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MR. GLADSTONE ON A FUTURE LIFE.

(Concluded from page 482.)

WE now come to Butler's argument about the indiscerptibility of the soul. You may lose or cut away portions of the body, but it makes no difference to the soul, which cannot be divided. And as the soul survives all such accidents to the body, why may it not survive the last bodily disaster of death? Such is the essence of this argument, which Mr. Gladstone says has been "much favored by preceding writers from a very ancient date." "But is it sound?" asks Mr. Gladstone; and he replies that "To me it appears wholly valueless." The following reasons are adduced:—

"For what is discernibility? Can it be defined otherwise than as the severance in space of the portions of some whole, which were previously united in space? so that the parts of a material substance, which necessarily exists in space, are said to be discernible. But the soul is not, according to the ordinary acceptance of the term, material. It does not then (as far as our knowledge goes) exist in space, and is not subject to its conditions. So that the idea of discernibility is wholly foreign to it, and can have no concern in proving either its mortality or immortality."

This is a metaphysical answer, which will have little weight with those who prefer to avoid the "art of wandering with method." There is a practical answer, which Mr. Gladstone does not notice. The parts of the body that may be lost or cut away are not necessary to its vital integrity as an organism. You may amputate legs, arms, and various other parts of man's anatomy, but you cannot cut out his heart, for instance. He goes on thinking without legs, as he may go on thinking (though not efficiently) with a fragment of one lung; even parts of his nervous system may be amputated, but if you cut his head off, and settle his brain, he is done for. In other words, the "soul" survives accidents which do not destroy the brain. And thus, as all roads lead to Rome, so all arguments lead up to the philosophy of materialism.

The "soul" people never confess their defeat. They are always inventing fresh answers to obvious truths. One of the most fatuous of these is based upon the dual character of the brain. Materialists are triumphantly told of a man whose mind was quite unaltered by the disabling of one side of his brain. But on examination this turns out to be another corroboration of Materialism. The brain consists of two halves—or rather, man has two brains—which usually function together, though not always in perfect harmony, and sometimes with distressing discord. The two hemispheres are capable of functioning separately. Destroy the action of one, and the other still does its work; but destroy the action of both, and the "soul" is extinguished. In the same way, man has two eyes, which usually function together, though not always. Destroy one eye, and a man can see with the other—like Gambetta; but destroy both, and sight is extinguished. In our opinion "soul" and "sight" are both abstractions. Functional activity is the only fact in the whole business.

Mr. Gladstone passes by the arguments of Dissolutionists and Negationists, and addresses himself entirely to Christians, or at least to believers in a future life. While rejecting the argument from "indiscerptibility," on metaphysical grounds, he accepts, on other metaphysical grounds, the argument that "the living being" in man is

"independent of death." Positive proof he has none, nor even a scrap of positive evidence. He argues that man is here for "a purpose"—namely, his spiritual development; and, as this is obviously not completed here, it *must* be completed elsewhere. How curious! It is illegitimate to say that we shall live again because we *desire* to, but quite legitimate to say that we shall live again because we *ought* to!

Having decided in this fashion that the "soul" survives death, Mr. Gladstone turns round on a very large—perhaps the largest—school of Christians, and denies that survival means immortality. Nothing is immortal but God; all else has a derivative being. "The natural immortality of the soul," Mr. Gladstone says, "is a doctrine wholly unknown to the Scriptures, and standing on no higher plane than that of an ingeniously sustained, but gravely and formidably contested, philosophical opinion." The Christian trusts to the promises of Scripture, and expects his personal resurrection through Jesus Christ; but this is not immortality, it is the recipient of a special gift from God. Mr. Gladstone points out that the early Church never pronounced in favor of man's immortality, while the doctrine was strenuously opposed by many Fathers, including Justin Martyr, Theophilus of Antioch, Irenæus, Lactantius, and Tertullian.

We are unable to follow Mr. Gladstone in his assertion that "the resurrection of the body as such is an exclusively Christian doctrine." It is certainly held by the Mohammedans; and if it be said that they took it from Christian sources, we point to the ancient Egyptians, whose priority in time is indisputable. Mummies are silent proofs of the Egyptian belief in the resurrection of the body. Pious care was taken of the corpses of departed souls, because it was believed that the bodies would be required again in the great day of reunion.

This point, however, is subsidiary. We therefore turn to the bearing of Mr. Gladstone's theories on the general question of the duration of life in heaven and hell. It is pointed out, naively enough, that Christians have been content to accept a vague heaven, while manifesting a feverish and morbid anxiety about hell. But this fact is easily explicable. In daily life, as in religion, man's first impulse is not the obtaining of pleasure, but the avoidance of pain. Few are anxious about going to heaven; many are anxious about keeping out of hell. When a man has two alternatives—a pint of wine to enjoy, or a roasting to suffer—he will bend all his energies to escape the roasting, and chance what he can get to drink at the finish. Thus the old-time preachers made the most of hell. Heaven was only "the other place." But now that belief is dying, they make the most of heaven, and "the other place" is hell.

Mr. Gladstone scents this distasteful fact. He complains that the truth that "punishment awaits the wicked after death" is "relegated at present to the far-off corners of the Christian mind, there to sleep in deep shadow, as a thing needless in our enlightened and progressive age." "Christian teachers," he adds, "seem largely to be possessed with an amiable fear lest the delicate ear in the Church, and the still more delicate eye in the closet, should find their niceness repelled by any glimpse of hell." But while Mr. Gladstone wishes to have hell kept in the foreground, he does not want too much hell, but just hell enough. After quoting a realistic picture of hell from the poetry of an English clergyman named Trapp (how appropriate!), Mr. Gladstone admits that the lines show "no small talent," but he says that "there creeps

into this kind of literature a strong element of pure vulgarity." But is it not fastidious to complain of a man's accents when he is crying out "Fire!"? The more raucous he is the better. If there is a hell, we ought to be told so in plain language. No warning can be too strong, too clamorous, or too importunate, against such an awful doom. When a man complains of another's crying "Fire!" too lustily, we are apt to think that he does not believe there is any serious danger.

Mr. Gladstone appears to hold that the saved will live in heaven for ever, but it is uncertain how long the damned will live in hell—although precisely the same time-adjective is applied to both in what Mr. Gladstone is pleased to call "the parable" of the Last Judgment. *Aionios* means everlasting in one clause of the sentence, and perhaps something less in the other. Mr. Gladstone is not like Dr. Farrar; he does not go beyond "perhaps." The Gospel drops the veil over the damned, and it is never lifted; but speculation is free, and Mr. Gladstone conjectures that in the course of time they may sink into practical if not actual extinction, or degenerate into something like brutes, without any sense of their situation. This idea is common enough in the East, but is little likely to catch on in the West. People in this part of the world are practical. They like plain hell and damnation, or no hell and damnation at all.

Christian theologians were never a happy family, and it is not surprising that Mr. Gladstone spends much time in opposing other ideas than his own which have long prevailed in the Christian Churches. Between death and the resurrection is an indefinite interval. What are the dead doing all that time? Some say one thing, some another. It is all a matter of conjecture. "The Christian Dead," according to Mr. Gladstone, "are in a progressive state; and the appointed office of the interval between death and resurrection is reasonably believed to be the corroboration of every good and holy habit, and the effacement of all remains of human infirmity and vice." This is perilously near the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory, and gives countenance to the practice of prayers for the dead. No wonder, then, that the Evangelicals are losing faith in Mr. Gladstone, and declaring that he is a Catholic in disguise.

The last part of Mr. Gladstone's pages on a future life deals with the moral aspect of damnation. He does not believe in justifying the ways of God to man. Where the great Milton failed, who else is likely to succeed? The whole question of the fate of the damned is part of the problem of evil. Evil exists in this world, yet Theists affect to reconcile it with God's infinite goodness; why, then, do they object to evil hereafter. "The mystery of mysteries in regard to the evil now in the world is not how it is to end, but how it began." Mr. Gladstone frankly admits that his only answer to the sceptic is derived from "the region of Faith."

G. W. FOOTE.

GOLD AND THE GOSPEL.

CHRISTIANITY, according to its own records, began with the most humble pretensions. Its disciples were enjoined to carry neither gold nor silver, purse nor scrip, nor even shoes. They were enjoined to "take no thought for the morrow," to "Sell that ye have, and give alms," and to "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." Jesus exclaimed, "Blessed are ye poor," "Woe unto you that are rich," and exhorted people to relinquish houses and lands, as well as family ties, for his name's sake. The early Church, according to the Acts of the Apostles, had all things in common. Believers sold their goods, and laid the price at the Apostles' feet. For failing to surrender the full value Ananias and Sapphira came to a sudden and mysterious death in the presence of Peter, for which it is a wonder that apostle was not called legally to account. This laying the price at the Apostles' feet seems to have been the beginning of a system which assured a comfortable living to the shepherds at the expense of the sheep. The Church soon learnt to make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, and, as it gradually established itself on the ruins of Paganism, it displayed a love of wealth and dominion which has characterized it ever since. The real function of its precepts of poverty and humility has been to keep the "have-nots" in order for the benefit of the "haves."

Under the influence of Christianity, the sanguinary Constantine became more arrogant and avaricious. The gospel became the key to gold. Gibbon says: "Constantine too easily believed that he should purchase the favor of heaven if he maintained the idle at the expense of the industrious, and distributed among the saints the wealth of the republic." He and his successors saw in the new religion an engine of political dominion.

Christianity spread through love of power. Motley tells us how, in the Netherlands, the crozier of St. Boniface went hand-in-hand with the battle-axe of Charles Martel. Charlemagne invaded Saxony ostensibly to extirpate heathenism, really to acquire land and wealth under cover of the gospel. So, further north, the Teutonic knights carried the cross, and enriched themselves with the spoils of the heathen. Heathenism was extirpated, and Christianity triumphed through the power of the sword. The long wars of the Crusades were largely maintained by the hope that with Palestine gained the wealth of the East would become tributary to Rome.

Lust of gold and desire to spread the gospel went hand-in-hand with Hermando Cortes and the conquistadors in America. *Encomendidas* were established, by which the Spanish Christians were entitled to levy heavy tribute in return for spiritual instruction; and gradually the Christianized natives were enslaved and forced to work in the mines to bring their conquerors the coveted lucre. Pizarro's cut-throats in Peru were equally animated by gold and gospel. The same may be said of the Jesuits, who, like Booth's army in our own day, became a vast trading community, and united the worship of God and Mammon.

It was a cardinal principle of the Inquisition that the property of all heretics should be forfeited, and its officers thus enriched themselves by their merciless atrocities carried on in the name of religion. Very much of the age-enduring persecution of the Jews at the hands of Christians has been occasioned by the convenience of squeezing these absorbers of wealth. Thus one of the French kings called them his sponges on this account. The Reformation has been much and justly extolled for its declaration of the rights of conscience and private judgment. Yet those who look into its history may discern that its success was largely due to the desire of princes and people to be free from the exactions of the Church. Much might be said of the influence of gold on history from the time of Julius Cæsar to that of "Dr. Jim." Suffice here to note that everywhere the extension of Christianity has been accompanied by the extirpation of the peoples to whom it has been introduced, or the sequestration of their lands and goods.

