

# The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

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## PIOUS IMPERTINENCE.

### AN OPEN LETTER

TO

MR. JEROME K. JEROME,

*Editor of the "The Idler."*

SIR,—

My attention has been drawn—as gentlemen who write letters to the press say—to an article on *The Sign of the Cross* in the current number of the *Idler*. It is the only unsigned article in the whole of the magazine, and is presumably editorial; at any rate you, as editor, must in the circumstances bear the responsibility for its general character, and certainly for its offences against common decency.

I do not believe, however, that you are actually the writer of this article. Its florid exuberance suggests the hand of Mr. Hall Caine. On a first reading I was tempted to cry as to its authorship—"Hall Caine or the Devil." But a second reading convinces me it is unworthy of the Devil, and I think it really unworthy of Mr. Hall Caine. Its authorship thus remains a mystery, which I am quite content to leave unsolved till the day of judgment, or even a remoter date. I will only say, in passing, that it may have been written by a Christian minister. He boasts of the eminent men of God who were present at the first performance of Mr. Barrett's play in London; he speaks of "baffled agnostics," and of Christianity as the subject of supreme interest to civilisation. I therefore conceive it possible, and almost probable, that the writer is neither a man nor a woman, but belongs to the third sex of clergymen.

One passage of what I must morally call *your* article concerns myself. I shall quote it in full presently. Meanwhile, for the sake of fresh or casual readers, I supply a little explanation.

Mr. Barrett's play, long before it was produced in London, was trumpeted as highly moral and religious. Laudatory opinions were printed from ministers of religion. I believe it was even blessed by bishops. And it was just *this* which excited my interest. It would never occur to me to cross the road, even with a free ticket, to witness one of Mr. Barrett's melodramas for its own sake. Even if I were miraculously tempted to do so, I have other work in the world than criticising such productions. But when I saw Mr. Barrett's new play advertised as a fresh piece of Christian Evidence, I conceived it my duty to test its merit and ascertain its worth. Accordingly I witnessed it at the Lyric Theatre. I went alone, to avoid all distraction. I sat, pencil in hand, and made such notes as were possible in the dim religious light which was deemed appropriate. For several days afterwards I turned the play over in my mind. I refreshed my memory—which hardly needs *much* refreshment—with regard to early Christianity, and its trials and sufferings. I went over again, with ample authorities before me, the old story of the Neronian persecution. Finally, I lectured on *The Sign of the Cross* at St. James's Hall. What I said of it I said openly, not surreptitiously, nor even anonymously; and an opportunity for discussion was allowed after my lecture, if any of Mr. Barrett's friends or admirers cared to defend his play against my criticism. I dare say I have my failings, like other men; but I never scamped a bit of work, I never lectured on a subject without trying to

master it, and I never advanced an opinion without being prepared to defend it in open debate.

The reader will now be in a position to appreciate your reference to myself in the *Idler* article, which I conceive to be idle enough to justify its appearance in a magazine of that title:—

"Of whole-hearted attacks, by able men; attacks stopping short at nothing in the way of adroit mud-throwing and fiery abuse, there were but two—the rancorous onslaughts of Messrs. William Archer and G. W. Foote. The latter delivered his in the familiar and offensive accents of blasphemous 'Freethought,' from the hired rostrum of St. James's Hall. The former hurled his contempt and contumely from a brief but comprehensive column in the *World*. Mr. Foote's invective will not bear reproduction in the pages of the *Idler*—but Mr. Archer's attitude as the outraged critic is worthy of note."

Mr. William Archer does not need my defence. He is well able to take care of himself. Even if he did need it, I would not be so impertinent as to make it without an invitation. I confine myself, therefore, to what you print about me; and I have to say, first of all, that this paragraph is an outrage. What do you mean by saying that my "invective" will not "bear reproduction in the pages of the *Idler*"? Is not this an intimation to those who did not hear my lecture that I indulged in scurrilous or indecent language? Every reader, who is otherwise ignorant of my methods of advocacy, would naturally come to that conclusion. But the conclusion is an absurdity—and *you know it*. I never uttered a word on the platform which I should hesitate to see in print. My own wife was present at my lecture, with many other ladies. One of my own children was present, and it is not in *such* company that a man is most liable to utter anything of which he should be ashamed.

You are careful not to give your readers the least idea of what I did say. Had you done so, you might have been put to the trouble of a reply. It was so much easier to bid your readers cry "Pah!" and call for "an ounce of civet."

You accuse me of "*abuse*," and you extend the accusation to Mr. Archer. This charge is repeated against him in a later article, which bears your signature. You appear to think that any criticism of a popular favorite, especially if he happens to be your friend, is "*abuse*." For my part, I am familiar with this trick of incompetent prejudice. I am so frequently told that I abuse the Bible, and abuse Christianity, and abuse Jesus Christ, and abuse all religion! And what does it mean? Simply this, that my opponents are hard-pressed; and, instead of arguing, they call names.

"Abuse" is not enough in itself; you must add the word "*fiery*"—which is another absurdity, for I came to the St. James's Hall platform from a sick room, and had to husband my strength. If I was "*fiery*" in such circumstances, I must be capable of setting up a perfect conflagration when I am well.

"Mud-throwing" belongs to the same species of rhetoric as "*fiery abuse*," and "*rancorous*" may be classed with it. I have really not enough interest in Mr. Barrett to be "*rancorous*." I believe I was rather sarcastic and satirical.

"Familiar and offensive accents of blasphemous Freethought" is a good mouthful. It smacks of the Christian Evidence platform, and betrays long-windedness—equal to that of Balaam's ass. But why is "*blasphemous*" introduced? Is it blasphemy to criticise Mr. Wilson Barrett?

I think I know what stirred the bile of this writer, and wherein consisted my blasphemy. Mr. Barrett brought

upon the stage a rescript from Nero, ordering the extermination of the Christians—men, women, and children. I said that no Roman emperor, no head of a civilised state—mad, drunk, or wicked—ever issued such an order. I added that Mr. Barrett's memory had betrayed him. Such an order did exist, and he had forgotten where he read it. It occurred in the book of Deuteronomy, and was the direct command of Jehovah. "Thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth," was the terrible order of this deity. Mr. Barrett, therefore, borrowed a horrible sentence from the Bible God, and put it into the mouth of a Roman emperor, who, wicked as he was, never rose to such supreme infamy. This I told my audience, and telling it was my "blasphemy."

Blasphemy! One is sick of the very word. It was flung at Jesus Christ, afterwards at Paul, and afterwards at all the early Christians; and when *their* religion triumphed, the Christians flung it at *their* adversaries. And they fling it still. It is a cry of bigotry and hatred. It is an abnegation of reason, and an appeal to passion. It is the first step on the road which leads to dungeons, torture chambers, and the fires of persecution. The word "blasphemy" should be banished from the vocabulary of civilisation.

So much for the passage which concerns me specially: and now let me ask you, sir, whether you really consider it fair and honest to let a personal friend of Mr. Barrett—one who dines with him at Hampstead, and receives letters from him when they are travelling apart; is it fair and honest, I ask, to let such a person cover Mr. Barrett's play with fulsome flattery, and cast personal insults at men who shrink from such a nauseous spectacle? If this is what you consider "criticism," I prefer Mr. Archer's "abuse"; I even prefer my own "blasphemy." It is all very well to appeal to "whatever is Christ-like in woman or man," but is it necessary to dispense with the antique virtues of veracity and honor?

G. W. FOOTE.

### THE DEVIL'S CASE.\*

MR. ROBERT BUCHANAN, original in all things, has set up as a publisher. If he could not otherwise get his volume fairly issued, I sympathise with his experiment, even while doubting if it can be commended to others from a business point of view. Although Mr. Buchanan has long since made a mark in literature, there are few publishers who would put forward such an outspoken work as *The Devil's Case*. The heresy of the *Wandering Jew* (noticed in the *Freethinker*, Jan. 29, 1893), which incited the controversy in the *Chronicle* on the question, "Is Christianity Played Out?" is not stronger than some of the utterances in this work, and perhaps I ought at once to mention that Mr. Buchanan says at the outset:—

Please remember, Gentle Reader,  
Not to judge me line by line:  
Tho' I try to state it clearly,  
'Tis the Devil's Case, not mine!

Man makes his Devil, like his God, in his own image. Indeed, to the civilised man, the god of the savage is a devil. The Devil of Mr. Buchanan looks remarkably like a deity in distress. As there are gods many and lords many, so are there many devils, and each shows some of the idiosyncrasies of his creator. The poetic devils are the most interesting. The Mephistophilis of Kit Marlowe is like Luther's *Teufel*—a downright barbaric devil, audacious and indecent, with the seven deadly sins in his train, and all unlawful things—

Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits  
To practise more than heaven by power permits.

Milton's Satan, the real hero of *Paradise Lost*, is a superb, self-respecting rebel against Omnipotence, who in his revolt carries a third part of the angels with him, and maintains eternal defiance amid eternal despair, holding it "better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven." The Mephistopheles of Goethe's *Faust* has none of Satan's strength. He is a

cultured, sneering German—ignoble, impudent, steeped in impurity, but devilish clever, and flippantly addresses the Lord himself:—

Pardon, high words I cannot labor after;  
Though the whole world should look on me with scorn,  
My pathos certainly would stir thy laughter  
Hadst thou not laughter long since quite forsworn.

Mr. Buchanan's Devil is a benevolent philanthropist, profoundly sympathetic with human suffering, whom the poet, when in distress and with youth's illusions gone, meets on Hampstead Heath on the night after a Bank Holiday. Marlowe's Mephistophilis wore the garb of a Franciscan friar, and Mr. Buchanan's Devil is in clerical attire and reads the pink edition of the *Star* in the moonlight. The Devil's Case is the result of the interview. The Devil calls his attention to all the suffering, disasters, and horrors in the paper, and professes himself to be anxious for their alleviation:—

If there is a God, He blundered;  
Man is here to set Him right.

Mr. Buchanan deems himself an efficient interviewer, and even devil's advocate, since he holds something in common with Nickie ben:—

I, the Interviewer hated  
Cordially by cliques and critics;  
Railed at in a hundred journals  
As a Scotchman lost and lorn;

He the Interviewed, for ages  
Outlaw'd by the cliques of Heaven,  
Who for ever and for ever  
Roll the Log and praise the Lord!

Still we keep as our possession  
One thing even the angels envy—  
Power to stand erect, while cravens  
Roll the Log and bend the knee;

Power to feel and strength to suffer,  
Will to fight for Freedom only,  
Zeal to speak the truth within us  
While the slaves of heaven are dumb.

Naturally, the Devil appoints Mr. Buchanan his Laureate to justify his ways to mortals. It is curious that the present Poet Laureate should have written what he himself calls "a philosophic poem of no mean kind" on *Prince Lucifer*; but Mr. Alfred Austin's Prince is a maundering windbag, who is hardly worth saving or damning. Mr. Buchanan's Devil has some grit in him. He shows the poet all the kingdoms and the religious leaders of the past, and professes to have been the inspirer of all that has tended to the welfare of humanity. This gives a good opportunity for comment upon the faiths of Greece, of Buddha, Zoroaster, Mahomet, etc., and to show the triumphs of intelligence and democracy ascribed to the Devil. The hero says:—

I'm the father of all Science—  
Master builder, stock improver,  
First authority on drainage,  
Most renowned in all the arts.

While the Priests have built their Churches  
To a God who does not heed them,  
I have fashion'd decent dwellings,  
Public hospitals, and baths.

"Take no heed about To-morrow,"  
Said the Man-God; "do no labor,  
Be content with endless praying,  
And eternal *laissez-faire*."

But the Devil, being wiser,  
Knows that he who fails to reckon  
With the morrow will discover  
That To-morrow is To-day!

Satan is, in short, like Prometheus, the spirit of human science, the civiliser, in rebellion against the cosmic necessity of things, the spirit of Freethought antagonising the dogmas of religion. This view is not so original as Mr. Buchanan seems to think. In 1869 the Italian poet, Carducci, wrote his famous *Inno a Satana* ("Hymn to Satan"), which excited a great rage among the clericals. The Satan of Carducci personifies the belief in reason and in human happiness opposed to Christian faith and asceticism. He sings:—

\* *The Devil's Case: A Bank Holiday Interlude*. By Robert Buchanan. (London: Robert Buchanan, 36 Gerard-street, W.)

