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THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

(Continued from page 146.)

A GOOD MAN GONE WRONG.

THE hero of a melodrama must never do anything wicked, but he must be thought capable of doing it, and it rather heightens the interest if he lies under a certain suspicion; for the virtue of the multitude is like that of some of the fine ladies in old comedies, who flared up at a positive attack on their virtue, but despised the man who never excited their apprehensions. All this is provided for in *The Sign of the Cross*, as it was provided for in *Claudian*. In both pieces Mr. Barrett plays the part of a good man gone wrong—not too wrong, but just wrong enough. You know he will come out right in the end, but meanwhile there is an appearance of uncertainty, which raises a half-pleasant alarm. Mr. Barrett's part in the new play is that of Marcus Superbus, Prefect of Rome. This high and mighty gentleman is a kind of Manfred. He is in very bad company, and there are hints of his questionable past. But his inherent nobility breaks through every hindrance and shines through every disguise, and eventually he dies in the fullest odor of sanctity.

Now let the reader observe the simplicity of Mr. Barrett's methods—I mean as a playwright. I have said that all his Pagans are wicked, and all his Christians virtuous. As a general statement it was true, but I have now to furnish the requisite qualification. Marcus Superbus is in the list of Pagans, but he is a good man gone wrong, who is bound to come right, and in the end he joins the list of Christians. Thus the exception only emphasises the rule. There was but one good man among the Pagans at the beginning, and he was obliged to leave them at the finish; which shows, not only that the Christians were good, but that every good man was sure to become a Christian.

THE CONVERSION OF MARCUS.

Marcus Superbus is Prefect of Rome under the Emperor Nero. The Christians are persecuted, and one of these unfortunates is a beautiful girl named Mercia. Sweetness and purity were not enough; beauty was also indispensable; for Marcus had to fall in love with her, and what was the use of a plain face under a Salvation bonnet? The part of Mercia is played charmingly by Miss Maud Jeffries. It is not an active, but a passive character. Mercia cannot strike into the course of events and modify it, but she can suffer the worst it may bring. And as I saw her devotion to "her people," beheld her renunciation of earthly joys, and watched her growing resignation to martyrdom, I thought of how the Church has always exploited woman, of how it has pressed her natural maternity into the service of its sinister supernaturalism.

Marcus desires this Christian girl. Her innocence is a condiment to his jaded palate. He tries solicitation, he attempts violence. Both fail, and at last he is touched by the passion of love. He would have Mercia as his wife. She is in the dungeon of the amphitheatre; her companions have gone out to the lions, and she is to follow them. A judicious interval is allowed by the officials for stage purposes. Marcus enters and begs her to save her life, and let him be her husband. She also confesses that she loves him. But how is her life to be saved? Marcus tells her. Let her renounce Christ. She refuses, and prefers death;

whereupon Marcus becomes a Christian himself, claims Mercia as his bride for all eternity, and goes forth hand in hand with her to the hungry lions in the arena.

"All For Love; or, the World Well Lost" was the title of John Dryden's finest tragedy. Mr. Barrett's play might be called "All For Love; or, the Gods Well Lost." From an emotional, amatory point of view, the conversion of Marcus is intelligible; from a spiritual point of view it is simply ridiculous. Can a man become a Christian in three minutes? Is Christianity to be learnt from a woman's eyes? Has it no doctrines, no history; nothing which makes any sort of appeal to the intelligence?

I have been told that Marcus was becoming a Christian all through the play; to which I reply that he was falling in love all through the play. He was *not* a Christian when he besought Mercia to renounce Christ; he *was* a Christian three minutes afterwards; and the suddenness of the change is beyond all rational explanation.

Marcus Superbus is cheated at the finish, through Mr. Barrett's imperfect acquaintance with the teachings of Jesus Christ. Mercia could not be his bride for all eternity. There is no justification in the New Testament for supposing that a man who misses a wife here will gain her hereafter. This is the world in which we must marry, if we ever marry at all. Jesus Christ distinctly taught that there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage in the kingdom of heaven, but all are as the angels of God—that is, of the neuter gender.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

The third scene of the third act is laid in Marcus's palace, where a number of Christians are imprisoned, and amongst them Mercia. Marcus comes out from a noisy crew of male and female revellers, talks to himself about the beautiful Christian girl, contrasts her with the lewd women he has left (of course the women were *all* lewd in Rome—except the Christians), and finally sends for her. After some rather fantastic conversation, they are suddenly surrounded by the revellers, who have burst out to find Marcus. The women proceed to rate Mercia like fishfags. One of them actually invites her to work a miracle—as though that were a Christian speciality! Mr. Barrett is probably ignorant of the fact that the Pagans had as many miracles as the Christians. Neither side denied the actuality of the other's miracles; the point in dispute was this—Whose miracles are the work of divine, and whose of demonic agency? However, the wanton crew are driven away by Marcus, who then (curiously enough) solicits Mercia to impurity, and, on being repulsed, actually attempts outrage. The stage is darkened for this struggle, at the crisis of which there comes a flash of lightning; and Mercia, having somehow found a crucifix, holds it up in the limelight; whereat Marcus shrinks aghast and crouches in terror. It was a "fetching" piece of stage business, but it will not stand criticism. Lightning could be no great novelty to a Roman, and a cross meant nothing to a Pagan; or, if it meant anything at all, it was significant of the powers of generation—a most awkward thing to appeal to at such a crisis! Had nothing stood between Mercia and outrage but a cross, her honor would not have been worth a moment's purchase. We do not read that the Turks and Kurds spare Armenian girls on account of the crosses they wear on their breasts. The fact is that this sign of the cross—Marcus cowering, and Mercia holding aloft the crucifix—is simply a bit of stage clap-trap, quite in harmony with the sentimentality of the whole melodrama.

The sign of the cross is introduced again in the last act. The boy Stephanus—a part admirably played by Miss Haidee Wright—shrinks from following his Christian companions from the dungeon of the amphitheatre to the bloody arena. He has been lashed and racked already, in a most brutal scene, which makes no appeal whatever to the intellect and imagination, but is a direct appeal to mere sensation; its interest, in short, if it has an interest, being not psychological, but purely physical. Stephanus is still suffering from the effects of that torture, and the consciousness of having betrayed his friends while under it, and Mercia tries in vain to arouse his fortitude; but at last he sees a vision of Christ beside him, and of the Cross before him, and he follows it cheerfully to his doom. This, again, is very pretty, but it is susceptible of improvement. It is easy to bring invisible characters and objects upon the stage. Something more definite should be produced in the nineteenth century. Surely the resources of science are equal to throwing a phantom Christ beside the boy Stephanus, and a phantom cross before him. We make this suggestion in good faith. Even melodrama should be as good as possible, and it is as well to “go the whole hog” in everything.

Mr. Barrett must pardon me for telling him, or reminding him, that the Cross has played other parts than the protector of virtue and the stimulator of fortitude. It was the sign of the Cross, we are told, that led Constantine, and through him his successors, to force Christianity upon their Pagan subjects. It was the sign of the Cross that led the multitude of Crusaders to pollute with cruelty and bloodshed the very land that had been trodden by the feet of their “Savior.” The sign of the Cross was painted on the shirts of the poor wretches burnt for heresy by the Inquisition. Sometimes, by a crowning infamy, as a heretic was in the flames, a red-hot crucifix was pressed to his lips.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

THE LAST WORDS OF HAMLET.

“The rest is silence.”

I SHALL not, with friend Gigadibs, attempt to show “the upshot of *Hamlet*,” nor do I flatter myself with perceiving points in the character “unseized by the Germans yet.” Yet it is not without cause that most all the critics, including Goethe, have fastened on *Hamlet* as taking us deepest into the thought of the great dramatist. *Lear* may have more poignant pathos, *Macbeth* more surging strength, *Romeo and Juliet* more passionate poetry; but in *Hamlet* we know we have the revised, matured work of the author. Though this may not assure us that it was his favorite work, yet the labored care spent on the revision is proof that Shakespeare deemed it worthy of that care, and no better instruction in the art of the great artist can be obtained than by comparing the rough edition of 1603 with the polished production of 1604. Act by act, scene by scene, line by line, he altered and improved the earlier play till what we have is, in part, rather a new version of *Hamlet* than a revision. Indeed, it is only the latter which can certainly be considered the work of Shakespeare, since *The Tragical Historie* of 1603 was probably taken down from the actors without any revision by the author.

Between the two versions many notable things must have occurred. One of which we have knowledge is that Shakespeare read Montaigne. His copy of Florio’s translation (1603) is one of the supreme treasures of the British Museum, and Shakespeare’s indebtedness thereto has often been pointed out.

In 1871 a certain German, named Stedefeld, published a translation of Emerson’s essay on *Montaigne the Sceptic*, together with the thesis that *Hamlet* was a “tendency-drama” against the sceptical and cosmopolitan *Weltanschauung* of Montaigne. Mr. Jacob Feis, in his *Shakespeare and Montaigne* (1884), took still more distinct hold of the wrong end of the stick. He argued that *Hamlet* was written as a warning against the scepticism and inconsistencies of Montaigne. This is nonsense. Henry Morley, in his Introduction to Florio’s translation, says rightly: “Shakespeare certainly was with Montaigne, and not against him.”

Had Mr. Feis studied the development of *Hamlet*, he might have been spared committing himself to an absurdity. Had he but taken *The Tragical Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* (1603), and the date also of Florio’s *Montaigne*, and compared it with the later revision, he would have found that the whole tone of thought is brought more into conformity with Montaigne. In the famous soliloquy, “To be or not to be,” we have in the earlier version (possibly mainly a report of the acted *Hamlet*):—

“Bourne before an everlasting judge
From whence no passenger ever return’d—
The undiscovered country at whose sight
The happy smile, and the accursed damned.”

For which Shakespeare substituted: “The undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns”—in face, as Goldsmith notes, of the fact that Hamlet had just seen his father “piping hot from purgatory.” So for “a hope of something after death” he substitutes “a dread” as the true factor. As Montaigne says of death, “*L'autre nous effraye.*”

There is such a different cast of thought between the amended version of *Hamlet* and that of 1603 that we are tempted to consider that the *Tragical Historie* represents the early work which Henslowe acted in at Newington Butts in 1594. In the earlier version *Hamlet* smacks of the ranter, in the later of the thinker. Here are a few examples of the philosophy which is absent in the first edition:—

Act I., scene 2—“How weary, flat, stale, and unprofitable,” etc.

Act II., scene 2—“Denmark’s a prison,” etc.

Act II., scene 2—“I have of late lost all my mirth,” etc.

Examples might be multiplied. The difference between the two *Hamlets* is even more than that between the work of a man of thirty and a man of forty. It is the difference between one who accepts the world and one who ponders upon it; between one who says as his last words “Heaven receive my soul,” and one who says “The rest is silence.”

J. M. WHEELER.

BELIEF IN GOD AN EMOTIONAL FIGMENT.

(Concluded from page 147.)

To the emotional believer in a God the proclamations of the Hebrew prophets, the shouts of unlettered Arabs, the incantation of the priests, and the incoherent exclamations of the Salvationists are of greater importance than intellectual declarations, which are regarded by these lovers of uncontrolled emotion as being lifeless and cold. The prophet of an emotional God needs no learning; he only asserts and announces, without ever explaining the meaning and force of what he asserts and announces. He presents neither art nor science, but contents himself with assumptions, which are the creations of his own mind. Even believers who are not extremely fanatical indulge more or less in these drawbacks, and they candidly confess that they are unable to explain why they do so. We think it was Paley who said, “He alone discovers who proves.” If this statement were accepted as a general axiom, half of the great theological “lights of the Church” would be extinguished, inasmuch as those who profess to have discovered a God can furnish no proof of their alleged discovery, for in their case fancy is relied upon rather than fact.

Many of the ancients attributed the first principle of all things to some one known agency, such as fire, water, air, etc., and each of these became the foundation or symbol of a religion; but such faiths made but little progress. They lacked the emotional feature which is prominent in the religions of Western nations. A good illustration is given of the ineffable and indefinable use of language, in reference to the incomprehensible, by Mencius, who says: “I fully understand language, and nourish well my vast flowing vigor.” “I beg to ask you,” said his companion, “what you call ‘vast flowing vigor’?” To which Mencius replied: “The explanation is difficult. This vigor is supremely great, and in the highest degree unbending. Nourish it correctly, and do it no injury, and it will fill up the vacancy between heaven and earth. This vigor accords with and assists justice and reason, and leaves no hunger.” Now, we submit that to a practical person, whose mind is not filled with ecstasy, this emotional condition does “leave hunger.”

