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MR. GLADSTONE ON MIRACLES.

MR. GLADSTONE'S edition of Bishop Butler's works was published some months ago. He now publishes a supplementary volume, entitled *Studies Subsidiary to the Works of Bishop Butler*, containing labored defences of Butler against his critics, and chapters on a Future Life, on Necessity or Determinism, on Theology, on Miracle, on the Mediation of Christ, and on Probability as the Guide of Life. The most important of these chapters, especially in view of the fact that the writer must be nearing the close of his long and busy life, is the one on Miracle the death; but we prefer to make the one on Miracle the subject of the present article. It is, so to speak, the starting point of the whole course of Mr. Gladstone's reasonings, and it betrays all his characteristic vices of argumentation on the subject of theology. Before we examine it, however, we desire to say that the volume, as a whole, is a remarkable one, considering the writer's great age. It is as good as anything he ever did; and, although the style is "Gladstone" throughout, it is really less involved, prelatial, and enigmatic than some of his old political speeches. It is a great performance for a man nearing ninety. No one can help feeling a profound respect for the well-preserved vitality of the venerable statesman.

Mr. Gladstone makes Hume's famous essay the basis—perhaps he would say the occasion—of his chapter on Miracle. But we are bound to say that, in our judgment, he does not understand Hume; or, to put it in another way, if he understands Hume, we do not. Mr. Gladstone seems to us to be in a fog from beginning to end. Hume defines a miracle; Mr. Gladstone never does; and what is the use of discussion without definition? This much must be added, that as Hume's definition of a miracle is a violation of a law of nature, and as Mr. Gladstone never touches or approaches a miracle in that sense of the word, his whole chapter is a waste of words as far as Hume's argument is concerned.

Hume uses the word "experience," and upon this Mr. Gladstone fastens with the sterile dexterity of an old parliamentary hand. Whose experience? What experience?—these are purely rhetorical questions. Hume's explanation makes them unnecessary. He was not foolish enough to consider a black swan a miracle because it was not seen in Europe, or ice a miracle because it was not seen in Siam. It is by experience that we learn the laws of nature, and those laws are our highest certitudes. Now a miracle is not merely something unusual, like a black swan was before the discovery of the southern hemisphere, or like ice is to the people who live near the equator. It is something more than this; it is a direct violation of a law of nature, in the scientific sense of the term. For instance, the specific gravity of water is less than that of iron, and water is a fluid, while iron in its natural state is a solid; consequently it would be a violation of a law of nature if an iron axe (as we read in the Scripture) were to float on the surface of a stream. Hume does not argue that such a thing is impossible *metaphysically*, for it is conceivable by the imagination; he argues that it is impossible *practically*; and he declares that the testimony needed to convince us of it as a fact must be sufficient to overcome our belief, which is grounded upon our own experience and the experience of all other persons, that iron necessarily sinks in water.

This is what Mr. Gladstone has to tackle, but he never makes the slightest attempt to do so. He has not even grasped the real meaning of a law of nature. He actually regards the Siamese twins, or a child born with two heads, as a "sharp contradiction to natural laws." Such phenomena are uncommon, and even unnatural in popular language; but they are not unnatural in the language of science. Certainly no one regards them as miraculous. They are not in the same category as turning water into wine, or human birth without a father, or the resurrection of the dead. They are generally called freaks of nature, and they conclusively prove that nature is not governed by an almighty and all-wise designer. Mr. Gladstone might just as well have taken a hare-lip as an illustration. It is happily uncommon, but it is not a violation of a scientific law of nature.

What is called "the theological bias" by Mr. Herbert Spencer is so strong in orthodox apologists that it blinds them to the real meaning of the terms used by their opponents. Or is it that they are grossly ignorant of the most elementary principles of science? The late Canon Liddon—an eloquent man, who lived in a world of words, not of actual knowledge—once said that he violated the law of gravitation every time he raised his hand to his head. Such a remark is ridiculous to those who have a little scientific information, and have taken the trouble to reflect upon it. Had the preacher stood in a scale, he would have found that he weighed just the same whether his hand were raised to his head or dropped at his side. Mr. Gladstone perpetrates the same nonsense. We will give his own words, lest we should be suspected of misrepresenting him:—

"A book is resting on the table by my side. It is kept in its position by the unfailing action of the law of gravity. But I desire at some given moment to consult it; and my will issues an order to the muscular power of my arm accordingly. This command is conveyed through the brain to the muscle, which in the normal condition of the body unfailingly obeys, and the book is accordingly lifted off the table by a force which counteracts and overpowers the law of gravity."

Such is the science of an old statesman who went to college in the pre-scientific ages and received a "classical" education! Mr. Gladstone has only to weigh himself alone, and then weigh himself with the book in his hand, to discover that gravitation is acting all the time. The book may be lifted by a man or by a whirlwind; neither agency "counteracts" or "overpowers" gravitation, which operates universally in time and space with mathematical certitude and precision. Mr. Gladstone has fallen into the juvenile error of supposing that when two combined forces produce a different effect from that of either of them separately, they are "overpowering"—that is, abolishing—each other, whereas they are co-operating with each other. According to Mr. Gladstone's view of the matter, chemical laws are constantly "overpowering" physical laws—which scientific men know is an absurdity. Vital laws do not annul chemical laws, and chemical laws do not annul physical laws. In every case the higher development rests upon the unalterable laws of the lower development.

One of Mr. Gladstone's mental gyrations is positively amusing. It is sometimes urged by theologians that what we regard as a miracle may only be an expression of a "higher law"—which, of course, robs it of its character as a miracle altogether; for a miracle is nothing unless it is an "overpowering" by a *violation* of the material laws of the universe. Mr. Gladstone, however, turns this argument

upside down, and directs it against the opponents of miracles. He talks of new laws of nature reversing the old, and adds that—"Unless we know all the laws of nature, Hume's contention is of no avail; for the alleged miracle may come under some law not yet known to us." He does not see that this is an argument *against* the alleged miracle as a miracle. Yet it is the writer of this apology for the miraculous who ventures to treat Hume as little better than a shallow sophist. What a pleasure it would afford the judicious reader if the great David could rise from his grave for a little while and pen a characteristic reply to Mr. Gladstone's criticism!

So far as the Christian religion and its Scriptures are concerned, Hume's argument resolves itself into a question of evidence. Is there a single miracle that is supported by adequate testimony? Let us get down from the clouds and try conclusions on solid ground. But this is an invitation which the apologists of Christianity are always slow to accept. Instead of arguing *the question*, they prefer to argue *about it*.

Mr. Gladstone spends time in explaining why there *should* be miracles, how necessary and valuable they are, how they help us to get nearer to a living God, and how the anomaly of miracle tends to banish the anomaly of sin. He might as well argue that a man *will* have ten thousand a year because he would very much *like* to. Our wishes, or our supposed necessities, count for nothing in this inquiry. Is it so, or is it not so? is the only question at issue. Indeed, it was a wise remark of Hume's that we should be on our guard against believing what we wish to be true, as inclination is very apt to eke out the deficiency of evidence.

A word in conclusion on a subsidiary point. Mr. Gladstone says it would be "difficult to find in the whole compass of polemical argument a grosser case, in a famous writer, of an abuse of logic and language," than in Hume's paragraph on prophecy. Hume says that prophecy is miracle, and that the argument against the one is valid against the other. Mr. Gladstone replies that the prediction is no miracle until its fulfilment. Quite true, but beside the point. Hume meant, of course, that it would be a miracle if a man really knew what would happen hundreds of years hence; it would involve supernatural information. Surely this is unassailable, and we are astonished at the vehemence of Mr. Gladstone's language. G. W. FOOTE.

ROBERT BURNS.

NOT only Scotsmen, but liberty-loving Englishmen too, all over the world, will join in the centennial commemoration of the early death of Scotland's greatest poet. I am old enough to remember the centenary of his birth, and I rather think that event first led to an appreciation of Burns, which has not only lasted, but grown with my growth. May this celebration add fresh lustre to his fame, and extend his work; for Burns I count among the liberators of mankind.

Carlyle, who, alike by native circumstance and genius, could appreciate the worth of Scotland's peasant-poet, lamented at large over the tragedy of his life. "Surely," he said, "if discrepancy between place held and place merited constitute perverseness of lot for a man, no lot could be more perverse than Burns's." The doleful wail of grim Greatheart set the key to a chorus of whining from pious quarters about a wasted life, to which I cannot attune my mind, even on the anniversary of his death-day. I count his life not wasted, but greatly lived. Carlyle knew—none better—that it is great and glorious to find adequate expression for one's inmost mind. "Nature's chief masterpiece," said the polished Pope, "is writing well." To gain this is worth toil, aye, and agony, for the best writing has to be forged on the anvil of one's own heart. And Burns had the gift of great writing, apparently without effort. There are glimpses of tragedy in most lives. But his was not the tragedy of aspiration without accomplishment. To have spoken direct from heart to heart in tender, passionate love songs; to have sounded freedom's battle call in the trumpet tones of "Scots wha hae"; to have scourged the hypocrites and encouraged the liberators; to have shown the sturdy stuff a peasant is made of, and to have become an inspiration of honest independence to those who dine on homely fare, was surely worth living for.

There was nothing of the whiner about Burns, even when lamenting that "man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn." Mirth and music were ever near. Wordsworth, with true instinct, though in sad mood, wrote of him "who walked in glory and in joy behind his plough upon the mountain side." He had the gift of telling his tender thoughts, whether of the modest crimson-tipped daisy, or the wee, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous mouse, or of nature's masterpiece, "the lasses," in liquid dewdrops of melody, that have become a permanent possession of his race; and he must have rejoiced in the faculty.

Burns struck a true note when he made the gossip at his birth say of himself:—

He'll hae misfortunes great and sma',
But aye a heart aboon them a';
He'll be a credit 'till us a';
We'll a' be proud o' Robin.

All have misfortunes. Happy are they endowed with hearts "aboon them a'." The English-speaking race everywhere, to-day, are proud of Robin; and Freethinkers, who claim somewhat of his spirit, will not be backward in sounding his praises. Many will laud some of the poetry of Burns who "whistle o'er the lave o't." They strive to conceal his heresies to "Kirk an' State," or they lament them as a part of his "wasted life," whereas they are the proof of its fruitfulness. Burns was a Deist. Of other religion, save what flowed from Deism, he scarce showed a scrap. "B. V." well said of him:—

He felt scant need
Of church or creed,
He took small share
In saintly prayer.
His eyes found food for his love;
He could pity poor devils condemned to hell,
But sadly neglected endeavor to dwell
With the angels in luck above.

Burns knew the different value of conduct and of creed:—

Ye'll get the best o' moral works
'Mang black Gentoos and Pagan Turks,
Or hunters wild on Ponotaxi
Wha never heard of orthodoxy.

How he satirised the unco' guid and rigidly righteous:—

Sae pious and sae holy,
Y've nought to do but mark and tell
Your neebour's fauts and folly.

* * *

Learn three-mile prayers, and half-mile graces,
Wi' weel spread looves, an' lang wry faces,
Grunt up a soleinn lengthened groan,
And damn a' parties but your own;
I'll warrant then ye'er nae deceiver,
A steady, sturdy, staunch believer.

And his shafts were not only winged at sanctimonious hypocrites. They struck at the very core of their beliefs. With what verve he satirizes the reigning God and creed of his countrymen:—

O Thou wha in the Heavens dost dwell,
Wha, as it pleases best thyself,
Sends aye to Heaven and ten to Hell
A' for Thy glory,
And no for once guid or ill
They've done afore thee!

