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SHAKESPEARE AND JESUS CHRIST.

ONE evening, some years ago, I was lecturing on the Free-thought view of Jesus Christ. It was in London, and the gentleman who came to the platform to criticise my lecture was the secretary of the Christian Evidence Society. Mr. Engström scarcely replied to my arguments, but he told several anecdotes, one of which related to Charles Lamb. According to Mr. Engström, Lamb remarked, in a certain conversation, that if Shakespeare entered the room they would all stand up, but if Jesus Christ entered they would all fall upon their knees. That, said Mr. Engström, was the natural attitude of men towards the Prophet of Nazareth. They could not help worshipping him, and that was an instinctive recognition of his divinity.

I am an intense admirer of Charles Lamb. He was an infinitely more beautiful character than Thomas Carlyle, who sneered at him, and I believe that some of his prose is as sure of immortality as any written in the present century. I flattered myself that I knew every scrap of Lamb's writing, and almost every scrap of what had been written about him. But I did not remember Mr. Engström's anecdote. All I could do, therefore, on the spur of the moment, was to assume its truth and reply to it accordingly. I said that standing up if Shakespeare entered the room would be a natural mark of respect to his colossal genius. The very attitude of sitting would be too slovenly at the first accost of that tremendous spirit. All our faculties, mental and bodily, would be strung to their highest tension by his sudden advent. But going on our knees was an irrational attitude, and if we fell into it at the approach of Jesus Christ it would only show the humiliating nature of superstition and the power of early religious training.

It is always well, however, to suspect the accuracy of Christian Evidence speakers. They are not trained in a school of precision, and are apt to be as loose in statement as they are flimsy in argument. I knew that Lamb was a Deist. He did not accept Revelation or embrace the deity of Christ. Consequently I felt certain that there was a mistake somewhere; perhaps not a very great one in mere form, but probably a considerable one in substance. That feeling has since been justified. I have recently been dipping again into William Hazlitt—a fine writer, though not so profound and quintessential as Lamb. Hazlitt is very voluminous, and one of his essays had escaped my attention. It is on "Persons One Would Wish to Have Seen," and is an account of one of those famous evenings at Elia's. Lamb got into one of his subtle and solemn moods, shot through with a certain fantasticality which so often annoyed solemn people who were not subtle. He said that he would like to see Guy Fawkes and Judas Iscariot. This rather startled the company, but the reasons given were allowed to be excellent. "Oh! ever right, Menenius—ever right!" exclaimed Lamb, who was now in the full tide of his wild profundity. What followed shall be given in Hazlitt's own words:—

"There is only one other person I can think of after this," continued Lamb; but without mentioning a name that once put on a semblance of mortality. "If Shakespeare was to come into this room, we should all rise up to meet him; but if that person was to come into it, we should all fall down and try to kiss the hem of His garment."

The story in this form evidently does not serve Mr. No. 781.

Engström's purpose. Lamb said nothing about falling on one's knees in the attitude of worship. No doubt he would have regarded that as a species of blasphemy, or at least of idolatry. Kissing the hem of Christ's garment is quite another matter. It is a token of overwhelming respectful affection, not of prostrate slavish adoration. It is an expression of feeling by gesture which goes beyond words, just as a lover who kisses his mistress's glove, or a bit of lace that has adorned her dear person, betrays his love more convincingly than he could do by the finest sonnet or the most rapturous epistle.

I do not pause to consider whether Jesus Christ was really deserving of this tribute of speechless affection. It is enough to say, at present, that Lamb's sentiment would have been endorsed by Rousseau and Renan (for instance), both of whom denied the deity of Mr. Engström's "Savior." And, after all, there is no argument in emotion, which is necessarily personal and incommunicable. When we discuss we must step out into the dry light of the intellect, where feelings only count as facts, not as authorities.

For my part, I do not accept Jesus Christ as a really historical character. I do not say—I am not in a *position* to say: no one is in a position to say—that there was or was not an actual personage who served as the nucleus of all that collection of legend and mythology which appears in the Gospels. But I am confident that the picture of Jesus Christ handed down to us is an ideal one, wrought by the pious fancy of many generations. On the whole, it is as imaginary as Hamlet or Othello, as we find them in the plays of Shakespeare; or, to take a more appropriate parallel, as King Arthur, the fabulous hero of early English romance. One has only to read some of the Lives of Christ written by modern Christians to realize the full certainty of this fact. There is endless re-weaving of the old material, but not a fresh gleam of actual history in whole acres of such productions.

Shakespeare, on the other hand, is indubitably an historical personage. Those who say we know very little about him talk very ignorantly. We know more about him than about any other playwright in the mighty constellation of which he was the central sun. The wonder really is, not that we know so little, but that we know so much. As for the cranks who argue that Shakespeare's plays were written by Lord Bacon, one can only stand aghast at the grotesqueness of their monomania. Not an argument can they advance which is not shivered into dust by the plainest facts of the case.

Take all the best things in the Gospels, and suppose them to have been really uttered by Jesus Christ, though nearly all of them were current before he appeared. What proportion does the total bear to the gold and jewels of Shakespeare's genius? We are somewhat blinded to the depth of Shakespeare's humanity by the splendor of his intellect. He dazzles us so that we are apt to lose sight of the streams of tenderness that sweeten the territory of his mind. Wordsworth wrote of Milton as one whose soul was like a star and dwelt apart. But the soul of Shakespeare was no solitary star—"pinnacled dim in the intense inane." It was a royal sun, raining out its beams with inexhaustible generosity. He took the whole world in his loving embrace; he blessed the saints and heroes, pitied the cowards and villains, and smiled benignly on the very fools. The world will have to change, and human nature alter itself, before his vivifying glory grows dim. Ben Jonson was most inspired when he said that Shakespeare was "not of an age, but for all time." G. W. FOOTE.

CELSUS.

NEARLY fifteen years ago I argued in the *Freethinker* (December 11 and 18, 1881, and January 1, 1882) that in Celsus, the earliest opponent of Christianity of whose arguments we have any record, Origen "had a foeman worthy of his steel," one who was "as fair, honest, and truth-desiring as his antagonist"; that on many points his arguments stood firm to-day, and proved that "the Christians had by no means a monopoly of reason and logic on their side."

It makes one feel old to look back to those early volumes of the *Freethinker*, but it is a satisfaction to find that in the *June Arena*, one of the leading Boston magazines, the Rev Samuel J. Barrows, D.D., in an article entitled "Celsus, the First Pagan Critic of Christianity, and His Anticipation of Modern Thought," admits nearly all that I then maintained. It is true Dr. Barrows is a Liberal Unitarian, but it is something that even he should make such admissions, for, as we shall see, they bear far-reaching consequences. One thing which Dr. Barrows brings out clearly is, that the arguments of Celsus, being based on reason and common sense, and such as any intelligent, scholarly, and unbiassed heathen would present, stand to-day, while the patched dogmas of the churches are being ever shifted to accommodate themselves to modern thought.

I distrust Christian chronology, but will, *pro tem.*, place Celsus with Dr. Barrows at the year 178 A.D. Origen calls him an Epicurean. Yet his work, entitled *Logos Alethes*—the True Logos, in contradiction to the pseudo-Logos of Platonising Christians, shows he was rather a neo-Platonist. His work, like those of Porphyry, Frouto, Hierocles, and others, was destroyed by Christian zeal; but fortunately Origen, in writing against it, took up item after item *seriatim*, so that we are able, if not to reconstruct his work, at least to form a very fair idea of it.

Celsus was in a position to know that Christianity was an offshoot of Judaism, upon which various heathen doctrines had been grafted. So he assailed its historical, or rather unhistorical, stories from the standpoint of a Jew, whom he makes argue directly against the Christian idol. He alleges that Jesus, so far from being a son of God, was a bastard; his mother, Mary, having been put away by her husband for her adultery with one Panthera, a soldier. Panthera is the name given in the Talmud to the father of Jesus, so it is evident that Celsus had access to Jewish sources, if this be not an indication that both the writings ascribed to Origen and Celsus are later than the Talmud. What is the Christian Father's answer? Why, that God would not permit a great teacher to be a bastard, and, moreover, "some animals—for instance, the vultures—bring forth young without any previous copulation with the males."

Celsus, in the person of the Jew, ridicules the idea of a virgin mother, and compares it with the fables of the Greek mythology. He alleges, what he seems to have been in a position to know, that the story of the worship of the Magi and the order by Herod to slay the children were inventions without the shadow of historical foundation. Jesus was brought up in obscurity, and worked as a carpenter. This Origen had the impudence to deny, on which Lardner observes: "Whence it came to pass that Origen said this is not certain, whether it be a slip of memory, or whether the copies used by him had carpenter's son, for, in all the Greek MS. in general, Jesus is called a carpenter in Mark vi. 3, as in our version" (*Credibility of the Gospel History*, chap. xviii., div. 3, sec. 22). The alleged witness of Celsus to the Gospels is no witness to our Gospels at all, since nearly every reference can be found in the Gospel according to Matthew, and was perhaps taken from the lost "Gospel according to the Hebrews," from which Matthew was probably compiled.

Celsus makes his imaginary Jew say to Jesus:—

"You assert that when you were baptized by John the figure of a bird lighted upon you twice. What responsible witness was there for this appearance? Who heard the voice from heaven calling you the Son of God except yourself and a fellow criminal? . . . The prophecies upon which you base those claims apply to innumerable persons. On what ground do you refer them exclusively to yourself? You assert that you are the Son of God. Now every man born under divine Providence is a son of God; if so, what can you differ from others? Why

did you go to Egypt when you were an infant? Were you afraid of being slain? But it is not natural for God to fear death. An angel came from heaven and commanded you and your relatives to flee lest you die. But could not the great God protect you where you were? He had already sent two angels in your behalf. But suppose we admit that the stories propagated by your followers are true, in what do your performances differ from the performances of other jugglers?"

Again, Celsus, wishing to identify the work of Jesus with similar ones performed by magicians, exclaims:—

"O light! O truth! He distinctly declares, with his own voice, as yourselves have recorded, that others will come performing similar works by the power of Satan. Jesus, then, does not deny that such works were done by wicked men and sorcerers? Is it not, then, ridiculous to conclude, from the same works, that one is God, and the other a sorcerer? You say you believe in him because he predicted his own resurrection; but others have predicted similar things for the purpose of deceiving stupid people. This was the case with Zamolxis in Scythia, the slave of Pythagoras, and with Pythagoras himself in Italy, and with Rhampsinitus in Egypt, and with Orpheus among the Odrysians, and Protesilana in Thessaly, and Hercules and Theseus. But the real thing to be considered is not what fables say, but whether a really dead man ever came to life again. Do you think that what you say of others is fiction, but what you say of him is truth? . . . According to you, he could not help himself while living; but after he had died he raised himself from the dead and showed the prints of the nails. But who saw this? A distracted woman, or perhaps some of those engaged in the same system of delusion, who had either dreamed so, owing to a peculiar state of mind, or, under the influence of a wandering imagination, had found an appearance according to their own wishes, which has been the case with numberless individuals."

Dr. Barrows asks:—

"What part of his argument might Celsus justly claim as still valid to-day?"

- "1. His arraignment of the deification of Jesus.
- "2. His scientific objections to the doctrine of the resurrection of the body.
- "3. His demonstration on scientific grounds of the untenability of the Mosaic cosmogony.
- "4. His exhibition of the mythical character of the Eden legends on which Christian theology is built.
- "5. His argument that the Hebrew prophecies were not fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth.
- "6. His belief that mythology was a comparative science, and that Jewish and Christian mythology must be tested by the same laws which are applied to the mythology of other religions.
- "7. His claim that the miracles of Christianity must be tried by the tests which we apply to all similar manifestations.
- "8. His protest against the claims of Judaism or Christianity to exclusive inspiration.
- "9. His claim that Jesus must be regarded not as a special incarnation of God, but as one of many messengers sent for the inspiration and guidance of mankind.
- "10. His recognition of a universal basis and a universal inspiration for all religions."

