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PROFESSOR BURY'S "GIBBON."

ROBERT BURNS has been dead a hundred years, and his fame is far wider and more assured than it was when he "shuffled off this mortal coil"—in his case a coil indeed. His life is now celebrated as a world-event, and his poetry is regarded as one of the most glorious contributions to human literature. Edward Gibbon died two years before Burns. He was not cut off prematurely like his great Scottish contemporary. He finished and revised his magnificent masterpiece, which stands higher in the world's esteem than it did a hundred years ago. Gibbon has taken his place with the little band of the great historians of all time. Critic after critic, of the highest scholarship and renown, has paid tribute to his power, learning, and genius. And although he has been freely censured by orthodox critics for his treatment of Christianity, the great Cardinal Newman was constrained to write: "It is melancholy to say it, but the chief, perhaps the only English writer who has any claim to be considered an ecclesiastical historian, is the unbeliever Gibbon."

There are many reputable editions of Gibbon in the market, foremost of which (perhaps) is Dean Milman's, re-edited by Dr. William Smith, and published in eight fine volumes by Murray. It is probable, however, that the place of honor will henceforth be occupied by Professor Bury's edition, which will extend to seven volumes. The publishers are Messrs. Methuen and Co., who have done justice to their side of the production. The first volume, which is just issued, is handy in size and shape, and admirably printed. It ends with the fourteenth chapter. The second volume, therefore, will open with the famous fifteenth chapter on the rise and spread of Christianity. We look forward to it with great interest, of course on account of Professor Bury's notes. He is a ripe scholar, thoroughly conversant with all the results of historical research and criticism during the last century, and is apparently untainted by the orthodox bigotry which—to borrow an expression from Charles Lamb—has damned Gibbon at a venture.

Meanwhile we draw our readers' attention to Professor Bury's introduction. His general verdict on Gibbon is as follows:—"Gibbon thus ranks with Thucydides and Tacitus, and is perhaps the clearest example that brilliance of style and accuracy of statement—in Livy's case conspicuously divorced—are perfectly compatible in an historian." Here is another striking passage:—

"But Gibbon has his place in literature not only as the stylist, who never lays aside his toga when he takes up his pen, but as the expounder of a large and striking idea in a sphere of intense interest to mankind, and as a powerful representative of certain tendencies of his age. The guiding idea or 'moral' of his history is briefly stated in his epigram: 'I have described the triumph of barbarism and religion.' In other words, the historical development of human societies, since the second century after Christ, was a retrogression (according to ordinary views of 'progress'), for which Christianity was mainly to blame. This conclusion of Gibbon tended in the same direction as the theories of Rousseau; only, while Rousseau dated the decline from the day when men left Arcadia, Gibbon's era was the death of Marcus Aurelius."

Professor Bury says it is useless to deny the general truth of Gibbon's point of view. Optimism may shut its eyes, and faith may evade the facts, but "for an inquirer

not blinded by religious prepossessions, or misled by comfortable sophistries, Gibbon really expounded one of the chief data with which the philosophy of history has to reckon." Why barbarism and religion triumphed together, and retarded for so many centuries what the moderns regard as progress, is a very awkward question. "Answers," says Professor Bury, "have been given since Gibbon's day, engaging to the intellect, but always making some demand on the faith—answers for which he would have had the same smile as for Leo's Dogmatic Epistle." Professor Bury does not attempt an answer himself. He says there is reason for thinking the question insoluble; and, after all, the function of the philosophy of history "is not to solve problems, but to transform them." What this means we do not precisely understand. To us it seems oracular, but some persons may find it soothing. Professor Bury might say, if pressed for an explanation, that it is for religion to answer a question profoundly affecting its own interests; in which case we should agree with him up to a certain point.

Gibbon's special treatment of Christianity is dealt with in the following passage:—

"But, though the moral of Gibbon's work has not lost its meaning yet, it is otherwise with the particular treatment of Christian theology and Christian institutions. Our point of view has altered, and, if Gibbon were writing now, the tone of his 'candid and rational inquiry' would certainly be different. His manner would not be that of sometimes open, sometimes transparently veiled, dislike; he would rather assume an attitude of detachment. He would be affected by that merely historical point of view, which is a note of the present century and its larger tolerances; and more than half disarmed by that wide diffusion of unobtrusive scepticism among educated people, which seems to render offensive warfare superfluous. The man of letters admires the fine edge of subtle sarcasm, wielded by Gibbon with such skill and effect; while the historian is interested in an historical standpoint of the last century. Neither the historian nor the man of letters will any longer subscribe, without a thousand reserves, to the theological chapters of the *Decline and Fall*, and no discreet inquirer would go there for his ecclesiastical history. Yet we need not hide the fact that Gibbon's success has in a large measure been due to his scorn for the Church; which, most emphatically expressed in the theological chapters, has, as one might say, spiced his book. The attack of a man, equipped with erudition, and of perfectly sober judgment, on cherished beliefs and revered institutions, must always excite the interest, by irritating the passions, of men. Gibbon's classical moderation of judgment, his temperate mood, was responsible, as well as foreign education and the influence of French thought, for his attitude to Christianity and to Mahometanism. He hated excess, and the immoderation of the multitude. He could suffer the tolerant piety of a learned abbé or 'the fat slumbers of the Church'; but with the religious faith of a fanatical populace or the ardor of its demagogues his reason was unable to sympathize. In the spirit of Cicero or Tacitus he despised the superstitions of the vulgar, and regarded the unmeasured enthusiasm of the early Christians as many sober Churchmen regard the fanaticism of Islam. He dealt out the same measure to the opposite enthusiasm of Julian the Apostate. His work was all the more effective, because he was never dogmatic himself. His irony should not be construed as insincerity, but rather as showing that he was profoundly—one might say, constitutionally—convinced of the truth of that sceptical conclusion which has been, in a different spirit, formulated precisely by the Bishop of Oxford; 'there is no room for sweeping denunciations

or trenchant criticisms in the dealings of a world whose falsehoods and veracities are separated by so very thin a barrier."

It may be doubted whether Gibbon would really have cultivated that "attitude of detachment" which is often but a disguise of cowardice. Although he was incapable of fanaticism, he was not without convictions, and in any circumstances he would probably have let his readers perceive them. As for his "manner," we venture to remind Professor Bury that Gibbon wrote while the Blasphemy Laws were savagely operative, and sarcasm was so much safer than invective. Mill told John Morley that Gibbon's style was to him "detestable." But sagacious readers could understand clearly enough what was Gibbon's real opinion of Christianity, whereas Mill kept his opinions to himself while he lived, and only left them to be published after his death.

Professor Bury makes short work of Gibbon's orthodox detractors. Dean Milman, for instance, spoke of his "bold and disingenuous attack on Christianity." Upon this Professor Bury remarks that "it is one of those futile charges which it would be impossible to prove and impossible to disprove." "Such imputations," he severely adds, "are characteristic of theologians in the heat of controversy, and may be condoned to politicians in the heat of electioneering, but in an historical critic are merely an impertinence." But the worthy Dean Milman was not merely an historical critic; he was a professional theologian, a paid defender of the Christian faith.

Let us close with Professor Bury's final praise of Gibbon. He calls the *Decline and Fall* the "greatest history of modern times," and says that although Gibbon, living a hundred years ago, is behind date in many details and in some departments of importance, he is secure of immortality, and "in the main things he is still our master, above and beyond 'date.'" G. W. FOOTE.

CRYING FOR THE MOON.

"To know
That which before us lies in daily life
Is the prime wisdom."—MILTON, "*Paradise Lost*."

THE story of beautiful Endymion, "the boy who cried for the moon," is usually regarded as a poetical figure personifying Sleep ever young, kissed by the chaste moonbeams, the fair Diana. Yet such an incident may have occurred as an actual fact. Nay, it is so related in an anecdote told in W. Cooke Taylor's *Natural History of Society*. He says: "A boy, about three years old, noticed the moon probably for the first time, and jumped to the conclusion that it was a golden cake; he made it at once his *summum bonum*; he cried, and shouted, and roared for his unattainable golden cake, and all the arts of coaxing and entreaty were used to pacify him in vain; confectioneries, in every variety, were offered and rejected with scorn; the urchin would have his golden cake, and he would have nothing else. The end was that he went to bed crying and supperless."

Fact or fiction, the story has a moral. "Men," says Pope, "leave their spheres and rush into the skies." The result is, of course, disastrous. Star-gazing is apt to lead to tumbling in ditches. Information in regard to supramundane affairs is as vague and uncertain now as it was to those whose curiosity was first excited on such topics. Mystery is but another name for ignorance, and the fascination of a mystery is the opportunity of the charlatan. The first cunning rascal who told a savage that he had a charm to drive away evil spirits was the founder of all priesthoods. "Do thus and thus, and you shall live in glory after you are dead," is ever the cry of the rogue to the fool. The inculcation of submissiveness instead of self-reliance, of dependence on God instead of valiant striving, of poverty here for the sake of happiness hereafter, smacks of the charlatan; and the worst form of tyranny that ever cumbered the earth was built up on this doctrine. The function of the ministers of Christ, whether they know it or not, is simply that of spiritual police. As Burns says, "the fear of hell's the hangman's whip to haud the wretch in order."

All prayers are a crying for the moon. "O Eternal and Unchanging Omnipotence, alter Thy Laws for our benefit," virtually asks the Archbishop of Canterbury when he orders special prayers. And the trouble is that, while reliance is

placed on prayer, material methods of amelioration are neglected. The consistent Christian should follow the practice of the Peculiar People, and refuse to call in the doctor, while believing that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick" (Jas. v. 15).

To ask eternal happiness as the reward of right-doing in this little life is crying for the moon. The expectation of everlasting bliss and the dread of unending woe quite dwarf the concerns of this little world into insignificance. The big golden cake up there is so glorious that to obtain it we give up our mundane meal. We never pause to consider what, if we got it, we should do with it. For my part, the contemplation of eternal life in the Christian's heaven seems truly awful. Fancy never ceasing to worship Jehovah!

Though hell might be worst, at least at the first,
Yet custom all anguish will soften;
But if we are bored with praising the Lord,
We'd be more so with praising him often.

Indeed, the realization of any kind of eternity might well drive ever-changing ephemera to distraction. Swift's picture of the undying Strulbrugs (*Gulliver's Travels*, part iii., chap. 10) might well make men renounce the hope of immortality, and reconcile them to their final dissolution.

The disposition to cry for the moon leads people to fritter away their energies in seeking for esoteric knowledge, instead of mastering the prime facts which lie before us in real life; for occult magical power over their fellows, instead of the natural ascendancy of character and brains. It has led the ablest female speaker of our day to resign her position on the School Board, and withdraw her most valuable exposition of the facts of the law of population in the pursuit of Theosophical moonshine. The leader of the modern revivers of magic appropriately signed herself "Luna." She knew her dupes were crying for the moon. Such people threaten to become lunatic. Crying for the moon is not even good exercise for a poetic nature. The great poet is he who shows the worth of the real. The great artist portrays the ideality of the familiar—the beauty which underlies the affairs of every day. George Eliot well says that "daily duties have infinite issues." The penetrating eye discerns the universal in the particular, and finds nothing common or unclean. Emerson says in his poetic way:—

There is neither great nor small
To the soul which maketh all.

