

# The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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## THE WORD "INFIDEL."

WHEN the American evangelist, Mr. D. L. Moody, was invited by the Manhattan Liberal Club to hold a public debate on Christianity and Secularism with Mr. Charles Watts or myself, he not only declined the invitation, but went out of his way to call the Freethinkers "infidels." Of course he did this purposely. His object was to raise a prejudice against Freethinkers, and to pander to the bigotry of Christians.

The mere fact that Mr. Moody deemed it politic to employ this word is a reason for repudiating it. We shall not cure Christians all at once of the bad habit of calling names, but we may as well remind them of their proneness to this vice, and do our best to shame them into greater decency.

The word "infidel" has just the same history as the word "miscreant." It first came into use during the Crusades. An infidel was simply a person outside the Christian faith, and a miscreant was simply a misbeliever. The Saracens were infidels and miscreants, because they followed Mohammed instead of Christ; and both terms were employed originally without any special opprobrium. But religious bigotry is always hateful, and he who differs from "the faith" is soon regarded with detestation. Both terms, therefore, took a secondary significance. "Infidel" came to connote moral perversity, and even a certain devilishness; while "miscreant" passed through stage after stage of degradation, until at last it meant an abandoned villain, lost to all sense of honor and humanity.

Naturally the Jews at home suffered in the same way as the Mohammedans abroad. Shakespeare was true to the average spirit of Christianity in making Gratiano exclaim to Shylock in the Doge's court at Venice, "Now infidel, I have thee on the hip." The phrase "an infidel Jew" was in common usage; indeed, it was pretty frequently used a good deal less than a century ago.

"Miscreant" has degenerated so far that it positively cannot be employed even against Freethinkers. To call a man a miscreant is simply to call him a thorough-paced scoundrel. It is actionable at law, and therefore dangerous. But "infidel" still preserves its ambiguity. You can call a man an infidel, hoping that people will understand you to mean that he is wicked; and if you are taken to task, you can always say you only meant that he is an unbeliever.

Christian bigots know the mischief of this odious word. That is why they use it. They also employ the general term "infidelity"—under which they class Atheism, Agnosticism, Secularism, Freethought, and sometimes even Unitarianism; in fact, everything that does not conform to their own orthodox standard of belief.

Now, the unbeliever is not an infidel, and unbelief is not infidelity. It would be more plausible, though perhaps not more polite, to accuse Freethinkers of rashness, singularity, or self-conceit; but to accuse them of infidelity is to fly in

the face of the plainest facts. "Infidelity" means *unfaithfulness*, and the Freethinker, of all men, is most faithful to conviction. He thinks he has found Truth, and he speaks out in her behalf, and stands by her against the world's frown. He often runs a terrible risk. He dares the anger of fools and the malice of bigots. He faces the prospect of social ruin. In former days he confronted imprisonment and death.

What a curious thing it is! A man thinks for himself, speaks out his thoughts, braves any danger rather than play the hypocrite; and the one crime of which he is then accused is "infidelity." And most of those who so accuse him never thought for themselves, and never made the smallest sacrifice for Truth in the whole course of their lives.

It may be said that I have given a certain countenance to the word "infidel" in the title of one of my own works. But *Infidel Death-Beds* is an ironical title. I took a phrase commonly employed by Christians, and showed that the stories they told under that heading were pious inventions. But I never called myself an "infidel." I have always repudiated the term as a wanton insult.

Personally, I am not fond of nicknames. I think that men and women of every persuasion should choose their own label, and that other persons should respect it. If I call myself a Secularist, that is the designation which others should apply to me. A Christian minister, many years ago, called me a Bradlaughite, and when I disclaimed that name, he insisted that he was right because I believed in Charles Bradlaugh. "Well," I said, "you believe in Christ. Suppose I call you a Christite." And, of course, he was indignant. He knew he had a right to fix his own label, but he foolishly thought he had also a right to fix mine.

Curiously enough, it seems that the term Christian was originally a nickname. It appears to have been first applied by the Pagans to the followers of Jesus Christ, who afterwards bore it as though it were their own invention. In the same way the term Nihilist was first applied to the "forward" party in Russia by their enemies. They were thus accused, in one sweeping word, of believing in nothing and wanting to destroy everything. Afterwards they accepted the word as a sort of ticket which had got fastened upon them, and which they could not remove.

I believe in the most drastic criticism of religion. I believe even in the employment of ridicule against falsehood. But I do not believe in the employment of a word merely to give pain or to show contempt. It is in this spirit that I appeal to the Christians who are not irrecoverably sunk in bigotry. They should cease calling us "infidels," and cease calling our opinions "infidelity." They should do this as a mere matter of common sense. I am not asking them for charity, but for justice. And even the baser sort of Christians may be warned that all of us are human, and that insult may lead to reprisals. In that case a very galling list of nicknames might easily be drawn up against them.

G. W. FOOTE.



## SUBSTITUTES FOR RELIGION.

WHEN a Christian fails to meet the arguments of a Freethinker, and to substantiate the belief in supernatural events said to have occurred a long way off and a good while ago, but which never happen here and now, he usually falls back on the question, "What have you to put in place of my religion?" It would seem a little ridiculous if a patient were to ask a doctor, What will you give me in place of my disease? or if a child should require something in place of the bogie with which he had been frightened. But to a person brought up to believe that it is a most appalling position to be, as Paul says, "without hope and without God in the world," it is as natural to demand how he shall get along without his accustomed beliefs as for a cripple to want to know how he shall move without his crutches. The expression quoted from Paul is constantly used by Christians to describe the forlorn condition of unbelievers. Mentally dependent on the imaginary God of their childhood and on the hope of immortality, they sincerely believe that those without these blessed consolations are wretched beings indeed. The existence of such persons as Professor Clifford, John Stuart Mill, Harriet Martineau, and "George Eliot," is inexplicable to them.