And what part of his Christian opponent stands? Not his belief in, nor his interpretation of, the Bible. Not his recondite speculations or absurd allegories; but, says Dr. Barrows, his claim that the moral fruits of Christianity are the best vindication of its place in human history. Beyond the fact that this is a minor element in origin, the statement is very questionable. Nothing is more certain than that Christianity succeeded by its appeals to the emotions rather than by any appeal to reason and right conduct. Hope of heaven and fear of the last day and the wrath to come were its potent aids, while its discipline and organisation were more effective than those of decaying Paganism. It is an incontrovertible fact that the triumph of Christianity was followed by the night of the Dark Ages. Celsus anticipated this. His final argument against Christianity was that its exclusive pretensions and intolerance were a menace to civilization. By standing apart striving for the supremacy of their faith, and refusing to perform their duties as citizens, the Christians were endangering the empire, and were really allies of the barbarians. History confirms the misgivings of Celsus, and endorses his arguments.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF SECULARISM.

CHAPTER XXI.

THROUGH OPPOSITION TO RECOGNITION.

So many gods, so many creeds—
So many paths that wind and wind,
While just the art of being kind
Is all the sad world needs.—ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

LADY HESTER STANHOPE said she knew "Lord Byron must be a bad man, for he was always *intending* something." Any improvement in the method of life is "intending something," and society ought to be tolerant of those whose badness takes no worse form. The rules of Secularism prescribes for human conduct are few, and no intelligent preacher would say they indicate a dangerous form of "badness." They are:—

1. Truth in speech.
2. Honesty in transaction.
3. Industry in business.
4. Equity in according the gain among those whose diligence and vigilance help to produce it.

Though this world be but a bubble,
Two things stand like stone—
Kindness in another's trouble,
Courage in your own.

Learning and fortune do but illuminate these virtues. They cannot supersede them. The germs of these qualities are in every human heart. It is only necessary that we cultivate them. Men are like billiard balls—they would all go into the right pockets in a few generations, if rightly propelled. Yet these principles, simple and unpretending as they are, being founded on considerations apart from modes of orthodox thought, have had a militant career. The Spanish proverb has been in request: "Beware of an ox before, of a mule behind, and of a monk on every side." The monk, tonsured and untunsured, is found in every religion.

In Glasgow I sometimes delivered lectures on the Sunday in a quaint old hall situated up a wynd in Candleriggs. On the Saturday night I gave a woman half-a-crown to wash and whiten the stairs leading to the hall, and the passage leading to the street and across the causeway, so that the entrance to the hall should be clean and sweet. Sermons were preached in the same hall when the stairs were repulsively dirty. The woman remarked to a neighbor that "Mr. Holyoake's views were wrong, but he seemed to have clean principles." He who believes in the influence of material conditions will do what he can to have them pure, not only where he speaks, but where he frequents and where he resides. The theological reader, who by accident or curiosity looks over these pages, will find much from which he will dissent; but I hope he will be able to regard this book as one of "clean principles," as far as the limited light of the author goes.

Accepting the "golden rule" of Huxley—"Give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so clear and distinct that they cannot be doubted"—causes the Secularist to credit less than his neighbors, and that goes against him; being, as it were, a reproach of their avidity of belief. One reason for writing this book is to explain—to as many of the new generation as may happen to read it—the discrimination of Secularism. Newspapers and the clerical class, who ought to be well informed, continually speak of mere free-thinking as Secularism. How this has been caused has already been indicated. Two or three remarkable and conspicuous representatives of Free-thought, who found iconoclasm easier, less responsible, and more popular, have given to many erroneous impressions. When Mr. Bradlaugh, Mrs. Besant, and Mr. Foote came into the Secularistic movement, which preceded their day, they gave proof that they understood its principles, which they afterwards disregarded or postponed. I cite their opinions lest the reader should think that this book gives an account of a form of thought not previously known. One wrote:—

"From very necessity, Secularism is affirmative and constructive; it is impossible to thoroughly negate any falsehood without making more or less clear the opposing truth."*

Again:—

"Secularism conflicts with theology in this: that the Secularist teaches the improbability of humanity by

* "Secularism: What is It?" National Secular Society's Tracts—No. 7. By Charles Bradlaugh.

human means; while the theologian not only denies this, but rather teaches that the secular effort is blasphemous and unavailing unless preceded and accompanied by reliance on divine aid."*

Mrs. Besant said:—

"Still we have won a plot of ground—men's and women's hearts. To them Secularism has a message; to them it brings a rule of conduct; to them it gives a test of morality, and a guide through the difficulties of life. Our morality is tested only—be it noted—by utility in this life and in this world."†

Mr. Foote was not less discerning and usefully explicit, saying:—

"Secularism is founded upon the distinction between the things of time and the things of eternity.....The good of others Secularism declares to be the law of morality; and although certain theologies secondarily teach the same doctrine, yet they differ from Secularism in founding it upon the supposed will of God, thus admitting the possibility of its being set aside in obedience to some other equally or more imperative divine injunction."‡

For several years the *National Reformer* bore the sub-title of "Secular Advocate."

We could not expect early concurrence with the policy of preferring ethical to theological questions of Theism and unprovable immortality. We accepted the maxim of Sir Philip Sydney—namely, that "Reason cannot show itself more reasonable than to leave reasoning on things above reason." We are not in the land of the real yet, common sense is not half so romantic to the average man as the transcendental, and an Atheistical advocacy got the preference with the impetuous. The Secularistic proposal to consult the instruction of an adversary proved less exciting than his destruction. The patience and resource it implies to work by reason alone are not to the taste of those to whom a kick is easier than a kindness, and less troublesome than explanation. Those who have the refutatory passion intense say you must clear the ground before you can build upon it. Granted; nevertheless, the signs of the times show that a good deal of ground has been cleared. The instinct of progress renders the minority, who reflect, more interested in the builder than the undertaker. What would be thought of a general who delayed occupying a country he had conquered until he had extirpated all the inhabitants in it? So, in the kingdom of error, he who will go on breaking images, without setting statues up in their place, will give superstition a long life. The savage man does not desert his idols because you call them ugly. It is only by slow degrees, and under the influence of better-carved gods, that his taste is changed and his worship improved. The reader will see that Secularism leaves the mystery of deity to the chartered imagination of man, and does not attempt to close the door of the future, but holds that the desert of another existence belongs only to those who engage in the service of man in this life. Professor F. W. Newman says: "The conditions of a future life being unknown, there are no imaginable means of benefiting ourselves and others in it, except by aiming after present goodness."§

Men have a right to look beyond this world, but not to overlook it. Men, if they can, may connect themselves with eternity; but they cannot disconnect themselves from humanity without sacrificing duty. The purport of Secularism is not far from the tenour of the famous sermon by the Rev. James Caird, of which the *Queen* said:—

"He explained in the most simple manner what real religion is—not a thing to drive us from the world, not a perpetual moping over 'good' books; but being and doing good."||

This end we reach not by a theological, but by a secular, path.

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

(To be continued.)

* "Why are we Secularists?" National Secular Society's Tracts—No. 8. By Charles Bradlaugh.

† "Secular Morality." National Secular Society's Tracts—No. 3. By Annie Besant.

‡ *Secularism and its Misrepresentation*, by G. W. Foote, who subsequently succeeded Mr. Bradlaugh as President of the National Secular Society.

§ Professor F. W. Newman, who is always clear beyond all scholars, and candid beyond all theologians, has published a *Palinode* retracting former conclusions he had published, and admitting the uncertainty of the evidence in favor of after-existence.

|| The *Queen* on the Rev. J. Caird's sermon, "Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands."

A SECULARIST'S CATECHISM.

(Continued from page 421.)

Q.—What is the difference between Secularism and Christianity?

A.—“Christianity,” in the words of Mr. G. J. Holyoake, “treats of two sets of duties—to God and to man: we hold that the duties to man take precedence in importance, and, indeed, include the highest possible duties to a benevolent God. Christianity holds that faith in Christ alone will save us: we hold that faith in good works will better save us, as humanity is higher than dogmas. Christianity teaches that prayer is a means of providential help: we teach that Science is the sole available means of temporal help. Christianity professes to supply the highest motives and the surest consolations: we say no motives can be purer or stronger than the love of goodness for its own sake, which brings consolation sweeter than dignities and loftier than talents. Christianity assumes that the moral sense cannot be educated without the Bible: we answer that the high culture attained in Greece, before the days of the Bible, is possible, in a purer and more universal sense, in these days of scientific civilization; we answer that the Bible, which has been understood in opposite senses by the ablest men—the Bible, which has divided the holiest churches, and which down to this hour dictates harshness of language and bitterness of spirit—cannot be a book of moral culture to the people. Christianity declares it has the promise of this life and of that which is to come: Secularism secures the realisation of this life, and establishes fair desert also in any life to come; for the “best use of both worlds” is the secular use of this. Christianity contends that if the Christian is wrong he will be no worse off than ourselves hereafter; while, if he is right, we shall be in danger: but this only proves that our system is more generous than the Christian, because our system still provides no harm for the Christian hereafter, while his system does provide harm for those who do not accept it. Christianity either denies that there can be sincere dissent from its doctrines, or it teaches that for conscientious difference of opinion the last hour of life will be the beginning of never-ending misery. Secularism, on the contrary, says that that solemn moment when Death exerts his inexorable dominion, and the anguish of separating affection blanches the cheek; when even the dumb brute betrays inarticulate sympathy, and the grossest natures are refined, and rude lips spontaneously distil the silvery words of sympathy; when the unfeeling volunteer acts of mercy, and tyranny pauses in its pursuit of vengeance, and the tempest of passion is stilled, and the injured forgive, and hate is subdued to love, and insensibility to affection—we say, that can never be the moment chosen by a God of love in which to commence the execution of a purpose which humanity cannot conceive without terror, nor contemplate without dismay.”

Q.—Is Secularism a necessity?

A.—Yes; for the three following reasons: (1) Because theology has failed to regenerate society; (2) because there are thousands of honest inquirers who cannot accept as true any of the supernatural faiths of the world; (3) because some guide for human conduct is desirable, therefore Secularism is a necessity to those who are unable to believe in theological teachings.

Q.—What do Secularists seek to destroy?

A.—Not the truths that are contained either in Christianity or in the Bible; these are for the service of mankind, irrespective of any religious profession. Our aim is to destroy the errors of theology—such as the belief in its creeds and dogmas; dependence upon alleged supernatural power as a means of help; the notion that the prayer of supplication is of any practical value; that man is necessarily a depraved being; that an ill-spent life can be atoned for by a death-bed repentance; that salvation can be obtained through the merits of Christ; that, if there be a heaven, the only passport to it is faith in the Christian scheme of redemption; that there exist a personal Devil and a material hell; and that the Bible is an infallible record.

Q.—What is the Secular view of the Bible?