Hail to thee, Satan !  
Hail the Rebellion !  
Hail, of the Reason, the  
Great Vindicator !  
Sacred to thee shall rise  
Incense and vows !  
Thou hast the God  
Of the priests disenthroned

Mr. Buchanan's Devil compares himself with Christ.

I, the Devil, as they style me,  
Have dispensed a benediction !  
He, the Christ, self-styled, self-chosen,  
Has become a wingèd curse !

While the countless priests were lying,  
I was preaching and beseeching—  
Crying, "The eternal godhead  
Helps but those who help themselves."

God, who knoweth, feeleth nothing,  
*Cannot* help you ! Tho' tis written  
Not a sparrow falls without Him,  
Ne'ertheless—the sparrow falls !

Mine the seers and mine the poets,  
Stoned and slain in every nation !  
Even those who most denied me  
Learned through me to stand erect.

This Devil boasts a good deal, and we feel inclined to say, "The gentleman doth protest too much, methinks." It must be confessed that the orthodox have given abundant cause for this in ascribing to the Devil all the pleasures and attractions of the world, as well as the use of carnal reason, in preference to divine faith. He is, in fact, according to them, the real benefactor of mankind from the time when he tempted Eve to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. One wonders, if this is Mr. Buchanan's Devil, what sort of Deity he possesses. We seem to get a glimpse in the fine Litany which serves as epilogue to the volume, from which I make one extract, illustrating rather the thought than the poetic power of the author :—

Thou hast set these Rulers above us, to bind us, to blind our eyes ;  
Thou hast sent these Priests to lure us with creeds and dogmas and lies ;  
Thou hast built Thy Church on the sands still shifting and tremulous.  
From Churches and Priests, and Liars, good Lord deliver us.

The volume is full of vigorous heresy. The poet sometimes put in a feeble word for orthodoxy, but the answer is usually crushing. Thus, to the argument that Evolution is working out the will of the Almighty Father, comes the reply :—

Say, can any latter blessing  
Cleanse the blood-stained Book of Being ?  
Can a remnant rendered happy  
Wipe out centuries of sorrow ?

The Devil's advice is, therefore :—

Waste not thought on the Almighty ;  
Seek, with all thy soul's endeavor,  
How to make thine earthly dwelling  
Bright and fair, in God's despite.

Mr. Buchanan may disclaim the Devil's teaching, but, for my part, I am free to say methinks the Devil hath much reason. The review of the past gives Mr. Buchanan as fine opportunities as the subject of the *Wandering Jew*. At times he takes advantage of them. Take, for instance, this on Voltaire :—

Diabolically smiling,  
Up to Priest and Prince he strutted,  
Tapp'd his snuff-box, and politely,  
Crack'd his jokes at the Madonna !

Nought of holy reputation  
'Scaped the ribald rascal's laughter ;  
Far away as Rome the Churches  
Echo'd with his jests profane.

Then, behold, a transformation !  
Suddenly he rose, transfigured ;  
Periwig and snuff-box vanished,  
And an Angel stood revealed.

In his hand my sword of Freedom  
Flashing on the eyes of Europe—  
While the hounds of persecution  
Paused, and Calas, kissed his feet !

The *Devil's Case* is full of "go" throughout, and, as the ideas it suggests are in a Freethought direction, I heartily hope that the fact that Mr. Buchanan has constituted himself his own publisher will not stand in the way of its circulation.

J. M. WHEELER.

### "THE CHRIST HAS COME."

(Concluded from page 180.)

It may be useful to here emphasise a point to which attention was called in my previous article upon this subject, which appeared in last week's *Freethinker*. Mr. E. Hampden Cook, M.A., is evidently right in claiming that the Gospels and Epistles teach that the second advent of Christ was to happen in the first century ; but he fails to produce any evidence that the event really took place. Thus the majority of professed Christians to-day are in the dilemma of either anticipating an event that has already occurred, or of admitting that at least, so far as the supposed second coming of Christ was concerned, the writers of the New Testament were in error.

Let us now further consider what Mr. Cook has to say in defence of his position. He says that Jesus "took back with him to their heavenly home those of his disciples who, in eager anticipation of his return, were at the time living really saintly and consecrated lives." The truth of this statement is invalidated by Mr. Cook's admission that Saint John is believed to have died early in the second century. It is evident, therefore, that Jesus did not take John with him, and we may reasonably expect that, if the second advent had taken place during his lifetime, John would have mentioned the fact. Mr. Cook fails to give any adequate explanation of this difficulty. He says that "a divine restraint prevented him recording the fact." Of course such a view of God's conduct is based only upon mere conjecture. Moreover, if the advent had taken place, such "divine restraint" showed a lack of wisdom and good policy. For the marvellous phenomena which are said in the Gospels to have taken place, crowned by the advent itself, would have been so startling in their character, and so very important to the Christian faith, that it is incredible to a non-theological mind to suppose that God would restrain one of his "inspired" penmen from proclaiming to the world such an extraordinary proof of what is regarded by many as supernatural power. The silence of St. John, together with that of the historians of the period, as to the events recorded in Matthew xxiv. is to me a strong argument against their reality. Mr. Cook says : "The silence of history proves nothing either way, it being equally impossible to prove from history that Jesus was not seen on the clouds of heaven in 70 A.D." And then he makes the astounding statement that "the burden of proof in the argument rests, not on those who assert, but on those who deny, the past advent." Was ever a more glaring instance given of the sacrifice of the rule of logic to the exigencies of theological assumption ? According to the law of reasoning, no one is called upon to prove a negative ; the proof of any allegation should come from those who affirm. But the fact is, no one denies the historical evidence of the second advent, for the good reason that there is none to deny. Then Mr. Cook undertakes to give the reason why history is silent. It was because no one was permitted to see and report of "that solemn and august interview between the Creator and his creatures." Referring to Acts i. 11, he says the "second coming would not only be personal and visible, but also private and restricted to a limited number of individuals." In such a case, "the world in general" cannot be reasonably expected to believe in an event in which they were not concerned, and were admittedly not informed of. It is, indeed, strange that, considering the theological pretensions of the Church, so many of the leading features connected with the "supernatural" character of Jesus are enveloped in obscurity, and that a knowledge thereof is not only limited to the comparative few, but that such limitation is especially enjoined. It is so with most of the superstitions of the world. Natural facts, the only ones of which we know anything, are always open to universal recognition, their limitation being regulated only by mental capacity. It would be impossible, perhaps, to discover a more complete defence of the Freethinker's position in refusing to accept as facts the Gospel narratives of the second advent than Mr. Cook's book

furnishes. He admits not only the silence of general history as to the scriptural recorded events, but he also admits the silence of "Church history," and the incompleteness of the New Testament records. He says: "The Gospel of Mark was apparently left unfinished by the author, the last twelve verses having to be added by another hand. The narrative of the Acts of the Apostles ends abruptly, leaving us uncertain as to the fate of Paul and other Christian workers. And, indeed, the annals of the Church, for nearly a century after the destruction of Jerusalem, are almost a blank." If this be true, which no doubt it is, where is the evidence to be found to justify the fanciful notion of the second advent? Mr. Cook admits that "the past second advent vastly changes the aspect of the New Testament," and that "this at first sight may appear very perplexing." But it involves more than this—namely, a confession that, for the last eighteen hundred years, the Christian Church has been the victim of a most manifest delusion.

While it must be admitted that Mr. Cook has dealt a very powerful blow at orthodoxy, it is equally clear to the impartial mind that his position is based only upon assertion and inference. He assures us that all sects who do not recognise the truth of his theory "must cease to exist." Let us hope that, if this is the case, his sect, if he has one, will share the same fate. His theory is quite as absurd and visionary as the orthodox one. He states that the word "millennium" denotes "a thousand years, during which the dethroned ringleader of evil is placed under restraint, and the saints reign with Christ." He further alleges that this millennium began at 70 A.D., and has "not yet terminated." But surely this is more than "a thousand years." Where does the superiority of his theory of the orthodox assumption appear in such absurd talk as this? Besides, the idea of the Devil having been "under restraint" ever since 70 A.D. is opposed to the notions of all leading theologians of modern times, who allege that he is still as busy as ever, for it is supposed that every criminal in England to-day is instigated to do wrong by his Satanic Majesty. Although science and common-sense have long since shut up hell and killed the Devil, the theological fiction of their realities is still the trump card of the priests in their theological business. When the masses are rescued from the devilish delusion, the doom of priestcraft will be sealed.

There is another feature in Mr. Cook's theory that is not in accordance with fact—namely, that "the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus and his saints was established over the earth more than 1,800 years ago." According to his own confession, the mission of Jesus, although all power was conferred upon him, has failed to remove "the awful sin and misery and oppression that are around us." Where, then, was the advantage of either his first or second advent on the earth? We are told that Jesus "wants to make use of us in diminishing and destroying the evils that abound in the world." If this be so, why does he not exert the influence which he is stated to possess? But here it may be fairly urged that, before asking for human assistance, it should be shown what good results followed from Christ's advent (if it ever occurred), either in the first or second instance. We are told that he is to make a third visit; but, judging from the two previous ones he is alleged to have made, what may we expect from any future visitation from him? Assuming that he came, as stated, he left this world in much the same condition as he found it. All great reforms and improvements have been achieved since he left, and in many instances in direct opposition to his teachings. Personally, I do not believe that the Christ of the New Testament has ever appeared, or that he ever will appear, among us; but, if he should come, his professed followers will in all probability have nothing to do with him. It is reported that of old he came unto his own, but they received him not; and in the event of his coming again my opinion is that he would meet with the same fate. But the great difficulty would be, in the event of his coming, how to recognise him; for we are told upon Bible authority that "false Christs" shall appear, and "shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect." This is rather awkward, because among the weak and credulous the same deception that has deluded so many believers during the Christian era may be continued.

It is quite time that the folly and absurdity of the beliefs in fancied Christs should be frankly censured. They are

but the outcome of perverted imagination and theological duplicity. The cant of the Church, the hypocrisy of many of the clergy, and the credulity of their flock have perpetuated this grievous evil; and it should be the constant endeavor of all Secularists to counteract the misfortune by persistently enforcing the power of self-reliance and the dependence upon secular effort, as being the only true remedies for the existing impediments to intellectual discrimination and to the happiness of mankind.

CHARLES WATTS.

## THOMAS PAINE AND EARL CHARLEMONT.

(Continued from page 188.)

THE next letter of the series, No. 162, dated August 8, is from Edmund Burke to Charlemont, with which, perhaps, we need not much concern ourselves, beyond noting that the writer is very complimentary to the Earl, and somewhat apologetic for himself. As to his book (the *Reflections*), he says: "I could not tell what your notions might be concerning my book on France. For that reason I did not send it to you; and, because I did not send it to you, I did not send it to anyone in Ireland." He goes on to mention that his party has disowned him; but he still claims to be no worse a Whig than the Sorners, Godolphins, and Jekylls.

It seems more than probable that Burke felt there was so little likelihood of a favorable reception for his book that he did not care to risk any unfavorable expressions of opinion, and this would especially be the case if he knew of the existence of a committee to organise the distribution of his opponent Paine's book.

No. 163, Charlemont to Edmund Burke:—

"1791, August 13, Bath.—Accept my most sincere, my warmest acknowledgments for your more than kind letter, which has, in the highest degree, flattered both my heart and my pride, as an undoubted evidence of your unaltered friendship, and as, by placing me upon an equal footing of correspondence, it exalts me, in your partial idea, to a level with those incomparable men, the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam. You express some doubt with regard to the perfect coincidence of our political sentiments upon a late important occasion, and your doubts are not entirely void of foundation. Though I admire you as the first of writers, though I love you as the best of men, though there be not a word, even in your first pamphlet, which does not, if possible, increase my admiration for your genius and my love for your heart, still I must confess that my feelings and prepossessions will not allow me to coincide in all your opinions. But what of that? Is an affection founded upon the firm basis of perfect esteem, and nourished by the unvarying influence of every social quality which can endear man to man, to be lessened by a difference of opinion? Surely not. Besides that, in some of the most essential points we do not greatly differ. With you I despise the French philosophy; with you I disapprove many of the proceedings of the National Assembly; with you I abominate the brutal excesses of a ferocious, though, perhaps, justly enraged, people; with you I deprecate the contagion of French example in a country circumstanced like ours; and with you I love and venerate the British constitution, though I think that in some instances it may and ought to be reformed according to its genuine spirit. But, while I lament the miseries too frequently attendant even upon well-conducted revolution, I cannot but rejoice that so large a portion of my fellow-creatures have, at any rate short of destruction, been emancipated from a tyranny grievous indeed, and which, in spite of all the boasted, though, as I have always thought, superficial and unreal, suavity of manners, was the more oppressive, as, by the unchecked despotism of a widespread nobility, it was brought even to the door of every individual. Thus much have I said, because thus much I could not help saying, since, in writing to a dear friend, the uppermost thoughts of my heart must and will have vent. . . ."