Many societies have run gold and gospel in double harness before, but they have not often explained their plans so honestly and boldly as the Nyassa Industrial Mission, started by the Rev. Charles Rudge, of which particulars are given in the *Daily Mail* of July 30. That enterprising halfpenny paper says:—

"Some missionaries with a knowledge of gold-mining, or some miners with a sound acquaintance with missionary work—converted specimens from Roaring Camp or Poker Flat—are badly wanted just now. Men equally at home with a Bible or derringer are rare, but they must be found, apparently, for intuition teaches me that Bibles are requisite in mission work, and a course of Bret Harte has convinced me that a good gun is about the first article in the equipment of a self-respecting gold-digger. It is a new association which is to be formed, with the Rev. Charles Rudge as secretary, that makes the demand for these men with divergent qualifications. The Nyassa Industrial Mission gave public notice yesterday, through their solicitors, Messrs. King, Wigg, and Co., of 11, Queen Victoria-street, City, that it has applied to the Board of Trade for a licence to be registered with limited liability without the addition of the word 'Limited' to its name. The objects for which the Association is to be established are stated with refreshing frankness. They do not conceal the fact that, while the Association proposes to save souls, it also intends to keep its eyes open for filthy lucre in the shape of mining rights and so on. The juxtaposition of some of the objects set forth as the aim of the association will rather divert the cynic. One object is 'The diffusion of the knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ throughout the whole world beyond the British Isles by the preaching of the Gospel, the translation and publication of the Holy Scriptures, and the establishment of schools.' Another object is 'To enter

into any arrangement with any Government, native chiefs, or authorities . . . and to obtain from them any rights, privileges, and concessions which the association may think desirable."

The Association proposes to employ missionaries, preachers, and evangelists, provided they profess the "observance of Believers' Baptism and of the Lord's Supper as the two ordinances appointed by Jesus Christ and practised by His Apostles." It also intends to develop its concessions and rights, and carry on the business of planters, farmers, graziers, meat and fruit preservers, miners, metallurgists, and brokers. The mining missionary business of the Nyassa Industrial Mission so well represents what Christianity has become in the present day that we feel warranted in giving free advertisement to its enterprising combination of Gold and Gospel.

J. M. WHEELER.

THOMAS PAINE: A GROSS INJUSTICE.

W. & R. CHAMBERS have long been regarded as publishers of useful and accurate information for the people, and we certainly did not expect to discover, in any publication issued under their auspices, that any sort of censorship towards well-known authors would be practised. We were, therefore, greatly astonished to find, in their latest edition of British authors, no mention made of Thomas Paine or of his works. This omission is, to our mind, the more remarkable from the fact that a long list of authors who held progressive views is referred to, comprising such names as A. Sidney, Harrington, Cobbett, Gibbon, Hume, Byron, and Shelley. No history of prose literature in England during the last half of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century can, in our opinion, be considered complete which does not mention *The Rights of Man* and *The Age of Reason*—works that for originality of thought and boldness of expression remain unrivalled in political and theological literature.

We cannot believe that the exclusion of all mention of Paine and his works, in this instance, was a mere accident, or that it can be justified upon the plea that the subjects he dealt with were generally avoided. The person or persons who revised the references to the authors of the period when Paine wrote must have been aware of his claims as a foremost writer of vigorous English, and of the fact of his having given to the world ideas that revolutionized the politics and theology of his day. Burke, who was Paine's bitter opponent, is dealt with at some length; why, then, in the name of justice, should the man who so completely answered Burke be entirely ignored? Have Tory prejudice and theological bigotry been allowed to exercise their baneful influence in this matter? To exclude the name and writings of one of the most prominent figures in modern progress from such a voluminous work as this encyclopædia of English literature is a gross injustice to the memory of the dead, and a humiliating satire upon the liberal thought of the nineteenth century. Our language may appear to some rather severe, but we are dealing with men whose pretensions to full knowledge and liberality are paraded by the leading arbiters of public opinion. Moreover, this grave omission was as foolish as it was futile, inasmuch as the name and works of Paine are literally ploughed into the history of political and religious thought in England; and the influence of his writings will exercise its potency for freedom when Chambers's one-sided encyclopædia shall be supplanted by a successor that will be fair and just in its compilations.

We cannot reasonably suppose that the compilers of such a vast encyclopædia were ignorant as to who "the author-hero of American Independence" really was. If they were so, then they were unfit for the task they undertook; while, if they did know, they stand condemned as being guilty of an unpardonable wrong. Is it not our duty, as friends of freedom, to express our indignation at the slight shown to the memory of its heroic advocate? Surely an explanation and an apology should be forthcoming from those who pose as the faithful and fair recorders of the history of the human mind for their studied silence as to one who nobly exclaimed: "The world is my country, mankind are my brethren, and to do good is my religion."

These sentiments are sublime, and they tower mountains high above the mean and petty attempt of those scribes who would relegate the life and labors of their author to oblivion. No firm or corporation of "limited liability" should be permitted, without receiving a severe condemnation, to perpetuate such an injustice in this age of liberty and progress. For our part, we enter our most emphatic protest against an effort to blot out from remembrance the services rendered to human advancement by one of the noblest sons of humanity. Let us hope that this exposure and protest will be the means of the injustice being remedied in the next edition of Chambers's popular book, and that the magnitude of the offence committed against the free expression of opinions and of historic truth will be fully comprehended and amply atoned for.

The omission of Paine's name and works seems to us to have been quite intentional, from the fact that references are made to other writers of extreme views without the slightest reservation. For instance, seven columns are devoted to Thomas Hobbes, against whom and his doctrines, we are told, "much odium prevailed." Thomas Harrington is also noticed as one who refused to kiss the Pope's toe, and who "continued to exert himself in diffusing his Republican opinions," for which he suffered imprisonment. Further, there is a long reference to Algernon Sidney, the distinguished advocate of Republicanism, who had to remain away from this country seventeen years, being apprehensive of the vengeance of the Royalists. Shelley, who is described as "an avowed Republican and Sceptic," and "who published a small treatise on *The Necessity of Atheism*," has fourteen columns devoted to him. Of Shelley we are told: "That he was sincere in his opinions, and benevolent in his intentions, is now undoubted." The italics are ours, and we use them to show that, had the writer been fair, he would have said as much of Paine. True, this one-sided recorder considered that Shelley lived in a world of dreams and visions, and "looked upon the world with the eyes of a visionary, bent on unattainable schemes and intellectual excellence and supremacy." But even this could not be said of Paine, for he was a thoroughly practical man, who taught principles of representative government and Bible criticism, that have now been largely adopted in France, America, and England. Even the leading daily journals of our time admit that Paine was a century in advance of modern criticism in matters Biblical, and in advocating political justice; while some of our principal publishers, both in this country and upon the other side of the Atlantic, readily issue his works. Yet this man, whose intellectual glory shed a lustre upon his age, and whose indomitable courage and self-sacrifice played a most important part in enhancing the greatness of the three leading nations of the earth, is not deemed worthy of notice by the compiler of a history of British authors.

When necessary, it is always a pleasing duty to us to do our best to vindicate the memory of Thomas Paine from the unjust machinations of his foes. His whole career was one consistent struggle against the evils of priestcraft and kingcraft. The primary idea of his life was to assist the people in securing their political and social rights. Being a fervent lover of freedom himself, he desired that others should share that inestimable blessing. In the truest sense he was essentially a world-wide reformer. National distinctions never interfered with his labors of love. Wherever he observed tyranny, oppression, and corruption, he worked for their removal. By his undaunted efforts he established for himself a name which became a terror to kings and priests, and which won for him a fame that will cause him to be regarded by all impartial minds as a real benefactor of the human race. He had a generous and affectionate nature, a mind superior to fear and selfish interests; a mind governed by the principles of rectitude and integrity, a mind the same in prosperity and adversity, a mind which no bribe could seduce nor terror overawe. He had a large and benevolent heart; he was faithful to his friends, forgiving to his enemies, compassionate to the unfortunate, self-denying to private interest, but zealous for the public good; magnanimous without being proud, humble without being mean, just without being harsh, simple in his manners, but manly in his feelings; one upon whose word you could rely, and whose countenance never deceived you. In short, his life was devoted to doing good, and to working for the welfare of all, irrespective of class distinctions. True, Thomas Paine aspired to glory, but it was that glory which Pliny calls

"true glory," which consists in having done something worth the writing, having written something worth the reading, and having made the world better and happier for having lived in it.

CHARLES WATTS.

HOW A GOD DIES.

SOME days ago I received from some well-wishing crank a lot of anti-Infidel tracts, which, being very brief, I took time to read. They were wretched in style and in logic; but a garbled quotation from Rousseau presented what might seem like an argument to some people.

The full quotation (only part was used) runs: "If the death of Socrates was that of a sage, the life and the death of Jesus were those of a God."

This led me to ask, What is the death of a god like, and who knows God or gods enough to say how they live or die? But allow that one man does live and die in accordance with another man's idea of how a god should live and die, does that signify that he really is a god, or is it only the realization of the other man's ideal?

For instance, from Mrs. Wilcox, who was present at the death of President Andrew Jackson, we have the following beautiful and touching incident:—

An old negro servant, who had been with him during all his life, was weeping over the silent form, uttered in her broken but expressive language: "Ole Massa is dead! Now Ole Massa's dead, dey's all dead and gone—an' dey was our best frens. Ole Massa not satisfied teaching us how to live, teachd us how to die."

This was no labored rhetoric of a scholastic pedant, but simple language from the heart of an unlettered yet devoted servant; and it was said about a man who could swear the gilding off a church steeple in ten seconds, of whom it is related that when the appointed committee notified him of his nomination they especially stipulated with him to use no swear words in his letter of acceptance or presidential messages, and whose God-loving enemies during that campaign yelled themselves wild from stump and pulpit platform that, if elected, Jackson would destroy all the Bibles and the churches.

Yet this man died—if not like a god (and as for that who knows?)—at least in a way which would shame many a godly man.

If, to-day, we had as many men and women who were as ready to live *like men*, rather than like mere animals, possessed of that quality known as faith, as there are those ready and longing to die like gods, this would be a better and a happier world, where the prophecies of Bellamy and the desires of all great minds and of lovers of humanity would be realized.

It is true that the traditional heaven would be chuck full of dead gods and dead people who died like gods; but the real world would be full of loving men and women who live as men should live, and honor and reverence the memory of those who lived like men rather than those who died like gods.

CARL BURELL.

Gospel Devils.

The belief in a demonic world is inculcated throughout the Gospels and the rest of the books of the New Testament; it pervades the whole patristic literature; it colors the theory and the practice of every Christian church down to modern times. . . . More especially is this conception fundamental for the authors of the Gospels. Without the belief that the present world, and particularly that part of it which is constituted by human society, has been given over, since the Fall, to the influence of wicked and malignant spiritual beings, governed and directed by a supreme devil—the moral antithesis and enemy of the supreme God—their theory of salvation by the Messiah falls to pieces. "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John iii. 8).

The half-hearted religiosity of latter-day Christianity may choose to ignore the fact; but it remains none the less true that he who refuses to accept the demonology of the Gospels rejects the revelation of a spiritual world, made in them, as much as if he denied the existence of such a person as Jesus of Nazareth; and deserves, as much as anyone can do, to be ear-marked "infidel" by our gentle shepherds.—*Huxley's "Essays," vol. 5, p. xiv.*

TYPES OF RELIGIONISTS.

VI.—THE SALVATIONIST.

THE Salvationist is an interesting survival of the early faith known as Shamanism, one principal item of which is to drive away evil spirits by noise. Church-going and the usual round of religion is generally a dull affair. The Salvationist makes it lively. His prayers are not long-winded, prosy platitudes, addressed to an Infinite Divinity immeasurably above him, but strong ejaculations bawled out and brought down to the level of the coarsest mind and the densest deity. His hymns and harangues are not of the humdrum type, but exhilarating effusions. He combines the attractions of the sky-pilot with those of the mountebank. He believes in the gospel of hubub and uproar. "Blood and Fire" is his motto. His God is a consuming fire, who demands his tribute of blood. To make sinners fall into the fountain there is nothing like working up the excitement. The clang and crash of cymbals and drum is followed by the rant and roar of choruses. My Salvationist's favorite hymn is:—

My sins were as high as a mountain,
They've all disappeared in the fountain;
He's wrote my name down for a palace and crown,
Bless his dear name, I'm free.

He knows he is saved, properly saved—"glory to his na-a-ame"—and thinks it quite natural that he should inherit eternal bliss and inhabit mansions in the sky, while sinners are howling amid the torments of hell. Glory to his name!