The merging of self in the oversoul may come perilously near insanity; but the recognition of the worth of the common enhances the value of life. This is philosophy. Lander makes Diogenes say to Plato: "To make remote things tangible, common things extensively useful, useful things extensively common, and to leave the least necessary for the last." This secular philosophy has been summed up in the motto of the Secularist, "One world at a time."

Secularism, as Mr. Foote says (*Religious Systems of the World*, p. 525), proposes "to cultivate the splendid provinces of Time, leaving the theologians to care for the realms of Eternity." And here, be it observed, that though people speak of death as being "launched into eternity," if there be an eternity for us, an essential portion is here and now. Emerson said: "He knows nothing rightly who does not know that every day is doomsday." It is not the day of judgment, but the days of no judgment, that we have to dread. J. M. WHEELER.

SECULARIST CEREMONIES.

"Death is the decisive test of the value of the education and morality of society; secular funerals are the symbol of the social renovation."—P. J. PROUDHON.

[CERTAIN ceremonies are common to all human society, and should be consistent with the opinions of those in whose name the ceremonies take place. The marriage service of the Church contains things no bride could hear without a blush, if she understood them; and the Burial Service includes statements the minister ought to know to be untrue, and by which the sadness of death is desecrated. The Secularist naturally seeks other forms of speech. It being a principle of Secularism to endeavor to replace what it deems bad by something better—or more consistent with its profession—the following addresses are given. Other hands may supply happier examples; but, in the meantime,

these which follow may meet with the needs of those who have no one at hand to speak for them, and are not accustomed to speak for themselves.]

ON MARRIAGE.

Marriage involves several things of which few persons think beforehand, and which it is useful to call their attention to at this time. The bridegroom, by the act of marriage, professes that he has chosen out of all the women of the world, known to him, the one to whom he will be faithful while life shall last. He declares the bride to be his preference, and, whoever he may see hereafter, or like, or love, the door of association shall be shut upon them in his heart for ever. The bride, on her part, declares and promises the same things. The belief in each other's perfection is the most beautiful illusion of love. Sometimes the illusion happily continues during life. It may happen—it does happen sometimes—that each discovers that the other is not perfect. The Quaker's advice was: "Open your eyes wide before marriage, but shut them afterwards." Those who have neglected the first part of this counsel will still profit by observing the second. Let those who will look about, and put tormenting constructions on innocent acts: beware of jealousy, which kills more happiness than ever Love created.

The result of marriage is usually offspring, when society will have imposed upon it an addition to its number. It is necessary for the credit of the parents, as well as for the welfare of the children, that they should be born healthy, reared healthy, and be well educated; so that they may be strong and intelligent when the time comes for them to encounter, for themselves, the vicissitudes of life. Those who marry are considered to foreknow and to foresee these duties, and to pledge themselves to do the best in their power to discharge them.

In the meantime, and ever afterwards, let love reign between you. And remember the minister of Love is deference towards each other. Ceremonial manners are conducive to affection. Love is not a business, but the permanence of love is a business.

Unless there are good humor, patience, pleasantness, discretion, and forbearings, love will cease. Those who expect perfection will lose happiness. A wise tolerance is the sunshine of love, and they who maintain the sentiment will come to count their marriage the beginning of the brightness of life.

NAMING CHILDREN.

In naming children it is well to avoid names whose associations pledge the child, without its consent, to some line of action it may have no mind to, or capacity for, when grown up. A child called "Brutus" would be expected to stab Cæsar—and the Cæsars are always about. The name "Washington" destroyed a politician of promise who bore it. He could never live up to it. A name should be a pleasant mark to be known by, not a badge to be borne.

In formally naming a child it is the parents alone to whom useful words can be addressed.

Heredity, which means qualities derived from parentage, is a prophecy of life. Therefore let parents render themselves as perfect in health, as wise in mind, and as self-respecting in manners as they can; for their qualities in some degree will appear in their offspring. One advantage of children is that they contribute unconsciously to the education of parents. No parents of sense can fail to see that children are as imitative as monkeys, and have better memories. Not only do they imitate actions, but repeat forms of expression, and will remember them ever after. The manners of parents become more or less part of the manners and mind of the child. Sensible parents, seeing this, will put a guard upon their conduct and speech, so that their example in act and word may be a store-house of manners and taste from which their children may draw wisdom in conduct and speech. The minds of children are as photographic plates on which parents are always printing something which will be indelibly visible in future days. Therefore the society, the surroundings, and teachers of the child, so far as the parents can control them, should be well chosen, in order that the name borne by the young shall command respect when their time comes to play a part in the drama of life. To this end a child should be taught to take care what he promises, and that when he has given his promise he has to keep it, for he whose word is not to be trusted is always suspected, and his opinion is not sought by others, or is disregarded when

uttered. A child should early learn that debt is dependence, and the habit of it is the meanness of living upon loans. There can be no independence, no reliance upon the character of anyone, who will buy without the means of payment, or who lives beyond his income. Such persons intend to live on the income of someone else, and do it whether they intend it or not. He alone can be independent who trusts to himself for advancement. No one ought to be helped forward who does not possess this quality, or will not put his hand to any honest work open to him. Beware of the child who has too much pride to do what he can for his own support, but has not too much pride to live upon his parents, or upon friends. Such pride is idleness, or thoughtlessness, or both, unless ill causes the inability.

Since offspring have to be trained in health and educated in the understanding, there must not be many in the family unless the parents have property. The poor cannot afford to have many children if they intend to do their duty by them. It is immoral in the rich to have many because the example is bad, and because they are sooner or later quartered upon the people to keep them; or, if they are provided for by their parents, they are under no obligation to do anything for themselves, which is neither good for them, nor good for the community to which they contribute nothing.

Believing this child will be trained by its parents to be an honor to them, and a welcome addition to the family of humanity, it is publicly named with pleasure.

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

(To be concluded.)

A SECULARIST'S CATECHISM.

(Continued from page 453.)

Q.—Do Secularists accept any authority, or is every man allowed to do as he likes?

A.—We accept the authority of cultivated reason, and facts that have been verified by experience. No one should be permitted to do as he likes, if in so doing his acts tend to injure others, and to disturb the harmony and well-being of the social state.

Q.—What, from a Secular standpoint, principally influences man's character?

A.—His physical organisation, early education, and general environment. These are the main conditions that determine the nature of human character and conduct.

Q.—What is meant by education?

A.—Not merely the possession of knowledge, but the ability to use knowledge so that it may be beneficial both to the individual and to the general community.

Q.—Are men, their surroundings and natural laws, the only forces that are concerned with the affairs of life?

A.—We believe that life is what it is through men acting and reacting upon each other, and in consequence of their complying, or non-complying, with the laws of existence, and making those laws subservient to their various objects in life as means to an end.

Q.—Is there no power over human existence except nature's laws and man's effort?

A.—That is more than we can say with our limited knowledge. But, so far as we know at present, these are the only agencies or factors that can be relied upon to sustain and regulate human affairs.

Q.—How do Secularists account for the origin of nature and her laws?

A.—We do not attempt to do so, inasmuch as we know nothing of what are called "final causes." Still, we accept the theory that probably nature and her laws may have always existed under some conditions—that there is one eternal existence of which all known forms are modes of manifestation.

Q.—Which theory do Secularists regard as being the more reasonable—that of Special Creation, or that of Evolution?

A.—Undoubtedly the theory of Evolution, for that accords with certain discoveries in science, and, moreover, it recognises the fact that all forms of nature are subject to perpetual change, and that the whole universe is the theatre of incessant activity.

Q.—What is the difference between Evolution and Special Creation?

A.—Evolution may be defined as an unfolding, opening-out, or unwinding; a disclosure of something which was not previously known, but which existed before in a more condensed or hidden form. According to this theory, there is no new existence called into being, but a making conspicuous to our eyes that which was previously concealed. "Evolution teaches that the universe and man did not always exist in their present form; neither are they the product of a sudden creative act, but rather the result of innumerable changes from the lower to the higher, each step in advance being an evolution from a pre-existing condition." On the other hand, the special creation doctrine teaches that, during a limited period, God created the universe and man, and that the various phenomena are not the result simply of natural law, but the outcome of supernatural design. According to Mr. Herbert Spencer, the whole theory of Evolution is based upon three principles—namely, that matter is indestructible, motion continuous, and force persistent.

Q.—*What are the objections to the theory of Special Creation?*

A.—To accept this theory as being true, we have to think of a time when there was no time—of a place where there was no place. Is this possible? If it were, it would be interesting to learn where an infinite God was at that particular period, and how, in "no time," he could perform his creative act. Besides, if a being really exist who created all things, the obvious question at once is, "Where was this being before anything else existed?" "Was there a time when God over all was God over nothing? Can we believe that a God over nothing began to be out of nothing, and to create all things when there was nothing?" Moreover, if the universe was created, from what did it emanate? From nothing? But "from nothing nothing can come." Was it created from something that already was? If so, it was no creation at all, but only a continuation of that which was in existence. Further, "creation needs action; to act is to use force; to use force implies the existence of something upon which that force can be used. But if that 'something' were there before creation, the act of creating was simply the re-forming of pre-existing materials."

Q.—*Is there any other serious objection to the belief that an infinite God created the universe?*

A.—Yes. If God is infinite, he is everywhere; if everywhere, he is in the universe; if in the universe now, he was always there. If he were always in the universe, there never was a time when the universe was not; therefore, it could never have been created.

Q.—*Is it reasonable to believe in the theory of Special Creation, when science proclaims the stability of natural law?*

A.—We think not; for, as the late Professor Tyndall, in his lecture on "Sound," remarked, if there is one thing that science has demonstrated more clearly than another, it is the stability of the operations of the laws of nature. We feel assured from experience that this is so, and we act upon such assurance in our daily life.

Q.—*What is the correct meaning of Agnosticism?*

A.—It has been well said that, to clearly understand what Agnosticism is, it is desirable to remember the fact that one of the very first heresies which distracted the early Catholic Church was that of the Gnostics. They took their name from the Greek word for knowledge (or science); but, of course, they used it within certain sufficiently-marked limits. They did not mean that they possessed universal knowledge of all things, but only that they had the knowledge of what the Christian religion really was, or ought to be. This is here offered as a parallel example of the application of a general term to one particular subject or object of human knowledge. Precisely similar are the limits of the word which the addition of the little negative particle *a* (*without*) makes to signify precisely the opposite of Gnosticism. Gnosticism meant a full, complete, and accurate knowledge of the origin, nature, attributes, and mode of operation of the deity; Agnosticism, on the contrary, signifies the very opposite of this. It declares that we have no knowledge of God; that we cannot pretend to say that such a Supreme Intelligence exists; and that we are absolutely precluded from affirming that the universe is really destitute of such a central *Nous*, or Highest Intelligence. "Canst thou," asked the writer of the grand old Semitic drama—"Canst thou by searching find out God?" This interrogation the honest Agnostic has put to himself, and, after long and earnest exertion of mind, after the intensost study of the world external and of the inner consciousness, he arrives at the conclusion

that the question cannot be satisfactorily answered, either affirmatively or negatively. The Agnostic does not argue that, "because we cannot see God, therefore he [God] is not." The Agnostic knows too well his own limited nature and the boundary of the knowable to claim for himself a God-like degree and measure of knowledge.

