converts (nominal) to Christianity are largely natives whose conduct is such that, by the general opinion of foreign residents, such converts are not the most desirable class to employ. The true Buddhist has ever in mind the fear of punishment hereafter for misdeeds, not to be lightly atoned for. 'The naughty little boy who is always ready to say he 'is sorry,' if he is assured that he will obtain forgiveness,' has no counterpart in true Buddhism; and the too-easily-purchased pardon of Christian teaching is viewed as a danger, from the ethical standpoint, by the educated and intelligent Asiatic."

The *London Quarterly Review* notices the Rev. Mr. Horton's *rechariffé* of Wendt, under the title of "The New Rationalism." It says the reverent Rationalists profess to honor Christ at the expense of the Bible and the Apostles. "The old names are retained, but the old meanings are gone. We are told to believe that a Christ who is not divine can do for us what only a Divine Christ can do. Sin and atonement, forgiveness and faith, mean something different from what they used to do."



### Mr. Foote's Engagements.

*Sunday*, February 16, St. George's Hall, Hull:—10.30, "How the Bible Stands Now"; 2.30, "Is Religion the Cause of Progress?" 7, "Life, Death, and After."

*Tuesday*, February 18, Memorial Hall, Farringdon-street, E.C., at 8 (for the Humanitarian League), "The Rights of Men and of Animals."

February 23, Camberwell.

March 1, New Brompton.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—February 16, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road, London; 22, Todmorden; 23, Manchester. March 1, Camberwell; 8, Sheffield; 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, S. W.

J. M. R.—Thanks for cuttings.

R. S. PENGELLY.—Cuttings welcome. We will see about the Manning suggestion.

J. R. WHITELL.—Mr. Foote is lecturing in Hull to-day (Feb. 16). Neither the Protestant nor the Catholic "Lives of Luther" are quite fair. The best plan is to read both, and judge upon the facts.

J. THATCHER.—Mr. Foote will offer Bristol a date immediately on his return to London. We do not know of any book or pamphlet such as you require. To dramatise Secular principles, illustrating them at work in every-day life, would be no easy task. Certainly it has not yet been achieved.

E. S. BASIER.—Rather too slender treatment of such a big subject.

E. S. SMITH.—A pious concoction. Colonel Ingersoll has not become a Christian. He is still lecturing almost every night against Christianity.

A. FLASH.—The story of Thomas Paine's death-bed recantation is an old one. You will be able to read the truth in Mr. Foote's *Infidel Death-Beds*. There is no circumstantial story of Charles Bradlaugh's death-bed recantation, though there are innuendoes. His daughter, Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner, has the signed testimony of the doctor and nurses to refute his posthumous libellers.

J. PARTRIDGE conveys the best thanks of the Birmingham Branch for the recent lecture delivered by Mr. Watts under Mr. Foote's scheme, and also for the publicity we gave to the Midlands Conference.

W. BOOTH.—We should be glad to see a renewed Freethought propaganda in the Hartlepoons, but it is necessary to have local assistance before anything can be done at such a distance from London. The letter of Franklin's seems to refer to the first part of Paine's *Age of Reason*.

G. R. (Liverpool).—Thanks for cutting, which marks the progress of Freethought. Pleased to hear you were "delighted" with Mr. Foote's recent lectures in your city. The perfect health you wish him is not yet realised. It will be necessary for him to obtain rest and change at the seaside on his return home from the north. He has been working against indisposition all the time he has been away.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURE SCHEME.—Daniel Baker, £2; Glasgow Branch, collection at Mr. Foote's lectures, £2 16s. 1½d.

C. LEATCH.—It is very good of you to "expose the Secularism of the N.S.S." on Deptford Broadway; it was still more good of you to invite Mr. Foote to attend your meeting; but, unfortunately, he was engaged at Glasgow, and could not avail himself of this magnificent opportunity, the loss of which will embitter the rest of his days.

J. FAGAN requests secretaries to note that he has removed to 48 Popham-road, New North-road.

S. OAKLEY, 81 Radigunds-road, Dover, wishes to hear from Freethinkers in the town. He will also be glad of tracts or back numbers of the *Freethinker* for distribution.

A. J. H.—Thanks. Mr. Bradlaugh's Bill provided for affirmation, not for swearing in the Scotch fashion.

J. M. R. B.—Cuttings are always welcome.

H. JONES.—There is, we believe, a *Chairman's Guide*. Mr. Holyoake's *Public Speaking and Debate* may be useful.

"VOLTAIRE."—Professor Rhys Davids's manual on Buddhism is published by the S.P.C.K.; his Hibbert Lectures by Williams & Norgate. Lecky's *History of Rationalism* is published by Longmans. Mr. Forder supplies Mr. Bradlaugh's *Humanity's Gain from Unbelief*.

H. B.—Received with thanks.

C. WRIGHT sends us the following version of Diderot up to date: "Wandering by night in a forest with a solitary light, a stranger told me to put it out to find my way more surely. The forest was the world, the light reason, and the stranger Mr. Benjamin Kidd."

