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The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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PRICE TWOPENCE.



HARRIET MARTINEAU.

It is pleasant to know that the two most eminent English-women of this century, "George Eliot" and Harriet Martineau, were Freethinkers. If the first named was pre-eminent for imaginative sympathy and insight, the latter was no less so for her whole-souled devotion to the pursuit of truth, and fearlessness in its utterance. In this respect I know of no woman more worthy of reverence than the subject of our sketch, and of few works I would more heartily recommend to all women than her *Autobiography*.

Harriet Martineau was born at Norwich on June 12, 1802. In her biography of Mrs. Opie she gives us a picture of life in this eastern cathedral city in the early part of the nineteenth century, and tells us how its proclivities to clerical exclusiveness and intellectual stagnation were corrected by the social gatherings of a few cultured families, and by a large infusion of French and Flemish manufacturing industry, the result of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Even before this Norwich had an infusion of heretics from the Anabaptist refugees, and the early Freethinkers—Hammond, Lewes, Cole, and Ket—were all burnt in that city. Among the later French Protestant Huguenot refugees were the Martineaus, who, for the best part of a century, had flourished as silk-weavers and surgeons. Her mother, Elizabeth Rankin, was a hard

Northumbrian woman of great self-reliance and strength of will. Her father, Thomas Martineau, was a manufacturer of dress material, at first well to do, but afterwards reduced in circumstances. Her education was conducted under the supervision of her uncle, an eminent surgeon, who gave his nephews and nieces the best instruction Norwich could afford. Young Harriet, however, at an early age resolved to walk alone, and not in educational leading-strings, and practically taught herself history and politics while her brothers and sisters were reading their *Goldsmith* and *Mrs. Markham*. From early life she was deficient both in hearing and in smell. These two avenues of knowledge were closed to her all her life, and the sense of taste also deserted her ere she reached womanhood. These deficiencies only impelled her more earnestly in the pursuit of knowledge. At the age of nineteen she sent some papers to the *Monthly Depository*, and from that time continued literary work of the Unitarian school. When twenty-one she met the young man to whom she gave her heart. Before they could marry he became suddenly insane, and, after months of illness of body and mind, he died. This must have been a severe wrench to easy-going Unitarian optimism, and we find a deeper note in all her after-life. She plunged into work, and at length made a mark by her *Illustrations of Political Economy*, in which she attempted to popularize, by familiar and practical illustrations and examples, the principles which—speaking generally—Smith, Malthus, Bentham, Ricardo, Romilly

and other men of original minds, had laid down in an abstract and strictly philosophical manner. These she followed up by two similar series, on cognate subjects: *Illustrations of Taxation*, and *Illustrations of Poor Laws and Paupers*.

In the year 1834 Harriet Martineau paid a visit to the United States, whither she found that the fame of her social writings had travelled before her. She met with a very cordial reception from the leaders of thought and action on the other side of the Atlantic, though she was threatened with violence at the hands of the anti-abolitionists. Here she saw the support given by Bible and Church to slavery. Here, too, she witnessed the trial for blasphemy of Abner Kneeland, against whose sentence she publicly protested. In her book on *Society in America* she devotes a chapter to the exclusion of women from politics, thus leading the way in the question of the emancipation of woman.

A mere list of the names of her works would take much space. I must, however, briefly mention her *Retrospect of Western Travel*; *Household Education*; *British India*; *The History of the Peace*; *Eastern Life: Its Past and Present*, and *Biographical Sketches*. Her novel, *Deerbrook*, is somewhat in the style of Jane Austen. *The Hour and the Man*, devoted to the story of Toussant l'Overture, is more vivid. Though without the power of "George Eliot," her novels and tales are vastly superior to the average run of those in demand at the circulating libraries. In narrating her spiritual progress, she mentions how her revered and beloved friend, Dr. Follen, was burnt to death on the *Lexington*. This was probably one of the things that led her to see that the doctrine of Providence was a superstition.* Dr. Carpenter, too, perished by being thrown overboard by a lurch of the steamer. Under his guidance she had studied Locke and Hartley, being brought to the doctrine of philosophical necessity, and hence to perceive the uselessness of prayers. A visit to the East, to the birthplace of Christianity and of its progenitors, Hebrew and Egyptian, led to a complete overthrow of the remnants of Christian faith. She says:—

"I had long perceived the worse than uselessness of enforcing principles of justice and mercy by an appeal to the example of God. I had long seen that the orthodox fruitlessly attempt to get rid of the difficulty by presenting the two-fold aspect of God—the Father being the model of justice, and the Son of love and mercy; the inevitable result being that he who is especially called God is regarded as an unmitigated tyrant and spontaneous torturer, while the sweeter and nobler attributes are engrossed by the man Jesus, whose fate only deepens the opprobrium of the Divine cruelty; while the heretics, whose souls recoil from such a doctrine, and who strive to explain away the recorded dogmas of tyranny and torture, in fact give up the Christian revelation by rejecting its essential postulates.

This led straight to philosophical Atheism, and, indeed, before she became of the number, she testified that "the best state of mind was to be found, however it might be accounted for, in those who were called philosophical Atheists."

The *Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development*, which passed between her and H. G. Atkinson, appeared in 1851, and disclosed her advance to the Positive school of thought. The book provoked much outcry, for it showed plainly that the most prominent authoress of the day was a complete unbeliever. I should like to cull for my readers some of her choice utterances from this volume, which was called *The Bible of Atheism*; but this must be reserved for another occasion. In 1853 she issued a condensed version of Comte's *Positive Philosophy*, the excellence of which may be judged from the fact that it has been retranslated into French. In '52 she began her connection with the *Daily News*, to which she contributed leading articles and biographical and other papers, some of which were afterwards separately published.

The latter portion of Miss Martineau's life was most heroic. Suffering from a hopeless enlargement and enfeeblement of the heart, she was for years on the very brink of death. She says:—

"Under this close experience, I find death in prospect the simplest thing in the world—a thing not to be

feared or regretted, or to get excited about in any way. I attribute this very much, however, to the nature of my views of death. The case must be otherwise with Christians, even independently of the selfish and perturbing emotions connected with an expectation of rewards and punishments in the next world. They can never be quite secure from the danger that their air-built castle shall dissolve at the last moment, and that they may vividly perceive on what imperfect evidence and delusive grounds their expectation of immortality or resurrection reposes" (*Autobiography*, ii., 435, 436).

In her illness the Queen, through Lord Melbourne, pressed on her acceptance a literary pension. But she was too independent to accept, and declared she could not conscientiously share in the proceeds of a system of taxation which she had reprobated in her published works. She lingered for many years, always in the prospect of death, yet ever serene and abounding in good works. Her death came at her picturesque villa at Ambleside on June 27, 1876. The following letter was written by her to Mr. H. G. Atkinson six weeks before her death:—

"I cannot think of any future as at all probable except the 'annihilation' from which some people recoil with so much horror. I find myself here in the universe—I know not how, whence, or why. I see everything in the universe go out and disappear, and I see no reason for supposing that it is not an actual and entire death. And, for my part, I have no objection to such an extinction. I well remember the passion with which W. E. Forster said to me, 'I had rather be damned than annihilated!' If he once felt five minutes' damnation, he would be thankful for extinction in preference. The truth is, I care little about it anyway. Now that the event draws near, and that I see how fully my household expect my death pretty soon, the universe opens so widely before my view, and I see the old notions of death, and scenes to follow, so merely human—so impossible to be true, when one glances through the range of science—that I see nothing to be done but to wait, without fear or hope or ignorant prejudice, for the expiration of life. I have no wish for future experience, nor have I any fear of it. Under the weariness of illness I long to be asleep" (*Autobiography*, iii., 454).

With these words I must conclude my too brief and inadequate sketch of a brave woman, whose example and influence have been, and will remain, potent in the emancipation and elevation of her sex.

J. M. WHEELER.

MR. FOOTE'S LETTERS FROM AMERICA.

XII.—THE FINAL SHADOW.

ON Friday, December 11, I lectured before the Manhattan Liberal Club on "The Irreligion of Shakespeare." Prior to the lecture the secretary read his correspondence with Mr. D. L. Moody, on the proposed public discussion between the evangelist and myself or Mr. Watts. I gave Mr. Moody's reply in my last letter. Mr. Dobson's answer was forcible and well-written. The club endorsed it, and passed him a vote of thanks. It is pleasant to add that the New York press did justice to both sides of this correspondence.

My lecture was listened to with the closest attention by a crowded audience, and was followed by discussion, in which Mr. Wakeman participated. Mr. Wakeman is a Shakespeare student, like myself, and his speech was very interesting. He cherishes the dream of an international edition of Shakespeare, to be produced in collaboration by the evolutionists of all the English-speaking countries. He has drawn up a tentative plan of such a work, which I intend to study as soon as I find leisure.

On the following Sunday I lectured for the Brooklyn Philosophical Association. Mr. Henry Rowley presided, and made a particularly bright chairman. I enjoyed the hospitality of his home during the day, and made the acquaintance of Mrs. Rowley, who is as good a Liberal as her husband. My reception at the meeting was all I could desire. Mr. Watts lectured the same afternoon at Washington, and I see from the report in the *Post* that he had an enthusiastic reception.

On the following Tuesday evening the Liberals gave us a farewell dinner at the Marlborough Hotel. Dr. E. B. Foote junior presided, and his fine old father sat on my right. Young Dr. Foote had drawn up a serio-comic menu, with Shakespeare quotations for all the courses. The

* It affected her brother James, the Unitarian minister, differently, being the occasion of one of his most eloquent outbursts in favor of immortality, in which he winds up a pathetic passage about his friend with the words: "Sooner would I believe that the fire consumed the loss everlasting stars."

universality of the poet's genius was curiously exemplified. The quotations were all wondrous pat; and, more curious still, they all leaned more or less to the dietetic principles of the chairman, who is both a vegetarian and a teetotaler; though I believe he relents on oysters, and I fancy on spring chicken. The speech-making was very good, if I am any judge of such things. Mr. Reed read a satirical poem he had written for the occasion; Mr. George Macdonald read a fine and touching poem on another subject, which I shall have to refer to presently; Mr. Wakeman spoke admirably on the coming Religion of Humanity; Mr. Watts spoke with much feeling on the subject of Mr. George Macdonald's poem, and also wittily on the decay of orthodoxy. My own speech was in response to the toast of the National Secular Society. In proposing it the chairman said some kind things about me, which the Liberals applauded, and which I shall try to deserve. Mr. Watts and I met with so much fraternal affection in America that I cannot trust myself to give a full expression to my feelings. "Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks." But still I thank them.

Colonel Ingersoll was of course not present at this farewell dinner. He had been confined to his room for weeks, the doctors having ordered him complete rest, even to the absolute exclusion of visitors. They said he had been working too hard, that complete rest for a good while would set him all right again, but that he would have to take things easier in future, and certainly refrain from travelling day after day and lecturing night after night. We called on the Ingersolls on the Monday before our departure, and were told that the Colonel insisted on disobeying the doctors and seeing us, if only for a minute. The time fixed for the interview was Tuesday afternoon. Meanwhile the family showed us the best hospitality. Mr. and Mrs. Brown took us to the theatre, where we saw Mr. Mansfield, a great American actor, wasting his powers on a trumpery play. Mrs. Brown was profuse in regrets; she had hoped to give us an opportunity of seeing Mr. Mansfield in *Richard III.* After the performance we returned to the Ingersolls', and took supper with them. Mrs. Ingersoll was there, with her sister, Mrs. Farrell, Mr. Farrell, Miss Farrell, Mr. and Mrs. Brown, and Miss Maud Ingersoll. I had seen very little of Miss Ingersoll, and I was glad to be in her society for an hour. She is cast in a robust physical mould than her younger sister. Her face and head are powerful, and the dark eyes show plenty of "soul" and a certain sweet tenderness, without which a woman may be handsome, but cannot be beautiful. The two sisters are admirable foils to each other. Mrs. Brown, to use a French phrase, is a warm blonde; Miss Ingersoll is a pronounced brunette. A lucky man has the former to wife; and some good man has missed a great stroke of luck in not winning the other. However, the Ingersolls love each other so that they cannot bear to part. Mrs. Ingersoll told me that the Colonel had always said to his daughters, "Never marry unless you must"; and, reaching back to clasp her unmarried daughter's hand, the fond mother said: "I think we shall keep Maud." I smiled, but inwardly I sighed. I understood the mother's heart, yet I remembered the saying of a noble American woman, whose name I have forgotten, that she was only half a woman till she was married, and only three-fourths of a woman till she was a mother.