The Salvationist delights in excitement. To get out of himself in heavenly ecstasy is the descent of the Holy Ghost in fire. He is afraid the Devil may regain hold of him if his spirits begin to flag. He likes only noisy meetings, loud tunes; raging, oft-repeated choruses, and exciting preachers. The sufferings of Christ, the agonies of the Cross, the wicked doings of sinners, and the torments of hell, are his favorite meditations. He drinks no alcoholic liquors, but intoxicates himself on the exuberance of his own religiosity. Salvation is all-and-all to him. He will neglect his work or his home for the ministrations of the Army. The *War Cry* is his idea of literature, and the promotion of its circulation is to him a glorious cause. He will find a finer flavor in Army tea than in any known brand, and, clear evidence of faith, will pay more for it.

Like the Jesuit, the Salvationist is strongly endowed with *esprit de corps*. The Army, he holds, is triumphant in all parts of the world. The traitor, Ballington, will have to return to the true fold. There never was, and there never will be, another man like the "General." Glory to his name. John Wesley was a good man, but he never thought of making his converts his customers, and is not to be named in the same breath with William Booth, "our only General." He does not say in so many words that there is no salvation out of the Army, but he implies it. He does not hesitate to say he finds "a falling short" in churches and chapels. They do not adopt a distinctive uniform and badge. They do not denounce drink and smoking (the one sanctioned by J. C., the other unknown to him). The true Salvationist thinks Booth as much sent from God as Moses and the prophets. He regards all the regulations of the Army as a part of the Gospel and doubts if those who do not contribute to Self-Denial Week can be regarded as true Christians.

Paul said he did not suffer women to speak, and that, if they wanted to know anything, they must ask their husbands, and learn in silence and subjection. But the Salvationist loves his sisters, and utilises them as a powerful adjunct to the Army. The obstetrical services of these soul midwives are invaluable at the pangs and throes of new birth, and they are fervent in singing their war song, "O, let the dear master come in." The Salvationist knows his uniform and singing are attractive to the ignorant factory or servant girl who happens to be, in the beautiful Scripture phrase, "having no sweetheart, and without a man in the world." He knows, too, the value of the brass-band, chorus-singing, hand-clapping, and tamborine-beating, which attract the crowd, and provide a cheap, if vulgar, entertainment. For, however intent on eternity the Salvationist may be, he always has an eye on the collection, since the "General" grants no salary until all the expenses are paid. Often he (not the General, but his typical minor officer) goes short, but he is lured on by hopes of promotion and final glory.

The Salvationist does not want any evidence of Christianity. He feels it. He knows Jesus was born of a virgin, because he has got it in him. He does not want human learning. He feels there is a hell, and but for that would still be wallowing in his sins. "Do you think," he says, "I should preach the Gospel if it were not for the Devil and hell?" He is, in short, a religionist who is in earnest, and, as such, is capable of much, both for good and evil. While the mass of religionists are hypocrites, he is sincere, though his sincerity is not unmingled with the worldly motive of preferring a life of uniform excitement to the dry, dull drudgery of ordinary labor.

UNCLE BENJAMIN.

WOMEN UNDER THE CHRISTIAN REGIME.

WE are told that Christianity raised the position of women. This dogmatic assertion, like many others made by believers in the carpenter theory of creation, has little foundation.

After nineteen centuries of free play, Christian England, according to evidence given in the police-court the other week, compels its women to work like slaves for twelve hours making buttonholes on men's coats, before they are enabled to earn ninepence. The workers have to supply their own thread and expend twopence on 'bus fares in fetching and taking back the coats.

With these conditions, is it such a great matter of wonder that immorality and crime are on the increase? Women must live, and have every right to do so. How can they eke out an existence on such a miserable pittance? It is an impossibility for them to do so. They are aware that for one night on the streets they can earn more than a fortnight's weary toil can give them. Disease may be the consequence. It is also inevitable when excessive work and worry, insufficient food, inadequate clothing, and unhealthy dwellings are the order of the day and of the years. Then the society of Christian England, which has forced immorality on the poor creatures, terms them "unfortunates"; gathers its robe tightly around it for fear of contamination, and despises them as of a different race, and objects of abhorrence; while it religiously chants: "He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away."

Occasionally, also, the clergyman, looking down on his well-dressed congregation, will, in sheer desperation for some new subject to dwell upon, enter into a discourse on the question, "Why do not the poor come to church?" The mockery of it! The poor know, as well as the church dignitary knows, that they are out of place in those buildings, where an easy and comfortable path to the next world is pointed out to those who have the means to travel along it. We are called a Christian country, but the heathens and savages upon whom we, in our insolent conceit, have undertaken to force our vices under the cloak of religion, never imposed a harder life and a more difficult way of earning a livelihood on the weaker sex.

In the name of humanity, let us attempt to better the position of these poor women, and free them from the curse of immorality, which the mammon-worshippers of Christian England have made compulsory for them.

F. A. UNDERWOOD.

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JONES.

"Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art translated."—*Quince*.

I HAVE just been reading Mr. John Vickers' very interesting theories of the Bible miracles, as given us in his book, *Imaginism and Rationalism*. I confess that he would have brought more conviction to my mind if he had touched on the parallelism between the accounts of Jesus Ben Joseph and Jesus Ben Pandira, as well as other Messiahs who seem to have got mixed up in Holy Writ; and also if he had shown how the belief in the accuracy of detail which he exhibits can be harmonized with the usually accepted theory of the very late origin of the gospels. Moreover, although his theory does fit in very well with some of the miracles, he occasionally rejects a much more simple solution in order to bring each of them into line.

Of these somewhat far-fetched explanations the one which seems least justifiable is his *exposé* of the supposed transfiguration fraud. To suggest that Joseph of Arimathea, Lazarus of Bethany, and the rest of the wire-pullers of Mr. Vickers' Christian drama, would take the trouble to send two men into Galilee to dress themselves and Jesus in white robes, in order to further infatuate his three most enthusiastic followers, seems to me equivalent to asking us to swallow the proverbial camel, lest we should choke ourselves with a gnat, especially as there was in this instance no prophecy which they could wish to fulfil. This impression is strengthened by the fact that I have myself had the honor of taking a part in the transfiguration of that holy man, the Rev. Obadiah B. Jones; on which occasion so startling was the resemblance to that of the gospels that, although myself a boy of less than sixteen, and a sincere believer, I, after carefully comparing those accounts with my own experience, decided that on that occasion the apostles in question had merely been deceived by the same natural phenomenon.

I was spending the summer holidays in company with my school chum, Billy Snodkins, at Dolgelly, on the slopes of Cader Idris, in North Wales, with the rev. gentleman in question, who was my house-master in a well-known English public school; and one beautiful afternoon we made an ascent of the mountain. When we reached the summit, solid little white clouds were driving across it from a south-westerly direction. As the first of these swept past us, what was our astonishment on beholding against its dazzling whiteness, in a brilliant and entire circle of rainbow hues, the colossal form of a new Messiah, with his two traditional supporters. A closer inspection revealed to us the fact that Jesus Christ was wearing a wideawake hat and knickerbockers, and enthusiastically waving to us an umbrella, while Moses wore a billycock hat, and the aged Elias supported his trousered limbs with a walking-stick. Many times in succession was this beautiful vision vouchsafed unto us; while, if we parted company, Moses seemed ever to follow, and to watch over me among the dizzy abysses of the stately mountain, while Elias attached himself to Snoddy. Mr. Jones had the special privilege due to his holy ministry of communing alone with his Redeemer.

Now familiarity as you are aware, invariably breeds contempt; and what do you think was the rev. gentleman's impious exclamation when he looked upon the forms of these three celestial visitants?—"Look at our shadows thrown on to that cloud!" And I confess with shame that that was the presumptuous conclusion at which we all arrived.

Now, how does this bear upon the transfiguration of Christ? Well, I imagine that Christ, as his manner was, got up and went away to pray (or for some more prosaic purpose), and left the three disciples sleeping. Shortly afterwards they awoke, rose up, and, looking around for Christ, observed a dazzling rainbow upon an approaching cloud, encircling three gigantic figures. The vision was over before they could collect their sleepy and frightened wits, for a bright cloud, the bright cloud, overshadowed them, and they fell on their faces. Jesus, who was doubtless afraid of losing his companions in the fog, came up groping and touched them; but from the dignified oriental attitude which they had adopted they were, of course, unable to tell where he had come from. They told him their experience, which involved nothing which he could not believe, and began discussing the meaning of the apparition: this of course was clear, it was to inform them "This is my beloved Son. . . Hear ye Him." So obvious was this that two of their historians, Matthew and Luke, state that they heard the very words spoken by a miraculous voice, as they were said to have been at his baptism. The fact, however, that St. Mark omits such a startling warrant of his maker's pretensions is sufficient proof that this is an embellishment. Mark and Luke state that St. Peter addressed himself to the apparition, but received no answer. This is very much against both the orthodox theory and that of Mr. Vickers, especially the latter. Christ forbade them to repeat their experience, and doubtless they obeyed him for a time; and this accounts for the fact that crowds of sightseers did not flock to the spot, when similar conditions might have produced similar phenomena and destroyed the illusion. It also prevented them from discussing the matter with the people of the neighborhood, who would have explained it away. The final result was that the three apostles, whose faith in his extreme claims had before been so weak that Christ had been quite surprised to hear Peter acknowledge them (Matt. xvi. 17), were now easily persuaded that the Baptist was the Elias of prophecy, who had prepared the way for this Messiah—a fact which seems to indicate that it was not till later that they fixed the name of Elias upon one of the supporters as an alternative fulfilment to satisfy the less credulous. In the very next act we find them squabbling for the places of honor in his kingdom. Before the transfiguration they had been unable to work miracles (Matt. xvii. 16, etc.), whereas they have now obtained "faith as a grain of mustard seed" (v. 20), and we hear of no more such difficulties.

LUCIFER.

—*Liberator*.

Lives of Jesus.

The world has been for a long time engaged in writing lives of Jesus. But when we come to examine them, one startling fact confronts us: all of these books relate to a personage concerning whom there does not exist a single scrap of contemporary information—not one. By accepted tradition, he was born in the reign of Augustus, the great literary age of the nation of which he was a subject. In the Augustan age historians flourished; poets and orators, critics and travellers abounded. Yet not one mentions even the name of Jesus Christ, much less any incident of his life. Of Jesus we have not one notice—not the faintest, slightest sentence or word on which history can fix as certain evidence that he ever lived at all.—*Moncure D. Conway*, in "Modern Thought."

M'NEILL AND THE "SUNBEAM."

EVANGELIST M'NIEL, holding forth at Ballarat to a Baptist congregation, pronounced the doom of the Brassey family. The preacher was remarking that Lord Brassey throws open the "Sunbeam" to the public on Sundays. "As a result of this thoughtless action, watermen and others were induced to work on the Sabbath in plying for hire with their boats, and the Lord's Day, therefore, was desecrated." The work of Sabbath-breaking, he predicted, would end disastrously, and Providence would some day cause the "Sunbeam" to strike on a rock and sink to the bottom of the sea.

There's One above has got
His eye on Brassey's yacht,
Which will surely give its "noble owner" one day
A sudden fatal shock
By colliding with a rock,
Since 'tis open to inspection on a Sunday.

Good shepherd, J. M'Neill,
Was commissioned to reveal
To the sheep whose simple souls he's been awaking,
That the purpose of the Lord
Is to sink (with all aboard)
The "Sunbeam," on a charge of Sabbath-breaking.

The well-upholstered boat,
Though at present quite afloat,
Will shortly disappear beneath the water,
Where the winkles, prawns, and sharks
Will play gastronomic larks
With Lord and Lady Brassey and the daughter ;

For Providence—so kind
To the piously-inclined
And sinners who are stricken with contrition—
Can be very hard, we know,
On a Sabbath-breaking show
If it snavels useful shillings for admission.

Yea, that's where Brassey's sin
Must undoubtedly come in ;
He doesn't stick at charging for inspection,
And the blessed Cause he robs
Of some nimble little "bobs"
Which might have fattened J. M'N.'s collection.

—*Sydney Bulletin.*

ACID DROPS.