Q.—*Is it not a fact that many of the principles of the National Secular Society are not new?*

A.—Probably that is so, but we are not aware that any sect, Christian or anti-Christian, possesses a special vested interest in goodness, or a monopoly of truth. Everything that is worth having belongs to man everywhere, and the principles of Secularism most certainly do not claim to be any exception to this rule. Truth is the universal prerogative of mankind in general, and goodness and virtue are qualities fortunately placed within the reach of humanity at large. If the principles of Secularism cannot lay claim to originality because they have been taught before, this is an objection that would apply with quite as much force, and certainly with as much truth, to most other systems, including Christianity itself. The ethical maxims to be met with in the New Testament may all be found in some form or other in heathen philosophies propounded long before Jesus of Nazareth is supposed to have trodden the shores of Galilee. It is surely a most puerile charge to bring against a system, that the whole of its teachings are not new. Morality is as old as humanity, and virtue co-existent with human action. But if Secularism or any other system can do something towards extending the domain of the one, and causing the other to take deeper root in the human mind, it deserves the respect of all good men, and it ought not to be sneered at because it has nothing new to teach. CHARLES WATTS.

(To be concluded.)

THE HOLY GHOST.

It is related in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles that, being all together, in one place, the apostles received the gift of the Holy Ghost in such quantity that they were all filled with it. It came with the sound of a mighty rushing wind, and filled the whole house in which they were sitting, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like unto fire, and sat upon each one of them.

Nobody knows what this Holy Ghost was, and the writer of this account does not tell us; we can only guess at it from the effect it had upon these apostles who were filled with it. They all began to talk at the same time, no one listening to the other, but each telling his own story in his own way, and, of course, making such a racket that the attention of the people round about was attracted to them. Some thought they spoke one language, and some another; in fact, it sounded like they were talking all the languages of Asia. It is not to be wondered at that the bystanders were amazed, and wanted to know what it all meant. Some suggested that they were drunk. But Peter, who seemed to be sober enough to stand upon his feet, stood up and spoke for the whole party. He said: "No, gentlemen; these men are not drunk as you suppose, because it is now 'only the third hour of the day.'" This seemed to settle the question, in Peter's mind, for he offered no other proof of their sobriety. The bystanders might have responded—had they understood our law latin—*non sequitur*. It does not follow, because men frequently get a jag on over night, that it lasts well into the next day. But Peter had no better reason to give, and so he stopped at that. If the people were not convinced, they said nothing; or, at least, the writer of the account did not think it best to give their comments upon Peter's reasoning.

It may be that the Holy Ghost has an intoxicating effect upon those who get full of it. It is often called a spirit, or the "Holy Spirit," and who can affirm that it is not alcoholic? And that may account for the fact that the Church, and all the holy ministers of half a century ago, were so vehemently opposed to the temperance reform started by the Washingtonians. They might have conscientiously believed that the condemnation of the alcoholic spirit was the unpardonable sin, the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. When I was a boy, I frequently saw half-a-dozen or more ministers gather around my father's sideboard and graciously take, each one, his liberal dose of that holy spirit of alcohol, and

smack his lips as though he felt it to be a blessing direct from the throne of grace. Long years after that, within the last six months, it came to my knowledge that a popular and eloquent preacher, the pride of the church to which he belonged, never ventured to preach until he had fortified with a bottle of whisky. How could he prepare himself for an outpouring of the spirit until he had first experienced an inpouring of it?

But times have changed. One Sunday morning, a little later in the day than the third hour, the man of God had had such an influx of the Holy Spirit that the outlet of his eloquence became obstructed; his words crowded together so fast that his language was incoherent; much like that of the apostles on that day of Pentecost when they were filled with so much spirit that their neighbors pronounced them drunk. His wife sent word to the waiting congregation that he was sick, and could not preach. The congregation was dismissed, and a delegation of saintly elders of the Church went to his house—no doubt intending to lay their hands upon him, as directed in the last chapter of St. Mark, so that he would recover. But see how scepticism has crept into the Church. Instead of recognizing that he was filled with the Holy Ghost—as the apostles would have done—they pronounced him uproariously drunk, and unfit to minister to the spiritual wants of their congregation. He had to leave; but they gave him a certificate of good character, and a recommendation to any other church to which he might go, where his spiritual gifts might be appreciated, and where they would recognize the Holy Spirit when they saw it.

Oh! the degeneracy of the Christian religion. That which eighteen hundred years ago was called the Holy Ghost now goes by the expressive name of "liquid damnation."

The Rev. Robert Taylor, in one of his sermons, while admitting that the actions of the Apostles indicated the spirit of wine, still insisted that the Holy Ghost was nothing but wind. The ghost was only a pious drawl of the word "gust," a puff of wind—as preachers often pronounce the word "God" "Gawd," with a religious drawl, intended to impress an awful solemnity upon the name. And so Hely, a Phœnician name of the sun—Helios in the Greek—became holy in Christian pronunciation.

The day of Pentecost—the day upon which the Apostles received the Holy Ghost—is the fiftieth day after Easter, or the Jewish Passover, or about May 22, when the sun, the Son of God, or Christ, having passed over the equator and risen above it, has become glorified—that is, cleared from the mists and fog of spring—and shines out in full splendor. The barren hills and valleys of Palestine become warmed, and the radiation of the heat into the air causes it to rise, and the cold air rushing in to fill the place causes the rushing mighty wind that the writer of "Acts" speaks of as the coming of the Holy Ghost—that is, the Hely Gust, or the wind that is caused by the heat of, or glorification of, the sun. And this explains the action of the Apostles, who were filled with this wind, all beginning to talk together; and also why our modern preachers, who claim to have received the Holy Ghost by direct inheritance from the Apostles, are so often windy, even when they have no ideas to fit the language they speak.

Talmage and Sam Jones, and many others of the same sort, have often been accused of being puffed up with pride, but now we understand it; it is nothing but the Holy Ghost that puffs them up with wind. That, perhaps, was what made the fire burn so fiercely when Talmage's church was three times burned to the ground. The Holy Ghost poured upon a conflagration is worse than kerosene oil.

A thought occurs to me here that perhaps it is the Holy Ghost that has kept the fires of hell going so long. He (the pronoun must be masculine, because he was the real begetter of the ever-blessed Redeemer) seems to have had more vindictiveness in his disposition than either of the other two persons in the heavenly Trinity; for does not Jesus tell us (Matt. xii. 31, 32): "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be given unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come?"

So you see that, after all the toil, trouble, and pain of a cruel death, to atone for the sins of men, the grand "plan

of salvation" is a failure, and the Holy Ghost holds a veto upon the saving process even after the Father and Son have agreed upon a pardon. The Holy Ghost is not to be choked off by lamb's blood, whatever the preachers say.

A comfortable doctrine, is it not? And that is why the Holy Ghost is called the Comforter, I suppose. The average Christian derives so much comfort from the assurance that ninety-nine out of every one hundred people of this earth are to be forever damned, and that the power of the Holy Ghost will make that damnation sure, whatever God and his Son may say about it, that they may well call him the Comforter. But to the sincere Christian, who has a heart softened by human sympathies, and who fully believes in the superstitions he was taught in his childhood, this undefined sin against the Holy Ghost has ever pressed upon his consciousness like a nightmare; and many a good man has died in despair for fear that he may have unwittingly committed it.

Cowper, one of England's greatest geniuses, and the truest and tenderest poet who ever wrote in the English language, was one of these sin-haunted unfortunates. All his life was made miserable by his melancholy fears that he had committed the unpardonable sin; and he died raving in despair that he was going to hell. Nothing that lying preachers have ever pictured of the death scenes of dying infidels could equal the actual facts that occurred at the deathbed of this pious, sincere, and devoted Christian. Blessed will be the world when the superstition that darkened Cowper's dying hour has been relegated to the long and dim past, among the hundreds of others almost as bad as itself.

J. P. RICHARDSON.

—*The Independent Pulpit.*

THE MISSING LINK.

A DISCOVERY THAT SEEMS TO FILL THE GAP BETWEEN THE MAN AND THE BRUTE.

SINCE the announcement of the discovery in Java, in strata of the Pleistocene age, by Dr. Eugene Dubois, a surgeon stationed with the Dutch army in that island, of what is popularly called the "missing link," or scientifically known as the *Pithecanthropus erectus*, or "upright walking ape-man," a year and a half has elapsed, says the *New York Herald*.

Dr. Dubois's first statement of the discovery, when it reached Europe, was assailed by critics, great and small. They decried the importance of his discovery, pooch-pooched his conclusions, and finally dismissed the matter—to their own satisfaction, at least—with the clincher that the bones found in the Java river bank were not the bones of one individual. They said they were the bones of several, having no particular connection with one another, and that the skull, which was so singularly like that of a man in some respects, and certainly not that of any of the higher apes, living or extinct, known to science, was that of an idiot that ages before had fallen into the river and was drowned, and that his skull, thus deposited in the river bottom, through lapse of time became petrified.

DR. DUBOIS'S REPORT.

But among the broader scientific men of the world Dr. Dubois, in his discovery, had, from the first, the support of two of high distinction—namely, Professor O. C. Marsh, of Yale University, and Professor Manouvrier, of Paris. These two men, being deeply impressed with the importance of the subject, have strongly upheld the position taken by Dr. Dubois in his original memoir, and have done much towards turning the tide of scientific opinion in favor of the Dutch surgeon's theory.

I saw Professor Marsh yesterday at his home on Prospect Hill, and, when told the object of my mission, he received me kindly and gave me access to much valuable information.

"Do you believe, Professor Marsh, that the remains found in Java by Dr. Dubois are those of a higher form of ape than has yet been known; in fact, a connecting link between the ape and man himself?"

"Certainly," was the reply. "There is now no reasonable ground for doubt. I have myself studied these bones with care. I believe they are those of one individual, and that individual is a veritable 'missing link.' Whatever light may be thrown upon the subject by future researches,

there can be no doubt that the discovery is one of the first importance to the scientific world bearing upon the origin and antiquity of man."

From a paper read by Professor Marsh before the National Academy of Sciences last April in Washington, and which has recently appeared in the current number of the *American Journal of Science*, I quote:—

DANA INTERESTED.

"The first definite information received in this country was in December, 1894, when Dubois's memoir on Pithecanthropus arrived. One of the first copies reached the late Professor Dana just as he was printing the last pages of his great work on geology. He at once wrote to me in Washington, asking me to look up the memoir and telegraph my opinion of the discovery, so that he could refer to it in his book.

"On inquiry I ascertained that this memoir had not been received at any of the scientific centres in Washington, and that the discovery itself was not known. On returning to New Haven I found a copy of the memoir awaiting me (received December 29, 1894), and at Professor Dana's request I wrote a review of it, which appeared, with illustrations, in the next *American Journal of Science*.

