

The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

VOL. XVI.—No. 27.

SUNDAY, JULY 5, 1896.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

NONCONFORMIST CHUCKLING.

A FEW weeks ago the Nonconformists were squirming under the Education Bill, which they described as the greatest blow against English liberty since the days of Charles the First. Now they are chuckling over the fate of that Bill, which they fancy they have heard the last of for ever. For our part, however, we fancy they are crowing before they are quite out of the wood. The Tory Government may be discredited, but it is not moribund. Barring accidents, it is likely to last for some years; and the attempt which has just been defeated will probably be renewed. We do not mean that the Education Bill will be raised from the dead precisely as it was buried. No doubt its complex machinery, and its solution of the religious difficulty, will be abandoned; but the Government is bound to obtain a largely increased grant for the Voluntary Schools; indeed, a direct pledge to do this early next year has been given by Mr. Balfour in the House of Commons. And, after all, this is the very essence of the late Bill. More than three-fourths of the money will go to the Church of England schools, while the Catholic schools will also profit in their due degree. What are the insults of partisans, and the threats of statesmen, in comparison with such an advantage? The wiser clericals will appreciate a *substantial* gain. They can afford to possess their souls in patience, for in a society like ours warfare is carried on with *money*, and a larger supply of *that* will enable them to wage a more effectual, if indirect, opposition to their less favored enemies.

Still, it is natural that the Nonconformists should chuckle. They have won for the moment, and sufficient unto the future day is the evil thereof. What we take exception to is their boasting. Here is the *Methodist Times*, for instance, claiming that the Nonconformist party has brought "the most powerful Government in the modern history of England to its knees." One would think there were no people in England but Churchmen and Dissenters, whereas there is a multitude of persons thoroughly indifferent to the squabble between these rival religious parties for power and privilege, but no less thoroughly opposed to any further subventioning of Denominational schools, and utterly disgusted at the hypocrisy of calling these establishments Voluntary, when by far the greater part of their cost is borne by the imperial exchequer. These persons have opposed the Education Bill, and without their assistance the Nonconformists could not have withstood the coalition of the English and Romish Churches.

It is curious that while, in its leading article, our Methodist contemporary claims the whole victory for the Nonconformist party, it admits, in an occasional note, that the Bill was very largely wrecked by Liberal Unionist and Conservative opposition; indeed, it quotes with implied approval the following passage from the *St. James's Gazette*: "It was Sir John Lubbock who brought the majority down by more than fifty per cent. It was Sir Albert Rollit who got Mr. Balfour to throw over Sir John Gorst. It was Mr. Whitmore who gave voice to the protest of London. It was Sir John Kennaway who hammered the final nail into the coffin of that ill-starred measure." What is the use, then, of talking as though the opposition the Government had to confront were merely "a Nonconformist attack"?

There is a more sagacious, and in our opinion a more principled, section of Nonconformists than those who follow

Dr. Clifford, Dr. Berry, Dr. Guinness Rogers, and Mr. Price Hughes. Dr. Parker tells the jubilant majority of Dissenters that they will eventually have to accept the exclusion of religion from the public schools. Dr. Parker says he is not in favor of "secular" education, but of "separate" education. Secular instruction only should be given in the public schools, and religious instruction elsewhere at the parents' choice and responsibility. Dr. Robertson Nicoll, editor of the *British Weekly*, advocates the same policy. He also asserts that the "official pronouncements" of Nonconformist Conferences do not really "represent the general body of the people." Further, he does not scruple to declare that "Nonconformists have been miserably led in recent years," and that "they are being miserably led just now." This is gall and wormwood to the "official" party. Mr. Price Hughes puts forward "one of the ablest of our younger ministers, Mr. Bradfield, of Leicester," to answer Dr. Nicoll. We are told that he "completely smashes and pulverizes the secular education position." But considering it has been smashed and pulverized so frequently, it has a perfectly marvellous power of self-restoration. We believe that Mr. Price Hughes and his friends are basking in a fool's paradise. We are confident that, if they could only get at the real opinion of the masses, they would discover a profound indifference to all this theological controversy between Church and Dissent over the problem of religious education. They never tire of affirming that the question is not stirred up by Church of England parents, but by Church of England priests; but is it not also true that the opposite side is mainly supported by Dissenting ministers? It seems to us a clerical squabble altogether, a mere professional dispute, in which the people are not very deeply interested. We should like to see a referendum on the subject, like that which has recently taken place in Australia. The result would probably surprise (and alarm) the clericals of both Church and Dissent.

We have read the article by the Rev. W. Bradfield, of Leicester, and it strikes us as extremely feeble in argument, though vigorous enough in expression. He says that if the State teaches at all it must teach religion. For this proposition he advances two reasons. First, the teacher has to deal with boys and girls, not merely with code subjects, and "religion will be as much wanted when he is teaching arithmetic as when he his teaching the Bible." But what does this mean? Does it mean that it requires a good deal of religion to harmonise the Trinity with the multiplication table? Or that arithmetic and the Bible have a natural tendency to contradict each other? Mr. Bradfield's second reason is more definite. "If the State," he says, "must not teach religion, the teacher must not ever use the word 'ought,' but only 'must.' His only sanction for right conduct will be the school prize, his only deterrent from wrong conduct will be the cane." This is written by a Christian minister, and it is like the street cry of "fresh fish." Christian ministers are the most bigoted and exclusive on earth. There is no such thing as natural morality in their classification. Righteousness begins and ends in the circle of their doctrines. Yet the gentlemen who sneer at the school prize and the cane hold forth the hope of Heaven and the fear of Hell as the appropriate motives to virtuous conduct! These modern preachers do not understand their own bad business. The old divines were not so stupid and ignorant as to teach that there was no such thing as natural morality. They admitted it cheerfully,

and argued that Christianity gave it greater power, higher sanctions, and deeper inspiration. But it now appears that a boy cannot even be trusted to work out a sum without a liberal dose of religion. His natural depravity is so strong as to make him find that six times six are thirty-seven.

Mr. Bradfield lets the cat out of the bag in stating why he is opposed to an Established Church:—"The true objection to the Establishment is that it is, from a religious point of view, a mischievous failure. If it really promoted the kingdom of Christ, there would be no valid Christian objection to it." Mr. Bradfield is not opposed to an Established Church on principle, but only on policy. If he could have it of his own pattern, he would vote for it to-morrow. This is perfectly clear, and we thank him for the confession. According to John Milton, new presbyter was but old priest writ large. We now see that a Non-conformist minister is but a Church priest in the shade of opposition. He would fasten *his* yoke upon the people if he had a chance. Practically, therefore, the difference between these rival factions is the difference between tweedledum and tweedledee. Both are the sleepless and unscrupulous enemies of secular civilization, and all that it involves of mental and personal liberty.

G. W. FOOTE.

THE KASIDAH.

The Kasidah of Hâjî Abdû Al-Yazdi: A Lay of the Higher Law, translated and annotated by his friend and pupil, F. B., was the title given to couplets of his own composing by the late Sir Richard Francis Burton. The Arabic name was one of his Eastern *noms de plume*. Despite this precaution, the work was written twenty-seven years before he ventured to print it. It was probably the tardy success of Edward Fitzgerald's *Quatrains of Omar Khayyam* which induced Burton to appear as the translator of this work, which contained his own deepest thoughts, and has some affinities with Omar. The original edition of the *Kasidah*, dated Vienna, 1880, is, I believe, quite unprocurable, while of the reissue after his death only one hundred copies were printed, his widow apparently agreeing to this very restricted circulation of her late husband's thoughts. Her utter disregard of his wishes in handing over all his works to the editorship of the secretary of the National Vigilance Society impelled me to look up his *Kasidah*, and make the public acquainted with some of its contents.

The cautious reader need be under no alarm. The work contains no line to cause a blush on a maiden's cheek, or to call for the peculiar offices of the secretary of the N.V.S. What Lord Coleridge said of the editor of the *Freethinker* may be said of Hâjî Abdû Al-Yazdi: he may be blasphemous, but he is certainly not obscene. Since to dismiss and decry the theologies of the priests is, in their eyes, blasphemy, it would be hard to acquit him of this charge. He proclaims in so many words:—

There is no God, no man-made God; a bigger, stronger, crueller man,
Black phantom of our baby fears, ere Thought, the life of Life, began.

In his notes, wherein, of course, Burton speaks of Hâjî Abdû as another person, though well known to him, he says "he recognises the incompatibility of the Infinite with the Definite; of a Being who loves, who thinks, who hates, of an *Actus purus*, who is called jealous, wrathful, and revengeful, with an 'Eternal' that makes for righteousness." Further on he says: "Christianity and Islamism have been on their trial for the last eighteen and twelve centuries. They have been ardent in proselytizing, yet they embrace only one-tenth and one-twentieth of the human race. Hâjî Abdû would account for the tardy and unsatisfactory progress of what their votaries call 'pure truth' by the innate imperfections of the same. Both propose a reward for mere belief, and a penalty for simple unbelief; rewards and punishments being, by the way, very disproportionate. Thus, they reduce everything to the scale of a somewhat unrefined egotism, and their demoralizing effects become clearer every progressive age."

"The Hâjî," he continues, "regrets the excessive importance attached to a possible future state; he looks upon this as a physical stimulant—a day-dream, whose revulsion

and reaction disorder waking life." But he remains Agnostic, neither affirming nor denying a continuance of life. "With him suspension of judgment is a system." One of the couplets, he tells us, not included in the collection is the following:—

Of all the safest ways of Life the safest way is still to doubt;
Men win the future world with Faith—the present world they win without.

In a prefatory note "F. B." lays down the principles of the poem. They are as follows: "The author asserts that happiness and misery are equally divided and distributed in this world. He makes self-cultivation, with due regard to others, the sole and sufficient object of human life. He suggests that the affections, the sympathies, and the 'divine gift of pity' are man's highest enjoyments. He advocates suspension of judgment, with a proper suspicion of facts, 'the idlest of superstitions.' Finally, although destructive to appearance, he is essentially reconstructive." His faith, as Lady Burton says in her preface, is "anti-Christian and Pantheistic." It is a sort of Oriental Humanitarianism, blended with the Western scientific sceptical habit of mind. Burton had travelled too widely and mixed with too many of all creeds and no creed to suppose that any religion was the sole depository of truth. The lesson he had learnt was one of humility and contentment, expressed in the couplets:—

The world is old, and thou art young; the world is large, and thou art small;
Cease, atom of a moment's span, to hold thyself an All-in-all!

Cease, Man, to mourn, to weep, to wail; enjoy thy shining hour of sun;
We dance along Death's icy brink—but is the dance less full of fun?

Agnosticism is the creed of the *Kasidah*, which ridicules the pretensions of man to solve the problem of the universe by postulating a God made in man's own image:—

How shall the Shown pretend to ken aught of the Show-man or the Show?

Why meanly bargain to believe? which only means thou ne'er canst know?

Who made your Maker? If Self-made, why fare so far to fare the worse?

Sufficeth not a world of worlds, a self-made chain of universe?
Grant an Idea, Primal Cause, the Causing Cause, why crave for more?

Why strive its depth and breadth to mete, to trace its work, its aid to implore?

Unknown, Incomprehensible, what'er you choose to call it, call;

But leave it vague as airy space, dark in its darkness mystical.

Your childish fears would seek a Sire, by the non-human God defin'd.

What your five wits may wot ye weet; what 'is you please to dub *designed*.

You bring down Heaven to vulgar Earth; your Maker like yourselves you make;

You quake to own a reign of Law, you pray the Law its laws to break;

You pray, but hath your thought e'er weighed how empty vain the prayer must be

That begs a boon already given, or craves a change of Law to see?

In his notes "F. B." says: "Hâjî Abdû [*i.e.*, himself] evidently holds that idolatry begins with a personal deity. He professes a vague Agnosticism, and attributes popular faith to the fact that *Timor fecit Deos*—'every religion being, without exception, the child of fear and ignorance.'" The last phrase is from Carl Vogt. "Evidently," he concludes, "he is neither spiritualist nor idealist." He says:—

Man hath no Soul, a state of things, a-nothing still, a sound, a word,

Which so begets substantial thing that eye shall see what ear hath heard.