A HORRIBLE story was published in Monday's newspapers. It was not fiction, but fact. A poor woman—named Emily Mott, aged forty-three, and a domestic servant out of employment—was found by a policeman sitting on a doorstep in High-street, Borough, South London. He asked her to move on, and she tried to, but she sank down on another doorstep. Seeing she was ill, the policeman conveyed her to St. George's Workhouse on an ambulance. She was fed there with a spoon, but she was too far gone to rally, and she died next day. The doctor who made the *post-mortem* for the coroner, stated that the body was "awfully emaciated," and as all the tissues of the flesh had become softened, it was clear that she had been suffering privation for a considerable period. The poor woman herself, while in bed in the workhouse, said that she had wondered homeless in London for eight weeks, picking up chance food, and sleeping wherever she could find a resting-place in the open air. Fancy eight weeks of such a tragedy, with church bells ringing, minister's preaching kingdom-come, and the pious poet singing :—

God's in his heaven,
All's right with the world.

In the face of such a tragedy it would 'be positively amusing, if it were not so sickening, to read that the Wesleyans are making a desperate effort to raise £50,000 for foreign missions. Men, women, and little children may die in England of slow starvation, but money must be spent on saving the souls of distant "heathen" from hell—though nobody can prove that they have souls, or that there is a hell for them to go to.

The Wesleyan Conference had to consider a report by its Lord's Day Observance Committee. These petty Sabbatarian bigots recommended that a special form of prayer should be used in all the chapels in favor of closing the National Museums and Art Galleries on Sundays. The Conference, however, did not endorse the recommendation. It was probably felt to be a waste of time and energy to appeal to Providence against a decisive majority in Parliament. There is a time for everything, and prayer is useless when the matter is settled.

The characteristic feature of Wesley's arrangements for his followers is the itinerancy of ministers, who, by clause 11 of the Wesleyan deed-poll, are compelled to move on to a fresh district every three years. Ministers in comfortable quarters have long objected to this arrangement, and means have been taken, as with the West London Mission, to evade it. The Conference, having decided to apply to Parliament for powers to alter their trust in this particular, the clause, by which Wesley sought to prevent the establishment of a rival to the permanent parish priest, will doubtless be abrogated, and Wesleyan Methodism will enter on a new phase.

The trend of the times was seen in the discussion of the question of guilds for youths by the Liverpool Wesleyan Conference. In vain the Rev. Dinsdale T. Young protested that it was not the function of a Christian church to provide recreation ; in vain he stated that cycling and rambling excursions were robbing the Sunday morning congregations ; the Wesleyans knew that if they are to retain the young they must make themselves attractive, and the recommendation of a Wesley Guild was carried by a large majority.

The vicar of Weston, near Crewe, is a little God Almighty in his own village. A girl who was playing in the school-yard was ordered by his godship to desist. She did so, but as she turned away the vicar caught her in the flagrant act of laughing at him. The girl denied the crime, but was dismissed from the school. The father applied to the Attendance Committee of the Nantwich Union, who directed their clerk to write to the Vicar ordering the girl to be re-admitted, as the offence, even if true, was not one to merit expulsion. The girl was sent again to school, but the mistress would not let her in. On this the father wrote to the Education Department, who have informed the managers that in their opinion the circumstances do not constitute sufficient grounds for refusing the girl admission. And yet there are people who think that our schools should be publicly controlled, and not treated as the private preserve of the parsons !

Showman Booth is running a Salvationist Exhibition at the Agricultural Hall, of which a prominent feature is a Zulu kraal, which should enable the Army visitors to feel at home. At the Exhibition, William Booth and Co. appear undisguised in their character of universal purveyors, selling everything from a bicycle to a box of matches. A prominent placard lets the world know that Booth insures against fire in this world as well as in the next.

The holy city of Jerusalem is becoming a deal like other resorts of visitors—public-houses abound. It is stated that there are now 135 places where intoxicants are sold. In every case these places are kept by Christians or Jews, the Moslems, who still preponderate in numbers, being prohibited from using or dealing in intoxicants.

According to the *Church Review* more churches are required in Birmingham to counteract Nonconformist influence in the capital of the Midlands. The *Birmingham Post* found, however, that there were already far more churches than are needed. With a seating capacity of 8,850, the attendance was but 840, less than one-tenth of the seats being occupied.

The decline of church-going is the subject of correspondence in the *St. James's Gazette*. A "Layman" says he recently attended a well-known Protestant church in Kensington, and there was a fairly eloquent man in the pulpit, but "an audience in which the male element was conspicuous by its absence, and the old maids and domestic servants gaped from their pews." This writer thinks that Roman Catholicism, with its gorgeous ritual, is the only real competitor with thorough-going Materialism.

"Prayer-books are now made with bouquet-holders on the outside."—*Fashion Item*. It looks as if ere long a Bible will not be complete unless it has a plate-glass mirror on the back, together with little compartments for hair-pins, face-powder, and *eau de Cologne*.

This want has been partially supplied, according to the *Western Figaro*, whose "pote" breaks out into the following lay :—

In the church at eventide
She sat thinking much of Jack ;
His footstep 'twas, she fancied,
As he came two sittings back.
With joy at once she saw him,
'Tho' behind she couldn't look ;
But she'd got a little looking-glass
Upon her new hymn-book.

On a recent Sunday evening, at Rising Sun, Indiana, the Presbyterian Church of that town was struck by lightning during the services of the large congregation which was

present on that occasion; but we are happy to state that no one was injured, although the preacher and many persons were severely stunned thereby. Almost simultaneously with this disaster a flash of lightning also entered the Methodist Episcopal Church in that town, where a large audience was assembled to attend the children's day exercises, causing a severe shock to a lady who was at that time on the platform speaking a piece.

In Melbourne recently two men were fined 5s. each for breaking the Sabbath by drying bear-skins on the Day of Rest. Bear-skins, it appears, take eight or ten consecutive days to dry, therefore they have to dry on at least one Sunday; and the furriers weren't actually drying them—their crime consisted in leaving the skins in the sun on that day and allowing Providence to break the Sabbath by letting the law of evaporation go on as usual. The magistrate who inflicted the fines had probably broken the same Sabbath in the same way by drying himself on that day, or, even if he didn't dry himself, it is to be presumed that he dried naturally, just like the skins. It would be interesting to know if a case would lie against a man who grew his beard on the Sunday in the city of Fitzgibbon, or whose hair was found increasing in length, or whose infant didn't stop growing. If it wouldn't, why wouldn't it? Why doesn't someone start a society for carrying the Sabbath law to its logical conclusion, and issue 420,000 summonses on Monday morning against the whole population of Melbourne because their skin evaporated on the previous day?—*Sydney Bulletin*.

Hope of reunion with Rome on other than terms of absolute submission having broken down, Anglicans are now seeking to open up a *rapprochement* with the Greek Church. Archbishop Benson and the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg have exchanged courtesies, which, however, are little likely to extend beyond.

The Greek Church, according to Anglican ideas, is sadly heretical in rejecting the clause that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son; while the Greek Church, in turn, regards Anglican orders, doctrines, and discipline with suspicion. On the former momentous topic there is little doubt that the Eastern Church preserves the earlier view. The Son and the Holy Ghost both come from the Father, but how the Ghost could proceed from the Son when the Son was conceived of the Holy Ghost is a beautiful Christian mystery. The doctrine of the Procession of the Holy Ghost was invented to give greater honor to the Son than the early Ebionites and Arians allowed.

The *Saturday Globe*, of Utica, N.Y., tells how they raise money at St. John's Episcopal Church at New Brunswick, N.J. The entertainment was in the chapel, the front seats being filled by young men. It consisted in several young ladies taking their turns behind a curtain which fell to within eight inches of the floor, so as to discover little more than the bare feet of the young lady behind it. The young men were told that they might bid to take to supper the lady whose feet most strongly appealed to their sense of the beautiful. Thus the highest bidder would have the honor and happiness of escorting the lady to supper, and at the same time contribute to the fund that the society was trying to raise.

Applause soon greeted this announcement. "A pair of little feet appeared under the hem of the curtain—shapely feet with pink toes. There were accorded, too, to the delight of the audience, glimpses of a shapely ankle, framed above by delicate embroidery." Then came the bids; two, three, five dollars, and five dollars won. One lovely pair of tootsies succeeded another, and the church fund was rapidly enriched, and the young men were nearer and nearer bankruptcy. "Then came a pair of feet whose insteps an Andalusian maid might envy. 'Ten dollars to start with!' shouted a youth. 'Twelve,' from a corner of the second row of seats. 'Fifteen,' from the first bidder, who, turning to his competitor, exclaimed: 'There's no use for you to bid against me. That young lady will take supper with me if I bid all night and have to sup at breakfast time. I bathed with her at Atlantic City last summer.'"

At Santiago Cathedral, according to a correspondent of the *Church Times*, the image of the Virgin Mary is dressed in a black silk gown and mantilla. Nothing but a fan is wanted to make her a complete Spanish *senorita*.

Another interesting item in the *Church Times* account of "A Pilgrimage to Compostella" is, that in Spain "the wafers both for priest and people, stamped with crosses, are, strange to say, sold in the shops for domestic pastry-making." This gives a side-light on the real origin and purpose of the Mass.

There are Unitarians and Unitarians. Some of them rather like Freethought; others hate it more than they hate the deadliest superstition. We presume the *Inquirer* has to

cater to some extent for the latter section; otherwise it is not very easy to account for the venomous references to Charles Bradlaugh and G. W. Foote in one of its recent issues. Secularism, it says, lived and flourished on the martyrdom of Charles Bradlaugh during his parliamentary struggle; whereas all who are acquainted with the inside of our movement know that this parliamentary struggle threw us back as a Secular party by turning so much of our energy and resources in a political direction. But let us return to the *Inquirer*. It says that when the struggle was over the "Secular party fell and fell"—in other words, Bradlaugh did not uphold the Secular party, it was upheld by his Christian enemies. And now, the *Inquirer* adds, the Secular party "has reached the last depth of having Mr. Foote for its chief apostle." This is not criticism. Are we to take it as a fair sample of Unitarian manners?

The *Inquirer* speaks of the "intellectual and spiritual poverty" of Secularism. Well now, to give our candid opinion, which seems to be invited, we think there is intellectual wealth enough in any one number of the *Freethinker* to furnish forth any dozen numbers of the *Inquirer*. Our contemporary seems to mistake dullness for wisdom, and is now mistaking insolence for wit—a blunder which dull people fall into naturally.

Secularism will have to find "some new light upon the problems of life and death." Well, it will not be found in the *Inquirer*. The writers in our Unitarian contemporary do not betray any profound knowledge of the problems of life, and we would prefer to take their view of the problems of death after they are dead.

We do not discuss politics—especially party politics—in the *Freethinker*. But the imprisonment of "Dr. Jim" and his five friends is not politics. It is a question of ethics, and of very elementary ethics too. We do not propose to go behind the jury's verdict, nor do we quarrel with the judge's sentence as far as the term of imprisonment goes. What we desire to condemn is the *kind* of imprisonment inflicted upon them. In our judgment it is an absolute outrage, and likely to defeat the ends of justice by exciting a gratuitous sympathy with the offenders. These men made a great mistake, a dreadful, disastrous mistake; but it was a mistake only possible to gallant men. When "Dr. Jim" told his troopers whither he was bound, and asked them if they would go, they cried out, "We'll follow you to hell." Very bad, and very sad, of course; but, after all, we have more respect for those dare-devils than for a good many highly respectable people who make a pile of money by far more questionable practices; more even than we have for some studiously virtuous journalists who never incur any greater danger than in crossing Fleet-street a little the worse for "inspiration."