The well-trained mind can be satisfied only by what it can be filled with, and there is nothing in such frenzied utterances as these to satisfy those who hunger for knowledge. A similar emotional figment is presented by English writers who attempt to describe the supposed supernatural, which is indescribable. To talk of "looking through nature up to nature's God" is mere rhetoric, destitute of any real argumentative signification. The discoveries of science are constantly driving the notion of an emotional God from the realms of intellect, and, as George Combe said, "Secular providence rules in his stead." If the God of the Theist had been a discovery instead of an emotional invention, this could not have happened. The banishment of the God notion from the human mind, so far as it has occurred, is the result of the scientific explanation of the movements going on in the organic and inorganic worlds. But here it has been discovered that formations and modifications can be traced to an endless succession of natural causes; and thus the supernatural has been removed into the spiritual world, and even here believers in Spiritualism have to confess that natural law prevails. Thus, in every realm the belief in an emotional God is becoming more and more ephemeral. A proof that this God notion is but a figment of the mind is found in the orthodox teaching of what is called the "Providential care exercised over the events of life." As Chaucer puts it—

Be it of war, of peace, or hate, or love,
All this is ruled by the sight above.

If this ruling be a reality, it is of a most extraordinary and cruel character. No man worthy of the name, even if he had the power, would be guilty of governing the universe as it is supposed to be governed by the supernatural Providence. If such a being exist as the "God of Nature," and he rules and controls natural events, he must certainly be the very incarnation of cruelty. Under his special government earthquakes swallow men, women, and children by thousands; cyclones, with their withering blasts, rob whole families of home and life; colliery accidents crush to death the hard toilers, thus depriving their loved ones of their only means of existence; and the tempests on the ocean consign thousands to watery graves. Under this "Providential care" all the malignant forces in nature are let loose, and no God intervenes to arrest or prevent the devastating work. Well may J. S. Mill exclaim that "nearly all the things which men are hanged or imprisoned for doing to one another are nature's every-day performances. Killing, the most criminal act recognised by human laws, nature does once to every being that lives; and in a large proportion of cases often protracted tortures, such as only the greatest monsters whom we read of ever purposely inflicted on their living fellow creatures..... Nature impales men, breaks them as if on the wheel, casts them to be devoured by wild beasts, burns them to death, crushes them with stones like the first Christian martyr, starves them with hunger, freezes them with cold, poisons them by the quick or slow venom of her exhalations, and has hundreds of other hideous deaths in reserve such as the ingenious cruelty of a Nabis or a Domitian never surpassed. All this nature does with the most supercilious disregard both of mercy and of justice, emptying her shafts upon the best and noblest indifferently with the meanest and worst; upon those who are engaged in the highest and worthiest enterprises, and often as the direct consequence of the noblest acts" (Essay on *Nature*, pp. 28, 29). After fully reflecting upon the misery, sufferings, and horrors which these facts indicate, are we not justified in regarding the belief in God as nothing more than an emotional figment?

If a God of infinite knowledge, power, and goodness really existed, it is only reasonable to suppose that he would make his existence known to us. He must be aware that many persons have sought long and anxiously for evidence of his existence; but they have failed to discover the object of their search. If God be what his believers allege that he is, he possesses the power of convincing every honest mind of his reality. Moreover, if a knowledge of him would be an advantage to all of us, his goodness should prompt him to reveal himself. But he has not done so; therefore, what is the sincere and earnest inquirer to do? He cannot manufacture evidence in favor of that of which he is entirely ignorant. It is useless to aver that persons who do not believe in a Supreme Being are obstinate and perverse. That is an imputation as false as it is unjust. Besides, such an accusation implies that we wish to avoid conviction, which is the very opposite of the

truth. To many of us it would be a source of great consolation if we could recognise grounds for believing that a being existed upon whom we could rely for help in the hour of need. The facts of life, however, do not appear to us to justify such a belief. We cannot think that a world in which there is so much wrong, so many gross inequalities, and such palpable injustice as we see around us, is directed and regulated by a God of infinite power and goodness. While injustice triumphs over justice; while wrong is clothed in purple and fine linen, and right is clothed in rags, begging for bread; while brutal force is allowed to trample ruthlessly beneath its feet the fairest flowers of maiden virtue; while nations are permitted to writhe in the agonies of famine, pestilence, war, poverty, squalor, vice, and crime; we say, while these blots deface the humanity of our race, we cannot believe that a God exists who could, but will not, destroy such agencies of desolation and despair.

Instead of gratifying our emotions upon the figment of theology, we prefer to turn to the facts of nature and to the truths of science, where ample scope is afforded for the fullest play of all our emotions. Who will deny that there is enough in nature to kindle within us the warmest rapture of enthusiasm. The massive rocks, the golden sunset, the glowing stars, the rolling waves, the rippling brook, the grassy mead, the trees with their luxuriant foliage, and the flowers of every variety of hue which have entranced and charmed mankind during all ages, are but the grand treasures and sights of nature. The poet who has revelled in these natural beauties, painting them in words which have stirred the emotions to their lowest depths, and made the objects themselves stand out in clear outline conspicuously to the reader, fascinating and enrapturing his mental vision, is the poet of nature, who finds in the external universe food for his highest powers.

In science we have also ample sources for emotional gratification. We have astronomy, with its worlds upon worlds, revolving around the sun; geology, with its fossil wonders, telling tales of ages long past; botany, with its variety of foliage; zoology, with its innumerable number of animal organisms; and last, but not least, the great science of man, who possesses a mind capable of the highest cultivation, an imagination prolific in picturesque representation, and aspirations lofty in their nature and consoling in their influence. These facts of science are more valuable to us than all the figments of theology, for it has been truly said: "Theology is a dark-robed demon of fear; science a white-robed messenger of love. Theology is an owl that haunts the night with doleful sounds; science is an eagle that flies upward towards the sun. Theology is the night full of dark, gruesome things, conjured up by the moral and mental nightmare of the race; science is the day full of health and joy, lit by the clear, shining sun, that drives away the very shadow of fear. Theology is a shroud covering the dead past; science is a banner inspiring the living with enthusiasm for a glorious future." CHARLES WATTS.

A BOUT WITH A BIGOT.

(Concluded from page 149.)

"ON page 314 of Dick's book I find the story repeated by you about the meeting of 'French literati,' who, being asked severally whether there was any such thing as moral obligation, answered in every instance, there was not; and Dr. Dick assures his readers that he had this on 'good authority.' We all know 'good authority'; it is cousin-germane to 'They say,' 'It is credibly reported,' and the widespread family of hearsay. You would not hang a cat on such tainted testimony; but any stick is good enough with which to beat the 'infidel' dog. The story, on the very face of it, is a preposterous fiction; but the contriver of it was not an artistic liar—he has over-reached himself. Whoever heard of any sane being disclaiming all moral obligations? It is possible that a party of French Atheists, such as that to which Hume was introduced (Hill Burton's *Life of David Hume*), might have disowned the Christian or supernatural sanctions of conduct; but there is not a line in the writings, nor record of the speech, of any 'infidel' repudiating all moral responsibility. The 'infidel' is always the first to insist on the duty of the individual to

the society in which he lives; without the recognition of that relation, society is impossible. Do you really mean to say that you retailed this silly falsehood on the slender foundation of Dr. Dick's 'good authority'? If so, it only confirms me in the conviction that some Christians, like most of the Jews of old, do not extend the benefits of the Ninth Commandment to 'infidels.' I presume that the form of moral obligation to which you confess does not require the keeping of faith with, or the observance of the law of honor towards, 'infidels'; and perhaps, after all, you Christians find you have more than enough to do in 'hating each other for the love of God, and fighting like devils for conciliation,' without stopping to consider the trifling question of the duty of fair play towards your external enemies. It is a malignant lie to say that 'soon after the Revolution the great body of French infidels, who then ruled the nation, not only denied all the obligations which bind us to truth, justice, and kindness, but pitied and despised, as a contemptible wretch, the man who believed in their existence,' and that, during the Revolution, 'Atheism was publicly preached,' and 'a professor was even named by Chaumette to instruct the children of the State in the mysteries (*sic*) of Atheism.'*

"The party of philosophical Atheism in the Revolution was that of the Girondes, which perished through the machinations of the Robespierists, soon after the advent of the Terror in 1793.† To use Mrs. Besant's words: 'The Gironde disappeared from the Convention ere 1793 had run half its course, and only the basest malice, or the profoundest ignorance, can ascribe the bloodshed of the Reign of Terror to the party which was among its earliest victims, which was essentially the party of reasoned Freethought, which was the child of the sceptical philosophy of the eighteenth century. The non-Christian Theistic party was roughly that of the Montagne.‡ Atheism may have been preached by individuals, but it was never enforced by the State, which, as we have seen, continued to pay the constitutional clergy. By the 'great body of French infidels,' who ruled France after the Revolution, Dr. Dick may possibly mean the Council of Five Hundred, or, less probably, the Directory; but in neither case is the description accurate, and it is simply outrageously incredible to say that either the post-Revolutionary Legislature or Executive pursued a policy of deliberate violation of justice, truth, and kindness. Dr. Dick's short and easy method seems to be that, whenever Frenchmen or 'infidels' are concerned, the acts of individuals incriminate the class or nation to which they belong; but whenever a Christian is naughty he is not a Christian.

"On pages 315-16 Dr. Dick paints in glaring colors, and presents in the most lurid light, a penny-show picture of the horrors of the French Revolution; but he discreetly omits to depict the butcheries of the 'White Terror,' carried out at the instigation of the Royalists—the Christian Royalists—in the provinces.§ But I daresay you look for a liberal discount off Christian atrocities, while the 'infidel' must pay interest at usurers' rates. Read the story of 'La Vendée' in *Louis Blanc's History*, or, if you prefer literature more nearly on a level as regards its subject, with the sanguinary evangelical tract, but out of all comparison with it as to style, Victor Hugo's *Ninety-Three*, as to the manner in which the priest-led Vendéans treated their Republican prisoners. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. If the Parisian massacres prove the wickedness of Atheism, and are to be set down as its natural fruits, what of the devilries of the White Terror? Perhaps you will answer that they were the work of Catholics, and, therefore, ought not to be counted as unrighteousness to Christianity; but you Christians have a trick of including Catholics when you are seeking to prove the success of Christianity by counting heads. Either Catholics are Christians, or they are not; and, as you can hardly afford to renounce them, you must accept the responsibility for their misconduct. Do you really understand anything about the underlying and exciting causes of the Reign of Terror? Are you aware that it was precipitated by a nefarious combination of all the leading Christian powers of Europe? that the blustering Duke of Brunswick had openly boasted that within a given time

he would seize Paris, raze it to the ground, and immolate all its inhabitants? that the Convention found itself menaced on all sides by the forces of the Allies and the craven-hearted emigrés on the frontiers, and by spies and secret enemies within the gate, even in the king's chamber and the Convention itself? Do you know enough of human nature to apprehend what even the best men, unnerved by constant work, anxiety, and dread, maddened by the thought that all their dearly-bought liberties may, at any moment, be snatched from them, may be driven to do? The continuous study of the sordid, abject life of the poor, the constant contemplation of its squalid tragedy, deranged Marat's wits. Can you wonder that the men of the Revolution, many of them of unstable, emotional equilibrium to begin with, and overstrung by the awful tension of the cumulative Revolutionary crisis, lost their heads in the figurative sense, before they lost them literally?

"Dr. Dick computes the total number of the victims who perished during the Revolution at three millions. As a matter of fact, there are no trustworthy statistics available. Dick's estimate is a ridiculously exaggerated one, even if we include in it the number of the French killed in the frontier battles with the Allies. But, in any case, suppose that we make up a *per contra* statement of the tale of the victims of Christian persecutions, religious wars, and the witchcraft delusion, how will Christianity emerge from the comparison? Do you plead that there is no doctrine of 'Christ's Christianity' which sanctions these crimes? While I do not admit that, I turn the plea against yourself. Point out to me any article of teaching in the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, D'Alembert, Diderot, Condorcet, D'Holbach, Volney, or any French philosopher of the last century, that sanctions directly, or by implication, the barbarities of the Revolution. The 'tiger and the ape' in human nature are still often too strong for the Rationalist; yet in three hundred years of but meagre power and opportunity he has done more to tame them than your Christianity during the eighteen centuries of its almost undisputed sway. Why, only last Christmas you were all bawling 'Peace on earth, goodwill to men'; and before the echoes of your carols had died away you were swaggering about like so many cut-throats, vowing the vengeance of the sword upon Turks, Americans, Boers, and helpless Ashantees. So much for nigh upon two thousand years of Christian civilisation!