The Freethinker may smile at this mistaken notion, but it is no less real than the drunkard's craving for a stimulant. Just as the average liquor-drinker, smoker, or meat-eater wonders how people manage to go through life without the essentials to their own comfort, so the average religionists fancy that those without their faith must therefore be without all hope, because without hope of heaven and without God in the world.

Those who have been Christian know how much is worthy and how much is unworthy in all this. They have felt how pleasant it is to depend on God, and find that, as Carlyle said, "he does nothing." They know how delightful it is to expect for themselves eternal glories, which they do not deserve, while others are condemned to everlasting punishment, equally undeserved. They have felt the ecstatic bliss of having a spiritual assurance of grace, a full knowledge that they are of the elect, while the rest of the world has sunk into wickedness. But a time comes when the too human, egotistic side of all this concern about the salvation or damnation of one's miserable soul becomes apparent. The ignoble heaven recedes, but the world of reality, with all its vast potentialities, enlarges; the imaginary God fades like the baseless fabric of a vision, but our real connections with the humanity in which we truly live, move, and have our being become clearer.

It seems to me that the Freethinker makes a good exchange both for himself and his fellows when he gives up the futile worship of a God who cannot profit by his adoration for the active service of human beings who need our sympathy and aid; and the vain expectation of post-mortem reward for the peace which comes from doing one's best. The child is the gainer who learns that its own parents, and no imaginary Santa Claus, are its real benefactors at Christmas.

In place of one superstition we do not need a fresh one, any more than to replace one disease by another. We want only the natural facts, which are obscured by theological fiction. Who wants to replace the bogie that frightens the child? What rational man believes in a personal Devil? Who wants something put in place of that once general belief? A personal God is but a corollary of a personal Devil, and when the one is dispensed with the other may follow.

The truth is that all that has been of worth in the old religions can be retained when their fictions are discarded. It is not belief in a God, but active goodness, that ennobles a life. Most of the worst people who have disgraced humanity have been sound believers. It is not creeds that are of real worth, but conduct that is of service to humanity. Shelley remarked how much the world would have been improved had religions been founded on charity instead of on faith. The spirit of Universal Love to which Shelley referred would make no bad substitute for religion.

J. M. WHEELER.

## ANCIENT AND MODERN THOUGHT.

TAKING a retrospect of the many centuries that have left their mark upon the history of time, what a marvellous record we behold of the revolution and development of the human intellect! We contemplate the rise, dominance, and decay of the grand civilization of Rome; the ethical potency of the sublime philosophy of Greece; the birth and early struggles of modern science; the advent, changes, modifications, and failures of the Christian religion; the growth and spread of scepticism, which in recent times has revolutionized the realms of thought; and, finally, the triumph, to a large extent, of reason and personal freedom over theological faith and traditional authority. In all these intellectual revolutions there has been a gradual transition from dependence upon ancient, to belief in modern, thought. It is true we still revel in the poetic beauties of Homer, the profound wisdom of Socrates, and the deep philosophy of Aristotle; but for all practical purposes these ancient writings have not that power over the human mind which they once exercised.

There is a marked difference between ancient and modern thought. The former was largely theological, theoretical, non-scientific (as we understand that term to-day), and metaphysical; the latter is mundane in its character, practical in its influence, and is based upon scientific methods. Canon Jessopp, in his sermon preached at Ipswich in connection with the British Association on September 15, 1895, said: "It is a simple fact in history that for ages theology was actually the only science that absorbed the attention of the most profound and the most subtle, and the most severely-trained thinkers in the civilized world—the only science which was studied systematically and taught scientifically." Now, what was the result of, as we think, this misapprehension of the true nature of science? The Canon gives the answer when he observes: "Theology, subject to no criticism from without, went further and further astray. For ages the theologians, having it all their own way, and never corrected by the conclusions of other discoverers on this side and on that, became even more and more unscientific in their methods of inquiry, and more and more reckless in denouncing all opposition to their most irrational conclusions."

With the diffusion of modern thought science has been rescued from its ancient perversion, and has triumphed in every department of human life. "During the present century," says the Canon, "and especially during the past sixty years, the physical sciences have had it almost all their own way. The wonderful growth in our knowledge of the material universe, the wonderful progress of discovery in every direction, the wonderful expansion of fields of observation, the wonderful pace at which cosmical phenomena have been registered, and the wonderful sagacity with which the great laws which govern these phenomena have been interpreted—all this, and the extraordinary literary ability which has characterized the great leaders and teachers of the new learning, have contributed to attract and fascinate the most intelligent portion of the community." This is a generous acknowledgment of the rapid advancement of science under the influence of modern thought. It accords with the testimony of the late Professor Huxley when he wrote in his *Lay Sermons* that "modern progress rests upon physical science; take away her gifts to our country, and our position among the leading nations of the world is gone to-morrow; for it is physical science that makes intelligence and moral energy stronger than brute force. The whole of modern thought is steeped in science; it has made its way into the works of our best poets, and even the mere man of letters who affects to ignore and despise science is unconsciously impregnated with her spirit, and indebted for his best products to her methods.....She is teaching the world that the ultimate court of appeal is observation and experience, and not authority." Here we discover the great advantage of modern thought; it is not satisfied with mere theory, but it seeks to reach the domain of practical demonstration. It is this fact that makes the present age pre-eminently Secular, in contrast with former times, which were thoroughly theological. Science has transferred the entire field of intellectual activity from the domain of theology to that of scientific investigation, which is one of the first principles of Secular philosophy.