A.—Secularism affirms that the Bible is a merely human production, abounding in the errors and superstitions specially common to ancient human works, the venerable

days of old being the infancy of mankind. Secularists regard the Bible as a book composed of a large number of distinct and incongruous pamphlets, quite unauthenticated, written by various person, nobody really knows by whom; at far distant periods, nobody exactly knows when; which have been floated down to us, as the “accidents of time” determined, by oral traditions and written copies, subject to all the blunders and perversions of ignorant and fanatical men, in ages perfectly uncritical and unscrupulous; whose originals have irretrievably perished; which frequently refer to prior authorities that have utterly perished also, and whose various readings are counted by tens of thousands. The various books which compose the New Testament were first circulated at a time when ignorance was the rule, and knowledge the exception; when the critical spirit was non-existent, and true believers accounted all forgeries in favor of their religion not only permissible, but praiseworthy. The amount of falsification prevalent which can be demonstrated even now, when so many of the required testimonies are lost, is astounding, and even appalling, to one who newly enters upon the inquiry by studying the works of some competent and impartial scholar. Of these falsifications and uncertainties the ordinary Christian knows nothing; and the learned Christians, who are thoroughly aware of them, are anything but anxious to point them out to their less informed brethren. The Secularist, knowing these facts, together with the equally demonstrated truth that both the Old and New Testaments are contradictory in their statements and teachings, estimates the book by its merits, and not by its supposed authority. The Bible, like all books, should be our servant, and not our master. Secularism applies the eclectic principle to all books, and, being bound by no authority save cultivated reason, the evil, folly, and errors of each are discarded, while the good, wise, and true are retained to assist in making a noble, dignified, and happy life for mankind on earth.

Q.—Are Secularists Atheists?

A.—Not necessarily so. Mr. George Jacob Holyoake, the founder of Secularism, says to the reader in his preface to the *Trial of Theism*: “All we beg of him is not to confound Atheism with Secularism, which is an entirely different question. It is not necessary to Secularism to say God does not exist, nor to question the alleged proofs of such existence. The sphere of Secularism is irrespective of Theism, Atheism, or the Bible. Its province is the ethics of nature. Secularism does not declare why nature exists, or how it exists. Nature is. Secularism commences with this ample, indisputable, and infinite fact of wonder, study, and progress.”

Q.—Did not Mr. Bradlaugh say that Secularism leads to Atheism when logically reasoned out?

A.—Yes; but he also said, in his debate with Dr. McCann: “Clearly, all Secularists are not Atheists. Clearly, many people who believe themselves to be sincere Theists can sign the declarations and principles which I have read to you [those of the National Secular Society], without doing any violation to their honest declaration; but, so far as I am personally concerned, and probably many will agree with me, I contend that the result of Secularism is Atheism. Only don't put it on all. Don't put it on the Society. There are many Atheists in the Society, and some who are not.” Besides, if Secularism and Atheism were necessarily one, then Mr. Bradlaugh's words would have no meaning when he said that Secularism led, when logically carried out, to Atheism. If it leads to Atheism, then it is not Atheism.

Q.—What is the difference between Secularism and Atheism?

A.—Secularism is a practical philosophy, providing rules for human guidance in daily life, while Atheism represents certain theories in reference to the supposed existence of God and the supernatural in the universe.

Q.—Have Christians in their teachings anything analogous to the stated relation between Secularism and Atheism?

A.—Yes; many Christians believe that the logical outcome of their teachings is Calvinism, while others will not admit that Calvinism is any part of Christianity.

Q.—Where is the Secular science, and where are the hospitals and other institutions of the Secular party?

A.—All science is secular, and it did not originate in any supernatural faith. Hospitals, and other benevolent institutions, are the result of human sympathy. They existed long before the dawn of Christianity, and to-day Secularists and all classes of unbelievers contribute towards

their support. The Christians built no hospitals until the fourth century A.D.

Q.—*What is the reason that professed Christians suppose they have done more useful work than Secularists?*

A.—Because they have had more time, greater wealth, and better opportunities than Secularists have had. Christians claim a history of two thousand years, during which time they have possessed untold wealth, and almost unlimited power. Secularism, on the other hand, has only existed, as an organisation, for about fifty years, funds left for its propagation have been stolen by Christians, and Christian laws have made Secular advocacy illegal.

Q.—*Have Secularists accomplished as much in their fifty years of existence as the Christians did during the first half century of their existence?*

A.—Undoubtedly, and more. The early Christians had no science worthy of the name; they achieved no political or social reforms, and they gave the masses no real education. It was not until the third century that Christian places of worship were erected. Secularists have several halls throughout the country, and they would have many more but for the disgraceful fact that, as already stated, Christians have appropriated to themselves money left for Secular purposes.

CHARLES WATTS.

(To be continued.)

IN THE OPEN.

AFTER one of the most successful winter sessions I have had since my first appearance upon the Freethought platform, I returned to London in May for what my provincial friends facetiously call a rest. My rest takes the shape of three long lectures each Sunday at different parts of the Metropolis, with barely sufficient time in between to attend to the wants of the inner man. This, together with week-night lectures and an occasional free fight, constitutes a fairly enjoyable time; at any rate, it prevents one from growing rusty. However, those who know London and Londoners are aware what an important element is open-air lecturing in the propagation of Freethought. Without it our movement in the Metropolis would be robbed of half its strength; with it there are always opportunities of winning sympathy and gaining converts, and then handing them over to the halls to be turned out a finished article later on. I have, therefore—although at considerable financial loss—devoted a certain portion of each summer to carrying on this work; but this year I have been enabled, thanks to the Lecture Scheme, to remain in London during the whole of the season; and from the many applications for lectures received—far more than I could accept—the arrangement seems to please the Branches very well indeed.

The parks are, naturally, the best places in London for out-door work, thousands of people visiting them Sunday after Sunday in search of fresh air, entertainment, and even instruction. Indeed, Sunday lectures in the parks are an established institution. They are conducted in accordance with well-understood rules, and people attend with perhaps more than the regularity of church attendants. Victoria, Hyde, Regent's, and Finsbury Parks are foremost in claiming the attention of Secularists, and at each one I have held large and successful meetings.

In Victoria Park—I must speak of myself, as I have no opportunity of listening to others—I find my audiences growing steadily larger and more sympathetic. My meetings there have been much better than usual this year, and interruptions from rowdy Christians, who will attend and advertise their bad breeding, receive but little support from the audience.

At Finsbury Park and Regent's Park I always find a good gathering, although at the latter place there are sometimes as many as three lectures on Secularism proceeding at the same time.

Hyde Park is perhaps the funniest station of all. Here one finds oneself surrounded by comic reciters; reciters who mean to be grave, but who are, nevertheless, intensely humorous; retired convicts holding forth on prison discipline; Home Rulers, Socialists, Temperance agitators, anti-vaccinationists, and evangelists of every order—all so close together that there is scarcely any appreciable division between the gatherings. Yet each platform has its special

nucleus of supporters, a larger body quickly congregating; and it is gratifying to note that the Secular audience is by no means the smallest.

Apart from the parks, there are numerous platforms maintained at street-corners and on vacant spaces, where good seed is always being sown; and one cannot praise too highly those men and women who give up their only leisure day during the week to help in the work, and whose good intentions are not always appreciated by those whom it is intended to benefit. In any account of open-air lecturing one ought not to omit mention of the discussion (?) that takes place, although this appears to grow steadily worse and worse. I suppose that the main cause of this degeneration is that the more sensible members of the Christian world see that they have no case to present to an audience, and so the defence of the faith is left to those whose combined impudence and ignorance are the best excuse for their conduct and assertions. Certainly the intellects of most of our opponents work in a fearful and wonderful manner. The truth of the resurrection is proven by the fact that some Christians ignored the teachings of the New Testament, and subscribed to hospitals where sick people might be cured by medical science, instead of by prayer; while the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is demonstrated by showing that certain others helped to found an asylum for the aged and insane. And ever this grows weaker. Opposition is as often absent as present, and the time-honored cry of "Where's yer 'ospitals?" grows fainter and fainter. The Christian Evidence Society, founded to sweep Secularism out of existence, and which has in its work the assistance of God the father and the Archbishop of Canterbury, is practically dead; it has given up many of its stations, and others show but little signs of vitality.

Even in the case of a gentleman like the Rev. Grattan Guinness, a man who runs one of those places where men who are weak-minded by nature are rendered incurably so by education—a missionary college—the opposition offered was of an utterly worthless character. For the strongest argument this rev. gentleman could bring against Secularism was that it had no doctrine of immortality; that Secularists didn't even know there was a hell for them to go to. Poor things! His other arguments were of an equally strong description. Roman Catholicism was not Christianity, because *he had been in Rome and had seen it*; the New Testament encouraged medical science, because *he had trained two of his sons as doctors*; Atheism had worshipped a prostitute during the French Revolution, etc., etc. Surely one need feel little surprise at the behaviour of the rank and file when such as these are the leaders.

Opposition of a different kind met me at Deptford on June 21. The bulk of our opponents in the open are, as I have said, either impudent or ignorant. There is one fellow here by the name of Seach, who presents us with an admirable blend of both types, and he is supported by a gang in every way suited to him. After the lecture a series of interruptions began. I went for the crowd—vocally; the crowd went for me—physically. Result: in the crush the platform, not a very strong one, disappeared. I have arranged to be at Deptford on Sunday evening again; and, although I have had to cancel another engagement to do this, still I hope that my friends will see the necessity of vindicating our position, and forgive the re-arrangement.

Since the row occurred I have received many letters of sympathy, with promises of support and expressions of contempt at the outrage; and not the least pleasing feature about them is that some emanate from Christians. The Deptford Secularists are making a gallant stand in a not very inviting locality, and they deserve the support of all who can conveniently attend.

Let me, in conclusion, reiterate my sense of the immense importance of the open-air work in London. The outdoor propaganda has been, and will continue to be for some time to come, the chief recruiting ground for the Secular party. Of the thousands who frequent our parks, a large number—the majority probably—are nothingarians, and it is from this class that we may hope for most. The zealous Christian is rarely converted, or, at least, only after a long probation; it is the man whose mind has ceased to be influenced by religious beliefs who will be caught by a passing discourse that may turn his mind finally in the right direction. For these reasons I would urge all Freethinkers to give our open-air stations all the support in their power,

both moral and financial. Their presence at meetings will not only give encouragement to those who are carrying on the work, but will act as a check upon that class of believers to whom an unsupported Secular platform is always an opportunity for creating a disturbance.

C. COHEN.

BICYCLES AND RELIGION.

LET no one be surprised if I consider the subject of the influence of the bicycle on religion worthy investigation. The interaction of things, apparently remote, offers a wide field to the philosophic mind. The biological law of the adaptation of an organism to its environment extends to every department of anthropology and sociology, and the introduction of one new factor may result in a gradual alteration of the whole conditions of life, the thoughts of the inner man being modified by external conditions. The physician, mentioned by Emerson, who "used to affirm that if there was disease in the liver the man became a Calvinist, and if that organ was sound he became a Unitarian," had a deal to say for himself. Whately noticed that the belief in ghosts and witches went down before steam-engines. Intercommunication has been the means of education, and the superstitious remain only in places where the steam-engine has not penetrated. Logically, as that cute divine, the Rev. Joseph Glanvil, showed in his *Saduceismus Triumphatus*, the whole of theology is bound up with the belief in good and evil spirits, and in destroying the belief in witchcraft the steam-engine may be said to have undermined all belief in the supernatural. The modifications introduced into theology may thus be traced to Watt and Stephenson as well as to Hume, Paine, and Voltaire. Some similar, if minor, results may be expected from the bicycle.

The bicycle has come to stay. There is no mistake about that. What, then, are its psychological effects? Among the most certain of these we may place an increased sense of power and of self-reliance. This, in itself, is anti-theological, for theology is founded on the sense of human helplessness. Then it forms habits of care in conduct and easy-going costume. No amount of preaching could do so much for rational dress, for men as well as women, as the bicycle. The bike is an enemy to idle and frivolous nonsense. Already cigar makers and trinket manufacturers are finding that people save their money to buy an improved means of health and power.