Mrs. Farrell is a remarkably bright woman, and her husband bears "good fellow" plain upon his face. He is the Colonel's publisher, and I should say he is wide awake at the business.

On the Tuesday afternoon we saw Ingersoll himself in his bedroom. Mrs. Brown told us that we were the only persons her father had seen outside the family since his illness. It was against the doctors' peremptory orders for him to see us at all, and she begged us not to stay more than five minutes; which we readily promised, for we would rather not have seen him at all (much as we should have felt the loss) than have done him the slightest injury. We found the Colonel looking better than we expected, though he was obviously weakened. The sciatica was better, and his complexion was fairly good. What troubled him most was his nerves; he felt too emotional. But nothing could damp his humor or quell the merry twinkle in his deep eyes. Talking of hotels, *apropos* of those we had stayed at, he said of a certain establishment that it used to be much patronized by English people, as "the uncomfortableness reminded them of home." Another

hotel, famous for high charges, gave him a frightful three days' bill, and before paying it he went to interview the manager. "I told him," said Ingersoll, "that I didn't want to buy the hotel, and asked him when he expected the other two instalments." The manager knocked off some forty dollars.

Ingersoll inquired about our trip with the greatest kindness, and told us how we ought to manage if we ever came to America lecturing again. As we were talking the family had dropped one by one into the room, and presently we were all chattering at sixty miles an hour. We looked at the ladies and rose to go. "What's the hurry?" said Ingersoll. We told him we were going to the banquet. "What time's that?" he asked, and we were obliged to say. "Well," he said, "you've got more than half an hour, and you're not going till the time's up." So we sat down again for a minute or two, and then we insisted on leaving. We said good-bye, and good-bye again. It was hard to go, but we had to. The last look I had of him as I left the room dwells in my memory, and will dwell there in constant freshness, until I have the pleasure of seeing him again. Downstairs we spent half an hour with the family, by that time including Mr. Brown, and after leave-taking on leave-taking we went off to the banquet at the Marlborough. Outside on the sidewalk I looked at Mr. Watts and said, "What a beautiful household!" and the very same words were on his lips too.

And now I have to convey sad news to my readers. We left America under the shadow of a great sorrow. On Thursday evening, December 10, we left Boston, as recorded in my last letter. Among the gay and genial friends who saw us to the station after dinner was Mr. Putnam. We had all dined well, and wisely; and "Samuel" was running over with jollity—as happy, to use a common expression of his, as a clam at high water. He was coming on to New York himself in a day or two, to attend the farewell banquet. So we merely said, "Till then," when we shook hands at parting. We did not know the parting was final. We did not know we should never see him again. That was the last full day of his life. The next night he was asphyxiated by an escape of gas. I learnt the dreadful tidings on Saturday afternoon. Mr. Eugene Macdonald and I were together at my hotel, just preparing for dinner, when we opened an evening paper and were startled by seeing the report of Putnam's death on the front page. Mr. George Macdonald came round soon after. He was terribly cut up, for "Samuel" had been a dear friend of his for many years. They had floated the Freethought flag together out in California, and had shared hardship and battle together. Dr. Foote junior came in later, and we sat for hours talking about Putnam's death and the future of the Liberal movement. Mr. Watts was at Washington, and did not hear the news till Sunday morning—a poor preparation for his afternoon lecture. He joined me again before midnight, and we sat into the small hours talking about "poor Sam."

Naturally there were many references to Putnam's death at the farewell banquet on Tuesday evening. George Macdonald's poem was very touching; Mr. Watts nearly broke down in his speech; and young Dr. Foote read a finished eulogy on the dead President of the American Secular Union. I felt constrained to say, in my turn, that Putnam would not have us unman ourselves with grief; that when a comrade falls at our side we must still look to our swords, and try their temper, and feel their edge. Eugene Macdonald would have said "Ay" to that, I know; but he was away at Boston, looking after poor Putnam's obsequies, in concert with Mr. Washburn and the dead man's sister.

I take this occasion, as President of the National Secular Society of Great Britain, of paying my tribute of respect to the memory of Samuel Putnam, President of the American Secular Union. I am sure that he was a man of deep and earnest conviction, that his heart was in the Freethought cause, that he was ready to fight for it at any moment and at any hazard, and that he would have died for it, if necessary, with all cheerfulness. He had his failings, I dare say, like all of us; but cowardice was not one of them. I never doubted his courage from the moment I looked into his eyes; and if anyone had told me that he ever flinched I should have calmly disbelieved it. His temper was sanguine and enthusiastic, and had it been balanced with equal intellectual power he would have been a very great man. He was thoughtful, though not exactly

a thinker. The emotional nature predominated in him. This gave him his personality and momentum; and it is precisely this, I think, which the American Freethought party will most miss in the immediate future. In some respects he was very loveable. I can testify that in his own country he inspired many strong attachments. The grief of his personal friends at his death was obviously profound. And this side of his nature was the one which seemed to have most impressed the Liberals of America. They frequently called him "Samuel," or still shorter "Sam." As a speaker he was naturally eloquent. He kindled himself and kindled his hearers. As a writer he was always bright and effective. His descriptions had a certain poetic quality. His controversial powers were considerable, and only wanted greater exercise. His reply to the Secretary of the Christian Evidence Society, who criticised his first lecture in London, was in all respects admirable. No doubt it will be remembered by many readers of the *Freethinker*, in which it appeared.

Putnam was coming to England again in 1900, the year of the Paris Exhibition. But he has gone to his rest. All his mortal remains are a few handfuls of dust, left from the cremating of his body. His immortal part—his work, his thought, his speech—lives on in the memory of thousands of his fellow Liberals, and will live on after they too are dead in the future of the great movement to which he devoted the prime of his manhood and the best powers of his mind.

Thousands of English and Scotch Freethinkers saw and heard Putnam last year, when he paid us a welcome visit and lectured in our principal cities; and they will join me in condoling with our American brethren, who are grieving over the loss of their leader.

Mr. Watts and I left New York in a blizzard. We had difficulty in getting our baggage down to the *St. Louis*, and of course there were few to see us off. All the men were frightened away, but one brave lady came over from Jersey City to say farewell. Mrs. West, too, a personal friend of Mr. Watts, came with her mother and her bright little girl of twelve, who has attracted attention on the stage. I shudder to think of their journey home from the wharf.

Out steamed the big ship to face the wind and waves. She was caught in a fog, and had to anchor for several hours in the bay. It was nearly dark when we dropped the pilot off Sandy Hook. For two days afterwards we sailed through the storm. When we emerged from it we were seventeen hours behind time. Most of the passengers were sick, and the saloon tables were nearly deserted. Not by me, however, for I never missed a meal. After the storm, which was a magnificent spectacle, we had grand weather to the very end. Brilliant sunshine most of the day, and glorious moonlit nights. One sunset I shall never forget. The zenith was clear, but dark slate-colored clouds lay all over the horizon. In the west the sun made the dense mass of clouds a rich purple, with magical edgings of gold and orange. The purple banks swept up from the sea like sloping ramparts of a great citadel or gated city, and the golden sunlight from the sunken sun, gleaming upwards, made the summits appear like the towers and pinnacles of a glorious palace. Gradually the night sank upon the splendid pavilion of the god of day on the central summit, and one by one the flanking lights of his chieftains died out in the descending gloom. I watched spellbound until sea and sky were one darkness, waiting for the advent of the queen of night; and as I turned away from the bulwark, and became conscious of the presence of my fellow passengers, their light chatter seemed an impertinence after that majestic scene.

About one o'clock on Wednesday we caught sight of the Scilly Islands. At four we saw the Lizard lights. Hurrah for England! Bless the dear little island, set in the silver sea. The water was almost as smooth as glass, and when we took the pilot on board in the soft moonlight the sea hisped lovingly around the big ship. Southampton was reached at two o'clock on Thursday morning, when we were in our berths trying to sleep. At six we were up, at half-past we breakfasted, at seven we were on the wharf, in the midst of a grand old English fog—the first we had seen for so long! The weather in America had been splendid nearly all the time of our sojourn there, and now! Well, let us be as charitable as we can, even to an English winter.

Two hours' run up to London, and home again! Oh, the delight of having one's wife and children about one after ten weeks' absence in a far distant land! Yet I send a salutation to all our friends in America, and I send it for my colleague as well as myself. For ten weeks he and I have been together, without a hitch, without an unpleasant word, without the shadow of a difference. We know each other better than we did before, and there is an added warmth in our handshaking as we meet and part.

G. W. FOOTE.

LESSONS FOR THE NEW YEAR.

THE year which has just closed has been in many respects an eventful one for the Freethought party in this country. A new and successful propaganda has been carried on in the West of London; fresh and improved offices of the National Secular Society have been secured at No. 377 Strand, the very centre of Metropolitan activity, where our ever-obliging secretary, Miss Vance, can be found daily, busily engaged upon official work, and ever ready to give all desirable information to Secular friends who may call upon her; through the aid of Mr. Foote's Lecturing Scheme hundreds of free lectures have been given in London and the provinces, and Freethought principles have been expounded in districts never before visited by the representatives of Secular views; the circulation of this journal and the sale of our literature in general have maintained their encouraging status; and, finally, the sending of two delegates by the National Secular Society to the Chicago International Freethought Congress will, no doubt, result not only in securing the long-hoped-for visit to this country of Colonel Ingersoll, but also in cementing more firmly than ever the bonds of affinity between the Freethinkers of the United States, Canada, and Great Britain.

The details of the American delegation having been amply dealt with in these columns by Mr. Foote, it is unnecessary for me to say much upon that event, which is one that will doubtless remain a memorable epoch in our international Freethought relations. Unfortunately, upon the eve of our leaving our American friends an incident occurred which cast a gloom throughout the Secular ranks. I refer to the sudden death of our friend Putnam. He was a brave soldier in the battle for mental freedom, and a persistent worker in the endeavor to emancipate the human mind from that slavery and fear engendered by ignorance and theological superstition. Next to Colonel Ingersoll, S. P. Putnam was the most prominent and admired speaker among the Freethinkers of the United States. He was also a prolific writer; his ready pen and his extensive command of language were invaluable to the cause he loved so dearly. His writings vibrated with the charm of earnestness, and were frequently illuminated with the fire of poetical genius. Personally I feel his death keenly, inasmuch as for many years we were the warmest of friends. His generous heart and genial manner evoked my sincere admiration. As I loved many of the qualities which enhanced the usefulness of his life, so do I revere his memory now he is no more. The lesson of his public life is one that we all may profitably master and act upon. That lesson is this: fidelity to principle, active service for the general good, and love and sympathy for man and woman. Such qualities are the blossoms and foliage of a true life; and these will sooner or later ripen into the choicest fruit that ever adorned the garden of humanity. Putnam is gone from us, but the recollection of his good deeds will long linger in the memories of those who knew him. Regrets are useless. Our love for the dead must not cause us to forget our duty to the living. In the words of the New York *Truthseeker*: "Could the now closed lips of our champion break the voiceless silence which hangs upon them, they would bid us only let his death 'augment the deep and sweeping thoughts' that lead the world to freedom. Let the bouyancy and hope that were his be ours."