Where was his soul, the savage beast which in primeval forests strayed?

What shape had it, what dwelling-place, what part in Nature's plan it played?

This Soul to see a riddle made; who wants the vain duality?
Is not myself enough for me? What need of "I" within an "I"?

And at the conclusion of this notable poem he exclaims:—

The shiver'd clock again shall strike ; the broken reed shall pipe again ;
But we—we die, and Death is one, the doom of Brutes, the doom of Men.

He derives the Soul-idea from the savage ghosts, and thinks it arose in Egypt, and not among the People of the Book, as Moslems call the Jews and Christians :—

The Ghost, embodying natural dread of dreary death and foul decay,
Begot the Spirit, Soul, and Shade with Hades' pale and wan array.

He exclaims :—

There is no Heaven, there is no Hell ; these be the dreams of baby minds ;
Tools of the wily Fetisheer, to fright the fools his cunning blinds.
Learn from the mighty Spirits of old to set thy foot on Heaven and Hell ;
In life to find thy Hell and Heaven as thou abuse or use it well.

Christianity, with its "trinal god," excited only his abhorrence by its substitution of monkish dogma for Pagan delight :—

And when, at length, "Great Pan is dead," uprose the loud and dolorous cry,
A glamor wither'd on the ground, a splendor faded in the sky.
Yea, Pan was dead, the Nazarene came and seized his seat beneath the sun,
The votary of the Riddle-god, whose one is three and three is one ;
Whose saddening creed of herited Sin spilt o'er the world its cold, grey spell ;
In every vista showed a grave, and 'neath the grave the glare of Hell.

He sees the slimy mask of the priest throughout religion's fields :—

"Be ye Good Boys, go seek for Heaven, come pay the priest that holds the key";
So spake, and speaks, and aye shall speak, the last to enter Heaven,—he.
Are these the words for men to hear ? yet such the Church's general tongue
The horseleech-cry, so strong so high, her heavenward Psalms and Hymns among.
What ? Faith, a merit and a claim, when with the brain 'tis born and bred ?
Go, fool, thy foolish way, and dip in holy water buried dead !

This line is evidently an allusion to Romans vi. 4, or 1 Cor. xv. 29. We wonder it was not suppressed by Lady Burton, a rigid Catholic. In his own note on the passage Burton quotes Schopenhauer's words as to how the English nation ought to treat "that set of hypocrites, impostors, and money-grabbers—the clergy, that annually devours £3,500,000."

Utterly discarding theology, Hâji Abdû yet despises sensualism. His gospel is Goethe's Gospel of Self-Culture. The German poet says :—

This great world would'st thou fashion ? 'Tis fashioned long ago ;
Thee is thy lot appointed, whether it be high or low.

So Burton urges :—

With ignorance wage eternal war, to know thyself for ever strain ;
Thine ignorance of thine ignorance is thy fiercest foe, thy deadliest bane.
True to thy Nature, to Thy self, Fame, and Disfame, nôr hope, nor fear :
Enough to thee the still small voice aye thundering in thine inner ear.
Pluck the old woman from thy breast : be stout in woe, be stark in weal ;
Do good, for Good is good to do : Spurn bribe of Heaven and threat of Hell ;
From self-approval seek applause : What ken not men thou kennest, thou !
Spurn every idol others raise : before thine own Ideal bow.
Be thine own Deus : make self free, liberal as the circling air ;
Thy Thought to thee an Empire be ; break every prisoning lock and bar ;
Do thou the Ought to self aye owed ; here all the duties meet and blend
In widest sense, withouten care of what began, for what shall end.

And with self-cultivation will come the recognition that we are part of a wider humanity :—

Survey thy kind as One whose wants in the great Human Whole unite,
The Homo rising high from earth to seek the Heavens of Life in light,
And hold Humanity one man, whose universal agony Still strains and strives to gain the goal, where agonies shall cease to be.

I do not pretend to criticise the *Kasidah* as a poem. While its versification is far inferior to that of Fitzgerald, it contains imagery and imagination at times worthy of Omar Khayyam. It is as a revelation of the inner mind of one of the most romantic figures of our time that the work is profoundly interesting. Sir Richard Burton was one of those men who made the greatness of England, and who spread the fame of English pluck over land and sea. An accomplished linguist and a sound scholar, he had every talent save that of using his talents in his own interests. A diamond with many facets, his *Kasidah* remains to prove that one who was probably the most virile and individual personality of our time was a thorough Freethinker.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF SECULARISM.

CHAPTER XX.

SECULARISM CREATES A NEW RESPONSIBILITY

"Mankind is an ass, who kicks those who endeavor to take off his panniers."—SPANISH PROVERB.

No one need go to Spain to meet with animals who kick you if you serve them. Spanish asses are to be found in every land. Could we see the legs of Truth, we should find them black and blue with the kicks received in unloosening the panniers of error, strapped by priests on the backs of the people. Even philosophers kick as well as the ignorant, when new ideas are brought before them. No improvement would ever be attempted if friends of truth were afraid of the asses' hoofs in the air.

He who maintains that mankind can be largely improved by material means imposes on himself the responsibility of employing such means, and of promoting their use as far as he can, and trusting to their efficacy—not being discouraged because he is but *one*, and mankind are many. No man can read all the books, or do all the work, of the world. It is enough that each reads what he needs, and, in matter of moral action, does all he can. He who does less fails in his duty to himself and to others.

Christian doctrine has none of the responsibility which Secularism imposes. If there be vice or rapine, oppression or murder, the purely Christian conscience is absolved. It is the Lord's world, and nothing could occur unless he permitted it. If any Christian heart is moved to compassion, it commonly exudes in prayer. He "puts the matter before the Lord, and leaves it in his hands." The Secularist takes it into his own. What are his hands for ? The Christian can sit still and see children grow up with rickets in their body and rickets in their soul. He will see them die in a foul atmosphere, where no angel could come to receive their spirit without first stopping his nose with his handkerchief, as I have seen Lord Palmerston do on entering Harrow on Speech Day. The Christian can make money out of unrequited labor. When he dies he makes no reparation to those who earned his wealth, but leaves it to build a church, as though he thought God was blind, not knowing (if Christ spake truly) that the Devil is sitting in the fender in his room, ready to carry his soul up the chimney to bear Dives company. Why should he be anxious to mitigate inequality of human condition ? It is the Lord's will, or it would not be. When it was seen that I was ceasing to believe this, Christians in the church to which I belonged knelt around me, and prayed that I might be influenced not to go out into the world to see if these things could be improved. It was no light duty I imposed on myself.

A Secularist is mindful of Carlyle's saying, "No man is a saint in his sleep." Indeed, if anyone takes upon himself the responsibility of bettering by reason the state of things, he will be kept pretty well awake with his understanding. Many persons think their own superiority sufficient for

mankind, and do not wish their exclusiveness to be encroached upon. Their plea is that they distrust the effect of setting the multitude free from mental tyranny, and they distrust democracy, which would sooner or later end political tyranny.

These men of dainty distrust have a crowd of imitators, in whom nobody recognises any superiority to justify their misgivings as to others. The distrust of independence in the hands of the people arises mainly from the dislike of the trouble it takes to educate the ignorant in its use and limit. The Secularist undertakes this trouble as far as his means permit. As an advocate of open thought and the free action of opinion, he counts the responsibility of trust in the people as a duty.

It will be asked, What are the deterrent influences upon which Secularism relies for rendering vice, of the major or minor kind, repellent? It relies upon making it clear that in the order of nature retribution treads upon the heels of transgression, and, if tardy in doing it, its steps should be hastened.

The mark of error of life is—disease. Science can take the body to pieces, and display mischief palpable to the eyes, when the results of vice startle, like an apparition, those who discern that

Their acts their angels are—if good; if ill,
Their fatal shadows that walk by them still.

A man is not so ready to break the laws of nature when he sees that he will break himself in doing it. He may not fear God, but he fears fever and consumption. He may have a gay heart, but he will not like the occupation of being his own sexton and digging his own grave. When he sees that death lurks in the frequent glass, for instance, that spoils the flavor of the wine. He takes less pride in the beeswing who sees the shroud in the bottle. He may hope that God will forgive him, but he knows that death will not. He who holds the scythe is accustomed to cut down fools, whether they be peers or sweeps. Death knows the fool at a glance. To prevent any mistake, Disease has marked him with her broad arrow. The young man who once has his eyes well open to this state of the case will be considerate as to the quality of his pleasures, especially when he knows that alluring but unwholesome pleasure is in the pay of Death. Temperance advocates made more converts by exhibiting the biological effects of alcohol than by all their exhortations.

The moral nature of a man is as palpable as the physical to those who look for its signs. There is a moral squint in the judgment, as plain to be seen as a cast in the eyes. The voice is not honest; it has the accent of a previous conviction in it. The speech has contortions of meaning in it. The sense is limp and flaccid, showing that the mind is flabby. Such an one has the backbone of a fish; he does not stand upright. As the Americans say, he does not "stand square" to anything. There is no moral pulse in his heart. If you could take hold of his soul, it would feel like a dead oyster, and would slip through your fingers. Everybody knows these people. You don't consult them; you don't trust them. You would rather have no business transactions with them. If they are in a political movement, you know they will shuffle when the pinch of principle comes.

Crime has its consequences, and criminals, little and great, know it. When Alaric A. Watts wrote of the last Emperor of the French:—

Safe art thou, Louis!—for a time;
But tremble!—never yet was crime,
Beyond one little space, secure.
The coward and the brave alike
Can wait and watch, can rush and strike.
Which marks thee? One of them, be sure,—

few thought the bold prediction true; but it came to pass, and the Napoleonic name and race became extinct, to the relief of Europe.

Trouble comes from avowing unpopular ideas. Diderot well saw this when he said: "There is less inconvenience in being mad with the mad than by being wise by oneself." One who regards truth as duty will accept responsibilities.

It is the American idea

To make a man and leave him be.

But we must be sure we have made him a man—self-acting, guided by reasoned proof, and one who, as Archbishop Whately said, "believes the principles he maintains, and maintains them because he believes them."

A man is not a man while under superstition, nor is he a man when free from it, unless his mind is built on principles conducive and incentive to the service of man.

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

(To be continued.)

A SECULARIST'S CATECHISM.

PROEM.

It has frequently occurred to me that the presentation of Secular views in the form of question and answer would be an advantage, not only to youthful inquirers, but also to adults who lack either the opportunity or the inclination to study in detail the nature of Secularism and its principles and teachings. Moreover, I have often been asked to give a plain and concise definition of Secular philosophy, and to point out wherein it differs from New Testament Christianity, and in what way it is superior to the Christian faith. Many inquiries have also reached me as to what are the Secular views in reference to the nature and destiny of man, the government of the universe, and to the political and social problems of the day. I propose to comply with these requests on the Socratic method—that is, by putting questions and supplying answers thereto. In doing this my endeavor will be to employ language that may be readily understood by those who wish to learn what the various phases of Secularism really are.

This expository method appears to me to be necessary, particularly at the present time, when we are constantly receiving into our ranks, from the rising generation, numerous recruits, who evince a laudable desire to have at their command a definite record of Secular views, principles, objects, and aims. Of course I do not intend to give an elaborate disquisition of Secular philosophy, but simply to furnish a concise, matter-of-fact epitome of our views as they are explained by the National Secular Society, and also by the leading writers of the Secular party.

THE CATECHISM.

QUESTION.—*What is Secularism?*

ANSWER.—In its etymological signification, it means the age, the finite, belonging to this world. Secularists, however, use the term in a more amplified sense, as embodying a philosophy of life, and inculcating rules of conduct that have no necessary association with any system of theology.