The bicycle enables the worker's one day of rest to be utilised. Sunday is no longer the day of gloom it was to our forefathers. The wheel brings the country nearer, and gives an improved opportunity of learning the beauties of the land we live in. No gorgeous Ritualism can vie with the fields and flowers. No attractive Church service can hold a candle against sunlight and sweet scenery, and so the bicycle, even in Sabbatarian Scotland, is becoming the great agency for rationalizing the day which the men of God have claimed for their master—that is to say, for themselves.

The sky-pilots are beginning to discover the influence of the bicycle in making a rational Sunday, and are in many places holding special services for cyclists, with care of their cycles in a porch or vestry. "Have your bikes, since you must," they cry; "but do come to church for an hour on Sunday." Well, the cyclist may look in for a rest, but such church-going must be a mere incidental, very unlike the important duty it was held to be of old, and the preacher will have to be a very attractive one who can keep young men and women who can soon put a smart distance between themselves and the House of God. The goddess Nature, when she has a fair chance, will always hold her own against the God of revelation, who is all very well in a shower, but otherwise little attractive.

A. WHEELER.

A clergyman once undertook duty for a preacher, the chief feature of whose sermons was their tediousness. The visitor apologized one Sunday to the clerk of the vestry, when the service was over, for the shortness of his sermon, as a dog had been in his study and tore out some of the pages. "Oh, sir," said the clerk, with a gleam of hope illuminating his sad face, "do you think that you could spare our vicar a pup?"

BLACKBALLING INGERSOLL.

BECAUSE of his religious views, the Ardsley Casino Club "hung up" the name of Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll, who was proposed for membership.

The Ardsley Casino is one of the most "swagger" clubs in the summer resorts around New York. The magnificent club-house is in a beautiful park of two hundred acres overlooking the Hudson at Ardsley, midway between Dobbs Ferry and Irvington. The great park, shaded by thousands of giant trees, is enclosed by a high granite wall, and there is a stone lodge, and a lodge-keeper at the main gate. The membership—well, the membership includes that portion of New York's Four Hundred which reside along the Hudson, between Yonkers and Sing Sing, in the summer-time.

Colonel Ingersoll was seen at his summer home, near the village of Dobbs Ferry, by a reporter.

"Were you one of the gentlemen who signed the original prospectus for the Casino?" he was asked.

Colonel Ingersoll paused a moment, and then replied: "Some time last year Mr. A. L. Barber asked me to sign a paper for the purpose of organizing a Casino Club, and also asked me to subscribe for some of the stock. I subscribed for \$1,000, payable when called for. Some months afterwards I received a notice asking me to pay one-half of my subscription. I sent a cheque for \$500. Last winter I was away from home most of the time. In my absence the cheque was returned, with the statement that my name had been proposed for membership, but that there was no second. Afterwards I was informed that some action was taken by the governing committee, so that I did obtain a second; and, so far as I know, the matter there rests. I never asked to be a member, never asked anybody to propose my name, and never said a word on the subject to anybody.

"I have also been informed that some of the committee objected to me on account of my views about orthodoxy. If it is true, I find no fault. These gentlemen, being Christians, have simply acted in accordance with their creed or creeds.

"I should have said nothing except for the reason that a reporter showed me a statement purporting to have been made by a member of the club, and the statement was not true."

The statement referred to by Colonel Ingersoll was not made by a member of the club, but by the manager or chief accountant. It was to the effect that Colonel Ingersoll's name had been withdrawn simultaneously with the names of numerous other gentlemen because the governing board could not say when the club house, which was greatly delayed in building, would be opened.

Walston H. Brown, son-in-law of Colonel Ingersoll, was elected a member a few weeks ago as a sort of peace-offering, but he is now anxious to resign. The *Herald* reports a member as saying that the women were the more vociferous objectors to Ingersoll's candidacy. C. P. Farrell, Colonel Ingersoll's brother-in-law, is authority for the statement that the Colonel is not losing a wink of sleep over the matter, and doesn't care whether he becomes a member or not.

—*Truthseeker (New York)*

ACID DROPS.

SEVENTY or eighty "Ransomers" started on Tuesday morning from Holborn Viaduct station for Canterbury, where they attended a service conducted by Cardinal Vaughan's brother. They knelt at the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket, the blessed martyr, and prayed for the conversion of England to the Catholic religion. We reckon it will take a long time to get that prayer answered.

The Abbé Validier has settled the hash of Mdlle. Couédon, who pretends to have interviews with the Angel Gabriel. Visiting the lady, he was told that he could put questions to the Angel, and he began his interrogations in Latin. "I beg your pardon," said the lady, "but if you speak Latin, the Angel does not understand." The Abbé asked if Gabriel could see inside a box, and was told Yes. Pointing to a box he carried under his arm, the Abbé asked what would happen if it contained a consecrated Host, and was told: "Oh, then, the Angel would go down on his knees and pray." "Then," said the Abbé, solemnly, "the Angel must know whether or not I have a Host in this box." Thereupon the lady fell on her knees, and exclaimed: "He knows the Host is in the box; he sees it, and adores it." But there was no Host in the box after all, and the Abbé denounced her as an impostor.

The Christian Cycle Club, Boston, pledges its members not to ride on Sunday to attend meets, runs, or races, nor

in any way to interfere with their "personal religious observance of the Lord's Day." This will leave the roads clearer for the less superstitious cyclists.

Mrs. Tingley and seven other American Theosophists have commenced their European crusade, or rather picnic. We may now expect to hear something authoritative about the "Master's seal." The crusaders complain that Theosophy is misrepresented in the public press, and announce their intention of "laying bare the true meaning of the doctrine." This is a curious exchange of parts in the comedy as hitherto played. It was humbly supposed that all the laying bare had been done by the press, and all the representation and misrepresentation by one or other of the rival societies themselves.

Theosophy is made up of the following ingredients: About two parts Asiatic mysticism, two parts debased Christianity, one part crude metaphysics, and ninety-five parts of pure twaddle and vapid nonsense.

"What course is it judicious to take at a Spiritualistic séance?" Answer: "Try to hit the happy medium." The recent exposures of Goddard, Mrs. Dawson, and other materializing "mejums," indicate that this is the way to get at the bottom facts.

The Rev. Zackary Sweeney, like many other little one-horse preachers, wants to debate with Ingersoll. The Colonel does not run at such invitations, but Mr. W. H. Lamaster offered to be his man. The man of God replied that he had not "crossed the orb of affairs" compared with Ingersoll. Whereupon Brother Charles Chilton Moore says he does not suppose Ingersoll has ever heard of Sweeney. "You may ask," says the heathen editor of the *Blue Grass Blade*, "What's in a name; a shunk by any other name would smell as sweet? but, say what you will, there is something in human nomenclature that instinctively tells us that a man named Zack. Sweeney could not be much." Brother Moore offers the Rev. Zack. choice of oral or written discussion with himself.

"As Science Advances, does Atheism Increase?" This question was answered editorially in the last number of *Pearson's Weekly*. The editor says that "Agnosticism probably does increase with the advance of science," but "a rigid line should be drawn between Agnosticism and Atheism." We should like to see that rigid line. It is clear enough to us that Agnosticism is mostly a new and more fashionable name for the old Atheism. We fail to perceive any substantial difference between them. What difference there is is chiefly one of attitude and temper.

Pearson's Weekly says that science cannot go beyond the laws of physical causation, beyond which there lies a *terra incognita*—that is, an unknown land, in which is included "all the spiritual part of man's nature." But the very shore of that unknown land has never been touched, to human knowledge, by any explorer. Its very existence is a matter of conjecture. People may dream what they like about it, but nobody knows. Perhaps nobody will ever know. Perhaps there is nothing to know.

The gentleman who answers that question in *Pearson's Weekly* soon gets out of his depth. He talks about "a guiding hand that established the law which science can only demonstrate." Whenever will the Christians drop this nonsense about "law"? They imagine that three letters must form the same word with the same meaning. But "a law of nature" is a metaphorical expression. It really means the methods of nature, the way in which things happen, the order of the concomitance or succession of phenomena. That is the only sense in which "a law of nature" is understood by scientists.

"Science is not Atheistic," says this writer, "since it recognises the existence of a God, no matter by what name the deity is called." But science neither recognises nor denies God. And surely it is curious that any name will do; even the Unknowable, or even a Sort of a Something. To use an American expression, God is getting too thin to last.

The report of another extraordinary murder trial from Russia shows how rankly superstitious are some of the beliefs still prevalent among the Russian peasantry. Two peasants, who had taken to dishonest practices, fell back upon an ancient belief that, if traced, they could render themselves invisible by holding a lighted taper or candle composed of human tallow. To obtain these ghastly lights, the two thieves waylaid and murdered a young villager of eighteen years of age. They disembowelled the body, and carried away the intestines and other fatty organs. While melting these down in their lodgings, they were surprised by their landlady, who communicated with the police. The

culprits were arrested, and quite frankly and callously confessed to their crime and its object.

In the good old Bible days the Lord pelted the Amorites with stones from heaven. He has woke up to some of his old tricks in Southern Russia, where hailstones have killed a number of children, besides wounding cattle and injuring the crops. He doeth all things well.

At the inaugural luncheon of the show of the East Kent Agricultural Society at Ramsgate, Canon Whitehead, with an absolute disregard for the Nonconformist conscience, toasted the Prince of Wales as a downright good sportsman. "Long might His Royal Highness live; many years might he exhibit in these shows; many prizes might he get; many thousand guineas might he pocket; many Derbys might he win."

Rev. Francis Herman, pastor of the Scandinavian Church at Salt Lake City, has not yet been apprehended. It is now considered certain that he is the murderer of Miss Henrietta Clawson. Two of her false teeth have been found in the ashes in the grate in the basement of the church, where the body is supposed to have been burnt. A pair of overalls stained with blood have also been discovered.

There is a church without a bell behind a certain railway station in the south-west of Scotland. Boys from the Grammar School sometimes do their lessons in the station waiting-room, and the following couplet was found inscribed on the back of a text-book picked up there:—

A church may thrive without a bell,
But down it comes without a hell.

Cardinal Vaughan is charmed with the Pope's encyclical. He advises the Catholics to keep straight on. Many clergymen of the Church of England are as near to Rome as possible already. In some churches, the Cardinal says, it is long before you can distinguish whether you are in a Catholic church or a Protestant church which calls itself Anglo-Catholic.

The Bishop of Mashonaland has been far away from his diocese during the recent troubles, and has been twitted with preferring safety and comfort in England. This insinuation prompts him to explain, in a letter to the *Westminster Gazette*, that he is over here trying to raise a minimum sum of £15,000. When he has obtained the cash he will go out to South Africa and attend to his duties there—by which time the troubles will be ended and the Bishop will be in clover.

A story is told of pious old President Kruger, which, if true, shows that he combines trust in God with keeping his powder dry. Long ago, the story runs, there was a famine in the Transvaal, and Kruger retired into the bush to pray for succor. He prayed hard, and on returning he prophesied that in three days' time a large herd of hartebeeste would pass that way. They did, and Kruger became the popular hero of the godly Dutchmen. It appears, however, that he did not really go into the bush to pray. He made for a Kaffir kraal, and told the headmen that they would all be shot if they did not discover game in three days. The frightened natives went and found the game, and drove it towards the Boer camp. Which explains the miracle.

A new code of instructions has been addressed from the Vatican to the Archbishops and Bishops in Hungary, which, though at a first glance bearing only upon religious questions, is really a political document. The clergy are instructed to continue untiringly their agitation against the new Church laws, and the Bishops are told to see that the clergy throughout the country do not adopt national principles, but obey the laws of the Church in all the departments of their lives. That is, the Church must be put above the State, and the marriage laws disregarded. But the day is past for ruling Hungary from Rome.