"The memoir of Dr. Dubois was an admirable one, and, although written in Java, with only limited facilities for consulting the literature on the subject, and for comparing the remains described with living and extinct forms to which they were related, the author showed himself to be an anatomist of more than usual attainments, and fully qualified to record the important discovery he had made. In my review, therefore, of this important memoir I endeavored to state fairly the essential facts of the discovery, as well as the main results reached by Dr. Dubois, after a careful study of the remains. My own conclusions in regard to this discovery, briefly stated in my review, were as follows:—

"It is only justice to Dr. Dubois and his admirable memoir to say here that he has proved to science the existence of a new prehistoric anthropoid form, not human, indeed, but in size, brain power, and erect posture much nearer man than any animal hitherto discovered, living or extinct..... Whatever light future researches may throw upon the affinities of this new form that left its remains in the volcanic deposits of Java during later Tertiary time, there can be no doubt that the discovery itself is an event equal in interest to that of the Neanderthal skull.

"The man of the Neander Valley remained without honor, even in his own country, for more than a quarter of a century, and was still doubted and reviled when his kinsmen, the men of Spy, came to his defence, and a new chapter was added to the early history of the human race. The ape man of Java comes to light at a more fortunate time, when zeal for exploration is so great that the discovery of additional remains may be expected at no distant day. That still other intermediate forms will eventually be brought to light, no one familiar with the subject can doubt.

"In most scientific quarters, however, both in this country and in Europe, Dr. Dubois's discovery was not received with great favor, and of the facts and conclusions stated in his memoir, which appeared subsequent to my review, I do not recall a single one that, in attempting to weigh the evidence presented, admitted the full importance of the discovery made by Dr. Dubois. The early conclusions seemed to be that the various remains discovered were human, and of no great age; that they did not belong to the same individual; that the skull apparently pertained to an idiot; and that both the skull and femur showed pathological features.

"In fact, the old story of the distrust aroused by the discovery of the Neanderthal skull, nearly forty years before, was repeated, although in a milder form. Dr. Dubois has stated in a late memoir that, with the exception of Professor Manouvrier, of Paris, and myself, no one else, until very recently, regarded the remains as evidence of a transitional form between man and the apes."

DUTCH GOVERNMENT'S AID.

"It was a fortunate thing for science that the Dutch Government appreciated the importance of the discovery made in its Javanese province by Dr. Dubois, and last summer allowed him to return to Holland and bring with

him the precious remains he had found and so well described. Not only this, but he was also permitted to bring the extensive collections of other vertebrate fossils which he had secured from the same horizon and in the same locality where the Pithecanthropus was discovered.

"All these were shown at the International Congress of Zoologists, held at Leyden in September last, and on September 21 Dr. Dubois read an elaborate paper on his later explorations in the same region. This communication was in many respects the most important one of the session, and its presentation with the specimens themselves was a rare treat to the large audience present, especially to those fitted to appreciate the evidence laid before them.

"Professor Virchow, of Berlin, was president of the meeting on that day, and had brought many specimens to illustrate the remarks he was to make in the discussion. The famous Leyden Museum was also drawn upon for an extensive series of specimens of man and the higher apes, so that, if possible, the true position of Pithecanthropus might then be determined once for all. Dr. Dubois, moreover, kindly invited Professor Virchow, Sir William Flower, and myself to come an hour before the meeting, and personally examine the remains he was to discuss; and this invitation was most gladly accepted.

FOSSILS CAUSE SURPRISE.

"The first sight of the fossils was a surprise, as they were evidently much older than appeared from the descriptions. All were dark in color, thoroughly petrified; and the matrix was solid rock, difficult to remove. The skull cap of Pithecanthropus was filled with the hard matrix firmly cemented to it. The roughness of the superior surface, especially in the frontal region, was apparently due to corrosion after entombment, and not to disease, as had been suggested by some anatomists. The femur was free from matrix, but very heavy in consequence of the infiltration of mineral matter.

"The two teeth showed no characters that indicated their interment under circumstances different from that of the skull or femur. All the physical characters impressed me strongly with the idea that these various remains were of tertiary age, and not post-tertiary, as had been supposed. The description of the locality and the account of the series of strata there exposed, as given by Dr. Dubois in his communication, confirmed this opinion, and a later examination of accompanying vertebrate fossils placed the pliocene age of all beyond reasonable doubt.

"The facts relating to the discovery itself, and the position in which the remains were found, as stated by Dr. Dubois in his paper, together with some additional details given to me personally, convinced me that, in all probability, the various remains attributed to Pithecanthropus pertained to one individual. Under the circumstances, no palæontologist who has had experience in collecting vertebrate fossils would hesitate to place them together.

"The three specimens originally described—the tooth, the skull, and the femur—were found at different times in the same horizon, all embedded in the same volcanic tuff. The tooth was found first, in September, 1891, in the left bank of the river, about a metre (39,368 in.) below the water level during the dry season, and twelve or fifteen metres below the plain in which the river had cut its bed. A month later the skull was discovered, only a metre distant from the place where the tooth lay. In August, 1892, the femur also was found, about fifteen metres distant from the locality where the other specimens were imbedded. Later, in October of the same year, a second molar was obtained at a distance of not more than three metres from where the skull cap was found, and in the direction of the place where the femur was dug out.

"If it be true, as some have contended, that the different remains had no connection with each other, this simply proves that Dr. Dubois has made several important discoveries instead of one. All the remains are certainly anthropoid, and, if any of them are human, the antiquity of man extends back into the Tertiary, and his affinities with the higher apes become much nearer than has hitherto been supposed. One thing is certain, the discovery of Pithecanthropus is an event of the first importance to the scientific world."

I am quite at my ease with a true man; one who has in his heart and his head the love of the human race.—*Voltaire*.

FALSE PHILANTHROPY.

When Charity to other lands
Doth diligently roam,
And scatter gifts with lavish hands,
While thousands starve at home ;

When Dives sends a thousand pounds
To aid the sick and sore
In far-off climes, while Laz'rus groans
Unheeded by his door ;

When Cræsus opes his ample purse
Some distant fund to aid,
While his own laborers are worse
Than cattle hous'd and fed ;

When Piety, with holy zeal,
Sends Bibles to the "nigger,"
While some poor neighbor infidel
She persecutes with rigor ;

When wealthy lords and dames respond
To Philanthrope's appeal,
With selfish thought to be renown'd
For *love* they do not *feel* ;

When princely gifts of millionaires
Avail but by their death,
While selfish, miser hearts are theirs
Until their latest breath,—

When these and kindred acts we view,
Applauded though they be,
We must distinguish 'twixt the *true*
And *false* philanthropy.

These are like lanterns high in th' air,
Of little use I trow ;
Their glimmering beams are thrown afar,
But give no light below.

H. N.

ACID DROPS.

PETER GLEN and Charles Davis, officers of the Salvation Army shelter in Blackfriars-road, expelled or "chucked out" Arthur Sheppard on the evening of May 3. They did it so gently and tenderly that they broke two of his ribs, besides inflicting other injuries. Sheppard declared that they made a dead set at him for no apparent reason ; while Glen and Davis declared that they turned him out for making a noise. When they were taken into custody Glen ejaculated, "Glory be to God! The General will get us out of this." But the General was not able to satisfy this pious expectation. Both these Salvation Army heroes have been tried, and found guilty by the jury of causing grievous bodily harm. Sentence was deferred for a week.

Mr. Geoghegan, who defended the prisoners, waxed eloquent over the fact that Sheppard was represented by "my learned friend, Mr. Hutton." "He is only a waterside laborer," said Mr. Geoghegan, "and I want to know who is paying the cost of these proceedings." But who paid Mr. Geoghegan? Surely not the prisoners. Why, then, should not some one assist Sheppard in prosecuting the fellows who broke his ribs?

The behavior of the crowd when that mad Frenchman fired a pistol at President Faure is described as "simply horrible." This is how a newspaper correspondent relates what occurred: "François had barely fired his second shot before two of the bystanders flung themselves on him, and with inconceivable fury made an attempt to tear his eyes out. The rest of the crowd who were near enough made furious snatches at the unfortunate man, tearing his clothes to ribbons, tearing his hair, and injuring him severely. It must have been fully half a minute before the police could fight their way up to him to arrest him ; and by that time one cheek had been nearly torn off, his eyes and nose had been fearfully injured, and he was nearly naked."

Of course this is very shocking ; but, after all, what can you expect? The crowd could not know that the mad fellow fired blank cartridges. They concluded that he had tried to kill the President, and his action was an appeal to the savage in them. This lesson should be laid to heart by those revolutionists who are tempted to deeds of violence and bloodshed. Outrage only promotes reaction. The propaganda of reason is the only one that really succeeds

Most of the Catholic priests at the Brompton Oratory are converts from the Church of England. A hundred

years ago such a fact would have convulsed England ; now it excites but a languid and momentary interest.

The Catholic Church is strengthening in England, but this produces no serious effect upon the Anglican Church, which has for some time been gaining ground at the expense of Nonconformity. Even in Temperance work the Church of England now takes the lead. Last week's *Methodist Times* deplored the "paltry revenue" of the Methodist Temperance Committee, and contrasted it with the "large sums raised annually by the Anglican Church" for Temperance objects.

Hanley Town Council has rejected, by a majority of two to one, a proposal to allow Sunday boating on the park lake ; and, of course, the *Methodist Times* is delighted. Perhaps our Methodist contemporary will explain the religious difference between walking and rowing within the park walls. If it is impious to exercise your arms on Sunday, how is it righteous to exercise your legs? Why are the upper limbs less privileged than the lower? We pause for a reply.

Our Methodist contemporary ventures to assert that the Continental Sunday in France and Italy "has simply eaten into the moral life of the nation." This is the sort of pious cant that makes Englishmen a byword in Europe. The people of this country are *not* more moral than the people of the continent. And why are France and Italy singled out in this Methodist tirade? They do not run a special Sunday of their own. The Continental Sunday is common all over Europe.

The *Church Times* says that the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill may put the clergy in an awkward dilemma. "They are bound by the laws of the Church to consider a man who, though a member of the Church, has contracted such a marriage to be a fit subject for excommunication. They are bound, therefore, to refuse Communion to him pending the Bishop's decision." Yet, if they do so refuse Communion, they may be exposed to civil penalties for defamation of character.

The result of the controversies between Church and State on the subject of marriage and divorce should result in our assimilating our marriage system to that on the Continent, so far as making civil marriages compulsory, letting church people and those religiously inclined add whatever other ceremony they may think necessary.

Lord Halifax, the President of the English Church Union, writes to the *Church Times* that, if the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill becomes law in its present shape, "a collision between Church and State, involving the most serious consequences, is inevitable." The clergy well know the result of such collisions. They always give way, and, therefore, attempt to make as much rumpus beforehand as possible.

Following the letter of Lord Halifax comes one from Father Black, who says that great numbers of the clergy and laity are beginning to feel that the only sure mode of correcting the position is to be found in separation from the State. The clergy are apt to bluster in this way, forgetting their Church is a State-made one. But they never quarrel too far with their bread and butter.

The Archbishop of Canterbury had a gloomy tale to tell his Diocesan Conference. The collapse of the Education Bill and the passing by the Lords of the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill were two sore blows to the Church, when they fancied they had the ball at their feet. And then the Pope's Encyclical, though not exactly tantamount to a denial of the validity of Anglican orders, distinctly flouted the claims of any other Church than that of Rome. Accordingly, the Archbishop lets the Pope know that the English Church is, and is likely to remain, Protestant. So Christian reunion is as near and as remote as ever.