Q.—*Have the Secularists an official statement of their principles?*

A.—Yes, those recognized and adopted by the National Secular Society, which are as follows:—Secularism teaches that conduct should be based on reason and knowledge. It knows nothing of divine guidance or interference; it excludes supernatural hopes and fears; it regards happiness as man's proper aim, and utility as his proper moral guide. Secularism affirms that progress is only possible through liberty, which is at once a right and a duty, and, therefore, seeks to remove every barrier to the fullest equal freedom of thought, action, and speech. Secularism declares that theology is condemned by reason as superstitious, and by experience as mischievous, and assails it as the historic enemy of progress. Secularism accordingly seeks to dispel superstition, to spread education, to disestablish religion, to rationalize morality, to promote peace, to dignify labor, to extend material well-being, and to realize the self-government of the people.

Q.—*What is the basis of Secularism?*

A.—The exercise of Freethought, guided by reason, experience, and general usefulness. By Freethought is here meant the right to entertain any opinions that commend themselves to the judgment of the honest and earnest searcher after truth, without his being made the victim of social ostracism in this world, or threatened with punishment in some other. Experience has proved the impossibility of uniformity of belief upon theological questions; therefore Freethought should be acknowledged as being the heritage of the human race.

Q.—*Are Secularism and Freethought identical?*

A.—Not exactly. All Secularists must be Freethinkers, but all Freethinkers are not necessarily Secularists. Freethought represents a mental condition, but Secularism

long before they reached the end of the route, but a man persuaded the constable to make him his deputy, and, after receiving the warrant, let the women go.

What crime these women were guilty of I have been unable to learn; but I will venture to say that it was a crime against the great fustian God, and not against society. To utter a word which they would consider blasphemous would be a greater crime than to poison a whole family of Quakers. Whatever the crime, all will see that there was Christian malice behind the sentence.

It is reasonable to believe that the men who composed the court were not naturally cruel; but they were Christians, and had imbibed the idea from reading the great spiritual novel that God was terrible in his denunciations of the wicked, and all were wicked who differed from them; and as God would inflict the most cruel punishment which infinite ingenuity could invent, they would follow his example by inflicting the most cruel punishment which they could devise.

Thus it would appear that Christianity has the power to drive reason from a man's mind, rob him of his judgment, and render him a cruel tyrant.

To say that Christianity is not dangerous is to say that a tiger is not dangerous because he is confined. He shows his teeth, and snarls to show that the old ferocious nature still holds control. And so the Christians, by showing that they do not respect the rights of others in the schools, and by dictating to others how they shall spend their Sundays; by making others pay taxes on their gospel-shops; by their shameless misrepresentations in regard to petitions for Sunday-closing of the Exposition; by imprisoning men for no crime; by suppressing Freethought papers, and by many other acts, demonstrate to all that they are not honest, and have no just conception of the rights of others, and that they cannot be trusted with power without endangering the liberties of all.

JOHN PECK.

—*Truthseeker.*

AN ARAB BLASPHEMER.

IN R. BURTON'S *Kasidah* he refers to Mansur, an Arab mystic who was put to death for blasphemy. Mr. Wheeler, of course, consulted the big tomes of Ibn Khallikan's *Biographical Dictionary* to "look him up." It appears that the full name of the individual in question was Abū Mugith ab Husim Ibn Mansur Al-Hallaj; Mansur being a common appellation, signifying "The Victorious." Ibn Khallikan, who lived in the thirteenth century of the Christian era, says of Al-Hallaj that "People are still at variance respecting his true character; some extolling him to the utmost, while others treat him as an infidel." It is evident from the passages given from his verses that he was, like most of the mystical Sufis, a Pantheist, believing that all are emanations from God. Thus he quotes: "I am the Truth; there is no light in Paradise but God"; and again: "I am he whom I love, and he whom I love is I; we are two souls dwelling in one body. When thou seest me thou seest him; and when thou seest him thou seest us." Another distich is cited from his which is believed to be a satire against the doctrine of predestination. It reads: "He threw him into the ocean with his hands tied behind his back, and said to him: 'Beware! beware! lest thou gettest wet.'" Few particulars are known of Al-Hallaj, except his dreadful fate. At an assembly held by the vizier to Al Muktedir, the eighteenth Abbaside, Kalif of Bagdad, he was invited to give his opinion, which was found heretical, and worthy of death. It was ordered that he should be bastinadoed, and, if he did not expire, his hands and feet, and finally his head, were to be cut off. This was carried out. After the infliction of a thousand strokes, his four limbs were cut off. He was then beheaded, his body was consumed by fire, the ashes cast into the Tigris, and the head stuck up on the Bridge at Bagdad. This took place on March 26, 922, of the Christian era. Ibn Khallikan says: "His disciples flattered themselves with the hopes of his returning (on earth) after forty days, and, as a great inundation of the Tigris occurred the same year, they pretended it was produced by the ashes of Al-Hallaj, which had been thrown into the river. Some of his partisans asserted that he had not been put to death, but that his likeness had been given to one of his enemies, who thus suffered in his stead." It will be remembered that this is exactly what the Moslems say of Jesus Christ, founding their belief on a passage of the Koran (Sura iii. 47-50), which says: "The Jews plotted, and God plotted. But of those who plot God is the artfullest." Sale, in his notes, mentions that some say it was Judas—poor Judas!—who got killed in so many ways.

Mansur Al-Hallaj is still remembered and looked up to by

the Sufis as one of their most spiritual leaders. An inspired Sufi is said to have demanded of God why he permitted Mansur to suffer. The answer was: "This is the punishment for the revealer of secrets"; implying that Mansur had the truth, but did wrong to cast pearls before swine. So Sir Richard Burton says Mansur was wise, but his murderers were wise also from their self-interested point of view.

ACID DROPS.

MR. GLADSTONE, Lord Halifax, the members of the C. U., and their fellow dreamers of Reunion with Rome, ought to be awakened by the publication of the Pope's Encyclical *de unitate*. The Pope extends the velvet glove, but the iron hand is beneath. The only terms of reunion are absolute acceptance, not only of the primacy, but the paramount predominance, of the Roman See over all who profess and call themselves Christians—the entire submission of mind and conscience to the ruling of the successor of Peter. This should clear the air and the road of those followers of Mr. Facing-both-ways who want the emoluments of the Church of England, while really working for Rome.

"It cannot be doubted," says the Pope, "from the words of Holy Writ, that the Church by the will of God rests on St. Peter, as a building upon its foundation." Whatever position those who believe in the integrity of "holy writ" may be in, to one who uses his reason there is no more barefaced forgery in literature than that on which the Church of Rome builds its claims, and which is put in gold letters around its greatest cathedral. Jesus, a solemn Jew, is made to make a bad pun in Greek to establish the claim of Peter, to whom, in another passage, he is said to have exclaimed: "Get thee behind me, Satan." Paul evidently had never heard of the passage in Matthew xvi. 18, or he would hardly have said that he withstood Peter to his face because he was to be blamed (Gal. ii. 11).

The Pope's Encyclical indicates that Mr. Gladstone, in appealing for the recognition of Anglican orders, took hold of the wrong end of the stick. Rome does not dispute the validity of Greek orders, but the Greek Church is nevertheless regarded as schismatic for refusing to obey the Papal See. The Pope does not, of course, in so many words deny the validity of Anglican orders, but by inference he is clear against them, and against the salvation of all Protestants, for he lays it down that they "can in no wise be counted among the children of God unless they take the Church as their mother."

Later reports of the awful tidal wave which accompanied the recent earthquake in Japan run up the slaughter bill to twenty-seven thousand. Yet how little impression it all makes upon us in England. The loss of two hundred and fifty lives in the "Drummond Castle" fills our newspapers for weeks, while the loss of twenty-seven thousand in Japan is related in a brief paragraph. We have not imagination enough to realise distant scenes, or to shudder at remote catastrophes. And one consequence of this deficiency is that the terrible calamity in Japan does not disturb the easy optimism of our believers in "Providence." They continue to praise the goodness of God, just because the suffering of their fellow citizens of this world makes such a feeble impression upon them. When an earthquake and a tidal wave destroy tens of thousands in Japan, and the English reader of the news does not eat so much as a slice of bread-and-butter less at breakfast, it is easy enough to understand why it makes no difference to his theology.

This illustration of divine Providence from Japan is accompanied by reports of famine and plague in Southern China, where many thousands are said to have been starved to death; heavy rains and destructive landslips with loss of life in Northern India, where the Sonada Mission House has collapsed, burying the inmates; and cholera in Egypt, where nearly 5,000 deaths have been registered since the beginning of the outbreak. "O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the people."

There was a great ceremony on Friday, June 26, at a newly-built house on the outskirts of Kennington Park, London. The building was dedicated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the presence of "a large and distinguished company," including several members of the aristocracy. The house is a large one, standing in its own grounds; its rooms are handsome and lofty, and the private chapel will seat a hundred persons. According to the newspapers, a special form of service was used by the Primate, probably in order to attract the special attention of God Almighty.

This fine house, thus piously dedicated, is to be a residence

for the Bishop of Rochester and his successors. In conjunction with a nice salary, it will afford them consolation while they linger in this miserable vale of tears; indeed, there is some probability of its preventing them from being in any desperate hurry to get to heaven.

Jesus Christ never had a house like the Bishop of Rochester. The firm had a hard and struggling infancy, but it has prospered amazingly since, and its agents now luxuriate on the fat of the land.

Upwards of a thousand invitations were issued for the Archbishop of Canterbury's recent garden party. Just fancy Jesus Christ giving a garden party to the swells of Jerusalem! The very idea is enough to flutter the angels and stagger the devils. What a change in two thousand years!

Only picture the scene—as it didn't happen. Peter master of the ceremonies, John cavaliering the ladies, and Judas Iscariot looking after the cloak room.

What would Jesus have thought of an announcement that at Christ Church Hall, Hanbury-street, Spitalfields, he could have his pipe, and, moreover, that there was "Tobacco free for the Early Birds," and "Tea and a Bite for all"? No doubt Parson Collings, who presides in his shirt-sleeves, and with a substantial pipe in his own mouth, finds he must do something to "compel them to come in." But if his example should spread, it may pall on the class of the public for whom it is intended, and nothing less than beer and "baccy" together will draw the Spitalfields pauper to hear the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

We have a good deal more esteem for the Smoking Parson of Spitalfields, who does his best to fulfil his calling and preach the gospel, than we have for the Bishop of London, who has ten thousand a year and a palace, and who, instead of doing his own work, has an assistant bishop at three thousand, whom he pitchforks into the best living in the City, St. Botolphs, Bishopsgate, where he will have another three thousand. Evidently the Smoking Curate at Spitalfields, hard by, thinks of these things, for he told his tobacco-attracted audience that when he procured a piece of preferment he would give them all an unlimited supply of whelks and ginger-beer. Meanwhile he has to appeal for subscriptions, or the tobacco would run short.

The Methodist Church in America, which has long done a lucrative business in post-mortem fire insurance, now professes to set up a mundane "Mutual Church Insurance Company" of their own. Most of the Churches, thanks to the exemption of Church property from taxation, go into the real estate business and act the part of landlord, and the cute Methodists don't see why they should not also strike a profitable line in insurance. "General" Booth's motto, "Every convert a customer," is likely to be taken up by all kinds of religionists who can easily reconcile the worship of God and Mammon.

The *Twentieth Century*, June 11, says: "It would be hard to estimate the value of Church property in this city [New York]. The land alone must be worth a fabulous sum. The very choicest lots and the most desirable locations are held as Church sites, for which no taxes are paid."

A Catholic priest in New York named McDonald is sued by a female parishioner for the recovery of \$1,500 which she alleges he got from her under false pretences. When the woman was sick and supposed to be dying, the priest induced her to sign a paper giving her money to him. When she recovered he refused to return it.

A young woman, named Erickson, connected with the Salvation Army in this city, has gone violently insane and been taken to the asylum. Her insanity assumes the form of continuous prayer.—*Truthseeker (New York)*.