The greatest monitor in human life is experience, when accompanied by the exercise of well-trained reason. The commencement of a new year affords a fitting opportunity for reflection as to how far we can benefit by the lessons to be learnt from the events of the past. Recently fruitless attempts have been made by a few—very few—disappointed aspirants to fame to mar the progress of the work as carried

on by the National Secular Society. Fortunately, however, through the discretion and forbearance of the Executive of the Society, no serious consequences have followed these foolish and unjustifiable tactics. I sincerely hope that, with the dawn of the new year, a different state of affairs will be inaugurated. Of course we cannot expect that uniformity of opinion will obtain, particularly upon matters of policy; and I should be the last, even if it were in my power, to try to enforce it. But difference of opinion need not cause angry feelings and personal attacks. All Freethinkers should have one object in view, and if they cannot agree as to the mode of trying to achieve that object, they at least should agree to differ. Supposing a grievance exists, by all means let resort be had to constitutional means to remove it. If this plan fails, and some persons are in consequence resolved not to co-operate any longer with their former co-workers, let them go on in their own way, without unjustly abusing those from whom they separate. Personally, I trust that the N.S.S. will continue the wise course it has hitherto adopted, which is to do practical work, accepting the aid of all who are willing to render it, and ignoring all petty and spiteful opposition, without attempting anything like retaliation upon those who offer it. Experience teaches that this is a dignified and successful course to pursue. If this lesson is consistently acted upon during 1897, the year will be productive of lasting good to that movement, which all Secularists should seek to improve to the best of their ability.

During my recent visit to Canada and the United States I found the Secular cause suffering through the lack of organization and the mixing up with it of certain "isms" which form no part of Freethought propaganda, as I understand it. Liberal thought on the other side of the Atlantic prevails extensively in every sphere of life, but its force is weakened by isolated action, and by the multiplicity of remedies proposed to cure the disease engendered by priestly rule and theological superstition. My experience teaches me that the great evil that lies at the root of our social wrongs was born in theology, nursed by the Church, and is still fostered by the priesthood. It may be possible to curb for a time the power of the Church and the priests, but if the original source of the evil—theology—be allowed to go unchecked these degrading influences will again gather strength and counteract any partial good that may be secured. While a corrupt tree is permitted to grow it is comparatively a waste of time to merely cut off the branches, for they will be replaced by others of the same injurious kind. Better far pluck up the root, and thereby prevent its further growth.

It must not be understood that it is here suggested that our work should be confined to attacking the root-evil. The members of the National Secular Society have a two-fold object. As Freethinkers, they attack theological teachings, because experience proves that such teachings have ever been inimical to human progress; as Secularists, they expound positive ethical principles, which are deemed sufficient, apart from all alleged supernatural religion, to secure good and useful lives. In my opinion, theology will never lose its influence over the majority of its adherents until they are convinced of its error. The function of Freethought is to demonstrate that theology is an error of priestly invention, used for the purpose of securing mental subjection to the creeds and dogmas of the Church. To those who have outgrown theological influence the advocacy of Freethought is unnecessary; to them we offer our Secular teachings, which, we allege, embody the true philosophy of existence. Thus, we blend the destructive and the constructive; and if in this combined form our principles are judiciously propounded, much may be done to promote truth, and to consolidate that mental freedom which is the legacy left us by the dauntless Freethinkers who unselfishly toiled and heroically suffered in the past.

Upon entering the year 1897 my earnest desire is for "peace, order, and progress"—peace the outcome of true friendliness; order based upon the just consideration of the rights and feelings for others; and progress which confers personal comfort and general happiness upon all members of the community. That such conditions can be secured only by earnest work, united effort, wise action, and honest and fair conduct is one of the principal lessons to be remembered at the dawn of what, it is to be hoped, will prove to be, to one and all, A Happy New Year.

CHARLES WATTS.

ANENT THE CLERICS.

A FEW years ago I used to sit in Convocation—not as a bishop, or lesser dignitary of the Church, or lay representative, but as a "recording angel," whose interest was mainly centred on the creation of "copy." Weary to the last degree were the hours unwillingly spent in those ancient houses of mental gloom, wherein the faintest gleam of common sense is promptly frowned upon and extinguished. Church Congresses, from my recollections of more than a dozen, are bad enough in truth; but for the quintessence of ecclesiastic ineptitude there is nothing equal to Convocation.

Dear old gentlemen—as the members mostly are—I can see them now, struggling in the bravest, but most unbusinesslike, manner to evolve a *Reformandum* from a chaos of conflicting opinions—which *Reformandum*, when evolved, had the invariable defect that it satisfied none of those who engaged in its production, and was received with Rabelaisian laughter when given to the world.

The House of Laymen, from which better things might have been expected, was, and I suppose is, as unbusinesslike as the Upper and Lower assemblies; and there was always something nauseating in the apeing of the ecclesiastical style and twang by prosperous cheesemongers and the like, who, for their services to the Church, are there permitted to sit side by side with real live lords.

As an old and hardened Freethinker I used to look upon these gentry—in aprons and broadcloth—with feelings which sometimes, I fear, fell short of respect. They were really too stupid to be taken seriously, though there was an air of culture, of scholarly refinement, and an evidence of rhetorical power about some of the bishops which one could not help but admire. And that used to set me thinking—in the midst of dreary debates on trumpery points of no earthly or heavenly importance to anybody—what should or could be done with these men, and the many beautiful edifices and great organizations and funds of which they have charge?

Without doubt the Church will be dealt with according to its deserts in the course of time. But is there anything to be done in the immediate present? I think there is; and so would many clerics, if they had but half an eye to their own interests and those of mankind at large. They must face the fact that the time has gone by for preaching and pretending to defend the silly old superstitions which were offered to our forefathers. The ordinary services, I suppose, must be continued; but there is no reason why clergymen should go into their pulpits and do violence to their own private convictions, and to the intelligence of their hearers, by even ambiguous references to dogmas that should have been dead and buried many generations ago. Surely there are an infinite number of topics of practical interest and utility which might fittingly supplant discourses based upon Hebrew records, or upon the alleged adventures and utterances of Jesus Christ, or upon the supposed attributes of a God that there are many good reasons for believing does not exist.

However, I have not much hope that clerics will be sensible enough to mend their ways. They will probably go on in the same old sleepy fashion, till the very moment before the rude awakening comes. It used to be the boast of the Church of England that she "placed a gentleman in every parish." That is rapidly ceasing to be true. The simpering noodles, with the thinnest veneer of culture and scholarship, who are now taking orders, afford no promise of improvement on, or even of equalling, the race of bluff old fox-hunting parsons who are rapidly dying out.

Now and then the clerical crowd try the diversion of raising a piteous wail at the progress of "infidelity." They cannot understand that thinking people should prefer the bright, clear, light of Reason to the feeble glimmer of the clerical candle. Their wail is but the plaintive cry of the established lanterns, as set forth in the old legend:—

A people dwelt in darkness,
In gloom and blinding night,
Till some grew tired of candles
And dared to long for light;
Then straight the established lanterns
In wrath were heard to say:—

"Oh, have you not your lanterns—
Your little shining lanterns?
What do you want with sunshine?
What do you want with day?"

Yes, we have had the little shining lanterns, and the prevailing impression is that they are not good enough. In fact, they are an insult to the era of Rontgen Rays.

X.

BELIEF IN DESIGN.

THE fact is the human heart naturally longs for good, and so we constantly try to comfort and console ourselves by crediting nature with benevolent ends towards us, of which the great Mother is all unconscious; and herein we have the explanation of the surprising popularity of teleological fancies. The pathetic sense of our necessities impels us to approve many charming little fictions, which, in our inner consciousness, we know full well to be, as the children say, only make-believe! The alleged bountiful provision of the earth is one of the most cherished of these amiable superstitions, as it is also, in view of the frightful famines which have desolated empires and destroyed nations, one of the most unaccountable. It is useless for us to attempt to impose upon ourselves, or to attribute anything like purpose—good or bad—to the purely natural forces which have evolved this globe and the successive orders of organized beings that have come and gone upon it. The design theory is a chimera! And equally futile is the popular idea of a directing intelligence over human affairs. The late Richard Jefferies, who in his *Autobiography* discusses this matter with rare ability, has the following forcible remarks on both phases of the subject:—

"There being nothing human in nature or the universe, and all things being ultra-human, and without design, shape, or purpose, I conclude that no deity has anything to do with nature. There is no god in nature, or in matter anywhere, either in the clods on the earth or in the composition of the stars. For what we conceive of by deity is the purest form of mind or idea, and no mind is exhibited in these. That which controls them is altogether distinct from what we understand as deity.....I cease, therefore, to look for a god in nature or the cosmos at large; I search for traces of this other force, which is not God. *It is a force without a mind*, something more subtle than electricity, but absolutely devoid of consciousness, and with no more feeling than the force which lifts the tides.....As everything in nature obviously happens by chance, it is clear that no deity is responsible. A man is caught by a revolving shaft, and is torn to pieces, limb from limb. A man bathes in a pool; a crocodile seizes him, and savagely rends him. If anyone maintains that an Intelligence directed these cruelties, I can only reply that his mind is under an illusion. There is no directing intelligence over human affairs, no interference, no assistance or protection. Those who act uprightly are not rewarded; those who do evil are not always punished. Rewards and punishments are purely human institutions, and if government be relaxed, they entirely disappear.....The superstition of a directing intelligence is one which every fact and every consideration disprove. I cannot adequately express my contempt for the common assertion that all things occur for the best, for a wise and beneficent end, and are ordered by a humane intelligence. It is the most utter falsehood!.....Even in my brief time I have been contemporary with events of the most horrible description, as when the mothers in the Balkans abandoned their own children to perish in the snow; as when the *Princess Alice* foundered; as when the hecatomb of two thousand maidens were burnt in the church at Santiago; as when the miserable creatures tore at the walls of the Vienna Theatre. Consider only the facts which overtake little children! Human suffering is so great, so endless, so awful, that I can hardly write of it. I could not go into hospitals and face it, as some do, lest my mind should be temporarily overthrown. The whole and the worst that the worst pessimist can say is *far beneath the truth*, so immense is the misery of man! It is the duty of all rational beings to acknowledge the truth. There is not the least trace of a directing intelligence in human affairs.

"What then? Let us be men; and, as rational beings, acknowledge the truth! Nothing is to be gained by self-deception! Let us accept things as *they really are*, not as we may imagine they might be, or ought to have been. Surely it is infinitely better and nobler for us to make the best of hard facts, however unwelcome, than to dwell in a fool's paradise of pleasing delusions. Let us, as George Eliot has finely put it, 'do without opium,' and go through the mill bravely, 'with conscious and clear-eyed endurance.'"

CARINGTON FORSTPER.

THE CITY CHOIR.

I WENT to hear the city choir,
The summer night was still;
I heard the music mount the spire,
They sang: "He'll take the pil—"

"I'm on! I'm on!" the tenor cried,
And looked into my face;
"My journey home! My journey home!"
Was belloyed by the base.

"It is for the—! It is for the—!"
Shrieked the soprano shrill;
I know not why they looked at me
And yelled: "He'll take the pil—!"