Not only have the Christian powers done nothing to rescue their fellow Christians in Armenia from Turkish oppressions, but even a fund for the relief of the distressed Cretans has not been allowed to be distributed, because each of the Christian powers suspects the other of stealing a march upon them. Christian effort must surely be the laughing stock of Moslems.

The program of the Church Congress to be held at Shrewsbury in October has already been drawn up. Among the subjects to be discussed is "The Bearing of the Theory of Evolution on Christian Doctrine." Archdeacon Wilson, Canon Gore, Rev. Professor Bonney, and Rev. C. Lloyd Engström are set down as speakers, the latter gentleman being limited to a quarter of an hour's discourse.

Grand Rapids, Mich., June 23.—After an all-night session, Rev. C. E. Loe, pastor of the Second Baptist Church, was

found guilty this morning of improper liberties with female members of his congregation, and deposed from the ministry. Rev. Mr. Lee is the inventor of the individual communion cup, for which he has a patent.

Everybody knows that religion sweetens life, allays discord, promotes peace, and fosters brotherly love. A fresh proof of this great and glorious truth comes from the north of Ireland. A party of Orangemen are reported to have had an annual celebration at Sheepbridge, about four miles from Newry; and before leaving some of them set fire to the National Hall, which was soon reduced to a heap of blackened ruins. No doubt they were well fortified by two potent and harmonious spirits—true-blue Protestant fanaticism and Irish whisky.

Are the clergy great readers? It does not appear so from the following incident:—The Rev. G. P. Haydon, a bachelor clergyman, intimated his intention of bequeathing his library to the Northern diocese in order to encourage reading; but the Archbishop of York replied that they had already a magnificent library, which only a few scholars ever entered. In his former diocese of Lichfield there were two houses bequeathed by former piety overflowing with books for the clergy, but they were quite neglected.

Talmage is at it again. In a recent sermon he declared that the founders of the United States Republic were all believers in Jesus Christ (which is a flagrant falsehood) with one exception. "I know," said Talmage, "that there was an exception to the fact that the prominent men of those times were good men. Tom Paine, a libertine and a sot, did not believe in anything good until he was dying, and then he shrieked out for God's mercy."

What politeness! What accuracy! Talmage is a living embodiment of Christian charity; the charity which thinketh all evil of its opponents, the charity which built and filled dungeons for unbelievers, the charity which burnt heretics to ashes at the stake. Certainly it is wrong to call Thomas Paine a good man if Talmage is one. It is almost a shame to mention them together.

Thomas Paine was not a libertine, and not a sot. Those who say he was are liars. They know they cannot prove it. Thomas Paine did not cry out for mercy when he was dying. That is another lie. Thomas Paine said that the world was his country, mankind were his brethren, and to do good was his religion. Is this evidence that he did not believe in anything good?

We print on another page a remarkable article from the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* on the falling-off in church attendance in that city. The fraternity to which Hugh Price Hughes belongs has suffered most. It is decreased 25 per cent. since 1881, in face of a large increase of population. We hope to read something on this in the *Methodist Times*.

George Ward, a holiness preacher, hails from East Liverpool, Ohio. He claims that his prayers induced the Almighty to send heavy rain that flooded the local base-ball grounds and prevented a game between the home club and the Holy Ghost College team from Pittsburg. Ward's interference was based on two grounds: first, the match was to be played on Sunday; second, the name of the Holy Ghost was being blasphemed. As the heavy rain washed away homes, stores, bridges, schools, and churches in Eastern Ohio, besides drowning a lot of live stock and ruining a million dollars' worth of crops, George Macdonald suggests in the *New York Truthseeker* that Ward is too dangerous a man to be let live, and that he should be "publicly drowned or hanged before he repeats his offence." We are unable to dissent from George Macdonald's view of the matter.

Prophet Baxter speculates on the Second Coming of Christ. He has been in the business for a great number of years, and it seems to pay him remarkably well. If Christ were to come, the game would be over; but as he isn't likely to come it will probably last—for, as Heine said, the fool crop is perennial.

Prophet Baxter runs a paper called the *Christian Herald*. It is said to be read by two or three hundred thousand persons—who, to use Carlyle's expression, must be mostly fools. In the number of this paper for July 9 there is a ridiculous yarn about "The Devil at an Infidel's Deathbed." This infidel lived in London (how precise!), and when he was dying (swearing dreadfully) he saw the Devil at the foot of his bed; but he got Old Nick to leave him in peace on condition that he surrendered himself at twelve o'clock the next day. When he was buried (where?) his dog went to the grave, looked down, and "gave three awful howls." Such is the awful nonsense which it pays to serve up to Christian customers.

A friend sends us the following extract from the advertisement columns of the *Times* for July 17:—

FOR SALE, ADVOWSON RECTORY. Eastern counties; near sea; large modern house, extensive gardens and grounds, good stables. Tithe, commuted, £725; net about £600. 30 acres glebe. Small population. Excellent shooting neighborhood. Present incumbent over 70. Price moderate. Apply Cobbold, No. 21, Tower-street, Ipswich.

The aforesaid friend comments as follows on this pretty advertisement: "Are the English people barbarians or imbeciles that they must trust the teaching necessary to their eternal welfare to anyone whom the purchaser can place in the pulpit—probably some dull relative who cannot earn his bread otherwise? Need we wonder at the cry for the Disestablishment of the Church when one reads of the garden parties of the bishops, and rectories bringing in £600 per annum, and 30 acres of glebe, with good shooting, and a small population, while we have read that 'the Son of Man had not whereon to lay his head'?"

Blasphemy is spreading. The *South London Advertiser* prints "A Methodical Sermon," which is extremely satirical, and winds up with "put some money in the plate." There is a good deal of jocularity in it (the sermon, not the plate) about the Devil. Apparently Old Nick stirred up someone in the *Advertiser* office to do this desperate deed.

"Why the Clergy are not Loved" has been the subject of much correspondence in the *Westminster Gazette*. It appears, however, that if the clergy are not loved the poets are. Mr. Austin, the Poet Laureate, speaking at the unveiling of the Burns statue at Irvine, said: "All the saints in heaven are not so much loved, not so much worshipped, as this flagrant sinner, who sang irresistibly of his own sins, which are sometimes, perhaps, our sins as well."

The Rev. Joseph Charles Edwards, rector of Ingoldmells, near Skegness, is dead, and his obituary appears in the *Hull Daily News*. The reverend gentleman was a most notorious begging-letter writer. Latterly he was afflicted with a wooden leg, which he made use of in playing upon the sympathies of the benevolent. His last epistle was to the Surgical Aid Society in London, begging for a new limb. He will have to wait for it now until the morning of the resurrection.

Rev. John Parker, vicar of Barrow, expressed an opinion that the use of bicycles on Sunday would "terminate painfully." He has been soundly rated for this utterance in the *Hull Times* by several irate correspondents. Mr. E. P. Schofield contributes some scathing letters.

Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton says in a recent letter to Marilla Ricker: "To emancipate woman from all belief in Bibles and in priests is the first step in her emancipation. To attack Bible, priest, and Church would increase the agitation four-fold, and would ultimately help the suffrage movement. When woman makes the same demand of the Church which she does of the State, complete equality, she will begin the second great battle, without which the first is not completed. Our suffrage women are blind and unphilosophical. I have said all along, attack the Church, the religion, and the Bible. They will not push 'The Woman's Bible,' nor circulate my leaflets in California now, for fear of injuring the suffrage movement."

How is it that the *London Echo* has not noticed Mr. Foote's new edition of *The Shadow of the Sword*, published by the Humanitarian League? It would seem that the pamphlet has at least reached the *Echo* office, for the other evening there was an article in that paper by "Meliorist," which obviously derived a good deal from Mr. Foote's publication, though without any sort of acknowledgment. The same quotations from Carlyle, Ruskin, Burke, and Hosea Biglow could hardly have been hit upon by two independent writers; the Burke passage especially, for how many people (even journalists) read Burke now-a-days?

Wherever bibliolatry has prevailed, bigotry and cruelty have accompanied it. It lies at the root of the deep-seated, sometimes disguised, but never absent, antagonism of all the varieties of ecclesiasticism to the freedom of thought and to the spirit of scientific investigation. For those who look upon ignorance as one of the chief sources of evil, and hold veracity, not merely in act, but in thought, to be the one condition of true progress, whether moral or intellectual, it is clear that the biblical idol must go the way of all other idols. Of infallibility, in all shapes, lay or clerical, it is needful to iterate with more than Cato's pertinacity, *Delenda est.*—*Huxley's Essays.*

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, July 26, Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, at 7.30, "Some Curious New Testament Superstitions."

Tuesday and Wednesday, July 28 and 29, Wood-street Chapel, Cardiff, at 8, Debate with Rev. W. T. Lee on "Did Jesus Christ Rise from the Dead?"

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. October 4, Glasgow; 11, Manchester.—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.

W. HASTING.—Sorry to learn that you did not consider your question properly answered by Mr. Foote on Sunday evening. You must remember that one man asks a question, and another replies to it, and that each speaks as he is impelled. You cannot both ask a question and dictate the answer. It is impossible to deal with the subject at length in this column. If you will read Mr. Foote's pamphlet, *Will Christ Save Us?* you will find his views very carefully stated.

J. K. MAAGAARD.—Will try to find room in an early issue.

MR. ST. JOHN, writing from 4 Victoria Villas, Willow Vale, Uxbridge-road, W., states that his health is much improved, and that he is now prepared to accept lecturing engagements again.

E. P. SCHOFIELD.—Thanks. See paragraph. Glad to hear that Mr. Foote's last visit to Hull did a lot of good, and that Free-thought is progressing with rapid strides in that part of the country.

A. G. STEPHENS.—Shall be happy to exchange with the *Sydney Bulletin*. Have put it in our exchange list.

E. H. BULL.—Mr. Foote will write you after his return from Swansea about lecturing again at Northampton.

YANKEE DOODLE.—We are not aware that the *Sunday Companion* ever put us down, either six months ago or at any other time. We don't care to press the other matter any further. It is now a domestic question for Christians.

A. HUREN.—Glad to be remembered by a sturdy Freethinker like yourself.

W. S. RELPH.—Many thanks.

J. D. POTTAGE.—Hops you will see this. Afraid a letter would not reach you at present. Your letter is both painful and amusing. Should be pleased to see you again.

J. ROBERTS.—Thanks for your bright note. Mr. Foote will not forget Liverpool.

T. HINTON.—Will read it and see whether it can be made the subject of comment.

W. COOK.—Under consideration.

PRESENTUM.—Thanks; but 'tis rather too sad for a joke.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Truthseeker—Nya Sanningar—Isle of Man Times—Public Opinion—Freedom—Progressive Thinker—Hull Daily News—Secular Thought—Boston Investigator—Crescent—Christian Herald—Dominion Review.

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.

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

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

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

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

How to Help Us.

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

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 are postponed till next week, owing to the Editor's absence from London.]

SUGAR PLUMS.