Next is the jocular letter of August 27, already given, and then No. 166, September 1, from Hon. Robert Stewart to Earl Camden, a most interesting letter on "The State of France." As it covers fifteen pages of close type, it is far too long to give now beyond one short extract, where the writer ventures to prophesy:—

"I am equally persuaded, whatever changes time may produce, whether gradual or in the shape of a counter revolution, that neither the king, the nobility, nor the clergy

can ever regain that situation from whence they have been driven. . . . Nor will that feudal tyranny ever revert to them which laid the people at their feet. The possessions of the clergy will soon become the property of a class of men too powerful to be removed. The ecclesiastical body will continue pensioners on an impoverished treasury, till, in a course of years, the kingdom of France may, perhaps, become as destitute of priesthood as it is at present of religion."

In this the Hon. Robert was pretty near the mark, although the work has not gone on quite so rapidly as he thought and others hoped.

No. 168 is from Halliday to Charlemont, November 5, 1791, Belfast, which refers to a new development of the Irish question, and the publication of Theobald Wolfe Tone's *Argument on Behalf of the Catholics of Ireland*; and the general liberality of the writer is shown in one passage at the close, and which is pertinent to-day when the action of the Catholics in connection with education is borne in mind: "One thing should certainly be done—the gates of education should be thrown open to the Catholics; the statute that bars them is a reproach and a curse to us." And we are getting these curses back home to us now.

No. 169 is another letter of fifteen pages from the Hon. Robert Stewart to Earl Camden on the state of France, containing some interesting matter on the part religion was playing in the great struggle.

No. 170 is from an Indian official, and contains some complimentary references to a name well known to Free-thinking students—Sir William Jones, the great oriental student.

No. 172 (Halliday to Charlemont, December 4, 1791) deals almost wholly with Irish politics and with Catholics, but contains another reference to Burke which shows how that writer must have been objugated for his work.

"The liberality of America and France hath had a wonderful effect on the public mind,—the more, for the contracted illiberal system of Burke, and the discussions which his rash and unwarrantable publications have occasioned."

No. 173 is Charlemont's answer to Halliday's 168 and 172, interesting by reason of its details, but more so by the side-light shown into the writer's own mind. The pity is that it is too long to give four and a half pages—what letter-writers these people were! One little passage is, however, so delightfully English that it must be given. After admitting that something will have to be done by way of Parliamentary reform, but expressing much doubt as to whether the Catholic rulers would be as good as the English, he writes:—

"No constitution, indeed, is firmly established but the British, which, in spite of the ill-effects that time, wealth, luxury, and consequent corruption have wrought, spite of Paine's ingenious, but not solid, animadversions, I must still regard as the best that ever was devised, principally for this reason, among many others, that it exclusively possesses the almost divine power of renovation, and the innate faculty of repairing its defects without departing from its genuine spirit, but merely by a legal recurrence to its first principles."

There is more in the same vein, a comparison of the French and American with the English, and some very interesting matter on the Catholics' education, etc.; and No. 175, from Halliday to Charlemont, is of value as the answer of the democratic Irishman to the English noble's aristocratic doubt.

No. 180 is Charlemont's answer to Sheridan's inquiry (No. 150), which was dated April 11, 1791, the answer being dated April 13, 1792, Dublin, and which is undoubtedly a mistake of a year and two days in the dates. A footnote states that the date 1792 is in the MS., and I have placed it as found, as an example of how errors can creep into chronology:—

"Thinking exactly as you do of Paine's very entertaining, very ingenious, but very dangerous performance, and too vehement a lover of the constitution in its purity not to be offended with its slanderer, I was, I must confess, vexed at the resolution to which you allude, and still more so at finding your name, without your consent as I well knew, published as one of the committee. Yet how to advise upon this occasion I do not well know. A serious public contradiction would not be pleasant, and possibly not innoxious. Perhaps the best method may be to expostulate between jest and earnest with some of your brethren on the liberty they have taken, and to declare in all companies, without

being too serious, your real opinion of the tendency of the pamphlet, giving it, however, its due praise, for much merit it certainly has, and laughing at your being put upon a committee to disseminate that which you do not approve. This is, I confess, all that immediately occurs to me, and I only mention it for your consideration, and as a hint on which you may improve. Men connected with the popular party will often be brought into scrapes of this sort, as the people who do not sometimes go too far will seldom go far enough. But prudence and unvarying rectitude will finally prevail, and set everything to rights."

In that letter is a very typical example of a politician's politic, the whole art of sitting on a fence; and a few pages later on we have another justification of Hosea Biglow's lines:—

I du believe in Freedom's cause,  
Ez fur away ez Payris is;  
I love to see her stick her claws  
In them infarnal Phayrisees.

France, being so much nearer than Poland, must be the explanation for the tone when writing of the French revolutionists and those of Poland—

"the frivolous, the luxurious, the barbarous French, epithets which I have always thought they deserved, but to which they have now indisputably proved their just claim. . . . But for the poor Polanders my heart bleeds, and my understanding assures me that it ought to bleed for them. . . . Individuals in England will, I doubt not, do all they can. Would I had money, and I also would subscribe; but the subscription of individuals is only a satire, and a just one, heaven knows, upon the minister."

And then follows some remarks not very flattering to Russia.

From the next letter (August 20, 1792) we learn that Charlemont is studying the question of evolution, as in writing to Malone, whom he had previously asked to get a copy, he says: "I have procured here the *Loves of the Plants*"—this being, I take it, Erasmus Darwin's book, which had not long been published.

Under date October 17, 1792, we have a letter from Halliday to Charlemont, from which we gather that the Whigs of Belfast are getting a bit scared at the pace things are going in France. Endorsing some verses which it would seem his lordship had asked for, Halliday says:—

"If you have patience, my lord, to read or listen to that tedious, democratic stuff, I beg you may recollect the occasion of my first mentioning it to you, that I sent it in obedience to your lordship's commands—sacred things to me; that it was wrote a quarter of a century before the publication of Paine's monstrosities, or the commencement of this too subversive revolution. What a reverse in the affairs of France!"

THOMAS SHORE.

(To be concluded.)

## A FREETHINKER'S THOUGHTS.

To make all men honest would diminish the number of priests and ministers.

If God is everywhere, it seems strange that no one can see him.

Priest, nun, and holy see is the trinity of the Catholic's worship.

If anyone wishes to find a mean man, he need not go beyond the nearest church to do so.

The religion of a great many young women is most fervid when the minister is unmarried.

Prayer is a gun that never brought down any game. It is a hook that never caught any fish.

Christians are worshipping the dead gods of heathenism—the played-out deities of other religions.

There are lots of persons always looking for an opportunity to benefit by the suffering of others.

Christianity writes humanity in small letters, but earth knows no nobler thing than a human heart.

L. K. WASHBURN.

Men foolishly think that gods are born like as men are, And have, too, a dress like their own, and their voice and their figure;

But if oxen and lions had hands like ours, and fingers, Then would horses, like unto horses, and oxen to oxen, Paint and fashion their god-forms, and give to them bodies Of like shape to their own, as they themselves too are fashioned.

—Xenophanes, B.C. 569.

## THE "MYSTERY" OF EVIL.

THE "mystery" of evil has perplexed  
A thoughtless world, and formed a fruitful text  
For swarms of pious preachers,  
Whom Christ, or cash, has called to humbly join  
The ranks of those whose chief reward is—coin :  
Our mystifying teachers.

The "mystery" of evil is as clear  
A mystery as ever did appear ;  
'Tis one of contradiction  
'Twixt what we know and what we merely think ;  
'Twixt vagrant thoughts and facts bound link by link ;  
'Twixt proven fact and fiction.

The scientist who seeks for nature's "laws"  
Conceives a likely theory of cause,  
Then looks for facts to try it ;  
And if he finds that facts will not agree,  
He knows his notion's false, and feels 'twould be  
Dishonest to deny it.

And if he *thinks* his theory's exact,  
Despite admitted proven adverse fact,  
We know—and who'll dispute it ?  
He's mad ; for normal thinkers all agree  
That fact is fact, and theories must be  
Ignored, or framed to suit it.

No "mystery" in science contradicts  
The principles of science, nor conflicts  
With fact that's been detected ;  
For each hypothesis of facts obscure  
That contradicts the facts of which we're sure  
Is ruthlessly rejected.

We all are *forced* to know that evil is,  
Whilst "God" is but a mere *hypothesis*—  
Than which a *fact* is stronger :  
Let all, then, bow to facts, like thoughtful men,  
Nor clothe a *fancied* God with *goodness*, then  
There's "mystery" no longer.

The "mystery" is *made* by minds inane  
That grant the adverse facts, and yet maintain  
The cause of contradiction ;  
They know they're wrong, 'tis shown in all their acts ;  
And yet they wail : "We can't deny the facts !  
But spare, oh ! spare our fiction !"  
G. L. MACKENZIE.

## PRE-DARWINIAN SPECULATION.

As a curious instance of how nearly some predecessors of Darwin came in the direction of evolution without hitting upon it, I note the following passage in *An Essay on the Origin and Prospects of Man*, by Thomas Hope (London, 1831 ; vol. ii, p. 389) :—

"As of monkeys the higher sorts seem only the last and highest of brutes produced prior to human beings, so of human beings themselves some species seem only the rude sketch of that ideal which nature has reached in others ; but what may at first seem extraordinary is that, precisely in the latitudes in which naturally arise the highest of brutes, the orang-outang, or wild man of the mountains—namely, the regions of Austral Asia—seem precisely to have been those in which the human race itself remained lowest and least perfect in body and in mind ; as if in those regions nature had wasted so much of its richest elements on the brute creation as to have had but little left to expend on the still higher human race."

Hope goes on to speak of how "the higher races, as they more extend and want more room and substance, generally end by destroying the lower tribes, and ultimately leave no trace of these."

Hope seems to have believed in spontaneous generation, and his book, though out of date, is still worth scanning for his curious speculations. He is best known by his *Anastasis*, a work of fiction admired by Lord Byron. BEN.

Whoever thinks that men might have full sympathy with their fellows, while lacking all sympathy with inferior creatures, will discover his error on looking at the facts.—*Herbert Spencer.*

## ACID DROPS.

THE Prince of Wales is not a great man, though he weighs a good deal ; but we rather like one of his points—namely, his superiority to Sabbatarianism. This very point, however, has brought him into disgrace at Aberdeen. A Sunday Observance meeting was recently held in the granite city, and one of the speakers denounced "Wales" for taking part in a yacht race at Hyères on the previous Sunday. This indignant Sabbatarian declared his opinion—for what it was worth, and he evidently thought it worth a lot—that "if the heir expected to sit on the throne and to outrage divine institutions in this way, it was more likely, looking towards the future, that the throne would sit on him." Poor "Wales"! He knows what to expect if he goes to Aberdeen.

Another speaker at this Sunday Observance meeting was a retired farmer, who said that thirty years ago he was asked to bring milk to town on Sunday, but he wouldn't. He asked the people to take the milk on Saturday evenings. All his customers agreed to the proposal except one rich lady, and she died a few weeks afterwards! Such is the fate of those who object to stale milk on the Lord's Day.

The Khalifa who succeeded the Mahdi cannot read or write. He has thirty wives, so he is pretty well occupied. He pretends to act under divine inspiration, and the people believe his pretensions. It is not surprising to learn that he is cruel and malicious, and is never so well pleased as when he is robbing and murdering. Half the people in some districts have been killed, and whole tribes have been blotted out in others. The Khalifa would have made a first-rate Grand Inquisitor. He has all the marks of the godliness which used to harry the Western world in the fine old ages of faith.