Then, clutching wildly at my breast,
Oh, heaven! my heart stood still.
"Yes, yes," I cried, "if that is best,
Ye powers! I'll take the pil—"

As I, half fainting, reached the door,
And saw the starry dome,
I heard them sing, "When life is o'er
He'll take the pilgrim home."

THE LATE S. P. PUTNAM.

MR. FOOTE having in his letter alluded to the sad and sudden death of the President of the American Freethought Federation, we give here some particulars of his career, taken from the *Truthseeker*:—

Samuel Porter Putnam was born July 23, 1838, at Chichester, N.H. His father was a Congregational minister of that place. During childhood he lived after five years of age at Cornish, N.H., Worcester, Mass., and Epsom, N.H., attending the common schools. He began to fit for college at Pembroke Academy, Pembroke, N.H., and entered Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H., in 1858. In 1861 he enlisted in the army as a private. For the first two years he was in the Valley of the Shenandoah and about Washington. He was then promoted to a captaincy and transferred to the department of the Gulf, where he remained until the close of the war, campaigning in Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and Texas. In 1865 he entered the theological seminary of Chicago, where he remained three years. After graduation he preached in the orthodox pulpits of Dekalb and Malta, Ill. In 1871 he resigned his connection with the orthodox Church, and joined the Unitarian denomination. He preached in this association at Toledo, O.; North Platte, Neb.; Omaha, Neb.; Evansville, Ind.; Northfield, Mass., and Vincennes, Ind. He then gave up all relations whatsoever with the Christian religion, and became an open and avowed Freethinker.

During the administration of Hayes he was appointed under the civil service rules to a position in the custom-house, New York, where he remained until 1887, when, at the Cassadaga congress, he was elected secretary of the American Secular Union, and after that devoted himself entirely to the Freethought work. After serving as secretary for three years, he was elected president of the Union in 1887. During that year he established *Freethought* at San Francisco. He was elected president of the California State Liberal Union, and labored mainly upon the Pacific coast until 1891. In 1892 he was elected president of the Freethought Federation of America.

During his life and labors Mr. Putnam had visited all but four of the states and territories of the Union, and had also spoken extensively throughout the Dominion of Canada. He had travelled over one hundred thousand miles in all. He was author of *Prometheus, Gottlieb: His Life, Golden Throue, Waifs and Wanderings, Ingersoll and Jesus, Why Don't He Lend a Hand? Adams and Heva, The New God, The Problem of the Universe, My Religious Experience, Religion a Curse, Religion a Disease, Religion a Lie; Pen Pictures of the World's Fair, and Four Hundred Years of Freethought*.

Last year Mr. Putnam visited England and made a lecture tour of the cities and provinces, extending his journey to Glasgow, in Scotland. At the last Congress of the Freethought Federation he was re-elected to the position of President, which he had held since 1892.

The secret of success is concentration; wherever there has been a great life, or a great work, that has gone before. Taste everything a little, look at everything a little; but live for one thing. Anything is possible to a man who knows his end and moves straight for it, and for it alone.—
Olive Schreiner.

ACID DROPS.

READERS of Zola's *Rome* will remember his picture of Pope Leo XIII. in the last stage of physical decrepitude, with a neck like a lean old bird's, and all his vitality concentrated in his eyes. It appears, however, that Papa Leo has taken a new lease of life. According to a Vatican organ, the *Voce della Verità* (the Voice of Truth), which of course cannot lie, a certain nun, who had always been in perfect health, went to the Holy Father two months ago, and told him that she had offered herself as a sacrifice to God in order to prolong the life of the Pontiff. God signified his approval, the nun died, and good old Leo is rejuvenated.

This is a very pretty story, but we can hardly accept it as an authentic miracle. Pope Leo XIII. has not yet attained to a supernatural age, and it will be time enough to talk of miracles when he has done so. When he reaches a hundred and twenty the world may begin to wonder; at present there is no room for the smallest surprise.

We venture to suggest that this nun-sacrifice business should be worked for all it is worth. Properly managed, it might rehabilitate Catholicism in the eyes of the intellectual world. When the vital virtue of one sacrificed nun is exhausted, another might offer herself, and so on for another century. Why not for five centuries? Why not for a whole millennium? If they can only keep the old Pope alive in this fashion—and, once begun, it is easy to continue, for it is only the first step that costs—the Catholic Church will justify its supernatural pretensions, and scepticism will be for ever extinguished.

A Lancashire Club hopes that the great Master of the Universe will spare Mr. Gladstone for many years longer. Spare him from what? From heaven, we presume; but is that a good wish for the right honorable gentleman? Somehow or other, the Christians always regard keeping out of heaven as the greatest happiness; and when we read the book of Revelation we incline to agree with them.

Mr. Foote's criticism of Wilson Barrett's play, *The Sign of the Cross*, was considered by his friends as very ill-mannered. It was a species of blasphemy against their idol to criticize him in such a drastic fashion. One by one, however, the ordinary journals are beginning to speak out, very much on the lines of Mr. Foote's pamphlet. Tuesday's *Daily Chronicle*, for instance, reviewing the six shilling novel which Mr. Barrett has issued under the same title as his play, falls foul of the Bishop of Truro's preface to this nonsensical production. The Bishop lauds Mr. Barrett to the skies, and says that "his success seems to be ours; his success is the mother of plays that live, and ideas of life that make men live." Whereupon the *Chronicle* regrets that the Bishop did not think twice and thrice before bestowing his blessing upon "a book that contains not one notable line, not one carefully-wrought phrase, not one striking passage, not one stimulating incident, not a thought which rises above the commonplace."

"There is no living figure in this book," the *Chronicle* continues—"no figure, that is, which could live for an instant away from the glare of the footlights. They are all puppets dressed in toga or peplos, to indicate sex, and delivering remarks that lend themselves admirably to what is humorously called 'elocution.'" This is precisely what Mr. Foote said of the play. On the whole, it is good to find the Christians taken in by such a shallow writer as Wilson Barrett. It is another demonstration, if that were needed, of the softening effect of Christianity on the human brain. Any mawkish or maudlin stuff goes down as "fine" with the average disciples of Jesus; indeed, the more mawkish and maudlin it is the better it seems to please them.

Alderman Samuel, M.P., in an address to the electors of Stockton, called attention to the fact—too often lost sight of in the education question—that normal schools and training colleges, formed and supported by Parliament out of public moneys, are principally, if not entirely, in the hands of the Church of England clergy. There should be a public demand for freedom in the training colleges as well as in the schools.

In round numbers, out of an expenditure of four millions upon education the denominations raise only £300,000, while the State and public sources provide £3,700,000. Surely it is time that all schools receiving so much public money should be publicly managed. The Church men have continually been crying, "Give, give," and it is time for John Bull to see what he gets in return for his cash.

The proof that hospitals existed before Christianity, and apart from it, is abundant, and may be found in the *Secular Almanack* for 1897. Yet we notice that the ministers, in

their Christmas sermons, still persist in ascribing this and every other blessing to Christianity.

One satisfactory piece of evidence on the hospital question is that of the rock inscriptions of King Asoka, who reigned in India in the third century B.C. We notice in the *Times* that another of these inscriptions has just been discovered on a pillar, which records that it is erected on the very spot where Buddha was born, about eighteen miles from the site of Kapilavastu, the capital of his father, King Suddohana. The birthplace of Buddha is thus better attested than that of Jesus Christ.

Herbert Spencer's view, that gods have grown from dead chiefs, finds some countenance in the fact that a religious sect at Orissa, in the Bengal Presidency, worship Queen Victoria as their chief divinity. It has been discovered that she is also an object of worship in one of the temples at Toomloong, in Thibet. Perhaps she is considered a great Mahatma. A medallion of Napoleon was found in Central Africa, where it was worshipped as a fetish.

"Percy Vere," a pen-name, by the way, of Ernest Jones, contributes to the *Northern Gossip* some satirical verses on the Newcastle Alderman Stephenson, who has built a library, which he offers to Heaton, on condition that it shall not be opened on the blessed Sabbath.

Mr. J. G. Bartram had a good letter in the *Newcastle Chronicle* on this worthy alderman's gift, the acceptance of which, on the stipulated conditions, would, he says, be selling one's birthright for a mess of pottage.

Clericalism has so long been dominant in Galloway, Wigton, and the south-west of Scotland that it is refreshing to find the *Stewarton Observer* giving its first article to a very liberal utterance on Sabbath observance, which is calculated to make the little parish godalmighties grind their teeth.

The *Northern Echo*, in a reprint of an article on the Bishop of Durham, says: "Dr. Westcott's view of the resurrection is that it was not the restoration of Jesus to the former conditions of the earthly life—as Lazarus was restored—but that it was a new manifestation of the spiritual life in the changed and glorified body of the Lord." Why, then, did the glorified body have nail prints and eat fish and honey-comb? Is Dr. Westcott reviving the old Docetic doctrine, against which the Third Gospel was probably directed?

Addressing a large congregation at a nave service in Norwich Cathedral, the Dean of Norwich warned those present against pickpockets, who appeared to be frequenting the cathedral. The Dean added that those attending the nave services must take care of their pockets, except when the collecting plates were sent round.

Christian charity is seen in its native guise in Russia. The Women's Medical Institute in St. Petersburg, recently established, is forbidden by its regulations to receive any students who are not of the Christian faith. A petition, signed by the Jews resident in Odessa, praying for the admission of certain women of their belief, has been rejected.

Literary experiments with the Bible are becoming increasingly common. We are all familiar with the *Children's Bible*, published by the houses of Cassell and Routledge, in which the indelicate passages are expunged. In America emancipated women have "tinkered" the Scriptures in their own interests. Toistoi has published a non-miraculous New Testament, and Dent and Co. endeavor to turn the sacred volume to financial account in their *Lyrical Poetry of the Bible*. We hear, too, of the issue of an up-to-date Bible, wherein the narrative is converted into nineteenth-century English. As the rustic said on hearing of the removal of the village pump, "We live in stirring times."

The Rev. Carr John Glyn, of Witchampton Rectory, Dorset, died on October 25, aged ninety-six years. Heaven was his home, but he kept out of it for nearly a century. He also disregarded the financial teaching of Jesus Christ by amassing a fortune, valued at £75,310 12s. 11d. All this wealth he had to leave behind him, which was lucky for him, for how could he have passed through the needle's eye with such a load upon his back?

A Primitive Methodist minister, the Rev. W. Gelley, has been lecturing against Secularism at West Stanley, with reference, it would seem, to recent lectures by Mr. Cohen. Mr. Gelley wound up by saying that "a little dog once came out, and barked at the moon, but the moon kept shining on, and it was their duty as Christians to still keep shining on." Of course, the Christians applauded this tribute to their illuminating power; but when the reverend gentleman was asked to turn his lunar light on the "little dog" he positively declined. He would not debate with

Mr. Cohen at any price. His doctor had ordered him to keep out of excitement. Perhaps, if the doctor examined his head carefully, he might advise him to keep out of lecturing too.

A Yorkshire friend relates to us a conversation he had recently with a Methodist minister. Not knowing that this friend had been a regular reader of the *Freethinker* for several years, the reverend gentleman imparted some queer information about Joseph Barker, who was at one time a Methodist minister, and afterwards became an Atheist, and finally went back to Christianity. "Joseph Barker," he remarked, "was an abler man than Bradlaugh. In fact, when Bradlaugh died Barker became editor of the *Freethinker*, which he conducted with great ability until, his views again leaning towards Christianity, he was anxious that a portion of the *Freethinker* should accord with his new views; and so, for a time, while one half of that paper remained staunch to its old traditions, the other half was advocating Christianity." The reverend gentleman said that Joseph Barker died in 1876—apparently some fifteen years before he became editor of this journal.