The Lord Bishop of Ely has had a hit at the anti-Gambling League. He publicly stated that he could not see any harm in card-playing and betting, so long as those who took part in it could afford to do so. Yet he would probably object to his servants tossing for halfpence.

Napoleon, when in want of cash, promised to restore the Jews to Jerusalem. The restoration did not come off. There have since been many attempts to found a Jewish State in Palestine, but it has been far more in evidence that a good deal of cash is required to set up the State than that the Jews of Paris, Vienna, New York, Hamburg, Frankfurt, and London want to go there. They are quite willing that the persecuted Jews of Russia and Poland shall return to the land of their fathers.

In an Adelaide suburb the Wesleyans erected an imposing edifice, and dedicated it "to the glory of God." Shortly

afterwards the Anglicans ran up a small wooden mission-hall right opposite the front door of the other place, and inscribed over the door: "Erected to the greater glory of God."

Rev. Alexander Rattray, of Parkhead, Glasgow, complains in *Eastern Bells* of the "manifest and ominous signs of a rapidly declining interest in spiritual matters." We hope the reverend gentleman will have continued cause for complaint. He says that we are approaching a great religious crisis. No doubt. And it will be a bad time afterwards for the gentlemen of Mr. Rattray's profession.

Our good old friend, the sea-serpent, has turned up again. Probably the hot weather has brought on the silly season early. It used to begin in August.

This time the sea-serpent has been seen by a "jolly salt" of Swansea, who relates his experience in the *Cambria Daily Leader*. The monster was ninety feet long, and carried its head fourteen or fifteen feet out of the water. Of course its mouth appeared "ferocious." But somehow it never makes a meal of anybody. The sea-serpent is always seen at a convenient distance—just far enough off to stimulate the imagination of born liars. Still, many people believe in its existence. They have faith enough to swallow any number of sea-serpents after digesting Jonah's whale and Balaam's talking jackass.

A correspondent writes: "There is one statement mentioned in Mr. Joseph Collinson's book on *What it Costs to be Vaccinated* (*Freethinker*, June 21) which, if true, will be a revelation to many of the 'true inwardness' of the vaccination cult. I say 'if true,' not because I wish to cast a doubt upon it, but because it is almost incredible that anyone would express the views here attributed to a nineteenth-century Englishman. He says that a well-known medical man, whose name is mentioned, suggests 'that anti-vaccinists who publicly speak or write against the practice of vaccination should be prosecuted as criminals,' and also advocates 'the refusal of free education to unvaccinated children, and the prosecution of employers of labor who give work to any but revaccinated persons!' The most advanced supporters of vaccination, like the upholders of Church dogmas in the past, would, if they could, force their medical creed down the throats of the public. What have those who are enjoying the fruits of past struggles for religious freedom to say to this new excommunication?"

The clerical party still holds sway in Belgium. Some seats have changed occupants in the recent elections, but the balance of parties remains unaltered. Unless the extreme Radicals and Socialists act a little more with the Moderates, they will leave Belgium permanently in the hands of the Catholics.

At a recent Sunday morning service in Rochester cathedral Canon Cheyne, in reading the first lesson, omitted certain passages, which he, apparently, considered as not tending to edification. It fell to Dean Hole to read the second lesson, but before commencing he gravely read out the passages omitted from the first lesson by the Canon.

About the first use to which the new Church House has been put has been to hold a meeting asking for relief to the owners of tithe-rent charge and other clerical property. These godly cormorants are insatiable. Their truest devotions are always offered to the trinity of £ s. d.

Sir J. W. Dawson uttered a heap of twaddle at the Mildmay Conference about the reconciliation of science and faith. Nevertheless, he said, "scientific men did find difficulties from intolerance, from errors in matters of fact, and from charges made against them sometimes by ministers in the pulpit. There were also many misrepresentations and misunderstandings. For instance, the Bible seemed to have committed itself to the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, but this was due to a mistranslated word." The word "firmament" should be rendered "expanse," and he regretted the revisers of the Bible had not had the courage to use it, but had relegated it to the margin. It is very convenient when anything is wrong to put it down to a mistranslation. But how about the myriads whom the alleged mistranslation deceived? Had they got the real "word of God"?

At Mizabich, in the Russian Government of Kieff, a military officer, who was thrashing a peasant, was restrained by a Jewish tavern-keeper, in whose house the assault occurred. The officer took his revenge by ordering a body of troops under him to attack the man's co-religionists. Houses and shops were broken into and wrecked, women outraged, and several persons killed. This sort of Christian treatment of the decideds has been going on through the ages.

The Rev. John Seller, of Dalton-le-Dale, appeared at the

Sunderland Bankruptcy Court, last week, to undergo his public examination. In reply to the Official Receiver, he said he had gone into his affairs two years ago, and found his accounts £1,370 on the wrong side. His indebtedness was now £1,208. The man of God had got into the hands of some of God's own people in the money-lending line.

The Rev. F. Haydn Williams, minister of Flowergate Old Chapel, Whitby, seems to be a very irascible man of God. Some boys shouted at him while delivering an address, and one threw a stone. He immediately collared the boy, took him to his house, and struck him on the back with his walking-stick, causing a bruise. He was fined £2 10s. and costs for the assault.

The *Leeds Mercury* is silly enough to print a begging letter on behalf of W. R. Bradlaugh, who boasts of having been "instrumental in closing the notorious Hall of Science." Our readers know the absolute falsehood of this statement. But any lie about Secularism finds an easy circulation in journals favorable to Christianity.

Mrs. Lomnitz, of New York City, is alleged to have become insane on the subject of Christian Science, in consequence of which she neglects her home in order to preach that doctrine. Her husband, Edward J. Lomnitz, who is a Freethinker, claims a divorce on this ground. We shall look out for the result of this action.

Bishop Whittle, of Dakota, remarks the *Christian Register*, says the Indian is proverbially honest, unless demoralized by drink—sold to him by Christians. In thirty-seven years' experience the Bishop never knew an Indian tell a lie. He once asked an Indian if it was safe to leave property in his wigwam while making a distant journey. The Indian laughed, and said: "Quite safe; there isn't a white man within a hundred miles of you."

Frank Cable, Protestant lecturer, who made fun of Roman Catholic "Holy Oil" in Hyde Park, and had to appear before Mr. Hannay, the magistrate at Marlborough-street Police-court, sends us a printed circular in which he states that he will henceforth lecture every Sunday at Battersea Park Gates. Frank Cable has our sympathy up to a certain point. We are at one with him in ridiculing "Holy Oil," especially when it turns out on analysis to be merely water. But the Protestants have holy water for christening, holy days for divine service, holy buildings for worshipping in, and holy men to preach from pulpits. Why all this fuss about one "holy"? Why should the Protestant dozen quarrel with the Catholic thirteen?

The *Daily Mail* gloats over the new regulations for Hyde Park and the other Royal Parks in London. It rejoices to think that "the cold vitreous-eyed Secularist, with his deadly batteries from the arsenals of Foote and Ingersoll," will no longer amuse the ribald crowd. But is not this a little too previous? There is nothing in the new regulations about "lectures," and if there is any attempt to bring lectures under the head of "performances" we shall probably have to test the question in a very practical way.

Harry Long (says the *Glasgow Evening News*) was keeping the crowd in excellent humor at the Green the other afternoon, and getting rid of his pamphlets in good style as well as his jokes. "Here," he cried, "is my famous debate with that great infidel, Foote, on the origin of man. Foote, gentlemen, as you know, was the best man, the strongest and most talented man the infidels could put forward, and I met and—What's that the gentleman says?" A man in the crowd remarked: "He wisna the strongest man we had by a long chalk." "Oh, wasn't he?" rejoined Mr. Long, sarcastically. "Then perhaps you can name somebody who was his equal? Just one. Come on, sir, mention Foote's equal. Oh, don't be bashful," and the Green orator smiled roguishly at the crowd. No name being mentioned by the timid disputant, Mr. Long turned solemnly and triumphantly to his auditors and shouted: "I ask the gentleman to mention one infidel equal to Foote as a debater, and lo! he gets an attack of lockjaw!" Haw! haw! haw! roared the crowd, and the pamphlets went like hot cakes.

Godliness is still very morose in some parts of Scotland. A Glasgow paper gives an account of a recent row in "a certain parish church on the west coast of Ross-shire." The minister refused the Communion to a young lady who had committed the abominable crime of attending a ball. This led to a scene, in which the man of God clenched his fist, shook it in the lady's face, and called her a liar. The Lord's anointed are an irascible lot when you touch their sore places.

John George Horspool, a local preacher, has been brought before the Borough Bench at Basingstoke on a charge of forgery. Of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

July 12, Camberwell.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—July 12, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road, London, W. 26, Camberwell. August 2 and 9, Camberwell. August 16 and 23, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court Road, London, W.—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.

L. J. B.—The prophecy is partly fulfilled in Christ, because the Life of Christ in the Gospels is an ideal one, largely made up from prophetic elements, as is admirably shown by Strauss. You will find this the key to the mystery which seems to perplex you.

A. B. FORRESTER.—Thanks. See paragraph.

MARY FERGUSON.—It is a local matter, which must be settled in Glasgow. You say you have not been a member of the N.S.S., and on what ground but that of your membership could the President of the N.S.S. claim any right to interfere?

J. COCHRAN.—Thanks for cuttings.

D. MCINTYRE.—(1) We are tired of correcting Christian falsehoods. The Hall of Science has not been acquired by the Salvation Army, and the Freethought movement did not die with Mr. Bradlaugh. (2) Golgotha, the place of skulls, is supposed to have been just outside Jerusalem. We do not understand your question about the Epistle to the Ephesians.

J. HAYES.—Such letters in the local newspapers are of real service to the cause.

F. J. BOORMAN.—Your last week's Lecture Notice, not being so marked on the envelope, was sent on to the editor in the country.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURE SCHEME.—E. L., £1.

N. S. S. BENEVOLENT FUND.—W. C., Dorking, subscription to Midsummer, £1.

M. LOAFER.—Your letter arrived too late for our last issue. We regret to hear of the disturbance at Mr. Cohen's lecture at Deptford, and hope the local Freethinkers will all attend and support him to-day (July 12).

J. NEIL.—Thanks. See paragraph.

R. W. HEARNDEN.—Mr. Forder may be able to procure it for you. Apply to him direct, at 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C. The book has long been out of print.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Post—Daily Mail—Leeds Mercury—Liberty—Cape Argus—Lucifer—Liberator—Vegetarian—Two Worlds—Vegetarian Messenger—Progressive Thinker—Federalist—Christian Herald—North Cambridgeshire Echo—Eastern Bells—St. Albans' Clock Tower—Boston Investigator—Middlesex County Times—De Dageraad—Islington Gazette—Kokstad Advertiser—Echo—North Eastern Daily Gazette—New York Public Opinion—Isle of Man Times—Newcastle Evening Chronicle—Critic—Nya Sanningar—Humanity—Truthseeker—Reading Observer.

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.

How to Help Us.

- (1) Get your newspaper 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.

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.)

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(91 Mildmay Park, N.)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:—

Per Miss Vance: W. Westwell, £5; C. B., £1; J. E. T., 10s.; Mr. and Mrs. John Samson, £1; T. Dunbar, 2s. 6d.; Lux, £1 G. Kersley, 1s. 6d.; J. McGlashan, £1.

Per G. Anderson: Mrs. Mensbier, £2.

Per C. Watts: W. Bailey, £1 1s.; A. J. Hooper, 1s.

Per R. Forder: J. Kennedy, £1.