THE second of the N.S.S. open-air demonstrations in London took place on Sunday afternoon in Regent's Park. Mr. Wilson again generously provided a brake, for the admission of which permission had been obtained from the Commissioners. It was a very unusual sight in Regent's Park, and of course it attracted much attention. A considerable crowd soon gathered around it, and there was a capital meeting when Mr. Schaller, as chairman, opened the proceedings. Mr. C. Cohen was the first speaker, and he delighted his auditors. The crowd increased while he was speaking, and it was a splendid gathering when Mr. Charles Watts rose to address it. He was in first-rate form, and was warmly applauded. Gradually the neighboring meetings thinned away, and Mr. Foote, who was the last speaker, addressed a tremendous assembly. He was tired of speaking before they were of listening. Miss Vance, Miss Brown, and other ladies, took up a collection, and the party drove away amidst general expressions of sympathy.

Probably the next demonstration will take place in Finsbury Park on the first Sunday in August.

Mr. Foote lectured in the evening at the Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, to an audience which was of highly gratifying proportions in such tropical weather. It is certain that the hall will be densely crowded in the winter. Mr. Foote discoursed on Mr. Gladstone's chapters on a Future Life in his new volume of essays on Bishop Butler, and the audience appeared to be deeply interested. Mr. Charles Watts occupied the chair, and made some humorous remarks on his taking to out-door speaking again at his time of life.

Mr. Foote lectures at the Athenæum Hall again this evening (July 26), taking for his subject "Some Curious New Testament Superstitions."

Mr. Charles Watts lectures this evening, Sunday, July 26, at 61 New Church-road, Camberwell, under the auspices of the Camberwell Branch of the N.S.S. His subject is, "The Science of Life, from a Secular Standpoint." The lecture commences at 7.30.

While this number of the *Freethinker* is being printed Mr Foote is debating with the Rev. W. T. Lee at Swansea. Some account of this meeting will appear in our next week's issue. Next Tuesday and Wednesday (July 28 and 29) a second debate takes place between Messrs. Foote and Lee in Wood-street Chapel, Cardiff. The subject this time is: "Did Jesus Christ Rise from the Dead?"

When the Cardiff debate is over Mr. Foote has another

debate on hand at Camberwell with the Rev. A. J. Waldron. It opens in the Secular Hall, New Church-street, on Thursday evening, August 6, and will be concluded on the following Thursday, August 13. The question for debate is: "Secularism or Christianity: Which is the Better System?" On the first evening the chair will be occupied by Mr. Charles Watts; on the second evening by the Rev. Mr. Jephson, of the London School Board. As it is reported that Christians will be present in strong force, we advise Secularists not to be late, or they will probably fail to gain admission.

Our sub-editor, Mr. J. M. Wheeler, is taking a brief holiday at Margate, after undergoing an operation on his left hand, which he somewhat injured a few months ago. We are happy to say that he is progressing very favorably. His wife is with him, and both are well looked after by the ever-hospitable veteran Freethinker, Mr. Munns, of the Terrace Hotel. Mr. Foote had to leave London for Swansea early on Tuesday, so this week's *Freethinker* goes to press without either editor or "sub." The reader will therefore pardon any possible shortcomings for once.

The New York *Truthseeker* for July 11 contains the following: "The English Freethinkers voted at their last Conference to send Messrs. Foote and Watts to attend the Secular Union and Federation Congress in this country next fall, and Mr. Watts writes us that Mr. Foote and himself are looking forward to the visit with much pleasure. While it will be Mr. Foote's first visit to this country, Mr. Watts writes that most likely it will be the last he himself will be able to make, and so he wants to see all his old friends. Notwithstanding this intimation, we hope these farewell visits will be like Patti's—repeated several times. Mr. Watts will always find a warm welcome. Mr. Foote, the President of the National Secular Society of England, successor to Charles Bradlaugh, will also find many friends on this side who have watched his struggles for mental liberty and the freedom of the press with approbation and sympathy. He has been a most efficient leader, practical and unwearying, and, as the representative of our English brethren and for himself, we trust that every Freethinker in the country will attend the Chicago Congress and give him a friendly handshake. While here, both Mr. Watts and Mr. Foote will lecture for those who desire, and who can make suitable arrangements, and we hope that every one of their spare evenings will be taken. Almost every Liberal in the country knows Mr. Watts's platform abilities, and we are reliably informed that Mr. Foote is not at all behind him, though a little different in style, as one star differeth from another—but both are stars. They will arrive in New York the latter part of October, and societies desiring their services may address either and both in our care, and we will take pleasure in forwarding the communications. Give them a royal welcome, and keep them busy!"

The garden party held at "The Nook," Canonbury, under the auspices of the Islington and Finsbury Park Branches, was an even greater success than the party of the previous year. Ninety-eight persons partook of tea, and at the subsequent festivities over a hundred were present. The scene was illumined with vari-colored lamps, which cast a dim, irreligious light upon river, trees, greensward, and revellers.

The Rev. E. L. Berthon, who is the inventor of an unsinkable boat, deserves great credit for having given up the dubious business of soul-saving for the real, tangible, honest, honorable, and humane occupation of saving bodies. He was vicar of Romsey, in Hampshire, but the claims of his more practical life as inventor became so absorbing that he was compelled to resign in order to devote himself to his inventions.

Secular Thought (Toronto) reproduces two articles from our columns with acknowledgment—Mr. Foote's on "More Converted Infidels," and Mr. Watts's on "Freethought Requirements."

The *Boston Investigator* still keeps up its high standard. The last number to hand is most interesting. It contains a symposium on "Ought the Church to be Abolished?"

Public Opinion, an eminent New York weekly, quotes a paragraph from Mr. Foote's recent article in the *Freethinker* on Mr. Gladstone's open letter to the Pope.

TRUE GREATNESS.—When Moses said to God, "I beseech thee show me thy greatness," God answered, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee."—*Union Church Lantern*. "And the Lord said,.....And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that.....I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts" (Exodus xxxiii. 21-23).

THE DECAY OF SUNDAY WORSHIP.

THE most striking feature of the religious census which we have had prepared, and which is now published in another column, is the new proof it affords that people who go to Church on Sundays are a steadily-diminishing fraction of the population. This phenomenon may be explained on one or another theory, but no theory can explain it away. The fact is not to be denied that the practice of Sunday worship, which was once regarded as the safeguard of morality, the centre-prop of religion, and even the key-stone of the Commonwealth, is steadily relaxing its ancient hold upon the people of England. In Newcastle and Gateshead there is a population of more than 300,000 persons. No more than one in ten of them goes to church, chapel, or meeting-house on Sunday. Since 1851, 200,000 new inhabitants have been added to the population of the two boroughs, while only 13,000 persons altogether have been added to the attendance of the churches; and even to that increase the Catholic community contributes more than half. As regards the last fifteen years, the population of the two boroughs has increased by 100,000, and yet, if it were not for the Catholic returns, the census of 1896 would show, in comparison with that of 1881, not merely a relative decrease in proportion to the enlarged population, but actually an absolute decrease in the total number of persons attending places of worship of all kinds. What the broad view of the census suggests, then, is nothing less than the general decay of Sunday worship among the people at large. It may be urged that the railway and the bicycle offer unprecedented facilities to a hard-worked people for spending its summer Sundays out of town, and that the figures indicate a laxity of observance rather than an abandonment of religious principle. That is a tenable argument, perhaps, though a thin one at the best. To attempt to deduce any hypothesis of our own would be beyond our present business. The census has been taken to ascertain the facts, and the facts are now exhibited and speak for themselves. To glance at a few of the more interesting and salient details, it will be observed that Newcastle is still nearly twice as religious as Gateshead, if statistics of church attendance can be taken as the criterion. In both boroughs the Catholic returns show enormous increases, and the Church of England statistics also show a considerably enlarged attendance. For Newcastle a small addition to the Society of Friends may be noted. But apart from the Church of England, the Catholics, and the Society of Friends, there is not a single considerable community in Newcastle which does not show a decrease. In Gateshead the honors are more evenly distributed, and one or two Dissenting Churches have additions to record in the number of worshippers. Not the least interesting feature of the census is the list of little sects that stand outside the larger and better known churches, and maintain an independent existence in exiguous numbers indeed, but with considerable vitality. A number of these isolated bodies, each with a knot of presumably zealous adherents, has sprung into life since our last census was taken. They are, no doubt, responsible for an appreciable fraction of the decreases recorded in so many of the more orthodox and more anciently-established communities. But these are no more than the flies on the cart wheel, and for the force which is causing the revolution and raising the dust we must look elsewhere. We shall not pursue the investigation here. The fact remains that in Newcastle and Gateshead—in a great modern community of 300,000 persons—scarcely one person in ten ever goes to any place of worship on Sunday. There may be differences of opinion as to what this is significant of; there will be none that it is significant of much.

—*Newcastle Daily Chronicle*.

THE PRINCE OF THE POWERS OF THE AIR.—Among curiosities of tradition, it is related that the College of the Jesuits at Rome is built in a little square where a violent wind is ever blowing. This is the reason of it:—One day the wind and the Devil were taking a walk in Rome, and being at last arrived before the house of the Jesuits, the Devil said to the wind: "Wait for me here; I have a word to say within." He entered, and never again emerged from the house. The wind is still waiting for him at the door.

PAINE ON ENGLISH FINANCE.

MONCURE D. CONWAY contributes to the New York *Evening Post* a letter written by Thomas Paine, which he says has never before appeared, except in Lanthenas's translation of Paine's *Decline and Fall of the English System of Finance*. Mr. Conway recently found in the National Archives at Paris a copy of it in French, printed by order of the Council of Ancients, April 27, 1796:—

"Citizens: I present you with a small work entitled *The Decline, and Fall of the English System of Finance*, in which I have explained and exposed the finances of your principal enemy, the Government of England. If I have any capacity in judging of circumstances, and from thence of probable events, the fall of that Government is very nearly at hand.

"The condition in which that Government finds itself at this moment is curious and critical, and different to anything it ever experienced before. It is now pressed by two internal and formidable opponents that never appeared during any former war. The one is, the great and progressive change of opinion that is spreading itself throughout England with respect to the hereditary system of government. That system has fallen more in the opinion of the people of that country within the last four years than it fell in France during the last four years preceding the French revolution. The other is, that the funding system of finance, on which the Government of England depends for pecuniary aid, is now explaining itself to be no other than a governmental fraud.

"In former wars the Government of England were supported by the superstition of the country with respect to a nominal non-existing thing which is called a Constitution, and by the credulity of the country as to the funding system of finance. It was from these two popular delusions that the Government of England derived all its strength, and they are now deserting her standard. When this monster of national fraud and maritime oppression, the Government of England, shall be overthrown, the world will be freed from a common enemy, and the two nations may count upon fraternity and a lasting peace.

"THOMAS PAINE."

"It was the opinion of William Cobbett," says Mr. Conway, "that official maltreatment of an humble excise-man, Thomas Paine, cost England her American colonies. However extravagant that may seem, there is little doubt that the outlawry of the author of the *Rights of Man* in 1792, not only broke the Bank of England in 1797, but founded that traditional hatred of French Progressives for England which, as Radicalism acquires power in France, amounts almost to a one-sided vendetta. Yet, were Paine alive to-day, the general constitution of his native country would probably come nearest his idea of Republican Government."

Superstitions.