Mr. Gladstone is telling the world all about the Future Life in the *North American Review*. He may be a greater authority on that subject some years hence ; but there may then be certain difficulties in communication.

Wesleyan Methodism has just profited to the extent of about £120,000 by the death of Lady Lycett. Sir Francis Lycett, who died fifteen years ago, left all his estate ultimately, with the exception of about £50,000, to this denomination. It is a splendid windfall, and the Secularist who reads of it understands how largely the Churches subsist on dead men's money. He also understands why the Churches maintain a law which prevents Secularism from enjoying such means of subsistence. Thousands of pounds have, to our knowledge, been lost to Secularism in this way during the last four or five years. Whereat the Christians smile, for they know this is more fatal to Free-thought than a hundred persecutions.

They have a miraculous Madonna at Ostra Brama, at Wilna, in Russian Poland, and the *Tablet* (March 21) tells a good story of a miracle wrought there. Some large candles were offered before her shrine, but at midnight the watcher heard a voice saying, "Put out all the candles," and he did so. Upon examination they turned out to be filled with gun-powder.

Another miracle has occurred in the island of Lesbos. Mgr. Nicephorus Glykos, the Orthodox Greek Metropolitan, died, or was believed to have died, on the 3rd inst., at the age of eighty. According to custom, he was laid out in state, but on the third day he rose again, quite as much according to the Scriptures as J. C., since the Old Testament says nothing of rising again. It seems he had fallen into a state of coma, and but for being a dignitary he would have been buried alive.

It is said that the Pope, instigated by Cardinal Vaughan, will authoritatively declare that Anglican orders are invalid. This, it is presumed, will have a disquieting effect on men of God who are inclined to Romanism, and precipitate their taking orders in the Roman Church, as some Church of England clergymen are said to have already secretly done.

A Scottish correspondent writes to the *Tablet* to say that the work of the late Archbishop Smith, on behalf of the canonisation of Mary Queen of Scots, has been taken up by his successor. Pope Pius V., who excommunicated Elizabeth, is said to have regarded her as a martyr. This may serve as a warning as to the kind of characters who shine in the calendar as saints. If they did not live well, they made a good ending.

Father Cormack, writing in *St. Peter's Chair*, reminds Catholics that cremation is "offensive to Christian sentiment," and that, by a decree of the Holy See in the year

1886, Christian burial is refused to such as are cremated by their own instructions.

Colonel Ingersoll was invited by the Rev. Dr. Rusk, of the Church Militant, Chicago, to address that body, which claims to be unsectarian. The Colonel expressed his willingness to comply; but it seems that the Church Militant holds its services in Willard Hall, which is under the control of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. A delegation was appointed by that body to wait on Rev. Dr. Rusk, and asked that the great Agnostic would not be allowed to make a public address within the precincts of the Woman's Temple. Mrs. Carse is reported to have said: "We will not permit Mr. Ingersoll to desecrate Willard Hall, unless he comes to confess." Subsequently, however, a meeting of Rusk's supporters affirmed that the great Agnostic should have the use of the hall.

Louise Moore, fifty-nine years of age, wife of a cutler of Spitalfields, died in circumstances that necessitated an inquest. Getting out of bed, she knelt down and prayed, and suddenly she fell over on her side and expired. Death was due to convulsions caused by enlargement of the liver. It was a singular answer to prayer.

Another inquest was held the same day on Abraham Cohen, a Jewish tailor, whose death was due to heart disease. After eating some dinner he became ill; then he prayed—and then he expired.

Near Lime-street, Liverpool, there is said to be a parish clerk who combines with his ecclesiastical office the business of a leather-seller, and the following notice appears in his window: "Office for Banns of Marriage. All sorts of muzzles kept in stock."

"Peter Lombard" says in the *Church Times*: "A good many people were distressed on Easter Day, when a London incumbent announced as the subject of his evening sermon 'The Resurrection of Sodom,' and on another day 'Jane Cakebread.' But I learn that no less a dignitary than the Dean of one of our cathedrals has taken for the subject of his Lent course, 'The Sorrows of Satan,' and that he takes Miss Corelli's book up into the pulpit and reads copious extracts from it as well as from 'Barabbas.'"

A Catholic missionary in Africa is reported in the *Church Times*, mind you (page 356, March 20) as writing: "The members of my congregation refuse to abandon their habits of cannibalism; but I am happy to say that, thanks to my efforts, they have learnt to eat with knives and forks." If not true, this is still suggestive as to the results of Christian civilisation.

In the *Church Times*, February 28, the Rev. H. C. Corrance, rector of West Bergholt, near Colchester, made the statement that a child in a Brighton Board school had been forbidden by the teachers to say the Lord's Prayer, and was, consequently, withdrawn by the mother from the school. John Carden, the clerk to the School Board, writes to say that Mr. Corrance has been asked for the name of the school, but has failed to give it. A careful inquiry has been made, with the result of showing that the rev. gentleman, in his endeavor to damage the Board schools, has been guilty of gross misstatement.

Professor A. H. Sayce has discovered a fresh mare's-nest. He now writes to the *Academy* (March 21) suggesting that the "Tidal king of nations" of Genesis xiv. is Tudkhula, king of the nomad Umman-Manda. The efforts of reverend Assyriologists to fit in discoveries with the statements of the old book become absolutely ludicrous in their contortions and distortions.

Sayce has put out a new work on *The Egypt of the Hebrews and Herodotus*. An alternative title might be "The Egypt of Fiction and of Fact."

Bessie Bellwood, the music-hall star, in a recent County Court action, got out in evidence that she was a Christian. We are not surprised to hear it. The lady's language, on occasion, is said to be founded on the strongest parts of the Bible—and betters the instruction.

The Rev. Mr. Maynard is a sporting Hampshire parson, who won a prize with a pigeon he had from a dealer on approval. The dealer claimed the sum, and Judge Leonard, sitting at the Portsmouth County Court, in awarding it, told the defendant that his conduct was disgraceful for a man in his position.

On March 5 two hundred colored people assembled in a church in Montgomery, Ala., in expectation that the end of the world had come, and that they would be caught up into heaven. Acting on the advice of some evangelists, many

of them had given away their worldly goods and are left destitute.

The Bishop of Newcastle, in giving an address to business men on "Christianity and Life in Reference to Books," mentioned fiction. He is reported as saying, What had religion to do with fiction? A great deal, he would answer. The bishop spoke truer than he intended. Religion has all to do with fiction. Fact is the province of reason and science; the bishop's dealings are in the vast realm of fiction.

The Bishop referred to the Old Testament and to the book of Revelation, "which was entirely an appeal to the imagination." Truly, when the fictitious element is eliminated from the Bible, its bounds will be very considerably narrowed.

The Rev. Morgan Jones, vicar of Edgton, Aston-on-Clun, South Shropshire, is charged by William Broome and Thomas Evans, his parishioners, with taking improper and indecent liberties with Helen Scholding, the schoolmistress. On one occasion he said to her: "I feel like Adam in the Garden of Eden; but what is the use of being Adam when all the fruit is denied me?" When she threatened to write home about his treatment, he said: "Oh, no; suffer little children to play together." Subsequently it was alleged the man of God became most unkind, and persecuted her in every way he possibly could in order to get her out of the parish. The case was heard before Dr. Tristram, Chancellor of the Diocese of Hereford, and the defendant denied the charges. Judgment was, as usual, reserved.

There has lately arisen in Perm, and the neighboring provinces of East Russia, a sect of Anarchists by religious conviction, known as the Neplatyelshtchiki, or Those-who-do-not-pay. They are convinced that all the institutions of Church and State are a fraud, because the affairs of the world are at present in the hands of Antichrist. Upon this ground they refuse to pay taxes of any kind, and claim the free enjoyment of the land as "God's land." They declare that, seven thousand years having now elapsed since the beginning of the world, the age of religious symbolism has given way to the age of the Holy Ghost, and they therefore condemn all religious rites and emblems. They meet frequently to read the Bible and the Russian fathers together, shun the society of all but their fellow sectarians, and drink no wine.—*Daily News* (March 19).

In Major-General Blackley's book, *Footsteps of the Lion*, he records that there is a small town not far north of Montserrat where every respectable dog wears a black crape bow on its tail during Lent, and where all animals, including the pig, are compelled to fast on Good Friday. They have evidently the true logical spirit of religion.

Referring to the aggressions of Christian nations against inferior races, the *Echo* (March 20) says: "So far as we know the facts and can judge, the only voices raised against these repeated perpetrations of gigantic iniquity come from the Irish party in Parliament, and from Agnostic and Secularist assemblies."

A despatch from Orel, Russia, states that in the recent terrible snowstorm which swept over the province 130 persons were frozen to death in one night, while a number of horses and cattle also perished. The Lord's tender mercies are over all his works.

The Jersey States, discussing the Bill for legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister, adopted the first article, legitimatising such marriages already contracted, by 27 votes to 15, the Dean and the whole of the clergy again voting in the minority. The men of God are opposed to any relaxation, because it will undermine the authority of their canons, although their fetish book absolutely orders that when a brother's widow is left childless her husband's brother shall take her to wife (Deut. xxv. 6). This some consider to be a relic of consanguine marriage.

William Q. Judge is dead. He was the hero of the forged Mahatma letters which deceived Mrs. Besant, who in turn deceived the public. Mrs. Besant tried to patch up a rather scandalous peace over this matter, but the exposure in the *Westminster Gazette* compelled her to defend her own reputation. Accordingly she went for Judge, and got him excommunicated in this part of the world. The sentence did not, however, extend to America, where the Theosophists stood by their own countryman. It is very lucky, in the interest of general honesty and sanity, that Judge did not die till the fulness of time. The exposure of his tricks is on record, and will supply an interesting chapter to the future History of Imposture.

The *Westminster Gazette*, in which Mr. Garrett wrote the articles entitled "Isis Very Much Unveiled," recalls the quarrel of Judge and Mrs. Besant, and how W. Q. J. sent

round to the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society a pamphlet in which he announced that Mrs. Besant was, in effect, possessed of a devil, and that the Mahatma (under whose direction she also professed to be acting) had ordered him to depose her altogether, and take over the whole thing himself; which, in a formal "Order," he accordingly proceeded to do.

The *Westminster Gazette* concludes its notice by remarking: "His death comes as the end of a somewhat variegated, and not particularly honorable, career; and it will be of some interest to see if anyone seeks to succeed him as he sought to succeed Madame Blavatsky—seal and missives, of course, included." W. Q. Judge probably will not want a successor. While credulous dupes abound there are sure to be cunning charlatans who will take advantage of their credulity. The rogue-crop thrives on the ground of the fool-crop.

Lady Isabel Burton died a day after Judge. Of course she was a very different character from that charlatan, but, as a faithful Catholic, she did her best (or worst) to minimise her husband's Freethought. It is hardly doubtful that Burton was really a complete sceptic. As a mighty traveller, he had seen too many religions to believe in any of them.

One of the last of the old school of theologians has departed in the person of Archdeacon Denison, who died at the good old age of over ninety. A determined opponent of the *Essays and Reviews*, of Bishop Colenso, of the consecration of Bishop Temple, and of *Lux Mundi*, the champion of the faith has passed away after seeing all he thought worth fighting for thrown out piece by piece from the Christian cargo.

The staid *Spectator* tells this story of Brigham Young:—The Mormon chief was asked by a United States Commissioner whether he was a Christian. "Yes, sir," was the reply. "Then you acknowledge that if you are hit on one cheek you ought to turn the other?" "I always do, sir; but if he hits *that*, I give him hell."

*Joyful News* seems to be an emporium for stories of converted infidels. The number for March 19 has a story by the Rev. Josiah Mee of one who is said to have been converted by one of Spurgeon's sermons. Curiously, this nameless converted infidel was made to say that he saw 666, the number of the beast, was on the habit of smoking. It happens that Spurgeon was very fond of good cigars. We wonder if his convert saw the sign of the beast on the eloquent pastor's Havanas.

*Joyful News* has some curious Requests for Prayer. The following are first on the list in its last number:—

Prayer is earnestly requested that a young man deeply convinced and the subject of many prayers may be saved.

Please join four of God's little ones in praying that a dear sister in Christ may soon learn to love the Shepherd's voice.

Pray that a widow may be brought through a business difficulty this month, and be able to glorify God.