Men talk of "mere morality"—which is much as if one should say, "Poor God, with nobody to help him."—R. W. Emerson.



We are aware that some persons claim science as a Christian product; but, like other claims emanating from the same source, it is altogether fallacious. All science is, and must be, from its very nature, secular. It belongs exclusively to the natural. Its inspiration, its experiments, and its results are all human. It has nothing to do with the alleged supernatural; its discoveries, its revelations, and its achievements are all consequences of human effort. In fact, the Bishop of Carlisle, in the *Nineteenth Century* for March, 1880, frankly says: "I maintain that science is Atheism; that all physical science, properly so-called, is compelled by its very nature to take no account of the being of God; because, as soon as it does this, it trenches upon theology, and ceases to be science; that its investigations and reasonings are, by agreement, conversant simply with observed facts and conclusions drawn from these; and in this sense it is Atheism, or without recognition of God."

As a set-off against the difficulty which this position places the orthodox believer in, he boasts that he has not only the benefits of science in common with other people, but he has something more which the Sceptic does not possess—namely, the belief in God. This, it is alleged, gives the Christian an advantage over the Secularist. But it does nothing of the kind, inasmuch as this "something more" is only a conjecture. Nothing is *known* of the object of belief, while the belief itself can confer no practical advantage, except, at the most, that of consolation, which is no panacea for the evils of life dealt with by science. Besides, the physical and moral wrongs of existence can be, and are, remedied without any belief in God; while, in all probability, they would for ever remain but for the knowledge and application of science. Thus the advantage is on the side of the Sceptic, for the world can progress without the Christian's "something more," but it could not advance without the aid of science, which is the Secularist's Providence.

Another drawback that pertained to ancient thought, and one which is being discountenanced more and more in modern philosophy, is that of metaphysics. Personally, we regard metaphysics as of little practical value in settling the issues of modern life. Professor De Morgan explains metaphysics to be: "The science to which ignorance goes to learn its knowledge, and knowledge to learn its ignorance, on which all men agree that it is the key, but no two men upon how it is to be put into the lock." This humorous definition shows how useless metaphysics is in the endeavor to solve the many problems that confront the student of the various phenomena which surround us. This ancient mode of reasoning is not understood by the general masses, and it must fail to reveal the mysteries of nature, for the very reason that it seeks to reach beyond the limits of the human mind, and to describe the, to us, indescribable. The whole trend of modern thought is in the opposite direction. It accepts nature as it is, without attempting to dogmatize as to how it originated, or if it ever originated at all.

Modern thought concerns itself with the endeavor to provide for worldly requirements, availing itself of the services of free inquiry in every department of life. To the modern thinker no opinion is too sacred for examination, and no doctrine too venerable for honest criticism. It accepts the decision drawn from reason rather than the verdict of ecclesiastical authority; it recognizes the superiority of the enjoyment of mental freedom to the force of compulsion; and it acts upon the maxim that, whether or not there be another existence, to us the affairs of our present life should be regarded as being of supreme importance. Herein lie the greatness of modern thought and the potency of the philosophy of Secularism.

CHARLES WATTS.

Science and freedom were the great factors of civilization or of progress, in all kinds of conceptions, sentiments, and social conditions; the first dissolved and destroyed the matrix of myth in which the intelligence was originally enveloped, and liberty, which was wholly due to science, made steady progress a matter of certainty. If—which in the present condition of the world is an impossible hypothesis—they were to fail, the human race would be irretrievably lost, since these are our real liberators from barbarism, which have upheld mankind in the struggle against it, under whatever name these principles have appeared.—*Tito Vignoli*.

## MISSIONARY JOTTINGS.

FROM the various notices of my lectures that have appeared in the *Freethinker* during the past few weeks readers of this journal will have gathered that my recent lecturing tour in the North of England and Scotland has been anything but a discouraging one. A connected account of my five weeks' wanderings will make this sufficiently clear.

I left London on November 14 in anything but the best of health, and on the following day lectured three times in Glasgow. I met with a warm welcome from my Scotch friends, and, what was still more gratifying, the audiences showed a marked improvement upon my previous ones. During the week I lectured at Dunoon, Paisley, Greenock, and Motherwell, to audiences that gave a most attentive and sympathetic attention to all that I had to say. At only one place out of the four was there anything in the shape of opposition, and that took the form of a sermon by one man, and a number of charges against Charles Bradlaugh by another. At most of these places the lectures were reported in the local press, in addition to stray paragraphs concerning the meetings figuring in other portions of the papers. Usually, these reports lead to a correspondence, and the matter is thus kept warm for some time. One or two of the letters I came across displayed marked ability on the part of their writers, and showed that the recent lectures by Messrs. Foote, Watts, Heaford, and myself are bearing good fruit. I returned to Glasgow for three more lectures on November 22, and was pleased to find still larger audiences than had gathered on the preceding Sunday.