It is perfectly absurd to call these men "criminals" in the ordinary sense of the word. Their offence was a political one, and it is a disgrace to English jurisprudence that such offences are put in the same category as common crime. No man in his senses would classify Dr. Jameson with Jabez Balfour. Why, then, should both be subjected to the same treatment in gaol? We know what that treatment is, for we have suffered it under the Blasphemy Laws; and, knowing what it is, we repeat that its infliction on Dr. Jameson and his companions is an outrage. They have not deserved the most sordid indignities. It might have been right to shoot them, but it cannot be right to dress them in the garb allotted to wife-beaters and embezzlers, and to lacerate their feelings every day by the most coldly-calculated degradations. We venture to say that no other country in Europe would have dealt with them in this fashion. In other countries, they would have been imprisoned to vindicate the law, but not subjected to ignominy. England is behind all the rest of the civilised world in this respect.

This has been seen to some extent by the Home Secretary, or the Cabinet, and Dr. Jameson and his companions have been shifted back from Wormwood Scrubs to Holloway Gaol, where they are deprived of their liberty during the term of their sentences, but not subjected to any indignities. This is as it should be. The only pity is that the Home Secretary or the Judges—whoever was to blame—allowed these men to be treated as convicts, even for twenty-four hours.

Dr. Oliver Wendel Holmes, as his biography records, was worried by a canvasser to subscribe to a large dictionary. "I'm too old," he said; "I sha'n't live to see it finished." "Nay, doctor," was the reply, "you won't have to live so very much longer; we've already got to G." Dr. Holmes told him he might go to L.

From the *Crescent* (July 29) we gather that Lord Stanley of Alderley, who was at one time Postmaster-General, "professes Islam." We do not know if this means that his

lordship is a full-fledged Moslem, but, if so, it is difficult to understand his attitude of opposition to the disendowment of the Welsh Church.

It is announced that a feature of the Paris Exposition of 1900 will be a section devoted to the history of Christianity from the beginning to the present day, with representations of the Temple of Jerusalem, the scenes of the life of Christ, Pagan and Christian Rome, Constantinople, and the lives of the saints. It would be about as historical to represent scenes from the life of Jupiter.

The popularity of *The Sign of the Cross* naturally has turned the minds of speculative playwrights to religious subjects. Grace Hawthorne threatens the production in London of *Pilgrim's Progress*, acting Christian herself. Perhaps there is a semi-religious public to support this sort of thing, and, anyway, it gives the parsons a chance of theatre-going without disguise.

"Cremation," says the *Church Times*, "is not in formal conflict with the teaching of our Lord, but it is a variation from the unbroken practice of the Church." Of course to burn bodies more forcibly suggests a question as to "the resurrection of the body" than to bury them. But why should the people of to-day regard the unbroken practice of a Church influenced by such superstitions?

The Low Evangelical *English Churchman* stigmatises the High English Church Union as "a sacerdotal confederacy." On the other hand, the High Ritualistic *Church Times* says of the Low Church Association: "This moribund society is a landmark. It represents the forces of the world disguised as Dominican Inquisitors, who once seemed to be in a position to carry all before them, but are now, like Bunyan's Giant, sitting in their cave, biting their nails in futile despair. They appeal to a certain small section of plutocratic religionists, who seem to think that the battles of the Lord are to be won by gold and State coercion. Their report is only useful as an evidence that charity is at a discount among them."

Thus High Church and Low evince their readiness for Christian union:—

'Tis strange what hellish wrath will rise
'Tween heavenly saints of kingdom-come;
While one sect *hocus pocus* cries,
The other bawls for *fee fau fum*.

After all, the Ritualistic Mass is hardly as disgusting as the Evangelical "bleeding Lamb."

Headlines are always a feature in American newspapers, and a writer in the *Outlook* recalls a hearty laugh he had over the ingenuity of this one: "875 Tongues Short." It introduced the account in a Monday's paper of a service in a once famous church, whose congregation had been reduced to a handful by quarrels over the pastor—the account beginning something like this: "A congregation of just 125 worshippers opened their service yesterday morning, in the Rev. Dr. Blank's church, by disconsolately singing the hymn, 'O, for a thousand tongues to sing!'"

One of our Chicago subscribers sends us a Liberal (Free-thought) tract, which he calls "a bigot tamer," and says is "very effective when shot into the orthodox camp." The front page contains a spirited picture of a Christian, surrounded by various agencies and instruments of persecution; but he is in the clutch of an "infidel," and is crying out in terror, "Don't hurt our feelings." The back page contains a telling extract from Ingersoll, and some interesting jail statistics from Canada, where the Sunday laws, which the bigots are trying to enforce in the United States, have long been in full swing. These statistics give the religious belief of the prisoners in two Canadian jails, and we think our readers would like to see the figures. Here they are:—

<i>Montreal Jail Report,</i> 1894.	<i>Kingston Penitentiary</i> <i>Report, 1893-4.</i>
Catholic.....2,627	Catholic..... 165
Church of England..... 271	Church of England..... 138
Presbyterian..... 153	Methodist.....106
Methodist..... 40	Presbyterian..... 52
Lutheran..... 24	Baptist..... 21
Hebrew..... 20	Lutheran..... 6
Baptist..... 7	Jewish..... 2
Congregational..... 3	Disciple..... 1
Evangelist..... 1	Quaker..... 1
Salvation Army..... 2	Memonite..... 1
Atheist..... 2	Infidel..... 1
3,150	494

The *Church Times*, intentionally or unintentionally, seems to be guilty of grave disrespect towards the head of the English Church. It devotes an article to "Tourists in Scotland," complaining that they "vex, by their attendance at schismatical worship, the Catholic Church of an English-

speaking people, a Church with which their own is in full communion." It proceeds to show that "the Presbyterian Kirk is entirely schismatical." Now, her Majesty, during her many prolonged visits to Scotland, always attends the Presbyterian Kirk. The *Church Times* may say she does this in her capacity as head of the Established Presbyterian Church of Scotland, but it is not easy to see why what is right in the Queen should be so dreadfully wrong in her subjects.

After the terrific tidal wave on the coast of Japan, which drowned nearly forty thousand people, we hear of a minor one on the Chinese coast, which drowned four thousand. As large quantities of cattle were also lost, and the rice fields of the district are under water, a famine is feared in the autumn. Natural forces have no more respect for men than for flies. It is idle to tell us of the Providence behind them.

Le Monde, a leading French Catholic paper since 1860, has had to give up the ghost, or rather, be absorbed in *Veillot's Univers*. The world is now lost in the universe.

The Rev. Dr. Amory Bradford has been lecturing in Kensington on "Christianity in Japan." He lamented that the Japanese were throwing off the old religions only to become Rationalists, but admitted they had taken vast strides in civilisation.

Mary Scott, an inmate of Dundee Royal Asylum, where she had been about seven months, cut her throat from ear to ear while lying in bed. She had not shown any suicidal tendencies, but she had suffered from "religious melancholia."

Bible burning has often been ascribed, without evidence, to "infidels," but the American *Bible Society Record* gives a circumstantial account of a burning of Bibles in the parish of San Miguel, Peru. The act was done at the instigation of the vicar of the province, representing the bishop, and by the parish priest, an order having been sought and received from the alcalde or civil magistracy to that end. Ninety-four copies of the Scriptures were delivered over to be made a bonfire of in the public square of the town. The Protestants made as much fuss as have Catholics when the mass has been profaned, and equally expect God's vengeance for the insult to their fetish.

The wife of Bishop Wightman, of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, has given to Bishop Hurst, for the American University, an autograph letter of John Wesley, written March 31, 1790, the closing paragraph of which is as follows: "As soon as possible you should put the Believers in Bands and introduce ye whole Methodist Discipline. But, I pray, do not introduce slouched hats; let us not imitate clowns or Quakers. Next to the Bible, I love common sense. Therefore I wd never be singular for singularity sake. I am, dear Billy, your affectionate friend and brother, J. Wesley. Beware of women." The final words are characteristic. Wesley suffered from a jealous wife, and his sentiments towards the sex were worthy of a father of the church.

Churches and chapels are not the only permanent hunting-grounds of the priests. Railway station waiting-rooms all over the country are utilized for the propagation of superstition by the display of rolls bearing texts on the walls, and Bibles and tracts on the tables. Why should not Freethought be represented? Mr. A. Guest, of 19 Alwyne-road, Canonbury, N., is willing to send gratis to Freethinkers in the country a quantity of tracts for them to place periodically in the waiting-rooms of their local station. He merely asks that a stamped and addressed wrapper shall be sent him.

The San Francisco *Examiner* says that Emma Ashley, the woman who tried to shoot "Lucky" Baldwin, "rose with a Bible in one hand and a pistol in the other, and fired the shot." The Bible in one hand and a pistol in the other! If the Church does not secure the services of the Ashley woman for a missionary to the heathen, it will overlook a remarkable case of fitness for the position.

The Rev. L. A. Lambert, author of *Notes on Ingersoll*, lately made the assertion that "the inflammatory addresses of John Wesley were the prime cause of the great London anti-Catholic riots of 1780, which resulted in the death of nearly five hundred people." The Methodist followers of Wesley denounce Priest Lambert's statement as a lie or a blunder, but they continue to circulate his *Notes on Ingersoll* as though the work were of unimpeachable veracity. Catholics and Protestants are willing to swap testimony against Infidelity, though both are aware that neither can be believed when talking about the other.—*Truthseeker*.

The Rev. Father Kileen has been removed from the Catholic Church of Bayonne, N. J., for using indecent language in the pulpit, for keeping a mistress, and for other conduct not officially indorsed by Papal authority.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, August 9, Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, at 7.30, "Christ's Descent into Hell."

Thursday, August 13, Secular Hall, New Church-road, Camberwell, at 8, Conclusion of Debate on "Christianity and Secularism" with the Rev. A. J. Waldron.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—August 9, Camberwell Secular Hall, S.E. August 16 and 23, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road, London. September 6, Manchester. October 4, Glasgow.—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.

G. CROOKSON.—One shilling is the proper price of the Foote-Lee debate. Threepence was a printer's blunder in resetting the advertisement during Mr. Foote's absence from London. It has been corrected. Thanks for cuttings.

A THINKER.—Mr. Wheeler does not know whether the statement is true or not.

L. LEVINE (Charleston).—Your papers are ever welcome. Salut.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND.—Per R. Forder:—Le Diable, £1; W. Newcomb, 1s. 6d.; W. Mann, 1s.; H. Seseman, £2 2s.; J. Jones, 2s. 6d. Barnsley:—J. Harvey, 2s. 6d.; G. Bennett 2s. 6d.; E. Creedy, 1s. W. Lees Sumner, 5s. Per Miss Vance:—J. Cuff, 5s.; Ips, 5s.; J. Sumner, 5s. Mr. George Anderson informs the secretary that he will sign a cheque for ten guineas for this Fund when the other £90 is subscribed, which he thinks should be done immediately.

GOTTHEIL.—Thanks for cuttings.

W. DYSON.—We do not know any good English work on the subject. There are several in French, if you read that language. The disease you refer to is commonly said to have been spread through Europe in the way suggested by Draper, but we fancy it must have existed before that period.

W. H. TAYLOR.—Pleased to hear that you are having good open-air meetings at Northampton, though we regret to hear that all the local work falls upon a few willing members. We hope you will persevere. Have you secured that hall for the winter season?

J. M. R.—Glad to have your cuttings.

MRS. KNOWLES.—Pleased to hear that Mr. Moss's first visit to Blackburn was so successful, and that his lectures gave such general satisfaction. You ought to have had better collections from the audiences.

S. J. B. writes:—"I am glad to see that our old friend, G. L. Mackenzie, is still about. I was beginning to wonder what had become of him." This correspondent thinks the Park Demonstrations a splendid advertisement for Freethought. He was present at the one in Regent's Park and saw the effect of Messrs. Foote, Watts, and Cohen's speeches on the crowd.

W. LEES SUMNER.—Yes, the Park Demonstrations in London are doing a great deal of good—as you expect. Glad to know you appreciated our reference to Charles Bradlaugh and the oath question.

W. WILTON (Melbourne).—The books and pamphlets you name, being all out of print, can only be picked up occasionally.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Lucifer—Liberty—Western Figaro—Critic—De Dageraad—Progressive Thinker—Post—New York Public Opinion—Charleston Sun—Metropolitan—Twentieth Century—Two Worlds—Truthseeker—Boston Investigator—Freethought Ideal—Christian Herald—Isle of Man Times—Rangoon Gazette—East London Standard.