What Calvinist can read Burns without unloosening some of the shackles of his faith? The increased freedom and happiness of life in Scotland within the past century are largely owing to the substitution of the teachings of Robert Burns for those of John Knox.

Burns said his favorite hero was Milton's "Satan." He carried about with him a pocket *Paradise Lost*, "in order to study the sentiments—the dauntless magnanimity, unyielding independence, and noble defiance of hardship in that great personage, Satan." How his love of freedom bursts out in the chorus of his "Jolly Beggars":—

A fig for those by law protected!
Liberty's a glorious feast!
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest.

Respectable mediocrities, too immaculate to gently scan their brother man, may point to flaws and faults. We must take genius as we find it. Faults! Best men are moulded out of faults. Burns was great enough to bear them. A grain of copper does not make gold inferior to silver. Burns was no marble model of all the virtues, but a warm-blooded, living, loving, impulsive man. He was

ever on the side of humanity, and I would say of him what he said in his epitaph on his friend, Gavin Hamilton :—

With such as he, where'er he be,
May I be saved or damned.

Heine, the German poet likest Burns, said he knew not if he was worthy of a laurel wreath. But lay, he proudly said, on my coffin a sword, for I was a brave soldier in the war of liberation of humanity. No one now will deny the laurel wreath to either poet, but assuredly to Burns also belongs the sword of the valiant soldier of human liberty.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF SECULARISM.

CHAPTER XXII.

SELF-EXTENDING PRINCIPLES.

“Prodigious actions may as well be done
By weaver's issue as by prince's son.”—DRYDEN.

So far as Secularism is reasonable, it must be self-extending among all who think. Adherents of that class are slowly acquired. Accessions begin in criticism, though that, as we have seen, is apt to stop there. In all movements the most critical persons are the least suggestive of improvements. Constructiveness excites enthusiasm only in fertile minds.

After the Cowper-street discussion with the Rev. Brewin Grant (1853; see Chapter X.), societies, halls, and newspapers adopted the Secular name. In 1863 appeared the *Christian Reasoner*, edited by the Rev. Dr. Rylance, a really reasoning clergyman, whom I afterwards had the pleasure to know in New York. His publication was intended to be a substitute for the *Reasoner*, which I had then edited for seventeen years. But when the *Reasoner* commenced, in 1846, Christian believing was far more thought of than Christian reasoning. One line in Dr. Rylance's *Christian Reasoner* was remarkable, which charged us with “forgetfulness of the necessary incompleteness of Revelation.” So far from forgetting it, it was one of the grounds on which Secularism was founded. However, it is to the credit of Dr. Rylance that he should have preceded, by thirty years, the Bishop of Worcester in discerning the shortcomings of Revelation, as cited in Chapter XIX.

In 1869 we obtained the first Act of Secular affirmation, which Mr. J. S. Mill said was mainly due to my exertions, and to my example of never taking an oath. In obtaining the Act I had no help from Mr. Bradlaugh, he being an ostentatious oath-taker at that time. It was owing to Mr. G. W. Hastings (then, or afterwards, M.P.), the founder of the Social Science Association, that the Affirmation clause was added to the Act of 1869. One of the objects we avowed was “to procure a law of affirmation for persons who objected to take the oath.”*

Another of our aims was stated to be: “To convert churches and chapels into temples of instruction for the people . . . to solicit priests to be teachers of useful knowledge.”† We strove to promote these ends by holding in honor all who gave effect to such human precepts as were contained in Christianity. This fairness and justice has led many to suppose that I accepted the theological as well as the ethical passages in the Scriptures. But how can a Christian preacher be inclined to risk the suspicion of the narrower-minded members of his congregation, if no one gives him credit for doing right when he does it?

With our limited means and newness of doctrine, we could not hope to rival an opulent hierarchy and occupy its temples; but we knew that the truth, if we had it, and could diffuse it in a reasonable manner, would make its way and gradually change the convictions of a theological caste. The very nature of Freethought makes it impossible for a long time yet that we should have many wealthy or well-placed supporters. Where the platform is open to every subject likely to be of public service—subjects suppressed everywhere else, and open to the discussion of the wise or foolish present who may arise to speak, outrages of good taste will occur. Persons who forget that abuse does not

destroy use, and that freedom is more precious than propriety, cease to support a free-speaking society. The advocacy of slave emancipation was once an outrage in America. It is now regarded as the glory of the nation. In an eloquent passage it has been pointed out what society owes to the unfriended efforts of those who established and have maintained the right of free speech.

“Theology of the old stamp, so far from encouraging us to love nature, teaches us that it is under a curse. It teaches us to look upon the animal creation with shuddering disgust; upon the whole race of man, outside our narrow sect, as delivered over to the Devil; and upon the laws of nature at large as a temporary mechanism, in which we have been caught, but from which we are to anticipate a joyful deliverance. It is science, not theology, which has changed all this; it is the Atheists, Infidels, and Rationalists, as they are kindly called, who have taught us to take fresh interest in our poor fellow denizens of the world, and not to despise them because Almighty benevolence could not be expected to admit them to heaven. To the same teaching we owe the recognition of the noble aspirations embodied in every form of religion, and the destruction of the ancient monopoly of divine influences.”*

Those who, in storm and stress, bring truth into the world may not be able to complete its triumph, but it makes its own way, and finally conquers the understanding of mankind.

Priestley, without fortune, having only the slender income of a Unitarian minister, created and kept up a chemical laboratory. There alone he discovered oxygen. Few regarded him, few applauded him; only a few Parisian philosophers thanked him. He had no disciples to spread his new truth. He was not even tolerated in the town which he endowed with the fame of his priceless discovery. His house was burnt by a Church-and-King mob; his instruments, books, and manuscripts destroyed; and he had to seek his fortune in a foreign land.

Yet what has come out of his discovery? It has become part of the civilisation of the world, and mankind owe more to him than they yet understand. When a young man he forsook the Calvinism in which he was reared. “I came,” he said, “to embrace what is called heterodox views on every question.”† He cared for this world as well as for another, and hence was distrusted by all “true believers.” Though he had “spiritual hopes,” he agreed that he should be called a Materialist.

We have now had (1895) a London Reform Sunday, more than 250 (one list gave 400) preachers of all denominations taking for their unprecedented text, “The Duties and Responsibilities of Citizenship”—a thing the most sanguine deemed incredible when suggested by me in 1854.‡ Within twenty years Dr. Felix Adler has founded noble Ethical Societies. Dr. Stanton Coit is extending them in Great Britain. They are Secularist societies in their nature. South Place Chapel now has taken the name of Ethical Society. Since the days of W. J. Fox, who first made it famous, it has been the only successor in London of the Moral Church opened by Thomas Holcroft. Though modern Secular societies, to which these pages relate, have been anti-theological mainly, the Secular Society of Leicester is a distinguished exception. It has long had a noble hall of its own, and from the earliest inception of Secularism it has been consistent and persistent in its principles. As stated elsewhere,§ the *Principles of Secularism* were submitted to John Stuart Mill in 1854, and his approval was of importance in the eyes of their advocates. In the first issue of *Chambers' Encyclopaedia* a special article appeared upon these views, and in the later issue of that work in 1888 a new article was written on Secularism. In the Rev. Dr. Molesworth's *History of England* a very clear account was given of the rise of Secularist opinions. This will be sufficient information for readers unacquainted with the subject.

The cause of Reason has had more to confront than the cause of Christianity, which has always been on the side of power since the days of Christ. The two most influential ideas which, in every age since Christianity arose, have given it currency among the ignorant and the credulous

* Leslie Stephen's *Freethinking and Plain Speaking*.

† See *Chambers' Encyclopaedia* (1888); article: Priestley.

‡ We have now a Museum Sunday. Even twenty years ago those who advocated the Sunday opening of museums were counted irreverent and beyond the pale of grace. Their opening is now legalised (1896).

§ *Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life*, chap. cx.

* *Secularism the Practical Philosophy of the People*, p. 12; 1854—fifteen years before the first Act was passed.

† *Secularism the Practical Philosophy of the People*, by G. J. Holyoake, p. 12; 1854.

have been the ideas of hell and prayer. Hell has been the terror, and prayer the bribe, which have won the allegiance of the timid and the needy. These two master passions of alarm and despair have brought the unfortunate portions of mankind to the foot of the Cross.

The cause of Reason has no advantages of this nature, and only the intelligent have confidence in its progress. If we expected to do more than we have done, we are not the only party who have been prematurely sanguine. The Rev. David Bogue, preaching in Whitfields Tabernacle, Tottenham Court-road, at the foundation of the Foreign Missionary Society (1790) of the Congregational denomination, exclaimed amid almost unequalled enthusiasm: "We are called together this evening to the funeral of bigotry." Judging from what has happened since, bigotry was not dead when its funeral was prepared, or it was not effectually buried, as it has been seen much about since that day.

Bigotry, like Charles II., takes an unconscionable time in dying. Down to Sir C. Lyell's days so harmless a study as geology was distrusted, and Lyell, like Priestley, had to seek auditors in America. While he lectured at Boston to 1,500 persons, 2,000 more were unable to obtain tickets, which were bought at a guinea each *extra*. At our great ancient seat of learning, Oxford, Buckland lectured on the same interesting subject to an audience of three.

Secularism keeps the lamp of Freethought burning by aiding and honoring all who would infuse an ethical passion into those who lead the growing army of independent thinkers. Our lamp is not yet a large one, and its supply of oil is limited by Christian law; but, like the fire in the Temple of Montezuma, we keep it burning. In all the centuries since the torch of Freethought was first lighted, though often threatened, often assailed, often dimmed, it has never been extinguished. We could not hope to captivate society by splendid edifices, nor many cultivated advocates; but truth of principle will penetrate where those who maintain it will never be seen and never heard. The day cometh when other torches will be lighted at the obscure fire, which, borne aloft by other and stronger hands, will shed lasting illumination where otherwise darkness would permanently prevail. As Elizabeth Barrett Browning has said: "Truth is like sacramental bread—we must pass it on."

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

A SECULARIST'S CATECHISM.

(Continued from page 437.)

Q.—What progressive movements have Secularists taken part in?

A.—In the struggles for the abolition of slavery; the repeal of the taxes upon knowledge; the establishment of a national system of education; the various efforts that have been made to extend the franchise among the masses; the securing of the right of free speech and a free press; the substitution of affirmation instead of swearing; the improvement of the social status of woman; the fostering of kindness to animals; the cultivation of peace and goodwill among nations; the settlement of disputes by intellectual arbitration rather than by brute force; the better adjustment of the relations between Capital and Labor, and the entire cessation of either persecution or prosecution for the holding of opinions, let them be what they may.

Q.—Are there any records of special acts of benevolence upon the part of unbelievers in the Christian faith?

A.—Yes, many. Among the numerous bequests left by rich men, the gifts of Freethinkers have appeared conspicuous. The founder of Girard College, not a believer in Christianity, in addition to the six million dollars required for the establishment of that college, gave, throughout his lifetime and at his death, thirty thousand dollars to the hospitals, twenty thousand dollars to the deaf and dumb asylum, twenty thousand dollars to the orphan asylum, twenty thousand dollars to the Lancaster schools, ten thousand dollars to provide fuel for the Philadelphia poor, ten thousand dollars to aid distressed sea-captains, twenty thousand dollars for the relief of poor masons, fifty thousand dollars for various other charities in Philadelphia, and three hundred thousand dollars for the

absolute poor. James Smithson left five thousand dollars to found the institution named after him at Washington; John Redmond gave three hundred thousand dollars to support three beds in the Boston Hospital; James Lick gave one million dollars to found an astronomical observatory; William M'Clure gave half a million dollars to aid the working men; and George Ilford gave thirty thousand dollars for the scientific training of women. Mr. Butland, a prominent member of the Toronto Secular Society, bequeathed fifty thousand dollars to the general hospitals of Toronto. In Glasgow the Mitchell Library was established at the cost of seventy thousand pounds by a Freethinker; and in the same city Mr. George Baillie left eighteen thousand pounds to establish unsectarian schools, reading-rooms, etc.