The cream of this joke will be most appreciated by the older Freethinkers, who remember that Joseph Barker and Charles Bradlaugh did edit the *National Reformer* together in the early sixties, one editor conducting one half the paper, and the other the other half, and each fighting the other in every issue. This game of cross purposes was brought to an end by the shareholders, who turned out Barker and put the paper entirely into Bradlaugh's hands.

New York *Public Opinion* says: "A church is to be started in Chicago, called the Church of Humanity, for those who have been alienated from their former places of worship by the clergy's general approval of the gold standard. The church is for both Protestants and Catholics."

An Anglo-Swiss paper has the following story about the Bishop of Bath and Wells:—He was stopping at a small hotel in a little-known Pyrenean watering-place, and his name was duly inserted in the "Visitors' Book." He at once received a number of business cards from plumbers and pipe-layers. The mystery was solved when it was found that his name had been entered thus: "Mr. Bishop. Pays d'Origine—Angleterre. Métier—Bains et Puits."

"Will any kind person purchase an advowson situated in the West of England? Patron in great need." Such is the wording of an advertisement in the *Times*. The chance of uniting simony and charity should just hit the average religionist. The "patron" will soon get rid of his cure of souls if he lets it go cheap enough.

John Richards, of Whitland Heath, conducted a Sunday-school, and carried on improper relations with one of his pupils for three years. His letters were freely interlarded with Biblical texts. In one of them he said: "It's only God and ourselves know how it has been with us." She sued him for breach of promise, after he had married another lady, and the jury awarded £85 damages.

Alexander Hamilton Hatch, otherwise known as the Rev. Richard Percival Durnford, has been committed for trial on a charge of forging an order on the London and County Bank, with intent to defraud the Rev. G. Akers, a Roman Catholic priest.

Some excitement was created in Newcastle-on-Ure. Church during service on Sunday. In the first place, a young woman had to be carried out of the building; and in a few minutes a number of children had to be similarly dealt with. After the congregation had been hurriedly dismissed, it was discovered that the illnesses had been caused by the fumes from a stove which had been burning during the previous night.

Pick Me Up says: "It is estimated that the number of slippers presented in twelve months to the unmarried clergy in the United Kingdom is 765,000 pairs. In order to wear out his share of slippers, each of these clergymen would have to walk a distance of 261 miles per diem."

Mrs. Hyatt, of 53 Fitzalla-street, Lambeth, is a mother who was rather too careful of her infant's soul at the expense of its body. She took it to be churching when it had a cold. The result was an inquest. Coroner Hicks said it was a bad habit of mothers to take their babes with them when they went to be churching.

"The Churching of Women," as it is called, is altogether a stupid and, in essence, a degrading piece of business. In the old time, women were not allowed to enter the "sacred" building until they were exorcised and purified from the "stains" of childbirth. Now it is mainly nonsense—very

sarcastic nonsense it must appear sometimes. This woman Hyatt was so poor that the coroner gave her money from the poor-box to bury her child. What must she have thought of the sentence of the service which says: "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them"?

Some people, who are themselves emancipated from some of the worst superstitions that cluster round Christianity, say there is no need for militant Freethought and iconoclastic "Bible-smashing." We hope such people noted an advertisement in the papers on Christmas, issued by that old humbug, Baxter.

The advertisement in question begins thus:—

CHRISTMAS SEVEN YEARS HENCE will be a day of lamentation and mourning and woe, because in December, 1903, Satan will be cast down from the air on to this earth, and the cry raised: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, for the Devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time." At the same time the Second Seal will be opened, and "the Red Horse of War will go forth and peace be taken from the earth, and people will everywhere kill one another"; and the Ten-horned wild beast, representing the Ten Kingdoms of France, Britain, Spain, Italy, Austria, Greece, Egypt, Syria, Turkey, and Balkan States, will become scarlet—i.e., Red-Republican, as foretold in Revelation vii. 12, 13; vi. 4; xvii. 3.

For further particulars the seeker after prophetic interpretation is directed to *Great Events from 1897 to 1906*.

The precious advertisement is issued by the Rev. M. Baxter, author of *Louis Napoleon, the Destined Monarch of the World*, and proprietor of the *Christian Herald*, which boasts the largest circulation of any religious paper. In a publication, *Fifteen Predicted Events*, issued as late as 1893, Baxter wrote: "At Christ's Second Advent on March 5, 1896, at the moment when the signal is given by the voice of the archangel and the trump of God for the resurrection of the deceased saints and the ascension of the 144,000 watchful Christians, strange and unheard-of scenes will transpire." Now the old humbug adjourns the unheard-of scenes another seven years. Yet he finds a perpetual crop of credulous believers, educated in the Sunday-school to believe his nonsense.

Dr. Henry, the Catholic Bishop of Down and Conner, has been repeating at Belfast the old fable that "the Head of his Church, numbering over 250 millions of subjects, is kept a prisoner in his own palace." The Pope is a prisoner only in the sense that a man is who locks his own door from the inside. He can go out when and where he likes, only he knows that his prestige would fly did he depart from the Vatican.

The *Catholic Directory* for 1897 shows there are now eighteen Papist Archbishops and Bishops of English and Welsh Sees; 2,686 priests—last year it was 2,628; and 1,463 churches—last year 1,446. With Scotland, the total Romish clergy of Great Britain are 3,090 in number.

The Romish claims for a Catholic University are being kept well before the public in the Papist press. What they want is not merely the building and teaching, which they can obtain for themselves by paying for it, but a State endowment of an institution where the priests would control education and prohibit all other teaching than their own.

According to *Whitaker's Almanack*, in the twelve months, 1894 to 1895, the cost per child for primary education was as follows:—England, 19s. 1½d.; Wales, 19s. 1d.; Scotland, £1 1s. 0½d.; Ireland, £2 3s. 11½d. Ireland ought to be leading the way in education; yet the returns of the General Election tell that illiterates were of the following proportion:—England, one in every 111 of the population; Ireland, one to five of the population. Doubtless the illiteracy is exaggerated in order that the priest may give direct guidance to the voter. Yet it is worth bearing in mind that, while Irish education, mainly under priestly control, costs twice as much as the English, the results in ignorance are twenty-two times as great.

Some fellow, with a superabundance of genius, has made the astonishing discovery that Noah's ark was the model subsequent shipbuilders have employed in the construction of their craft. He shows that it was six times as long as wide, with a depth one-tenth its length. And the Lord furnished the original specifications! Ha, ha, ha!

His Reverence (to Mick Ryan, minding sheep)—"I see a number of your flock got boxed with Jones's. I must inform your boss." Mick—"Sure, ye needn't talk, yer Reverence. A lot of yeer flock got boxed yesterday down at the pub, and the Claneys knocked lumps off the Smiths. Ye wouldn't like me to inform yeer boss?"

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, January 3, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—January 10, Sheffield; 17, Manchester; 24, Athenæum, London; 31, Athenæum, London. February 7, Athenæum, London; 21, Liverpool; 28, 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.
- A. W. STAVERS.—Card received with many thanks.
- W. SIMONS.—Thanks for the clipping from *Reynolds'*. It was a very funny mistake, though we don't think it misled anyone. The report you enclose shall be noticed in our next issue.
- G. PORTER.—You seem to have a turn for such things, but you want more careful practice.
- H. JONES says that "Abracadabra's" articles on "The Credibility of the Gospels" have given him much pleasure; and thinks their publication in pamphlet form would do good service to Freethought.
- J. ROBERTS (Liverpool).—We quite understand your Branch's "profound sorrow" at the news of Putnam's death. Personally, you say, you were "enamored of him," and we note this for the sake of his friends in America, who will be glad of every sign of sympathy from England.
- HIRARTHOG.—Very glad to hear we have been "mostly" the agent of your intellectual emancipation. Your letter is very welcome. We are always pleased to hear from anyone we have helped. By all means send on the essay you have written, and it shall have our best attention.
- J. R. ALLAN.—If you want to go into the matter thoroughly, order Mr. Foote's pamphlet on *The Ascension* (one of *Bible Romances*) from Mr. Forster, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C. Price 1d.; postage ½d.
- DELTA.—Thanks. See paragraph.
- W. G. J.—Amusing. See paragraph.
- THOMAS MACLEISH (Glasgow).—Much obliged, but we had already seen a copy of the "wonderful production." Thanks for your catalogue of its glaring local inaccuracies, which shall be kept for any possible use.
- G. CRUDDAS.—Thanks. See paragraph.
- S. J. B., one of our facetious verse contributors, in sending us New Year's greetings, says: "I also beg to offer my congratulations to the sub-editor on the very efficient manner in which he has conducted the paper during the editor's absence."
- C. E. SMITH.—We have none of the American photos left. We ordered a hundred, but the photographer had to give up business suddenly on account of illness. Pleased to hear you have derived "unusual pleasure" from our American letters. Thanks for the extracts, also for the corrections.
- E. SWEDLEY.—You will read about it in this week's *Freethinker*.
- H. SILVERSTEIN.—Under consideration.
- W. L. S.—The matter is extremely simple. Under the Oaths Act, carried by Charles Bradlaugh, you are entitled to affirm as witness or juror in any court by simply saying, either that you have no religious belief, or that the taking of an oath is contrary to your religious belief. Say one or the other, and stick to it. Do not be tempted into answering any questions as to the nature of your religious or irreligious belief. Keep strictly to the formula prescribed in the Act. By the way, the N.S.S. secretary is always ready to supply printed forms of instruction on this matter. Thanks for your good wishes.
- THE National Secular Society's new office is at No. 377 Strand, London, where all letters should be addressed to Miss Vance.
- PAPERS RECEIVED.—Northern Gossip—Two Worlds—Freidenker—Londoner—Humoristische Blätter—Echo—Darlington Times—Isle of Man Times—Torch of Reason—Crescent—Lucifer—Stewartry Observer—Northern Echo—Twentieth Century—Daily Mail—Conservator—Boston Investigator—Firebrand—Altruist—Der Arme Teufel—Progressive Thinker—Secular Thought—Dominion Review—Open Court—Homeopathic World—To-Day.
- 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.
- CORRESPONDENCE should reach us not later than Tuesday if a reply is desired in the current issue. Otherwise the reply stands over till the following week.
- LECTURE NOTICES must reach 28 Stonecutter-street by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.
- FRIENDS who send us newspapers would enhance the favor by marking the passages to which they wish to call our attention.
- LETTERS for the Editor of the *Freethinker* should be addressed to 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.
- The *Freethinker* will be forwarded, direct from the publishing office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 10s. 6d.; Half Year, 5s. 3d.; Three Months, 2s. 8d.
- 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.

SPECIAL.

COLONEL INGERSOLL is coming over to England. He gave a definite promise to this effect during the last interview Mr. Watts and I had with him before leaving America. "I'll come," he said. It was brief, simple, and decisive, and perfectly satisfactory.

Thus the two chief objects of our visit to America have been achieved. We represented the old country at the Chicago Congress, and were the only two Liberal speakers at the magnificent public meeting in the Central Music Hall. We also secured Ingersoll's promise to visit England. That is worth all the trouble and expense.

It would have been indecent to press a sick man for anything more than his promise. The time of Ingersoll's visit will of course depend on circumstances; for instance, the state of his health, and the condition of affairs in America. Personally, I should not be surprised if he decided to come over next summer. All the Ingersoll family will probably come together. From the conversations we had with them on the subject, I believe they look forward to the trip with much pleasure.