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

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

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

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.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THIS number of the *Freethinker* will be in the hands of some of its London readers before Thursday (Aug. 6), when the debate on Secularism and Christianity takes place at the Camberwell Secular Hall between Mr. G. W. Foote and the Rev. A. J. Waldron, the chair being occupied by Mr. Charles Watts. As there is every prospect of a crowded attendance, we advise Freethinkers who want to secure a seat to come early. The doors open at 7.30 and the debate begins at 8.

The third open-air demonstration under the auspices of the National Secular Society was held on Sunday afternoon in Finsbury Park. Mr. Wilson once more kindly provided a brake and a pair of horses. Mr. Thomas Shore took the chair, so to speak; and the speakers (in the order of their addresses) were Messrs. C. Cohen, C. Watts, and G. W. Foote. Miss Brown, the ever faithful at these gatherings as elsewhere, took up the collection. The demonstration itself was a grand success. People gathered around the brake as Mr. Cohen spoke in strong, clear tones, although suffering somewhat from a cold. Mr. Watts, who was in capital form, and made a speech, at once dignified and eloquent, attracted a still larger crowd; and there was a magnificent assembly before Mr. Foote had concluded his address. All the other meetings were dwarfed into insignificance by this splendid gathering, which evidently included a vast number of people quite unacquainted with Freethought. For some time the audience was cold; it seemed hardly to know what to make of the speaking; but it grew sympathetic as it continued to listen, and there was plenty of applause before the end. Hearty cheers were raised as the speakers drove away.

Mr. Foote lectured in the evening at the Athenæum Hall, to a good audience on "The Sermon on the Mount." Miss Vance took the chair and fulfilled its duties admirably. After the lecture Mr. Foote had the pleasure of shaking hands and chatting with an American gentleman of the finest English build of body and of noticeable strength of head and face. This gentleman spoke in the highest terms of Ingersoll, whom he knows personally, calling him the grandest man in America. He said that he wondered why Mr. Foote fought such an uphill battle in this old country when there was such a splendid field for him in America. He was glad to know that Mr. Foote was going to visit America, and hoped to have the pleasure of meeting him there.

Mr. Foote lectures at the Athenæum Hall (73, Tottenham Court-road) again this evening (August 9), taking for his subject, "Christ's Descent into Hell." On the following two Sundays the platform will be occupied by Mr. Charles Watts.

The fourth open-air demonstration takes place this afternoon (August 9) at Peckham Rye. Time 3.30. One of the Camberwell Branch members will take the chair, and the speakers will be Messrs. Foote and Watts. Peckham Rye used to have an evil reputation for disorder. We hope this demonstration will pass off quietly, but in case of need it would be well for the local Freethinkers to turn up in force on this occasion.

Last Sunday evening Mr. Charles Watts lectured in the Secular Hall, Camberwell, to a capital audience. Judging from the frequent and hearty applause, it was evident that the lecture was much appreciated. Mr. Hartmann presided, and, previous to the lecture, Mrs. Charles Watts gave two recitations, which were applauded again and again. This evening, Sunday, August 9, Mr. Watts lectures again in the same hall, taking for his subject "The Fallacy of Alleged Christian Evidences." As this will be Mr. Watts's last lecture at Camberwell previous to his visit to America, we expect he will have a large audience and good debate.

Mr. A. B. Moss has been lecturing (under Mr. Foote's Lecture Scheme) at Blackburn, Rochdale, Todmorden, and Heckmondwike. This week he lectures at Bradford. Everywhere he has had fine open-air meetings, but the provincial friends seem to be deficient in the art of making a good collection. Mr. Moss will give an account of his tour in the *Freethinker*.

The Failsworth Secular Society holds its annual services in connection with the Schools this afternoon and evening, when Mr. J. M. Robertson will deliver addresses. Hymns and choruses will be sung by the choir, assisted by the Failsworth String Band. Tea will be provided for friends from a distance.

The July *Freethought Magazine* has, for frontispiece, a portrait of John Emerson Roberts, a Liberal preacher of Kansas City, who was formerly a Baptist minister and doctor of divinity. H. M. Taber shows what can be offered "In Place of Christianity"; H. C. Wycliff writes on "The Evolution of Religious Beliefs"; and Mr. E. D. Davis, by a careful collating of passages in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, comes to the conclusion that these gospels were reconstructed from earlier documents, which underwent many alterations at the hands of scribes. Only so, he thinks, can we account for both the differences of the stories and their striking verbal coincidences. Judge Waite writes on "Signs of the Times," finding in the rejection of the religious vote for Indian schools, and in the failure of the attempt to get God into the United States Constitution, cheering signs for American Freethinkers, who must, however, remember that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

The New York *Metropolitan*, in its August number, gives among "Notables of the Month" a portrait of Colonel Ingersoll, with a paragraph anent his having been made the central figure in a large-sized picture of hell by G. S. Perhacs. The painting of this picture, which gives one hundred and twenty clearly-defined figures on the huge canvas, has taken several years. The Colonel's form is the dominant one in hell. He appears smiling genially, and extending a glad hand to Satan's victims or visitors.

De Dageraad, of Amsterdam, in its August number translates Mr. J. T. Cunningham's paper on "The New Darwinism" from the *Westminster Review*. There is also an interesting paper on "Children and Monkeys."

The *Rangoon Gazette*, of Burma, often gives insertion to Freethought letters, and the numbers before us have some able ones on "Education in the Middle Ages," by Mr. E. H. Seppings, who shows that learning never flourished under Christian auspices.

The debate between Mr. G. W. Foote and the Rev. W. T. Lee, at Cardiff, took place in Wood-street Congregational Chapel on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, July 28 and 29. Mr. Glenelg Grant occupied the chair. The question for discussion was: "Did Jesus Christ Rise from the Dead?" The local arrangements were in the hands of Mr. W. Fitzgerald, the gentleman who presided at the Swansea debate. Largely owing to his excellent superintendence, there was a fine meeting on the first evening, and a still finer one on the second evening, when the interest in the debate had grown warm. Mr. Grant had little to do as chairman, but that little was done with tact and geniality. Of course, there were a few interruptions; that is inevitable in a public debate; but both meetings were, on the whole, extremely well-behaved.

The *South Wales Echo* contained the following editorial announcement of the Cardiff debate: "Shade of Galileo, the world does move! Have I not been invited to attend a two nights' theological debate between Mr. G. W. Foote, the President of the National Secular Society, and the Rev. W. T. Lee, not in a public hall or the long-room of a public-house, but in the Wood-street Chapel, Cardiff? The 'infidel' has been invited to speak for his belief or disbelief in a Christian church. And the representative of heterodoxy is the notable Mr. Foote, whose name will be handed down in history as the last prisoner in England for 'blasphemy,' a man who received and served a brutal sentence of twelve months' imprisonment at the hands of a judge who forgot himself, and turned advocate as well as zealot on the bench. Yes, the world does move—from gaol bird for conscience sake to debater—holding the same conviction—by invitation, and in a Christian church! Here is a specimen of Christian toleration which is worthy of the times and characteristic of the better days coming. I take no lot or share in theological or political discussion. I simply call attention to an interesting and significant fact, and to a subject which will prove of deep interest to a very large section of the public of South Wales. The President of the National Secular Society is a clever speaker, an able and skilled debater, a scholar and a thinker. The other giant of the debate is the Rev. W. T. Lee, of Longcross-street Baptist Chapel, Cardiff, and needs no introduction to the public. With Mr. Glenelg Grant in the chair, the balance between the two debaters will be held with strict fairness. There is no need to fear that the unbeliever will be mobbed, pelted with brickbats, refused a night's shelter in the town, or that he will receive any of the barbarous treatment which was meted out to his predecessor but a few years ago."

Although the second night's debate did not close until nearly half-past ten, Mr. Foote adjourned with some local Freethinkers to a room that had been engaged, where it was decided, with unanimity and enthusiasm, to form a Branch of the National Secular Society. Those present were of opinion that the debate would give a considerable impetus to the Freethought movement in Cardiff, and that a Branch would have a good prospect of success, especially if the debate were followed up by lectures. It was resolved to find a suitable room for a larger meeting, to be called through the *Freethinker* and an advertisement in the local press. Meanwhile the gentleman who agreed to act as secretary *pro tem.*—Mr. Le Coq, 13 Moy-road—will be glad to hear from any readers of this journal who are willing to take part in this effort. He invites all such to call at his residence on Sunday evening, August 9, for the purpose of talking over the situation.

It can do truth no service to blink the fact, known to all who have the most ordinary acquaintance with literary history, that a large portion of the noblest and most valuable moral teaching has been the work, not only of men who did not know, but of men who knew and rejected, the Christian faith.—*John Stuart Mill*.

PSEUD-IDEAS.

HERBERT SPENCER has recently added a valuable term to the dictionary of definitions. He calls it the "pseud-idea," and it means sham thinking, or a thought that is not a thought. We have a vivid illustration of it, he says, in the assertion, not infrequently made concerning some remarkable phenomenon—"Oh, it is caused by electricity"; an assertion which, in both speakers and hearers, leaves a contented feeling that they understand the matter; the truth being that none of them has the remotest idea what electricity is, and none of them has the remotest idea how electricity, did they know its nature, could produce the effect observed. What they take to be their ideas are simply pseudo or false ideas. Mr. Spencer employs this illustration to show how little real meaning there is in Mr. Balfour's proposition, that "out of the depths of unfathomable mystery there emerge the certitudes of religion, the primary certitude being the existence of a rational author for the ordered system of phenomena." I want to apply it to an example of the pseud-idea that falls conveniently under my eye. The other day Gen. Thomas J. Morgan, of these parts, delivered a patriotic address on "Building a Nation," and in casting about for a basis for his commonwealth he discovered, or said he did, that a nation having no earthly king must accept a heavenly one, and that, to be permanent, it must "rest upon God." Thereat every pious and imbecile hearer nodded assent and felt that the country was safe; but, as in the case of those who accepted the electrical illustration, neither the speaker nor the hearer had a definite idea what God is; nor, if they had known or thought they knew what he is, could either have told how to go about founding a nation on him. And what is true of General Morgan and his hearers is true of nearly all who talk and listen to theological discourse. It is mainly true, also, of a great deal that goes under the head of political and economic teaching. The thinking thought to be thought is sham thinking—a mere impression, and confused at that, like one gob of mud striking another.

If those who speak and write, and those who listen or read, will keep in mind the difference between the true idea and the pseud-idea, they will not talk and write so much, nor will they accept so much as genuine thought which is in reality only aimless and unguided mental divagation, resembling the coursing of a calf around a barnyard. It would put an end to preaching, which is a result that cannot very well be helped. G. MACDONALD.

—*Truthseeker*.

AN EXPURGATED EDITION.

It appears the Christian sisters who want the Bible read in the schools have prepared an expurgated edition, wherein much objectionable inspired matter is drooped out of the holy record. Wonder if they omitted an account of the drink-offering of "the fourth part of a hin," mentioned in Numbers xxviii. 7, which was to be made day by day to the Lord? The command is unconditional: "The fourth part of a hin of strong wine" was to be poured unto the Lord for a drink offering. A hin was a Hebrew measure of six quarts. One-fourth of this, three pints, was to be given the Lord each evening. With this fact in mind we turn to Jeremiah xiii. 13, 14, and read: "Thus saith the Lord: Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit upon David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with drunkenness; and I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the Lord; I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them. If a man should make such awful threats, knowing he was drinking three pints of strong wine daily, a zealous effort would be made to induce him to sign a temperance pledge. The preachers will tell us this wine-bibbing and these terrible threats of producing drunkenness have a spiritual significance; but all these passages which represent God as a brutal character were reflections of the vileness of the writers, and it is simply shameful to impose them on the world as the "Word of God." Though emasculated in the interest of a higher civilisation, what remains will be inferior to modern thought.