J. BURNS.—You will find what you want in *Bible and Beer*.

J. P.—Your book, *God, Christ, and Science Reconciled*, shall receive attention when we have a little leisure.

L. LEVINE (Charleston).—Thanks for papers. Please note "Sugar Plum" on the Paine portrait.

E. SMEDLEY.—(1) The division into seven days evidently arose from the phases of the moon. The custom was possibly adopted by the Jews when in Babylon, and legend ascribed it to the Lord's revelation to Moses. (2) Mr. St. Chad Boscawen's book is the latest, but we do not think it throws new light on the Sabbath question.

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

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Sun—Science Siftings—Reading Observer—Freidenker—Truthseeker—Open Court—Brisbane Courier—Two Worlds—Progressive Thinker—Warrington Examiner—Liberty—Greenock Telegraph—Suffolk Chronicle—Pall Mall Gazette—School Board Chronicle—Torch of Anarchy—Secular Thought—Rochdale Observer—Isle of Man Times—Hampstead and Highgate Express—Twentieth Century—Worker's Friend—Labor Prophet—East End News—New York Public Opinion—Clarion—Le Journal.

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.

### SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE'S lectures in South Lancashire were delivered in spite of indisposition which tempted him to return home. His three lectures at Liverpool were a trial, and he was very far from well on reaching Bolton, where, however, he was fortunate enough to enjoy every home comfort with the hospitable Hampsons. The audience in the Co-operative Hall, for numbers and enthusiasm, excelled everything seen in Bolton for many years. Several persons, more or less orthodox, joined in the discussion. At Blackburn, on the following evening, there was a similar experience. The hall was crowded with the largest audience that has been seen there for a considerable time. Many ladies were present, and friends had come in from Preston, Nelson, Lytham, and other places. Seated near the front was the veteran J. M. Umpleby, whose face was a picture as he followed all the points of the lecture. As for the audience in general, it was as enthusiastic as could well be imagined, and the discussion was continued till ten o'clock.

The Blackburn and Bolton friends are loud in praise of Mr. Foote's lecture scheme. They say it has put new life and activity into the movement. Audiences grow larger, and new members are being enrolled.

Glasgow gave Mr. Foote capital meetings on Sunday. The Brunswick-street hall was fairly filled in the morning, well filled in the afternoon, and inconveniently crowded at night. All three lectures seemed to be highly appreciated, the evening audience being particularly enthusiastic. Mr. Black and Mr. Gilmour officiated during the day as chairman. They strongly invited discussion, but did not elicit any. A collection in aid of Mr. Foote's lecture scheme realised £2 16s. 1½d. Glasgow has done extremely well in this respect. The Branch fully realises the value and importance of the lecture scheme, and is thankful to the President for its inauguration.

During the week following his Glasgow meetings, Mr. Foote has been lecturing every night in south-west Scotland. An account of his tour will appear in our next issue. To-day (February 16) Mr. Foote delivers three lectures in Hull, on his way back to London.

Mr. Foote delivers an address for the Humanitarian League next Tuesday (Feb. 18) in the Memorial Hall, Farringdon-street, E.C.—near Ludgate-circus. The chair will be taken at eight o'clock, and the admission is free, though in case of need preference will be given to the holders of tickets, which can be obtained gratis at 28 Stonecutter-street. Mr. Foote's subject is "The Rights of Men and the Rights of Animals." The address is one of a course organised by the Humanitarian League, in which Mr. Josiah



Oldfield, Mr. J. C. Kenworthy, the Rev. A. L. Lilley, and Mr. Frederic Harrison have already taken part. Such an opportunity should be seized by Freethinkers to induce their Christian friends to hear the President of the National Secular Society.

Mr. Daniel Baker, the Birmingham veteran, promises a subscription of £12 during 1896 towards Mr. Foote's lecture scheme, and sends a cheque on account. Another veteran, Mr. J. M. Umpleby, of Blackburn, offers to give £100 if ten others will do the same, or £50 if twenty others will subscribe the same amount. We hardly dare to hope that ten or twenty Freethinkers will volunteer to keep Mr. Umpleby company, but they may rely upon it that he means business, as he has already subscribed £20 to this fund. Certainly a thousand pounds would enable us to double the strength of the Freethought party in a year or two.

Mr. Charles Watts had two very successful meetings at Ipswich on Monday and Tuesday, February 3 and 4. He reports that the local Branch of the N.S.S. is doing practical work. Referring to Mr. Watts's lectures, the *Anglian Daily Times* says: "The able manner in which he dealt with his subjects was appreciated by the audience." A good report also appears in the *Suffolk Chronicle*.

Last Sunday evening Mr. Watts had a capital audience at Camberwell, when he lectured upon "Theology Tested at the Bar of History." The applause was frequent and most enthusiastic, and at the conclusion Mr. Watts received quite an ovation. Mr. Hartmann made an excellent chairman. We are pleased to hear that many strangers were present, including a large sprinkling of ladies.

This evening, Sunday, February 16, Mr. Watts lectures in the Athenæum, Tottenham Court-road, taking for his subject "Woman: Past, Present, and Future." This should draw a large audience at the present time, when so much is being said about "Woman's Rights" and the "New Woman." We hear that an interesting debate may be expected after the lecture.