"I observe that you have drawn much of the inspiration and information of that part of your paper which enlarged upon the sombreness of 'infidelity' and the disconsolateness of 'infidels' in the presence of death, from Dr. Dick's book.

"Dick adduces the much-quoted fable about Voltaire, and the seldomer-mentioned one of Gibbon, in support of his view that 'infidels' dread death more than 'fidels.' His account of Voltaire's death-bed is a scandalous perversion of the facts. It is true that Voltaire had a priest; but the real reason for this was that, as, according to the Christian law of France, a heretic's body might be cast out to rot by the roadside, and as Voltaire, with pardonable weakness, desired that his corpse should be decently buried, he took the only course open to him—that of seeming conformity with the Church. His last words, uttered with perfect calmness ten minutes before his death, and addressed to his faithful *valet-de-chambre*, were: "Adieu, my dear Morand, I am gone."* In reference to Gibbon, whose expression, 'All is lost, irrecoverably lost,' in a letter on the death of Mrs. Posen, Dr. Dick takes as a characteristic avowal of the 'infidel's' anguish at the thought of the total extinction of friends by death, and of his own similar fate, I find it reported that when he came to die 'the *valet-de-chambre* observed that he did not at any time evince the least sign of alarm or apprehension of death.† In Mr. Foote's booklet you will find sixty-four carefully authenticated accounts of the deaths of the most distinguished modern 'infidels,' and from every one of them there are totally absent those very manifestations of doleful foreboding and hysterical despair which Dr. Dick and you, who feebly mimic him, declare to be the necessary concomitants of disbelief in the consolations of a creed that, in the words of Holy Willie's prayer, 'sends ane tae heaven and ten to hell, a' for thy glory, and no' for ony guid or ill they've done afore thee.'

"It has been my painful privilege to stand by the death-

* Dick, *loc. cit.*, p. 314.

† Lamartine's *Girondins*, vol. iii., pp. 170-184.

‡ *French Revolution*, p. 235.

§ *Histoire de la Revolution*, par Louis Blanc, liv. xvi., p. 646, quoted by Annie Besant, *loc. cit.*

* For a list of authorities see G. W. Foote's *Infidel Death-Beds*, second edition, pp. 92-96.

† *Last Days of Gibbon* (in Milman's edition of Gibbon), vol. i., Introduction, quoted by G. W. Foote, *loc. cit.*, p. 45.

beds of many Freethinkers, and never once have I witnessed the slightest sign of any fear of a beyond. On the contrary, apart from the sorrow of leaving those they held dear, most of the dying 'infidels' were firm and composed, even to the point of cheerfulness, sustained to the last by the principles which they had espoused, and which they had found sufficient amidst all the lights and shadows of their way of life. But, after all, what do death-bed testimonies signify? They do not prove the truth of the opinions held by the dying, else all systems are true, and the Mohammedan who, in his passing, has visions of Al Sirat, and bebies of houris flying to welcome him, verifies the existence of what the Christian flouts as sheer hallucination. Montaigne once said that we did not need a philosophy to teach us how to die; we want one to show us how to live. If it should happen that a man whose whole working, thinking life has been devoted to the service of Freethought did, in the delirium of mortal sickness, call upon that name of Jesus which he first lisped at his pious mother's knee, it would only mean that in the tumult of his brain some early impressions had surged to the surface. For, if the Master did not indite it, has not some later hand added with a master-touch that old Jack Falstaff, dying in Eastcheap, 'babbled o' green fields'? And so, to the poor wretch gasping his last in some noisome den, in gloom and stench, there comes back the fragrance of the open country on a spring morning, and the shimmer of cool, clear waters, and the song of birds, and in the lane, with its garniture of hawthorn, the sweet face of the woman he loved long ago.

"I have said before (in my oral criticism of your essay) that habitual cheerfulness or sadness and the morbid fear of death are commonly idiosyncratic. That is how the Christian puts it when you speak of Samuel Johnson's or Addison's horror of death, or of the profound melancholia that made Pascal's life a burden, and drove the poet Cowper to attempted suicide. If it is an Atheist who is in question, the Christian smells a causal connection between his Atheism and his pessimism. But, in point of fact, apart from that tension of temperament from which no belief, however optimistic, can entirely relieve its subject, the Atheist has more to gladden and less to sadden him than the Christian. He does not see in his neighbor, or it may be even in his own flesh and blood, a possible child of the Devil, bound for an eternal Hell. He does not hate and harass his fellow-men because they do not bow the knee to the God whom he worships, or look upon this world as a wilderness, as a state of probation, where we have no continuing city. On the contrary, he beholds the race of men marching on from a lower to a higher life. He greets every man as a brother, and he owes a grudge to nobody for opinion's sake who allows him to hold and utter his own unmolested. As for this world, it is to him wondrous fair, but capable of boundless enrichment and beautification if men would but exchange creeds for deeds, and seek for truth as earnestly as they now strive to perpetuate ancient and privileged Error.

"Are you still satisfied with your 'authority' for the statements made in your paper on 'Infidelity'? I think you owe me a rejoinder. I have preserved a copy of this for possible future public use."

The pith and quality of Mr. Hart's "rejoinder" are conveyed in the subjoined passages: "I do not intend to satisfy your curiosity by telling you who I think the most (*sic*) reliable authority—Dr. Dick or the names you mention. Further, I positively decline to discuss the subject with any man who can make such an outrageous statement that (*sic*) 'The Rationalist has done more in three hundred years to tame the "tiger and the ape" in man than Christianity has done in eighteen centuries of undisputed sway.' There must be very much of the tiger left in the man who can make such a monstrous assertion, and much more of the ape in the man who could believe it." Like God, like worshipper. Jehovah cursed and chastised Adam and Eve for being too curious, confounded the speech of the builders of the Tower of Babel because they wanted to get up to heaven and see what was going on there, and struck ever so many people dead because they looked into a box in which he lodged. Your mystagogue and trickster always hates people who ask inconvenient questions, and try to peep behind the curtain. Nobody cares a denarius for Mr. Hart's or my own opinion as to the value of this or that authority, as an authority; we are only concerned to know whose testimony is the more credible in reference to a given point. This expert in Christian Evidences, and most notable

researcher in the history of "Infidelity," is so constitutionally careless, or, not to put a very fine point upon it, unconscientious, that he cannot even quote my words faithfully, although they were staring him in the face. There is a maxim in law that a witness found equivocating in one particular may be considered untrustworthy all round. If Mr. Hart is to be tested by that rule, it will go hard with him. The exquisite good taste and refinement of the personality based on the "tiger and the ape" phrase is worthy of that Christian charity which, next to Christian veracity, has come to be a "hissing and a bye-word."

What a fine, typical specimen of the genus *Christianus*, *orthodoxus*, *ignavus*, *ignobilis* (otherwise the orthodox Christian ignoramus of the baser sort) is this example from Garelochhead. As an individual his obscurity and incapacity render him a negligible quantity, but as a type he is simply invaluable. Such specimens are yearly becoming scarcer. The survivors are found only in outlying rural stations, where their isolation protects them from the destructive competition of higher forms of life and thought. It is thus that the pouched animals of the Australian continent persist, while their congeners in other parts of the world have been fossils for ages. I add this Garelochhead specimen to my collection with great pride and joy. There is not a characteristic organ or structure wanting. The atrophied eye, the undeveloped brain, the marvellously prehensile hand, still grasping some hair and bones of the skeleton of the *Dickus Christianus* upon which it last feasted, all are represented to a nicety. My only difficulty is that of assigning the precise varietal value of my acquisition; but perhaps my readers will kindly classify it for me.

J. P. GILMOUR.

THE TURK AND THE CHRISTIAN.

FOUR great problems now engage the attention of Christian philanthropists, and I believe that all of them are embodied in measures at present before the various legislatures. They include the suppression of liquor drinking, Sabbath-breaking, prostitution, and the public exposure of the female form. If there is anything that can for a moment divert the energy of the reformers from these vast issues, it is the conversion of the heathen, particularly the Turks. Now, among the subjects of the Sultan there is no liquor drinking, no Sabbath-breaking, no prostitution, and females, when in public, conceal their persons from toe to topknot. Hence, before I inlist for reform at home or for conquest abroad, I want to know whether, by the suppression of the above reprehensible customs, we of this country are to be transformed into the moral image of the Turk, or whether, by converting the Mohammedans, these customs are to be introduced into the Ottoman Empire, and its inhabitants thereby made to become like us. In either case, what will be gained, and who will have gained it?

We might induce the Turk to take our Christ, who manufactured wine, as a substitute for his Mohammed, who prohibited that drink as a beverage. Our whiskey we might trade, bottle for bottle, for his sherbet. We could spare him our Roosevelt and meddling parsons to enforce that Sabbath observance which with him is at present voluntary. For his polygamy we could offer our "social evil," and for his veiled females, as unsuggestive as so many bales of dry goods, our *decolleté* dames who uncover just enough of their flesh to arouse the emotions without satisfying the eye, and to incite the imagination to unwholesome revelry. But would he be any better off? It seems to me that, upon balancing one thing against another, we should lose nothing by the bargain if we made an even swap, and gave him Anthony Comstock for a present.

The Turk's habits, custom, and religion are at least as good as those of Christians. All he needs is to be a white man instead of a Turk, and the fact that we can't make one out of him should not be overlooked.

—*Truthseeker*.

GEO. E. MACDONALD.

An odd circumstance happened once at Winchester. As Dr. Wilson was one Sunday morning going through the streets towards the cathedral, he heard a woman cry: "Mackerel! All alive, all alive, oh!" And on his arrival at the church he began the sermon as follows: "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive, all alive, all alive, oh!" These last words the doctor proclaimed aloud in the true tone of the fisherwoman, to the great surprise of the congregation. But the good doctor was so studious and absent that he knew not what he had done.

ACID DROPS.

IT is astonishing how busy the clergy can be in answering a Freethought lecturer "next Sunday" or some other convenient time—after he has left the locality. When Mr. Foote was lecturing recently at Hull, the Rev. F. Ballard, a Congregational minister who fills one of the most important Hull pulpits, was present at the afternoon meeting. At least it is so reported. He did not, however, accept the opportunity which was offered for discussion, but reserved his criticism for a more suitable occasion. Writing in the local *Daily Mail*, a correspondent signing himself "Fairplay" comments rather severely on the discretion which appears to be, not only the greater part, but nearly the whole of the reverend gentleman's valor: "When Mr. Foote was in Hull 'mum' was the word, but now that he has gone the reverend gentleman can make short work of the infidel."

The religious census taken at Bolton disclosed such a "shocking" state of things that Mr. Walker, a local capitalist, offered £5,000 towards evangelising the town. Since then his tannery has been totally destroyed by fire. The damage is estimated at £150,000, and the loss is only partially covered by insurance. Alack and alas! There seems to be a poor chance of getting that £5,000 now.

Alluding to this Bolton census, the *Methodist Times* makes the confession "that it is to-day the exception for a Methodist chapel to be really full, and that the immense majority of the people of England are unreached by us or by any other Church." It appears, however, that the West London Mission, which Mr. Price Hughes bosses, is more flourishing than ever, though it suffers [Ah!] from "a great temporary lack of funds." "The crowd in St. James's Hall," we read, "is, if possible, more dense than ever, and there are constant conversions." No doubt; but Mr. Hughes will be ill-advised if he publishes any more narratives of them. The Atheist Shoemaker is not yet forgotten.

Lord Rosebery, the dreadful man who keeps race-horses and actually won the Derby, was bitterly and incessantly denounced by the *Methodist Times*. His lordship has not given up his race-horses, and he may win another Derby; but somehow or other he is forgiven, although he is unrepentant. "Lord Rosebery," says the *Methody* paper, "is getting to know the heart of England," and "Mr. Gladstone will have a successor."