SUGAR PLUMS.

FOR a summer audience it was a very good one that assembled at Camberwell Secular Hall on Sunday evening, when Mr. Foote lectured on "The Bible as a School Book." The audience was as enthusiastic as the weather was magnificent—too magnificent for indoor meetings. This evening (July 12) Mr. Foote lectures again from the same platform, on "Secular Salvation."

The Camberwell Branch is having splendid open-air meetings at Station-road and Peckham Rye.

Mr. Foote's debate with the Rev. A. J. Waldron is fixed to take place in the Secular Hall, Camberwell, on Thursdays, August 6 and 13, the subject for discussion being "Christianity or Secularism: Which is the Better System?" Mr. Charles Watts takes the chair the first night, and the Rev. Mr. Jephson, of the London School Board, the second night. The debate is looked forward to with great interest in South London, and very crowded audiences are expected.

Mr. Foote's debates with the Rev. W. T. Lee, of Cardiff, are arranged as follows: At Swansea, July 21 and 22, on "Christianity or Secularism: Which is the Better for Man?" at Cardiff, July 28 and 29, on "Did Jesus Christ Rise from the Dead?" While Mr. Foote is at Swansea and Cardiff he will be glad to have an interview with the local Freethinkers, with a view to forming Branches of the National Secular Society. Perhaps some of them will communicate with him in the meantime.

Mr. Charles Watts lectures this evening, Sunday, July 12, at the Athenæum Hall, 73, Tottenham Court-road. His subject is: "What Secularists Believe, and What they Cannot Believe." Previous to the lecture Mr. John Glendinning will give a dramatic recital. Mr. Glendinning, who has just returned from America, is one of our leading emotional actors, and we can guarantee those present at the Athenæum Hall next Sunday night a dramatic treat. We ask our friends to muster in good force upon that occasion, and give Mr. Glendinning a hearty welcome. He is the son of the well-known Secularist of Huddersfield.

The first of a series of N.S.S. outdoor Freethought Demonstrations will take place this afternoon (July 12) at 3.30 in Hyde Park. Mr. G. W. Foote and Mr. Charles Watts

will both attend and speak. Application has been made to the Commissioners for leave to introduce a van to serve as a platform. It will probably be granted, but a formal permit has not arrived up to the time of our going to press. London Freethinkers should turn out in strong force, and bring some of their Christian friends with them. If they go to the usual meeting ground near the Marble Arch, they will find our speakers there, or else a notice that they have gone on to the Reformers' Tree, where meetings must take place when vans are introduced.

Mr. Cohen, who is delivering open-air lectures in London under Mr. Foote's Lecture Scheme during the summer, speaks to-day (July 12) at Deptford Broadway, and in view of the disorder caused by bigots a fortnight ago we beg the local Freethinkers to rally around the platform and support the lecturer.

Mr. Cohen's remuneration for his work—not a great sum, but just a living wage—is guaranteed by Mr. Foote. On the other hand, the branches for whom Mr. Cohen lectures are expected to send in the collection to Miss Vance, to help make up the required amount. Up to the present, however, the branches have been very lax in this matter. Several of them have not remitted at all. This is most regrettable. Mr. Foote's responsibilities in connection with the Lecture Scheme at present amount to several pounds per week, and little is being contributed in this dull season of the year by subscribers.

The Annual Excursion, under the auspices of the N.S.S. Executive, has had to be postponed. The trip to Margate, advertised for July 19, is definitely abandoned. The Railway Company wanted to fix the starting time at Holborn and Victoria at 8.30, and owing to the conditions of street traffic in London on Sunday morning it is impossible for excursionists to arrive from all parts of London at that hour. The minimum cost of a special train is £60, and in the circumstances it would have been madness to face such a responsibility. Besides, it was clearly stated at the opening of negotiations that our party could not possibly start before 9, and that a quarter or half an hour later would be a distinct advantage.

The N.S.S. Executive will determine at its next meeting what arrangements can be made for a trip in August. Those who have purchased tickets for July 17 can have their money returned by applying to Miss Vance, at 28 Stonecutter-street, or to the Branch secretary, as the case may be.

Mr. Munns, of the Terrace Hotel, Margate, will be disappointed at not meeting our party on July 19, as we shall be disappointed at not seeing his genial countenance. Mr. Munns was trying to arrange for a Freethought demonstration on the sands. However, that idea will keep. The sands won't run away, and the London Freethinkers won't all get buried immediately. We will have that demonstration yet, and drink Mr. Munns' health in flowing cups of his best tea.

Mr. Arthur B. Moss is engaged to lecture at Blackburn in the open air on July 27 and 28; on the 29th he lectures at Rochdale, and on the 30th at Todmorden. He would be glad to lecture in Yorkshire on Friday, July 31, and Saturday, August 1, under Mr. Foote's scheme. He is also open to lecture on Sunday, July 26, and Sunday, August 2.

The Finsbury Park and Islington Branches desire to remind those who enjoy mild revelry that to-day will take place the garden-party they have arranged at The Nook, 19, Alwyne-road, Canonbury. Tea at 5; other attractions, trees, flowers, and music. In the event of rain the scene of the *réunion* will be the Bradlaugh Club and Institute.

Voltaire de Cleyre is a fine-looking young lady, whose portrait adorns the June number of the *Freethought Magazine* of Chicago. She contributes a good paper on "Mary Wollstonecraft"; Mr. H. C. Wycliff writes like a reformer on "The Evolution of Religious Belief"; and Mr. C. C. Millard on "Realism versus Idealism." Both the veteran Lucy N. Colman and the talented young Freethinker, Helen H. Gardener, write on "The Woman's Bible."

Some time ago we stated, after reading the full report of the peace negotiations between the Marquis Ho, on behalf of Japan, and Li-Hung-Chang, on behalf of China, that we did not think that Europe had, even in Bismarck, a statesman who was superior in shrewdness or patriotism to either of these heathen. We knew the Chinese, as a Confucian, was virtually a Secularist, and it now appears that the Marquis Ho is, like so many educated Japs, a thorough Freethinker.

A correspondent of the *Daily News* (July 2) relates an interview which he had with this remarkable man, to whom

it is largely due that Japan is the most progressive nation in the world. He asked if the undermining of religion did not weaken national life. The Marquis slowly smiled as he answered: "I think most of the educated Japanese prefer to live by reason, science, and the evidence of their senses. I have secured absolute toleration for all religions, and, to a certain extent, I would encourage a spirit of religion; but I regard religion itself as quite unnecessary for a nation's life. Science is far above superstition; and what is any religion, Buddhism or Christianity, but superstition, and, therefore, a possible source of weakness to a nation?"

The Marquis Ho holds with Bacon that Atheism never did perturb States. He said, in so many words: "I do not regret the tendency to Freethought and Atheism which is almost universal in Japan, because I do not regard it as a source of danger to the community; so long as they are educated they will be moral, and Shintoism, which for centuries has been the religion of the upper classes, has always taught that right living will secure the protection of the gods without prayer to them."

Mr. Symes reprints in the *Liberator* Mr. Wheeler's article on "Saint Buddha," and adds the following interesting note: "The story of Barlaam and Josaphat must have been popular among the Methodists at one time. I remember my mother's uncle, a Methodist layman, was a great reader, and possessed a splendid library. He was fond, too, of copying out extracts to pass his time in old age, and wrote a good hand. I well remember reading, some eight or ten years after his death (say, forty years ago), the life of Barlaam and Josaphat in his handwriting. Of course the good man had no suspicion that the tale was a Buddhistic one! Still, it edified him all the same."

The St. Alban's *Clock Tower* prints a letter by J. J. Hayes, *apropos* of Cardinal Vaughan's sermon, denying that the supernatural has ever done anything for suffering humanity. Prayer was no good when the *Drummond Castle* went down, but "had there been a raft bridge to the vessel, probably all would have been saved."

We see from the *Kokstad Advertiser* (South Africa) that Mr. E. H. Horton has affirmed, instead of swearing, in the Circuit Court. As it was reported that he was "allowed" to do so, Mr. Horton states that there was no allowance in the matter. He exercised a right given to him by the laws of Cape Colony.

Mr. A. B. Moss, who is very active on Sundays in open-air work in London, reports two capital meetings last Sunday—at Hyde Park in the afternoon, and at Kilburn in the evening.

Miss Vance's report of the last N.S.S. Executive meeting is unusually lengthy, and is unavoidably held over till next week. It includes the list of attendances of vice-presidents and branch delegates during the past year, as ordered to be published by the Glasgow Conference. One part of the report must be referred to at once. The Executive decided to print a general lecture-list for all the open-air stations in London for August. Sunday or other fixtures for that month should be sent in to Miss Vance by July 18 without fail.

The New York *Truthseeker* "congratulates the English Secularists on the eighth election of George William Foote to the Presidency of the National Secular Society. When the best man for a place is found and duly installed, it is the part of wisdom to keep him there. We trust that Mr. Foote appreciates the honor done him, and that he also will accept our felicitations." The *Truthseeker* gives a long extract from our report of the Glasgow Conference.

A Cute Minister.

Among the crowd who waited the opening of the pit door of the Royal on the *Merchant of Venice* night was a minister with his collar up to hide his white choker. "Is this the entrance to the pit stalls?" he asked. "No, the pit." "Well, what's the price here?" "Half-a-crown." "Ah, this is the place for me, then," he replied, addressing the crowd. "Would you mind letting me up to the front?" he next asked a big man beside him; "there are some ladies up there I want to get to." "Certainly," said the man, and let him pass. The parson, who was about as fat as a razor edge-wise, slid through the crowd like a weasel and got right up to the door, where he stopped to breathe. There were no ladies there; he had simply told a lie to gain a trifling advantage, and the big man who let him pass was sorely tempted to drag him to the outside of the crowd, and reason with him *a la allee*. Neither did the minister meet any ladies in the theatre; he sat alone the whole performance. Perhaps it was a white lie, like the upturned collar of his coat.—*Glasgow Evening News*.

THIS IS NOT A SUNDAY-SCHOOL STORY.

IN all the millions and billions of prayers that have been made, to which number, publicly and privately, I have contributed largely, there is no evidence that any prayer was ever answered. Just as in the thousands of dreams of the night some dreams must "come true," according to the law of chance—which is just as truly a law as the law of gravity—so, with all the prayers that are made, it would be a miracle if none of them were ever "answered"; but the result would be precisely the same if Christians prayed to a wooded god, or to the Devil.

The educated Christian clergy all know this, and they were not willing to risk an exposure of the inutility of prayer by putting it to a test when Professor Tyndall proposed it to them. The rascals pretended to amuse themselves immensely, or to be righteously indignant, as they thought best served their purposes; but they all declined to try it on, all the same, though there is express instruction in the Bible to "try God and see if prayer to him amounts to anything."

The story that I am going to give comes straight from the mother alluded to:—

There are a man and his wife who have a daughter. The man is a most devout religionist—one who daily gets down on his knees and prays to God, and who does all that he can to advance the cause of one of the most orthodox of churches. The woman has evolved no little; reads the *Blue Grass Blade* and inclines to stand in with the "new woman." They have a daughter, now matured into a splendid specimen of physical, moral, and intellectual beauty, who has distinguished herself as an adept in calisthenics.

When this daughter was a little child, the leaders in one of her ankles were so contracted that her foot was drawn out of its natural position, and it seemed that, in spite of all motherly care, that child would grow up crippled and deformed. The child early appreciated the disadvantage to which she seemed to be destined, and went to her father to ask about it. He explained to the child that there was a God who answered the prayers of those who asked him for what they wanted, and the father told his daughter that, if she would pray to God to straighten her foot, God would do it. It was at night, and the child, believing that her father knew, and would tell her the truth, went and knelt down at her bedside and prayed that God would straighten her foot during the night, and then got in her bed and went to sleep. In the morning, the first thing when she awoke she stuck out her bent foot and said, with a face expressive of deepest disappointment: "Papa, God hasn't straightened my foot at all."