Joy to the world! Another infidel saved! The Rev. J. Wesley Hart tells the story in the *Methodist Recorder*. Joseph Beck was his name, a sailor-lad on H.M.S. A—. At the Haven of Rest, in V—, he proclaimed himself an Agnostic. Asked to explain, he said: "I was in hospital a bit back, and had nowt much to do beside read, and a mate sent me the *Freethinker*, and I got interested in it. Since then I ain't bothered much with the Bible, for it don't seem up to date. That's about all, sir." Evidently Joseph Beck was in a liberal hospital, where they let him read what he liked, though we have heard of sailors who had to keep the *Freethinker* carefully concealed.

Joseph Beck, the Agnostic, had derived some curious notions from the *Freethinker*. He went on to say: "What's-his-name has proved the world never came about in the way Moses explains. He says a lot of atoms get together of themselves, and that's how the earth was formed." Mr. J. Wesley Hart

really must excuse us if we suggest that this reads more like the kind of utterance ministers are apt to put into sceptics' mouths than the genuine words of a sceptical sailor. However, the infidel was converted. The soft moonlight, combined with his mother's prayers, melted his heart; the sceptical heart is always callous, and "that night the little pocket-Bible had once more been opened."

In the *Westminster Gazette* they have, for the past week, been discussing "Why the Clergy are not Loved." The simplest answer seems to be: Because they claim authority and ascendancy without any reason.

Rev. Barton R. V. Mills writes to the *Westminster Gazette* complaining of the laity who presume to think for themselves. In every other walk of life, he says, people take their opinions from experts, but "every layman thinks himself qualified to make his theology for himself, and to reject the teaching of his clergyman at his own undisciplined will." We regret to say this is not true. It is to be wished the laity were as bad as this clergyman represents them. But, if it were true, the complaint is irrational, if not impudent. A lawyer knows something of law, and a doctor of medicine; but what does a parson know of kingdom-come? All his pretended knowledge is guess-work. Laymen can guess as well as he, and save their money in the bargain.

J. R. Thomson, writing in the *St. James's Gazette* (June 30), says: "Go where you will on Sunday—by road, rail, or river—and you will find young England, not in tens or hundreds, but in thousands, and these the very flower of our youth, for it is a melancholy fact that those whom the churches do retain are not by any means the pick of the basket. The intellect as well as the muscle of young England is outside the Church on Sunday." If Freethinkers had done nothing beyond changing "the Lord's Day" from one of gloom into one of gladness for the young, they would still have reason to congratulate themselves.

On the testimony of the Rev. Dr. McCosh, better known by Huxley's nickname of McBosh, the Scotch have become less religious and more sober within the last half-century. McCosh says of his early days: "I knew a case in which the people gathered at a funeral drank so hard that when they arrived at the burial place, several miles off, they found that they had forgot to bring with them the coffin and the corpse." This is a common tale up north, but we take the rev. gentleman's word that it happened within his personal experience.

The annual import of spirits into Lagos reached a total of two millions of gallons. On the Niger coast it has about the same figure, and has increased 50 per cent since 1892. Gin and the Gospel go together to Africa, and it remains for Islamism to combat intemperance.

The gin, like the Gospel, is much diluted and mixed with various poisonous compounds, so that Captain Cameron, the traveller, said it was "not only spirit, but absolutely poison." The prices at which it sells are eloquent on this point. Rum sells at 18s. a dozen quart bottles; gin at 2s. 6d. per dozen pint bottles. Sir R. Burton declared that, if only the Christian with his fire-water would leave Africa and let the Arab slave do his old work, Africa would be the gainer by the exchange.

The Society of Friends, in Lancashire and Cheshire, has issued a circular emphatically condemning, as "unrighteous and un-Christian," the wars which have been, and are now being, waged in the name of our country on the African continent. This is, so far as we are aware, the only protest made by any of the Christian Churches; and the *Church Times* refuses the name of Christian to those of the Society of Friends, on the ground that they are not baptised, and it is baptism which makes the Christian.

A Glasgow correspondent writes:—*On dit* that a prominent and fashionable leader of the Church in Glasgow has potted a net of £50,000 by a deal in "coats." This is an amalgamation of the wealth of a commercial oligarchy to crush out of existence heathen competitors, and oppress the many poor, that the rich few may be made still richer; and we wonder much how this gambling and its countenance by "leaders in Israel" can be reconciled with the "good words" of the Sermon on the Mount. With all their belief in heaven and a just providence, the ministers of the Church in Scotland act up, verily, to the secular injunction of keeping the powder dry and having a good share of the root of all evil!

Father Ignatius has brought the question of Dean Freemantle's "public denial of every article of the Nicene Creed" before the attention of the Bishop of Ripon and the Archbishop of York. These worthies, however, remembering Colenso, are hardly likely to cite a dean for heresy. Father Ignatius says: "If, as the Dean teaches, there is no revelation, and no Personal God to give us one, and Christianity

is simply a monstrous delusion, the reason for the existence of the Church of England and other churches has dissolved away before the luminous learning of the very reverend Dean. But it would be more honest, from a purely secular point of view, if the Dean would cease receiving a thousand pounds a year for teaching a religion which he neither teaches nor believes."

The *Church Times*, alluding to Mr. Labouchere's exposure of the Kilburn Sisters, calls him the Grand Inquisitor of *Truth*, but admits that sisterhoods, like Caesar's wife, ought to be above suspicion.

Emily Jones, the wife of the Rev. William David Jones, vicar of Llanellen, and chaplain of the Joint Counties Lunatic Asylum, charged her husband with persistent cruelty and neglect to maintain. The parties were only married last year. Mrs. Jones objected to the conduct of Mabel Bond, a pupil teacher, who resided at the vicarage; but the man of God swore at her in the presence of the servant, whom he told to obey Miss Bond, and not Mrs. Jones. He afterwards ordered his wife to leave the house, and commenced an action for divorce against her on the ground of physical incapacity. She got doctors to give evidence that the charge was false, and he abandoned the proceedings. He still kept Mabel Bond in the house. The Court found that the wife had fully made out her case, and ordered the man of God to pay 12s. 6d. per week for the maintenance of his wife, who should not be compelled to return to him.

The Russian Tribunal of Kazan has acquitted the seven persons accused of having murdered, by decapitation, a peasant named Konon Mativinine. Their object was stated to be to offer a sacrifice to idols, the worship of which, mingled with certain Christian beliefs, still survives in the province of Viatka, where the corpse of the victim was discovered. The manner in which the murder was committed corresponded exactly to the customs of the Pagan sacrificers, who, when they offered up an animal to their gods, cut its throat and let all the blood run out, which they boiled and then drank, the internal organs being burned upon a pile of faggots.

The poor, demented Liverpool coal-heaver, Larkin, who struck at the head of his son with an axe, had been out of work for six weeks, and had been heard to say that the child would be "better off in heaven."

Another prophet who sees visions has turned up in France in the person of Paulin Delpont, a boy of nine, who has seen visions of his patron saints, Paulin and St. Joseph. The fame of the young prophet is spreading abroad, and hundreds of peasants flock to Larcque to hear his revelations. The cult of Joan of Arc seems to be responsible for these nineteenth century revivals of mediæval manias.

The balance-sheet of the annual horse-racing meeting at Great Yarmouth shows a contribution of £50 to the Church Schools Fund. Perhaps the money is accepted on the principle of spoiling the Egyptians.

The Catholic organs now cry out that what they want is not State aid, but rate aid. We hope they and the other religionists will keep up the dispute about ways and means. The more religionists fall out, the less the pockets of honest people are likely to suffer.

Mr. Grant Allen having, on the strength of his reputation as a naturalist, been elected president of the Haslemere Microscopic and Natural History Society, some clerical and other members have resolved to resign. They are surely not afraid that Mr. Allen will contaminate their morals; but, as they evidently attach importance to little things, perhaps they have a strong regard for the morals of the animalculæ under their microscopes.

Professor Orr is a Presbyterian of the old school, and does not undertake to reconcile oil and water. At the Pan Presbyterian Council there was a good deal of beating about the bush with regard to the holy-watered Darwinism of the author of the *Ascent of Man*. But Professor Orr says, in so many words, that anyone who accepts the evolution theory cannot be a Christian. He forgets that a Christian can now-a-days be anything he pleases.

It is really sickening—to borrow *Methodist Times* language—to witness all this cant about the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes, and blood is thicker than water, and all the rest of this Anglo-American Christian sentimentalism. The real truth is that England and America dread war with each other. It wouldn't pay either. Both would lose heavily over the transaction. But it pays to mow down South African natives and Soudan dervishes; so we hear no protests from the Nonconformist Conscience in those directions. It is all commercialism at bottom.

Canon Tristram has given his decision that mixed marriages, performed by clergymen of the Church of England, are valid in the Isle of Malta. This is not relished by the Catholics, who desired such "dispensations" entirely under their own control.

One way in which the Catholic Church increases its hold in England is by its only giving a dispensation for mixed marriages on the promise that any children of the marriage shall be baptised and educated as Catholics. Such promises are invalid in law, yet sufficiently serve the turn of the Church to ensure an increased control of the offspring of marriages with Protestants.

The Canadian Catholic press are amazed at the defection of the population from the clergy, as shown by the recent election. The *Presse*, of Montreal, says that, judging by the immigration, there should be in the United States from twenty to twenty-five million Catholics; but far more than a half of that number have been lost to the Church.

The extent to which Ritualism is spreading in the Church may be judged from the list given in the *Tourist's Church Guide* of the number of churches using altar lights. In 1882 there were 581, in 1888 1,136, and in 1896 3,568. Incense in 1882 was used only in 9 churches, in 1888 the number had increased to 89, and in 1896 to 307. Vestments, used in 336 churches in 1882, and in 599 in 1888, are now used in 1,632. The more the rottenness within, the more paint and show are placed on the exterior.

The Grand Old Man is catching it hot now that the Nonconformists realise what they surely must have always known—namely, that he is a devoted High Churchman. Here is the *Methodist Times* referring to his "fulsome and grovelling letter to the Pope." Yet a few years ago Mr. Gladstone was the idol of the Nonconformist Conscience.

While the English Bishops voted solid against the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, five Catholic peers—Lords Russell of Killowen, Ripon, Denbigh, Carmoy, and Morris—voted with the Prince of Wales for it; and only two, the priest-led Duke of Norfolk and the equally priest-led Marquis of Bute, were found in the minority.

A Jersey City storekeeper was fined \$2 for selling a piece of cheese on Sunday, June 7. The law under which the fine was imposed was passed in the year 1797.

A common dodge, of which an example is given in the *Daily News* from the "General Rate Demand Note" of the Urban District Council of Ealing, is to put down on the note for rates a voluntary school rate. That is, the Council pay for printing a begging petition on their demand note, with the view of obviating any establishment of a School Board. This is how "voluntary" schools are maintained.

Noticing the election of Signor E. Nathan, the new Grand Master of the Orient Rite of Freemasonry in Italy, the *Tablet* indulges in strong language against Masons all over the world. It says: "No one who chooses to inquire into it need be any longer in doubt as to the real character of Masonry, with its unveiled demonolatry for the higher grades, and its inner ring of orgiastic and blasphemous mysteries." These are big words to be directed from celibate "priests of the bloody faith" against a body whose principles are those of philanthropy and goodwill. The clericals rage because the Masons on the continent see and say that "c'erialism is the enemy" of progress and enlightenment.

It is well known that an early reading of Matthew xxvii. 16 is, that the Jews chose "Jesus Barabbas." The Jesus has probably been left out by someone who did not like to see the name applied to a robber. In Mrs. Lewis's Syriac version this is now given as Jesus, the son of a teacher, Bar Rabba. But possibly the original was Bar Abba—i.e., Jesus, son of a father, as distinguished from the Jesus who was only the son of a mother.

The *Jewish Chronicle* says: "The Jews—we say it with deep regret—are at present being persecuted, not by the Crescent, but by the Cross. Russia and Roumania are black spots on the fair face of Europe, while in the Turkish dominions the Jews, on the whole, are in the enjoyment of something like a very real toleration."