Freethinkers should keep the following paragraph constantly by them; it is extracted from the *London Sun*, of Monday, March 23: "The first English ship regularly engaged in the slave trade was commanded by Sir John Hawkins, and was named *The Jesus*. Queen Elizabeth commissioned the commander, and gave him as a crest a fettered African slave."

What on earth, or what in heaven—or, for that matter, what in hell—was Jesus doing while a ship bearing his name was starting that regular slave trade, which was finally well described as the sum of all villainies? Surely he might have sunk her with a thunderbolt or a waterspout. If he couldn't do that, he might have insisted on having his name painted off the ship's bow or stern—whichever end bore the pious inscription. No honest man would have allowed his name to figure on such a ship, and no honest god would have done so either.

The *Speaker* remarks on the compulsory attendance of undergraduates at University chapels as an instance of how far we are still under the old monastic influence at our seats of learning.

One of the applications for a licence at the Blackheath Sessions on Tuesday week was described as "recently in holy orders." The man of God probably expects his second spiritual calling to be the more profitable.

The Rev. William Bailey has been working miracles of faith cure in imitation of Christ at North Platte, Neb. He endeavored to imitate the Holy Ghost in one of the families who had believed in him, but the husband ejected him from the house, and a mob gave him a coat of tar and feathers.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, like Her Majesty, spends his spring on the Continent, and returns in time for the May meetings and garden parties at Lambeth Palace. The path of religion is a pleasant one on £15,000 a year.

The Unitarians have been having a forward movement. If the *Baptist* is to be credited, it is needed. It states that from 1878 to the present time there has been an actual decrease of at least fifty congregations in the Unitarian body. If they wish to succeed, they should appeal, not to the classes, but the masses, and consistently throw over the pretence of regarding the Bible as God's word.

The Jews of England are going to memorialise the Czar, on the occasion of his coronation, in favor of an amelioration of the lot of their unfortunate brethren who are his subjects. The *Jewish World*, however, says that, "though personally, perhaps, the present Czar is less inimically disposed towards the Jews than was his late father, the reasons are not very obvious that should make an appeal from London on their behalf just now more acceptable than was the Mansion House Memorial so contemptuously treated in November, 1890."

The Rev. W. P. Mears, in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, points to China as a dreadful example because the literary aristocracy have, under the influence of Confucius, lapsed into "thorough-going Agnosticism, Materialism, and religious indifference." Mr. Mears would have preferred them to lapse into superstition, for then the case might have been more hopeful for their becoming converts to Christianity.

A commission of American men of God was appointed by the American Board of Foreign Missions to examine the state of Christian missions in Japan. One of the rumours which disturbed the Board before the deputation left for Japan was that a vast number of the native Christians had receded from their faith and had become infidels and Atheists, and that the opinions of these backsliders had exerted an untold influence on the native Christian Church. This influence, it was further said, had made itself especially felt in the institutions of learning. The commission report that the departures are not quite so bad as they were led to expect. It seems that rationalist views are chiefly held by the Japanese who have visited Europe and seen Christianity in actual operation. The commission have to report that in the Doshisha University, Kyoto, established in 1875, "the state of affairs from a religious standpoint is such that the members of the commission are in doubt as to whether the University can still be called a Christian institution."

Armenian atrocities still make hideous the columns of the *Daily News*. After a sickening record in the issue for March 20, the writer ended as follows:—"But God still reigns. He is faithful and true, and His promises sure." Bad grammar, and nauseous sentiment! The man who says that God still reigns, while men are murdered and women are outraged and children are starved, all in the name of religion, is really a fit inmate for a lunatic asylum.

The Kilmun heresy case will be considered at the ordinary meeting of the Presbytery to be held at Dunoon on the last Tuesday in March. Mr. Robinson, the heretic in question, sits tight upon his pulpit, and his orthodox opponents will have to come to the sticking-point if they want to get rid of him.

Mrs. Harkin was a "strong-minded" woman. An ordinary woman would make one will; Mrs. Harkin made eleven. The last was in favor of Dr. Nulty, the Catholic Bishop of Neath, which is a long way from Liverpool, where Mrs. Harkin resided and made her money. Litigation at the Liverpool Assizes, before Justice Vaughan Williams, resulted in an arrangement between the Bishop and Mrs. Harkin's niece. The Church gains a few thousand pounds, anyhow; and, of course, 'tis all for the glory of God. The suspicion of any other motive is simply blasphemous.

I saw the sun burn o'er the sterile sands  
Of low-lying Egypt, and the mighty flood  
Of the Nile, stained with rushing human blood;  
And by a broken temple in waste lands  
There knelt an old priest wringing anguished hands,  
And moaning ever: "Can Osiris die?"  
And then, behold! I saw another sky,  
Clothed with the glory of the northern lights,  
Flashing and sparkling ever overhead;  
But on the wind that swept from icy heights  
Wailed a wild voice: "Baldur is dead—is dead!"  
And then it seemed to me that I was led  
Past a wan cross, round which the low wind, sighing,  
Sobbed in mine ears: "The Nazarene is dying!"



## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—March 29, morning, North Brixton Gladstone Club; evening, Athenaeum, Tottenham Court-road, London. April 5 and 12, South Shields.—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.
- N.S.S. BENEVOLENT FUND.—Miss Vance acknowledges:—F. Jones 5s., and reminds our friends when casting off clothing that the applications to the fund are more numerous than the supplies.
- MISS VANCE begs to acknowledge toys from Mrs. Penny and from an unknown friend for the Children's Party. Further donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged, and should be sent to 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C. Early application should be made for tickets, in order to give some idea of the number that will be present at the tea.
- SHAREHOLDER.—Now that the Bradlaugh Memorial Hall Company is being wound up, as was inevitable, it is of course open for any shareholder to devote his share-money, whatever it may be, to some live object—say Mr. Foote's lecture scheme.
- T. DOBSON.—The cutting will be useful. Mr. Foote has often lectured on social questions, and there are many social references and illustrations in his Freethought addresses.
- J. FULTON, sending £1 to Shilling Month, writes:—"I expect to repeat it ere long. I am sorry you are not getting so many of them as I would like to see, as I consider your lecture scheme a noble one, deserving hearty support from all Freethinkers."
- J. F. HAMPSON.—Best regards to you and yours.
- R. JOHNSON.—Thanks for your subscription. If all subscribed according to their means, we should be able to send the torch of Freethought into every benighted part of the kingdom.
- J. WILLEY.—Glad to have your encouraging letter as well as subscription.
- CHEESEMONGER.—We are not surprised. Bigotry is an old acquaintance of ours.
- ANNUAL CHILDREN'S PARTY FUND.—R. Forder, Treasurer, acknowledges:—Battersea Branch, 6s.; F. Smith, 5s.; J. O., 1s.; Geo. Anderson, £3; E. Bator, 5s. 9d.; J. Warner, 2s.; Mrs. Henderson, 11s.; M. Christopher, 2s.
- J. S. B.—We have two reports of the Derby debate. Mr. Cattell's was first. See our next issue.
- A. J. LOVELL.—Hope to see you all at Sunderland shortly.
- A. CORLEY.—The Derby debate between Mr. Foote and Mr. W. T. Lee is in course of publication. The proofs of the last sheets are delayed through Mr. Lee being away from home on a lecturing tour. We hope to announce the publication definitely in our next issue. The price of the volume will be one shilling.
- G. WHITE.—Our regards to the South Shields friends. Mr. Foote is nearly himself again, and, though not lecturing till April, makes his first public appearance since his illness by taking the chair for Mr. Charles Watts, his loyal friend and colleague, this evening (March 29).
- H. D.—Mr. Foote is immensely improved by the rest he has given himself from platform work, which, of course, is only a part of his heavy labors.
- R. E. HOLDING.—We have the highest regard for your skill as a scientific draughtsman, and hope your lectures will (as they deserve) be well attended.
- VICE-PRESIDENTS of the N.S.S., some of whom have already been called upon, should not give further relief to a member of the Liverpool Branch who is now in London. He should be referred to Miss Vance, who will lay his application before the Benevolent Fund Committee. He has been twice relieved from the fund already.
- A. R. MUNRO.—Glad to hear you had a "red-letter day" at Hull on Sunday. Keep it up. You have a splendid field there, and Mr. Foote will do his best to supply you with lecturers. Your bigoted chief constable will not be allowed to kill our propaganda in Hull. If we cannot charge for admission, we will let the people in free—and get three times as many.
- A. B. H. (Derby).—Mr. Watts has met James Marchant in debate, and has declined to meet him again; his reason being that James Marchant lacks ability and is very vulgar.
- J. ROBERTS.—We hope you will have the pleasure of bringing the Rev. W. W. Howard into public debate with Mr. Foote at Liverpool. But past negotiations are not very encouraging, and there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip.
- E. SMEDLEY.—Darwin was still living when Dr. Aveling wrote his *Darwin Made Easy*. Darwin's *Life and Letters* has been published since, showing what the great naturalist's religious opinions really were. See Mr. Foote's *Darwin on God*, where you will see that Darwin regretted having used the terms "Creator" and "Creation" in the *Origin of Species*—a work written while he was still a Theist.
- J. M. R.—Thanks for cuttings.
- J. STANWAY.—Thanks for your earnest and encouraging letter. We are much pleased to hear that you intend to support the adoption of Liberty of Bequest in the program of the Independent Labor Party. Mr. Foote has repeatedly stated his willingness to visit Hanley if any decent hall can be obtained, and to do so at his own risk.
- O. P. Q.—Your letter on Secularism in the *Greenock Telegraph* is well written, and should do good. Freethinkers should seize every opportunity of ventilating Secularism in their local newspapers.
- T. E. M.—Received and under consideration.
- J. PROCTOR (Sunderland).—Sorry that "R. Sears, ls.," was omitted from your list by the printer.
- J. M. HEADLEY, 21, North Howard-street, Great Yarmouth, will be glad to hear from Secularists who are willing to help in starting a local branch of the N.S.S. We hope many of our readers will communicate with him immediately.
- W. S. CLOGG.—Glad to have your approval. Mr. Foote has made several attempts to organise lectures in the East-end, but without success. It is not a question of neglect—at least on his part.
- THORNEY.—Glad to read your high appreciation of Mr. Wheeler's articles.
- R. S. HOSE.—Much amused by your account of W. R. Bradlaugh's lecture against Atheism in the Peckham Public Hall. Thanks to Messrs. Ben Ellis, Hartmann, and Sabine, who gave him such a very bad quarter of an hour, and induced him to beat a hasty retreat from the platform.
- R. J. MURRAY (Nottingham Freethought Society).—Your "correction" is an absurdity. Mr. Watts's lectures at Nottingham were delivered under Mr. Foote's lecture scheme, and Mr. Foote was responsible for the local expenses. He handed Mr. Watts the money to pay for same. Your Society only volunteered to pay the local deficit at the last moment, when Mr. Watts was leaving Nottingham; and, after consultation with Mr. Foote, he has returned the 24s. you paid him.
- J. MARTIN.—Sorry to hear that the Battersea Labor League will not support Secular Education, from fear of losing its Christian members.
- J. P. GILMOUR.—A Monday excursion to Loch Lomond after the Conference is a good idea. Let us know more of this in due course.
- P. H. ECHLIN.—Acknowledgment was according to what we thought your directions.
- J. T. CONGREVE.—Consider his great age.
- G. CROOKSON.—Pleased to know you have been "intensely interested" by our articles on Mr. Barrett's play. But why call them "cruel"? It is no part of our business to dissect ordinary melodramas. Mr. Barrett boasts, and lets his friends boast, that his play is an appeal on behalf of Christianity, and this is the justification of our criticism.
- A. FORRESTER.—The Glasgow friends have acted nobly. Instead of humming and ah-ing, they have given the President's lecture scheme a trial, as loyal members should; and finding it "good business" they have persevered with it, instead of bullying him for hitting upon a good idea. Make any suggestions you please. You are bound to find out "wrinkles" as you go along, and the President has really too much humor to lay claim to omniscience. Of course the small deficits on local expenses here and there will be met from the Fund. Let us know the exact amount.
- W. H. MORRISIT, the Bristol veteran, would like to see a whole number of the *Freethinker* filled with Shilling Month subscriptions.
- G. PROCTOR.—The Lecture Scheme will be extended everywhere, if the funds permit. What hall can you obtain at Gainsboro?
- FREETHINKER (Kettering).—The *Two Worlds* is published at Cheetham-street, Manchester.
- PAPERS RECEIVED.—Two Worlds—Progressive Thinker—Horwich Chronicle—Echo—Brighton Gazette—Liberty—Burton Gazette—New York Public Opinion—Truthseeker—Brann's Iconoclast—Liberator—Der Arme Teufel—Freidenker—Dunoon Observer—Federalist—Isle of Man Times—Humanity—Free Review—Nya Sanningar.
- 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.
- SCALE of ADVERTISEMENTS.—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—One inch, 4s. 6d.; half column, £1 2s. 6d.; column, £2 5s. Special terms for repetitions.