The debate held at Derby between Mr. Foote and Mr. W. T. Lee is in the press, and will be published in a week or two in a handsome form at one shilling. It is probable that another debate between Mr. Foote and Mr. Lee will soon take place in London.

The Blackburn Society has taken a larger room at 18 St. Peter-street, where fortnightly meetings will be held. The recent social party, and the visits of Mr. Cohen and Mr. Foote, have all been successful, and new members have been added to the roll.

Mr. Forder lectures at Leicester on Sunday (Feb. 16), and as it is some years since he was there he will be glad to see many of his old friends. His subject is, "The Bible and Ancient Monuments."

At the adjourned general meeting of the Finsbury Park Branch, Mr. G. J. Ward was re-elected treasurer for the Branch, and Mr. H. R. Clifton as secretary, for the ensuing twelve months. The secretary was elected to represent the Branch on the N.S.S. Council. There will be a Branch meeting on the first Sunday in each month at the Bradlaugh Club, at 9 p.m.

The *Outlook*, an American religious magazine, in its number for January 25, gives an account, by Myrtis Willmot Barton, of Miss Clara Barton, of the Red Cross Society, who has gone out to Armenia to nurse the victims. She says: "Questions are frequently asked concerning Miss Barton's religious belief; on that score I can say that she comes of a family of most liberal-minded people, and this, combined with her life, has led her to adopt the true Red Cross spirit, making no distinction in race, nationality, nor creed—the word 'humanity' embracing everything—so that it may well be said of her, as Thomas Paine said of himself: 'The world is my country, to do good is my religion.'"

Mrs. Tyndall is making good headway, the *Athenæum* says, with the biography of her husband, the late Professor Tyndall. She has had to sift an enormous correspondence, some of which will doubtless be very interesting.

The *Liverpool Daily Post* publishes further correspondence on Religious Doubt. Some of the letters are refreshingly outspoken.

Mr. Joseph Collinson, of the Humanitarian League, sends us the following statement: "Much confusion having been caused by the similarity of names, attention is again called to the fact that the Humanitarian League is not in any way connected with the later-established magazine, the *Humanitarian*, and is not responsible for any of the opinions

expressed in that paper. It is the more necessary that we should repeat this notice, and that our members should give all possible publicity to it, because it is apparent from some editorial notes in the January number that the so-called *Humanitarian* is committed to a vivisectionist policy."

After a labor convention recently held in Cincinnati, the question of taxing Church property was discussed at length. The only Jew delegate in the convention said he was perfectly willing that the Jewish temple be taxed as well as the church. A resolution in favor of Church taxation was carried.

In an article on "The American College as a Moral Force," written by Professor W. T. Sedgwick, in the *Technology Quarterly*, he says: "In two important respects most scientific and technical colleges depart very widely from the old-fashioned American college of fifty years ago—namely, in neither requiring nor offering religious exercises, and in refusing altogether to stand *in loco parentis*." Mr. Sedgwick holds that these secular tendencies rather increase than diminish moral force. The present ideal is truth and love of accurateness.

The Paine exhibitions have excited new speculations as to what has become of the Romney portrait of Paine, valuable as a masterpiece of the artist as well as from its subject. It was painted for Thomas Cooper; not the Chartist, but the Freethinker, and author of *The Right of Free Discussion*. Cooper was one of the English Jacobins, and was deputed with James Watt, the inventor, by the Constitutional clubs, to congratulate the Democrats of France in April, 1792. The Romney portrait was painted in June of that year. Cooper afterwards went to America, where he became a judge, and president of South Carolina College. He died at Columbia in 1840, and it is likely that the Romney portrait is still in that district, though it is possible that it passes under some other name than that of the once obnoxious Thomas Paine.

#### BIBLE "IFS."

If God made Eve from Adam's rib  
While he was hypnotised,  
Breathed in her lungs the breath of life  
And stood her up full-sized  
Before him, then aroused her lord,  
Why can't that God again  
Create a man and woman so,  
And save the bearing pain?  
Is man, the earthly king, so weak  
No anguish he can bare  
Without an anæsthetic, while his mate  
Must grin and bear her share?  
If God made every living thing—  
Made man of common mud,  
And called the job a splendid one,  
Then why that awful flood?  
If good it was at first, why drown  
And start it all anew?  
A good mechanic plans his work,  
And works his plans too.  
If God, at first, discerned the end,  
Why did he not then know  
Enough to make the whole thing right,  
And let it stand just so?

—Dr. T. Wilkins.

#### Revised Texts.

Pray not at all.  
Love without ceasing.  
Let women not keep silence in the churches, or in any other places that need reformation.  
And if they want to know anything, let them *not* ask their husbands, for they may not find out much if they do.  
The fear of the Lord is the beginning of folly.  
Blood is of no use for washing out sin.  
Give not to everyone that asketh, but find out the deserving.  
Resist all evil.  
Take much thought for the morrow.  
Put not thy trust in preachers.  
Be yourself instead of trying to imitate an impossible God  
BABBALANJA.

"Please take us out somewhere, but not to a music-hall, for I have a clergyman's daughter stopping with me, and—she might meet her father."