On the following evening I was booked for Carlisle, a small place of about 4,000 inhabitants, where no Free-thought address had ever been delivered, although only about three miles distant from Robert Owen's colony at New Lanark. The visit here promised us a little excitement. The Town Hall had been booked for the lecture by Messrs. Black and McLeish, but after the posters were out we received a note from the "powers that be" to the effect that, as the subject announced was contrary "to the constitution of the Council," the engagement would be cancelled. Of course we were considerably astonished to find that a Free-thought lecture was not agreeable to a Scotch town council; but we informed them briefly that we were coming down, and should insist upon our right of entry. I imagined that, having given us this gratuitous advertisement, the Council would at least have made us pay for it in some way. In this I was disappointed. It transpired that the bigotry of the Council was quite equalled by its cowardice. A short stray note did the whole of the business, and no further opposition to our holding the meeting was offered. An audience of several hundred assembled, and listened quietly and attentively to all that was said. A few questions were asked at the close of the lecture, but no opposition was offered. The sale of literature was good, and as I left the hall I observed numerous groups of people standing about discussing the subject—two things which proved that the interest of the people had been awakened. I suppose it is unlikely that we shall be allowed the use of the Town Hall again; but, if any other is obtainable, I shall certainly pay Carlisle a return visit in February. We had some little trouble in securing lodgings for the night, owing, I have reason to believe, to the hotel-keepers having been warned against sheltering us. Eventually we overcame that difficulty, although the hotel-keeper's charges reminded me of the Biblical text: "I was a stranger, and ye took me in." Probably he thought that having four Atheists under one roof involved risk of damage to the property, and as there was extra risk there ought to be additional profit.

As upon previous occasions, I was accompanied to the above-named places by Messrs. Black, McLeish, Train, and others, and one cannot praise too highly the energy and enthusiasm that the Glasgow Secularists are throwing into the work. I am informed that the committee have never worked harder or better than at present, and it is gratifying to learn that their efforts are meeting with a fair measure of success. New members are being added, and old ones are turning to the work with renewed vigor. Thanks to the kindness of Mr. George Anderson, we were enabled to distribute 5,000 leaflets at the meetings; and this, together with other literature sold and given, should do a considerable amount of good.



On November 29 I lectured three times at Edinburgh, and then travelled to Liverpool to hold a two-nights' discussion with Mr. George Wise, upon "Is there a Life Beyond the Grave?" We had a large and well-behaved audience; my points were well followed and appreciated; and, as it would be out of place for me to comment upon the merits of the discussion, I will only add that the local Secularists appeared well pleased with the result. A fair report appeared in the *Liverpool Post*, the leading paper.

From Liverpool I went north again, and on December 5, 6, and 7 lectured at West Stanley, Durham. The three days' campaign proved a phenomenal success. The audiences grew steadily in size, until at the last meeting there must have been at least 1,200 people present, every seat and all standing room being occupied. I was informed by some of the older members of the party that these were the largest Freethought meetings ever held in the district. Many of those present at the lectures had to walk four and five miles through the mud and rain in order to be there, so that there was a little more than the ordinary interest taken in the meetings. A good report of the lectures appeared in the *Consett Chronicle*, besides odd paragraphs and a leading article, in which it was vaguely hinted that I had permanently damaged the morality of the district. The success of the meetings rendered the committee quite jubilant, and I have arranged for a return visit on January 16, 17, and 18. New members were enrolled, and a fair sale of literature effected—both very pleasing results. During my stay in Stanley I paid a visit to the two oldest Secularists in the neighborhood—an old lady and gentleman of over seventy years of age. I quite enjoyed my chat with the old lady. Her bright, intelligent face was a pleasure to see; her speech was bright and cheery, and her interest in Freethought as strong as though she were only twenty-five. Altogether, my visit to Stanley was one of the most interesting of the tour. It was new ground for me; the members there are giving their whole heart to the work in hand, while the lectures were a far greater success than either I or the committee had anticipated.

My next visit was to the town of Blackburn, where I lectured on December 11; and thence I went to Birmingham, lecturing there three times on the 13th. I found the Branch here under a cloud. The meeting-place they have at present is far from being a desirable one, and it has been decided to give it up. The committee, however, have several plans on the carpet for the future; and, provided the Branch receives the assistance it deserves, there will soon be an opportunity of placing the movement in Birmingham upon a better foundation than it has been for some time.

Working my way homewards, I lectured at Derby on December 16, 17, and 18. In spite of many disadvantages, the handful of Secularists who are keeping the flag flying here are making steady progress. The whole of the three lectures were well attended; the first, on "Christianity and Woman," drawing a crowded house. Every seat was occupied, and many people were standing. A striking feature in the audience was the large number of ladies in attendance. Their presence made the hall look quite gay; and, judging from their faces, the lecture was followed with pleasure and appreciation. A few hours after the lecture came the earthquake; and on the following evening opinion seemed divided as to whether its occurrence was due to my presence in Derby, or whether Jehovah had been listening to the speeches of some of his supporters on the previous evening, and had got riled in consequence. During the three meetings more literature was disposed of than had ever been the case before. Secularism has evidently begun to make its presence felt in Derby, and there is no reason why a really strong organization should not be built up in the town. I am returning there on January 10 for three lectures, the first time that Sunday lectures in a hall will have been tried.

My concluding lecture was given in my native town, Leicester, to a fair-sized audience; and on the following day, the 21st, I returned to London after more than five weeks' absence.

Most of my week-night lectures have, as usual, been given under the Lecture Scheme, and I am more than ever convinced of the necessity of some such institution becoming a recognized part of our organization. I believe that there are just now splendid opportunities of losing money with considerable advantage to the Freethought cause;

and so long as the money is *well lost* it should be forthcoming. The Lecture Scheme has already been of great assistance in many towns, and its sphere of usefulness might be indefinitely extended if the funds are available. Even where lecturing has been done, more good might be achieved if we were only in a position to secure the more commodious and more comfortable halls. It is impossible to pay all expenses by means of collections, so that we are bound to put up with smaller halls, which means smaller audiences, unless we are in a position to bear the additional financial strain.

Early in the new year I have arranged to go over the same ground again, when I hope to be able to report still further progress in the dissemination of Freethought principles.