Educate women, and you educate the teachers of men; if the child is father to the man, the woman forms the man in educating the child. The cause of female education is, then, even in the most selfish sense, the cause of mankind at large.—C. G. Nicolay.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

July 5 and 12, Camberwell.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Mr. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—July 12, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road, London, W. 26, Camberwell.—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.

Much correspondence stands over till next week, owing to Mr. Foote's absence from London.

JOHN HUME.—Have forwarded as desired.

A. E. WADE.—Presume you received post-card. Mr. Watts lectured at Northampton as advertised, in the Exeter Hall, Exeter-street. We are sorry to hear that you cycled into Northampton, and had to return without being able to find the place of meeting. Mr. Watts missed two appreciative auditors, and you missed two good lectures. Thus runs the world away.

T. DARLEY ALLEN (Canada).—Your letter celebrating the reputation of Moses would be lost upon our readers. You take no notice of Freethought arguments on the subject, and there is no use in mere reiteration. Sorry, therefore, we cannot insert.

TRUTH SEFKER (Glasgow).—We cannot undertake to answer such communications by post. Mary Ferguson's letter in the *Mail* is obviously not written by herself. You had better look out for an answer to it by the Glasgow Branch. One side often looks all right till the other side is presented. The Branch officials assured us that they had nothing whatever to do with the taking of Mrs. Ferguson's old shop by Mr. Lindsay. It was a purely private matter of business, which they did not feel called upon to interfere with. We were also informed that the factor had resolved not to let the shop in any case to Mary Ferguson. Our intervention was solicited; but, in the first place, the lady was not a member of the N.S.S., and, in the next place, we could see no ground for intervening, even if we desired to do so. It appeared to us that the Glasgow friends knew all the circumstances of the case, and were in a better position than any outsider to come to a just conclusion.

E. H.—(1) Mr. Bradlaugh repudiated Mr. Brewin Grant's report. If you can look up the *National Reformer* of the period of the debate, you will see a very different description. (2) We hold that Polydemonism preceded Polytheism, and that Polytheism is earlier than Monotheism.

J. W. THOMPSON.—We know nothing whatever about the religious opinions of Reed the murderer, and newspaper chatter is not very trustworthy. It is easy enough to say the man was an Atheist. He does not appear to have mixed in any way with Atheistic company. It may be that he was not a church attendant, and that alone is often enough to cause a man to be called an Atheist.

J. SHARP.—It has already been inserted in the *Freethinker*. You must have overlooked it.

J. M. R.—Thanks. Cuttings are always welcome. We usually see the *Christian World*.

GORTON CROOK.—Many thanks. Papers shall be sent as directed. We appreciate honorable antagonists like yourself, but how is it pious frauds grow so profusely on Christian soil? One in the trade informs us that the proprietor of *Paddock Life* owns the *Sunday Companion*; but we have no first-hand knowledge.

H. BEACH.—To visit Mr. Bradlaugh's grave, book from the Necropolis Station, Westminster Bridge Road, to Brookwood, the station beyond Woking, and turn to the left. Trains, at 2s. 6d. return, leave every day at 11 30.

MOSLEM.—The *Crescent* is published at 32, Elizabeth Street, Liverpool.

SHAKESPOKE.—Your verses are funny, but need polish.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Worker's Friend—Der Arme Teufel—Clarion—Crescent—Open Court—Secular Thought—Glasgow Mail—New York Sun—New York Public Opinion—Arena—Echo—Blackpool Gazette—Morning—Truthseeker—Free Review—Progressive Thinker—Twentieth Century—Literary Guide—English Mechanic—Two Worlds.

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

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.

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

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

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

ORDERS for literature should be sent to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

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

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.

THE PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM.**TO THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.**

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

It was resolved at the Annual Conference in 1895 to raise a fund for the purpose of compensating the President for his loss in out-of-pocket expenses and otherwise in attending to the Society's business. The Committee appointed to carry out this object issued an appeal for £100 for the first year, and £86 was subscribed. A fresh appeal has now to be made for the current year, in accordance with the vote of the Glasgow Conference held on Whit-Sunday. We venture to hope for a prompt and liberal response, so that it may be unnecessary to make further appeals. Subscriptions can be forwarded to Miss Vance, Secretary, at 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C., or to any member of the Committee. Acknowledgments will be made in the *Freethinker*.

GEORGE ANDERSON

(35a Great George-street, Westminster, S.W.)

CHARLES WATTS

(81 Effra-road, Brixton, S.W.)

R. FORDER

(28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.)

GEORGE WARD

(91 Mildmay Park, N.)

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE is delivering two Sunday evening lectures in the Secular Hall, Camberwell. The first is fixed for this evening (July 5), when his subject will be "The Bible as a School Book."

Mr. Charles Watts lectured last Sunday evening at the Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road. Miss Vance presided. The audience was not so large as usual, in consequence, no doubt, of the exceedingly fine weather. Several interesting questions were asked at the close of the lecture.

Mr. C. Cohen lectures at the Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, this evening (July 5). Mr. Charles Watts will take the chair, and introduce the lecturer to the audience. This is Mr. Cohen's first appearance on that platform, but we hope far from his last.

At the last meeting of the N.S.S. Executive, on Thursday, June 25, Mr. Foote proposed to organise some outdoor Freethought demonstrations in London during the summer, and Mr. Watts promised his co-operation. The proposal was eagerly seized upon, and will be carried into effect immediately. Of course the demonstrations will take place on Sundays, when the people are free to attend them, and many thousands will be reached in this way. A beginning will be made in Hyde Park on Sunday afternoon, June 12, when Mr. Foote, Mr. Watts, and, perhaps, other speakers will address the crowd. Regent's Park will be the scene of another demonstration, Victoria Park will not be neglected, and the South of London will have its turn. Other parts of the Metropolis will be visited according to opportunity.

The Executive also decided that the N.S.S. should take part in the great Hyde Park demonstration on behalf of Peace, which is being organised for Sunday, July 26th. The demonstration will be under the auspices of the International Socialist Congress, but there is to be no contentious matter on the program, and we can all demonstrate in favor of Peace and against the military systems which are eating away the vitality of Europe.

Mr. Foote debates at Camberwell a few weeks hence with the Rev. A. J. Waldron. He has also arranged to debate before the end of July with the Rev. W. T. Lee, at Cardiff and Swansea. In August he debates with the same gentleman at Plymouth, and later on in London. The subjects will be so varied as to cover most of the ground in dispute between Christians and Freethinkers.

The Church party sustained a defeat at the Westor-supper-Marc School Board election, where the clerical chairman had declared they would never permit the appointment of a Nonconformist on the teaching staff. Five Nonconformists were elected against three Churchmen and one Independent. The Church party raised the cry that one of the

candidates was an "atheist," and the answer of the electors to the charge, said to be false, was to place him far and away at the top of the poll.

The *Blackpool Gazette* inserts some Freethinking verses from "Motor," entitled "Queries Suggested by the General Opposition of Parsons to the Sunday Running of Trams."

Clericalism has had a bigger rebuff in Canada than in England or South Australia, for there it has come principally from the Catholic province of Quebec, where the French Canadian has shown an unexpected revolt against priestly rule. The Manitobans will probably now be left to regulate their own school affairs.

Our energetic friend, Mr. L. Levine, of Charleston, who is always doing some good work for Freethought, has had Colonel Ingersoll's letter on the Czar's coronation printed in his excellent series of "Book-marks," which he distributes widely in all parts of the English-speaking world.

The garden party of last autumn, organized by the Finsbury-park and Islington Branches, having been such a success, another is arranged to be held this day week (Sunday, July 12), at "The Nook," 19 Alwyne-road, Canonbury, the residence of Mr. A. Guest. Tea at 5; music and illuminations subsequently. The tickets are 1s., obtainable of branch secretaries, or at 28 Stonecutter-street. Only a limited number will be issued, and should be applied for at once.

The *Two Worlds*, a Spiritist paper, recently inserted, without any name, a piece entitled "Who was Jesus?" It was written by Mr. Bradlaugh many years ago, at a time when the Spiritist movement claimed to be Christian, and, in a revised form, was used as a tract by the National Secular Society. Its use in the *Two Worlds* is another indication that, in the words of Brother Jasper, "the world do move."

The *San Francisco Bulletin* says that Ingersoll's Chicago address on *The Coming Civilisation* "bids fair to become the platform of intelligent men all over the world." It recommends all to procure the lecture and keep it by them for re-perusal.

IF JESUS CAME DOWN FROM THE SKIES; OR, THE MODERN DISCIPLES.

If Christ, who they say is alive, could return
To this earth from his heavenly throne,
His modern disciples he'd angrily spurn,
And their actions condemn and disown.
He would see how they wink at the precepts he taught,
And 'twould fill him with rage and surprise;
Yes, he'd find that they set all his teachings at naught—
If Jesus came down from the skies!

To lay up no treasures on earth for themselves
The disciples of Jesus were told;
But this precept he'd find everyone of them shelve,
For their purses are well-lined with gold.
They were also instructed to carry no scrip,
And the pleasures of earth to despise;
But he'd find that these precepts they all of them skip—
If Jesus came down from the skies!

The "Savior" we're told, had no place for his head,
And that he in a stable was born;
But his modern disciples are sleek and well fed,
In fine raiment themselves they adorn.
And he'd find that in well-furnished mansions they dwell,
And methinks that his dander would rise,
That he'd say they were "vipers" and "children of hell"—
If Jesus came down from the skies!

The ancient disciples on faith did depend
For the cure of their bodily ills;
But the modern disciples, when ill, always send
To the doctor for lotions or pills.
Some "Peculiar People," 'tis true, try to act
In the way that the Gospels advise;
But he'd find that they're censured and treated as crack'd—
If Jesus came down from the skies!

Said Jesus, "If on the left cheek you are struck,
To the striker just offer the right;
And if by a man, who is down on his luck,
You are robbed of your cloak—be polite;
And to offer your 'coat' to the thief do not fail,
And be sure that you never chastise";
But he'd find that they clap the offenders in jail—
If Jesus came down from the skies!

"Be harmless and gentle," said Christ, "as the dove"—
For this precept they care not a pin;
And he said that they were one another to love,
But they hate one another like sin!
In fact, with these precepts of Jesus not one
Of his modern disciples complies;
With a whip how he'd lash them and make them all run—
If Jesus came down from the skies!

ESS JAY BEE.

WHAT CHILDREN SHOULD BE TOLD.

WHY should it be considered wise or expedient that the young are to be taught to reverence a Church by those who have ceased to do so themselves—a Church which ignores the living, universal, perpetual inspiration awakable in each human soul, which demands as a condition to that soul's salvation a belief in its own specified interpretation of the teaching of him whom it claims as its Founder, and an acknowledgment of the authority of a priesthood instituted to meet the requirements of a sect whose beliefs were founded partly on the traditional superstitions of a race emerging from the ignorance of barbarism, and partly on the fanatical cravings of their own egoism? Moreover, one cannot doubt that it is a priesthood which rose to power by the help of some of the most vindictive and blood-thirsty passions capable of governing human actions, and that its sway over communities has been kept alive by the very fact that for generations these teachings have been impressed on the weak and immature brain during the infancy of the individual, and have thus become so much a part of nature as to form an almost impregnable barricade against the invasion of such thought as can alone convey the means of attaining spiritual enlightenment. For not the least mischievous effect of the power of priestcraft was the wilful closing of the channels of perception against any ray of enlightenment which might have penetrated into these obscured souls, which rays they were taught to regard, not as the divine light of reason, but as the work of the spirit of darkness, endeavoring to rob them of the only safeguard they professed against its devastating power. The more earnestly and the more sincerely these doctrines were held, the more carefully would those who held them fence themselves about with what they conceived to be their spiritual armor of defence against the powers of evil.