Some people who form theories without facts—as the nigger made his wooden god, out of his own head—have invented strange reasons for Ingersoll's not attending the Chicago Congress. As a matter of fact, he was not expected to attend the Congress itself. What he engaged to do was to lecture on the Sunday afternoon in McVickers' Theatre, and give the proceeds to the Congress funds. And the reason why he cancelled this engagement was stated by Ingersoll in writing, and published in the American newspapers. Many of the Liberals supported Bryan and the silver standard, and some of them were ridiculously angry with Ingersoll for supporting McKinley and the gold standard. They seemed to think they had a sort of vested interest in his tongue. Some of them wrote angrily to the Colonel, calling him names and saying he was bought. One fool said he had taken down Ingersoll's portrait from the wall and destroyed it, and burnt his books. In view of this state of feeling, the Colonel declined to go to Chicago. He said he would not put himself in a position to be insulted, and did not want to talk to people who couldn't understand that a man might differ from them and be honest.

I think Ingersoll mistook the number of these illiberal Liberals. I believe that if he had gone to Chicago he would have had a magnificent reception. But he had a right to judge for himself, and to act on his own judgment. As it was, he took all the responsibility as to the theatre, and gave Mr. Watts and myself a hundred dollars as his subscription towards the Congress expenses, the sum being duly acknowledged by treasurer Reichwald in the *Truth-seeker*, so that the Liberals could not say that he took no interest in their movement.

We saw Ingersoll for an hour on the Monday morning after the Congress, as he was passing through Chicago. He said he was very sorry for our sakes that he could not lecture for the Congress, but there was such a thing as "damned fools being too many." He didn't understand a Liberal who thought he could stamp fifty cents worth a dollar and make money out of nothing, and then quarrelled with the book of Genesis because God made the world out of nothing. Then the Colonel spoke of the letters he had received, and showed he was very much hurt. "What would you think," he said, "if I were to write that Foote and Watts didn't believe what they preached, but had simply come over from England to make money by lying? And what would you think of any editor who inserted such a letter from me if I were wicked enough to write it?" Only one answer was possible, and we gave it; at the same time we assured Ingersoll that, so far as we could see, the great mass of Liberals held him in the highest esteem.

Everybody in America knows why Ingersoll did not go to Chicago. The secret is as open as a hat. And, as the Yankees say, that's all there is about it.

G. W. FOOTE.

"There was only one thing that prevented Hobbins from walking upon the water." "What was that?" "Every time he attempted it he would sink."

SUGAR PLUMS.

THE editor of the *Freethinker* is home again from America. Having arrived in England only on Christmas Eve, he has scarcely had time to do more than look around him as yet. He will have something special to say to his readers next week. Meanwhile, he is sorry to see that Mr. Forder is unwell, and that Miss Vauce is laid up with a severe cold. He hopes, however, that both will soon recover. Mr. Wheeler does not look too well either. He has worked very hard during the editor's absence, and must now obtain relief for a few weeks. Mr. Wheeler's conduct of the *Freethinker* during the editor's absence has been most admirable. The paper could not have been in better hands.

Mr. Foote and Mr. Watts made their first public appearance, after their return from America, at the Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road, on Sunday evening. The place was terribly crowded, the platform and every inch of standing room being occupied; while many persons were unable to gain entrance at all. Mr. Watts, who took the chair, received a very warm greeting as he rose to speak. After a few words of introduction, he called on Mr. Foote to lecture on "Colonel Ingersoll and American Freethought." The President was greeted with enthusiastic applause, and his chat (he declined to call it a lecture) was followed with deep interest. There was much hand-shaking after the speaking. All the friends appeared glad to see the President and Mr. Watts home again.

Mr. Foote occupies the Athenæum Hall platform again this evening (January 3). The chair will be taken by Mr. C. Cohen, who will soon be leaving London for fresh provincial engagements. During the President's absence in America, Mr. Cohen has delivered a considerable number of lectures under the Lecture Scheme. He has written an account of these meetings for next week's *Freethinker*.

The subject of Mr. Foote's lecture at the Athenæum Hall this evening (January 3) is "The Doom of the Gods." This is one of the lectures he delivered in America, and probably his London friends will like to hear it. Prior to the lecture, or after it, Mr. Foote will have something to say about the immediate future of the Secular movement in England, especially in regard to the National Secular Society.

Colonel Ingersoll has promised to visit England. There's a fine New Year's card for the Freethinkers of the old country. It will be better than medicine for the sick, and will postpone the funerals of the dying.

The *Torch of Reason*, the propagandist organ of the Liberal Churches of Oregon, where Freethought is making rapid strides, in an article headed "Our English Co-workers," says that "those who did not hear G. W. Foote, of England, during his recent visit to America, missed a great treat indeed. He is one of the foremost thinkers and orators of our age." "Let us all hope," the *Torch* concludes, "that we may have the pleasure of meeting him on American soil again."

The New York *Truthseeker* just to hand contains a report of the two lectures by Messrs. Foote and Watts before the Manhattan Liberal Club. Our esteemed contemporary says: "Both meetings were attended to the full capacity of the hall, and the audience in each instance testified its appreciation by according the generous applause which the orators deserved." "Mr. Foote's audience," it adds, "applauded the statement of Wilson Macdonald that this was one of the best lectures delivered before the Liberal Club during its twenty six years of existence."

There is an infinitely pathetic column in this number of the *Truthseeker*—namely, the last "Notes and News" that Samuel Putnam ever penned. He posted the copy only a few hours before his death. It gives an account of the Boston reception to Messrs. Foote and Watts, and is written with all the writer's old exuberance. "It was a grand meeting," he says, and "Paine Memorial building never heard nobler strains of eloquence." "These memorable days," he adds, "have passed, not to be forgotten; and the future opens with grander promise." What ironies are prepared for us by the great Aristophanes of the universe! as Heine calls the supposed ruler of mortal destinies.

The National Secular Society's Executive would have met, in the usual course of things, on the last Thursday in December, but as that was New Year's Eve the meeting has been postponed to the following Thursday evening (Jan. 7), when the President hopes to see a full attendance. Every member should endeavor to be present.

Mr. R. Forder is once more treasurer for the Annual Children's Party in London. The time and place are not

yet fixed, but the treasurer is ready to receive subscriptions or gifts of oranges, apples, cakes, lemonade, toys, and all the things that delight the hearts (and stomachs) of little children on such occasions.

The January *Free Review* opens with an article on "The Babylonian Father, Son, and Paraclete," by Chilperic, who cites the ancient hymns to the Savior Merodach, first-born of his Father Ea, and to Gibil, the spirit of fire, who work together to cure those possessed by devils. Chilperic cites Dr. Zimmern as saying: "In the Babylonian religion we meet with a triad of gods, of whom the first two, Ea and Merodach, stand to one another in the relation of father and son, while the third, the Fire-God, carries out the commands of both, and acts specially as the intercessor between God and man." Orford Northcote follows with a short but incisive paper entitled "Egoism the Sole Basis of Ethics." Mr. J. M. Robertson dilates at length on "The Way to Unite the Democratic Vote." F. H. Perry Coste defends "Usury and Interest." J. Armsden begins a paper on "Social Liberty," and Hope Clare writes very freely on "Stagnant Virginity." There is a discussion of the question, "Shall we Deceive Our Children?" a good account of Biré's *Diary of a Citizen of Paris during the Terror*, and a notice of Mr. Ashton's *Devil in Britain and America*, besides the shorter notices of "New Books."

Writing in acknowledgment of a message of congratulation sent to him by the Sociological Section of the Birmingham Natural History and Philosophical Society on the publication of his final volume on *Synthetic Philosophy*, Mr. Herbert Spencer says:—"Please communicate to the section my appreciation of their sympathetic feeling, and the pleasure I feel in receiving their warm congratulations on the completion of my labors. As you, in common with the section, will understand, the chief gratification obtained in a case like mine is from the consciousness of work satisfactorily done; but it goes without saying that a genuine expression of approval coming from others adds to this gratification."

The Annual Dinner of the London Freethinkers, under the auspices of the National Secular Society, takes place at the Holborn Restaurant (as usual) on Monday evening, January 11—Mr. Foote's birthday. The tickets are four shillings each, and can be obtained at the N.S.S. office, 377 Strand, at 28 Stonecutter-street, or at the Athenæum Hall on Sunday evenings. These annual reunions are always enjoyable, and a good gathering is expected on this occasion. Mr. Foote will, of course, preside, and Mr. Watts will be present with other well-known Secularists.

Merciful Providence.

Providence was kind to Colonel Ingersoll, and he was let off for what our orthodox friends call blasphemous utterances by a severe prodding, which made the wretch swear, instead of pray; for observation had taught him the latter was liable to be punished by immediate death. Reports say the Colonel is greatly improved in health. If he takes the gentle hint in the spirit it was offered, he may orate a good while yet. Praying has been the capital offence of Providence, the principal one calling for immediate death; but now comes another malady closely related to it, and that singing in a church choir. G. W. Nelson, of the First Baptist Church, Chattanooga, on Thanksgiving Day had completed his vocal exercises, and the preacher had pronounced the last words of his benediction, when Mr. N. fell heavily to the floor, dead. If Colonel Ingersoll's affliction was an infliction of Providence for blasphemous utterances, is it not also evident Mr. Nelson's singing incurred divine displeasure?—*Progressive Thinker*.

With the last of the mythologies will pass away, after some lingering, the immoralities which have attended all mythologies. Now, while the state of our race is such as to need all our mutual devotedness, all our aspiration, all our resources of courage, hope, faith, and good cheer, the disciples of the Christian creed and morality are called upon day by day to "work out their own salvation with fear and trembling," and so forth. Such exhortations are too low for even the wavering mood and quacked morality of a time of theological suspense and uncertainty. In the extinction of that suspense, and the discrediting of that selfish quackery, I see the prospect, for future generations, of a purer and loftier virtue, and a truer and sweeter heroism, than divines who preach such self-seeking can conceive of. When our race is trained in the morality which belongs to ascertained truth, all "fear and trembling" will be left to children; and men will have risen to a capacity for higher work than saving themselves—to that of "working out" the welfare of their race, not in "fear and trembling," but with serene hope and joyful assurance.—*Harriet Martineau*.

FATE AND THE ANCIENTS.

THE question of fate was one on which the ancients were greatly exercised. With them Zeus (Jupiter) was neither omnipotent nor omniscient, the "Father of Gods and Men" himself being amenable to a yet higher authority. This they called *εἰμαρμένη*, or fatal necessity. It was the one true deity, invisible, impersonal, almighty, with whom prayers were of no avail, and propitiatory sacrifices useless. For the laws of fate were immutable, its decrees inexorable. The poets tried to personify this blind force. Sometimes they represented it as one individuality (a woman), at others as three sisters. It was the perfect Trinity in Unity, for it signified the Past, Present, and Future (Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos), which again is the One Eternity. It was the office of Jove to superintend the carrying out of the ordinances of this mystic Power. Hesiod tells us that it was the function of the fates and furies to punish both men and gods. Nemesis, too, the stern Goddess of Vengeance, is sometimes identified as one of the Parcæ.