## THE REAL FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH.

MATTHEW ARNOLD used to call the Church of England an association for the promotion of national goodness. This was not sarcasm, but his idea as to what the Church should be; and he tried his best, with small success, to make it so tend. As a matter of fact, the Church never has been this, and the only goodness it has ever promoted has been identified with submissiveness and obedience to "our spiritual pastors and masters" and the powers that be. Historically, the Church is an association for the promotion of subordination among the masses. Its political and economic purpose is to make the poor contented with their lot by assuring them that theirs is the kingdom of heaven, that resignation under suffering here is the necessary prelude to happiness hereafter.

The Church has always been the buttress of privilege; the buffer between the classes and the masses. Hume saw this pretty clearly, and Macaulay had a good inkling of the situation. The latter historian shows that in England in the seventeenth century the parson was a mere appanage of the squire. He says that, for one who made the figure of a gentleman, ten were mere menial servants. The coarse and ignorant squire could hire a young Levite for his board, a small garret, and ten pounds a year. This clergyman might not only be the most patient of butts and of listeners, might not only be always ready in fine weather for bowls and in rainy weather for shovel board, but might also save the expense of a gardener or of a groom. Sometimes the reverend man nailed up the apricots, and sometimes he curried the coach horses. He cast up the farrier's bills. He walked ten miles with a message or a parcel. He was permitted to dine with the family, but he was expected to content himself with the plainest fare. He might fill himself with the corned beef and the carrots; but, as soon as the tarts and cheesecakes made their appearance, he quitted his seat and stood aloof till he was summoned to return thanks for the repast, from a great part of which he had been excluded (*History of England from the Accession of James the Second*, chap. iii.).

Lecky remarks that the domestic chaplains "often closed their career by purchasing some small living at the expense of a marriage with the cast-off mistress of their patron." Dean Swift says that in a great household the chaplain was the resource of a lady's maid whose character had been blown upon, and who was therefore forced to give up hopes of catching the steward. All this shows the parson was a mere retainer—retained, of course, for his utility. As the squire got superseded by the commercialist, the parson attained a better position as a protector of the haves against the havenots. The increase of wealth gave an increase of position to the clergy, as a sort of superior auxiliary to the police. But with the establishment of a regular police force, and the utilisation of the press as a protector of property, the economical function of the clergy is rapidly passing from their hands.

In Mr. Brooks Adams's *Law of Civilisation and Decay*, a work of original thought and research, the true function of the clergy is clearly displayed. In Catholic times the Church was a power between the crown and the nobles, often able to usurp authority over both. It was the growth of the free towns and of trade which diminished the power of the clergy. To the Church, the rise of the mercantile class was pure loss, not only because it prompted their vassals to seek better protection than ecclesiastics could give, but because the propagation of the secular spirit of trade bred heresy. Minds brought into contact with actual facts were apt to doubt the utility of prayers and masses. Accordingly, all commercial communities have rebelled against paying for miracles, and in the thirteenth century scepticism was already widely spread among the manufacturing towns. The clergy retaliated with frightful ferocity. As heresy followed in the wake of trade, the Inquisition followed in the wake of heresy; and the beginning of the century just named witnessed simultaneously the prosperity of the mercantile class and the organisation of the Holy Office.

The Reformation indicated the triumph of the commercial, landed, and monied classes. As the well-to-do and aristocratic ceased to be military, they needed all the more the services of the clergy to "haud the wretch in order." The endowment of the Church was a saving of blood and treasure to the army. It was the distinction of Henry VIII.—not that

he changed religion, for he had no intention of doing this, but that he fully carried out the policy of all strong English kings—to make the Church wholly subordinate to the State. He ended, as far as England is concerned, a prolonged conflict. Hence the hatred of sacerdotalists for what they call the Deformation.

What an unwarlike oligarchy requires is a moral instrument of repression, which will assure safety to their property and privileges. Mr. Brooks Adams says plainly that the Tudor rulers treated their religion as a financial investment. The Church of England, in Tudor times, vibrated between the orthodoxy of the "Six Articles" and the Calvinism of the "Lambeth Articles," according to the exigencies of real estate. Within a single generation the relation Christ's flesh and blood bore to the bread and wine was changed five times by royal proclamation or Act of Parliament. In all the changes of faith under Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, the clergy were always with the powers that be. If creeds were alike to the aristocracy, it well understood the value of the pulpit as a branch of the police of the kingdom, and from the outset it used the clergy as part of the secular administration. On this point Cranmer was explicit. Elizabeth represented the landed gentry more perfectly than any previous sovereign, and she told her bishops plainly that she cared little for doctrines, but wanted clerks to keep order. Elizabeth led her clergy with a rod of iron. No priest was allowed to marry without the approbation of two justices of the peace. When the Dean of St. Paul's offended the Queen in a sermon, she told him "to retire from that ungodly digression and return to his text"; and Archbishop Grindall was suspended for disobedience to her orders. The correspondence of the Elizabethan bishops is filled with accounts of their thralldom.