## SHILLING MONTH.

MARCH has not yet ended. There is still time for hundreds, and even thousands (if they only will), to take part in this subscription towards the expenses of my Lecture Scheme, the success of which has been so frequently reported in the *Freethinker*, and the continued success of which must depend upon the support I receive in response to this appeal. All bodies have to go in for a "Forward Movement" in the present age, and this is the Forward Movement of Freethought. Those who have any faith in me, those who value the labors of my colleagues who are helping me to carry out this scheme, those who wish to see Freethought propaganda carried on vigorously

all over the country, will send me a token of their sympathy before the thirty-first of March. If all send who can send, I shall have a splendid record of successful work to lay before the Annual Conference.

G. W. FOOTE.

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED.

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

T. Dobson, 2s. 6d.; J. Fulton, £1; E. Birkbeck, J. F., F. D., J. W. Phillips, H. Smith, R. B. Harrison; R. Johnson, 10s.; J. Willey, 5s.; G. Billing, 2s.; R. Goodman, 5s.; Cheesemonger; J. Fish, 3s.; F. Jones, 2s.; R. Brookes, 2s. 6d.; A. Newson, 2s. 6d.; J. Hayes, 2s. 6d.; J. Dennis, 3s.; Thorney; F. W. Sirett, 7s. 6d.; C. Williams; Castor, 2s.; W. C. Stuart, £1 1s.; P. H. Echlin; James and John Crabtree, 2s.; G. Crookson, 10s.; W. S. Clogg, 2s. 6d.; Cheshire Branch, 5s. 6d.; C. J., 5s.; J. Beverley; J. Unsworth; W. H. Morrish, 5s.; Two Gainsboro Friends, 3s.; A. Haynes; A. J. Lovell, 10s.; J. B. H.; A. Corley, 5s.; J. Stainway, 2s. 6d.; A. G. Lupton, 10s.; Lancaster Freethinker, 10s.; N. Billany (per C. Watts), 5s.; W. Darton, 2s. 6d.; Bob.

*Bolton*.—T. Holstead, 4s.; Mrs. Hampson, 2s.; J. F. Hampson, 2s.; Annie Hampson, Louie Hampson, W. Ayre, W. Collins, C. Atkinson.

*Glasgow*.—J. Williamson, 10s.; L. Speirs; T. Robertson, 5s.; J. Woodburn; W. Craig, 2s.; N. Stevenson, 5s.; D. Halstead, 2s.; F. G.; J. Simpson, 2s.; A. McCrone, D. Irvine, S. Adamson, A. McConnachie; R. Webster, 3s.; A. Campbell, 2s. 6d.

*South Shields*.—Peacock; Gompertz, 2s.; Philipson, 2s. 6d.; Chapman, 1s. 6d.; Profit, Charlton, Fothergill, White.

*Liverpool*.—Owen, 2s.; Ross, Friend, Hall, Dinsdale, Dickson, Miss Dickson.

*Per Miss Vance*.—A. W. Marks, 10s.; Mrs. B. E. Marks, 10s.; M. Christopher, 2s.; J. Potter, 1s.; Mr. and Mrs. Henderson, 2s.

*Per R. Forder*.—J. Williams, 2s.; S. P. McDougall, 2s. 6d.; B. Waterhouse, £1; A. Lewis, 2s. 6d.; J. Warner, 2s.; F. H. (Macclesfield), 2s.; L. W. R., 1s.; A. C. Brown, 2s. 6d.

### SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. HOLYOAKE desires us to hold back for a week or two the publication of his new work on Secularism, in order to secure concurrent publication in England and America.

Mr. Charles Watts is back in London after ten days' absence in the country, where he has been debating and lecturing, largely under Mr. Foote's lecture scheme. In the next issue of the *Freethinker* he will give an account of his tour. Meanwhile, we may state that he had three splendid meetings on Sunday last at Hull, and the local friends tell us that he was in first-rate form. In the afternoon, partly owing to the expected presence of the Rev. F. Ballard, the hall was crowded to excess. Mr. Ballard was present, and spoke after the lecture, but he did not really discuss, and he declined the offer of a set debate. Friends came to the meetings from York, Withernsea, Hornsea, Grimsby, Barton, Goxhill, New Holland, and Beverley; and nearly forty sat down to tea between the afternoon and evening lectures.

Hull has been worked by Mr. Foote, and now by Mr. Watts, under the President's lecture scheme. The admission has been free, the audiences have been extraordinarily large, and the collections have been really satisfactory. If a Freethought millionaire would come along, and put down £5,000, we would undertake to place Freethought before multitudes of people in this country, and revolutionise Freethought propaganda.

Mr. Watts lectures this evening (March 29) at the Athenæum in Tottenham Court-road. Mr. Foote will take the chair. This is his first public appearance since his recent illness. The hall should be crowded.

Mr. Cohen, who left London in the middle of January, is still lecturing in the provinces. He returns to London on April 2, by which time he will have delivered *thirty-eight* lectures (besides others) under Mr. Foote's scheme. Mr. Cohen is now conducting a Freethought mission at Leeds, where he delivers to-day (March 29) the first *Sunday* lectures that have been delivered in Leeds for some time. Mr. Foote would have inaugurated the new course of Sunday lectures there, had it not been for his recent indisposition. Mr. Cohen will make an excellent substitute.

The *Dunoon Observer* gave excellent reports of Mr. Cohen's recent lectures at Dunoon, and severely censured the interrupters who turned the first meeting into a bear-garden.

The editor also continues to insert letters on the Bible and Christianity. Of course he is favored with letters from bigots who censure his impartiality, and impudently tell him that he ought not to open his columns to anything against Christianity; but the editor replies that he doesn't believe in burning or burking sensible letters on any public question. The Christians, he says, must "meet rational criticism with rational criticism—a thing surely not beyond their power." This last clause is rather sarcastic.

The Glasgow Branch, finding that the President's lecture scheme is the cause of a Freethought revival in south-west Scotland, is making a fresh collection for the Lecture Fund. A first instalment arrives this week. More will be acknowledged as the collecting sheets in members' hands are sent in to the secretary.

The Annual Children's Party, under the auspices of the National Secular Society, takes place on Wednesday evening (April 1) in the large hall of the Club Union, next door to the Holborn Town Hall. Applications for tickets should be made at once to Miss Vance, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C. Mr. Foote and Mr. Watts will both be present during the evening.

Tea, cakes, etc., will be provided for the children, with a variety of amusements. During the evening the laughable farce of *Good for Nothing* will be played, in which Miss Katie Watts will appear as "Nan."

On Easter Sunday the Battersea Branch holds a tea party, and invites members of other Branches and isolated Freethinkers. A good entertainment will follow; the St. Clair family will attend, and a farce will be played by the members of the Dramatic Club. There will be plenty of dancing. Tickets (only 6d. each) can be had at the hall, or at outdoor meetings at the Park Gates on Sunday mornings.

Mr. Robert E. Holding, zoological artist, is giving courses of lectures on various aspects of animal life, illustrated by diagrams. He has recently been at the South West London Polytechnic Institute, and, from the syllabus sent us, we judge his discourses to be interesting and instructive.

The Rev. J. Ira Maltzberger, a Baptist clergyman of Turner, Kans., has refused to preach against, and has announced himself to be an out-and-out infidel. He states that, after a great mental struggle, he resolved to make this announcement, his conversion to unbelief having been caused principally by the weakness of the answers of the clergy to the arguments of Colonel Ingersoll.

We receive from the office of *Secular Thought*, 6 Adelaide-street West, Toronto, a copy of the first number of a new magazine entitled *The Dominion Review*, a Monthly Record of Events and Opinions in Politics, Religion, and Science. The review opens with an article entitled "Hell Not in the Bible," by the Rev. W. E. Manley. Papers on "Is the Sun Habitable?" "The Evolution of Mind," and "Goldwin Smith as American Advocate" follow; and there is some well-written verse by W. A. Ratcliffe and A. W. Herdman. Under the title of "From Our Own Observatory," the editor gives lively liberal comments on Canadian affairs. The *Dominion Review* is well got up, and we hope it will have a successful future.

The *Free Review* for April opens with a summary and review of "Schopenhauer's Views on Women," by E. S. Galbraith. A smart paper on "The Ethics of Renan" follows. F. C. Huddle contributes a Freethought story with the title, "The Foundations of Belief." Those who like argument will find plenty in three papers on "Free Love Fallacies," and the conclusion of a discussion on "Socialism and Anarchism." G. Whitfield has a word of protest against the muzzling of dogs, and "Geoffrey Mortimer," under the title of "Protect Arcadia," has a seasonable and well-written word on the protection of wild birds, plants, etc. Some reviews of new books make up a capital number of this bright and interesting magazine.

#### How to Help Us.

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

## MR. COHEN'S TOUR IN THE WEST OF SCOTLAND.

Mr. C. COHEN'S lectures in Glasgow on Sundays, March 8 and 15, were well attended and highly successful. On the second date, in spite of most inclement weather, the audiences were appreciably larger, and the lecturer's stimulating and suggestive handling of his subjects won the lively approbation of the mass of his hearers. There was hardly any discussion worth mentioning. On the afternoon of the 8th, when the subject was "Christianity and Slavery," one of Mr. Foote's opponents at Camberslang turned up, armed with a sheaf of paper, and fully prepared to traverse a multitude of points which Mr. Cohen ought to have raised, if only he had been forewarned of the nature and scope of his critic's researches. As it was, the polemist in question simply recited some of the assertions made by him at the Camberslang meeting as to the condemnation of slavery by General Councils of the Catholic Church—a contention decisively disposed of by Mr. Cohen; but he omitted to explain to the meeting why he had failed to keep the promise which he made to Mr. Foote to send for insertion in the *Freethinker* the passages from the decrees of the (Ecumenical Councils which pronounce chattel-slavery to be wrong in principle. The claims of Mr. Foote's Lecture Scheme were assiduously pressed at all the meetings, and a good many new members were added to the Branch.

The week-night campaign opened at Dunoon on Monday evening, 9th inst., under conditions that recalled the pioneer times of the fierce struggle with lawless bigotry. The meeting took place in the Large Burgh Hall, and, as the district has been in a state of brisk effervescence since Mr. Foote's visit in February, it was not surprising to find the room filled. During his lecture on "Is Christianity True?" Mr. Cohen received a passably attentive hearing, and the earlier part of the discussion passed of peaceably enough, thanks to the vagaries of a local buffoon, who spent most of his time in reading an extract from the *Freethinker*, bristling with technical biological terms, some of which he was compelled to spell letter by letter. The tumult began with the appearance of a rude, blustering fellow, who was recently associated in Glasgow with the odious creature who fabricated the Hall of Science libel. This ruffler and his gang had come for mischief. At the close of his harangue he gave what the chairman knew to be a false name (Dr. Tanner), and the latter announced that, as this person had been guilty of deliberate deception, he would not be permitted to speak again. This greatly irritated the fogleman's faction, and they listened with ill-disguised impatience to a new Christian speaker. A subsequent remark of the chairman's, that as there were no fresh speakers he would call upon Mr. Cohen to reply to the gentlemen, whom he presumed were the representatives of the clergy of Dunoon, was the signal for a systematic outbreak. It was in vain that the chairman and Mr. Cohen strove to make themselves heard; all that Mr. Cohen did manage to make intelligible was that, on account of the misbehaviour of a part of the audience, he felt that it would be his duty to return the following week and give them a lesson in good manners. Then "Dr. Tanner" jumped on a seat and began to bawl a doxology, an exercise from which he suddenly desisted, in obedience to an emphatic remonstrance, coupled with moderate muscular pressure, from our staunch friend, Mr. Black. An ex-chief magistrate of Dunoon (Mr. Mackay) mounted the platform and endeavoured to restore order; but the spirit of lawlessness had broken all bounds, and there was nothing for it but to dismiss the meeting. Afterwards, on our way home, we were accompanied for some distance along the streets by a motley rabble, which regaled us with musical honours.