Q.—Have Secularists any faith or religion?

A.—That depends upon the meaning attached to the words "faith" and "religion." If these terms are understood as representing theological and dogmatic teachings, we have neither.

Q.—How do Secularists understand the terms here mentioned?

A.—Our faith is limited to possible results in this life, and it is based upon the experience of the past, not upon conjectures as to a future existence. Religion, with us, signifies morality—that is, practical duties, not speculative opinions. This is the etymological meaning of the word.

Q.—Have Secularists any standard of right, such as the Christian's "Golden Rule," which is: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even to them"?

A.—We do not accept this as the best standard of right, but only as an expression of likes and dislikes. Besides, it belongs to the Pagan world, and it is not the unique teaching of Christianity. We hold that the best conduct is to do that which is conducive to the general good, independently of what we would that others should do to us. Conduct that results in being useful to others and ourselves is undoubtedly the best for all mankind.

Q.—Does this express the Secular idea of duty?

A.—Yes, inasmuch as it represents that conduct which grows out of our relation to each other. It includes our obligation to parents, family, and the State, to whom, and to which, we are individually indebted for benefits received.

Q.—Is there no other duty?

A.—No; because our only concern is with this world and its inhabitants, beyond which we recognise no moral duty or responsibility. The only demand we admit is, that our conduct should be in harmony with what the best interests of the community require of its members.

Q.—What motive have Secularists for compliance with this demand?

A.—The desire to maintain social affinity, and to raise the standard of ethical culture and general intelligence by the example of right-doing. Experience proves that this is the surest way of promoting the general good.

Q.—But is not that reducing morality to a personal advantage?

A.—Quite so; and herein lies the excellence of the Secular method, for the general good is the result of personal action. It is a mistake to suppose that individual happiness is possible while we are surrounded with ignorance and vice; therefore Secularists urge that their neighbors should be well instructed in order that all, individually, may share the highest good.

Q.—Do Secularists believe in a future life?

A.—Some do, and others do not. That is a question left to each person to decide for himself. The National Secular Society does not dogmatise upon the subject either *pro* or *con*. It cannot affirm there is such a life, because to prove it is impossible; it cannot deny a future life, because we know nothing of it, and to deny that of which we acknowledge we know nothing would be illogical.

Q.—Is the Secular position upon this subject a safe one?

A.—We think so; for, by making the best of this life, physically, morally, and intellectually, we are pursuing the wisest course, whatever the issues in reference to a future life may be. If there should be another life, the Secularist must share it with his opponent. Our opinions do not affect the reality in the slightest degree. If we are to sleep for ever, we shall so sleep, despite the belief in immortality; and if we are to live for ever, we shall so live, despite the belief that possibly death ends all. It must also be remembered that, if man possesses a soul, that soul will be the better through being in a body that has been properly trained; and if there is to be a future life,

that life will be the better if the higher duties of the present one have been fully and honestly performed.

Q.—Have Secularists no fear of future punishment, supposing they are wrong?

A.—Certainly not; for if there be a just God, before whom we are to appear to be judged, he will never punish those to whom he has not vouchsafed the faculty of seeing beyond the grave, because they honestly avowed that their mental vision was limited to this side of the tomb. Thus the Secularists feel quite safe as regards any futurity that may be worth having. If the present be the only life, then it will be all the more valuable if we give it our undivided attention. If, on the other hand, there is to be another life, then, in that case, we shall have won the right to its advantages through having been faithful to our convictions, just to our fellows, and in having striven to leave the world purer than we found it.

Q.—Do not Secularists miss a great consolation in not believing in a future life?

A.—Decidedly not; for the reason that the belief is only speculative, having no foundation in known facts. Besides, we have the conviction that our secular conduct on earth will entitle us to the realization of its fullest pleasure. And this conviction is not marred by the belief that the majority of the human race will be condemned to a fate "which humanity cannot conceive without terror, nor contemplate without dismay."

Q.—Is not the belief in a future life necessary as a motive to moral conduct?

A.—No; because people live good lives without such a belief, while many who believe in "a life beyond the grave" are guilty of the most immoral conduct. The consideration that our actions affect, for good or for evil, our fellow creatures here ought to supply a sufficient motive for right living.

Q.—But are not the hope of heaven and the fear of hell among the strongest incentives to virtue, and the most potent deterrents to vice?

A.—In some cases this may be so, but that is the result of a false education. The highest incentive to good conduct should be our personal honor and the welfare of others; the strongest deterrent to bad conduct ought to be the knowledge that it results in injurious consequences upon the whole of the community.

Q.—Do Secularists believe in what is termed the "Divine Providence" of the universe?

A.—They do not. Our only providence is that which is derived from science, forethought, industry, and human effort. We have no faith in miracles or in the efficacy of prayer. Other conditions being equal, we believe that the crops of an unbeliever will ripen quite as well upon his estate as those upon the estate of the most pious.

Q.—What injunction do Secularists give in accordance with their view of life?

A.—That we should trust to ourselves, and not rely upon supposed heavenly favor. That we should seek in the order of nature a basis for practical precepts in life, and regard the laws of nature and man as being the foundation of all virtue and prosperity.

CHARLES WATTS.

(To be continued.)

CHRISTIAN AND HEATHEN MORALS.

THE publication of the moral statistics of India ought to be an eye-opener as to the inefficacy of the religion which claims to be the sole depository of divine truth to give assurance of right conduct in its votaries. In Europe, where Christendom prevails, there are 1,180 in prison for crime out of every million. In India, where heathenism prevails, there are only 380 in every million in prison for crime. And this is not the most striking part of the statistics. They show that in India the largest proportion of crime relatively to their numbers is due to European Christians. Next in criminal precedence come the native Christians, persons usually who have broken their caste ties for cash consideration. Then—and some distance off—come the Moslems, and next the Hindus. The great bulk of the people, while lowest in the scale of crime, and five times less criminal than the Christians, are the Buddhists.

It is the Christian countries that have the greatest amount of drunkenness and prostitution, and which spend most, and have the biggest debts, for war purposes. Yet

our great boast is the money we spend on foreign missions. To all the missionaries might be applied the saying of Jesus: "Woe unto you, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves."

The native African has the vices of savagery, but he is temperate, chaste, honest, and truthful, compared with what he becomes under the influence of gin and the Gospel. Mrs. French Sheldon walked across the Dark Continent without molestation from Africans. Among the worst specimens of Africans are the Abyssinians, and Abyssinia has been a Christian country since the days of Constantine. Christianity, when unrestrained by Freethought, either deteriorates or destroys; and where you find the most devotion to Christianity—in Roman Catholic countries—you find also the greatest criminality.

When America was discovered, Mexico and Peru were quite advanced in civilization, having large, well-built cities and a very well-written history. The Christian Catholic Spanish conquerors murdered thousands for gold, and made slaves of the rest. The real Aztec is wiped out and gone.

Farther north were the North American Indians, very properly called "the noble red men." The Protestants came, proffering peace, but gave them war and robbed them of their lands; they offered them religion, but gave them fire-water; they preached to them of Jesus and the love of God, but introduced vice and disease that sent them prematurely to hell (if orthodox doctrine be true). Out of the millions of inhabitants of America, nine-tenths have disappeared. And that has been the result of Christian civilization in America.

Captain Cook discovered the Sandwich Islanders in 1778, just 118 years ago. They were then a healthy, robust race, happy and comparatively moral. Their numbers were estimated at not less than 350,000. To-day there are about 35,000 left, many suffering from the diseases and vices of the Christian civilization that was introduced among them. Nine-tenths of them have gone, and the rest will follow soon.

The Chinese and Japanese who have resisted the advance of Christian civilization have many excellent qualities, for which they are in no way indebted to the Christian God, Jesus, or the Bible. The Chinese State and civilization have endured ages longer than any Christian kingdom. The Japanese, for natural grace, elegance of manners, and courteous deportment, are the equal of the best society of Europe or America. They are well educated in their own literature. It was said of them when first known to Europeans: "They are the happiest people in the world." There was not a thief, drunkard, or insane person in the empire. The majority of educated Japs are Freethinkers. Herbert Spencer is one of the authors most read in the Universities, and the Marquis Ito has recently announced his preference that his countrymen should be frank Freethinkers, rather than hypocritical Christians.

There is nothing in the dogmas of Christianity—its belief in the Trinity, or the blood atonement—to help right conduct. On the contrary, the Church doctrine, that the worst scoundrel that ever disgraced the earth may repent in the last hour of his miserable existence, and have his sins and crimes washed out by the blood of Jesus, thus avoiding the just consequences of a detestable life, is a corrupting and pernicious doctrine.

What aids right conduct? All that tends to make honest social life happy and comfortable; the cultivation of the intelligence, which shows self-interest to be bound up with the welfare of our fellows. Education is the great factor of improvement. In England Mulhall notes that "the increase of schools" and School Boards, which the clericals have done their worst to thwart and suppress, "has been accompanied by a decrease in crime." The statistics show a decided decrease since the Education Act. In the period from 1851 to 1860, when but 26 children attended school to every 1,000, there were 96 criminals to every 100,000. In the period 1871–1880, with 82 children at school to every thousand of the population, in every 100,000 there were but 50 criminals; and the number has since been reduced.

When people recognize that "clericalism is the enemy" of intelligence and progress, they will find that the twenty millions or so spent yearly on sky-pilotage and missions are a very bad investment. The money would show a far superior return if devoted to increasing the secular efficacy of our schools.

LUCIANUS.

JAPANESE MYTHOLOGY.

To the student of mythology, the first supplement to the transactions and proceedings of the Japan Society, in the shape of the first volume of Mr. W. G. Aston's translations of the *Nihongi*; or, *Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697*, will be of great interest, as this is the first English translation of that valuable store-house of Japanese myths. The *Nihongi* itself has neither title-page nor preface, but the *Konin Shiki* (commentary on the *Nihongi* of the period 810-824) states that it was completed and laid before the Empress Gemmiō in A.D. 720 by Prince Toneri and Yasumaro-no-Ason.

It seems to have been in large part taken down by the latter from one Hiyeda-no-Are, a person possessed of a remarkable memory; while Mr. Aston is of opinion that, with the exception of the first two books, much of the earlier part was written by the illustrious Shotogaku Daishi, its reputed author, a profound student of Buddhism and of Chinese classical literature. Of the earlier part of the book Mr. Aston states: "It furnishes a very complete assortment of all the forms of the untrue of which the human mind is capable, whether myth, legend, fable, romance, gossip, mere blundering, or downright fiction. The first two books are manifestly mythological."

The first myth in the book is that of the Creation. We find that, "Of old, heaven and earth were not yet separated, and In and Yo (male and female principles) not yet divided. They formed a chaotic mass, like an egg of obscurely defined limits, and contained germs. The purer and clearer part was thinly drawn out and formed heaven, while the heavier and grosser element settled down and became earth. The finer element easily became a united body, but the consolidation of the heavy and gross element was accomplished with difficulty. Heaven was therefore formed first, and earth was established subsequently. Thereafter Divine Beings were produced between them. Hence it is said that, when the world began to be created, the soil of which lands were composed floated about like fish sporting on the surface of the water. At this time a certain thing was produced between heaven and earth. It was in form like a reed-shoot. Now this became transformed into a God, who was called Ama-no-toko-tachi-no-Mikoto (Land-eternal-stand-of-august-thing)."