Brigadier Lumsden, of the Salvation Army, has resigned. He has been chief cashier to the Army, and secretary of its Banking Department. "There is no doubt," the *Methodist Times* says, "that he has quite unique experience of Christian finance." This gentleman, who is so experienced on the mammon side of righteousness, has accepted a post under the West London Mission; and his co-operation (in the arts of Christian finance) will relieve Mr. Hughes of "an intolerable financial burden" and "add years to his life." We congratulate Mr. Hughes on this respite from heaven.

Mr. Price Hughes writes a letter on the Lumsden incident to the London *Echo*, denying that it has any sort of connection with Ballington Booth's revolt in America, or that it implies any sort of hostility to the Salvation Army. In the course of this letter Mr. Hughes states that "tens of thousands of Methodists have during the last twenty years joined the Salvation Army." We are glad to have this statement made thus publicly. It supports the contention that Booth's followers are, for the greater part, not "converts" at all, but Christians attracted by sensationalism from other denominations.

"General" Booth comes home to meet trouble. In "Our Auxiliary Letter," which is headed in large letters, underlined, "For Private Circulation," W. Bramwell Booth tells how Mr. and Mrs. Ballington Booth sent in their resignations dated January 31; how he sent out Herbert Booth and Eva Booth to entreat them to reconsider this; but these mediatory efforts have failed. Ballington Booth is reported to be energetically organising another Army.

Though this is the first time there has been a secession in the family, it is by no means the first time that men of ability, trained in the Army, have left, finding better results were to be obtained in other quarters.

Ballington Booth and his wife have started "on their own." They have chosen a motto, "Jehovah-nissi"—"the Lord is my banner"; which is all very well, but the Lord is already William Booth's banner, unless there is a big mistake in the prospectus. The name of the new organisation is not yet settled, but a great initial meeting was held on Monday evening in the Cooper Institute. Ballington Booth explained that he was not going to fight the Salvation Army. "We

have resolved," he said, "to the best of our abilities, to do something that shall win over the middle and artisan peoples of this country to the cause of Christ." The new movement, the *Daily News* remarks, is to be for the genteel. "To this complexion," continues our contemporary, "has the equality and fraternity of Salvationism come at last. Mr. Ballington Booth is probably wise in his generation. He knows that Americans are very particular as to the company in which they are saved, and that they altogether refuse, for instance, to be saved in the company of the negro. Some of the white Young Men's Christian Associations will not admit colored members, and they, so to speak, extend the system of negro compartments to the voyage to Paradise."

The *War Cry* comes out with a very suggestive large front-page cartoon, representing Satan tempting Christ and saying: "All this will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me." It looks like a personal slap at Ballington Booth.

The Bristol King-street Circuit *Church Record* for March has an article on "The Wonders Wrought by Faith," an interview with Mr. George Müller. This well-known gentleman of the Orphanage on Ashley Down has long claimed to be favored of the Lord. We are told that, "with unwonted fire and flashing eye, he swung his arm as if clinching the nail with a final blow of the hammer, exclaiming: 'Show me the man that has done it—point out the man!' " Done what? Raised and expended £253,000 in missionary enterprise. He had just mentioned this one item of his work. The apparent boastfulness was disclaimed with the swiftness of St. Paul, as the old man eloquently continued: "Beloved brethren, it is not in boastfulness I say this; it was obtained by prayer."

Mr. Müller forgot to add two words which might have explained all—"prayer and advertisement." Well he knows that every mention of the sums received by faith in prayer serves to bring more. He tells us, indeed, of his business relations with God: "I began to trust Him for a few sovereigns; now, for any amount you like, if I am persuaded that it is right." That is, Mr. Müller began like any other person in a small way, and increased as he saw his method succeeded. But, like many others who ascend the ladder of fortune, he quite leaves out of sight the method by which he mounted—his own ever-ready advertisements, and those received in the religious and secular press.

Our criticism, be it understood, is entirely on Mr. Müller's boasted methods of raising funds. His purposes, so far as the provision for orphans is concerned, are excellent; and the recognition of this fact, not by God, but by charitable human hearts, has enabled him to go on and extend the sphere of his operations. So far as he and other Christians alleviate human misery, we wish them good speed, even though we dissent from their theories and are sceptical as to their methods.

The Rev. G. Swinger Rowe is horrified to find his bookseller keeps popular novels to meet the demand for Bible Class prizes. The bookseller said that, to supply this demand, he first stocked Geikie's *Life of Christ*. He found, to his loss, that he had made a great mistake. This is of a piece with the present aspect of religion all round. Services must be made attractive and entertaining; the pill must be thickly sugar-coated; solos take the place of sermons, and pleasant Sunday afternoons of morning and evening service.

The little city of Morristown, forty-five miles from Knoxville, Tennessee, has a sensation. A maiden lady of that town gave birth to a female child. The mother vigorously protested her own virginity, and insists that her child is the Savior—that this is the second coming of Christ. It is reported that the woman's mother would have killed the child when she heard of its birth but for the interference of neighbors. The mother is said to be mentally sound, except in the matter of the divinity of her child. She contends that Christ was intended to come the second time as a female. This is altogether too modern a story to go down. To give it a fair chance, it ought to be dated over a thousand years ago.

The British and Foreign Bible Society announces that it has translated the Bible into 381 languages. It does not mention that some of those who used these languages have all been killed out by Christians. We remember reading how some learned bug had been well paid for translating the Bible into some North American Indian dialect. When he had finished, it was found there were only some half dozen persons spoke that dialect, and none of them could read.

The Bible as translated in Fijian, and the New Testament as translated into Hindustani, are Bowdlerised editions of the book as we know it, and all the startling passages which the bad boy in Sunday-schools picks out to show the girls

are omitted. Now, what parson in authority will be courageous enough to propose that the obscenity with which our copy of the Bible teems be also omitted, in order that men and women may go to church without having to try and look unconscious when the filth is read out?—*Sydney Bulletin*.

It is reported that the Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, the imitator of Talmage in verbosity, and in abuse of those who do not believe in his hell and endorse his mathematics that three are one and one is three, is now in a madhouse. This is the culmination of such damnable teaching. If all the preachers who promulgate such absurd doctrines were confined with him, there would be little use for insane asylums for the next generation.—*Progressive Thinker*.

A burglar arrested in New York a few days ago had in his possession a kit of tools and some excerpts from the book of Proverbs. One passage which he had marked reads as follows: "He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand, but the hand of the diligent maketh rich."

Policeman X, in *Tit-Bits*, complains that the clergy neglect policemen. He has been for thirteen years living in a district where there are twelve policemen, who cover an area in which there are three vicars, nine curates, and thirteen Dissenting ministers; and during the whole of that time not a single visit has been made to these twelve policemen by any one of these ministers. We sympathise with Policeman X, but we think there is a mistake in his arithmetic. Surely three vicars, nine curates, and thirteen Dissenting ministers would find work for more than twelve policemen.

The *Catholic Weekly Register* continues its onslaught on Mr. Purcell for his "unnatural" *Life of Cardinal Manning*. He is, it appears, very ungrateful, for not having, when presented by Manning's executors with "materials worth a sum of money probably reaching thousands of pounds," written exactly such a life as the Catholic Church would have wished. In the March number of the *New Review* a warm attack on the late Cardinal comes from "Edgbaston," the name of the Birmingham Oratory where Cardinal Newman so long resided. "Edgbaston," whoever he may be, evidently understands the Romanist ways, and says, anent the executors first threatening legal proceedings against Mr. Purcell, and then, finding their threats did not prevent the issue of the book, declaring that they did not go to law on account of the expense: "If Manning was mistaken in his choice of a biographer, he was still more unlucky in choosing his executors; nothing is easier than to appraise at its just value the loyalty which measures its devotion to a dead chief's memory by the sordid test of pounds and shillings."

The *New York Tribune* says: "The Pope's encyclical of two years ago, advising Catholics to read and study the Bible, has not apparently had much effect. The archiepiscopal book store at Milan, probably the largest in Italy, does not sell a hundred copies a year of the Scriptures."

Mrs. Lowe, a wealthy lady, who had generously supported the local Baptist cause at Bewdley, was announced to conduct the service in the Baptist Church on Sunday evening. She gave out the hymn, and then fell dead in the pulpit. The cause was purely natural—heart disease; but had such an incident occurred on a Secular platform, what sermons would have been preached, and what articles written, on the "awful event."

In the *Animals' Friend* for March Bishop Bagshawe, of Nottingham, replies to Mr. H. S. Salt, of the Humanitarian League. The Bishop says: "I presume Mr. Salt does not mean to blame Almighty God because, on account of the sin of man, he causes the whole animal creation to die in suffering. They are belongings of man, and therefore share in his punishment. Every animal is either torn to pieces or eaten alive by some other animal, or it dies in the more prolonged agonies of sickness and starvation." This is God's method, according to the Bishop, who might have cited the case of Achan, in Joshua vii. 24, whose sons, daughters, oxen, asses, and sheep were burnt for his sin. It is fortunate man has got beyond imitating such a "divine" example.

Bishop Bagshawe says: "I consider that to procure valuable and health-giving exercise and recreation for a number of men is an adequate reason for the pain inflicted on the fox." Yes; and what a consolation it would be to the hunted animal could it know that this is all divinely arranged, and that, on account of the sin of man, He causes the whole animal creation to die in suffering—except those in the lethal chambers constructed by Sir B. W. Richardson.

"The infliction of a painful death upon animals on account of man's sin is not inconsistent with God's mercy and love. It is an act of God's justice, and man need not go out of his way to make exceptions to it." We suppose, then,

those who provide a painless death for ownerless dogs and other poor creatures, whose lives are a round of misery, are going out of their way to thwart God's justice. The Bishop's God, who sends the mass of his human creatures to hell, and tortures animals for man's sin, is indistinguishable from a devil.

The Bishop continues: "Revelation and reason alike show that animals have not the faculty of reason, and that they are therefore separated by an impassable barrier from man, who has it. Man has rights, animals have not. To say they have is a 'detestable assumption,' and to base the cause of humanity on a ground so false and unscriptural is to deter every sensible man from joining with those who so speak in their endeavor to promote it. Better that animals should suffer than that men should be led into false and dangerous opinions. 'I have given them to you to be your meat; even as the green herbs have I given them to you.'" This represents the true theological, pre-Darwinian attitude, and Bishop Bagshawe well illustrates how far his creed is founded in savagery.

The dark places of the earth are being illuminated by the light of modern science. According to the *Electrical Review*, it is proposed to lay down machinery and plant for the electric lighting of the great Golden Temple, at Amritsar in the Punjab, at a cost of three lacs of rupees; and special appeals are being made to the Sikh community for the purpose of raising this sum.

Professor Moulton, a University Extension lecturer, who has gone over and taken the English Literature chair in Chicago University, has issued a book on *The Literary Study of the Bible*, in which he makes the following complaint: "It is one of the curiosities of our civilisation that we are content to go for our liberal education to literatures which, morally, are at the opposite pole from ourselves; literatures in which the most exalted tone is often an apotheosis of the sensuous, which degrade divinity, not only to the human level, but to the lowest level of humanity. Our hardest social problem being Temperance, we study in Greek the glorification of intoxication; while in mature life we are occupied in tracing law to the remotest corner of the universe, we go at school for literary impulse to the poetry that dramatises the burden of hopeless fate. Our highest politics aim at conserving the arts of peace; our first poetic lessons are in an *Iliad* that cannot be appreciated without a bloodthirsty joy in killing. We seek to form a character in which delicacy and reserve shall be supreme, and, at the same time, are training our taste in literatures which, if published as English books, would be seized by the police."

Professor Moulton holds up the Bible as the opposite to all this—which only shows how a man may read a book without really knowing what is in it. The Bible is not a Temperance book. If it is, let the clergy answer Mr. Foot's *Bible and Beer*. The Bible is not a Peace book either. The fighting in Homer is chivalrous in comparison with the brutal wars in the Old Testament, with their wholesale massacres of men, women, and children. Nor is the Bible a Purity book. It is often disgustingly and gratuitously obscene. There are things in it that would be "seized by the police" if they were published elsewhere. On the whole, it appears to us that Professor Moulton has simply given himself away. His three complaints against classic literature apply with still greater force to his own Bible.