Those who ridicule vulgar superstitions, and expose the folly of particular regards to meats, days, places, pictures, apparel, have an easy task; while they consider all the qualities and relations of the objects, and discover no adequate cause for that affection or antipathy, veneration or horror, which have so mighty an influence over a considerable part of mankind. A Syrian would have starved rather than taste *pigeon*; an Egyptian would not have *bacon*; but if these species of food be examined by the senses of sight, smell, or taste, or be scrutinized by the sciences of chemistry, medicine, or physics, no difference is ever found between them and any other species, nor can that precise circumstance be pitched on which may afford a just foundation for the religious passion. A fowl on Thursday is lawful food; on Friday, abominable. Eggs in this house and in this diocese are permitted during Lent; a hundred paces further, to eat them is a damnable sin. This earth or building yesterday was profane; to-day, by the muttering of certain words, it has become holy and sacred. Such reflections as these, in the mouth of a philosopher, one may safely say, are too obvious to have any influence, because they must always, to every man, occur at first sight; and where they prevail not of themselves, they are surely obstructed by education, prejudice, and passion, not by ignorance or mistake.—*Hume's "Essays."*

TYPES OF RELIGIONISTS.

V.—THE METHODIST.

If true piety and genuine Christian belief are to be found anywhere in this now ungodly world, it must be in the person of the Rev. Ebenezer Cantwell, of the Methodist Church. Grace and sanctification are ever on his lips. Conversion is the constant theme of his discourses. The whole world lieth in wickedness, but Methodists are the salt of the earth, who preserve it from putrefaction. We have all gone astray and fallen short of the glory of God, but the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth from all sin, and, praise and bless his holy name, the Methodist has the full assurance of salvation.

The Methodist has one panacea for all the ills that flesh is heir to—fervent prayer. Alfonso the Wise of Castille and Leon wished he had been present when God created the world, as he thought he could have offered some useful suggestions. The Methodist is ever present with his Creator, and is always proposing improvements. The Deity must be very good-natured or very deaf. He takes so much impertinent advice without castigating his advisers. The Methodist supplies his God with a long string of instructions every morning and evening, and on all other available occasions. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." If it don't, why, then, it is not effectual.

He will not discuss with you, but he will pray for you. The Methodist is ever ready to pray for, and at, his enemies. He will tell God exactly what he ought to do with infidels. My own particular Methodist minister, the aforesaid Rev. Ebenezer Cantwell, when I, as a youth, asked a sceptical question in class as to the mutual powers of God and Satan, made me stand forward while he informed Omniscience, and the class what should be done with regard to my wretched self. "Consume him not in thy just wrath, O Lord. Thou knowest he is a poor, ignorant, miserable sinner. Spare him, good Lord! Send not thy lightnings and diseases upon him! Cut him not off in the midst of his sins! Help him to escape from the clutch of Satan that is upon him. Let him not fall into the burning fiery furnace for ever, O Lord." That minister "wrestled with the Lord" in this style for fully a quarter of an hour, and then gave out the hymn, "Long as the lamp holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return." My young lady, for whose sake I endured his ministrations, never smiled at me again. The Lord unhappily did not break the Rev. Mr. Cantwell's thigh, as he did Jacob's; and if he broke the Lord's thigh on my behalf I am extremely obliged to him, for the Lord has never interfered with me since.

The Methodist is fond of stories of saving grace. His gullet is always open for a converted infidel yarn. He believes in the Rev. H. P. Hughes and the converted Atheist Shoemaker. Such a noble blessed work is going on in West London. Scarcely a hundred prostitutes can be seen at one time in Piccadilly. Tell him that Methodism is declining at home, and he will tell you of its triumphs abroad. He may lament that in some quarters Methodists are becoming too respectable, aping the Establishment alike in its ministers and its churches. The Salvationists now get the more ignorant and excitable, who were formerly attracted by Methodist revivals. But then the Army, it is to be hoped, is doing the Lord's work, as well as finding customers for General Booth; and true piety may perhaps co-exist with Pleasant Sunday Afternoons, though he fears that these un-sanctified agencies are spoiling the spirit of true religion.

Outside the Holy Bible the Methodist is almost an ignoramus. The *Methodist Times* and *Joyful News* are his idea of literature. He despises vain learning. "If any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant." The tree of knowledge is still in the possession of the serpent, who tempts mankind to taste to their own damnation. The theatres and dancing are other lures of the evil one on the primrose path to the everlasting bonfire. If you wish to be merry, sing psalms or the hymns of the Wesleys.

The methods of Methodism centre round "conversion." To effect this the principal instrument is terror. The wrath of God, the day of judgment, and the burning lake of fire and brimstone must be held over the heads of sinners, and "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." The Methodist's disgusting familiarity with the deity is part of his system of conversion. He is on such close intimacy with the Lord that he can lay down in his name the exact terms of salvation. He delights in shaking his congregation over the fiery pit, and then, when their minds are almost unhinged with fear, extending the hand of mercy. This makes the Methodist glow with the satisfaction of being one of the Savior's apostles. He is withal, consciously or unconsciously, a good bit of a hypocrite, and in my dealings with religionists there is none I would be more cautious with than a Methodist.

UNCLE BENJAMIN.

RAMSEY-KEMP TESTIMONIAL FUND.—Amount previously acknowledged, £24 1s. 6d. E. H. Munns, 10s.; J. Munns, 5s.; F. Pinnell, 2s.—GEORGE WARD, *Hon. Treasurer.*

The whole truth or silence.—*Harriet Martineau.*

SCIENCE AND SUPERSTITION.

HAVE you heard of Obadiah, who worked at Collins Green,
A striving, steady, thoughtful chap, as many may have seen;
A quiet man, a sober man, religious as they make 'em?
His friends who did not go to church he did his best to
take 'em,

And always spake in parables, evangelicly sublime,
Of sin, and death, and suffering, beyond the verge of time;
And how, by prayer and piety, a crown of glory's won,
And special blessings gained above—when we this life have
done.

Prayer meetings he attended, some two or three a week;
At some of which he read the hymn, at others he would
speak;
At home he played the organ, though his playing wasn't
much—

His fingers rambled o'er the keys with undecided touch;
But always sacred music attuned his serious soul—
A parson in his mode of life, but lived by getting coal.

Now Joe, his mate, was opposite in nature altogether;
In lanes and fields he botanized—if not tempestuous weather;
Or, if at home he stayed at night, would ponder deep and
well

Those scientific tomes that teach in language terse, and
tell

How shafts are sunk, how tunnels drove, how ventilation
works

Through levels, up-brows, end-ways, in what corners fire-
damp lurks,

How best to act in moments of emergency and strife,
When thoughtless miners sometimes risk a crowd of human
life.

In short, he studied all the things a man should do and dare
To win his bread, to save a life; but never thought of prayer.

And thus they worked together, though of different modes
of thought.

Joe *science* took for teacher, and accepted what she taught.
He pondered well the part she plays in every well-wrought
mine;

But Obie's chief reliance was his faith in the divine.
And so they stood one morning, as for work they did
prepare.

Said Obie, "They would prosper more if they began by
prayer."

For prayer, he thought, will oft succeed when other efforts
fail.

"So th' parson tells, and I believe," quoth Joe, "an idle tale
Not fit to be relied upon by those who daily toil

"In mines, at least a thousand feet below the sunlit soil."

It means both strength and patience, aye, and courage to
get coal,

And skill as well, to carve and delve, just like a giant mole,
Before your work's accomplished. Then came a rumbling
sound

As of reverb'rate thunder, shaking the drear profound;
And then a rush of air swept by these workmen as they
stood

All mute and pale and trembling, awaiting the dread flood
Of gas-explosive *fire-damp*—the herald of dismay.

Joe fell upon his face quite flat, but Obie knelt to pray.

And when the rescue party found and raised each drooping
head

Joe's heart was beating faintly; but Obie—he was dead.

JAMES BROCKBANK.

A UNITARIAN CRISIS.

Is there to be a "split" among the Unitarians? Judging from the course of recent events, such seems to be exceedingly likely. It is well known that there are two distinct parties in Unitarianism: (1) The old, or Conservative, party, holding views of the "Channing" type, believing in the divine and special origin of Christianity, and holding the "Arian" view of Christ, etc.; (2) The modern or advanced school of thought, taking an entirely human view of Christianity and of Christ. The wonder is that these two sections have worked together in comparative agreement for so long. A crisis, however, seems to be approaching. The *Christian Life*, the organ of the "Channing" party, has recently printed a series of articles by "A Trustee of Manchester College," which has caused considerable friction. The Trustee (who, by the way, shows not the least charity for any opinions that differ from his own) avers that "advanced" teaching is emptying Unitarian chapels and stemming the tide of increase. He is backed up by the Rev. Robert Spears, the *Christian Life* editor, who, at the recent anniversary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association at Essex Hall, read a paper on "Our Gains and Losses," endorsing the Trustee's statements, and hinting that he had more up his sleeve than he cared to tell.

The advanced party, both at the meeting and also by letters, etc., in the *Inquirer*, indignantly deny that there is any decrease except locally. In the *Christian Life* the Trustee goes out of his way to attack Atheists and the members of the Ethical Societies. He says the latter ought to be called "The Society of Rebels against Almighty God." He further states: "They are really Agnostics of the worst kind, and I can compare them to nothing but 'a band of lunatics from Bedlam out for a holiday,' with kites flying in the air." What a beautiful specimen of Christian charity! This is the good old persecuting hating spirit cropping up again, even in that "Free" and "Heretical" Church, the Unitarian.

But all this raving will not stay the tide of advanced thought which is asserting itself in Unitarian pulpits. It is evident that a large proportion of Unitarian ministers are really not Christians, but Theists or Voyseyites. And what stands beyond Voysey? The free and open platform of truth and knowledge, where superstition has no sway, and where human help and brotherhood point to the world's true salvation. Towards that platform, slowly but surely, leading religious thinkers (unconsciously perhaps) move.

ALERT.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE TERM "OSTENTATIOUS."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—There is no reason to re-discuss the question of oath-taking, except with reference to Christian equity or historic truth. Had you been in the Freethought movement when the oath used to be taken by Atheists, you would not think the term "ostentatious" inappropriate. It was a merit in those to do it ostentatiously who claimed the right to do it, and maintained the right to do it as a public duty. Anyone might say of me, I "ostentatiously" declined to take the oath. Christian law denied to the Atheist the "right" of making an oath, and I "ostentatiously" kept this point before the public. But if the use of the term as applied to Mr. Bradlaugh is thought to be disparaging, I am quite willing to change it.

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

EDUCATION AND CRIME.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I am afraid "Lucianus" is mistaken in congratulating the public on the beneficial effects of the Education Act, as regards the suppression of crime. The figures he adduces in his "Christian and Heathen Morals" do not agree with the criminal statistics given in the Blue Book issued at the end of last May. In that publication it is shown by figures that the proportion of juvenile offenders, especially between sixteen and twenty-one (who must all be supposed to have passed through Board or other schools), has increased appreciably. And the *Times*, commenting thereon in a leading article (May 30), pointedly asks: "And where do the good effects of education come in?" Anyone going about with his eyes open can see that at no time were the streets so full of young ruffians and prostitutes as at the present day. If, instead of being crammed with information useful only in securing marks; if, instead of wasting time on learning the silly details of Jewish laws—devised for a set of savages—the pupils were to be made acquainted with the laws of their own country—which every grown-up person is supposed to know—Board-school education might do some good. But since a lot of parsons, robed and unrobed, have wriggled their way into the Board-room, manners and morals are swamped by the old religious humbug, hence the increase of juvenile crime; and the Free Libraries put the finishing touches to the pernicious foundation laid at school.