Then follows the genealogical tree of seven succeeding generations of gods. "These make eight deities in all. Being formed by the mutual action of the heavenly and earthly principles, they were made male and female. From Kuni-no-toko-tachi-no-Mikoto to Izanagi-no-Mikoto and Izanami-no-Mikoto are called the seven generations of the age of the gods. These last two were standing on the Floating Bridge of heaven holding counsel together, saying: "Is there not a country beneath?" Thrusting down the jewel-spear of heaven (literally male-pillar), and groping about therewith, they found the ocean, and from the coagulated briny drippings of this spear an island was formed, upon which the two deities dwelt, and wished to marry and produce countries. So they made the island the pillar of the centre of the land. "Now, the male deity turning by the left, and the female by the right, they went round the pillar of the land separately. When they met together on one side the female deity spoke first, and said: 'How delightful! I have met with a lovely youth.' The male deity was displeased, and said: 'I am a man, and by right should have spoken first. How is it that on the contrary thou, a woman, shouldst have been the first to speak? This was unlucky. Let us go round again.' Upon this the two deities went back, and, having met anew, this time the male deity spoke first, and said: 'How delightful! I have met a lovely maiden.'" The old, old story is then very naively told, with the result that union took place, and several islands were born. Next was produced the sea, then the rivers, and subsequently the mountains, trees, and herbs. "After this Izanagi and Izanami consulted together, saying: 'We have now produced the Great-eight-island country, with the mountains, rivers, herbs, and trees. Why should we not produce someone who shall be lord of the universe?' They then together produced the Sun-Goddess, who was called Oho-hiru-me-no-muchi (Greatnoon-female-of-possessor), and Ama-terasu (heaven illuminin). Therefore the two deities rejoiced, saying: 'We have had many children, but none of them have been equal to this wondrous infant. She ought not to be kept long in this land, but we ought of our own accord to send her at once to heaven, and entrust to her the affairs of heaven. At this time heaven and earth were still not far separated, and therefore they sent her up to heaven by the ladder of heaven.'"

After the Sun-Goddess, the Moon-God was produced to be her consort. Then the Leech-Child was produced, and afterwards a god, who had a fierce temper and cruel disposition, and who wrought all manner of evil things—in fact, so bad was he that his parents said: "Thou art exceedingly wicked, and it is not meet that thou shouldst reign over the world.

Certainly thou must depart far away to the Nether-Land" (Hades).

Then Izanami gave birth to the Fire-God, and was burnt to death in doing so. Before expiring, however, she gave birth to the Earth-Goddess and the Water-Goddess. Tzanaji, his task having been accomplished, ascended to heaven, and made report of his mission. There he dwelt in the smaller palace of the Sun.

Ama-terasu, the Sun-Goddess, who is at once a ruler of the heavens and an anthropomorphic deity, gives birth to a number of deities. Incidentally what is related of the gods throws light on the condition of the people. Thus much ado is made about ceremonial purity. Special huts were erected for the consummation of marriage and for child-birth. Death contaminated a house, and a new one was erected on the decease of the owner—a practice long continued in the case of Imperial palaces.

"The Age of the Gods" is followed by an account of the heroes and emperors, the earlier portion of which is evidently legendary, but which, nevertheless, throws much light on Japanese history and evolution. We come across some familiar folk-lore stories and old customs, such as belief in spirits, witches, sympathetic magic, transmigrations, taboos, lustrations, purification by spittle, dances, etc. The old practice of killing the slaves of great people at their death, to attend them in the other world, was abolished about the beginning of the Christian era by the Emperor, Iku-me-iri-hiko-i-sachi, who substituted clay figures for living people. Remote as is Japan, the student of its history and mythology is, on the whole, less struck by its peculiarity than by the similarity of human evolution in all parts.

H. JONES.

THEY'RE NOT IN A HURRY TO GO THERE.

There's a world, Christians say, that is better than this ;
But they're not in a hurry to go there !
And they call it a region of infinite bliss ;
But they're not in a hurry to go there !
'Tis above—many miles from the top of "St. Paul's" ;
And on Sundays, in churches and chapels and halls,
In praise of that region each sky-pilot bawls ;
But they're not in a hurry to go there !
Though they say t'other world is a region of bliss,
And there neither is sorrow nor woe there,
Like leeches or limpets they all stick to this ;
For they're not in a hurry to go there !

There's a crown up above for each one, we are told ;
But they're not in a hurry to go there !
And there's also a harp and a trumpet of gold ;
But they're not in a hurry to go there !
To the strains of their harps and their trumpets, a throng
Of "beasts" and of "elders" will sing them a song,
Which never will end—'tis so deucedly long ;
But they're not in a hurry to go there !
You would think they'd be anxious to hasten away
To that region—their trumpets to blow there ;
That their beautiful harps they'd be longing to
play ;
But they're not in a hurry to go there !

On his throne, to receive them, sits Jesus, the Jew ;
But they're not in a hurry to go there !
And the patriarch Abra'm is waiting there too ;
But they're not in a hurry to go there !
They can use as a couch, when in want of a rest,
Either old Father Abra'm's or Jesus's "chest" ;
But, this fact notwithstanding, it must be confessed
They are not in a hurry to go there !
Perhaps they are thinking, upon the q.t.,
That things will be deucedly slow there ;
But, whatever's the reason, 'tis plain as can be—
They are not in a hurry to go there !

For, if one of them's ill, and is likely to start
For that world, he seems frightened to go there ;
With the aid of a nurse, and the science and art
Of a doctor, he tries not to go there.
If, in spite of these efforts, he heavenward steers,
His friends say, "Poor fellow," and shed bitter tears ;
The thought that he's "gone aloft" none of them cheers ;
They are sorry to see the man go there !
They say that those realms are the realms of the
blest,
And that nothing but bliss they will know
there ;
Yet, strange to relate, in deep mourning they're
dressed
If a friend of theirs happens to go there !

ESS JAY BEE.

Science surpasses the old [miracles of mythology.—
Emerson.

ACID DROPS.

LORD SALISBURY told some blunt truths at the St. James's Hall meeting in aid of the East London Church Fund. He was severe on bazaars, balls, and garden parties, as agencies for raising the wind. He said it was a strange thing that "spiritual considerations" failed to extract sufficient cash from the pockets of believers, and that it was necessary to resort to "mundane attractions." "The largest efforts which Christian munificence ever makes," said his lordship, "it makes in response to an organisation by which one is invited to purchase worthless articles at ridiculous prices."

Lord Salisbury concluded in a different vein. He referred to the crowd of social questions that beset us, and declared that "the sole hope we really have of solving these great social problems is in the action of religion." Yes, if they are to be solved to the taste of Lord Salisbury. Nothing but drenching the people's minds with religion would ever induce them to tolerate a measure like the Landlords' Relief Bill.

Sir J. William Dawson, ex-Principal of McGill University, Montreal, and a past President of the British Association, is now in England, and has been interviewed by the *Christian Commonwealth*. He still holds that there is no discrepancy between Christianity and Science—that is, if you understand both like Sir William Dawson. "Those who attack Genesis," he says, "either do not understand it, or wilfully misrepresent it." Modesty, however, might suggest another alternative. It is really not impossible—at any rate, it is quite conceivable—that a man might understand Genesis, and represent it honestly, and yet differ from Sir William Dawson. It is a cool piece of bigotry to suggest that Huxley (for instance) was either a rogue or a fool. This is the easiest method of controversy.

"I know nothing about the origin of man," said Sir William Dawson, "except what I am told in Scripture." Then he doesn't know much.

This Canadian geologist is not an authority in biology. When he says that the "first animal" must have been "a product of absolute creation," he is talking the language of faith. The scientific imagination cannot conceive creation at all, and the creation of an animal is merely a form of words without the slightest definite meaning. Sir William Dawson's pious platitudes may satisfy the ignorant mob; they will make no impression on persons of intelligence and information.

The *Star* is a London paper, London is in England, and England is the most Christian country in the world. Well, a recent number of the *Star* contained the two following items in contiguous columns:—(1) An old workman, named James Watson, committed suicide in Peabody-buildings, because he had been discharged as "too old" by a firm for which he had worked thirty-five years. The poor fellow said he could face work or death, but not the workhouse. (2) The Court of Common Council, sitting at the Guildhall, decided to send congratulations to Princess Maud, on the occasion of her marriage, in a gold box to cost £210. These two items don't seem to fit each other somehow; but of course they are both all right, singly and together; for England is a Christian country, and God governs the world.

The Archbishop of Canterbury is to officiate at the wedding of Princess Maud of Wales and Prince Charles of Denmark. His Grace, with the clean-cut, suave face, will make a first-rate ecclesiastical flunkey. No doubt he will get a suitable present for the job.

There is, of course, a gradation in these matters. An archbishop to marry a princess, a bishop to marry a countess, a dean to marry a rich lady, a rector to marry a middle-class woman, and a curate to marry a mere human female who is so degraded as to work for a living.

The *Daily News* of July 8 has a notice of the exhibition of antiquities at University College, illustrating Mr. Flinders Petrie's last year's work in Egypt. The writer's notions about the new stele of Merenptah are very peculiar, although they are only what might be expected from our daily experience of orthodox assertions. He calmly talks about "the great flawless tablet recording the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt," when, as a matter of fact, the monument does nothing of the kind. The very extract he gives from the inscription shows clearly that the "people of Israel" were in Syria or Palestine in the days of the Egyptian king.

If the *Daily News* young man had looked in the margin of his Bible (assuming him to possess such a book), he would have seen that the Exodus is asserted to have taken place

in 1491 B.C. He says that the tablet is dated 1200 B.C., or 291 years after the Israelites had ceased to "sojourn" in Egypt. Consequently, from his own data it is impossible that the newly-discovered monument can have anything to do with the question of the Jews in Egypt. It simply implies that the people of Israel had been defeated by King Merenptah in Palestine. No one ever disputed the existence of the Israelites in Palestine; no one has ever proved that they "sojourned" in Egypt.

Whenever our explorers turn up a monument that can be connected somehow with the Jews by any effort of the imagination, the orthodox make as much fuss about it as if it were an actual proof of Jonah's three days' free lodging in the whale's interior, or a phonographic record of the voice of Balaam's ass. No ancient monument yet discovered has decided any disputed question in favor of orthodoxy. Each fresh advance in our knowledge demolishes some orthodox theory; and, as was pointed out in these columns in noticing Mr. Petrie's article in the *May Contemporary*, the new inscription of Merenptah effectually disposes of the current Egyptological theories of the Exodus, and demonstrates that the early Jewish legends do not record the really important events of Israelitish history.

Dr. Rufus K. Noyes, writing to the *Boston Investigator*, stands up for the good old term "Atheist." "The word 'Agnostic,'" he says, "is very unsatisfactory to those who do not believe in God or gods. It is cowardly, shuffling, and sneaking; and was coined only for the use of those who are as yet afraid to express themselves in terms representing their real convictions."

The Humanitarian League's circular against vivisection is signed by a large number of representative persons, among those well known to our readers being G. W. Foote and G. J. Holyoake. A reference to this circular in the *Methodist Times* is exquisitely comic. It is said to have "received the signatures of nearly all of the labor leaders, including"—and then follows a list in which appears the name of the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes. How long has this gentleman been a labor leader? And where are his credentials?

This same Methodist paper has some curious references to Robert Burns. "Burns," it says, "had a genius for poetry, and none for goodness." Why, there was more real goodness in Burns's little finger than in the whole of the Methodist editor's body. Certainly he never went about fussing over other people's morals. He had enough to do, perhaps, to look after his own. But then the liquid in his veins was blood, not the washy stuff which creeps along the veins of his pharisaical detractors.