C. COHEN.

## THE CREDIBILITY OF THE GOSPELS.

### THE EVANGELISTS' KNOWLEDGE OF GALILEE.

IN the three Synoptical Gospels the entire public ministry of Christ—with the exception of a few days preceding his arrest and trial—is represented as confined to Galilee. And here the writers' almost complete ignorance of the geography of the northern province is plainly conspicuous. Following Matthew's version, the places in Galilee which are stated to have been visited by Jesus are: Nazareth (iv. 13), Capernaum (iv. 13; viii. 5, etc.), "his own city" (ix. 1), "his own country" (xiii. 54), "the country of the Gadarenes" (viii. 28), Gennesaret (xiv. 34), "the parts of Tyre and Sidon" (xv. 21), "the borders of Magadan" (xv. 39), and "the parts of Cæsarea Philippi" (xvi. 13). This is all. The phrase "his own city" is said to denote Capernaum, and "his own country" Nazareth. It is not stated that Jesus actually entered the towns of Tyre, Sidon, and Cæsarea Philippi (which were beyond the limits of Galilee), but only that he went into the neighborhood of those cities. Also, Matthew's "country of the Gadarenes" is in the other two Synoptics "the country of the Gerasenes," and Matthew's "borders of Magadan" are in the Second Gospel "the parts of Dalmanutha."

If we attempt to follow the wanderings of Jesus through Galilee, we soon come to an *impasse*, and have to give it up. Thus (keeping to Matthew's account) we are told that, after the Baptist was cast into prison, Jesus "withdrew into Galilee; and, leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum" (iv. 12, 13). Next, when "walking by the Sea of Galilee" he called Andrew and Peter, and "went about in all Galilee" (iv. 23). After this he went up into the mountain, and delivered his famous Sermon, after which he "entered into Capernaum" (viii. 5), but, finding "great multitudes," he departed "unto the other side" (viii. 13). Next, he "entered into a boat" (viii. 23) and came into "the country of the Gadarenes" (viii. 28), after which he again "entered into a boat," and arrived at "his own city" (ix. 1). After this, he "passed by from thence" (ix. 9) to some unnamed place, and again "passed by from thence" (ix. 27) to another nameless place; after which he "went about all the cities and villages" (ix. 35). Next, we are told, "he departed thence to teach and preach in their cities" (xi. 1), and "at that season" he went through somebody's cornfields (xii. 1). After this, he again "departed thence and went into their synagogue" (xii. 9), and shortly afterwards he "withdrew from thence" (xii. 15), and "on that day" went and "sat by the sea side" (xiii. 1). After holding forth at this unnamed place he "departed thence" (xiii. 53) and came to "his own country" (xiii. 54). Soon, however, "he withdrew from thence in a boat to a desert place" (xiv. 13), then "went up into a mountain apart" (xiv. 23), and the same night walked upon "the sea" (xiv. 25), and came to Gennesaret (xiv. 34). After this, he "withdrew into the parts of Tyre and Sidon" (xv. 21), and soon afterwards "departed thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee, and he went up into a mountain and sat there" (xv. 29). Next, after feeding 4,000 people, he entered a boat "and came into the borders of Magadan" (xv. 39), and after some discussion with the people "he left them, and departed" (xvi. 4). Then he "came into the parts of Cæsarea Philippi" (xvi. 13), and "after six days" ascended "a high mountain," and was transfigured (xvii. 1). After this great feat he went to Capernaum (xvii. 24), and finally "departed from Galilee, and came into the borders of Judea beyond Jordan" (xix. 1). This



completes the itinerary in Galilee, and, it is to be noticed, Jesus did not leave this province during his whole ministry—that is, until he went up to Jerusalem a few days before his arrest and trial. The accounts given by Mark and Luke are on the same plan, and are of the same indefinite nature.

Now, in reading a narrative of this character it immediately becomes apparent that we have merely a number of unconnected, undated, and unlocated anecdotes clumsily pieced together, and not a biography by an eye-witness or a companion of Jesus. It is, at the same time, also plainly evident that the Gospel writer knew little or nothing of the geography of the northern province of Palestine, and still less of the places visited by Jesus.

If we turn now to the works of a writer who had lived in Galilee before the destruction of Jerusalem—I refer to those of the historian Josephus—we shall see how very small was the knowledge possessed by the three Synoptists. The following are some of the towns and villages mentioned by the Jewish historian:—

**CITIES:** *Sepphoris*, "the greatest city of all Galilee"; *Tiberias*, next in importance; *Garis*, near *Sepphoris*; *Scythopolis*, "the largest city of Decapolis"; *Taricheæ*, about four miles from *Tiberias*; *Bethmaus*, half a mile from *Tiberias*; besides *Asochis*, *Besara*, *Zebulon Saab*, *Gischala*, *Garisme*, and others.

**VILLAGES:** *Japhia*, "the largest village of all Galilee"; *Arbela*, *Bersabe*, *Selamis*, *Jotapata*, *Capharecho*, *Sigo*, *Cana*, *Capharnaum*, *Jumnia*, *Meroth*, *Achubare*, *Dabaritta*, *Chabolo*, *Ruma*, *Gabaroth*, *Simonias*, *Seph*, *Meloth*, *Xuloth*, *Baca*, *Sennabris*, etc. Also, on the eastern side of Lake Gennesareth, which Jesus is stated to have often visited, were: *Gumala*, *Gadara*, *Solyana*, *Hippos*, *Julias*, *Arpha*, *Seleucia*, and *Sogane*, the last three being villages.