The combination of mediævalism, music, and mummery, which is progressing in the Church of England, is well illustrated in the Passion Play which has been produced at the Romanising Church of St. Bartholomew, Brighton. Here the characters of the gospel story were taken by trained members of the congregation, a pretty sister in Eastern garb enacting the role of the Virgin Mary; her son being first taken by a choir-boy, and afterwards by an acolyte. Applause was rigorously suppressed, but we read: "One more than once got the impression that it was on the point of breaking out." In reverting to scenic representation, the Church may unconsciously be throwing an effective side-light on the very origin of its legends.

The Rev. Morgan Jones, vicar of Edgton, Shropshire, has got an easy sentence for perjury. Mr. Justice Grantham awarded him six days' imprisonment, which, dating from the opening of the assizes, terminated immediately.

The *Church Times*, noticing how the *Methodist Times* extols the "Christian School Board system," remarks: "It is a cardinal doctrine of Dissent that State patronage of religion is to be abhorred. Here we have a Dissenting journal gloating over a State-made and State-paid established religion, of which, to boot, they, and they only, approve." The Nonconformist Conscience has indeed got into a hopeless muddle on the education question through having deserted its fundamental principle, that religion is a private affair.

According to the *Record*, there is at Cambridge a secret society containing some 1,200 members, all pledged to spread the Catholic faith in England. They are known as Companions of St. John, and some of the Companions of St. John are naturally members of the Society of Jesus.

It is not often now-a-days that parsons have the cheek to interfere with marital arrangements, but the Rev. A. B. Prole knows what belongs to his calling, and posts up "Instructions for Lent." Special reference is made to married people and to persons about to marry, and we give the remainder in Mr. Prole's own words:—

Advent marriage doth deny,
Hilary (Jan. 13) gives the liberty,
Septuagesima says thee nay,
Easter octave says you may,
Rogation bids thee to contain,
Trinity sets thee free again.

"This ancient rhyme teaches the prohibited times of holy matrimony, as well as those seasons of abstinence, during which St. Paul says (see 1 Cor. vii. 5, 29): 'It remaineth that they that have wives be as though they had none, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinence.'"

Dean Carmichael, of Montreal, thinks education is rendering the masses more dangerous than the ignorant mob who tore down the Bastille. Professor Youmans well says in reply: "A man does not become dangerous because he has learned to sign his name; but he becomes dangerous both to himself and others if he has been taught to dissociate cause and effect; if he has got it into his head that benefits may be obtained without labor; if his brain has been muddled with the notion that others are responsible for making him happy and prosperous."

Schlatter, the J. C. and faith healer of America, has an imitator in Rev. W. Bailey, of North Platte, Nebraska. Bailey has been working his miracles all the winter, and so endeared himself to the female members of one of the families who had believed in him that he became unduly frequent in manifesting his powers, and the husband ordered him to clear out and never return. He paid no attention to the order, and the husband, in sheer desperation, went along to District Judge Grimes, and asked what to do to get rid of the "healer," who was breaking up his family. The judge, in true Western fashion, donned his hat, went to the house, and ejected the intruder, who was ordered to leave the town. He refused, and an emergency tar-and-feather committee was formed among the citizens. After adorning the "healer," they turned him loose, and threatened to lynch him if he did not depart. He went, remarking that if the Lord ordered him to return he would do so.

Mr. Moody, the evangelist, tells that when a boy he used to go to church barefooted, carrying his shoes in his hand to save wear and tear, and putting them on his feet before entering the sanctuary. The Honolulu folks did the same when they got their first supply of clothes from the missionaries. They, however, waited till they got inside the church to put their clothes on, and the proceedings are said to have been lively.

There is a run on converted cobblers in the Methodist market. One, who was a miser, is brought to our notice in the *Methodist Recorder* of March 5. He has a bag of gold, and empties "the glittering coins upon the table until there rose a bright glowing heap." If he got them all by cobbling, he must have been a miraculous miser indeed.

To this miser enters the Rev. John Melville, a "frank, winsome, manly fellow," who sees that the cobbler is like J. C. in that "the world knew him not," which is the title of the story. A side character introduced is Davies, a storekeeper. "Now, unfortunately, Davies was a philosopher and an Agnostic." How very unfortunate for men of God that such people really exist outside stories.

Every illness of Pope Leo XIII. gives rise to speculations as to his successor. Cardinal Rampolla is first favorite as the special confidante of the Pope and the advocate of a democratic policy. The older order of ideas range round Cardinal Galimberti, who will have the support of Austria, as Rampolla has of France. In Papal conclaves, however, nothing is more likely than for a dark horse, hitherto unnamed, to come out a-top. The only thing certain is that he will be an Italian, and one who desires the restoration of the temporal power.

Canon Smith, presiding at a Christian Evidence lecture on "Is there a God?" at Swansea, said it might be that there were some who were surprised that a Christian audience could, in the present day, be assembled to discuss such a question. However, he was never surprised to hear of the

deepest doubts and the darkest, gloomiest feelings that might come into the human mind. Of course, Atheism is everything that is inhuman and horrible; but even Canon Smith seems to allow that it may honestly come into the human mind. If so, and it honestly stays there, is the holder to be damned forever?

The Lord's Farm at Paskack, New Jersey, where Huntsman T. Mnason, *alias* "God, the Great One," and a band of "Angel Dancers"—nine males and seventeen females—live together after the style of the primitive Christians, has, it is said, given rise to an epidemic of contagious disease. The Lord's Farm was indicted as a disorderly house in 1893, and Mnason, who claims to be a prophet of God, spent a year in the State prison at Trenton, N.J. He had previously been sentenced to six months' imprisonment for "blasphemy" in declaring himself to be the son of God.

There have been terrible floods in Mesopotamia. More than 30,000 head of cattle and a nomad tribe of 600 Arabs have perished in the flood. Some such catastrophe as this may have given rise to the deluge legend.

The Moslem Ramazan, or month of fasting, falls this year at the same time as the Christian Lent. This is not usually the case, owing to the Moslem calendar being lunar; but, despite this difference, there is little doubt that the origin of the customs is the same. A fast in spring, when winter provender was falling short, was probably necessary and useful before it became part of religion.

Prophet Baxter used to have a lot of money in the provision business, and is said to have an eye on house property, which he has endeavored to cheapen ever since he published *Louis Napoleon, the Destined Monarch of the World*. Baxter now fixes April 24, 1908, for the final dissolution of the world. We have in our possession one of his prophetic announcements, in which this very year was given as the date of J. C.'s reappearance. Lieutenant Totten, the American crank, also announced 1896 as the consummation of the ages.

Dr. Boyd tells the following story in his new volume of *Recollections*: "Froude had been staying down in Devonshire in a familiar parish, and he had called on a farmer known since both were boys. In the state chamber of the farmer's dwelling there lay on a table a grand illustrated edition of the Bible. 'That is a beautiful Bible,' said the historian. 'No, it's not,' was the startling answer. 'I wish it had never come into this house!' 'Why so?' Then the farmer said, 'I'll show you.' He turned to a picture which represents the walls of Jericho in the act of tumbling down on a well-known occasion. 'That never happened,' said the farmer; 'it's a parcel of lies!' Somewhat scandalised, Froude asked how this conclusion had been arrived at. 'I'll tell you. After I saw that picture I got a ram's horn and made it into a trumpet. Then I went out and walked seven times round an old house that I wanted down, and I blew till I nearly burst myself, and the house never fell down at all.'"

This reminds one of the hero of Mrs. Linton's *Joshua Davidson*, who read in the New Testament that faith would remove mountains, and was astonished to find that it wouldn't shift a hill near his cottage.

Professor Ramsey's new work on St. Paul is fairly orthodox, as may be inferred from its publication by Hodder and Stoughton. But one admission he makes, on the famous *burking* case that was managed by Peter and the Holy Ghost, is worth reproducing: "The episode of Ananias and Sapphira v. 1 f. excites reasonable suspicion. That Ananias should be carried forth and buried unknown to his family, unmourned by his kindred and friends, is not merely contrary to right conduct, but violates the deepest feelings of oriental life." This has been said again and again by Freethinkers. It is now being recognised by Christians. Eventually they will admit that men and women could not be *burked* as Ananias and Sapphira are said to have been, in any province of the Roman Empire. The story is one of the monstrous historical absurdities which abound in the New Testament.

Canon Knox Little holds a post in connection with Worcester Cathedral worth £800. He is also vicar of Hoar Cross, Staffordshire, which is a small parish with a very small income. Such a great "friend of the people" is not, however, to be left in such poverty. His income is likely to be raised to over £1,000 a year, as he has been offered the living of Mortlake, which is worth about £400 per annum, with residence. Of course, the residence is not in the workhouse.

The Primate of Denmark died recently at Copenhagen. His name was Fog. What a splendidly appropriate name for a bishop!

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—March 15, Secular Hall, Leicester; 16 and 17, debate with the Rev. James Hyde at Derby; 19 and 20, Nottingham; 22, Hull; 29, Athenæum, Tottenham Court-road, London.—All communications for Mr. Watts should be sent to him (if a reply is required, a stamped and addressed envelope must be enclosed) at 81 Effra-road, Brixton, London, S.W.

R. WELLINGS, 12 Dexter-street, Derby, is the new secretary of the Derby branch of the N.S.S.

GLAEGOW CROSS.—The style of the Rev. J. T. Watts, of the *Methodist Recorder*, is not that of J. T. S., of *Joyful News*, as you wrongly surmise. J. T. S. is J. T. Smith, of 51 Whitevale-street, Glasgow.

ALPHA.—Mr. Wheeler is unable to advise you in the matter.

H. B.—Received with thanks.

G. L.—(1) Your letter does not convince us of the necessity of flogging. We are profoundly convinced that brutality begets brutality. You are anxious to see cruelty *minished*, but we are rather anxious to see it *prevented*. Doubtless we both mean the same thing at bottom; the difference is one of method. (2) "How strange," you say, "that hundreds of pounds can be speedily collected in the cause of superstition, and scarcely any amount in the cause of truth and freedom." Well, you see, superstition appeals to other motives, such as worldly advantage, hope of heaven, and fear of hell. Still, we should like to see Freethinkers more liberal than they are in supporting their principles.

PETRO.—An old story, which has done duty in many costumes.

W. H. HARRAP.—Freemasonry may be useful in despotic countries. In a country like ours it seems a mere excuse for conviviality. One need not become a Freemason to recognise the principle of human brotherhood.

A. J. H.—Cuttings always welcome.

S. R. THOMPSON, formerly of Wood Green, is now at Neslington Cottage, Grange-road, Ashton-on-Mersey. Friends will please note. We reciprocate this correspondent's good wishes.

SILVERSTONE.—You have evidently a keen nose for a fabrication; but we cannot give all our energies to the fictions of the religious press.

W. CODY.—Glad to have your encouraging letter as well as your subscription to Shilling Month.

J. G. DOBSON, secretary, Stockton-on-Tees Branch, reports two more successful lectures by Mr. Cohen under Mr. Foote's lecture scheme. Six lectures have been delivered there altogether under the scheme, and, as Mr. Dobson says, not one of them would have been delivered without it. They have cost £4 6s. 6d. locally, and the collections have realised £3 10s. 4d., thus leaving only 16s. 2d. to be paid by the Branch. Mr. Dobson naturally hopes there will be "a hearty response" to our appeal for funds.

W. D. ROLLEY.—Mr. Foote's pamphlet on the existence of Jesus Christ will certainly (barring accidents) be written this summer. We have not Butler's *Analogy* by us in answering your letter. His passage on reason is too famous to be in any danger of dispute. You will find an account of Hypatia in *Crimes of Christianity* (2s. 6d.), by Messrs. Foote and Wheeler.

T. HIBBOTT.—Advertisement inserted. It is true that we hear next to nothing from Freethinkers in the Rochdale, Bury, and Rossendale district, who might take a lesson from those at Bolton and Blackburn.

A. WHITTIT.—Sorry there are difficulties at Dundee, but hope, as you believe, that the prospect will brighten next winter. Our best regards to your wife. We hope to see you both again some day.

POLICEMAN.—Cobbett's *Legacy to Parsons* is the best small book we can recommend you on the subject. It puts the origin and nature of the Established Church very clearly.

J. GRANDOY.—Thanks for cuttings. Mr. W. T. Lee is a man of ability, and we regret to see him sinking below his natural level in the advocacy of Christian Evidences. It was a piece of critical violence on his part to present what he did at Swansea as Mr. Foote's opinion of the National Secular Society. Mr. Lee knows better, and means better; but the best men get more or less corrupted by bad company.