"Burns was cut off in the blossom of his sins." This may be taken as a mild hint that he went to a warm establishment. Of course the Methodist censor is booked through to the other place. Some people, however, would prefer to be with Burns. Bardolph's sentiment about Jack Falstaff might be re-echoed in this case: "Would I were with him, wheresoe'er he be, in heaven or hell." Hell with Burns would be far preferable to Heaven with Methodist prigs.

Another word about this Methodist journal. It is naturally upset by the *Daily News* report of an interview with the Marquis Ito, Prime Minister of Japan, who "expressed the most appalling sentiments with respect to religion," declaring Buddhism and Christianity both to be superstitious, and evincing a preference for Atheism. One thing the Marquis fears, however, is that "the lessons of reverence and duty towards parents and seniors, taught so carefully by Confucius, will be lost to the rising generation." There you are, says the Methodist journal; that is one of the "inevitable results of detestable secular education"; there is "no possible basis of morals except in religion." But this is a display of very gross ignorance. Confucianism is not a religion, but a philosophy. It is entirely secular from beginning to end. It turns away from every kind of supernaturalism. The moral teaching of Confucius has a purely natural basis. It is human, and not divine—as the Methodist editor may discover if he will only take the trouble to obtain a little elementary information on the subject.

Father Smith, a Roman Catholic priest, and a member of the Barrowford School Board, moved a resolution "that no religious teaching be given in any of the schools under the Board." Father Smith's motives are not ours, but we are glad to see him moving in this direction. We only regret that the Barrowford School Board did not accept his resolution. It is merely a question of time, however; secular education must come in the end.

Mr. G. J. Holyoake is contributing an interesting series of articles to our columns. They will eventually be reprinted in a volume, and indeed they are well worth preserving.

Mr. Holyoake, however, is not infallible—a proposition he would never think of disputing. It appears to us that his reference this week to the late Charles Bradlaugh is quite unnecessary and offensive in expression. There was really no need to say, "I had no help from Mr. Bradlaugh," even if the statement were entirely true, as to which we have no means of judging. Mr. Bradlaugh is not alive to state his side of the case, whatever it might have been. Nor is it correct to say that Mr. Bradlaugh was an "ostentatious oath-taker." That he took the oath in courts of law when justice could not be obtained otherwise is perfectly true, but as his position was always understood there was no room for hypocrisy. He preferred affirmation, and in the House of Commons he claimed it; but he never abandoned his right to take the oath, and he exercised it before finally taking his seat for Northampton. Mr. Bradlaugh's principles were not exactly those of Mr. Holyoake, but they were still principles—a fact which Mr. Holyoake overlooks.

M'limo is not the Matabele god, but the Matabele oracle. He is the god's agent, and takes presents for telling lies, just like the priests of Christianity. Unfortunately he has told them pretty thick lately, and his business is under a cloud. The natives were assured that the whites would run away, instead of which they chased the natives.

The official returns of the loss of life caused by the tidal wave which visited Japan on June 15 give over twenty-seven thousand as killed and twenty-five thousand as wounded. Over seven thousand houses were washed away. They cannot want to see the deity riding on the storm there again.

3,377 cholera cases and 2,795 deaths were reported last week from Cairo. The hymn says, "Diseases are thy servants, Lord; they come at thy command." We are pleased to observe, however, that elaborate precautions are taken to ward off the visit of the Lord's servants.

It is estimated that the drought in New South Wales has caused the loss of 9,500,000 sheep. This is a tremendous loss of property. And just imagine the suffering of these poor animals in such circumstances! We commend it to the attention of believers in "Providence."

A new sect has arisen at Hapsal, a small town in Russia. The head of it is the Prophet, a strange-looking man dressed in long flowing robes. He baptises his followers in some sequestered stream in the forest. The men are called the Prophet's "guard," the women his "brides." Twelve of the "brides" are selected to specially minister to him. The same old game! Solomon was right. There is nothing new under the sun—especially in this line of business.

"The Converted Cowboy," dating from Denaby Main, Rotherham, advertises himself as "open to conduct revival services, preach anniversary sermons, and deliver lectures." He describes himself as a "soul-winner." We don't quite understand what a Converted Cowboy means, but we presume the gentleman has left American cows and come over to milk John Bull.

The Jersey and Guernsey clergy have been holding their Decanal Conference, and they seem to have morality—other people's morality—on the brain. The Dean of Guernsey and the Rev. Mr. Watson were very warm on Sunday desecration, while other men of God spoke strongly against "sinners." A resolution was carried to cut these people off, nobody stopping to consider how many worshippers would be left in the Churches. Some of the clergy expressed a wish to see the old form of excommunication revived. Persistent sinners—yes, and persons holding dangerous views—would then catch it hot. After all this thunder the clergy sang a hymn, and then went off to dine at the Royal Hotel, where they kept it up till ten o'clock. It was a long feed, a strong feed, and a feed altogether, my boys. Yes, yes; these parsons are just like other folk, for all the airs they give themselves when acting professionally. And don't they like having their own way!

Rev. J. H. Weeks, at a recent Religious Tract Society's meeting, gave some curious instances of hymn translation into African languages. "Wonderful words of life" came out as "Wonderful words of stomach." "Lord, dismiss us with thy blessing" became "Lord, kick us out softly, softly." "Go, labor on" was translated and sung as "Go, blunder on." Evidently the missionaries are unsuccessful in more ways than one.

When the St. Louis disaster occurred, the Presbyterian General Assembly, sitting at Saratoga, sent "sympathy and earnest prayers." Colonel Ingersoll sent a cheque to the Mayor for 100 dollars (£20). See the difference between tender Christians and hard-hearted infidels!

Yankee scientists mean to get level with "Providence."

They intend to stop his devastating the continent with cyclones. Professor H. A. Hayen, of the Government weather bureau, says that "In fifty years there will not be a big town in the south-west without a tornado trap."

In the case of the Athlone prisoners, named Cunningham, who have been sent to a criminal lunatic asylum, it will be remembered that the murder was done under the delusion that the deceased was possessed by an evil spirit—a delusion for which the lunatics might have cited the belief of Jesus Christ himself.

The Evangelical Alliance has just held a jubilee celebration at Mildmay Park. One of the speakers, Dr. John Smith, of Edinburgh, characterized the advocates of union with Rome as "the hirelings of an unscriptural system." How they love one another!

A writer in *The Burgess* (Birmingham) gives an account of his visit to St. Petersburg. He says that the waiters at the hotels "are Tartars, who, being Mohammedans, are relied upon not to get drunk." What a satire on the Christians!

Rev. Dr. Ross, returning from South Africa, has been preaching at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Newcastle-on-Tyne. He said he was delighted with the generosity of the Christian people out there. A congregation of two hundred people would shell out from £8 to £14 every Sunday. But, alas, he confessed that it was "a rude shock to him to find a distinct line of demarcation between the white men and the natives. In the Dutch Church, as in the Dutch States, the natives had no status. They had not the ordinary rights of human beings. In the school, in the church, they were separated." It is just the same in America. The black delegates to the Republican Convention at St. Louis were refused accommodation at the hotels at first, a compromise being afterwards come to that they should feed in their bedrooms. Yet the Convention was opened with prayer, by a white sky-pilot, to God the father of all.

The six Church parsons of Ealing have signed a round robin against disballing the Lord's Day. Their parishioners are too fond of "games, excursions, and divers kinds of amusements." In other words, they prefer sunshine and open air to the "blessed privilege" of listening to out-of-date sermons. We fear the evil is past cure. The clergy will have to engage in a brisker competition with other Sunday attractions, or go under in the struggle for existence. At any rate, they will not be saved by plaintive appeals in the newspapers.

The Buxton Unitarians are indignant. Mr. Price Hughes has been pitching into them for having only one God, a solitary God without partner or child. They reply that Mr. Hughes has too many Gods, three instead of one. He proves his case from the Bible, and they prove theirs from the Bible. What a book it is, to be sure!

The "Sleeping Fakirs" have got into trouble in the Hungarian capital. They were going through a fortnight's sleep in the Panopticon, and were paid £4 a day for the performance. The proprietor of the show had his suspicions, and concealed two men to watch the sleepers at night. When the hall was closed one of the Fakirs rose in his glass coffin, took a bottle of milk and some provisions from under his pillow, and began to regale himself. After victualling he smoked a cigarette. The watchman rushed upon him and raised an alarm, but the wily Fakir had a ready explanation. He said he thought the fortnight was up, and he took the feed by mistake. Mrs. Besant ought to run over and champion that injured Hindu.

The Preacher and the Cop.

One day, as a clergyman was passing along the street, he saw a policeman taking a drunken man to the lock-up. Indignant at the roughness of the policeman, the minister stopped him and said: "Can you read?"

"Yes."

"Have you read the Gospels?"

"Yes."

"Then you ought to know that you must not ill-treat your fellow man."

The official took stock of the clergyman and inquired in his turn: "Are you a bit of a scholar?"

"Yes."

"Have you read the instructions to policemen?"

"No."

"Ah! Just you read them through, and then we will have some further talk."

It is on the ruins of religion that sound morality must be founded.—*Helvetius*.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, July 19, Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, at 7.30, "Mr. Gladstone on a Future Life."

Tuesday and Wednesday, July 21 and 22, Temperance Hall, Swansea, at 8, Debate with Rev. W. T. Lee on "Christianity or Secularism?"

July 26, Athenæum Hall; 28 and 29, Debate with Mr. Lee at Cardiff.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—July 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.

F. WRIGHT.—Thanks for cutting. See paragraph.

ANTI-PADDOCK LIFE.—We are assured by a good authority that the facts are as stated. Why not write to *Sunday Companion* and ask whether it is owned by the gentleman who owns that sporting paper? Perhaps you will let us see any answer you receive.

UNKNOWN.—Thanks for your trouble in sending us the cuttings from the *Rangoon Gazette*, etc. But the squabble over the Baptist Church is a purely domestic one, which would scarcely interest our readers.

GOTTHEIL.—Thanks. See paragraph.

MISS E. M. VANCE wishes to deny the statement that halls at Battersea were engaged and then abandoned under Mr. Foote's Lecture Scheme. Miss Vance made inquiries, after great difficulty in obtaining information from the then secretary, but she did not engage a hall, as other courses of free lectures in other parts of London were running at that time, and Thursday—the only night available at Battersea—was unsuitable.

H. LEES SUMNER.—Always glad to receive useful papers or cuttings.

E. H.—Mr. Watts is responsible for his own utterances. At the same time, we see no contradiction between what he says in the Catechism and what Mr. Foote said in the Lee Debate. Mr. Watts does not say that Atheism is a theory of the universe. You read more in the sentence you quote than it contains. Mr. Lee, of Cardiff, is the gentleman whom Mr. Foote debated with at Derby.

W. A. TURNER.—Mr. Foote was imprisoned for twelve months in Holloway Gaol from March 1883 to February 1884. He was prosecuted for "blasphemy" in connection with the *Freethinker*. His indictment charged him with being instigated by the Devil to bring the Holy Scriptures and the Christian Religion into disbelief and contempt. Mr. Foote's book giving an account of his imprisonment has long been out of print, but he intends to write a shorter narrative of how he fell among thieves, and to keep it permanently in circulation.

J. M. R.—We will consider the suggestion. Thanks for cuttings.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURE SCHEME.—C. Girtanner, 9s. 6d.; W. D. M., 2s.; A. Lewis, 3s.; Collection in Hyde Park on Sunday, £1 14s 9d.