The ancients believed that the time of life for every man was planned out by this triarchy, and the way in which each individual was to die decreed beforehand by these dread sisters. Thus Homer speaks of Achilles attaining his death and *destiny*. Euripides makes Iphigenia say: "From the beginning, the demon* of my mother's zone was hostile to me." Ovid alludes to the "Law of the Destinies," and Virgil to the "Destinies harmonious in the established order of the fates." With regard to the revocableness of this law, Seneca, in his *Troades*, says:—

"We are ruled by the fates! Yield, therefore, in good part to your destinies—not the most watchful care can disarrange the threads of the spindle† when once the distaff is in play! Whatever our mortal race goes through, whatever we do, or undertake to do, comes as a decree from on high and Lachesis, whose department it is to rigidly uphold the decrees as revealed by the distaff wound by unrelenting fingers. All things go on in a pre-ordained path, and the first day will guide us to the last (the horoscope and casting of nativities). It is not in the power of Jupiter himself to reverse the decrees, which, once wound round, run on uninterruptedly to their appointed end. And this established course goes on with everyone, and is not to be set aside by prayers of any sort."

Miserable, hope-deadening creed! Although men were well assured of the unyielding nature of this divinity, and knew that nothing could conciliate it (or them), they were ready—nay, eager—to pay their devotions. (Men have been known to worship devils.) Temples were raised in the honor of the Parcæ. The three were always spoken of with the greatest reverence. Often they were mentioned as the "venerable goddesses." More ancient than any of the Olympian deities, the Parcæ ruled all. They alone were incapable of wrong-doing. Thus far the mythologists.

The philosophers (who rationalized religion) may be divided into two schools—the one of which believed in the inevitableness of this *εἰμαρμένη*, while the other discarded fate altogether from its system. To the former sect belonged Heraclitus, Empedocles, Aristotle, Hippocrates, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, and a host of other illustrious men. The sceptical school was adorned by Epicurus (most maligned of philosophers), Carneades, and Lucretius, one of the sweetest, as well as the most irreligious, of Latin poets.

There appears to have raged among the ancients an endless controversy anent Fate, or Predestination—a controversy which then waxed no less fierce than the disputes which afterwards arose among the Christians on the same question. Zeno, Chrysippus, Epicurus, Posidonius, and Cicero, all wrote treatises on the subject; a portion of Tully's work alone has been preserved to us. Parmenides (who first discovered the spherical shape of the earth) thought that the ultimate principle of the world was necessity (B.C. 505). In this belief he was followed by Leucippus and Empedocles. Democritus, of Abdera, defined motion (being the cause of the production of

everything) as necessity. Anaxagoras, the Clazomenian philosopher (B.C. 400), is said to have opposed the doctrine of predestination in order that he might maintain another doctrine with greater facility. This, however, is doubtful, as we only have the authority of Alexander Aphrodisiensis on the point. The matter is not mentioned by Diogenes Laertius, Plutarch, or Cicero. Plato, in his *Republic*, says:—

"All these things (the arrangement of matter) naturally subsist from necessity."

He writes, too, of the Artificer of the universe (Plato never speaks of God as a *creator*) as laying down laws "fixed by fate, after the manner of a law-giver."

We cannot do better than transcribe the remarks of Alcinous on the teaching of the "divine" Plato concerning necessity:—

"All things are in fate, but all things are not, however, fated [is not this a contradiction of terms?]; for fate, while holding the rank of a law, does not, as it were, say that one person shall do this, and another suffer that, for it would proceed to infinity, since the things produced are infinite, and infinite too the accidents around them; moreover, that which is in our power would depart, and praise too, and blame, and everything else.....But it says that if a soul selects a life of this kind, and does some such acts, some such things will follow it (cause and effect). The soul, then, is without a master, and it rests with itself to do or not an act; nor is it forced to do this or that.....but the consequence of everything is fixed by fate."

Apuleius, on the doctrines of Plato, writes:—

"All things are governed by the guardianship of Providence; nor can the cause of any evil be ascribed to God; on which account [Plato] conceives that not all things are to be referred to the lot of fate. For he gives this definition: Providence is a divine determination, the conservator of the prosperity of that for the sake of which it has undertaken such an office; and fate is a divine law, by which the inevitable designs of, and the acts commenced by, the Deity are fulfilled. And hence, if anything is done by Providence, it is done likewise by fate, and that which is finished by fate should seem to have been commenced by Providence."

What did Plato mean by these ambiguous phrases? He denied that the Deity was responsible for evil. Then did evil originate in spite of the "divine determination"? Was a benevolent God balked in his good intentions? By whom? Is it in the power of man (an emanation from the divinity himself, according to Plato) to upset the schemes of the Omnipotent? The philosopher speaks vaguely of fate. Is this law subservient to the Deity? or is this necessity independent of the self-existent, according to which God himself is bound to act?

The doctrine of Aristotle concerning fate seems to have been construed by his opponents into a denial of the necessity for prayers and sacrifices. It was, therefore, deemed inimical to the interests of religion, or, perhaps, we should rather say to the interests of the priesthood, which flourished on the credulity of their pious dupes. We shall see, later on, how the wily Seneca extorted himself from what might have proved an unpleasant position.

We come now to the Stoics. Their conception of the Deity appears to have been a strange one. They said that—

"God is an animal, immortal, rational, perfect, and intellectual in his happiness, unsusceptible of any kind of evil, having a foreknowledge of the world and of all that is in the world; however, that he has not the figure of a man, and that he is the creator of the universe, and, as it were, the father of all things in common, and that a portion of him pervades everything."

Ye gods! a pantheistic animal! Zeno, the founder of the sect, taught that God is called Mind and Fate and Jupiter, that all things are produced by fate, and that this *εἰμαρμένη* is a connected cause of existing things, or the reason according to which the world is governed. The Stoics, too, said that divination has a universal existence, since Providence has; so they defined it as "an act on account of certain results." To this school belonged Epictetus, Arrian, and Seneca.

FLORENCE BRADSHAW.

(To be concluded.)

* The power allotted to every man at birth, afterwards transformed into the Christian "guardian angel."

† Clotho, the youngest of the sisters, presided over the moment in which we are born, and held a distaff in her hand; Lachesis spun out all the events and actions of our lives; and Atropos, the eldest of the three, cut the thread of human life with a pair of scissors (Lemprière).

Men create the gods after their own image, not only with regard to their form, but with regard to their mode of life. —Aristotle.

THREE KINDS OF FAITH.

It is an extraordinary fact that, among Christians, the correct meaning to attach to the fundamental doctrine of *Faith* is one of very serious dispute. As Freethinkers, we are continually informed that faith alone can save us. Christians tell us that a man may live an upright life from a moral point of view, but that without faith he is simply covering himself with the filthy rags of self-righteousness. But there is no need to say more of the all-importance attached to faith, as all Christendom is at one in raising that virtue to a high pinnacle of glory, and unanimous as to its absolute necessity for salvation.

In this article we will point out the difference between the meaning attached to faith by Protestants, and that held by Roman Catholics; and we will show that both forms are spurious when contrasted with the faith held by Rationalists.

1. Among Protestants salvation by faith is assumed to mean that by a confidence or trust in Jesus Christ, for their salvation, their souls, by His sufferings and merits, have been saved from the just damnation in which, by their fallen nature and by their sins, they were originally common participators with the whole race of mankind. By simply accepting the sacrifice of the Son of God they cross the line separating the goats from the sheep, and their future life at death is secured from any accusations of the Evil One on the terrible day of judgment. They may, perchance, fall into sin, but it cannot count against them; for, however much the victims of the Christian's sin may suffer, the Recording Angel is ready to blot out his notes with the blood of the Lamb. The Protestant points to such texts as "For we account a man to be justified by faith without the works of the law"; "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved"; "He that believeth in me shall never perish, but have everlasting life"; and to the thief on the cross Jesus said: "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." In the Thirty-nine Articles we read: "Wherefore that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine." The Confession of Faith, after mentioning the importance attached to belief in doctrines and in the promises of God, goes on to say: "But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the Covenant of Grace." Again, Bunyan, in his *Pilgrim's Progress*, makes Ignorance's confession of faith to be "Ignor.—I believe that Christ died for sinners, and that I shall be justified before God from the curse, through His gracious acceptance of my obedience to His law. Or thus, Christ makes my duties, that are religious, acceptable to His Father by virtue of His merits, and so shall I be justified." But Ignorance, according to Bunyan, wasted his time in being religious and moral, as he was damned after all with more ceremony than any other character in the story.

We have given enough to show what is the Protestant definition of faith, good works being merely the fruit of that faith. The latter saving clause is used by all Christians when repudiation of an immoral professor of religion is desirable.

2. Now, curiously enough, the Roman Catholic idea of saving faith is almost as stated in the above extract from Ignorance's confession of faith. Faith of the Protestant kind is, with the Romanist, only the matriculation fee, so to speak, for entering the Communion of the Church, and must be followed up by the further payment of good works, which, by Christ's redemption and the merits of the saints in heaven, are made acceptable to God for personal salvation. We have thus the Protestant Churches condemning the Catholic theory of salvation in a decided manner; and the Catholic Church returns the compliment in as decided a manner, with the usual curse thrown in. I quote from Dr. Bruno's *Catholic Belief*, a book with an introductory letter written by the late Cardinal Manning. The author, writing on "Justification by Faith Alone," says: "Her [the Church's] teaching accords with holy scripture, while the Protestant theory of justification by *faith alone* is not, according to scripture, rightly interpreted, but is opposed to it..... Would that our Protestant friends might see that their theory of justification rests upon a mistake, by attributing to the word 'faith,' occurring in holy scripture, the sense of trust as the primary meaning, under the spurious reason that *trust* supposes *faith in gospel truths*, and *faith in gospel truths* leads to *trust in Christ for pardon*, not perceiving that the same thing could be said of the fear and love of God, of repentance and of obedience, all of which, in germ, are implied in *faith in gospel truths*, and *faith in gospel truths* leads to them; and that, therefore, *trust* is no more apprehending justification than is *faith in gospel truths*, and other above-mentioned acts of virtue; but *all* must be placed only in the rank of dispositions or conditions towards being justified."

The Roman Catholic definition includes, of course, submission to the Church authorities as one of those necessary accompaniments of faith without which salvation is impossible.

Leaving the two halves of Christianity condemning each other, we would draw special notice to the fact that apparently the Deity, who took such trouble to come down to this world to be crucified for us, seems never to have left behind him any clear and unmistakable definition of saving faith. A man is condemned if a Catholic, condemned if a Protestant, and no one can be certain whether he will be saved or damned. We admit, of course, that such an arrangement may be a method for separating the elect from the non-elect, the latter being allowed to take the wrong view and be led away to damnation.

3. The Rationalist claims to have more faith than the Christian. The latter seems to be under the erroneous impression that the former ridicules all faith whatever, and, given the opportunity, brings up the well-known popular delusion in regard to the "know-nothingness" of the Agnostic. Such misrepresentations are made by all Christian preachers, whether educated or not, but may be regarded by the Freethinker as mere dust-throwing to blind the eyes of their votaries.

The Freethinker sees that his reason has been developed through ages of experience, and that his position as the highest developed being must have been attained by a greater or less adherence to, or faith in, the dictates of reason by primitive man and his whole line of ancestors, including even the sensations felt by the original globule of protoplasm from which all life must have come. Observation tells the Freethinker that nature's laws and the matter of the universe are always the same, the one merely modifying the form of the other, and not the total amount. He regards the question of the origin of the universe as the height of folly, since it is plain to him that, as creation is never seen around us, it is useless to try to think upon mental fallacies founded on primitive mistaken notions of the changes occurring in nature. His faith in the events of the past, and speculations as to the future, are founded on what his investigations have shown him to rule in the present. We say it is easier for a man to be mistaken, to be unhinged in his reason, or to lie, than for a miracle to take place. Our faith is built on the rock of reason, and for a religious man to place reason after faith is simply to put the cart before the horse.