A. MONRO.—You did not ask for the return of the cuttings at the time, and we do not keep such things when dealt with.

J. M. R. (Glasgow).—Thanks for cuttings. We were glad to see the obituary of Robert Ferguson in the *Daily Record*. Ferguson was a very brave old man. Nothing could exceed the quiet but stubborn heroism he displayed, ten years ago, in facing imprisonment for selling the *Freethinker*. Scotland may be proud that it breeds such men.

A. W. STAVERS.—Your experience at the Rev. Mr. Moll's meeting does not astonish us. Christians require a lot of teaching before they understand fair discussion. But we must not lose temper with them; we must allow for their unfortunate training.

JOHN SANDERSON.—Always glad to hear from you. Mr. Foote is deriving great benefit from the rest he is giving his vocal apparatus, and expects shortly to be himself again.

JOHN HINDLE, of Stockport, a veteran Secularist, writes: "I am glad your lecture scheme has turned out a success. For more than fifty years I have seen the want of such an arrangement. . . . Your scheme, when fully developed, will obviate many difficulties, and spread Freethought in many quarters where it has not hitherto penetrated."

O. N. WELD.—You are quite right; it was John Stuart Mill, and not Beaconsfield, who called the Tories "the stupid party." We are afraid that your suggestion that the title of the *Freethinker* should be altered is hardly feasible; at the same time, we are quite willing to receive the opinion of our readers on the point. We fancy that any title would soon become obnoxious if associated with the principles we advocate.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Cambria Daily Leader—Crescent—Post—Two Worlds—Sussex Daily News—Blue Grass Blade—Der Arme Teufel—Freidenker—Humanity—De Dageraad—Bristol Church Record—Federalist—Our Auxiliary Letter—Zoophilist—Liberty—Animals' Friend—New York Public Opinion—Leek Times—Truthseeker—Progressive Thinker—Open Court—Hull Times—Independent Pulpit—Brisbane News—South Shields Free Press—Isle of Man Times.

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.

SHILLING MONTH.

SIX months ago I appealed to the readers of the *Freethinker* on behalf of my Lecture Scheme, which was then in its infancy. Since then it has been the means of introducing Freethought to thousands of fresh auditors, through scores of lectures, in various parts of the country. I am now appealing again for the same object, and I trust there will be a liberal response. The gospel must be preached to the heathen, and a Freethinker who is saved himself, but will not subscribe a trifle to save others, was really not worth saving. Most of my readers could afford one shilling; some could afford several shillings. I ask them all to do something, and to do it promptly. I hope that no one will wait till March is over, and then regret that he did nothing. Now is the accepted time, now is the month of subscription. A single shilling, of course, is very little; but a few thousand shillings amount to a sum which would go far in propagating Freethought. My readers are thousands, and they have the shillings. Let them send the same to me at 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.

G. W. FOOTE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED.

(Where merely the name is given the amount is one shilling.)

J. W., £5; G. L., 2s. 6d.; W. Waymark; J. W. F., 15s.; W. H. Harrap, 5s.; E. G., 2s.; R. Bulman; R. Griffiths, 2s.; T. Johnson, 2s. 6d.; W. Plumpton, 2s.; O. N. Weld, 2s. 6d.; A. Whittit, 3s.; T. Warwick; T. Hibbott; J. Jones, 2s.; J. Bevins, 2s. 6d.; Hernatite, 2s.; J. Chamberlain, 2s.; Alpha Junior; John Hindle, 2s.; Thor, 2s. 6d.; W. Cody, 10s. Per R. Forder: N. W., 5s.; Collected by Plymouth Branch, 15s.; S. H. Munns, 10s.; J. M. Munns, 10s.; E. Sayer; R. Carroll, 5s.; F. W. D., 2s. 6d.

THE ANNUAL (LONDON) CHILDREN'S PARTY, under the auspices of the N.S.S. Executive, takes place in the large hall of the Club Union, Clerkenwell-road, next door to the Holborn Town Hall, on Wednesday, April 1. Messrs. Foote and Watts and other well-known Secularists will attend during the evening. Subscriptions towards the expenses are urgently needed, and should be forwarded to Miss Vance, secretary.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THE National Secular Society's Annual Conference will be held on Whit-Sunday at Glasgow. Of course the local "saints" are delighted to know that they will have an opportunity of welcoming Freethinkers from all parts of the kingdom. We hope the N.S.S. Branches throughout the country will lose no time in making arrangements to be represented at the Conference. The President has two proposals to make, one of which is by far the most important ever laid before the Secular party. Both will appear in due course on the Agenda, which is printed a fortnight beforehand.

Last Saturday night Mr. Charles Watts "broke new ground" at Woodhouse, a thriving village about five miles from Sheffield. His lecture, which was given under Mr. Foote's scheme, was attended by nearly two hundred persons, who listened very attentively to an examination of the orthodox claims for Christianity. At the conclusion of the lecture several questions were asked, and the Christian portion of the audience expressed their desire to hear Mr. Watts attempt to show, upon an early date, wherein he considered Secularism superior to Christianity. The arrangements for the lecture were made by Mr. S. Swale, of Chesterfield, who presided at the lecture. Several friends were present from Sheffield and the surrounding districts. Great satisfaction was expressed at Mr. Foote's scheme, and it was hoped that Mr. Watts would be able again shortly to visit Woodhouse under the same auspices.

On Sunday last Mr. Watts lectured in Sheffield to three excellent audiences, those in the afternoon and evening being particularly good. Friends from surrounding districts mustered in good force, and thirty sat down to tea, which had been provided for the visitors.

To-day, Sunday, March 15, Mr. Watts lectures morning and evening at Leicester. On Monday and Tuesday he debates with the Rev. James Hyde at Derby, and on Thursday and Friday Mr. Watts lectures at Nottingham. We hope our Derbyshire friends will make a special effort to attend the debate. The Rev. Mr. Hyde is a most gentlemanly disputant, and Mr. Watts's polemical force is well known.

Mr. Watts visits Hull next Sunday (March 22) under Mr. Foote's lecture scheme, as no hall can be obtained with a charge at the door, and the admission has, therefore, to be entirely free. Mr. Foote himself had splendid meetings there a few weeks ago, and no doubt there will be large audiences to welcome Mr. Watts. The posters offer "special terms" to the Rev. F. Ballard, who has been replying to Mr. Foote in his absence. Mr. Ballard having said that ten minutes was not enough for reply to an hour's lecture, the Branch offers him half-an-hour all to himself and a reserved seat on the platform. But will he come? We fear not; but it is well to give him a good opportunity.

We have run to earth, with the assistance of Mr. J. P. Gilmour, the actual writer of the story in *Joyful News* called "Conversion of an Infidel." Just as we are going to press we receive a letter from "J. T. S." himself—not giving his name or address. But we have both! The whole matter will be dealt with in our next issue. It is another pretty story in Christian ethics.

This Sunday the Camberwell Branch holds a social conversation. These entertainments are always enjoyable and well conducted.

The Finsbury Branch held a well-attended meeting on Sunday morning at the Club Union Buildings. New rules were adopted and ordered to be printed, and the secretary reported that the arrangements were complete for the summer campaign on Clerkenwell-green.

"Sin Against God an Impossibility" is the title of Mr. Touzeau Parriss's lecture this evening (March 15) in the Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, London, W. Admission to the back of the hall is free; reserved seats are sixpence and one shilling.

The *Independent Pulpit*, of Waco, Texas, where Colonel Ingersoll has been speaking to immense audiences, has now completed its thirteenth volume. Under the conduct of Mr. J. D. Shaw, the *Pulpit* has kept up a high standard. We hope it will continue its good work, and find increased support in the coming years.

The semi-centennial number of the *New York Home Journal* gives portraits of many persons who have been connected with its career. Three which interest us are Edgar Allan Poe, the poet; James Parton, the biographer of

Voltaire; and Benjamin R. Tucker, the associate editor, of whom an account is given, carefully concealing the fact that he is editor of *Liberty*, and one of the most freethinking writers in the United States.

The National Sunday League, which was founded by Secularists, and in its struggling days almost entirely supported by them, has become a very prosperous body, although it has, we believe, dropped the more definitely educative part of its old program, and now confines itself to music and excursions—which, of course, are excellent in their way. On Monday evening the League held a meeting at Queen's Hall in support of the Bill to be moved in the House of Commons in favor of the Sunday Opening of National Museums and Art Galleries. One of the speakers, the Rev. Russell Wakefield, rather curiously remarked that the Sabbath was a day for recreation and reverence. This is a somewhat professional view of the matter, but it did not seriously impair the value of the meeting. The Bill, it was explained, has been carefully drafted—that is, we are afraid, it is drafted to suit the clergy. Museums are only to be open from two to six—which will not interfere with morning or evening service; no official is to be employed more than six days a week, and anyone who has conscientious objections is to be exempted from Sunday service.

Professor W. J. Youmans, the editor of the *Popular Science Monthly*, says: "A school-book, as the term is now and has always been understood, is one specially prepared for the uses and needs of the school, and containing nothing that is not required for purposes of instruction. This is not the case with the Bible, which was not written or put together with any such view, and much the larger part of which is quite unsuited to school use. In large part it is a repertory of mysteries which the ordinary certificated teacher has no recognised fitness for handling." Moreover, he says, "the fact cannot be ignored that there is much in the Bible which, from a scientific and historical point of view, does not harmonise with the general character of modern education."

"No secular history," says Professor Youmans, "would be read in our schools to-day, or in the schools of any enlightened community in which the fortunes of nations were represented as controlled by special divine intervention. The time has passed when plagues, earthquakes, and famines could be historically interpreted as expressions of divine displeasure; and the time has almost passed for any useful introduction of the doctrine of design in connection with the study of nature." This last is a notable admission from a notable quarter.

The *Popular Science Monthly* contains a portrait and well-written account of Professor Andrew Dickson White, the author of *The Warfare of Science with Theology*, and President of Cornell University, who has also occupied the position of ambassador of the U.S. to Russia. Professor White is a thorough Freethinker, and his work is in some respects superior to the similar one by Professor Draper.

DOUBT.

MEN fear her, for they have not seen her clearly,
But from afar—a spectre in the night;
That space o'er-leapt, she is, when seen more nearly,
An angel-form of light.

With gentle voice she checks our blind submission
To that which was when man was in his youth,
And sends us forth, full armed for earnest searching
Of boundless space for truth.

She bids us "March!" where Faith's command is
"Loiter!"
She bids us "Do!" where Trust would whisper "Pray!"
She bids us search the inmost heart of Nature;
She bids us know to-day.

Her fingers rend the veil of lies asunder,
Woven by knaves for superstition's face;
She melts the mists of Ignorance and Error,
And Knowledge grows apace.

What some have named "Too deep for understanding"
She, with Research, doth probe with keenest steel;
She all things proves, and them of worthy metal
Doth seal with Truth's own seal.

Then walk with her, for all her paths are pleasant;
She knows no future, fraught with weal and woe.
She lives and loves, and lights the golden present;
Her heaven is—To know.

—Walt. A. Ratcliffe.

IN MEMORIAM.

ROBERT FERGUSON.

By the death of Robert Ferguson, at the great age of eighty-six years, a long familiar figure disappears from the Free-thought circle in Glasgow. He had been ailing for some months, and a fall which he had a fortnight ago gave the finishing touch to the enfeebled action of a heart gradually failing through senile decay. Only on Tuesday the old man crept downstairs and sat for a little behind the counter of his well-known shop in Ingram-street; but all Wednesday he lay abed in a drowsy state, and early on Thursday morning his breathing grew fainter and fainter, until, almost imperceptibly, it ceased altogether.