The Church of England has been, since its constitution, the first order of defence to property and privilege. Hence the amount of old sermons on the divine right of kings, followed by those on the divine right of primogeniture. When the land was poor and the people ignorant, the only learned class could pretend that kings themselves acquired their supernatural qualities from sacerdotal consecration. As wealth and knowledge increased, the process became reversed; and priests drew their title to speak in the name of God from bishops appointed by the Crown. Politically speaking, this was the whole substance of the Reformation, which intellectually, by opening the flood-gates of "private judgment," began a process by no means yet completed. Archbishop Cranmer taught that God committed to Christian princes "the whole cure of their subjects as well concerning the administration of God's word as of things political." Bishops, parsons, and vicars were ministers of the temporal ruler, to whom he confided the ecclesiastical office precisely as he confided the enforcement of order to a chief of police. As a part, indeed, of the secular administration, the main function of the Anglican priesthood, under the Tudors and the Stuarts, was to preach obedience to their patrons. In no other department of public affairs did the landed gentry show particular energy or ability. Their army was ineffective, their finances indifferently handled; yet, down to the time of their overthrow in 1688, they were eminently successful in ecclesiastical organisation. Every intelligent person, who might otherwise prove troublesome, was found a benefice, while Dissenters were kept down by Test and Conventicle Acts.

While the man of God was almost the only educated person in the town or village, and certainly the only one who week by week could impress his ideas on the people, he was a political power, and was utilised as such. Yet, as Herbert Spencer points out, Nonconformity has developed with the spread of industrialism. Every extension of the power of the people has been resisted by the parsons, for every such extension has restricted their own sphere of influence. Above all, they have stood, and still stand, as far as possible, in the way of education; for, as their influence over adult minds diminishes, they can retain their hold only by securing the plastic minds of infants. The fight for the control of education is a fight for life and death, and they will do anything to secure the victory. Bitterly opposing science and democracy as long as they dared, they are now in the towns seeking to accommodate religion to science, and authority to democracy. They are unsaying the old lies about man and his destiny. They are throwing over the Devil and eternal torments. Juggling with words is their trade. They seek to hold with the hare, and run



with the hounds. The poorly-paid curates in towns are allowed to flirt with Christian Socialism, while the whole real weight and influence of the Church throughout the country is placed in the scales of reactionary Conservatism. Whether this identification of the Church with Conservatism, which has come conspicuously to the front of late, will be to the permanent interest of either remains to be seen. Freethinkers bide their time, and rely on more powerful and palpable agencies than prayer.

The clergy are, as Carlyle called them, solemnly-constituted impostors. Pretending to despise the things of this world, they have always been scheming for power and preferment, and greedy of the crumbs which fall from rich men's tables. They vow they are called by the Holy Ghost to their office, and are always ready for a better living. They preach principles flagrantly opposed to their own practice. They say, "Woe to the rich," and "Regard not the things of this world," yet keep a good eye on the fat livings. High, Low, and Broad Church, Attitudinarians, Platitudinarians, and Latitudinarians, are one on the fundamental question of cash. Those who fail to see that the whole thing is a blind will, in my judgment, never penetrate the real inwardness of our holy religion.

UNCLE BENJAMIN.

### MISSIONARIES AND THE SLAVE TRADE.

SOMETHING about Christian missions in Africa is learned from the report of Professor O. F. Cook, who was sent to Liberia to make an investigation for the New York State Colonisation Society. The *World* publishes a summary of a chapter in the report devoted to a description of the slave trade.

Professor Cook alleges that many enterprising missionaries, too impatient to convert natives by the slow process of moral suasion, buy them as slaves at so much per head, and thrust Christianity upon them. These missionaries, he says, are largely responsible for the demand which makes traffic in human bodies profitable. "There is every probability," says the report, "that if only the good work goes on far enough we shall have regulation slave raids, towns burned, the people slaughtered, and the children carried away to satisfy the demand. Buying children is a part of the system. The missionary soon finds that he could work to better advantage by having children who can be expected to stay continuously, and thus have the opportunity of prolonged training. Children are cheap—he will redeem them from barbarism, train them for usefulness among their own people, etc. In the interior of Liberia boys twelve and fourteen years old were offered me for goods of cash value of about three dollars. Girls come at about twice the price. But what becomes of these children after they are bought? They are, as a rule, at the mercy of the vicissitudes and temper of the missionary, and not in the charge of some permanent and well-organised institution. Beyond the missionary who bought them, no one feels any special responsibility. The missionary may die or return home within a very few years or months; indeed, one of these alternatives is, in this climate, an early probability, and the child, now unused and ill adapted to returning to native life, but without hold on the civilised, is in a truly pitiable state."

The writer says that slavery is still an African institution. "Willingness to attack and carry off the inhabitants of the next village is well-nigh universal in Africa. There needs only to be a sufficient demand for the captives. It makes not the slightest difference in the world whether the goods are to be exported to America or carried across the Soudan to Egypt, or 'educated' in mission schools in Africa or elsewhere; the pillage and cruelty which will be invoked to supply the demand are exactly the same."