Thus only is it possible to account for what one is forced to acknowledge to be the fact—that high-minded and gifted beings have held such doctrines as the vicarious Atonement and the eternity of "hell" to have emanated from the author of the All-good; that one's soul's salvation is dependent, not on one's conduct, but on an extraneous definite event, and on a credulous faith in improbable occurrences, handed down to us on the testimony of unproved and unprovable documentary evidence.

Such beliefs appear to those who do not hold them to involve a misconception and misapplication of the true meaning and purpose of the most beautiful spiritual teaching extant; and shall we, who consider such misconceptions to be a thralldom, allow our children's minds to be impregnated, without their volition, with what we have unhesitatingly rejected? No; what we think honestly why should we shrink from telling our children? In religion truth is the first consideration, above expediency and above respectability.

If the limbs of children are not left free, they do not develop to their allotted capacity; and the ideas of the young cannot grow as they would and should if they are continually being cramped with dogmatic restrictions, which do not allow their intellects full play, and over which the young mind is too feeble to leap, so that it falls back and sinks (with rare exceptions) into a groove in which it remains for life. To those who are content to have their wings clipped, and who desire no better lot than this circumscribed haven of supposed safety, there is nothing to be said; but on those who have tasted the purer atmosphere of Freethought it must be urged: "Do not hesitate to afford your children, through fear of the world's uncomprehending disapproval, the same liberty which you yourselves enjoy."

Let us help our children, if we can, to aim at something higher than "respectability" in their religious aspirations, and to recognise that the first step towards the attainment of true religion is the abandonment of hypocrisy.

—Mrs. Walter Grove, in "The Free Review."

OLD TESTAMENT MYTHS.

PROFESSOR CRAWFORD HOWELL TOY is one of the leading lights of Harvard University. He has been delivering a series of lectures in New York on the results of the Higher Criticism. The evangelical *Observer* remarks that one might just as well write the word "myth" on the first cover page of the Bible, and place the book on a shelf in the attic, as to accept Professor Toy's teachings on the subject. The lectures were delivered in the Lenox Avenue Unitarian Church, and we give below portions of them as reported in the *New York Tribune*. Professor Toy said:—

"Although Israelitish history solves no political problem, it is nevertheless full of interesting events and great names. It did not begin in Genesis. The story of the Flood and kindred tales form an interesting collection of legends and myths, permeated, nevertheless, with a strong religious feeling. Little of Genesis can be accepted as history. It must be regarded either as a combination and reflection of dim recollections of old tribal history, or of later events. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are but the incorporated forms of the old tribes. There are several reasons why the account of the abode in Egypt and the Exodus cannot be regarded as historical facts, and one of them is the fact that, in the Egyptian records that have thus far been discovered, there is no reference to these occurrences, so that this portion of the Old Testament must be regarded as a reflection from a much later time—the history of a subsequent period incorporated into the book of Exodus. The tablets of Amarno, found nine years ago, and inscribed about 1500 B.C., or before the time commonly assigned to the life of Moses, contain not a word of the Israelitish history as found in the earlier books of the old Testament. Hence we have to dismiss these early accounts as the legendary, imaginary pictures of a past life, reconstructed in the light of much later times."

In referring to David, Professor Toy said that, contrary to what has been thought, he was not a spiritual man, though a religious one; that he did not write a single one of the Psalms, which were the work of a later period; and that the only one of his poems we have is his lament over Jonathan. We quote again from the *Tribune's* report:—

"Writing was hardly used for literary purposes by the Israelites long before the time of David, and it is not till the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. that we have the first attempts at history. Those attempts concerned themselves with the early traditions, the forefathers, the judges, and the early kings. One of these histories is called the Jehovistic (or Yahwestic), because it employs the divine name of Jehovah (or Yahweh); it is made up of delightfully-told stories, picturesque, naive, frank. Most of the familiar stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob belong to it. The other, called the Elohist (because it has the divine name Elohim—that is, God), is more restrained in tone and more advanced in thought. In contrast with these are the mythical narrations of Genesis i. to xi., which are almost wholly borrowed from the Babylonian. The books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings received their present shape in the sixth century (the Exile). Several centuries later Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah were written under the influence of the developed ritual law. Finally, the history of the heroic struggle of the second century is recorded in the books of the Maccabees. Israelitish history, in the classic period (except contemporaneous annals), is a picture of things not as they were, but as the writers supposed they must have been. Legend and myth were, of course, interwoven into much of it."

Again the lecturer said:—

"The romances, Ruth, Jonah, and the others, are admirable narrations—vivid, clear, impressive. The Hebrews are the inventors of the short story. Finally, the Apocalypse is a striking Hebrew creation—it is a story of the past and the present dramatically put as a predictive vision. The hero of the book of Daniel never existed in the flesh, and its visions are not predictions; but its pictures are full of life and movement, and it is a literary classic."

The *Observer*, after making the remark already referred to, comments as follows:—

"We have heard it said by more than one of the followers of these bold and erratic scholars that to them the work of the higher critics has made the Bible a new book, disposing of many difficulties in the way of its acceptance. We confess that at last we are ready to assent to the claim that, under the sweeping treatment of the critics, the Word of God does become an entirely

different book. The book is seen to be so much more human, say the critics. It certainly is if all that the critics declare is true. To make history entirely out of one's imagination, and palm it off as true, as the later B.C. writers must have done, is just as human in character as any kind of fraud of which we ever heard. But what shall we say of the ignorance of Peter when he quoted the Psalms and attributed them to David? It was Peter who protested that he and others of the disciples had not followed cunningly-devised fables when they made known the power and coming of our Lord Jesus, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. But even the eyes which saw the Transfiguration glory, and the ears which heard the divine voice, were not such powerful arguments, Peter intimates, as the more sure word of prophecy. It is this sure word of prophecy that the higher critics pronounce practically a romance and a string of cunningly-devised fables."

The only exception we have to make to this is that the fables were not so cunningly devised after all; and, by the way, this statement of Peter that they did not follow sophisticated myths, for so the passage should be translated, shows that they were accused of doing this in the very first century. *Qui s'excuse s'accuse*.

The pious *Observer* continues:—

"Such teaching eliminates the divine element in the Bible. Inspiration is no longer there. Our ethical code is built up on a book that seems to be one thing, but is another. It seems to be history, but is fiction. The spiritually-minded Jews of the apostles' time and the merely religious Jews of Christ's day evidently believed in the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and the Davidic authorship of many of the Psalms. Were they ignorant, or did they know all that the present critics know, and for policy's sake keep the common people in ignorance? It hardly seems possible that they knew as much as some of our critics of to-day know, and we can only conceive that six hundred years after the Old Testament was hatched up from legends, romances, fiction, tradition, and folklore generally, so well was the work done that scribes and Pharisees, apostles and saints, believed the work genuine, and its attributed authorships fact. To this complexion have matters come—that is, if the Toy School is correct—namely, that the Old Testament is largely the product of legend-writers and fiction-gatherers, and the New of ignorant men who did not know fiction from fact, or, knowing, built up a New Testament on the fiction of the Old."

Well, now, that is just exactly about the size of it, and I am pleased to note that the evangelical editor has so much discernment.

LUCIANUS.

Healing Philosophy.

In an article on "Healing Philosophy," in the *Metaphysical Magazine*, there is an interesting account of a certain sect in Japan. The principal theory of the sect is that right thinking in all things will heal diseases and bring good fortune. There are two spirits in the world—the spirit of the Sun God, which is called Yo-ki, and the spirit of gloom and darkness named In-ki. The spirit Yo-ki makes a man courageous and cheerful, and consequently long-lived; but In-ki makes the heart gloomy and brings death. One becomes inspired with Yo-ki by the practice of holy breathing, which consists in standing in the morning sunshine, and breathing hard for a certain time. One must, of course, banish all In-ki thoughts. There is, no doubt, a great deal in this, and we shall certainly try this "holy breathing" on the first opportunity. If we could only turn on sunshine when we liked in London, we should all feel happier and better. But we cannot possibly feel joky, which, we suppose, is the English equivalent for yo-ki, when an atmosphere of in-ki oppresses us, as it so often does in chill November and other days.—*Westminster Gazette*.

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.
- (6) Get your newsagent to exhibit the *Freethinker* in the window.

WITCHCRAFT AND MIRACLES.

A LATIN proverb says: "*Si duo faciunt idem, non est idem*" (If two do the same thing, it is not the same thing); and this is true, not only of individuals, but also of nations and of religions. It is a habit common among all classes of people to condone the faults of their own kind, but to be severe with those of others. The oracles of Delphi were divine to a Greek mind, but they were of diabolical origin according to the judgment of Christians. Jesus was a magician in the eyes of the pagans, while the Christians worshipped him as the son of God who performed miracles.

The priests of Pharaoh and Moses perform the same tricks, but the deeds of Moses alone are regarded as miracles, and the Israelites claim that he could accomplish more than the Egyptians. The Therapeutes and other Gnostics practised the healing of the sick by the laying on of hands, and by praying in somewhat the same way as the early Christians did. Simon Magus and his disciples were believed by the early Christians to possess power over demons;* but Simon was a competitor of the Apostles, and, therefore, his deeds were not regarded as divine. Before an impartial tribunal the methods and aspirations of both parties would resemble one another more than the one-sided statements of Christian authors at first sight seem to warrant. The accusation made against Simon by Luke, of having offered money to the Apostles for communicating to him the Holy Ghost, is as unreliable as the charges of pagan authors hurled against the Christians.

Minucius Felix puts the common notions, which in his days prevailed in Greece and Italy concerning the practices of the Christians, into the mouth of Cæcilius, who describes them as a desperate class of vulgar men and credulous women threatening the welfare of mankind. He states that they are Atheists, for they cherish a contempt for temples, spit at the gods, and ridicule religious ceremonies; that their own cult is a mixture of superstition and depravity; that they possess secret symbols by which they recognize one another; that they call themselves brothers and sisters, and degrade these sacred words by sensuality. Further, it is said that they adore a donkey's head, and that their worship is obscene. The libel culminates in the assertion that the reception of new members is celebrated by slaughtering and devouring a child covered all over with flour, which is an obvious perversion of the Communion; but Cæcilius declares that it is done because partnership in guilt is the best means of securing secrecy. Lastly, he adds that on festival days they celebrate love feasts, which, after the extinction of the lights, end with sexual excesses.

Similar accusations are found in various authors, and even the noble-hearted and high-minded Tacitus speaks of Christians with contempt.

Justinus Martyr, in his *Apologia*, makes the asseveration that the Christians are innocent, but leaves the question open whether the heretics, such as the Gnostics, might not be guilty of these abominations (App. II., p. 70), and Eusebius directly claims that the practices that prevailed among the heretics were the direct cause of the evil rumors concerning the life of the Christians.

While we must bear in mind that the moral rigidity of the Gnostics leaves, upon the whole, no doubt about the purity of their life, we may grant the probability of the presence of black sheep among them. But the same is true of the Christians, as we know for certain on the good authority of St. Paul, who, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, after an enumeration of such sinners as will not inherit the kingdom (5, 8-11—the passage remains better unquoted), says: "And such were some of you." Accordingly, there can be no doubt about it that there were abuses in the Church of Corinth. St. Paul believes the rumor of a sin, "that is not so much as named among the Gentiles," and the Second Epistle is the best evidence that the Corinthians did not deny the facts. They repent, whereupon St. Paul recommends charity towards the main offender (2 Cor. ii. 6-11), saying: "To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also."

The various aberrations among the Christians, which were very apparent in many of their most prominent

leaders, such as Constantine the Great, must not astonish us, because Christianity originated in an age of unrest, and the new movement was the centre of attraction for all kinds of eccentricity. In spite of various excrescences, we cannot but say that Christianity opened to the world new vistas of truth. Represented by such men as St. Paul, it tended towards purity of heart; but the same is true of the Gnostics and the Manichees. The accusations on both sides rest mainly upon partizan statements, and cannot be trusted, or, at least, must be used with due reserve. But it is natural that here, as always, the same things are no longer the same when reported of people of another faith. Thus the virtues of the pagans are to St. Augustine only polished vices, and the heroism of Christian martyrs is mere obstinacy in the opinion of Roman prætors.