Then the mother undertook the case, and she said she would have that child's foot straightened if it could be done. She did not tell the little girl to pray to God about it, and it is not in evidence that the mother did any praying about it.

She found a distinguished surgeon off in a city in another State, and, though they were pressed for money, she went to him several times with her child, and she worked and did what he told her, and I saw that child when, as a young woman graduate at a college, in short calisthenic skirts, she led the troupe of school-girl beauties, she being the prettiest and most graceful in the group, with not even a suspicion of deformity in her foot.

And this is the difference between Christian praying and rational working.

—*Blue Grass Blade*.

Priests.

Priests may justly be regarded as an invention of a timorous and abject superstition, which, ever diffident of itself, dares not offer up its own devotions, but ignorantly thinks to recommend itself to the divinity by the mediation of his supposed friends and servants.—*David Hume*.

SURVIVAL IN LANGUAGE OF EARLIER BELIEFS.—Among all the relics of barbaric religion which surround us, few are more striking than the phrases which recognise as a deity the living sky, as "Heaven forgive me!" "The vengeance of heaven will overtake him."—*Dr. E. B. Tylor, "Anthropology," p. 359.*

JERUSALEM THE GOLDEN.

JERUSALEM, before the invention of gunpowder, was easily fortified and defended, since nature had done more in that direction than human ingenuity could do. On the east the gulch of Kidron, on the west the gulch of Hinnom, and both steep, rocky gulches uniting right south of the town. Both gulches are short, and run out almost entirely above the northern wall, the gulch of Hinnom running around the eastern part of the town in a kind of half circle. It was a fine spot for a pack of robbers, as the Jews always were, to fortify themselves on. Jerusalem was never a large place. It has at present less than 25,000 inhabitants, including the new town outside of the walls; and it certainly has from twice to three times the inhabitants now that it had in the time the Bible speaks of. From all indications, when the present walls were built, about 300 years ago, the town was much enlarged on the north, and while it always was a place of great importance to the Jews, being their place of last resort, it certainly never could have been more than a small, miserable town.

The streets of Jerusalem, like in all Oriental towns, are narrow, and run in a haphazard way. One can never tell by entering a street where he will come out. Within the last sixteen years some of the streets have been paved; before that time pavement was unknown. As the town is built on solid rock, with a deep gorge running through the centre, and the centre of the street forming the sewers, all accumulated filth would be swept into the gulch below during the rainy season, and the mud could never have been very deep. Most of the streets in the Armenian quarter are in the same condition they were a thousand years ago; the rock is bare where the rain had a chance to sweep off the filth; while in depressions, where the dirt has accumulated, the streets are horrid in the winter-time. Some of the streets are so steep that steps had to be made here and there to get up and down. Wagons are never used here, and no vehicle of any kind was ever seen in Jerusalem, except from the Damascus Gate to the residence of the Governor. Nor could wagons be used on the streets, as they are seldom wide enough for two wagons to pass one another. All traffic is carried on with camels, and they have to keep the centre of the street, or their loads will knock against the houses. When a camel train is approaching, people will take a stand on some protected place, either dodge into the doorway of a house, or remain on some place where the street is wider. People are in no rush here; time has no value to them, and they wait perfectly contented. Many of the streets are built over in places, as happened at the hospice where I lodged, the street running through underneath, and usually it takes but a small span to span the street, which in such places is very dark.

The houses in Jerusalem are small and low, seldom more than two stories high, and so irregular that it is often impossible to tell what belongs to one house and what to another. No wood is used here in the construction of houses; the ceilings of every room or passage are vaulted, then levelled with rubbish, and paved with flat stones. When more room was wanted another building was put on the top of the first, irrespective of size, shape, or situation, which gives the town the look as if the water had washed it there. Beauty and symmetry in architecture was entirely unknown in Jerusalem before the present century.

Of all places I have ever been in Jerusalem has the poorest water supply. Situated on the backbone of a chain of mountains with but few points rising above it, it has no regular springs. To the north-west of Jerusalem are some springs which flow more or less during the winter months; but when the snow and rain stop they stop likewise. The water from those springs is collected in a pond outside of the wall, the pond being connected underground with a large cistern inside the town. Many of the springs in Palestine are unfit for use. The water in the Pool of Siloam is useless, and so is En She Mesh, called the Apostles' Springs, although that is considered a sweet spring. No doubt sweet to those who are parched with thirst.

R. GUNTHER.

—*The Independent Pulpit*.

Did you ever hear of a man going to hell who rode in a carriage? Never! Who go to hell? Tramps.—*Ingersoll*.

TYPES OF RELIGIONISTS.

III.—THE EVANGELICAL LOW CHURCHMAN.

THE Rev. Aminadab Howler, of St. Allsobs, is truthful beyond his own intention when he describes himself as a miserable creature. His life is a prolonged whine. Things have gone against him. He has seen all the good livings and accompanying wines (without the *h*) go to the High Church Ritualists, and he is inclined to doubt if purity of worship and genuine belief remain in the land. The Jesuits, he thinks, are at the bottom of the Ritualistic movement. Mr. Gladstone, he is quite sure, is a Jesuit, and so probably was the late Rev. E. B. Pusey. He is afraid that God, for our apostasy, may yet deliver us into the hands of Anti-christ—that is to say, the Scarlet unmentionable—Lady, whose seat is on the Seven Hills of Rome.

The Evangelical Churchman is great on the subject of prophecy, and delights in Millennial Conferences. He is always expecting Jesus to come quickly and wind up the very unsatisfactory state of sublunary affairs by restoring the Jews to Jerusalem, and cathing up the true believers to meet him in the air, while the Rationalists and Romanists receive the vengeance of eternal fire.

Next to the Scarlet Woman and her followers, the Jesuits and Ritualists, he hates the Higher Criticism. His cry is: "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible!" The precious volume, he holds, is certified by the sure word of prophecy, and not one jot or tittle shall pass away. Infidelity, scepticism, and criticism are instigated by Satan. Inquiry, investigation, and learning, when not employed in backing up orthodoxy, are hostile to man's highest welfare, and are suggestions of the Evil One. Darwinism is a subtle device of the Devil, and Herbert Spencer an emissary from the nether regions. Another constant subject for moans and groans with the Rev. Aminadab Howler is the progress of Sabbath desecration. That a Conservative Government should authorise the opening of the national museums on Sunday he regards as a proof of the triumph of Antichrist, and a sure sign that Armageddon is at hand.

The Evangelical Churchman finds himself driven nearer and nearer to the Nonconformist platform, and he will express his opinion that, but for the progress of Popery within the Church, his dear dissenting brethren (with whom he is happy to associate in prophetic conferences and missionary enterprises), the Jews, and others, might have been safely within the bosom of the dear old Church of England. He laments that good Christians, instead of opposing in unison the serried ranks of Popery and Infidelity, the twin errors of Romanism and Rationalism, should be broken up into so many divisions, and spend their time in sectarian strife. Yet he is always ready to rail at High Church or Broad Church. His favorite paper, the *English Churchman*, has constant jibes at the man-milliners, the apists of the Papists; and the Church Association to which he belongs is at daggers drawn with its stronger rival, the English Church Union.

The Low Churchman sees himself and his Evangelicalism threatened with extinction. He belongs to a vanishing type, and, like the Tasmanians, or other native race, which withers at the approach of civilization, a settled melancholy seems to rest upon him. His talk is in a lugubrious twang. He snuffles in his cant about a sinful world, and, indeed, he has ever present the sorriest possible specimen of a miserable sinner. The height of Christian melancholy is reached when the Rev. A. Howler assumes his sickly smile, and assures his "dear brother" in oily tones that he hopes to meet him in heaven.

A few such inhabitants as our Evangelical Christian would suffice to turn Paradise into a caterwauling pandemonium. The Evangelical never doubts that he is the favorite of heaven, and never pauses to think what sort of a God it must be who enjoys his company. This sublime assurance makes him earnest in seeking converts to his own belief, and uncharitable towards all who happen to have fallen in love with some other "doxy" than his own. A story is told of the Rev. Aminadab, or one of his tribe, that on one occasion he got much interested in the spiritual welfare of a condemned murderer, and obtained leave to attend him in his last moments. He began pestering the criminal as to the state of his soul, accompanied with the most gloomy reflections. "Why can't you leave me to die in peace? What business is it of yours what I'm thinking about?" asked the prisoner. "My dear friend," replied the Rev. Aminadab, in his most sickening, unctuous tone, "as a servant of God it is my duty to lay before you the wages of sin and the way of salvation." The condemned man rose from the bed on which he was sitting, and, wagging his finger solemnly in the parson's face, exclaimed: "Oh, you're a servant of God, are you? Then look'ee 'ere, old sour face, in half an hour I shall be seeing your guv'nor, and blowed if I don't tell him what sort of a meeserable servant he's got."

UNCLE BENJAMIN.

The holier a mystery is, the greater the fraud it contains.

AT CHURCH.

LYIN' by the riverside,
Sunday afternoon,
Thinkin', will I go to church?
But I'd just as soon—
'Spite o' what I'm told I ought—
Be just whar I am,
For the river doesn't dron
Dreary college cram.

An' the lark that's soarin' high
Sings a sweeter song
As it trills its melody,
Ringing, full, and strong,
Than "Old Hundred" ever was,
Ever's like to be;
For the lark can strike his note
Rich an' true an' free.

An' the dronin' of the bee,
As it buzzes by,
Gives a note of harmony
Neither low nor high;
Then the rustlin' o' the grass,
Lookin' for the place,
An' the trees and noddin' broom
Dresses full o' grace.

Then the screamin' waterfowl
Hev a session flight,
Provin', by the noise they make,
Everyone is right;
So I'm quite content to make
This my church out here,
Whar no seates are laid between
Me an' sunshine clear.

THE GABERLUNZIE.

OLD-FASHIONED CAMP-MEETINGS.

FEELING that the time of my departure is at hand, I am contrasting my reflections with what they would have been had the teachings that shaped my belief in early life continued.

Then, at the camp-meetings near the Hudson River, we would listen in solemn cadence to the horrible refrain:—

Hell beneath is gaping wide;
Vengeance waits the dread command,
Soon to stop your sport and pride
And sink you with the damned.

But another stanza would be more applicable to my case at the present time:—

And now the aged sinner goes,
Laden with guilt and heavy woes,
Down to the regions of the dead,
With endless curses on his head.

While it would be impossible for me to conceive a reason why I, in justice, deserved so much "cussin'" I might recall the explanation that Calvinistic theology used to give, in my youth, "original sin," "primeval curse," and invoke the aid of the blasphemous inquiry by the little "sacred-song" maker, Watts:—

May not the sovereign Lord on high
Dispense his favors as he will?
Choose some to live, while others die,
And yet be just and gracious still.

G. B. CRANE.

Obituary.

Colonel Jesse Hooker, a millionaire of Montgomery, Alabama, U.S.A., died there on June 10 at the age of eighty-four. In accordance with his will a document, drawn up by himself, was read over his grave in lieu of any burial service. The document is given at length in the *New York World* of June 15. The writer disclaims belief in any personal God, terms the Bible a discordant and contradictory book, and points to the mistakes of Jesus about the end of the world. The document concludes as follows: "That the Christian religion originated in a period of the world's history when the grossest ignorance prevailed regarding matters of science no one can deny, and nothing astonishes me more than that the intelligence of the nineteenth century should still receive the superstitious conclusions of that ignorant age and people as absolute truth, which admits no change or modification. My motive for writing this brief statement of my opinions is to prevent, if possible, those who are interested in propagating the Christian religion from misrepresenting my position, and for the purpose of bearing my dying testimony to my firm belief in the pernicious and dangerous tendency of that religion as believed and practised by a credulous world."