Professor Cook has only added new testimony to the mischievousness of missionary work everywhere among subsidiary races of people. In China we have massacres and consequent international complications; in Turkey, the Armenian atrocities; in South America, the extinction of the natives; in Hawaii, disease and depopulation; in Africa, a stimulation of the slave trade and rapine. All this to inculcate a religion that makes the heathen no better off here or hereafter. It is time that the criminal folly should cease, and the "millions for missions" be retained in the pockets of the dupes from whom it is extorted under false pretences.—*New York "Truthseeker."*

Good Minister—"Yes, children, we all have besetting sins. So have I, like the rest. Now, what do you suppose is my besetting sin?" Bright Boy—"Talking."

### TO A CHRISTIAN.

WHY couple the ungodly one  
With sinners? Tell me, pray!  
Know ye not, then, that sin is done  
Alone when man his way has won  
O'er crushed humanity?

The God to whom ye bow the knee  
In homage, year by year,  
Came, a phantasmal mystery,  
From men of low mentality,  
Beneath the stress of fear.

The lightning, as it rent the sky  
With swift electric flash,  
Did then unto each startled eye  
An angry God personify,  
His voice the thunder-crash.

And so, where'er in cosmic plan  
They could perceive no cause,  
The early men a greater man  
Conceived, with power to bless or ban  
Apart from Nature's laws.

Yet you know those events that they  
Observed with wonderment  
Are all accounted for to-day,  
Because the lamp of Reason's ray  
A swift solution sent.

Then cast ye off the childish lore  
Found in the mythic page;  
Think not as thought the men of yore,  
But knowledge seek for evermore  
To grace the coming age.

To Truth and Right erect your shrine,  
And intellect and worth;  
Let no one 'neath injustice pine:  
So shall you find a very mine  
Of happiness on earth.

F. W. THORRINGTON.

### IMPRESSMENT OF SINGERS.

It is common enough to *press* people to sing, but in former times this practice was carried to a more tyrannical extent than we have now any example of. In the time of Henry VIII., when music was more cultivated in England than it had ever been before, a power was given to the deans of cathedrals and collegiate churches for supplying their several choirs with children possessed of good voices by *impressment*. John Tusser, the unfortunate author of a poem on *Husbandry*, tells us that he was *impressed* from Wallingford College, in Berkshire, into the King's Chapel.

Queen Elizabeth, who relinquished no prerogative which had been exercised by her ancestors, kept in full force, during her whole reign, that of issuing placards or writs for impressing singing boys for her Chapel, as well in the capital as at Windsor. The original of one of these, signed by herself, is preserved in the British Museum. It authorises Thomas Gyles, Master of the Children of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, and his deputy or deputies, and every of them, to take up in any cathedral or collegiate churches, and in every other place or places of this our realm of England and Wales, such child or children as he or they, or any of them, shall find and like of, and the same child and children, by virtue hereof, for the use and service aforesaid, with them or any of them, to bring away without any let, contradictions, stay, or interruptions to the contrary.

Under some such acts as these archbishops still pretend to confer musical degrees. But this treatment was not nearly so bad as that in Catholic countries, where, for ages, boys with good voices have been castrated for the service of the Church, women's impure voices not being permitted in the sacred buildings!

The odd result of the misplacement of stops must be familiar to most readers, but it is not often that they are so serious as in the following instance:—William Sharp, the celebrated line engraver, believed the divine mission of the madman Richard Brothers, and engraved a portrait of that worthy with the following inscription beneath it: "Fully believing this to be the man appointed by God, I engrave his likeness.—W. SHARP." The writing engraver by mistake put the comma after the word "appointed," and omitted it at the latter part of the sentence, thus giving a ludicrous effect to the whole inscription. Many impressions were struck off before the mistake was discovered and rectified.



## CORRESPONDENCE.

## SPOOKS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—You will perhaps kindly grant me a small space in your next issue for the purpose of passing a few remarks on Mr. Orr's critique on Mr. Watts's admirable article on "Evidence: Real and Imaginary."

I have been a decided unbeliever in both *holy and unholy ghost stories and miracles* for the last sixty-three years; as such, I herewith humbly beg to endorse every word in Mr. Watts's article.

I have spent many years in Pembrokeshire, where there are scores of *old women* who do not condescend to witness single ghosts, but go in for them in the wholesale line, such as crowded funerals, etc. When a farmer, or any member of his family—or, indeed, any other country person—dies, it is quite a common occurrence for one or more of these *old women* to say: "Ah, I knew that somebody would soon die in that house, for I saw a funeral coming out one night about a week since." It is quite amusing to the respectable people in the neighborhood, as not one of the old women was ever known to mention a word about the imaginary funerals until there was the necessity for a real one.

I may say that it is also quite a common occurrence for Christians, on the death of a relative or friend, to say: "Ah, their dear spirit is gone to the Lord who gave it."

It may be that Lord Brougham's friend, when death was approaching, thought that one Lord was as good as another: so, quite naturally, he sent his spirit to his old friend, Lord Brougham.

T. DUNBAR HARRIS.

## THE DEVIL STILL ALIVE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—One of the audience at Mr. Foote's lecture in Bolton on Tuesday week, who listened to "What Has Become of the Devil?" carried the lecturer's verdict to the mill where he works, the following morning. "Bill," he said to his mate, "dost know as a yeerd last neet hast devil's deud?" "It's a damn lie," said Bill; "devils noan deud. Thers one ut hawer heawse, a gradley sneezer, who crakt my on t' yed wit poker obeawt a fortnit sin, an' that's why aw stopt off my wark. Neawe," said Bill again, "devil's noan deud."