It must be recorded to the credit of some of the order-loving and fair-minded inhabitants of Dunoon that they warmly protested against this discreditable exhibition. Mr. Mackay and other prominent citizens came to us in the side-room to say how grieved and ashamed they were at the occurrence, and both the local newspapers, which gave copious reports of the meeting, explicitly saddled the opposition with all the blame in the case. The *Observer*, in a refreshingly outspoken article, animadverted strongly upon the rowdiness displayed, and one of its paragraphists pithily remarked that "boos" and hisses were not Christian evidences, and did not count as arguments with level-headed Christians. It will readily be understood that in the circumstances we regarded it as a point of honour that we should return to Dunoon at the earliest possible moment. Accordingly, when we learned for certain that Mr. Cohen would be free at the beginning of the following week, we requested the Dunoon friends to arrange for a meeting; but here a difficulty arose. The disturbance at Monday's meeting had furnished the bigots with a pretext for lodging a complaint, and the convener of the Halls' Committee declined to let the hall to us until he consulted the commissioners, whose decision would not be known until the afternoon of Monday, 16th, rather too late for a meeting on the same night. However, as the Dunoon friends were confident that their application would be

granted, they bade us hold ourselves in readiness for immediate action. On Monday forenoon they wired that a meeting had been arranged for that evening, at Sandbank, a township about three miles from Dunoon; and, having hastily mobilised our flying corps, we sped down the Firth, only to find that, after a solemn, and perhaps prayerful, scrutiny of the Deed of Gift, the trustees of the Sandbank Public Hall had discovered that, as it stipulated that the building should not be used for any purpose that would tend to corrupt the morals of the community, it would not be lawful for them to let it for a Freethought lecture. Hallelujah! As an offset to this disappointment—for the Lord always tempers the wind to the shorn lamb—we were overjoyed to hear that, by a majority of 9 to 2, the Dunoon Commissioners had authorised the convener to give us the hall, but that, as the large hall was already engaged for Tuesday, the small one had been taken for Mr. Cohen's second lecture. That event passed off without a hitch. The room was packed to suffocation, and hundreds were turned away. Groups of eager listeners gathered outside, at the windows, on the chance of catching an occasional sentence; and the deportment of the audience was most exemplary. The only ripple on the otherwise serene surface of the evening's proceedings was raised by "Dr. Tanner," who made a desperate and despicable attempt to work in an extraneous reference to the "Leeds Orgies"; but this was vigorously ruled out of order, and the pitiful coward collapsed. The meeting separated with all the sedateness and decorum of a conventicle; and, although the vestibule was lined with people who had just come down from a religious meeting upstairs, and there was a considerable crowd waiting outside, I only heard a solitary hiss, and such sporadic *voces populi* as, "Aye, that's yin' o' the infidels," "Is that him? Ach, he's no' sae ill-looking efter a," and "Whit are they comin' here fur w' their fause doctrine?" I was informed of two somewhat amusing incidents connected with the meeting. A drunken man staggered into the vestibule, and asked the way to the "infidel" meeting. Some good Samaritan, anxious for his spiritual welfare, directed him upstairs to the religious function. After sitting for a while, it at last dawned upon even his obfuscated intelligence that there must be a mistake somehow, and he said so, with more energy than politeness. A policeman was summoned, but refused to act, and the ulterior fate of that inebriate is shrouded in mystery. In the other case two sailors were seen coming down the stairs precipitately, and heard using flamboyant language. One of our friends solicitously inquired, "What is the matter?" "The matter?" blurted out one of them, with an expression of ineffable disgust and chagrin; "why, we thought it was an efflorescent concert; but incinerate my optics if it ain't a cerulean, purpuraceous, and sanguinary prayer-meetin'"; and as they moved off there was a further pyrotechnical display. We are pardonably proud of what we may venture to call our conquest of Dunoon. The bigots and bullies there have had a practical proof of the spirit and policy with which Secularists meet all attempts to overawe or stop them in their propagandist work, and the prestige which our movement enjoys of being always in the forefront of the battle for free speech has at least been preserved inviolate. On behalf of Mr. Cohen and the Glasgow Branch, I proffer sincere thanks to the small but compact and loyal body of Dunoon stalwarts, who have helped us to plant the standard of Secularism firmly in their burgh. They are already planning new modes of attack, one of those being to serve an invitation to debate upon every clergyman in the neighborhood, and to let the public know what has been done by an advertisement in the local press. It is not often that one comes upon men of such spirit, worth, and enterprise. It has been both a pleasure and an honor to stand shoulder to shoulder with them. May we always find friends as trusty in the hour of need.

After Dunoon it was inevitable that the other week-night meetings should seem somewhat tame and prosaic; but, judged on their own merits, they were really most interesting and fruitful. Paisley gave Mr. Cohen a good audience, but a very poor babbler as an opponent. The Branch there is thriving apace, and the secretary handed Mr. Cohen a substantial subscription for the lecture scheme. At Greenock, on Wednesday, the 11th, there was a fine, intelligent gathering; but the criticism was paltry, when it did not sink to the lower depth of detraction and malignity, as when an Irish Orangeman revived the filthy calumny which once coupled the names of Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant. A list was drawn up of local Freethinkers willing to form a Branch, and as more than the complement was obtained, there is little fear of the success of the project.

The Motherwell meeting was in some respects the most encouraging of the series. It was large, animated, and responsive. At the suggestion of a friend, Mr. Cohen made reference to an odiously familiar and scurrilous leaflet which had been distributed at the door. By way of answer to its stereotyped question, "Where are the hospitals, etc., built by Secularists?" Mr. Cohen pointed out some of the legal and moral disabilities under which Secularists and Secular Societies still labor, and protested warmly against the

shameful injustice of such taunts from the very people who had deliberately despoiled us. Here also a quorum of names was enlisted in order to the inception of a Branch, and I have since heard that a preliminary meeting has been held for that purpose.

The two outstanding features of Mr. Cohen's week-night itinerary are the magnitude of the audiences and the dearth of efficient criticism. Even making allowance for the attraction of a free lecture, the first circumstance points to a quickened interest in Freethought questions, and shadows forth the vast possibilities of expansion that lie before Secularist propaganda, if only its resources are replenished and developed. The masses of the people are slowly emerging from the slough of indifference and despond into which the collapse of the old faith has plunged them. The hunger for knowledge is springing up in their minds, and the promise of the future is with this great multitude, who are groping blindly after some settled scheme of thought and rational method of life. Transitional periods are crises in growth, and may as easily lead to degeneration as to progress. If the Rationalist is not at hand to give salutary nourishment and direction to the nascent habit of independent thinking, the irrationalist is always ready to administer some nostrum to allay intellectual unrest and paralyse the judgment. There is nothing like a stated succession of meetings for arousing and sustaining an active interest in Secularist doctrine. In each of the places visited there is hardly anything else talked about in the interval between the lectures; and while innuendo and slander are busy, the antagonising forces that make for truth and justice are also at work, and in the end Secularism is not only justified, but also strengthened and advanced.

The absence of creditable opposition is profoundly significant. It means that Christianity has fallen so low that not even its professional teachers and apologists dare to defend it openly. The cultured lay or clerical Christian is too painfully conscious of the infirmity of his creed to risk any exposure of it. And thus, in its dishonored old age, historic Christianity is embodied in dogmas and institutions; is creeping back for an asylum into the affections and keeping of the despised rump of the once widespread horde of the uncouth and unlettered, who fostered its puling infancy. Thus religions, like men, may pass into their second childhood.

J. P. GILMOUR.

## JESUS OF NAZARETH DOETH A GUY!

AN EASTER HYMN.

(With Apologies to Moody and Sankey.)

WHAT means this noisy, frowsy throng?  
There surely must be something wrong.  
Why are they so excited, pray,  
And just like Bedlamites astray?

I will explain the reason why:  
Jesus of Nazareth draweth nigh,  
And they are anxious to espy  
Jesus of N. as he passeth by.

Who is this Jesus, why doth he  
Send people off their n-u-t?  
How is it that he hath the skill  
With such a mob the streets to fill?  
Hush! hush! you fools, is my reply,  
Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.  
Yes, there he goeth; look! Oh my!  
On a couple of asses he passeth by!

What is his destination, pray?  
And is it very far away?  
Why doth J. C. so wildly bolt  
Astride that donkey and that colt?  
Those "mokes" were stolen, I reply,  
Jesus of Nazareth doeth a "guy";  
They are not paid for, that is why  
Jesus of Nazareth bolteth by!

Why do the people's cheers resound?  
Why spread they out upon the ground  
Old clothes, and branches off the trees,  
And follow Christ like swarms of bees?  
This is the reason, I reply:  
They think 'tis a God that is passing by;  
They therefore laud and glorify  
Jesus of N. as he passeth by!

What is this dreadful change of scene—  
Christ on a cross—what can it mean?  
How could they murder and deride  
The God they'd lately glorified?  
It is not true—'tis all my eye,  
To say that their "Savior" they left to  
die;  
To say that, mocking his bitter cry,  
Jesus of Nazareth they passed by!

ESS JAY BEE.

## PALEY'S PLAGIARISM.

THE famous work on *Natural Theology*, by Dr. Paley, has long been the text-book upon the subject at universities and theological colleges. Most people regard it as an impregnable argument, original, at least, in its illustrations with Paley himself. It is neither the one nor the other. It is a piece of sophistry, founded on the work of another man, to whom Paley, who said he could not afford to keep a conscience, acted with gross unfairness in keeping his name and work concealed. The leading arguments and illustrations of his *Natural Theology* are taken from a book of the same nature, written by Dr. Bernard Nieuwentyt, published in Holland over one hundred years before Paley's treatise made its appearance in England. Nieuwentyt's work was translated into English by Mr. Chamberlayne, a member of the Royal Society, under the title of *The Religious Philosopher* (three vols., 8vo; 1718-19).

To show the connection between Mr. Chamberlayne's *Religious Philosopher* and Dr. Paley's *Natural Theology*, I give the plan of both publications in parallel columns. The reader will see their almost complete identity:—

General Arrangement of Dr. Paley's "Natural Theology."	General Arrangement of Dr. Nieuwentyt's "Religious Philosopher."
--	--

Dr. Paley lays down his "Statement of the General Argument" in two or three sections.

Paley commences the application of his argument of design with an examination of the structure of the human body. Chaps. 3 to 11 inclusive contain his illustrations. Chap. 9 is devoted to the muscles.

Paley commences his 12th chap. with Comparative Anatomy.

In the 20th chap. Paley commences with the structure and nature of Plants.

Paley makes his observations on the "Elements," Air, Water, Fire, Light, etc.

Paley's 22nd chapter is on "Astronomy."

Paley concludes with some general remarks on the nature and existence of a Deity.

Dr. Nieuwentyt has his "General Epistle to the Reader," in which the same "General Argument" is employed.

Dr. Nieuwentyt also commences his application of the argument of design by an examination of the human body. "Contemplation" 10 is devoted to the muscles—containing 16 sections, illustrated with many plates.

Nieuwentyt enters upon the consideration of Comparative Anatomy.

The nature of Plants is considered by Dr. Nieuwentyt.

Nieuwentyt makes observations on the "Elements," etc.

The 24th "Contemplation" of Nieuwentyt is on the "Visible Heavens."

Dr. Nieuwentyt ends his disquisitions on Astronomy, etc., with remarks of a similar nature on the same subject.