S. R. THOMPSON.—Very sorry to hear that Mr. Thompson's eyes are no better, but hope for a speedy improvement. We note, as you request, that Mr. James, of London, has gone to Manchester on business, and that he is obliged to cancel all engagements with London Branches for the present season.

YANKEE DOODLE.—We don't care to pursue the subject. It is for the Christians to take it up now. If they like to have a pious paper and a gambling paper run by the same proprietor, with the same advertisements a little altered in both, it is their business. We have put them on the scent, and it is for them to follow it.

P. SABINE.—See "Sugar Plums." We hope the Peckham Rye platform will be adequately supported.

J. ROBERTS reports that the Liverpool Branch has suspended Sunday meetings till the end of August, and that the excursion to Burton was a great success.

E. T. N. (Jersey).—Thanks.

A. E. E.—Shall appear. Thanks also for cuttings.

REF.—The *Referee* is rather out for once. There is no evidence that Paul was a widower. See Mr. Foote's pamphlet, "Saint Paul," in *Bible Heroes*. If the Apostle was ever a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, he must have been married, as that was a condition of membership; but the evidence on that point is of the most shadowy character.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Bible Temperance Educator—Freidenker—Public Opinion—Boston Investigator—Morning Star—Crescent—Las Dominicales de Libre Pensamiento—Isle of Man Times—The Burgess—Newcastle Daily Leader—Progressive Thinker—Newcastle Weekly Chronicle—Metaphysical Magazine—Inquirer—Middlesex County Times—Truthseeker.

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

CORRESPONDENCE should reach us not later than Tuesday if a reply is desired in the current issue. Otherwise the reply stands over till the following week.

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

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

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

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

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

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS.—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—One inch, 4s. 6d.; half column, £1 2s. 6d.; column, £2 5s. Special terms for repetitions.

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

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

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

GEORGE ANDERSON

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

CHARLES WATTS

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

R. FORDER

(28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.)

GEORGE WARD

(91 Mildmay Park, N.)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:—

Per R. Forder: A. King, £5; W. Lamb, £1; E. Lawson, £1; H. B., 10s; G. R. (per E. Truelove), £1; E. Truelove, £1.

Per Miss Vance: G. H. Gask, 10s.; J. Larkin, 2s. 6d.; Mr. and Mrs. Deane, 5s.; F. J. and G. Brady, £1; S. Holmes, 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. Marks, £1.

SUGAR PLUMS.

ON Sunday afternoon the first of a projected series of Freethought open-air demonstrations took place in Hyde Park. Owing to the delay of the permission to bring in a brake, and the consequent uncertainty of position, it was impossible to advertise the meeting adequately. The permission was only received from the Commissioners on Friday, though it might just as well have been sent a fortnight earlier. However, a brake, kindly provided and driven by Mr. Wilson, was drawn up at the Reformers' Tree, serving at once as a platform and an advertisement. People soon gathered around it, and little streams of pedestrians gradually flowed over the distant sward into the assembly, which finally swelled into a very considerable crowd. Mr. Schaller, of the West London Branch, took the chair (metaphorically), and made an appeal on behalf of the National Secular Society. Stirring addresses were then delivered by Messrs. R. Forder, C. Watts, and G. W. Foote, all being heartily applauded. The meeting lasted more than an hour, and kept up its proportions to the finish. Miss Brown and other ladies took up a satisfactory collection.

Another demonstration will be held this afternoon (July 19) in Regent's Park. Time, 3.30; place, opposite Gloucester-gate entrance, between that gate and the "Zoo." Messrs. Foote, Watts, and Cohen will address the gathering. There should be a great rally of friends in the district, who should, if possible, induce their Christian friends to attend.

Last Sunday evening Mr. Charles Watts delivered a brief lecture at the Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road. The brevity of the lecture was caused through the kindness of

Mr. John Glendinning, who was announced to give a dramatic recital. His rendering of a long selection from *Hamlet* was a masterpiece of dramatic art, and so thoroughly did it "catch on" that Mr. Glendinning was compelled to respond to three encores. In each piece given by him he displayed his usual elocutionary powers. Previous to his dramatic recital he gave the audience a graphic account of his visits to Colonel Ingersoll in America.

Mr. Foote resumes the platform at the Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, this evening (July 19), when he will lecture on "Mr. Gladstone on a Future Life." This is the subject of the largest and most important chapter in Mr. Gladstone's new volume entitled *Studies Subsidiary to Bishop Butler's Works*, and considering Mr. Gladstone's great age it is worthy of special attention.

The delegates and friends who attended the Glasgow Conference, and went with the Whit-Monday excursion to Loch Lomond, etc., will be glad to hear that the photographs of the groups taken at Arrochar are now ready. Mr. Hay, the photographer, a member of the Glasgow Branch, has mounted the photos of the three groups, representing respectively the Metropolitan, Midland, and Scottish and Irish sections, on a handsome, delicately-tinted card 12 inches by 15 inches, which can be had post free for 3s., very little above cost price, from D. G. Lindsay, 82 Ingram-street, Glasgow. Specimens are on view at R. Forder's, 28 Stonecutter-street, and J. W. Gott's, 36 Villier-street, Bradford.

The American Secularists are looking forward to the visit of Messrs. Foote and Watts, according to the resolution of the N.S.S. Conference in response to the invitation of the American Secular Union. Mr. Putnam, the president of that organisation, and Mr. Macdonald, the editor of the *Truthseeker*, have both been writing very pressing letters, telling Messrs. Foote and Watts that they *must* come, or it will be a great disappointment to the "saints" on the western side of the Atlantic. Colonel Ingersoll has also written a very cordial letter, saying that he is delighted to hear of this visit, that he will be most happy to see Mr. Watts again, and that he is anxious to meet Mr. Foote. When they are face to face with Ingersoll they will be able to tell him how deep and earnest is the desire of the English Freethinkers to see him over here, and to listen to his eloquence. In fact, it will be a special object with them to bring Ingersoll over to this country.

Messrs. Foote and Watts hope to leave England at the end of the second week in October. They are to have a great reception in New York on October 25, at Chickering Hall, which is a fine and famous building. "I expect to have Ingersoll present," writes Mr. Putnam, "and all the leading Liberals of New York and the vicinity." The American Secular Congress takes place at Chicago, beginning on November 15, and lasting for several days. This gathering has been postponed a month in consequence of the Presidential election, which causes as much disturbance as half-a-dozen big earthquakes. In view of the visit of Messrs. Foote and Watts, a magnificent hall has been engaged for the Congress. Ingersoll is expected, and Mr. Putnam says "We shall have the largest ever held in America."

"Do not fail to come. Now is the time. People are all ready to welcome. We have made up our minds to have you here, and we want you this year. You must heed the call." Personally, he adds: "I am looking for you with all my heart." Evidently there is no escape. Not to go, in these circumstances, would be positively unkind.

The *Cosmopolitan*, of New York, in its July number has a paper on "Great Orators and the Lyceum," by J. B. Pond. It gives portraits of Wendell Philipps, W. Lloyd Garrison, J. B. Gough, Frederick Douglass, and Colonel Ingersoll. Of the latter it says: "Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll is, without doubt, one of the greatest popular orators now living. Ingersoll will never receive the full credit due to his great success as an orator during the present generation, as his vehement assaults on the Christian religion have aroused so many and such powerful enmities. But without regarding his creed, judging him solely by his power as an orator, no nation can to-day produce his equal."

"There are," continues Mr. Pond, "poetry, wit, humor, sarcasm, and tenderest pathos in nearly every lecture he delivers, whether on religion or politics. Colonel Ingersoll is not invited by the lyceums to lecture in their regular courses, as his infidelity arouses the opposition of all orthodox committees. But his fame is such that he does not need aid in procuring audiences. Whenever he wants to lecture, he sends out an agent, 'hires a hall,' and lectures at his own risk, and almost always, when in large cities, to his own great pecuniary benefit. In the smaller towns the church influence is always too much for him, and it does not pay him to lecture there."

The Bible Temperance Educator, edited by the Rev. John Pyper, reprints in three successive numbers Mr. Foote's pamphlet entitled *Bible and Beer*. It does this without so much as saying "By your leave." However, we are rather glad that Mr. Foote's views are thus brought before the Bible Temperance people. They will see what has to be answered. Whether they will see it answered is a very different matter.

Editor Pyper laments that "Christian writers should supply the weapons which this infidel scribe uses so freely and deftly in his onslaught upon Christianity." Well, it is sad. However, Editor Pyper is quite satisfied that Mr. Foote has employed all his "logical energy, scholastic acquirements, and controversial skill" in vain; which, of course, only means that he has not converted Editor Pyper, which he never expected to do.

The third reading of the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill was carried by a majority of 38 in the House of Lords, the voting being 142 to 104. It was bitterly opposed in a pious speech by the Duke of Argyll, who undoubtedly believes himself the wisest, if not the best, man on this planet. Viscount Halifax, representing the Church Union, said that 2,675 clerical signatures against the Bill had been received in four days. The Bishop of Salisbury, the Bishop of London, and the Bishop of Ely spoke against the "incestuous" measure, the last making tasty references to Sodom and Gomorrah. In the division no less than twenty Bishops, headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, voted against the third reading. Cardinal Vaughan had also issued a circular calling upon the Catholic members of both Houses to uphold the law of the Church. The clericals made a last great effort, but they were ignominiously defeated, and they have lost their last citadel—the House of Lords.

Preaching recently at the Unitarian Church, Chatham-place, Hackney, the Rev. S. Fletcher Williams placed Giordano Bruno above Calvin and Luther. "Had not the ground been cleared," he said, "by a Savonarola, a Bruno, and an Erasmus, the chances are that we should still have been Romanists, enslaved to all the superstitions whose absurdities the 'heroic fury' of Bruno, the burning zeal of Savonarola, and the laughing philosophy of Erasmus helped to abolish."

Reynolds's Newspaper has a trenchant paragraph on Mr. Gladstone's argument for miracles in his new Butler volume. It says that the real miracle is that "a great mind like Mr. Gladstone's, almost alone among competent thinkers, cannot yet understand that the interest of miracles is not that which could attach to an occurrence out of the fixed order of nature, but that which attaches to the study of the defective, irregular, or morbid action of the human brain or anatomy."

Mr. W. Heaford delivered two successful lectures last Sunday at Wood Green and Edmonton. He had some feeble opposition in the morning, and in the evening the accredited Christian Evidence lecturer made an attempt at brawling in order to obtain an audience. His efforts were crowned with only a minimum of success, while Mr. Heaford's audience grew larger and more appreciative than ever.

Mr. Heaford to-day delivers two out-door addresses, and also lectures in the evening at the Bradlaugh Club and Institute on "Religion and Insanity."

Mr. A. B. Moss lectured at Northampton on Sunday (under Mr. Foote's Lecture Scheme) to large open-air audiences. He has promised to visit Northampton again in October.

Joseph Symes, in the May 16 number of his *Liberator*, writes an article on Mr. Foote's *Shadow of the Sword*—the new edition recently published by the Humanitarian League. "Mr. Foote," he says, "always writes with knowledge of his subject and with close and vivid reasoning." Mr. Symes, however, does not believe that war will cease. He says he cannot close his eyes to the great Battle of Life which pitiless Nature has arranged for this world, and he fears that when we cease to fight we shall grow soft and effeminate and "drop back into the primeval jelly-specs out of which we came." We venture to suggest to our old friend and colleague that quiet co-operation has played a larger part than noisy warfare in the development of civilisation, and that if men cease to fight each other they will always find exercise for their courage and heroism in contending against Nature. A fireman is as brave as a soldier, and a lifeboatman as heroic as any sailor who thunders with our guns against England's enemies on the ocean.