J. F. H.

## NO MATTER WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM.

It has often been said that the orthodox Church never refused to accept money, no matter by whom given or how the donor acquired it. The following anecdote is illustrative of the effect of the example set for the more ignorant class of white people and negroes:—

In one of the Southern towns there was a colored "revival" meeting in progress, and as nearly everyone was more or less filled with "de sperit," and would be inclined to be liberal in their donations, the pastor, an aged negro, took advantage of this fact, and urged the congregation to remember that the church was sadly in need of money for various purposes.

Just about this time a gambler from Ohio and several friends came in out of curiosity. The pastor then asked one of the deacons to pass the collection box. The first to contribute was Brother Wilson, who dropped in ten cents.

"Ten cents from Brudder Wilson," announced the deacon.

"May de Lawd bless Brudder Wilson!" answered the pastor.

"Twen'y-fi' cents from Brudder White!" again announced the deacon.

"May de good Lawd bless Brudder White!" responded the pastor.

The deacon continued to announce the names of those who contributed and the amounts, and finally reached the gambler, who was feeling pretty joyful, as he had won quite a large sum the previous night, and he took a twenty-dollar bill from a large roll and dropped it in the box.

"What's de name, sah?" asked the deacon, his eyes popping with excitement.

"Oh, never mind the name. I am a gambler from Ohio."

"Twen'y dollahs from a gamblah frum Ohiah!" the deacon shouted.

"May de good Lawd bless an' prospah de noble gamblah frum Ohiah!" fervently exclaimed the pastor.

It has yet to be understood that a man may be a religious doubter, a pious sceptic, and an earnest infidel; for surely it is religious to doubt as long as a thing seems doubtful, and pious to refuse to give assent to that which appears to the soul a lie.—George Dawson.

## BOOK CHAT.

WE are pleased to notice that Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman has included in his *Victorian Anthology* the noble sonnet, by Eugene Lee Hamilton, entitled "A Flight from Heaven":—

Once, from the parapet of gems and glow,  
An Angel said: "O God! the heart grows cold  
On these eternal battlements of gold,  
Where all is pure, but cold as virgin snow.

"Here sobs are never heard; no salt tears flow;  
Here there are none to help, nor sick nor old;  
No wrong to fight, no justice to uphold:  
Grant me thy leave to live man's life below."

"And then annihilation?" God replied.  
"Yes," said the Angel, "even that dread price;  
For earthly tears are worth eternal night."  
"Then go," said God. The Angel opened wide  
His dazzling wings, gazed back on Heaven thrice,  
And plunged forever from the walls of Light.

This fine sonnet, the imaginative daring of which is equalled by its artistic beauty, was copied into the *Freethinker* on its first appearance in the *Academy* some years ago; but no lover of poetry will regret our repeating it, as it now appears in *Sonnets of the Wingless Hours*.

\* \* \*

The *Academy* (Feb. 8), reviewing Mr. D'Arcy's *Short Study of Ethics*, says: "To appeal to God when thought is helpless, and then make the Divine Being the principle of thought's explanation, is, in the last resort, only to expound *ignotum per ignotius*." The same number of the *Academy* contains a review of Mr. J. M. Robertson's work on *Buckle and His Critics*.

\* \* \*

A series of "Famous Scots," to be issued by Messrs. Oliphant, is inaugurated this week by one on Thomas Carlyle, by Hector C. Macpherson.

\* \* \*

Dr. A. Specht's Freethought work on *Theology and Science* has been translated into Dutch, and is published in six parts, at forty centimes per part, by Wilms & Co., of Amsterdam.

\* \* \*

Hiram M. Stanley, the author of *Studies in the Evolutionary Psychology of Feeling*, holds that feeling is the primitive mental state. Fear is regarded as the primitive emotion which arises with knowledge of objects and power of representation, and superstition follows fear. The evolution of mind is regarded as dependent on the stimulating influence of pain on volition.

## PROFANE JOKES.

Child—"Does the Lord take the papers?" Mother—"No, my child. Why do you ask?" Child—"Oh! I thought he didn't; it takes our minister so long to tell him about things."

Bobby—"I don't think Dod was very polite, mamma." Mamma—"Why, Bobby, what makes you think that?" Bobby—"You always told me 'at ladies should be 'tended to first, and Dod 'tended to Adam 'fore he 'tended to Eve."

"Who was Peter?" asked a Sunday-school teacher. "Peter was a brick." "Why, Johnny, I am surprised at you." "It says so in the Bible, anyhow. I read it the other day. It says: 'Thou art Peter, and upon this brick I'll build my church.'" "Rock, Johnny, rock; not brick." "Well, I knew it was some kind of a building material."

It was in a Caribou church, only the other Sunday, that the choir did not put in an appearance at the opening hour. The pastor arose, glanced at the empty choir seats, and said: "I see the singers are absent this morning. Let all arise and sing, 'Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow.'"