BOOK CHAT.

A BAXTERITE pamphlet, entitled *A Last Call*, announces that by true reckoning we are on the point of completing the 6,000th year from Adam, and this marks the limit of divine patience with the human race. The long-delayed Jesus Christ will positively make his last appearance shortly, and the Jews will go back to Jerusalem. If anyone wants these things proved at length, he should send a subscription to the author to enable him to print an important pamphlet, which, as yet, alas, exists only in manuscript.

Dr. Ernest Hart, in his book on *Hypnotism and the New Witchcraft*, advises Mr. Stead to "subject all his symptoms to the analysis of a skilful physician, instead of hurriedly reducing vague nervous sensations into copy for periodical publications." This is a hint that he considers the mental balance of the editor of *Borderland* needs readjustment, and, considering that Mr. Stead actually endorses Mr. Maitland's belief that the late Dr. Anna Bonus Kingsford killed Dr. Claude Bernan and Paul Bert by willing their deaths, we think sober-minded people will incline to agree with Dr. Ernest Hart.

In "Talks with Tennyson," in the *New Review*, Mr. Wilford Ward, a Catholic, mentions that, in a talk about George Eliot's "negative religious views," Tennyson said: "How difficult it is to repeat a thing as it really happened. George Eliot had this conversation with me at Aldworth, and the account of it which got into print was that I disputed with her till I was red in the face, and then roared: 'Go away, you and your molecules.' The real fact was that our conversation was 'sweet as summer,' and at parting I shook her hand, and said very gently: 'I hope you are happy with your molecules.'" * * *

Most Freethinkers know *The Sight of Hell*, by Father Furniss, as a book which displays perhaps more clearly than any other the true inwardness of the Christian religion. Now the Rev. T. C. Livins has written a book on *Father Furniss and His Work for Children*. The Father, it seems, was very fond of children, for whom *The Sight of Hell* was written, and he arranged a system of children's masses for them. He conducted the confession of children by taking a whole class and questioning them. He seems, however, to have suffered from doubts, and was constantly asking to confess to any priest who would hear him. Perhaps he had something on his mind that he was so often talking of devils, or he may have had qualms as to whether his frightening children was really justified by the results. * * *

A circular informs us that *The Hat Crusade* (vol. i., 191 pages), by Samuel Fox (deceased) and Edward Pickard, is now published. Copies, price 5s. net, and extra for postage, may be obtained from E. Pickard, Flushing, near Falmouth. The circular says: "As the authors highly approve of the skinny profits system of trade, and people being obliged to devote themselves entirely to their business body and soul, the price through the trade will be 7s. net (order prepaid). Considering the amount of labor that has been expended in the production of this book, the price (5s. and postage) is not dear. The authors cannot undertake to pay tradesmen's profits for selling the book. Readers must do this themselves, or else purchase direct. No presentation copies. A limited number only printed. Reviewers requiring copies should apply early, sending cash with order, else no notice will be taken of it." If Mr. Pickard desired an extremely limited circulation, he could hardly take more effective steps to attain it. Some day he may learn that a reviewer's notice is the cheapest form of advertisement. * * *

The Squire and the Doctor; or, Landlord and Tenant, is the story of the treatment of Dr. T. M. Watt, of Hovingham, Yorkshire, and his final eviction from the house he had occupied a quarter of a century, by his landlord, Sir William Worsley. There are forty-eight closely-printed pages for one penny (Reeves & Co., 185 Fleet-street). This story of a village Hampden is well calculated to bring the evils of landlordism before the eyes of the people. * * *

In one of the police-courts of New York a venerable Italian priest complained that Carlo Motta had robbed him of a part of a valuable manuscript history of the Vatican, with the title of *The Open Vatican*. The author and complaining witness, M. Antonio, D.D., says the publication of the book will carry consternation into church circles. He claims he was once private secretary to Pope Pius IX. He is seventy-one years old, says the press dispatch from which we have condensed this paragraph. His secretary, also in priestly garb, accompanied him to court. Motta was held in \$3,500 bail. The manuscript is valued at \$25,000. The secretary of Archbishop Corrigan said he had heard of the complaining witness, who was not an impostor.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JUDAISM AND FREETHOUGHT.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In your esteemed paper of June 28 I find that you put down the names of Israel Zangwill, Max Nordau, and Uriel da Costa as decided Freethinkers (pp. 412, 413). As a matter of fact, this is *not* the case. Mr. Zangwill is decidedly Jewish in his writings. He is a member of a synagogue, and of the "Maccabeans," a Jewish National Society. As to his religious opinions, I would refer you to the *North American Review* of 1895 (p. 426), where he writes on the position of Judaism, and, after a splendid defence of its principles, he winds up by saying that, if Israel's faith be a dream, "it were well to abandon the search for significance in the futile and ephemeral life of man, and to look forward hopefully to the Messiah of the cosmic catastrophe." Besides this, he is a frequent contributor to Jewish papers and magazines.

As to Max Nordau, I am not in a position to state his religious opinions. His views, as far as they can be judged by his writings, may seem freethinking; but I hardly understand his position when I hear that he, with Israel Zangwill, is expected to be present at a meeting of the "Maccabeans" to discuss the question of a Jewish State. This is more than a Freethinker would condescend to do.

Except his assertion that Rabbinical Judaism did not coincide with the Bible, and his denial of immortality on biblical grounds, Uriel da Costa can hardly be called a Freethinker in our sense of the word. You may as well call Calvin or Knox Freethinkers because they rejected certain dogmas of the Roman Church.

I am in sympathy with Freethought so far as it expresses an honest conviction; but when it assumes the character of popular Christianity, by making baseless assertions and labelling all men according to their convenience, it deserves the same fate as the system it so severely condemns.

I hope that, in justice to your remarks, you will be good enough to insert this letter in your valuable paper.

PHILO JUDÆUS.

PROFANE JOKES.

Presiding Elder (speaking upon Jim Jackson's application for membership)—"Ob co'se, we all know dat Jim's got a reputation ez a chicken t'ief, but now he wants to jine our chu'ch; en ef we let him into our fold he probably won't steal any mo' chickens." Deacon Randolph (rising impressively)—"Bredderin', we all knows dat membahship in dis chu'ch doan keep no fellah frum stealin' chickens, an' we also knows dat jais ez long ez Jim Jackson ain't no Christian he's de principal objec' ob suspicion in dis yar town. I move we keep him out."

"I am sorry to have to tell you, young man," said the aged clergyman, "that the sermon you delivered this morning was preached by John Wesley more than a hundred years ago." "Is it possible!" exclaimed the young divinity student, both shocked and grieved. "I—I found it in a volume of sermons published by the Rev. Philetus Muggins in 1825, and long since out of print! Whom can one trust?"

"Are you for having God in the constitution?" said one prominent member of Congress to another. "Certainly, we are a Christian people." "Well, I bet you cannot repeat the Lord's Prayer." The bet was taken, and the money put up, and he who was to recite commenced: "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die—" "Stop, stop," said the other; "you need not go through. I had no idea you knew it."

This is an American version of a Scotch story told of James Merry and Baird, the ironfounder. When Baird gave £10,000 to the Kirk, Merry bet him that he did not even know the Lord's Prayer. He commenced, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," and Merry handed over the money.

A dignitary of the Church, who is a warm advocate of missions, was talking with a prominent official of the War Department the other day, and remarked that "a single shot, fired by one of the largest guns, cost as much as would keep a missionary for a year." "That is true," rejoined the official; "but then, you know, if it came to a war, we could not fire off missionaries."

If there were no opposition to opinion, the world would either turn about with every breath of novelty, or stagnate for ever in a living death.—*Leigh Hunt*.

When the statements are ratified by experience and moral culture, theology can give these no extra sanction; when they are not so ratified, theology cannot make them acceptable.—*G. H. Lewes*.

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. Watts, "What Secularists Believe, and What they Cannot Believe."
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Balls Pond): Garden Party, the Nook, 19 Alwyne-road, Canonbury. Tea at 5. If wet, at Bradlaugh Club.
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "Secular Salvation."
EAST LONDON BRANCH (Swaby's Coffee House, 103 Mile End-road): (8), J. T. Blanchard, "The New Secularism."
WEST LONDON BRANCH ("Sun in Splendor," Portobello-road, Notting Hill Gate): Tuesday, at 8.30, Adjourned half-yearly meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, E. Pack, "Christian Infidels."
CAMBERWELL BRANCH (Peckham Rye): 8.15, A. lecture.
CLERKENWELL GREEN: 11.30, Stanley Jones, "The Church and Science."
DEPTFORD BROADWAY: 6.30, C. Cohen will lecture.
EDMONTON (corner of Angel-road): 7, W. Heaford will lecture.
FINSBURY PARK (near band-stand)—Finsbury Park Branch: 11.15 and 3.15, J. Rowney will lecture.
HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE (Middlesex side): 7, E. Calvert, "Is the Right of Free Speech Conducive to Truth and Progress?" Thursday, July 16, a lecture.
HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, R. Rosetti, "Is Christianity of the Reiné Origin?" Wednesday, July 15, at 8, C. Cohen will lecture.
ISLINGTON (Highbury Fields, Highbury Corner): 10.45, C. Cohen, "Christianity and Progress."
KILBURN (High-road, corner of Victoria-road): 7, S. E. Easton, "The Rise and Progress of Christianity."
KINGSLAND (Ridley-road): 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "Some Bible Tales."
OLD PIMLICO PIER: 11.30, F. Haslam, "Fall of the Bastille."
REGENT'S PARK (near Gloucester Gate)—N.W. Branch: 8, A. lecture.
MILE END WASTE: 11.30, W. J. Reeves, "Myths and Superstitions."

COUNTRY.

BARNSELY (Black-a-moor Head Hotel): 8, Postponed monthly meeting. Paper by A. Addy.
LEEDS (Vulcan Club, Vulcan-street, Benson-street): 7, Members' quarterly business meeting. Subscriptions will be taken.
LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): Annual Picnic to Burton, Cheshire. Waggonettes will leave Birkenhead Ferry entrance at 2.15.
MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints)—Closed for alterations and repairs until August 16.
HECKMONDWIKE (Mr. Wood's Office, Cemetery-road): 2.30, quarterly meeting.
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 8, Members' quarterly meeting; 7, A. lecture or reading.
SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, "Secular Propaganda"—a discussion.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BARNSELY (May Day Green): 6.30, W. Dyson, "Neglected Chapters of Christian History."
NORTHAMPTON (Cow Meadow): A. B. Moss—12, "How to Revise the Bible"; 6.30, "The Crumbling Creeds of Christendom."

Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—July 12, m., Islington; a., Victoria Park; e., Deptford. 15, Hyde Park. 19, m., Hyde Park; a., Regent's Park; e., Hammersmith. 23, Hammersmith. 26, m., Mile End; a., Victoria Park; e., Battersea. August 2, m., Finsbury Park; a., Regent's Park; e., Battersea.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, Rotherhithe, London.—July 12, Northampton. 19, m., Camberwell; a., Victoria Park. 27 and 28, Blackburn. 29, Rochdale. 30, Todmorden. August 16, Camberwell. 23, m., Westminster; a., Finsbury Park; e., Ball's Pond. 30, m., Wood Green; e., Edmonton.

POSITIVISM.

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