The *Liberator* reproduces Mr. Wheeler's review in the *Freethinker* of Mr. Robert Buchanan's poem, *The Devil's Case*.

Mr. Foote's first debate with the Rev. W. T. Lee takes place next Tuesday and Wednesday evenings (July 21 and

22) in the Temperance Hall, Swansea, which is a very large building. Of course, the Christians will be in a great majority, and Mr. Foote will probably have uphill work. Fortunately he is used to it. The subject to be debated is "Christianity or Secularism : Which is the Better for Man?"

Mr. Foote has been invited to open the winter session of the Glasgow Branch in September. He has accepted the invitation.

Mr. James, who has for some time been bravely lecturing under rather adverse conditions at Deptford, has gone to Manchester. He will lecture to-day (July 19) at the Town Hall-square, Rochdale, at 3.30, on "Woman : Past, Present, and Future."

The Camberwell Branch is having very large meetings on Peckham Rye on Sunday afternoons. Unfortunately there was some disorder last Sunday, and we hope the South London Freethinkers will turn up to-day (July 19) in strong force to support the platform.

We hope our friends in all parts of the country will insist on being supplied with the *Freethinker* by their newsvendor. The wholesale agents are in some cases very unfriendly to this journal, and would like to do it an injury. Sometimes they positively refuse to supply it, sometimes they report it as unobtainable, and sometimes they quietly omit it from their parcels. They will generally give way under pressure, but without it they oppose serious obstacles to our circulation.

TYPES OF RELIGIONISTS.

IV.—THE BROAD CHURCHMAN.

THE Broad Churchman is distinguishable from his exalted brother of the High Church, and his miserably-humble brother of the Low Church, by having a certain modicum of brains. His honesty is the more questionable. He can find you thirty-nine good reasons for interpreting the Thirty-nine Articles in any way he chooses. But the interpretation is apt to betray that the secret deity of his adoration is the unholy Trinity of L. S. D. He is great at the reconciliation of faith and science—that is, of fiction and fact, and thinks a splendid emulsion may be produced by whisking together the oil of religion with the water of reason. "Observe how finely they mix," he will say before he allows them to settle. He is fond of talking of the "divine process of evolution," and, however many the process has crushed out, he is assured of its divinity, since it has brought him to the top. He has given up what that eminent pietist, "Dod Grile," calls "the erroneous doctrine that God made the world in six days and was arrested on the seventh." Days, even when defined as "evening and morning," mean long geological periods. The Sabbath was instituted to commemorate the fact that the Lord took a long while about his handiwork. The Bible must not be read in the light of the ideas of the times of the writers, but in the full blaze of modern information, remembering always that the Bible is not, but contains, the word of God.

The Broad Churchman, it must be confessed, is a bit of a humbug. He stands up and says, "God spake these words"; or, "The Lord said unto Moses"—when he believes nothing of the kind. He does not face the inconsistency, but rests on the law which permits him to minister, and even preach, the errancy of the Scriptures. He esteems the Church for its comprehension, and its failure to disturb him and his heresies. It is vain to remind him that legal restrictions are not the measure of moral duties. He has good and sufficient reasons for remaining where he is. Why, he thinks, should the National Church, with all its endowments and emoluments, be given over to the bigots and the fools? So he tries his best to shirk the telling of lies, though he cannot help countenancing them a little, since the strong meat of criticism, which he himself digests, may upset the stomachs of the feeble among his congregation. He sees the inferences from the Higher Criticism, but refuses to draw them. He may let you know in private that he thinks Jesus mistaken as to Moses and Daniel; but these are not subjects for popular exposition.

The Broad Churchman likes to sit on both sides of the fence. He wants the credit of being on the side of progress, and the cash on the side of orthodoxy. He wishes to make things pleasant, first for himself, and then all round. So he proceeds to coat over the old brimstone pills of theology with thick layers of treacle. He pitches out the old rotten cargo, here a little, there a little, though what he retains has been infected by what he has got rid of. In fact, it is difficult to say what he does, and what he does not, retain.

The Broad Churchman is broad in interpretation. He does not like to be pinned down to the evident meaning of the story of Balaam or of the Thirty-nine Articles. He asks

for a little latitude, and he takes a good deal. Christianity to him means anything in general and nothing in particular. His teaching is as nebulous as the third person of the ever-blessed Trinity. But there is one thing he holds to—faith in an undefinable God. Give him God, 'tis all he asks, for he knows his own stipend follows in the deity's train. As to what God is, all that can be ascertained is that he is an infinite person of masculine gender. God's antagonist, Satan, he has superannuated, and he never mentions hell to ears polite. These are allegories, but it is blasphemy to suggest that God is also an allegory. For the rest he follows Paul's practice of being all things to all men—and women. He will take part in an afternoon Dorcas Meeting, and have a stall at the Alhambra in the evening.

Jesus Christ said: "Ye cannot serve two masters." The Broad Churchman is his confutation. He serves God, and also the world and the flesh at the same time. He attempts to hold with the hare of orthodoxy, and runs with the hounds of free inquiry, and only totters in a position of unstable equilibrium. Is he a genuine Christian? No more than I am. But he is a clergyman with four hundred a year—a sum never likely to be reached by

UNCLE BENJAMIN.

TOOT!

(A long way after Rudyard Kipling.)

If you ever 'eard a circus band 'longside a roundabout,
If you ever cussed a bloomin' German band,
If you ever wished to send a blamed piano up the spout,
This little song o' mine you'll understand.

For my luck's been wuss nor 'ard, an' I've got my marchin'-card

To a barricks which this Tommy doesn't suit.

(Cornet—Toot! toot!)

W'y, they've chucked me into 'eaven, and my poor old ears are riven

With the—

Chorus—Too! too! Tutu! tutu! Too! too! Toot! toot! toot!

Ow the toot!

Blooming toot!

It's enough to make a man get up an' scoot!

It's the same both night an' morn,

An' I wish I'd ne'er been born

A second time to 'Too! too! tutu! Toot!

ff Whoopee. Let 'em rip it. Too! too! tutu!

Toot! toot! toot!

If you play your cards for safety when you have your run o' life,

An' are lookin' for a colder place nor 'ell,

You will thank your stars and gaiters if you sneak a swaddy's wife,

Or play the loose, for 'eaven ain't 'alf as well

As the place where souls are toasted, or at most just 'alf-way roasted

In the way a fellow sits an' toasts his foot.

(Cornet—Toot! toot!)

For it's gospel truth I'm givin', there's only rows in 'eaven

With the—

Chorus—Too! too! etc.

When you land they take you in an' fake you up a bloomin' treat

With a gownd that's 'alf-a-dozen sizes big,

An' they stick you in the chorus with a cloud to be a seat,

An' you feel ashamed to have to wear the rig.

You have just to sit and shiver, like a chunk o' bloomin' liver,

An' wish yer'd got the order o' the boot.

(Cornet—Toot! toot!)

It would petrify a geyser, or a patent ice-cream freezer,

An' you're sure to cuss the—

Chorus—Too! too! etc.

If I ever get a chanst to skip an' leave the bloomin' place,

You can bet I'll very soon get up an' get;

I have tried to start the angels on a handicappin' race,

But the duffers hadn't pluck to lay a bet.

If they'd give me a court-martial, they would find that I ain't partial

To their company, which Tommy doesn't suit;

(Cornet—Toot! toot!)

An' I'd swop the place for Blazes, for their racket nearly crazes

Me when they start off with—

Chorus—Too! too! tutu! Toot! toot! toot!

Ow the toot!

Blarsted toot!

From the battered old tin trumpets that they toot.

It's a fair pack-drill parade

That the good get when they're dead,

For they've got to keep on whoopin' Tutu! Toot!

toot! toot!

THE GABERLUNZIE,

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

REPORT of Executive Meeting held at Club Union Buildings, June 25; the President in the chair. Present: Messrs. E. Bater, T. Gorniot, W. Heaford, F. Schaller, H. J. Stace, C. Watts, J. M. Wheeler, G. J. Warren, P. Sabine, M. Laofor, W. Leat, and the Secretary.

The Secretary reported that the following branches had omitted to send in the name of the delegate elected to represent them upon the Executive: Finsbury Park, Islington, West London, Bethnal Green, Lambeth, Lewisham, and Wood Green.

The minutes of previous meetings were read, and the Council proceeded to elect the Secretary and Sub-Committees for the ensuing year.

Miss Vance was re-elected as Assistant Secretary, and in view of the extra duties which would devolve upon her with the change of offices, etc., the stipend was increased 10s. weekly.

Benevolent Fund Committee.—Messrs. R. Forder, S. Hartmann, G. J. Warren, V. Roger, E. Bater, Misses A. Brown and A. Fry, were elected.

Committee for Examining Lecturers.—Messrs. J. M. Wheeler, J. Samson, and V. Roger.

Finance Committee.—Messrs. E. W. Quay and F. Schaller.

The President reported the receipt of letters, and the replies thereto, from Mr. James Anderson, who, after having given notice of appeal against the decision of the Executive, had withdrawn from the Society.

The progress of Mr. Foote's scheme for defeating the Blasphemy Laws was also reported to the meeting, and it was resolved that a special meeting be called to consider the Articles of Association when finished.

An invitation from the Peace Association to take part in a demonstration in Hyde Park was accepted, and Messrs. Foote, Watts, Moss, Heaford, and Cohen were elected as delegates.

The President reported the result of the Conference called by the London Trades Council *re* the Government Education Bill. In company with Messrs. Watts and Moss, he had moved a resolution on behalf of the N.S.S., which was carried unanimously.

A letter from Mr. Touzeau Parris, tendering his resignation as Vice-President, was read, and the resignation accepted unanimously. The President said that he had invited Mr. Parris to be present, and that in view of that gentleman's recent actions, and long inattention to the Society's business, he concurred in the vote.

The list of attendances for the past year was ordered to be published, in accordance with the resolution passed at the Conference. It was resolved that a list of open-air lectures for August should be published, particulars for which to be forwarded to Miss Vance at 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C., by July 18, that being absolutely the latest date.

E. M. VANCE, *Assist. Sec.*

List of Attendances from June, 1895, to April, 1896.

Summomed to 11.	Attended.
President.—Mr. G. W. Foote	11
Vice-Presidents.—Mr. C. Watts	9
" " V. Roger	2
" " S. Hartmann	5
" " E. Truelove	2
" " J. M. Wheeler	8
" " J. Samson	4
" " W. Heaford	8
" " R. Forder	4
" " A. B. Moss	4
" " T. Parris	2
" " E. Bater	9
" " C. Cohen	4
Branch delegates:—	
Bethnal Green	1
Battersea	6
Finsbury Park	3
Finsbury	9
Lambeth	7
Lewisham	2
Hanley	7
Westminster	9
Wood Green	3
Camberwell	5
Islington	7
West London	6
North-West London	4

The entire theory of the Church is antagonistic to any concentrated or consistent scheme for raising the earthly condition of the suffering masses.—*W. R. Greg.*

The crime of inquiry is one which religion has never forgiven.—*Shelley.*

A FREETHINKER'S THOUGHTS.