—*Progressive Thinker*.

That she can fill whatever place
A parson doth, she saith;
And then she dons his trousers as
A matter of good faith.

INGERSOLL STILL A DOUBTER.

BUT THE SPIRITUALISTS GREATLY ADMIRE HIM AND THINK THAT IN TIME HE WILL BE CONVERTED.

COLONEL ROBERT G. INGERSOLL was at the Lilydale (N.Y.) Spiritualistic camp-meeting last week, and delivered his lecture on "Liberty." A correspondent of the New York *Journal* reports two interviews with the great orator:—

"What do I think of Spiritualism? I don't believe a word of it as a religion, or as a truth to swear by.

"But there are several good things about the Spiritualists," he continued, with the eye twinkle habitual with him when pleased with any particular subject. "First, they are not bigoted. Second, they do not believe in salvation by faith. Third, they don't expect to be happy in another world because Christ was good in this. Fourth, they do not preach the consolation of hell. Fifth, they do not believe in God as an infinite monster. Sixth, the Spiritualists believe in an intellectual hospitality." In these respects they differ from our Christian brethren, and in these respects they are far superior to the saints."

"What do you think of Theosophy, Colonel?" Ingersoll replied: "I can illustrate that with a story which will exactly answer the question. There was a man out in India who was preaching to a few Hindoos on the street. He said nothing is real; all is illusion. At that point a man rode up on an elephant and guided it to run over the speaker. Thereupon the speaker ran away, and the people laughed. Then the speaker came back, and the crowd said: 'How do you explain your conduct so it will agree with your principles?' And then the speaker replied: 'Friends, there was no elephant. I did not run away. You did not laugh. I did not come back. I am not explaining this now. It is all an illusion.' According to my idea that man was a Theosophist."

Colonel Ingersoll next took up the question of heredity and hypnotism. The latter science, he said, he did not believe in. He pronounced the science of palmistry or hand-reading also a fake, pure and simple, as also that of judging by the physiognomy.

"There is no art to read the mind's construction in the face," said he, "to quote from Shakespeare. I never saw a seraphic expression on the countenance of a priest. It is always a solemn visage, indicating stupidity. Solemnity and stupidity go hand in hand. The typical priest looks a criminal. No lawyer defending a client indicted for crime would take a clergyman on the jury, because clergymen think that justice is never done unless a man is convicted. They think it right to abhor all forms of law. In England in the time of George the Third there were 223 offences punishable by death. Now there are only two. During the many years when those penalties were being revoked by Parliament there were many bishops seated, and no bishop ever voted for the repeal of one of those penalties. There were 20,000 clergymen in England, and no sermon was ever preached in favor of the repeal of the death penalty. Their policy is that everyone is a criminal."

"But where does the soul go to after it passes out of the body? You gentlemen of this faith pretend to have diagnosed the case, and ought to be able to answer my question. Now that I have the good fortune to be here, I want to increase my fund of information."

Thus spoke Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll to a group of leading Spiritualists at this assembly ground this morning. The Colonel was waiting for a train for Bradford, Pa., and wanted to utilize his time in learning the lesson of immortality.

"The soul goes to the summer land," replied the leading Spiritualist. "There it works and evolves to a higher plane."

"Ah," said the colonel, grimly. "It works, does it? I thought we rested after we got up there?"

The leading Spiritualist spoke of a passage in Ingersoll's lecture where he referred to the man in a dugout. "We progressed from that man," said he. "Why not keep on?"

"Well, I am sure," replied Ingersoll, "I get all the work in this world I want," and then he observed musingly, while the crowd hung on his utterances as if an oracle, "I am sure I don't know what I should do, even if you should convince me of immortality, which you say you can do. We don't stop work up there?"

"No," said the leading Spiritualist. "There is the law of progression, you know."

Then came another Spiritualist: "You would have the consolation of knowing that you would live again, at any rate, colonel, if you would let us give some tests of future life. We have trance mediums who could do it."

"Don't believe anybody ever went into a trance," was the reply. "If you have people here who are in the habit of getting into trances, they ought to be shut up in an asylum until they are cured."

"Then you won't let us try to convince you, Colonel?" asked a Spiritualist.

"No. I don't care to know whether I am immortal or not. Fact is, I don't want to live forever, although I am not at all satisfied with this world. A minister asked me once if I thought I could improve on this world if I had the power of creation. 'Yes,' said I, 'certainly. I would, in the first place, make good health catching rather than disease. Acting in the place of Nature, I would not burn down this hotel, destroying the lives of mother and babes, at the same time burning up a few bedbugs and rats. There would be no disease in my world, nor death, nor suffering, nor misery. All should be happiness.' The principal objection I have to your Spiritualistic belief," said the Colonel, abruptly changing the subject, "is that your mediums never tell anything useful to the human race. They will go into trances and relate that John Miller, who was killed in a railroad accident out West, is now over there preparing a bed of roses for his friends here on earth. No, I can't accept your faith; certainly not without more proof than you have been able to give."

Colonel Ingersoll passed one of the happiest days of his life here. He is looked on by all Spiritualists in the light of a Moses, who would eventually lead them to the conversion of all the world to their faith. They explain his obstinacy by the fact that he is not spiritual-minded enough to receive the truth. But they know he will be some day, when he shall have evolved to a higher plane. As the Colonel took the train for Bradford this morning he was followed to the station by a delegation of mediums. He waved his hands in adieu from the platform, saying, "Good-bye, my brethren. You have here the prettiest spot on earth, and when I die, or pass over, as you call it if I can't go to heaven I want to come to Lilydale."

THE VIRTUE OF VICE.

We all are bad, the Bible says,
And God is wise, and all the rest;
We may have doubts, but Jahveh's ways
Are not as ours; He knows what's best.
God's best we are, though all depraved;
So parsons say to one and all:
'Tis better to be bad and saved
Than never to be bad at all.

A sorry knave, when sorry, makes
The angels flap their wings and crow,
But none the slightest notice takes
Of decent people—oh, dear, no!
Let this be on your minds engraved,
Who'er you be, both great and small:
'Tis better to be bad and saved
Than never to be bad at all.

The wisest of our race agree,
"Prevention's better far than cure";
The priest says: "Rubbish! scabs for me!
God's sacred scraping makes me pure!
No health for me, but vile disease;
No cleanliness, but dirt and mud,
Corruption, filth, and moral fleas,
Repentance, faith, and reeking blood!"

O cease to practise what's correct,
Nor strive to be humane and just!
The honest man, whom men respect,
Inspires Jehovah with disgust.
You can't be saved, unless depraved;
So, decent people, try to fail!
'Tis better to be bad and saved
Than never to be bad at all.

You say your mind is *not* depraved;
You *don't* admit you're full of sin?
If that is true, you can't be saved;
Jehovah's grace you'll never win.
Be quick! do wrong, and get depraved,
In order to confess your fall!
'Tis better to be bad and saved
Than good and never saved at all!

G. L. MACKENZIE.

Through the kindness of Mr. George Anderson and other friends the committee for carrying out the river excursion to Hampton Court, on Sunday, August 23, will be enabled to take fifty children free of cost. Application for free children's tickets must be made at once to the Bradlaugh Club and Institute, 36 Newington Green-road, Balls Pond, N.

EVOLUTION OR CREATION.

RECENT discoveries, especially those which show by intermediate forms that the bird-type is derived from the reptile-type, and those which show that, beginning with the four-toed *Orohippus* of the Eocene strata, we ascend in later strata, through *Mesohippus*, *Miohippus*, *Protohippus*, and *Pliohippus*, up to the modern horse, have given strong support to the hypothesis of evolution—support so strong that Professor Huxley, who had, up to the time he saw Professor Marsh's fossils, made reservations in his acceptance of the hypothesis, thereafter accepted it without reserve. Not only do fossils furnish in this and other cases the lines of lineal ascent to existing forms, but they simultaneously disclose a general fact of great significance—the fact that early types of creatures in any class display the commonest or most general traits of structure, and that later types of the same class are more specialized in this or that direction. The truths of classification, again, have a kindred meaning.

The lesson taught by the facts of distribution in time is also taught by the facts of distribution in space. In various regions there are alliances between the present fauna and the past fauna found fossil; though different, they are near akin. Once more there are the facts of embryology. In various ways these tell us with endless repetition the same story. If we accept the hypothesis of evolution, the strange transformations undergone by a developing embryo become intelligible, though otherwise unintelligible. Every superior animal commences as a nucleated cell, a form common to the smallest and simplest creatures, the *Protozoa*. In each great class of *Metazoa* further development of each higher type is accompanied by a "recapitulation" of traits distinctive of lower types. Marvellous as is this repetition of traits belonging to lower types, rudely indicated, it is quite congruous with the hypothesis of evolution—implies a kind of transcendental heredity. On the other hand, the hypothesis of design furnishes no explanation, but presents an insurmountable difficulty. With which evidence may be joined the evidence furnished by rudimentary organs, which are full of meaning on the evolution hypothesis, but worse than meaningless in the special-creation hypothesis.—*Herbert Spencer*.

The Atonement.

If there was no Atonement until the crucifixion of Christ, what became of the countless millions who died before that time? And it must be remembered that the blood shed by the Jews was not for other nations. Jehovah hated foreigners. The Gentiles were left without forgiveness. What has become of the millions who died since, without having heard of the Atonement? What becomes of those who have not believed? It seems to me that the doctrine of the Atonement is absurd, unjust, and immoral. Can a law be satisfied by the execution of a wrong person? When a man commits a crime, the law demands his punishment, not that of a substitute; and there can be no law, human or divine, that can be satisfied by the punishment of a substitute. Can there be a law that demands that the guilty be rewarded? And yet to reward the guilty is far nearer justice than to punish the innocent.

According to the orthodox theology, there would have been no heaven had no Atonement been made. All the children of men would have been cast into hell for ever. The old men bowed with grief, the smiling mothers, the sweet babes, the loving maidens, the brave, the tender, and the just would have been given over to eternal pain. Man, it is claimed, can make no atonement for himself. If he commits one sin, and with that exception lives a life of perfect virtue, still that one sin would remain unexpiated, unatoned, and for that one sin he would be for ever lost. To be saved by the goodness of another, to be a redeemed debtor for ever, has in it something repugnant to manhood.—*Ingersoll*.

Prayer and Practice.

After the Lord's visitation at St. Louis, in the shape of a tornado, the Mayor received the following message, which tells its own story:—

"Saratoga, N. Y., May 29.—The Presbyterian General Assembly tenders deep sympathy and earnest prayers in view of the calamity which has overtaken your community.

"JOHN N. WITHROW, Moderator."

The theatrical actor, destitute of religion, sent the following:—

"London, May 28.—Have mailed you \$1,000. Deepest sympathy in your calamity.

"HENRY IRVING."

Colonel Robert Ingersoll sent his cheque to the Mayor of East St. Louis for \$100, and received prompt acknowledgment of its safe arrival.

The Presbyterians are probably still praying the Lord not to do it again.—*Progressive Thinker*.

"THEOLOGICAL ANATOMY."

"I've brought yer liver, sir."—OUR BUTCHER.

POOR Hodge, who was wasted to mere skin and bone,
On a bed of affliction was lying;
He was once hale and strong, but his labor was done,
And now he was certainly dying.

His relatives, knowing his critical state,
Gather'd round him, advis'd him to fasten
His serious thoughts on his imminent fate;
So he asked them to send for "the paason."

His reverence came; his warm sympathy gave,
Religious advice did impart,
Knelt, and fervently pray'd God his spirit to save
And to grant him *at once a new heart*.

Hodge patiently heard, till the "paason" had done,
Then anxiously hurried to speak;
"Ded you zay 'a new heart,' zur?" said he in a tone
Of surprise. "You hev made a mistake.

"Et's th' liver complaaint, zur—a diff'rent affair!
Zoo, thankful I'd be to the Giver
Ef 'e wou'd be zo kind, in reply to yer praay'r,
Az to zend me along a *new liver!*"

H. N.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SECULARIST'S CATECHISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Mr. Watts's catechism is so generally good that I am impelled to take exception to one bit of reasoning. In stating the objections to "special creation," he says: "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."