"Dickson resents your pitching into the Devil, bishop." "On what ground?" "Says it doesn't do to antagonise people we may have to ask favors of in the future."

This reminds us of a good old Freethinker who told his parson he had better die in the middle of the week. "Why so?" said the man of God. "Because no rich man can enter the kingdom of God. You will have to go to old Nick, whom you are always preaching against, and if you are fresh from a Sunday sermon won't he pile on the fire and brimstone?"

"Do you want to come in?" asked St. Peter, kindly, as a forlorn-looking soul rode up on a second-hand cloud. "I dunno," was the dubious response. "Ain' the poor pew kinder drafty?" "No, no; we have no poor pew here!" Taking hold of his arm—"Come right in." "No, ye don't! I know what religion is, an' I know what heaven is. No poor pew, no religion; no religion, no heaven. So long!"



## 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.

**ATHENÆUM HALL** (78 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30, Charles Watts, "Woman: Past, Present, and Future."  
**BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE** (36 Newington Green-road, Balls Pond, N.): 7.15, Conrad Goodrich (late of the Lyceum Theatre), "Some Comedians of the Early English Church." Tuesday, at 8.30, social party. Wednesday, at 8.30, R. Forder, "The Signs of the Zodiac"—Lecture V. continued.  
**BATTERSEA SECULAR HALL** (back of Battersea Park Station): 7.45, F. Haslam, "Life and Times of Thomas Paine."  
**CAMBERWELL** (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, J. Rowney, "Paul and his Teaching."  
**EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY** (78 Libra-road, Roman-road): 8, Sunday-school; 7.30, Miss Hope Rea, an address.  
**LAMBETH BRANCH** (Liberal and Radical Club, 108 Westminster Bridge-road): Thursday, at 8, F. A. Davies, "The Value of Christianity."  
**PENTON HALL** (81 Pentonville-road—Humanitarian Society): 7, Joachim Kaspary, "The German Lutheran Idolatry."  
**SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY** (Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road): 11.15, Sunday-school; 7, T. Gantry, M.L.S.B., opens discussion on "Should Voluntary Schools be Subsidised by the State?"  
**WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY** (Westminster Town Hall, Caxton-street): 11.15, Mrs. Gilliland-Husband, "Philosophic Faith."  
**WEST HAM SECULAR ETHICAL SOCIETY** (61 West Ham-lane): 7, W. Heaford, "The Dream of Immortality."  
**WOOD GREEN** (Club and Institute, 4 Lawn-villas, Stewart-crescent, opposite Wood Green Church): 6, club committee; 7.30, T. F. Blanchard, "The Principle of Population in Relation to Socialism"; 9, 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): 11, H. Snell, "What are Sacred Books?" 7, "Charles Bradlaugh, Atheist and Reformer" (with limelight illustrations).  
**BLACKBURN** (Venetian Hall, Darwen-street): Thursday, Feb. 13, J. Titherington, "Inconsistencies of Christianity." Sunday, at 3, members meet at 18 St. Peter-street.  
**BRISTOL** (Shepherds' Hall, Old Market-street): 7, Leon Dorné, A.K.C., "Christian Gratitude."  
**HECKMONDWIKE** (Lumbar's Coffee Palace, Market-place): 2.30, a meeting.  
**GLASGOW** (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12, discussion—J. Kinniburgh, "Some Eccentricities of our Written Language"; 6.30, J. Cassels, "Over-population and Poverty."  
**HULL** (St. George's Hall): 10.30, G. W. Foote, "How the Bible Stands Now"; 2.30, "Is Religion the Cause of Progress?" 7, "Life, Death, and After."  
**LEICESTER SECULAR HALL** (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, R. Forder, "The Bible and Ancient Monuments."  
**LIVERPOOL** (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 7, J. Read, "The Ethics of Suicide."  
**MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL** (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, a lecture.  
**NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE** (Northumberland Hall, High Friar-street, near Grey's monument): 11, O. Cohen, "The Great French Revolution—Daybreak"; 3, "Spinoza"; 7, "Atheism: its Meaning, Morality, and Justification."  
**SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY** (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, F. H. Hart, "Respectable Heresy."  
**SOUTH SHIELDS** (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, business meeting; 7.30, entertainment.  
**STOCKTON-ON-TES** (32 Dovecote-street): 6.30, W. M. Scott, "Vaccination."

### Lecturers' Engagements.

O. 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 Credon-road, Rotherhithe, London.—March 1, Balls Pond.

**HUMANITARIAN LEAGUE LECTURE.**—The fifth of a series of addresses on THE RIGHTS OF MEN AND THE RIGHTS OF ANIMALS will be given in the MEMORIAL HALL, Farringdon-street, E.C., on TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, at 8 p.m., by G. W. FOOTE. The chair will be taken by ERNEST BELL. Subject, "THE SECULARIST VIEW." The Lecture will be followed by a Discussion. Admission Free.

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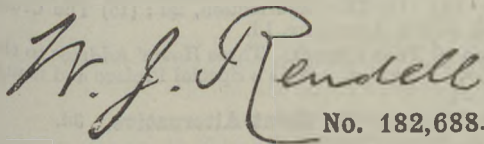
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