As a simple example of the character of true faith let a chemist pour a solution of nitrate of silver into a solution of common salt. A white precipitate occurs, and the chemist has absolute faith that he can obtain the same result at any future time. His faith is not only firm, but it is more—it is universal, a term which the Roman Church wrongly claims. If someone asserted that the precipitate did not always occur, experiment would convince him, and, in reality, scepticism of such scientific faith has no existence anywhere. Outside of mere scientific speculation, the faith of science is recognized not only in Europe, but among the educated heathen, as they are called, of China, India, Japan, and Africa. At home it is recognized by Christians in the ordinary affairs of life, and we can truly claim our faith to be universal. Now, no religion can justly claim such general acceptance. One man's religious faith is wholly denied by men as intelligent as himself. Not only does the Freethinker deny the wrong meaning attached to the word "faith," but Christians, Hindoos, Mohanmedans, Confucians, etc., down to the believers in Unkulunkalu of the Zulus, all deny the truth of each other's faith, and nearly all appeal to so-called ancient authorities to prove their statements. The scientific, rationalist, or secular faith is thus the only truly universal faith. Without it, impressions on the mind would be a mere confusion of phenomena, generalizations of science could never be attempted, and progress in knowledge would be an impossibility. We have sufficient belief in the reasonableness of humanity to hope that such faith will ultimately be recognized by all people, not only because of its value from a purely scientific point of view, but for moral and social reasons. Faith, in truth, is an essential sentiment of the mind, in order to obtain the happiness of mankind.

W. S. A.

Nothing New Under the Sun.

How very true,
There's nothing new,
To gloat o'er or bewail;
For Noah and Co.,
Long, long ago,
Had a great clearance sail!—J. M.

We are still, and our kind must long continue to be, injured in power and in peace by the operation of past ignorance, which has mournfully impaired the conditions of human life; but the emancipation which may be obtained is already precious beyond all estimate—*Harriet Martineau*.

Even theologians have got so far as to struggle to show that science and revelation can be made to agree. In this, we know, they will not succeed; but it is a testimony to the strength and consideration which science has obtained.—*Harriet Martineau*.

BOOK CHAT.

THE *Chronicle*, reviewing Dr. Alfred Weber's *History of Philosophy*, says: "The author is a staunch Monist. His insistence on the unity of the principle at the root of all experience is continually appearing in all the pages of his history."

* * *

Thomas B. Mosher, of Portland, U.S.A., who published an American edition of *The City of Dreadful Night*, has just issued Sir R. F. Burton's *Kasidah of Haji Abdu-el-Yezdi*.

* * *

Servetus and Calvin: A Study of an Important Epoch in the Early History of the Reformation, is the title of a valuable book by R. Willis, M.D., of which Mr. Forder has purchased the remainder copies. Paul Henry, and others, having sought to defend Calvin from the stain on his character arising from his treatment of Michael Servetus, Dr. Willis's work can be recommended to all inquirers into the question; and those who consult it are little likely to absolve the Geneva reformer from the charge of malignant persecution.

* * *

The Pope of Geneva and the Pope of Rome, differing in so many points, agreed in the duty of pulling down heresy and exterminating the enemies of God. They both said with the psalmist: "I hate them, O Lord, which hate thee—yea, I hate them with a perfect hatred." They alike appealed to the savage law of God: "If thy brother, thy son, the wife of thy bosom, or the friend that is as thine own soul, entice thee, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods,' thou shalt not consent to him, neither shalt thine eye have pity on him, neither shalt thou spare him; but thou shalt surely kill him." On the matter of persecution Papists and Protestants were tarred with the same brush.

* * *

Beza defends Calvin by the truly Christian method of blackguarding his victim, whom he calls *espagnol de mundite memoire*, "not man, but rather a horrible monster, composed of all the heresies, ancient and modern, and, above all, an execrable blasphemer against the Trinity." "*A raison de laquelle, par juste jugement de Dieu et des hommes, le 27 jour d'Octobre, il fut condamné au supplice du feu.*"

* * *

It was only the heretics, Anabaptists, and Antitrinitarians who protested against the murder of Servetus. The Reformers, including the mild Melancthon, fully approved of Calvin's conduct. The Geneva Pope himself boasted of his bigotry, admitting it was at his instance he was arrested; and in a letter to the Marquis de Poet, dated September 30, 1561 (nearly eight years after), he wrote: "Above all, do not fail to rid the country of those zealous scoundrels who stir the people to revolt against us. Such monsters should be exterminated, as I have exterminated Michael Servetus, the Spaniard."

* * *

Dr. Willis gives an able sketch of the early life and works of Servetus, "the first who proclaimed the true way in which the blood from the right reaches the left chamber of the heart by passing through the lungs, and who even hinted at its further course by the arteries to the body at large." It is safe to say this discovery outweighs, in value to humanity, the whole of the *Institutes* of Calvin.

* * *

Dr. Robert Willis, the author of this able volume, which is dedicated to his friends, Dr. Davidson and R. W. Mackay, was an able and pronounced Freethinker, who, in his day, did much for his opinions. He wrote a good *Life of Spinoza*, and published through his friend, Thomas Scott, of Ramsgate, *The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua in the Face of the Science and Moral Sense of Our Age*, and also *A Dialogue by Way of Catechism*. Dr. Willis was not afraid of letting his Freethought opinions be known.

* * *

The Whitman cult is growing in America. A monthly journal, *The Conservator*, is devoted to the ideas of "the good, grey poet," and two books of importance have just been issued—*Walt Whitman, the Man*, by T. Donaldson, and *Walt Whitman: A Study*, by John Burroughs, one of his earliest appreciators.

Obituary.

GERMANY has lost one of the most eminent of its scientists in the person of Dr. Emil du Bois-Reymond, whose death took place on December 26. Born in Berlin, in 1818, of French-Swiss parents, he studied at the University, where he, in time, obtained the chairs of physiology and organic chemistry. He adopted Darwinism, and, with Helmholtz, contested the vitalist theory, and proved that biological phenomena are governed by physical and chemical laws.

OUR ENGLISH GUESTS.

SELDOM in the history of Paine Hall has there been a more enthusiastic and successful meeting than that which was held on the evening of Wednesday, the 9th inst., to welcome to Boston our distinguished visitors and friends, Messrs. Charles Watts and George W. Foote, of London, England. The hall was well filled, not only by the Liberals of Boston, but also by several others from various parts of New England; and the reception which was given to these gentlemen was exceedingly cordial, and must have convinced them that they have no warmer friends in America than those who greeted them on this occasion.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Ernest Mendum, who made some very interesting remarks, in which he expressed his admiration for the guests of the evening, and eulogized them for the great services which they have rendered to the Liberal cause. He then introduced Mr. George N. Hill as the chairman of the meeting, who, after a few introductory remarks, introduced Mr. Watts, who was received with long-continued applause. Although over ten years have elapsed since this gentleman has spoken in Boston, he has lost none of his former force and eloquence; and his discourse, which was on "The Bible and Civilization," was one of the most able and eloquent ever delivered in this hall; and it held the close attention of the audience for nearly one hour, eliciting frequent applause.

At its close Mr. Samuel P. Putnam made a few remarks; and, after a collection had been taken, Mr. Foote was introduced amid much applause. This was his first appearance on this platform; and much curiosity and interest had been excited among the Freethinkers of this city concerning him. We are pleased to say that his reputation as an orator was fully sustained on this occasion. His address on "The Doom of the Gods," which occupied over an hour, was a learned and thoughtful production, delivered with great fluency and force, and was highly appreciated by all. At the close of the meeting Messrs. Watts and Foote held a reception; and nearly all who were present availed themselves of the opportunity to shake hands with them.

—*Boston Investigator.*

PROFANE JOKES.

LITTLE CLARENCE—"Pa?" Mr. Callipers—"Eh?" Little Clarence—"Pa, does a woman preacher kiss the bride or the groom after marrying 'em?"

Salvation Army Apostle—"If you swear at those horses, my good man, you'll never go to heaven." Canal Driver (humbly)—"I knows it, mum; but if I don't I'll never get to Tonawanda."

Tommy—"Maw, doesn't anybody but good people go to heaven?" Mrs. Figg—"That's all, my son." Tommy—"But, maw, how does the good people enjoy themselves if they ain't any bad people there for them to try and manage?"

Mrs. Dash—"I understand you have given up compiling a Woman's Bible." Mrs. Cash—"Oh, yes! it was too bad! We found out, you know, that to make it consistent we would have to call the Devil 'she.'"

"Willie, what was the preacher's text?" "Somethin' about havin' faith like a grain of some kind of seed, an' sayin' to the mountain, 'git a move on you!' an' it'll git."

"And now, little children," said the Sunday-school superintendent, "if you are good children, some day you may wear a golden crown." "Paw's got one on his tooth now," chirped the smallest and newest boy.

Rev. Dr. Primrose—"This is the first time I've seen you in church in over a year, Sambo. I'm glad you have reformed this blessed Thanksgiving season." Sambo—"Yis, sah, I'se feel thankful to de Lord that he didn't let dat spring-gun go off las' night."

"I am deeply interested in discovering the lost tribes of Israel," said Mr. Musty, as he came in and sat down by the busy editor for an hour's discussion of the subject. "So?" replied the man of resources. "Why don't you advertize for them? The business office is on the first floor. Here, Dick, show the gentleman to the advertizing department."

Christianity a Failure.

Ah! how true it is that Christianity has not, as you say, Christianized the world! There is something curious in the spectacle of the embarrassment of every sect of Christians in accounting for this fact. I know no subject on which there is more miserable floundering among incompatible views and untenable assertions.—*Harriet Martineau, in "Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development," p. 244.*

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, "The Doom of the Gods."
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 7.15, R. Forder, "More Blasphemous Poetry."
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, S. E. Easton, "Is the Bible Man's Highest Guide to Morality?"
EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Libra-road, Old Ford): 7, G. Spiller opens a discussion on "Good and Evil."
KINGSLAND: 12, Meeting at Bradlaugh Club and Institute.
NORTH LONDON ETHICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL, Leighton Hall, Kentish Town: 11, Lesson by F. J. Gould. Children invited.
SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY, Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road: 11.15, Sunday-school; 7, Dr. Stanton Coit, "John Wesley and Methodism."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, A lecture.

COUNTRY.

DERBY (Pollicott's Dining Rooms, Market-place): 7, Election of officers and passing balance sheet.
GLASGOW (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): New Year Holidays. January 4, at 8.30, Annual Conversation in Assembly Rooms, Bath-street.
HECKMONDWIKE (Mr. Wood's Office): 2.30, Business meeting.
LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, A lecture.
LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 7, L. Small, B.Sc., "Weismannism."
MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, C. Pegg, "Behind the Scenes of Popular Journalism." Lantern illustrations.
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Northumberland Hall, High Friar-street): 3, Members' meeting; 5, tea; 6.30, concert.
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, Grand Exhibition, "Derbyshire and the Peak," with lantern illustrations and descriptive readings.
SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, Business meeting; 7.30, Lantern lecture.

POSITIVISM.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—Church of Humanity, St. Mary's-place. Service and Discourse every Sunday evening at 7.

SUNDERLAND.—Conversational meetings, open to all, at Mr. Coates's, 13 Derby-street, every Sunday, at 7.

Information and literature may be obtained from Mr. Malcolm Quin, Church of Humanity, Newcastle-on-Tyne, who will be willing to consider applications to deliver lectures on Positivism gratuitously and without expense, where such lectures may be desired.

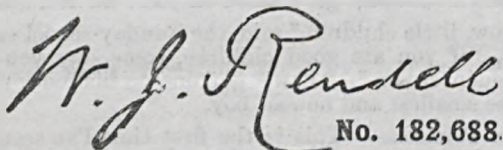
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