Now, setting aside such general statements as "he went about all the cities and villages teaching"—which any one unacquainted with a single town in Galilee might make—we find, according to Matthew's Gospel, that only *one* out of all these places was actually visited by Jesus—the village of Capernaum. If we admit "the country of the Gadarenes" to be *Gadara*, then the number is raised to *two*; that is all. Thus, it is not unreasonable to infer that the Jews of Galilee neither witnessed Christ's miracles nor heard his gospel. The only other place named by Matthew—viz., Nazareth—is nowhere mentioned by Josephus. It seems to me to be highly probable that this city is purely mythical, and that its name was derived from (and suggested by) that of the Galilean lake, "*Gennesareth*." The latter appellation occurs once, it is true, in Matthew's Gospel (xiv. 34); but it is given as the name of an inhabited place on the western shore of the lake. The writer was evidently unacquainted with the fact that Gennesareth was the name of the lake itself, and not that of a city overlooking it.

Josephus says (Wars, iii. x. 1): "This lake is called by the people of the country the Lake of Gennesareth." Yet the two Gospel writers who are said to have been apostles and "people of the country" never give it this name; they designate it "the sea," or "the Sea of Galilee," or "the Sea of Tiberias" (Matt. iv. 17; xv. 29; John vi. 1, etc.). This fact, again, tends to the same inevitable conclusion at which we had already arrived—that the Gospel narratives were not composed by men who had lived in Galilee, or even by men who had any acquaintance with the geography of that province.

The author of the Fourth Gospel, indeed, mentions *Cana*; but the three Synoptists appear to have never heard either of that village or of the great feat of conjuring (turning water into wine) which is stated to have been performed there. Luke, also, records the restoration to life of a young man at a place he calls *Nain*; but we have only that fabricator's word for it. Another city called *Bethsaida* is mentioned by Mark and Luke; but this, like the preceding, probably only existed in the imagination of the Gospel writers. In fact, though the second of these writers says that Jesus and his followers "withdrew apart to a city called Bethsaida" (Luke ix. 10), we find, two verses farther on, the disciples saying, "For we are *here* in a *desert place*." Luke evidently forgot he had placed the company in a "city."

It is a significant fact that not one of the three "cities" which the Gospel writers call Nazareth, Nain, and Bethsaida is once mentioned by Josephus, though that historian, in his own account of the war in Galilee, and in his own "Life,"

goes several times over the ground where they are marked on the atlas; nor, on the other hand, is it less significant that, of the numerous real towns and villages with which the northern province was closely studded, the Gospel historians who profess to relate Christ's ministry in Galilee are entirely ignorant.

Let us now glance at the peregrinations of Jesus in Galilee, as recorded in the Fourth Gospel. According to this veracious account, Jesus first appears at a marriage feast at *Cana* (ii. 1), after which he "went down to *Capernaum*" (ii. 12). Some days later "Jesus went up to Jerusalem" (ii. 13), where he expelled certain people from the temple and discoursed with Nicodemus (iii. 1). After this he went "into the land of Judea" (iii. 22), though he was there when at Jerusalem. The Baptist at this time was "not yet cast into prison" (iii. 24). Next, he "left Judea, and departed again into Galilee" (iv. 3). On the way he came to an unknown place called *Sychar* (iv. 5), and talked with a woman of Samaria. After two days he left for Galilee (iv. 43), and came a second time to *Cana* (iv. 46), where he worked a miracle (iv. 54). Next, "after these things.....Jesus went up to Jerusalem" (v. 1), where he healed a man at the Pool of Bethesda and made an oration (v. 19-47). Then, "after these things" he went "to the other side of the Sea of Galilee" (vi. 1), and "went up into the mountain, and there he sat with his disciples" (vi. 3). Next, after feeding 5,000 people with five loaves, he "withdrew again into the mountain" (vi. 15), and, later, walked on "the sea," and came to *Capernaum* (vi. 19), where he orated in the synagogue (vi. 26-59). "And after these things Jesus walked in Galilee," though he was there when at Capernaum (vii. 1). Lastly, Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and taught in the temple (vii. 14-viii. 59), and returned no more to Galilee.

In this account, it will be seen, Jesus visits but two places in Galilee—the villages of *Cana* and *Capernaum*; the first-named being unknown to the three Synoptists. He also leaves the province twice to go up to Jerusalem, afterwards returning to it—a fact likewise unknown to the Synoptical writers, whose narratives, further, leave no place for such excursions.

Without going farther into the matter, it must, I think, be evident to every unprejudiced reader that the Gospel accounts of the ministry of Christ are less deserving of credit than anything recorded in any other book of travels that has ever appeared in print.

ABRACADABRA.

### SOME BIBLE SLIPS.

IN 2 Chronicles xx. 36, 37, there is a mistake showing the grossest ignorance on the part of the chronicler. It is said Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, joined himself to Azariah, King of Israel, to make ships to go to Tharshish; whereas, from 1 Kings xxii. 48, we learn that the fleet Jehoshaphat built consisted of ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold.

Another flagrant error is that in 1 Chronicles x. 6. It is said that all Saul's house died, together with him and his three sons; whereas, in 1 Samuel xxxi. 6, it says that all his men died with him and his three sons.

We wonder how the following can be explained away: Compare 1 Kings xv. 32, 33 and xvi. 8 with 2 Chronicles xiv. 1; xv. 19; xvi. 1. How could the Kings of Israel and Judah be at war all their days if it was not till the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign that Baasha made war on him?

Now for a few other mistakes. 1 Chronicles xxvi. 15 says Abededom was a Levite; but 2 Samuel vi. 10 says he was a Gittite. In 1 Chronicles xxix. 22 it says Solomon was anointed before a large assemblage; whereas 1 Kings i. 39 says he was hastily anointed by Zadok in the presence of a few friends.