Robert Ferguson was born at Sanquhar, a town rendered historic in the old covenanting times. His parents were both orthodox, and Robert was drilled strictly in Bible and Catechism; but, being made an apprentice to the carpet-weaving at Kilmarnock, the shrewd and greatly daring "wabster lads," in whose active brains all sorts of innovating ideas were continually seething, soon gave his thoughts a different turn. One of these, Thomas Wilson, a versatile genius, who, among his other accomplishments, dabbled in astronomy and composed music, lent Ferguson Owen's *New Moral World*, and, charmed with the prospect of a regeneration of humanity which it predicted, he became an ardent Socialist. Until about this time Ferguson had been a member of the Relief Kirk at Kilmarnock, but the arbitrary conduct of the minister in denouncing from his pulpit a publican who belonged to the congregation seems to have had the effect of showing him what clericalism really meant, and thenceforward he went to church irregularly, and at last withdrew completely. Ferguson now devoted his energies to political work, and, having removed to Ayr, on one occasion walked to and from Kilmarnock to hear Dan O'Connell. To the same period belonged some interesting experimentation in mesmerism. Ferguson became an expert "mesmerist," and used often to entertain me with accounts of the strange adventures of his clairvoyant subjects, one of whom he dispatched on journeys to remote parts, such as the Arctic Circle, of the scenery and inhabitants of which the clairvoyant gave characteristically vague descriptions. Once Ferguson ordered his docile Mercury to make a trip to hell; but, after a long interval of passivity, the subject reported that he had explored all the amplitudes of the three dimensions of space, without being able to find it, which was exactly what Ferguson expected. Coming to Glasgow about 1860, he pursued his calling of carpet-weaver, until, during a spell of dull trade, he took to book-canvassing, and, after a short time, as hall keeper for the old Eclectic Institute in Dunlop-street, he began business as a bookseller in the premises in Brunswick-street, occupied about a year earlier by J. H. McGuire. Subsequently he removed to the South Side, and finally to Ingram-street, where for the last thirteen years his shop has been a landmark to the Glasgow Secularists. The most notable and trying event in Robert Ferguson's otherwise tranquil but not inactive life came at an age when even the doughtiest fighter has earned the right to an honorable repose. In 1885 the tidal wave of resurgent bigotry, raised by the upheaval excited by Mr. Bradlaugh's parliamentary struggle, reached Glasgow, and some of the "unco guid and rigidly righteous" prevailed upon the local police persecutor to enforce a clause in the Glasgow Police Act, which makes the sale of "blasphemous or obscene literature" a punishable offence, and summons Ferguson for the sale of certain illustrated numbers of the *Freethinker*. That was ten years ago, and in our busy modern lives a decade's history is apt to crowd out any clear remembrance of what went before. Still, many of our readers cannot have forgotten the story of Ferguson's case. He was not a man to rush heedlessly or needlessly into danger. All his life through he walked circumspectly, avoiding every appearance of wanton aggressiveness, yet with a firm and unflinching adherence to the principles which were dear to him, because he believed them to be good and true; but when danger confronted him, and compromise or surrender would have meant forfeiture of self-respect and betrayal of principle, the old man of eighty did not hesitate, but preferred the nobler part, and went uncomplainingly to jail, thus worthily maintaining, in a higher sphere, the martyr spirit of the sturdy covenanting stock from which he sprang. Ferguson was sentenced to thirty days' imprisonment, but the law agent whom we employed for the defence—founding on a technical issue, namely, that no prosecution for blasphemy, even in the constructive sense of the vending of "blasphemous" publications, was competent save under the general written or common law, and in a superior court—applied to the Supreme Court in Edinburgh for a bill of suspension and liberation; and pending adjudication upon the point Mr. Ferguson was released on bail, after undergoing nearly two days' confinement. Fortunately, he was not much the worse for the detention, although, being a big man, with a proportionately large foot, the prison officials could not supply him with

slippers, and he was kept in his stockinged feet in an uncarpeted cell—a very real hardship in midwinter for such an old man. In due time the appeal was heard, the result being that the Glasgow stipendiaries' sentence was quashed; and Lord Young, one of the judges, took occasion to remark that such a case should never have been brought into that Court—which meant, of course, that the Glasgow police had blundered in entering upon the action. In addition to the moral defeat incurred by them, the Glasgow authorities had to pay their expenses, which must have come to several hundred pounds; so that it is highly improbable that we shall be exposed to similar molestation for a long time to come. So much for the moral gain, due to Robert Ferguson's spirited resistance to parochial intolerance.

Dr. Priestley was accustomed to say that he must have been born of a happy constitution, because he rode buoyantly even on the highest waves of his turbulent and changeable life. Robert Ferguson had the same order of temperament, happily without a corresponding tale of vicissitude; with a robust physical constitution and an equable, cheerful temper, he went on his unambitious way, unhasting and unresting, faithfully performing his daily round, and looking out upon the world with a friendly but fearless eye. Every Secularist lecturer of note during the last thirty-six years has known and trusted Robert Ferguson; and, down to the very last, he preserved an unclouded interest in the world-wide movement of Free-thought. I often found him absorbed in some American or Australian Free-thought journal, and fully posted up in all that was going on under the Southern Cross, or on the Pacific slope. He was not only an indefatigable reader of general literature; he digested what he read, and was a well-equipped and widely-informed man; and a chat with him was always instructive and sometimes inspiring, charged as it was with memories of the notables with whom he had fraternised, and the stirring times in which he had so stoutly borne his part.

In spite of the unavoidably short notice, a large company followed Mr. Ferguson's body to its last resting-place in the Southern Necropolis on Saturday afternoon. At the house, and beside the open grave, the present writer delivered brief speeches. Mr. Foote had often expressed a wish that if, as was probable, Ferguson should pass away before him, he might have the privilege of paying the last mark of respect to so valiant a veteran in the grand army of Liberty; but his recent illness, from which he is only slowly recovering, made it impossible for him to come north. As the next best thing, the following passage from his letter was read at the grave: "Had I been well enough, I should certainly have attended Mr. Ferguson's funeral. He was a brave old man, and I shall always treasure the memory of his heroism in facing imprisonment at a time of life when it might well have been his death-warrant. Courage of that kind is far rarer than the world imagines. You say the funeral takes place at two o'clock to-morrow. Well, I cannot be there in person, but I will spend a little time with you all in spirit, and help to fortify my own soul with the thought of your brave old countryman's quiet, unostentatious, and stubborn devotion to the great law of conscience. I do not believe in a future life, but if there be one it ought to be well with that gallant spirit." J. P. GILMOUR.

March 8, 1896.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

REPORT of the monthly executive meeting held at the Club Union Buildings on Thursday, March 5; the President in the chair. Present:—Messrs. C. Watts, S. Hartmann, J. Samson, W. Heaford, R. Forder, A. B. Moss, E. Bater, J. Potter, G. J. Warren, H. R. Clifton, W. Leate, S. Jones, H. J. Stace, A. F. Taylor, T. Gorniot, and the Secretary.

Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed. Cash statement received.

The President reported the amount of the donations received at the Annual Dinner, which had hitherto been arranged by the London Secular Federation; in the circumstances it was resolved to discharge the last liability in connection with the Federation—i.e., balance of printing account, and to hand the residue to the funds of the N.S.S.

An application to form a new branch of the society, to include Carlton and Netherfield (Notts.), was granted; and the Lewisham Branch fees were remitted.

Glasgow being the only Branch which had, up to the time of meeting, invited the Conference, it was resolved that the Conference for 1896-7 be held at Glasgow, and the Secretary was instructed to notify the Branches.

A discussion arose on a report circulated in connection with the Finsbury Park Branch. After much discussion Mr. Foote offered to give space in the *Freethinker* for any necessary explanation, and it was moved, "That we pass to the next business."

The Finsbury Branch delegate gave a brief report of the progress of his Branch, and the meeting closed.

EDITH M. VANCE, *Assistant Secretary*.

THE MINE AT CALUMET.

Excoos! Be you the dominee
That folks calls Parson Boone?
Wal—Jane an' me has called to see
Ef you'll ride Monday noon
To Calumet to bury Jim—
James Baker—he is dead—
Death hil too strong a hand for him,
Es you hev often said.

“Perfess?” He didn't perfess. He hed
One simple way all through.
He merely practised, an' he said
That that would hev to do.
“Prayed?” Never—not es I hev known—
'Cept mebbly with his han's,
An' 'stead of claspin' of his own
He clasped his feller-man's.

“Under conviction?” The idee!
He never done a thing
To be convicted fer; why, he
Wus straighter than a string.
Oh, say! He was a nifty man!
Oh, he was brave an' square;
His mighty heart wuz bigger than
That meetin' house out there!

Eh? “Jined the Church?” You don't catch on!
You couldn't a knowed 'im, pard!
To them as did, now he is gone
Your questionin' sounds hard.
I told 'em up to town to-day
“Above the sexton's dirt
Let Parson say his little say;
He can't do any hurt.”

“Fire in the Osceola mine!”
Jim heard the awful cry
That rose from Level 29
Es he wus passing by.
An' down the burnin' shaft he went
To where the flames begun,
An' up the half-dead miners sent
Es fast es skips could run.

Through other drifts he searched around,
An' lyin' stifled there
A dozen helpless men he found,
An' dragged to light and air.
An' my boy, Timothy—my Tim—
He found, too weak to crawl,
An' got him in the skip; but Jim—
He didn't come up at all.

We waited fer him all night long,
An' watched an' hil our breath,
A sufferin', tearful, hopeless throng
Around that pit of death;
An' when the smoke blew out, my son
Crept down to learn his fate—
He reached him, but the worst wus done—
He found him—just too late!

He died adoin'
What he could find to do.
“Did he perfess?” Wal—
I never knowed him to.
Don't notice if my talk is broke,
An' if my eyes should leak;
'Tain't Tim—nor mother, but the smoke
Hes kinder made 'em weak.

What? “How about his soul?” Look here!
Intendin' no offence,
Your dumb-fool questions does appear
To show a lack of sense.
If I repeat 'em, like es not
When you come moseyin' down
You'd find our place most awful hot—
They'll make you jump the town!

Don't come! Hunt other souls to save!
His neighbors at the Green
Will gather round Jim Baker's grave
An' tell the things they've seen.
Ef God don't know what's good and true,
An' wants to punish him,
Why, rather'n go to heaven with you,
I'll go to hell with Jim!

—W. A. Croffut.

“TO THIS DAY.”

In the Second Part of *Henry VI.* (act vi., scene 2) Smith, the weaver, well illustrates low logic by his proof of the validity of Jack Cade's claims to be the grandson of Edward Mortimer. Cade having asserted that his father was stolen by a beggar woman when young, and brought up as a brick-layer, ignorant of his noble birth, Smith adds: “Sir, he made a chimney in my father's house, and the bricks are alive at this day to testify it.” I have heard of a distinguished member of the now defunct Bible Defence Association who, in the very spirit of Smith, the weaver, used to go about carrying a portion of a brick from Babylon with him. This fragment of baked clay served equally to confirm the story of Jehovah coming down to see the tower of Babel, or that of Nebuchadnezzar having been turned into an ox, or the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah against Babylon.

It was a friend of the hero of the Babylon brick who, hearing I was inclined to be sceptical, recommended me to read the Rev. Charles Leslie's *Short and Easy Method with the Deists*. The method proved a long and hard one with me. Leslie's argument was like that of Smith, the weaver. The Bible yarns must be true because they had monumental evidence; and he devotes the major portion of his work to showing that the customs of celebrating the Passover and the Lord's Supper were just such monuments, dating back to the times when they were instituted. Leslie had never studied the history and antiquities of customs, or he would have found that it was quite a common thing to assign a legendary origin for them. Indeed, a considerable proportion of legends arises from the attempt to account for rites and customs, of which the real origin has been lost. No more unlikely stories than those giving the origin of the institution of the Passover and of the Eucharist are to be found in any mythology. In the one case we have to credit that God slew all the firstborn of Egypt, but that two million Jews were saved by, at a few hours' notice, each family killing a male lamb of one year old and putting the blood on the doorposts, so that when God saw the blood he would pass over. In the other case we have to credit that some man, sitting at a supper-table, offered bread and said: “Take eat, this is my body.” If this were so, no wonder some people thought him mad.

With both these illustrations it is evident that we have stories invented to account for already established rites, and the fact that the rites exist to this day no more proves the truth of the stories than does the brick from Babylon prove that Nebuchadnezzar ate grass.

Some people fancy that when they see in the Bible the phrase, “to this day,” that phrase is an interpolation. This is a very convenient theory to get rid of the evidence that the writing is a long way distant from the time of the event recorded. But it is quite an unsafe theory in dealing with ancient and alleged ancient documents. Internal evidence, containing signs of late date, is *prima facie* a sign of the late date of the whole document, unless there is direct proof that the other parts are earlier, or that the part with the sign of late date is by a different hand. But in no case can this be shown with respect to the Bible documents.

LUCIANUS.

A Dream.