One of the most characteristic features of the pre-scientific age is man's yearning for the realisation of that which is unattainable by natural means. The belief in magic will inevitably prevail so long as the dualistic world-conception dominates the minds of the people, and in that period of civilisation supernatural deeds are expected as the indispensable credentials of all religious prophets. It is the age of miracles and witchcraft.

Miracles and witchcraft possess this in common, that both are supposed to supersede the laws of nature; but there is this difference, that the miracle is believed to be the supernatural power of one's own religion, while witchcraft is the miracle of heretics. Miracle is anything contra-natural that is legitimate, and witchcraft is the same thing, but illegitimate; the former is supposed to be done with the help of God, the latter with the help of Satan; the former is boasted of as the highest glory of the Church, the latter is denounced as the greatest abomination possible.

Now, we know that, wherever contra-natural feats are believed, there the strangest events will be experienced by those who are under the suggestion of the belief; and then at once a competition will originate between those who represent the established religion and others who perform, or pretend to perform, similar deeds. The former are prophets and saints, and they work miracles; the latter are wizards and witches, and their art is called witchcraft.

It is natural that wizards and witches are always represented as obnoxious, and it is said that their art is practised to injure the welfare of mankind. Nevertheless, some very mean deeds are counted as miracles, while good deeds, if only performed by believers in other gods, are branded as witchcraft.* Moreover, all priests are unanimous in condemning the application of charms and spells, except those of their own religion, even though they be used for the best and purest ends. A faith-cure by heretics would not be countenanced by the Church, but official processions with prayers and sprinkling of holy water were still employed in French Canada during a late small-pox epidemic.†

—*The Open Court.*

P. CARUS.

Theology and Progress.

Theology can give no additional guarantee for progress, for a state of things at once compatible may, for anything we can say, always remain compatible with infinite wisdom and goodness. As a matter of historical fact, theology only suggested the dogma of man's utter vileness, and all genuine theologians are marked by their readiness to believe in deterioration instead of progress. They look forward to a future world instead of this. But what reason have they to believe in this future of blessedness? God's love for his creatures. But the most prominent fact written on the whole surface of the world is what we cannot help calling the reckless and profuse waste of life. If everything we see teaches that millions of individuals are crushed at every step by the progress of the race, and if that process is compatible with infinite goodness, why suppose that infinite goodness will act differently in future? It is an ever-recurring but utterly fruitless sophistry which first infers God from nature, and then pronounces God to be different from nature.—*Leslie Stephen.*

* There are miracles attributed in the Christian Apocrypha even to Jesus himself, which would be criminal.

* *Iren. adv. haer.*, I., 20-21; *Justin Martyr.*, App. II., pp. 69, 70; *Epiphanius ad haer.*, XXII., 1.; *Euseb.*, *H. E.*, II., p. 13.

† Thus in 1521 a physician of Hamburg was executed for witchcraft, because he had saved the life of a babe which the midwife had given up as lost. See Soldan, *Hexenprocesse*, p. 326.

BOOK CHAT.

A TWOPENNY pamphlet has been sent to us entitled *Is God Arbitrary? or, the Scriptural Significance of Unbelief and Condemnation: An address to Evangelists and Freethinkers*, by One who is Both. The writer, disregarding the whole teaching of the Christian Churches during the days when they had no Freethought opposition, makes out that unbelief means not dissent, but moral antagonism to Christ's teaching, and that to be damned simply means to be condemned. All very pretty; but should we have ever heard of such interpretations but for Freethought criticism of the orthodox dogmas?

Of course it was a Freethinking lady who first adopted the "bloomer" costume. The story is told in *The Life and Writings of Amelia Bloomer*, by D. C. Bloomer, her surviving husband. Mrs. Bloomer but copied the dress of Elizabeth Smith Miller, the daughter of Gerrit Smith, a well-known American Freethinker and abolitionist. She was the first to appear in public dressed in short skirts and full Turkish trousers, and her cousin, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, was the second. Mrs. Bloomer says: "A few days after Mrs. Miller's arrival in Seneca Falls Mrs. Stanton came out in a dress made in Mrs. Miller's style. She walked our streets in a skirt that came a little above the knees, and trousers of the same material—black satin. Having had part in the discussion of the dress question, it seemed proper that I should practise as I preached, and so a few days later I, too, donned the new costume, and in the next issue of my paper [the *Liby*] announced that fact to my readers." This led to a squib on the bloomer costume; and, says Mrs. Bloomer, "The name has continued to cling to the short dress in spite of my repeatedly disclaiming all right to it, and giving Mrs. Miller's name as that of the originator, or the first to wear such dress in public. Had she not come to us in that style, it is not probable that either Mrs. Stanton or myself would have donned it."

The Reason Why: A Story of Fact and Fiction, by Ernest E. Russell, editor of *Public Opinion* (New York), will shortly be published. It is announced as distinctly a "purpose" novel, and decidedly radical.

The Humanitarian League has published a special edition of Mr. Joseph Collinson's essay on *What it Costs to be Vaccinated*. Neatly bound in buckram cloth and well printed on "antique paper," it makes a dainty volume. The price is one shilling. We note with pleasure that Mr. Collinson's very useful and admirable tract has been well received by the press. The London letter of the *Newcastle Daily Leader*, the great organ of the Radicals north of the Tees, describes it as "a powerful and well-arranged plea against the legal enforcement of vaccination."

Mahomet the Illustrious, by Godfrey Higgins, the learned author of *The Anacalypsis*, was first published in 1829, and was one of the first works issued in this Christian country that treated the Prophet of Arabia with justice. It has been re-issued in America in the "Library of Liberal Classics."

The July number of the *Scottish Review* has an article on "The Worship of Serapis," by Mr. F. Legge, in which he seeks to identify the Ptolemaic deity with the Babylonian Bel Merodach. It will be remembered that the Emperor Hadrian wrote, when visiting Egypt: "The Bishops of Serapis are bishops of Christ." So that Mr. Legge does something towards supplying a link between "the two Babylons."

Dr. George Brandes, a Danish Freethinking critic of Jewish birth, has just published in book form a big work on Shakespeare, after its having appeared in parts. We understand the work is being translated into English.

Dr. Alice Vickery has published through Henry Renshaw, 656, Strand, a shilling pamphlet on *The Most Common of the Diseases of Children*. It is written with great care and lucidity, and we should say with ample knowledge. Parents ought to find it very useful. Its value is enhanced by an appendix containing prescriptions for ordinary treatment.

The *Book of Genesis*, by C. Woosing Wade, M.A., is a work giving the conclusions of the best rational critics on the first book of the Bible, together with the text, dividing the priestly portions from the Jehovistic, etc., together with explanatory notes. It opens with a literary analysis in which Mr. Wade at the outset instances the many repetitions and inconsistencies found in the volume. This is followed by a chapter on "The Myths," and another on "The Patriarchal History." The volume shows what a different complexion Freethinkers have forced Christians to put upon the old documents, which are still foisted on children and the ignorant as the revealed word of God.

PROFANE JOKES.

A correspondent vouches for the following as a true story: "Edith," said a mother to her little four-year-old daughter, "I want you to go in your room, kneel down by your bed, and ask God to forgive you for being such a very naughty girl." Edith did as she was bidden, and remained a long time. When she came out her mother said, "Edith, did you ask God to forgive you for being such a bad girl?" "Yes, mamma," said the child, "and God said: 'Great Scott! I know lots of worses girls than you are!'"—*New York Tribune*.

General Gaines asked an Indian preacher how much pay he received.

"Two bit a day," was the reply.

"That," said the General, "is damn poor pay."

"Damn poor preach," retorted the Indian.

A minister and a wealthy member of his congregation were walking along the beach admiring the shells that had been cast up by the sea.

"Can you tell me," said the minister, "why this ocean is unlike—very unlike—my congregation?"

"I couldn't tell; no, sir. I am disposed to look upon your conundrums as frivolous."

"Sometimes they are, but this one isn't. It is based on a sad, solid fact."

"Well, I give it up, anyhow."

"It's because the sea shells out."

And the wealthy member was wrapped in thought for several minutes.

Mrs. Tawker—"How do you do, Mr. Prey? What are you going to preach about to-morrow morning?"

Rev. Lettus Prey—"Well, to tell the truth, I haven't quite finished my sermon yet, but—"

"Oh, I'm so glad; because then I can persuade you, I'm sure, to say something about the bad practice of talking about one's neighbors. It will strike right home to Mrs. Next-door, you know, who is always saying things against my children and me; when, if she would stay at home once in a while, and attend to those horrid, dirty-faced little imps of hers, it would be a good deal better for every one! Now, you will, won't you, dear Mr. Prey?"

THE INDIFFERENCE OF NATURE.

WE have had in this century a stern series of lessons on the folly of believing anything for no better reason than that it is pleasant to believe it. It was pleasant to look round with a consciousness of possessing a thousand a year, and say, with Browning's David, "All's love; and all's law." It was pleasant to believe that the chance we were too lazy to take in this world would come back to us in another. It was pleasant to believe that a benevolent hand was guiding the steps of society, overruling all evil appearances for good, and making poverty here the earnest of a great blessedness and reward hereafter. It was pleasant to lose the sense of worldly inequality in the contemplation of our equality before God. But utilitarian questioning and scientific answering turned all this tranquil optimism into the blackest pessimism. Nature was shown to us as "red in tooth and claw"; if the guiding hand were indeed benevolent, then it could not be omnipotent, so that our trust in it was broken; if it were omnipotent, it could not be benevolent, so that our love of it turned to fear and hatred. We had never admitted that the other world, which was to compensate for the sorrows of this, was open to horses and apes (though we had not on that account been any the more merciful to our horses); and now came science to show us the corner of the pointed ear of the horse on our own heads, and present the ape to us as our blood relation. No proof came of the existence of that other-world and that benevolent power to which we had left the remedy of the atrocious wrongs of the poor; proof after proof came that what we called nature knew and cared no more about our pains and pleasures than we know or care about the tiny creatures we crush under-foot as we walk through the fields.—G. BERNARD SHAW, in *"The Twentieth Century."*

RAMSEY-KEMP TESTIMONIAL FUND.—S. Hartmann, £1; J. Swaagman, £1; E. Moon, 5s.; W. Rudd, 1s.; W. Druncock, 1s. Per Mrs. Hampson (Bolton):—T. Holstead, 2s.; C. N. Atkinson, 1s.; W. Collins, 1s.; F. J. Hampson, 1s.; A. C. Hampson, 1s.; G. Smith, 1s.; N. Cottrell, 6d.; A. F. Hampson, 3d.; L. S. Hampson, 3d. Per G. J. Warren:—F. Terume, 1s.; W. Davis, 1s.; Mr. Hones, 1s.; A. L., 1s.; G. J. Warren, 1s.; Friend, 6d.; Friend of Liberty, 6d.; F. Swatts, 6d.; F. Mason, 6d.; W. Lewarton, 6d.; A. Marks, 6d.—GEORGE WARD, *Hon. Treasurer*.

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.

THE ATHENÆUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30, C. Cohen, "Atheism: Its Morality and Justification."

BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Balls Pond): 10, Excursion by brake to Abridge. 7.15, Stanley Jones, "Buddha and Christ."

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "The Bible as a School Book."

PENTON HALL (81 Pentonville-road—Humanitarian Society): 7, Joachim Kaspary, "John Ruskin."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, Stanley Jones will lecture.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH (Peckham Rye): 3.15, A. lecture.

CLERKENWELL GREEN: 11.30, C. Cohen will lecture.

EDMONTON (corner of Angel-road): 7, J. Ramsey will lecture.

FINSBURY PARK (near band-stand)—Finsbury Park Branch: 11.15, A. lecture; 3.15, F. Haslam, "The Life and Times of Thomas Paine."

HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE (Middlesex side): 7, S. E. Easton, "The Rise and Progress of Christianity." Thursday, July 9, S. E. Easton will lecture.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, Lucretius Keen, "Six Days' Hard Labour"; 3.30, A. B. Moss, "Shelley." Wednesday, July 8, at 8, Stanley Jones, "The Evolution of Christianity."

KILBURN (High-road, corner of Victoria-road): 7, A. B. Moss, "Dead Gods."

KINGSLAND (Ridley-road): 11.30, S. E. Easton will lecture.

MILE END WASTE: 11.30, A. Guest, "The Bible and Woman."

OLD PIMLICO PIER: 11.30, A. B. Moss, "The Foundations of the Christian Faith."

REGENT'S PARK (near Gloucester Gate)—N.W. Branch: 3, C. Cohen will lecture.

VICTORIA PARK (near the fountain): 11.15 and 3.15, J. Rowney will lecture.

WOOD GREEN (Jolly Butchers' Hill): 11.30, W. Heaford will lecture.

COUNTRY.

BLACKBURN: 7, Fortnightly meeting at 18 St. Peter-street.

LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 7, J. Roberts, "The Beauties of Nature." Committee meeting after lecture.

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Kusholms-road, All Saints)—Closed for alterations and repairs until August 16.

HECKMONDWIKE (Mr. Wood's Office, Cemetery-road): 2.30, a meeting.

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, W. H. Grainger, "The Growth of Priestly Power."

STOCKTON-ON-TEES (32 Dovecote-street): 6.30, Business meeting.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, Business meeting; 7.30, W. Cooke, "Secular Propaganda."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

NORTHAMPTON (Cow Meadow): W. Heaford—11, "The Uncertainties of Christianity"; 6.30, "The Creed of an Unbeliever."

Lecturers' Engagements.

O. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—July 5, m., Finsbury; a., Regent's Park; e., Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road. 12, m., Islington; a., Victoria Park; e., Deptford. 15, Hyde Park. 19, m., Hyde Park; a., Regent's Park; e., Hammersmith. 23, Hammersmith. 25, m., Mile End; a., Victoria Park; e., Battersea. August 2, m., Finsbury Park; a., Regent's Park; e., Battersea.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Creden-road, Rotherhithe, London.—July 5, m., Westminster; a., Hyde Park; e., Kilburn. 12, Northampton.

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.

Read "THE TRUTH SEEKER."

MONTHLY, PRICE 1D.

Edited by JOHN GRANGE.

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

COLONEL INGERSOLL'S LECTURE,

ABOUT THE HOLY BIBLE.

Price Sixpence.

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

THE CLACTON TEA TABLE, TOWN HALL BUILDINGS, CLACTON-ON-SEA.—Hot dinners daily, 12 to 3. Specials, 1s. ordinary. Tea, coffee, chocolate, fresh made at any time. List of furnished apartments kept for inspection free.—H. FOYSTER, Proprietor.

FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT

BY

G. W. FOOTE.

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

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

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

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

Mr. S. P. Putnam says:—

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

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

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

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

Price Twopence,

"A Letter to Lord Ellenborough"

OCCASIONED BY THE SENTENCE WHICH HE PASSED ON

MR. D. I. EATON,

AS PUBLISHER OF

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

BY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

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

Just published, price 1s., by post 1s. 2d.,

VERBATIM REPORT OF

FOUR NIGHTS' DISCUSSION

On the Questions, "Is Secularism Superior to Christianity?" and "Is Christianity Superior to Secularism?" between Mr. CHARLES WATTS (Vice-President of the N.S.S.) and Dr. ALEXANDER JAMIESON (President of the Glasgow Protestant Laymen's Association), in the North Saloon, City Hall, Glasgow, on May 6, 7, 8, and 9, 1895.

Corrected by both Disputants.

London: Watts & Co., 17 Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, E.C.

WHITE HART, ABRIDGE, ESSEX; thirteen miles from London. Cyclists and Beaufests specially catered for. T. MOODY, Proprietor.

Two New Pamphlets by Ingersoll

Now Ready, price Threepence,

The Coming Civilisation.

An ADDRESS delivered in the Columbia Theatre, Chicago, on Sunday, April 12, 1896, to Members and Friends of "THE CHURCH MILITANT,"

BY

COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL.

Also, by the same Author, price Threepence,

THE FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH.

CONTENTS :—

1. The Old Testament. 2. The New Testament. 3. Jehovah.
4. The Trinity. 5. The Theological Christ. 6. The "Scheme." 7. Belief. 8. Conclusion.

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

Now Ready, Price Three Shillings,

FOOTSTEPS OF THE PAST.

ESSAYS ON HUMAN EVOLUTION.

By J. M. WHEELER.

With an Introduction by G. W. FOOTE.

CONTENTS :—Early Religion—Animism—Fetichism and Idolatry—Totemism—Were the Jews Savages?—Religious Dances—Sympathetic Magic—Kings, Priests, and Gods—Sacrifices and Scapegoats—Killing the God—Nature Festivals—Lent—Easter—May Day—Christmas Customs.

"The book is well done throughout."—*Weekly Times and Echo.*

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

Superior edition, superfine paper, cloth, 2s., post free,

The Bible Handbook

FOR FREETHINKERS & INQUIRING CHRISTIANS.

BY

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

Sold also in separate parts as follows :—

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

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

THOMAS PAINE'S WORKS.

The Rights of Man. Centenary edition. With a Political Biography by J. M. WHEELER. 1s.; bound in cloth, 2s.

Miscellaneous Theological Works. 1s.

The Age of Reason. New edition, with Preface by G. W. FOOTE. 1s.

Complete Theological Works. (Including the *Age of Reason*.) Cloth, 2s. 6d.

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

THE BEST BOOK

ON NEO-MALTHUSIANISM IS, I BELIEVE,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

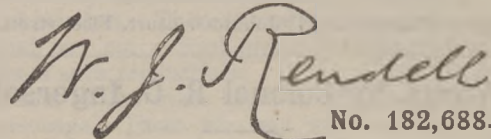
W. J. Rendell's "Wife's Friend"

Recommended by Mrs. Besant in *Law of Population*, p. 32, and Dr. Allbutt in *Wife's Handbook*, p. 51. Made ONLY at No. 15 Chadwell-street, Clerkenwell; 2s. per doz., post free (reduction in larger quantities). For particulars send stamped envelope.

IMPORTANT CAUTION.

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

LOOK FOR AUTOGRAPH REGISTERED TRADE MARK


No. 182,688.

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

Higginson's Syringe, with Vertical and Reverse Current, 8s. 6d., 4s. 6d., and 5s. 6d. Dr. Palfrey's Powder, 1s. 2d. Quinine Compound, 1s. 2d. Dr. Allbutt's Quinine Powders, 8s. per doz. All prices post free.

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

ALLINSON FOR HEALTH.

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

Consult DR. T. R. ALLINSON,

4 SPANISH PLACE, MANCHESTER SQUARE, LONDON, W

Fee 10s. 6d. from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. To working classes, 5s., from 6 to 8 p.m.

DR. ALLINSON cures without drugs or operations. He has 10,000 consultations yearly. Send 10s. for his "Book of Health."

STANTON, the People's Dentist, 335 Strand (opposite Somerset House).—TEETH on VULCANITE, 2s. 6d. each; upper or lower set, £1. Best Quality, 4s. each; upper or lower, £2. Completed in four hours when required; repairing or alterations in two hours. If you pay more than the above, they are fancy charges. Teeth on platinum, 7s. 6d. each; on 18 ct. gold, 15s.; stopping, 2s. 6d.; extraction 1s.; painless by gas, 5s.

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

SOMETHING NEW AND SOMETHING GOOD.



Gott's "Perfect" Sewing Machine. Price
£6, Carriage Paid.
LIBERAL DISCOUNT FOR CASH.

The "PERFECT" Sewing Machine possesses the following advantages:—All the latest improvements, easy and silent in running, wheel nickle-plated, feet nickle-plated, automatic bobbin winder, reliable and regular in its working. The most simple loose wheel apparatus. Inch measure on table. Splendid inlaid walnut wood work. Indestructible cog wheels. Extra size driving wheels. Shuttle lever. Improved shuttle, etc.

The following extras are supplied with each machine, free of cost:—10 needles, 6 bobbins for shuttle, 1 fell seamer, 1 adjustable binder, 1 adjustable hemmer, 1 quilter, 1 hemmer, 1 presser-foot, 1 wide hemmer, 1 small presser-foot, 1 straight guide, 1 screw for straight guide, 1 braider, 1 screw-driver, 1 oil-can, and an instruction book.

Every Machine Warranted for Two Years.

DIRECT FROM THE WAREHOUSE.

Gentlemen's Cloths and Ladies' Dress
Fabrics. Suits made to Measure.

Patterns Post Free to any Address.

AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

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

Just published, price 2d., by post 2½d.,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

By CHARLES WATTS

(Vice President of the National Secular Society).

London: Watts & Co., 17 Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, E.C.

Works by Colonel R. G. Ingersoll.

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SOME MISTAKES OF MOSES. The only complete edition in England. Accurate as Colenso, and fascinating as a novel. 182 pp. 1s. Superior paper, cloth 1s. 6d. | LAST WORDS ON SUICIDE. 2d. |
| DEFENCE OF FREETHOUGHT. A Five Hours' Speech at the Trial of C. B. Reynolds for Blasphemy. 6d. | GOD AND THE STATE. 2d. |
| THE GODS. 6d. | WHY AM I AN AGNOSTIC? Part I. 2d. |
| THE HOLY BIBLE. 6d. | WHY AM I AN AGNOSTIC? Part II. 2d. |
| REPLY TO GLADSTONE. With a Biography by J. M. Wheeler. 4d. | FAITH AND FACT. Reply to Dr. Field. 2d. |
| ROME OR REASON? A Reply to Cardinal Manning. 4d. | GOD AND MAN. Second reply to Dr. Field. 2d. |
| CRIMES AGAINST CRIMINALS. 3d. | THE DYING CREED. 2d. |
| ORATION ON WALT WHITMAN. 3d. | THE LIMITS OF TOLERATION. A Discussion with the Hon. F. D. Coudert and Gov. S. L. Woodford. 2d. |
| ORATION ON VOLTAIRE. 3d. | THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH. 2d. |
| ABRAHAM LINCOLN. 3d. | ART AND MORALITY. 2d. |
| PAINE THE PIONEER. 2d. | DO I BLASPHEME? 2d. |
| HUMANITY'S DEBT TO THOMAS PAINE. 2d. | THE CLERGY AND COMMON SENSE. 2d. |
| ERNEST RENAN AND JESUS CHRIST. 2d. | SOCIAL SALVATION. 2d. |
| TRUE RELIGION. 2d. | MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE. 2d. |
| THE THREE PHILANTHROPISTS. 2d. | SKULLS. 2d. |
| LOVE THE REDEEMER. 2d. | THE GREAT MISTAKE. 1d. |
| IS SUICIDE A SIN? 2d. | LIVE TOPICS. 1d. |
| | MYTH AND MIRACLE. 1d. |
| | REAL BLASPHEMY. 1d. |
| | REPAIRING THE IDOLS. 1d. |
| | CHRIST AND MIRACLES. 1d. |
| | CREEDS & SPIRITUALITY. 1d. |

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

48 Pages, beautifully printed and elegantly bound, price Sixpence,

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

A CANDID CRITICISM
OF

MR. WILSON BARRETT'S PLAY

BY
G. W. FOOTE

CONTENTS:—

- A Pious Play
- Blasphemous Abuse
- Melodrama
- "Claudian"
- Pagan and Christian Morality
- Pagan and Christian Torture
- Nero and His Vices
- Faith and Filth
- The Primitive Christians and the Roman Empire
- Fabulous Persecutions
- Paul at Rome
- The Neronian Persecution
- The Forged Passage in Tacitus: its History and Probable Origin
- Mr. Barrett's Cant
- The Real Sign of the Cross

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

Printed and Published by G. W. FOOTE, at 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.