PRAYER is trying to shake fruit from a barren tree.
 All the hypocrisy of the world is not yet painted black.
 The hand that holds the crozier is the hand that curses the world.
 Every sect and every party are opposed to liberty and progress.
 Men have been punished for being true more than for being false.
 What evidence is there that any God inhabits the wilderness of the sky?
 Man takes more interest in God than God takes in man, or else facts are liars.
 There is no more reason for looking up than for looking down with reverence.
 There is no more unhappy being than he who goes through life afraid of God.
 A man would rather be seen by all the gods in the universe when he is doing wrong than to be seen by another man.
 The immensity of the universe, as revealed by the telescope, makes Nazareth, as seen through the Gospels, seem insignificant.
 The old saying, that to know a man thoroughly you must know his grandparents, may be applied to the Roman Catholic religion.
 The person who reads the Bible with his own understanding will not agree with the Christian Church as to its divine character.
 A stone upon the wayside was adorned with the motto: "God is love." Another stone not far away bore this inscription: "Fear God." This seemed very much like printing on one side of a dog-kennel, "This dog is gentle," and on the other, "Beware of the dog."
 L. K. WASHBURN.

God a Reflection of Man.

A god's ideas of right and wrong are those of the people by whom he is created. Wandering tribes do not, as a rule, consider it wrong to rob outside the circle of their clan; their God is, therefore, a robber like themselves. If they settle in a fertile country, pass into the agricultural state, build towns, and become peaceful citizens with property of their own, they change their views respecting theft, and accordingly their god forbids it in his laws. But it sometimes happens that the sayings and doings of the tent-god are preserved in writings which are accepted as revelation by the people of a later and a better age. Then may be observed the curious, and by no means pleasing, spectacle of a people out-growing their religion, and believing that their god performed actions which would be punished by the gallows if they were done by men.—*Winwood Reade, "The Martyrdom of Man," chap. vi., p. 178; 1872.*

Science and Religion.

The reconciliation of religion with scientific truth is reaffirmed by Editor Carus, in a late number of his paper, as the special work of the *Open Court*. I do not enjoy Dr. Carus's confidence, or I would advise him that in the nature of things it can't be done. Religion is the absence of science, as obscurity is the absence of light. He may dispel religion with science, or he may eclipse science with religion; but he can no more reconcile them than he can reconcile an unlighted room with an electric illuminator. When the illumination takes place, the darkness is no longer there. The religionists are still groping beyond the reach of the rays, but those who stand in the light of science have no excuse for pretending not to see. There are fakirs who close their eyes, hang the placard, "I am blind," on their chests, and appeal for support like those who were born without sight, or have since lost it. In the observer they induce that tired feeling akin to the weariness of discouragement.—*G. Macdonald, in "Truthseeker."*

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CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAN FREMANTLE AND CHRISTIANITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I see that you comment upon my protest against Dean Fremantle being allowed to remain as a *paid* minister in the Christian Church of this land, because he publicly denies every article of the Christian Creed. Allow me to explain. Dean Fremantle's case is, I suppose, quite the worst scandal that has ever been brought to light in our Church. He is not a heretic; he does not hold any particular false doctrine respecting Christian faith. He is not an Arius or Eutyches, a Nestorius or Apollinaris, or even all these in one—he is, in your sense of the word, a "Freethinker." He denies, as Canon Gore says, "the whole idea of Revelation." Not only so, but Dean Fremantle wishes it to be publicly understood, and taken for granted, that the clergy, in reciting the creeds in public worship, do not believe themselves one single word of what they are saying. Fremantle writes (*Fortnightly Review*, March, 1887; p. 458) of the clergy and the Articles of Faith: "The clergy should not be required to make any subscription at all." They may believe anything or nothing. Although this sort of thing seems to us Christians most outrageous fraud and dishonesty, Dean Fremantle jocosely adds, respecting this shameless duplicity: "It is quite possible that much that is a puzzle to our generation will not be so to the next." To illustrate the manner in which the Dean proposes that an entire infidel, who does not believe in a God at all, may be a well-paid clergyman in our Church, or, for that matter, Archbishop of Canterbury, he says, on page 454: "They [the infidel clergy] will feel able to speak of God as just and loving, since the supreme power, *ex hypothesi*, includes mankind, the leading portions of the world, with all its noblest ideals." These clergy, although they are to invoke in public worship "God the Father of Heaven," "God the Son, Redeemer of the World," "God the Holy Ghost," "The Holy Trinity, Three Persons and one God," are only to do so with this mental reservation. I quote the Dean's words: "They (the clergy) need not quarrel with those who think of the Supreme Power rather after the analogy of force or law, than according to the strict idea of personality."

Mr. Editor of the *Freethinker*, perhaps you will kindly tell us what you and your co-"Freethinkers" "think" of such a Dean in the Church of England, and the Bishops who, as Canon Gore calls them, are the Dean's "accomplices." The Dean's own Bishop entirely endorses his position, and calls Fremantle "a man of God" with "a diversity of gifts"—yes, very "diverse," from the hitherto acknowledged "gifts" of a "Christian" teacher.

A very universally esteemed and influential statesman of the day wrote to me lately respecting Dean Fremantle, that "he knew him as a great suppressor of Christian doctrine" which he is paid £1,000 a year to teach. This is an unique and unprecedented piece of villainy in the annals of the English Church that would be utterly impossible in any other profession; so that, under the garments of a dean or bishop, fraud, villainy, and dishonesty of the most infamous kind can find a comfortable and suitable home. Is it not time for honest Christians to unfurl the banner of a call to arms; for at Ripon, under the ægis of the Bishop, Dean Fremantle is striving to place not only "Theology," but common "morality under changed conditions" indeed; making the very name of "Bishop" or "Dean" a synonymous term for a rogue of the very worst kind?

IGNATIUS, O.S.B. Monk.

MR. FORDER CORRECTS A FALSE STATEMENT.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—It has come to my hearing that a statement is being made that a sum of money (five pounds) was legated by the late Mr. Temple, of Balham, to the Battersea Branch of the N.S.S.

Permit me to say that I had four wills of Mr. Temple in my possession, three of which were destroyed by him after certain events occurred, in none of which was the Battersea Branch alluded to, nor in any letter or conversation of Mr. Temple with me.

I must, further, say that every instruction of the late Mr. Temple, to my personal knowledge, was faithfully carried out by the executor.

ROBERT FORDER, Hon. Sec. N.S.S.

FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

So far from it being irreligious or irreverent to disbelieve that our prayers will modify the laws of the universe, it seems to me that the true reverence is to recognize our presumption in daring to expect such a modification.—*C. E. Plumtre*, "Natural Causation."

Science commits suicide when it adopts a creed.—*Professor T. H. Huxley*.

Disease is the natural state of Christians.—*Pascal*.

Be not simply good; be good for something.—*Thoreau*.

Science is the getting of knowledge from experience on the assumption of uniformity in nature, and the use of such knowledge to guide the actions of men.—*W. K. Clifford*.

Hypocrisy will serve as well

To propagate a church as zeal;

So, round white stones will serve, they say,

As well as eggs—to make hens lay.

—*Samuel Butler*, "Miscellaneous Thoughts," 1660.

To argue with persons who have renounced their reason is like giving medicine to the dead.—*Paine*.

You cannot reason a man out of an opinion he has never been reasoned into.—*Swift*.

To manacle the mind is an evil infinitely greater than to imprison the body.—*Renan*.

Conscious and confessed ignorance is a better state of mind than the fancy without the reality of knowledge.—*Grote*.

Words without any positive signification are the everlasting engines of fraud.—*Horne Tooke*.

One of the greatest pains to human nature is the pain of a new idea. It is, as common people say, so "upsetting." It makes you think that, after all, your favorite notions may be wrong, your firmest beliefs ill-founded.—*Walter Bagshot*.

I will call no being good who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow creatures; and if such a being can sentence me to hell for not so calling him, to hell I will go.—*J. S. Mill*.

As men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect.—*R. W. Emerson*.

PROFANE JOKES.

When old Bridgman, the herbalist, was ill two clergymen called upon him to offer spiritual consolation. They were warmly received by the sick man, who asked them to pray for him, and expressed his belief in religion as a "great thing for a man, especially in case of sickness." To this one of the good ministers replied that it was "good at all times, for the young and the middle-aged, and when a man got to be old, infirm, and lame, its worth could not be told." At this the eyes of the sick man brightened, and, forgetting his weakness, he said fervently: "I know something that beats it all hollow for lameness, and that is pure skunk's grease, without a blanket blank particle of lard in it. I've got it to sell at a shilling a pint."

A little Washington boy, when reminded by his mother that God knew it when he was naughty, replied, with touching, childish confidence, that God wouldn't tell.

A colored deacon gave the new minister some valuable advice, and it will apply to the clergy generally. "You can talk on most any subject," he said, "but if you want to keep peace in this church you mus' tech the Ten Comman'ments very lightly."

Bacon—"I see they've put a sounding board back of the minister's pulpit. What do you suppose that's for?" Egbert—"Why, it is to throw out the sound." Bacon—"Gracious! If you threw out the sound, there wouldn't be anything left in the sermon."

Once upon a time, ever and ever so long ago, there was a man named Adam. And his wife's name was Eve. And there arose a mighty epidemic of measles in that land. But Eve wasn't afraid. She had Adam.

He had judged it wise to leave the parental mansion for a season, and when returning and nearing home his heart failed him, and, meeting the rector of the parish, explained to him his difficulty. The rector strongly advised him to go on, quoted to him the parable of the Prodigal Son, and eventually succeeded in persuading him. Meeting again a few days after, the younger man having a very limp and forlorn aspect, the rector said, cheerfully: "Well, I suppose we've killed the fatted calf?" To which the prodigal replied: "Well, er-er no, we didn't have any veal, but they jolly well near killed the Prodigal Son."

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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, G. W. Foote, "Mr. Gladstone on a Future Life."

BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Balls Pond): 7.15, W. Heaford, "Religion and Insanity." July 25, at 8.30, Summer Smoking Concert.

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, E. Pack, "The Way to Pray, and What to Say."

WESTMINSTER BRANCH N.S.S. (42 Vincent-street): 8, Half-yearly general meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, A. B. Moss, "Science the Savior." CAMBERWELL BRANCH (Peckham Rye): 3.15, E. Pack, "The Bible and Morality."

CLERKENWELL GREEN (Finsbury Branch): 11.30, E. Calvert will lecture.

HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE (Middlesex side): 7, C. Cohen will lecture. Thursday, July 23, at 8, C. Cohen will lecture.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, C. Cohen will lecture; 3.30, E. Calvert, "The Soul." Wednesday, July 22, at 8, a lecture.

ISLINGTON (Highbury Fields, Highbury Corner): 10.45, Stanley Jones will lecture.

KILBURN (High-road, corner of Victoria-road): 7, Lucretius Keen, "The Origin of Man."

KINGSLAND (Ridley-road): 11.30, W. Heaford will lecture.

OLD PIMLICO PIER: 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "The Curse of the Cross."

REGENT'S PARK (near Gloucester Gate)—N.W. Branch: 8, Demonstration—speeches by G. W. Foote, O. Watts, and C. Cohen.

VICTORIA PARK (near the fountain): 11.15, J. Rowney will lecture; 3.15, A. B. Moss will lecture.

MILE END WASTE: 11.30, J. Fagan, "Secularism and Christianity."

COUNTRY.

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

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

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, W. H. Grainger, "Agnosticism the Ultimate of Thought." 8, Announcements as to projected excursion, etc.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BARNSELEY (May Day Green): 6.30, W. Dyson will lecture.

NORTHAMPTON (Cow Meadow): G. Standing—11.15, "Absurdities of the Church"; 6.30, "Christianity and Social Progress."

Lecturers' Engagements.

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

A. B. MOSS, 44 Oredon-road, London, S.E.—July 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.

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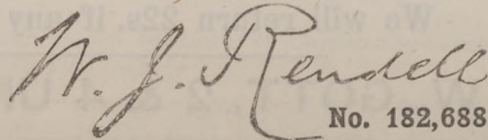
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