Now, it appears to me that Mr. Watts is here demolishing a position which no theologian holds. When a theologian uses the word "creation" in a Biblical sense, he means a calling into existence by mere effort of will on the part of God that which previously did not exist, and that he does not use the word in its scientific signification. Some latitude should be allowed in the use of terms. Free-thinkers speak of the "laws of nature," yet disavow the theological meaning of the term. So in this case "creation" to the religious mind is neither bringing something "from" nothing nor the transforming of existing material; but, as I have said, the making to exist that which previously did not exist.

Again, Mr. Watts maintains "creation needs action; to act is to use force; to use force implies the existence of something upon which that force can be used." I think he is wrong here. Creation, although action, does not necessarily need something to be acted upon. A genius creates an idea. A poet creates his stanzas, but the creation is in his brain, which does not act upon anything external to itself, but produces, as it were spontaneously, and, so to speak, "from nothing"—although I do not like this latter expression. Thus the Theist may argue: God created matter with the same action of will as the thinker uses in creating an idea.

Our case as Atheists is so strong that I think we ought never to strain a point to gain an argument, but rather be liberal to our opponents than otherwise.

A. GUEST.

The Hypothesis of Creation.

He who can believe that St. Goar, of Trèves, transformed a sunbeam into a hat-peg, or that men were once changed into werewolves by putting on an enchanted girdle, or that Joshua and Cardinal Ximenes constrained the earth to pause in its rotation, will probably find no difficulty in accepting such an hypothesis to account for the origin of men and oxen. To persons in such a stage of culture it is no obstacle to any hypothesis that it involves an assumption as to divine interposition which is incapable of scientific investigation, and uninterpretable in terms of human experience. It can hardly be denied, however, that any hypothesis which involves such an assumption is at once excluded from the pale of science, and relegated to the regions of mythology, where it may continue to satisfy those to whom mythologic interpretations of natural phenomena still seem admissible, but can hardly be deemed of much account by the scientific inquirer.—*Professor John Fiske*, "Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy," vol. i., part ii., chap. ix., pp. 441-2.

FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

I cannot help, therefore, accounting it, on the whole, a gain (though it may seem for certain poetic constitutions a very sad loss) that the naturalistic superstition, the worship of the God of nature simply taken as such, should have begun to loosen its hold upon the educated mind. In fact, if I am to express my personal opinion unreservedly, I should say (in spite of its sounding blasphemous at first to certain ears) that the initial step toward getting into healthy ultimate relations with the universe is the act of rebellion against the idea that such a God exists.—*Professor William James.*

The prevailing fashion among scientific men of emphasizing the "mystery of mind" is unnecessary and illogical, since mind is no more a mystery than matter, and all that there is any ground for confessing is that, in consequence of the greater complexity of mental phenomena due to the higher state of development of the material basis of mind, we possess as yet much less knowledge of those than we do of many of the simpler phenomena of nature.—*Lester F. Ward.*

There will always be brakemen enough; what we want is more firemen and engineers.—*Grant Allen.*

Clear knowledge of what one does not know is as important as knowing what one does know.—*Huxley.*

No man has learnt anything rightly until he knows that every day is Doomsday.—*Emerson.*

Nature knows no pause in progress and development, and attaches her curse on all inaction.—*Goethe.*

Be honest with yourself, whatever the temptation; say nothing to others that you do not think, and play no tricks with your own mind. Of all the evil spirits abroad at this hour in the world insincerity is the most dangerous.—*James Anthony Froude.*

Shakespeare's Religion.

From this new world of thought and feeling Shakespeare held aloof. Turn as others might to the speculations of theology, man and man's nature remained with him an inexhaustible subject of interest. Caliban was among his latest creations. It is impossible to discover whether his religious belief was Catholic or Protestant. It is hard, indeed, to say whether he had any religious belief or no. The religious phrases which are thinly scattered over his works are little more than expressions of a distant and imaginative reverence. But on the deeper grounds of religious faith his silence is significant. He is silent, and the doubt of Hamlet deepens his silence, about the after-world. "To die," it may be, was to him, as it was to Claudio, "to go we know not whither." Often as his questionings turn to the riddle of life and death, he leaves it a riddle to the last, without heeding the common theological solutions around him. "We are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little life is rounded with a sleep."—*J. R. Green, "History of the English People."*

Special Providence.

During the Battle of Malvern, in the American Civil War, General Stonewall Jackson found one of his majors posted behind a thick oak gate post. He rode up to him and said: "Major Dabney, every shot, and shell, and minie ball strikes just where the Lord permits. You must excuse me, sir, for expressing my surprise that you are seeking to put an oak gate post between you and Special Providence." The major, not at all abashed, replied: "My dear fellow, you not understand the doctrine of Special Providence. At this juncture I look upon this gate post as a very special Providence."

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PROFANE JOKES.

The vicar of a certain parish church has recently paid many visits to an old farmer, one Giles, with the object of inducing him to attend church. At length he received the assurance that the farmer would "pop in some time when he wasn't busy." On the following Sunday, while the clergyman was giving out his text, Giles nervously entered the sacred edifice. Walking up the centre aisle, he peered from left to right until he reached the front pew, when, to the surprise of the vicar, he turned on his heel and walked out again. The preacher was somewhat severe on the congregation for their lack of courtesy in not offering the stranger a seat, and, after giving a "wiggling" to the churchwardens, sidesmen, and verger, the vicar waited upon the farmer and apologised on their behalf. "Oh, I didn't come to stay!" exclaimed Giles. "I wanted to see Farmer Brown about his pigs, but he wasn't there."

"Yes, sir," said a Methodist Bible-banger, "I argued with the infidel for three hours, till I made him admit that a man could be in hell." And the man of God did not understand why the listeners laughed.

Mrs. Van Colt relates that at one of her prayer meetings in the South a colored brother prayed: "O Lord, send dy angel to pin de wings on Sister Bancot's heels, dat she may fly tro de worl preaching de eberlasting gospel." An older one then added: "And, O Lord, gib er wings on her shoulders too, or she'll fly upside down."

A visitor from Manchester had been invited to address the Sunday-school. "I am reminded, children," he said, "of the career of a boy who was once no larger than some of the little fellows I see before me. He played truant when he was sent to school, went fishing every Sunday, ran away from home when he was ten years old, learned to drink, smoke tobacco, and play cards. He went into bad company, frequented stables and low tap-rooms; finally became a pickpocket, then a forger, and one day, in a fit of drunkenness, he committed a cowardly murder. Children," he continued impressively, "where do you think that boy is now?" "He stands before us!" cried the children, as with one voice.

Madame de B., arriving too late for mass one Sunday, at twenty-five minutes before one o'clock, said to her lackey: "Go and write my name." Lady Jersey put it somewhat differently, remarking to her daughter as she turned away, finding all the seats filled: "Well, my dear, at least we have done the civil thing."

A minister took leave of his congregation, whose principal characteristic was a want of liberality, in the following words: "Beloved brethren! if I were to say that our parting grieved me greatly, I should be perverting the truth. I am enabled to say good-bye to you with tolerable composure, for three reasons: You do not love me, you do not love one another, and the Lord does not love you. If you loved me, you would have paid my salary during the last two years. If you loved one another, I should have officiated at more weddings among you. If the Lord loved you, He would have called more of you to Heaven, and I should have had more funeral services to conduct." He was not pressed to remain.

The Persecution of Socrates.

Mankind can hardly be too often reminded that there was once a man named Socrates, between whom and the legal authorities and public opinion of his time there took place a memorable collision. Born in an age and a country abounding in individual greatness, this man has been handed down to us by those who best knew both him and the age as the most virtuous man in it, while we know him as the head and the prototype of all subsequent teachers of virtue, the source equally of the lofty inspiration of Plato and the judicious utilitarianism of Aristotle—"i maestri di color che sanno," the two head-springs of ethical as of all other philosophy.

This acknowledged master of all of the eminent thinkers who have since lived—whose fame, still growing after more than 2,000 years, all but outweighs the whole remainder of the names which make his native city illustrious—was put to death by his countrymen, after a judicial conviction, for impiety and immorality. Impiety, in denying the gods recognized by the States; indeed, his accuser asserted (*see Apologia*) that he believed in no gods at all. Immorality, in being by his doctrines and his instructions a "corrupter of youth." Of these charges the tribunal, there is every ground for believing, honestly found him guilty, and condemned the man, who probably, of all men then born, had deserved the best from mankind, to be put to death as a criminal.—*John Stuart Mill.*

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 ATHENEUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "Christ's Descent into Hell."
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, C. Watts, "Christian Evidences: A Fallacy." Thursday, August 13, Second night's debate between G. W. Foote and Rev. A. J. Waldron.
EAST LONDON BRANCH (Swaby's Coffee House, 103 Mile End-road): (8), H. Silverstein, "Some Misrepresentations of C. Bradlaugh."
PENTON HALL (81 Pentonville-road—Humanitarian Society): 7, Joachim Kaspar, "George Jacob Holyoake."
WEST LONDON BRANCH ("Sun in Splendor," Portobello-road, Notting Hill Gate): Tuesday, at 8, Business meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, E. Pack, "Thy Will Be Done."
CAMBERWELL BRANCH (Peckham Rye): 3.15, Freethought Demonstration—addresses by G. W. Foote, C. Watts, and C. Cohen.
CLERKENWELL GREEN (Finsbury Branch): 11.30, Stanley Jones will lecture.
EDMONTON (corner of Angel-road): 7, Lucretius Keen, "How They Think it Was Done."
HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE (Middlesex side): 7, F. Haslam will lecture. Thursday, August 13, at 8, A lecture.
HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, C. Cohen will lecture; 3.30, Stanley Jones, "New Views of Christianity." Wednesday, August 12, at 8, Stanley Jones, "Comparative Religions."
ISLINGTON (Highbury Fields, Highbury Corner): 11, A. Guest, "Taking Things for Granted."
KILBURN (High-road, corner of Victoria-road): 7, S. E. Easton will lecture.
KINGSLAND (Ridley-road): 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "Christ's Moral Stories."
MILE END WASTE: 11.30, F. Haslam, "Mahomet and His Koran."
OLD PIMLICO PIER: 11.30, R. Forder, "All About the Devil."
REGENT'S PARK (near Gloucester Gate)—N.W. Branch: 3, W. Heaford will lecture.
VICTORIA PARK (near the fountain): 11.15, J. Rowney will lecture; 3.15, C. Cohen will lecture.

COUNTRY.

DERBY (Pollicott's Dining Rooms, Market-place): W. Dyson—10.45, "When Christ was King"; 6.45, "A Splendid Fight: Science v. Theology."
FAIRFORTH SECULAR SUNDAY-SCHOOL (Pole-lane): Annual Services. J. M. Robertson—2.30, "The Bible in the Schools"; 6.30, "What has Christianity Done?"
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, Pleasant Sunday evening—musical and other recitals, etc.
SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, "How I Became a Freethinker."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

NORTHAMPTON (Cow Meadow): Mr. Goodrich—11.15, "Is Religion Necessary?" 6.30, "How Priests would like us to Spend our Holidays."

Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—August 9, m., Hyde Park; a., Victoria Park; e., Battersea Park. 16, m., Hyde Park; a., Regent's Park; e., Kilburn. 19, Hyde Park. 23, m., Camberwell; a., Peckham Rye; e., Camberwell. 27, Hammersmith. 30, m., Ridley-road; a., Regent's Park; e., Battersea.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Oredon-road, London, S.E.—August 16, Camberwell. 23, m., Westminster; a., Finsbury Park; e., Balls Pond. 30, m., Wood Green; e., Edmonton

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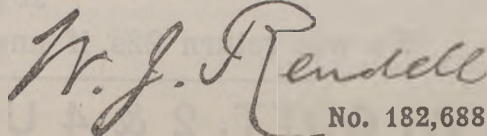
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