There is no doubt the book of Chronicles was written with a view of aggrandizing the Levitical institutions; and it seems to have been a success on the whole, as very soon the Chief Priest became supreme. We wonder if the book of Chronicles was put in the ark of the Lord, or box of the Lord?

To die is one of two things; for either the dead may be annihilated and have no sensation of anything whatever, or, as it is said, there is a certain change of passage of the soul from one place to another (metempsychosis). If it is a privation of all sensation, as it were a sleep in which the sleeper has no dream, death would be a wonderful gain; for this futurity appears to be nothing more than one night.—Socrates.



## MOTHER CHURCH'S CHERRY TREE.

SEE those cherries, how they cover  
Yonder sunny garden wall;  
Had they not that net-work over,  
Thieving birds would eat them all.

So to guard our Church and pensions  
Ancient sages wove a net,  
Through whose holes of small dimensions  
Only certain birds can get!

Shall we, then, this net-work widen?  
Shall we stretch these sacred holes,  
Through which e'en already slide in  
Lots of small dissenting souls?

Heaven forbid! Old Testy crieth!  
Heaven forbid! so echo I;  
Every ravenous bird that flieth  
Then would at our cherries fly!

Ope' but half an inch or so,  
And behold what beves break in!  
How some curs'd old Popish crow  
Pops its long and lickerish beak in!

There "Socinians" flock unnumbered,  
And "Independents" slim and spare;  
Both, with small belief encumber'd,  
Slip in easy anywhere.

"Methodists," of birds the aptest  
Where there's picking going on,  
And that water-fowl the "Baptist,"  
All would have our fruit anon!

Every bird of every city,  
That for years, with ceaseless din,  
Hath reversed the starling's ditty,  
Singing out, "I can't get in!"

If less costly fruit won't suit them,  
Hips and haws and such-like berries,  
Curse the cormorants! stone them! shoot them!  
*Anything to save the cherries!*

W. J. L.

## TEETH AND SUPERSTITIONS.

JAMES C. DOUGLAS says, in the *Journal of Dental Science*: "The parish monthly nurse of Churcham, Gloucestershire, used invariably, after public baptism, to wash out the mouth of the infant with some of the remaining sanctified water as a safeguard against toothache."

In county Wicklow it was customary to point three smoothing irons, each three times, at the painful spot, in the name of the Trinity.

Aubrey says: "The Irish do use a wolf's fang tooth, set in silver, which they hold to be better than coral for assisting teething; while in Germany silver bells are used." From Pitsligo we have the following:—

If ye cut yir first teeth abeen,  
Ye winna dance i' yir marriage sheen.

From Germany we have the following: "When children shaled their teeth, the women used to wrap salt about them and cast them into a good fire. Cramer saith that in parts of Germany some women will bid their children to take the tooth which is fallen, or taken, out, and go into a dark corner of the house, and cast the same into it, saying: 'Mouse, here I give thee a tooth of bone, but give thou me an iron one.'"

Puritan New England was not exempt from superstitions. The first tooth cast by a child should be swallowed by the mother, to ensure a new growth of teeth.

Among the Malagasy it was customary, when a child lost one of its first teeth from the lower jaw, to throw it over the house; if from the upper, to bury it under the foundations; the belief being that a new tooth would grow in the socket if this was done. This, at one time, was also customary in England.

A variety of superstitions in connection with bones will be found in *Footsteps of the Past*, p. 33.

The physical slave has no bodily freedom; the mental slave no intellectual freedom. The chattel slave was procured for a monetary price; the owners of mental slaves purchase them with religious, political, and other falsities. Fear of hell is the religious slave-driver's whip and bloodhounds, which prevent mental slaves from seeking their intellectual and spiritual freedom.—L. A. Mallory.

## ACID DROPS.

MOODY, the evangelist, did not accept the invitation sent him by the Manhattan Liberal Club to debate Secularism and Christianity with Charles Watts or G. W. Foote. He has a far better notion of converting New York. He claims that a million souls can be saved by spending a million dollars, and several millionaires have promised to find the money if the scheme is perfected. Moody's idea is to hire hundreds of evangelists, and turn them loose on New York, so that revival meetings will go on daily in every church, public hall, and theatre in the city. By this means, it is thought, it will be possible to arouse the unconverted.

No doubt Moody is capable of spending the million dollars, but we don't think he is capable of saving the million souls. Millions of dollars have been spent already, we imagine, in connection with his revival operations; but where are the millions of converted souls in the United States? Why should a dollar convert one soul in New York when it takes so many dollars to convert half a soul in any other city?

This million-dollar scheme for converting New York will be a good thing for the hired evangelists. Twelve months hence the profit to anyone else will probably be *nil*.

Moody should really produce one of those dozens of Atheists he says he has converted. Of course, we don't doubt his word. Possibly he couldn't lie if he tried. But seeing is believing, and some of us would like to set eyes on some of those converted Atheists. One would do for a beginning.

The *Christian World* thinks that Moody is well advised in not accepting the invitation to debate with Mr. Foote or Mr. Watts. "Mr. Moody," it says, "knows his own strong points, and dialectics is not one of them."

General Booth has a new plan for raising the needful. A farmer might set aside a field and say that whatever it produces shall go into the Lord's treasury—that is, into Booth's exchequer. A cottager might say: "That hen shall be consecrated; her eggs and chickens shall be used for the kingdom." A beekeeper might select one hive, a shopkeeper one article of sale, and a labouring man some portion of his time. Even a corner of a gold mine might be set aside in the same way. Booth is not above taking the output of "a gold mine altogether." Of course not. Whoever thought he was? No doubt he would rather have a gold mine than any number of consecrated hens.