C. W. HECKETHORN.

Theology and Knowledge.

Theology loves what is old. It lives on old beliefs and old customs of the soul. Conservatism runs in its blood. It attaches an idea of sacredness to the ancient. It distrusts the new. The Jews used a stone knife in the rite of circumcision, stone being a pre-historic material for tools. Hindoo priests kindle holy fire by the friction of sticks, such being the mode of producing fire in bygone ages. To God the Roman Church prays in dead Latin. The English-speaking world clings to the antiquated version of the Bible which was issued in 1611. One is reminded of Ruskin's servant in Venice: when he and his master hunted for art treasures in old buildings, and the air at any time seemed unusually foul, he sniffed and said, "Ah, we are coming to something old and fine now!" And so, when we approach stiff traditions and mouldy prejudices, we suspect the neighborhood of theology. Theology stands for the old. Knowledge stands for the new.—*F. J. Gould.*

BOOK CHAT.

MR. ALLEN UPWARD, author of *Songs in Ziklag* and *A Crown of Straw*, has a new novel in the Pioneer series, with the curious title, *One of God's Dilemmas*. The title suffices to show the freedom with which the great Taboo is treated now-a-days.

* * *

Messrs. Putnam's Sons are bringing out a new edition of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. It will be issued in good style and at a moderate price.

* * *

Mr. Wheeler's article on Celsus (*Freethinker*, July 12) brought him the gift from our veteran friend, Mr. Edward Truelove, of a rare little book, published in 1830, entitled *Arguments of Celsus, Porphyry, and the Emperor Julian against the Christians, also Extracts from Diodorus Siculus, Josephus, and Tacitus relating to the Jews*. The work is anonymous, yet sufficiently proclaims the name of the translator, Thomas Taylor, the Platonist, a man of very original mind and independent judgment.

* * *

A label in the volume in question shows that it originally belonged to the "Library of the Society of Free Inquirers, instituted August 16, 1831." Of this early Freethought society Mr. Truelove was librarian and secretary, so Mr. Wheeler has many reasons for prizing the volume.

* * *

Thomas Taylor published another rare little volume with the imprint of Amsterdam. It was entitled *A View of all Systems of Religion*, and in it Taylor boldly defended polytheism. Both this volume and the *Arguments of Celsus, Porphyry, and the Emperor Julian*, are well worthy of being re-issued at the present day.

* * *

A very curious work is that entitled *The Veil Lifted: A New Light on the World's History*, by H. Martyn Kennard (Chapman and Hall; 1896). The purport of the book, like that of *Philistines and Israelites*, is to show that the Biblical narratives are based on, though a perversion of, authentic history, and that all the prominent Biblical characters were reigning monarchs; Moses, for instance, being identified with the Pharaoh Apepi, Joseph with Aahmes, David with Hirhor, etc. All of this seems to us mere wild conjecture, which there is no possibility of proving at the present day.

* * *

At the same time, it must be admitted that Mr. Kennard shows great familiarity with ancient monumental history, and occasionally makes some good points. The suggestion that the Hebrews are to be identified with the Hyksos, who ruled in Egypt five hundred years, is an old hypothesis, while a good deal is to be said for the thesis that the Rho of the Christian Labarum has developed from the lock of Horus. But we feel, in reading *The Veil Lifted*, that, after all, it is mainly conjecture as to what is behind the veil. The book may be recommended to orthodox scholars, just to see what they make of it.

* * *

The third volume of Mr. E. Sidney Hartland's *Legend of Perseus* will be published by Nutt & Co. in the autumn. It will be entitled *The Rescue of Andromeda*. The prior volumes, dealing with Supernatural Births and the Life Token, we have already extolled as throwing much fresh light on ancient history and human evolution, and there is little doubt that the concluding volume will be worthy of its predecessors.

* * *

Students of Buddhism will find a handy *vade-mecum* to that important faith, which is at once a philosophy and a religion, in the renderings of important portions of the Pali scriptures by Henry Clarke Warren, of Harvard University, entitled *Buddhism in Translation*.

* * *

Another American work likely to be of interest and importance is *Studies in the Psychology of Religious Phenomena*, by Professor J. H. Leuba. We rather think these phenomena belong to the pathology of psychology.

* * *

In the *Life of Edward Miall*, by his son, Arthur Miall, p. 97, it is stated that when the Liberation Society was first formed "no banker in London would receive their account. Subsequently, the London and Westminster allowed an account to be opened on behalf of the Association in the names of Dr. Price, Mr. Swaine, and Mr. Miall. Another indication of the strong feeling existing against the Association occurred a few weeks later, when all efforts to hire a chapel in the borough of Westminster for the delivery of lectures proved unavailing." The Liberation Society has grown, and there is doubtless no bank now that would not gladly have an account with it. This instance of what took place only half a century ago may make us less surprised at some of the difficulties which beset Freethinkers to-day.

FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

We never know how anthropomorphic we are.—*Goethe*.

The mind of the bigot is like the pupil of the eye: the more light you pour upon it, the more it will contract.—*O. W. Holmes*.

Thought is the first faculty of man; to express it is one of his first desires; to spread it, his dearest privilege.—*Diderot*.

Many innocent and harmless people have so much intellectual cowardice that they dare not reason about those things which they are directed by their priests to believe.—*Darwin*.

Matter is not that mere empty capacity which philosophers have pictured her to be, but the universal mother who brings forth all things as the fruit of her own womb.—*Giordano Bruno*.

The measure of civilisation in a people is to be found in its sense of the wrongfulness of war.—*Sir A. Helps*.

Is heaven a place, or state of mind?

Let old experience tell!

Love carries heaven where'er it goes,
And hatred carries hell.—*Charles Mackay*.

The demand that all other people shall resemble ourselves grows by what it feeds on.—*J. S. Mill*.

If I believe my nurse and my tutor, every other religion is false; mine alone is the true.—*Helvetius*.

How ingenious and true is Feuerbach's remark, that the cultured man is a very much more refined being than the god of the savage—that god whose intellectual and physical nature must naturally be exactly proportionate to the stage of civilisation of his worshippers.—*Dr. L. Büchner*.

No one can have argued against a superstition without noticing an entire insensibility to the plainest evidence when it opposes a conviction.—*G. H. Lewes*.

Only by varied iteration can alien conceptions be forced on reluctant minds.—*Spencer*.

But Faith, fanatic Faith, once wedded fast

To some dear falsehood, hugs it to the last.—*Moore*.

Better bitter truth than blessed error, for truth always heals the wounds that error inflicts.—*Goethe*.

Religion is the mind's complexion,

Governed by birth, not self-election;

And the great mass of us adore

Just as our fathers did before.—*Horace Smith*.

Let us think freely and speak plainly.—*Leslie Stephen*.

PROFANE JOKES.

A learned pedagogue, in Sloper's Island, used every morning to read passages in the Bible, and expound the same as he proceeded, in order that, by asking questions as to how much they remembered of his comments, he might ascertain who were the bright boys of his school. On one occasion he read from the book of Job thus:—

"There was a man in the land of Uz, and his name was Job, who feared God and eschewed evil."

"This means, boys," said the master, "that he eschewed evil as I do tobacco; he would have nothing to do with it."

With this very clear and forcible elucidation of the word "eschew" he proceeded, and a number of verses were read and commented on in a similarly clear and intelligent manner.

A few days afterwards the school committee arrived to make an examination. The master called the boys up, and began to put them through an-examination.

"Who was the man that lived in Uz?" he asked one of the brightest little fellows.

"Job," replied the dear little cherub.

"Was he a good man?"

"Yes."

"What did he do?"

"He chewed tobacco when nobody else would have anything to do with it," was the boy's answer.

That answer ended the examination for the day.

New Curate—"Children, why did the angels walk up and down the ladder instead of flying?"

Profound silence. (The curate afterwards confessed that he had no sooner asked the question than he felt mentally bankrupt.)

At length one small child held up her hand.

"Well, what is it, Lottie?"

"Please, sir, I thinks I knows."

"Speak out, then; don't be afraid."

"Please, sir, I thinks it wuz 'cause they wuz moulting, sir, like mother's canaries."

Curate (immensely relieved)—"Quite right."

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, "Some Curious New Testament Superstitions."
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Balls Pond): 7.15, S. Easton, "The Rise and Progress of Christianity."
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, O. Watts, "The Science of Life, from a Secular Standpoint."
PENTON HALL (81 Pentonville-road—Humanitarian Society): 7, Joachim Kaspary, "Schopenhauer, the German Pessimist."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BATTERSEA (Battersea Park Gates): 11.30, J. Thurlow, "Bible Biographers."
CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, J. Rowney will lecture.
CLERKENWELL GREEN (Finsbury Branch): 11.30, A lecture.
EDMONTON (corner of Angel-road): 7, J. Thurlow, "Christian Socialism."
HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE (Middlesex side): 7, Lucretius Keen, "Six Days' Hard Labor." Thursday, July 30, at 8, a lecture.
HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, a lecture; 3.30, F. Haslam will lecture. Wednesday, July 29, at 8, R. P. Edwards, "Is Atheism Immoral?"
ISLINGTON (Highbury Fields, Highbury Corner): 11, J. Fagan, "The Apostles' Creed."
KILBURN (High-road, corner of Victoria-road): 7, F. Haslam will lecture.
KINGSLAND (Ridley-road): 11.30, Stanley Jones, "Buddha and Jesus."
OLD PIMLICO PIER: 11.30, W. Heaford, "Miracles."
VICTORIA PARK (near the fountain): 3.15, C. Cohen will lecture.
MILE END WASTE: 11.30, C. Cohen, "Jesus Christ."
REGENT'S PARK (near Gloucester Gate)—N.W. Branch: 3.30, W. Heaford will lecture.

COUNTRY.

BRISTOL BRANCH: 6.30, meet at Tram terminus, Eastville, for ramble to Frome Glens.
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Northumberland Hall, High Friar-street): 3, Monthly meeting; urgent business.
MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints)—Closed for alterations and repairs until August 16.
PLYMOUTH (Democratic Club, Whimble-street): 7, Business meeting—forthcoming Foote and Lee debate, and to receive current subscriptions.
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): Members' and friends' excursion to Strines Inn, via Hollow Meadows, and home via Reservoirs, Bradfield Dale. Meet at 1.15 corner of Arundel and Norfolk Streets. Carriages start at 1.30 prompt.
SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, A reading.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

NORTHAMPTON (Cow Meadow): J. Rowney—11.15, "God's Pedigree, Birth, and Life"; 6.30, "The Death and Resurrection of an Immortal God."
ROCHDALE (Town Hall Square): July 29, A. B. Moss, "Christianity at the Bar of History." Members' meeting first Sunday in the month.

Lecturers' Engagements.

O. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—July 26, m., Mile End; a., Victoria Park; e., Battersea. August 2, m., Finsbury Park; a., Regent's Park; e., Battersea.

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

POSITIVISM.

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