The peculiarity of the Christian religion is that it is founded on a dream. Faith in Christianity is faith in the Incarnation, and the only evidence that God was incarnate and born of a virgin consists of a dream. The Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, calling him the son of David, and telling him, “Fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.” Can we suppose Archbishop Benson paying any heed to such a dream as this? If he had not a dream, but an actual visitation, he would probably remember that, according to 2 Corinthians xi. 14, Satan can transform himself into an angel of life, and that to recommend a condonation of adultery probably came from this source. But what we have is not even Joseph's account of his dream. It is only the statement of a document alleged to be “according to Matthew,” who is not even said to have been in Joseph's confidence. The faith of Christendom in this matter rests on the unauthenticated report of a dream. No wonder the faith has sat on its believers like a nightmare. When they exercise their reason they begin to say, “I awoke, and behold it was a dream.”

BRAIDBEARD.

A New York reporter has found that most of the leading orators there always have an afternoon sleep when they have to speak in the evening. Colonel Ingersoll makes it an invariable rule, Dr. Parkhurst is nearly always invisible from three to five p.m., and innumerable preachers spend Sunday afternoon in bed,

“In the last church fair did the ladies take part?” Mr. Slimpurse—“No; they took all.”

BOOK CHAT.

MR. W. S. LILLY says of Dickens: "I stand aghast at the inane insignificance of most of his personages, at the vapid vulgarity of most of his incidents, at the consummate crudity of much of his thought, at the intolerable ineptness of much of his diction. He was constantly talking—at least, in his later years—of his art. He seems to me one of the least artistic of writers." We will not dispute questions of taste with the lay Jesuit. Grant all these and more than these faults, there remains the fact that Dickens had the one quality which Jesuits try to crush, and yet which ever appeals to man—viz., *humanity*.

No. 20 of the brown-papered publications of the Humanitarian League is on *So-called Sport*. It contains papers on "Hunting the Carted Stag," by the Rev. J. Stratton; "Shooting Pigeons from Traps," by Colonel Coulson; and "Coursing the Bagged Rabbit." Their account of what is done by "gentle and simple" in the way of "sport" is enough to make a humane person ashamed of his species. In 1883 a Bill for the abolition of pigeon shooting, carried in the Commons, was rejected by the Peers, temporal and spiritual. We are glad to note, from the excellent Introduction by H. S. Salt, that the Humanitarian League has drafted a wider-reaching measure.

Dr. W. H. Brooks contributes to the *Popular Science Monthly* a review of the writings of Francis Galton, entitled "The Study of Inheritance." It was Galton who pointed out that the statistics of the lives of persons specially prayed for negated the supposed efficacy of prayer. The present paper is largely concerned with the law of regression to the type of a race under which "the more exceptional the gift, the more exceptional will be the good fortune of a parent who equals, and still more if he has a son who surpasses, him." The papers are to be continued.

In the same number is a paper on "The Stamping Out of Crime," by Dr. Nathan Oppenheim, who says that "the teaching of science all over the world echoes again and again the words of Galton, that the way to better a race lies in preventing the more faulty members from breeding."

No. 9 of *Transactions of the Cremation Society of England* shows that this sanitary method of disposing of the dead is on the increase both at Woking, where last year 150 cremations were carried out as compared with 125 in 1894, and at Manchester, where 58 bodies were burnt. In Liverpool a limited liability company has been formed, and a crematorium will shortly be erected; while a new one has been opened at Maryhill in the suburbs of Glasgow. The Report gives a full account of cremation, and a bibliography of the subject. It is published at the offices of the Society, 8 New Cavendish-street, W., price 6d.

We are occasionally asked to recommend books for children free from theological nonsense and mere sentimental clap-trap. Such books, unfortunately, are rare, and we are accordingly pleased to note that the series, "Animal Life Readers," published by George Bell & Sons for the Humanitarian League, and edited by Edith Carrington and Ernest Bell, exactly hit the mark. They are all concerned with animal life. But, then, what subject more interests children? They are attractive, brightly written, simply worded, full of stories and information, and excellently illustrated, as the name of the veteran animal draughtsman, Harrison Weir, sufficiently attests. The series of books, of which fourteen, divided into two complete sets for the seven standards, are being issued, range in price from eightpence to one shilling, and are admirably fitted for gifts from parents and friends, for prizes in schools and bands of mercy, as well as for school books under the new code permitting passages impressing on the children the duty of gentleness and humane treatment of animals. They are admirably calculated for this purpose, and since, as Tennyson says, "Manners are not idle," and sympathetic regard for all sentient creatures adds to the sweetness and dignity of human life, we are glad to accord unstinted praise to this admirable series of volumes.

The *Daily News*, reviewing a work on Spiritism, entitled *The Great Secret*, by a clergyman of the Church of England, mentions that he started a "mystic oratory," where a mystical service of prayer was held, and wherein assembled twice weekly "a knot of sincere and earnest inquirers," who reproduced under spiritual guidance as closely as could be "the conditions of the forty days between the Resurrection and Ascension." The promise had been given that, if such conditions were fulfilled, "the departed would come and fill the vacant chairs which we left vacant for them." The conditions were observed, but the promise was not fulfilled—no visitor from the dead came.

PAINE ON CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

THE story of Jesus Christ appearing after he was dead is the story of an apparition, such as timid imaginations can always create in vision, and credulity believe. Stories of this kind had been told of the assassination of Julius Cæsar, not many years before; and they generally have their origin in violent deaths or in the execution of innocent persons. In cases of this kind, compassion lends its aid, and benevolence stretches the story. It goes on a little further, till it becomes a most certain truth. Once start a ghost, and credulity fills up the history of its life, and assigns the cause of its appearance! one tells it in one way, another in another way, till there are as many stories about the ghost, and about the proprietor of the ghost, as there are about Jesus Christ in these four books.

The story of the appearance of Jesus Christ is told with that strange mixture of the natural and the impossible which distinguishes legendary tale from fact. He is represented as suddenly coming in and going out when the doors are shut, and of vanishing out of sight, and appearing again, as one would conceive of an unsubstantial vision; then, again, he is hungry, sits down to meat, and eats his supper. But as those who tell stories of this kind never provide for all the cases, so it is here; they have told us that when he arose he left his grave's clothes behind him; but they have forgotten to provide other clothes for him to appear in afterwards, or to tell us what he did with them when he ascended; whether he stripped all off, or went up clothes and all. In the case of Elijah, they have been careful enough to make him throw down his mantle; how it happened not to be burnt in the chariot of fire, they also have not told us. But as imagination supplies all deficiencies of this kind, we may suppose, if we please, that it was made of salamander's wool.

—*Age of Reason.*

PROFANE JOKES.

"Freddie, when you said your prayers last night, didn't you ask God to make you a good boy?" "Yes, mamma." "Well, you've been as bad as ever to-day." "But, mamma, you can't blame me if God doesn't do just what I ask him."

May—"I don't see why they make so much fuss about Eve giving the apple to Adam in the Garden of Eden." Marie—"Why, think of the danger she ran of giving the only man in existence appendicitis!"

St. Peter—"What's all that disturbance about down at the gate?" Assistant—"A party of football players, who were killed in the V rush, have demanded admittance." St. Peter—"Well, tell them they can't come in." Assistant—"I did, sir; but they formed a rush-line and broke down the gate."

"Dear me," exclaimed the new arrival in Hades; "why here come the shades of people whom I knew to have been truly good. Well, I never." "That party," calmly explained the old settler, "doesn't belong here. It is merely making a slumming tour."

First Boy—"I'll go to heaven when I die." Second Boy—"Bet you don't." "Yes, I will, too. My maw says it ain't safe to leave me where there is a fire."

Professor of Shakespeare—"This morning we have cases of ellipsis. Definition. Yes?" Aspiring Sympathetic Student—"Omission of a word or idea easily supplied from the context." P. of S.—"Exactly. Example. Yes?" A. S. S.—"Shakespeare's frequent use of 'Go to—!'"

Teacher—"Cleanliness is next to godliness." Johnnie—"Then say, teacher, why is it wrong to go swimming on Sunday?"

CORRESPONDENCE.

A CORRECTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I write to emphatically contradict a rumour which has been circulated to the effect that at a recent meeting of the Finsbury Park Branch Mr. Ward moved, Miss Robins seconded, and Mr. Pinnell supported a motion that the Branch secede from the National Secular Society. No such motion has been made at any meeting of the Branch, and there is not the slightest foundation for the rumour.

Trusting you will insert this letter in the next issue of your paper, so that no stigma may attach to a most loyal Branch of the National Secular Society,

HENRY R. CLIFTON, *Honorary Secretary.*

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 (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30, Touzeau Parris, "Sin against God an Impossibility."
 BATTERSEA SECULAR HALL (Prince of Wales-road): 7.45, F. Haslam, "What is Secularism?" Monday, at 8, free dramatic entertainment. Tuesday, at 8.30, dancing.
 BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (86 Newington Green-road, Balls Pond, N.): 7.15, Mrs. H. Bradlaugh-Bonner, "England Abroad." Tuesday, at 8.45, social partv. Wednesday, at 8.30, R. Forder, "The Signs of the Zodiac—Lecture IX., Cancer."
 CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7, conversazione for members and friends.
 EDMONTON (Angel Assembly Rooms): 8, W. J. Ramsey, "After Death—What?"
 ISLINGTON BRANCH: 6.30, committee meeting at the Bradlaugh Club and Institute.
 WEST LONDON BRANCH (Athenæum, Godolphin-road, Shepherds Bush): 7.30, J. Rowney, "The Sermon on the Mount."
 WEST HAM SECULAR ETHICAL SOCIETY (61 West Ham-lane): 7, Dr. Kaines, "The Religion of the Knowable."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 12, F. Haslam will lecture.
 HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 12, a lecture.

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM (Alexandra Hall, Hope-street): 7, W. J. Russell, "Christianity in the Light of History."
 BRISTOL (Shepherds' Hall, Old Market-street): 7, R. Stone, "Slavery in the Mine."
 CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school; 7, G. Standing, "Curiosities of the Church Prayer-Book."
 DERBY ("Ye Olde Feathers"): 7, H. McGuiness, "Why I am a Liberal."
 GLASGOW (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 11.30, C. Cohen, "Darwinism and Democracy"; 2.30, "An Hour with the Devil"; 6.30, "What Think Ye of Christ?"
 HECKMONDWIKE (Lumbard's Coffee Palace, Market-place): 2.30, a meeting.
 LEEDS (Vulcan Club, Vulcan-street, Benson-street): 7, John Grange will lecture.
 LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 11, Charles Watts, "Does Death End All?" 6.30, "The Triumphs of Secularism in Modern Thought."
 LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 7, Lawrence Small, B.Sc., "An Evening with John Davidson."
 MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, Ernest Newman, "Social Evolution."
 SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, Mr. Axe, "Geysers, or Liquid Earthquakes" (with lantern illustrations). Wednesday, at 8, dancing.
 SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, business meeting; 7.30, T. Thompson, adjourned debate, "The Future of Liberalism."
 STOCKTON-ON-TEES (32 Dovecote-street): 6.30, important business.

Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London.—March 15, Glasgow; 22, Edinburgh; 29, Leeds. April 5, Balls Pond; 12, 19, and 26, Manchester.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Oredon-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—April 5, m. Westminster; 12, Mile End; 19, Camberwell; 26, m. Wood Green, e. Edmonton.

TOUZEAU PARRIS, 32 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, London, W.—March 15, Athenæum, Tottenham Court-road; 22, Athenæum, Shepherds Bush. April 12, Balls Pond; 26, Glasgow. May 3, Failsforth; 10, Balls Pond.

POSITIVISM.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—Church of Humanity, St. Mary's-place. Service and Discourse every Sunday evening at 7.

SUNDERLAND.—Conversational meetings, open to all, at Mr. Coates's, 13 Derby-street, every Sunday, at 7.

BRISTOL.—St. James's Hall, Cumberland-street. Mr. MALCOLM QUIN will give Three Lectures on Positivism on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, March 17, 18, and 19, at 8 o'clock. All seats free.

Information and literature may be obtained from Mr. Malcolm Quin, Church of Humanity, Newcastle-on-Tyne, who will be willing to consider applications to deliver lectures on Positivism gratuitously and without expense, where such lectures may be desired.

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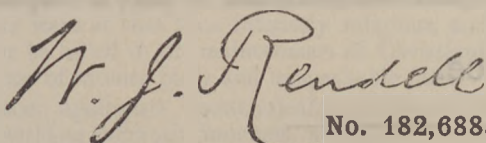
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