Not only is the general arrangement similar; the particular instances are alike. Voltaire had said before Paley: "I shall always be convinced that a clock proves a clockmaker"; but the particular illustration of the watch is found in Nieuwentyt, who says: "Let us suppose that in the middle of a sandy down, where few people are used to pass, anyone should find a watch, showing the hours, minutes, and days of the months, and, having examined the same, should perceive so many different wheels, nicely adapted by their teeth to each other, and that one of them could not move without moving the rest of the whole machine; and should further observe that those wheels are made of brass, in order to keep them from rust; that the spring is steel, no other metal being so proper for that purpose," etc. These are almost the very words afterwards used by Paley without any acknowledgment. Paley does, indeed, mention the name of Nieuwentyt once, and this in a very disingenuous manner. He says: "Dr. Nieuwentyt, in the *Leipsic Transactions*, reckons upon one hundred muscles that are employed every time we breathe." Paley, instead of referring to the work which would have proved his whole indebtedness, mentions the inaccessible *Leipsic Transactions*, in which it made its first appearance. Of course, it is quite true that Paley utilised his material as an able special pleader may the brief drawn up for him by a solicitor; and to the reputation of a special pleader Paley is fully entitled. But the main thought and the main illustrations of his work were not his own, and this, in common fairness, he should have mentioned.

Now let me, with the fairness wanting in Paley, acknowledge that the above matter was ventilated in the columns of the *Athenaeum* as far back as 1848, pp. 803, 907, 934. As, however, editions of Paley are multiplied without any acknowledgment of the truth, it is not out of place to again call public attention to the facts underlying this vaunted piece of Christian evidence.

LUCIANUS.

When Andrew Halliday told Fred Lawrence at the Savage Club that St. Peter would not let him into heaven, "Won't he, though?" said Lawrence. "Egad! if he don't, I'll serve him with a copy of Holy Writ."

BOOK CHAT.

"You have committed the offence of plain speaking, and I fear it cannot be pardoned," wrote Mr. Gladstone to Mr. Purcell, the author of *The Life of Cardinal Manning*. Gladstone accurately measured the bitterness of the Catholic party, who, by their numerous articles against Mr. Purcell, show how deeply they resent the shattering of an idol.

\* \* \*

Those who do not care to tackle Mr. Purcell's bulky volumes on Cardinal Manning will find much of his information condensed in a sixpenny *brochure* by Miss M. F. Cusack ("the nun of Kenmare"), entitled "A Modern Cardinal."

\* \* \*

Mr. Lecky's new work, "Democracy and Liberty," discusses the influence of democracies, aristocracy, upper chambers, nationalities, in connection with religious liberty, Socialism, labor questions, woman questions, etc.

\* \* \*

The *Times* (March 24), noticing Mr. Lecky's work, says it "is worthy of his reputation, and a veritable encyclopædia of information." It seems that Mr. Lecky considers the *Referendum*, an appeal to the genuine opinion of the country, as a device full of promise, not less so because it would lower the authority of the House of Commons. The *Times* notices that, wide though the range of Mr. Lecky's inquiry be, he passes over the bearings of science on democracy.

\* \* \*

*Percy Bysshe Shelley, Poet and Pioneer*, is the title of a study by Mr. H. S. Salt, shortly to be published by William Reeves. The book is partly the reprint of a work already noticed. Mr. Salt claims that the verdict of time not only pronounces Shelley a great poet, but corroborates his social and freethinking views.

\* \* \*

In his newly-published work, *What I Think of South Africa*, Mr. Stuart Cumberland tells the following story of "Oom Paul": "Some time ago his Honor accepted the invitation to open a new synagogue at Johannesburg. After the usual preliminaries he, to the amazement of the Chosen who were there assembled, announced, in his loudest tones, 'In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I declare this building open.'"

\* \* \*

The *Labor Prophet* for March devotes its front page to an article on "The Humanitarian Movement," by Mr. H. S. Salt, of whom a portrait is given. Mr. Salt explains what he means by a humanitarian. "I mean," he says, "one who feels and acts humanely, not towards mankind only, or the lower animals only, but towards *all* sentient life—one who adopts the principle that 'it is iniquitous to inflict unnecessary suffering on any sentient being.' I should not regard as humanitarians, for example, those 'philanthropists' who, having made a fortune by commercial competition, in which the depreciation of wages is a recognised method, afterwards give back a portion of their wealth as charity. This may perhaps be philanthropy, but it is not humanitarianism. Nor do I think that the name should be given to those 'zoophilists,' or so-called animal lovers, who keep useless and pampered animals as pets and playthings, wasting on them time and money which might be better spent elsewhere, and, indeed, wasting the lives of the animals themselves, for animals have their own lives to live as men have." (London: 72 Fleet-street; price 1d.)

\* \* \*

The new edition of Olive Schreiner's *Story of an African Farm* will have as frontispiece a photogravure of a recently-taken portrait of the author. Over 80,000 copies of this remarkable work have been sold.

\* \* \*

A series of articles by Olive Schreiner on "South Africa and the Boers" will commence in the April number of the *Fortnightly Review*.

\* \* \*

With the delivery of an address by Mr. C. W. Leadbeater, on "The Theosophical View," the Humanitarian League's course of lectures on "The Rights of Men and the Rights of Animals" was brought to a close on Tuesday evening, March 17, at the London Memorial Hall. The six addresses, which have shown a remarkable consensus of opinion on the principles of humanitarianism, among speakers otherwise representative of widely-divergent schools of thought, will be shortly published as a volume by Messrs. George Bell and Sons.



In all ancient Christian literature there is not one word that tells the slave to revolt, or that tells the master to liberate the slave, or even that touches the problem of public right which arises out of slavery.—*Ernest Renan*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THAT CONVERTED ATHEIST.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I am greatly astonished with your latest reference in the *Freethinker* to my story which appeared in the *Joyful News*. In the first place, the account you give of the interview contains discrepancies, and is highly coloured, as is vouched for by a gentleman who was present when *my answers* to their inquiries were given. If this is the way reports of interviews are to appear, further investigations—even if permitted—would be useless. In the second place, a post-card sent to Mr. Gilmour for his own private information, and, I believe, marked "private" for that purpose, is sent to you and printed in your columns without permission. This is evidently unfair to me. Thirdly, you state that the reply you received from me was without my name and address. I have a competent witness to the fact that I enclosed a private note for you, with the letter for publication, requesting you to publish my letter, but only to give my initials. As the letter for printing reached you, I reasonably conclude that the other also did. Under these circumstances I absolutely decline any further communication with you or your representatives.

JOHN T. SMITH.

51, Whitevale Street, Glasgow.

P.S.—I was greatly surprised to learn that Mr. Gilmour knew the contents of my letter to you *a week prior to its publication*. I may add that the conduct of the deputation of four compelled me to write to Mr. Gilmour respectfully suggesting that my only means of future communication *re my article* would be through the Press.

[Mr. Smith's post-card to Mr. Gilmour was *not* marked "private." He sent *no* private letter to us with the one intended for publication in the *Freethinker*. He has a competent (anonymous) witness for everything he is unable to substantiate otherwise. We quite understand Mr. Smith. He prates of *privacy* after concocting a converted infidel story for *public* consumption, and stands upon his dignity to avoid a damning exposure. It is the Price Hughes business over again.—ED.]

THE SUNDAY LEAGUE AND A THEOLOGICAL SUNDAY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—What is the Sunday League coming to when, through its President and Secretary, it gives itself away to Dr. Peake and the rabid Sabbatarians by *denying* that its object is to destroy the "theological" Sunday? May we not ask the League the meaning of its Sunday Excursions and its Sunday Concerts, if not to change the theological into a rational Sunday? And yet, in all the daily papers, we see letters signed by Alderman Treloar and Henry Mills disclaiming any intention or purpose to do so. Alas! we sigh for the good old times when Charles Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, in her Freethinking days, pleaded so eloquently on the platforms of the League for a rational Sunday. But the League was young then, and strong and confident in its principles. We fear it is growing old now, faint and feeble, when its President and Secretary proclaim to the world the abandonment of their leading object and main purpose to bring about a rational way of spending the weekly day of rest. Even Mr. Massey Mainwaring could not rid himself of this old figment of the sanctity and sacredness of the holy Sabbath day; but a higher note was struck, and a broader view advocated, by Sir John Lubbock, who presented a petition from the Sunday Society, frequently referred to in the debate when the proposal was unfortunately made by the mover to limit the hours of opening from two o'clock to six. It is but fair to say that Mr. Lough, Mr. John Burns, and others, emphasised this view; but, in the interests of "sanctity" and "sacredness," the advocate of the Sunday League yielded to pressure on this cardinal point, and the nightmare of a "theological Sunday" will still darken the horizon and rob the Sunday of its brightness and joy, and as well the opportunities of intellectual and moral elevation, by closing our Museums and Art Galleries at six instead of nine or ten o'clock. The debate is still going on in the daily papers, and Dr. Peake is clinching his argument by quoting the words of Lord Hobhouse at a public Conference of the National Federation of Sunday Societies, held in London last year, of which the Sunday League is a member. In the printed report of the Federation, now lying before me, Lord Hobhouse said: "They thought that the use of Sunday should be the *rational* as opposed to the *theological*"; and this is the only true and logical position of any Sunday League or Society claiming public attention and support. We trust all the other members of the Federation will disown and repudiate so mean and degrading a position.

J. TOPHAM.

## 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, Charles Watts, "The Science of Life."

BATTERSEA SECULAR HALL (Prince of Wales-road): 7.45, select entertainment. Good Friday, at 8, social gathering.

BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Balls Pond, N.): 7.15, G. J. Holyoake, "The General Behavior of the Devil." Tuesday, at 8.30, social party.

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, G. Standing, "What is the Old Testament?" Good Friday, 8.30 to 2, ball.

EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Reform Club, Well-street, Hackney): 7.30, Miss E. J. Troup will lecture.

PENTON HALL (81 Pentonville-road—Humanitarian Society): 7, Joachim Kaspar, "Mormonism and Salvationist Folly."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road): 7, Dr. Stanton Coit, "John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*."

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Westminster Town Hall, Caxton-street): 11.15, Dr. Stanton Coit, "The Bible as a Text-book of Morals."

WEST LONDON BRANCH (Athenæum, Godolphin-road, Shepherd's Bush): 7.30, S. E. Easton, "Where will you Spend Eternity?"

WESTMINSTER BRANCH N.S.S. (42 Vincent-street): 8, members' monthly meeting.

### OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 12, a lecture.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 12, W. Heaford will lecture.

### COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM (Alexandra Hall, Hope-street): 7, W. H. Whitney, "Thomas Paine."

BRISTOL (Shepherds' Hall, Old Market-street): 7, annual meeting—important business.

CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school; 7, Stanley Jones, "The History of Culture."

DERBY ("Ye Olde Feathers"): 7, Mr. Briggs, "The Limits of the Artificial."

GLASGOW (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12, discussion—D. Baxter, "Freethought Gleanings from the *Herald*"; 6.30, social meeting.

LEEDS (Vulcan Club, Vulcan-street, Benson-street): morning, C. Cohen, "Darwinism and Democracy"; afternoon, "Christianity, Woman, and Morality"; evening, "Scepticism: Its Meaning and its Value."

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

LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 7, F. Woollett, "The Mormons and their Religion."

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 3, annual meeting of members; 6.30, social party.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Northumberland Hall, High Friar-street): 3, monthly business meeting.

PLYMOUTH (Democratic Club, Whimble-street): 7, business meeting, to arrange for Mr. Watts's lectures.

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, lecture or reading by a local gentleman.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, business meeting; 7.30, R. Chapman, "The Future of Secularism."

### Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—March 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.—April 12, Balls Pond; 26, Glasgow. May 3, Failsworth; 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.

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.

## THE PATH OF PROGRESS:

A Reply to "Merrie England."

By W. D. MACGREGOR.

A TRENCHANT CRITICISM OF SOCIALISM.

The *Scotsman* says of it: "Able thought out and deserves attention." *Glasgow Herald*: "We can cordially recommend this little book as affording an able and lucid answer to Mr. Blatchford." *Edinburgh Evening News* says: "Makes mince-meat of the Socialistic balderdash that does duty for argument in 'Merrie England.'" *Daily Mail* (Glasgow) says: "An able little treatise, ingenious and logical. We hope the average man will honestly read it. The inevitable result will be widened views and economical salvation not far off." 96 pages. Price 6d. To be had of JOHN HEYWOOD, Publisher, Manchester; and all Booksellers.

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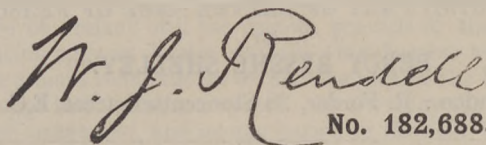
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