Rev. R. Gillespie, of the Irish Presbyterian Mission, Ahmedabad, says that the Salvation Army has lost the confidence of all the missions in India. He declares that the Army, instead of breaking new ground, simply draws away native Christians from the older societies. Mr. Booth Tucker alleged that there were twenty-five families regularly at work on the Bareja Farm Colony, and Mr. Gillespie says there was only one. Mr. Booth Tucker claimed 75,000 adherents at Gujerat and 10,000 enrolled soldiers. Mr. Gillespie challenges him to show as many as 100 converts there. At Pauch Mahals 3,000 soldiers were said to be on the rolls. Mr. Gillespie says that after diligent inquiry he could not find a single one. Finally, it is affirmed by Mr. Gillespie that the agents employed by the Salvation Army are often men of evil reputation.

Three lunatics have escaped from Worley Asylum. "General" Booth's "lost" and "inquiry" department ought to find them. Perhaps they have surrendered themselves by this time. Instinct ought to lead them to the proper quarter.

James Cooper, a Glasgow boot and shoe merchant in the Paisley-road, was a very pious person, and kept a ledger for money "in account with the work of the Lord." His accounts in bankruptcy show a deficiency of £4,000, and his creditors think he gave too much attention to the Lord's work.

The *Echo* says: "The Lord's Day Observance Society wish us to insert the following:—'Councillor Meade-King, a member of the Liverpool Sunday Society, has been urging the Library Committee of that city to open the public libraries on Sundays. The suggestion has not been entertained.' If one, ten, or twenty additional public-houses were opened in Liverpool on a Sunday, or if 10,000 additional bicyclists left Liverpool on a Sunday, the Observance Society would have said nothing, or, if they said anything, they would be laughed at. The Society reserves most of its condemnation for all kinds of intellectual recreation on Sundays, and the result is they are fighting a losing game."



The steamer *Tallahassa* arrived in New York in a disabled condition. To save the vessel and cargo from sinking, she was unloaded on a Sunday. The bigots arrested the foreman for violating the Sunday law. Fortunately, the magistrate was a sensible one. He remarked: "It was all nonsense to make this arrest. You might as well arrest a man for endeavoring to subdue the flames if his house is burning on Sunday. The prisoner is discharged." The bigots who prosecuted would have preferred the ship to go to the bottom, rather than save it by labor on the day they claim to monopolize.

A Northern clergyman has adopted the early Christian method of saluting his flock—that is, the female portion of it—irrespective of time or place. The younger the choir-girl, the more unctuous the kiss. On his parochial visits he slobbers over any female present, and on a recent visit an objecting new woman hauled off and dealt out such a sound-ing thwack that the old gentleman's eye went into mourning for a week.—*Sydney Bulletin*.

Mr. Price Hughes has been discoursing on "The Existence of Satan the Explanation of Evil," and the address is to be published. We shall read it to see whether we can gain a hint as to the explanation of the "evil" into which Mr. Hughes fell when he stood sponsor for that Atheist Shoe-maker story.

Bishop Moorhouse is fond of dilating upon the horrible effects of secular education in Australia. The question was last year submitted to the direct vote of the people, and by an overwhelming majority they decided to retain it. We now read that the executive of the National Scripture Education League, at a meeting held recently, presided over by the Bishop of Melbourne, unanimously agreed to abandon the idea of endeavoring to secure the introduction of Scripture lessons into the State-schools by a plebiscite of the people. Holy Joe will probably endeavor to secure his ends in some less open way.

Marie, Countess of Caithness and Duchess of Pomar, set the way in believing herself an incarnation of Mary Queen of Scots; and a few years ago it was said in a spiritist paper that there were no fewer than six incarnations of this lady living at the same time, including Mrs. Besant. One of these Marys is now being searched for by the French police. She got a wealthy old lady to believe that she, the elder one, was an incarnation of Elizabeth, who had to expiate the beheading of Mary by giving pecuniary reparation to her former victim. The reincarnated Mary claimed a nephew of the reincarnated Elizabeth as her Bothwell, and the pair made off ostensibly to Scotland. Not receiving any news from Holyrood palace, Elizabeth sagely came to the conclusion that she had been robbed, and Bothwell and Mary are both wanted.

Famine and plague in Bombay have led to 100,000 people leaving that place. Over 635,000 famine-stricken persons in India are receiving relief.

Dr. C. R. Drysdale, in a letter to the *Echo* on the subject, says: "It is this low standard of comfort which is due to erroneous theological training, which is the only real cause of such terrible famines." He also censures "that disastrous superstition of the child marriage of women."

Mr. Labouchere alleges that the orphanage of the Kilburn Sisterhood is nothing but a baby-farm, worked for profit, and falsely pretending to be philanthropic. Will the Mother Superior follow the example of the "libelled" gentleman called Brooks, over whom Mr. Labouchere so signally triumphed in the Law Courts?

A Birmingham paper publishes this:—Dr. T. de Witt Talmage, America's pulpit Barnum, will shortly marry Miss Mangam, the daughter of a New York millionaire. Of course every man, even Dr. Talmage, is entitled to take unto himself a wife, though he may be within five years of the allotted span of life, and have previously adventured forth twice on the troubled matrimonial sea. But in an age which has already suffered tortures from the "fifteen" puzzle and "pigs in clover," the Doctor ought to have looked elsewhere for his bride, if he did not wish to bring madness to anyone who attempts to solve his matrimonial relations. We are induced to these remarks by the fact that Mr. Mangam's brother recently married Dr. Talmage's daughter. Think of the complications that will be brought into existence when the knot is tied between Dr. Talmage and Miss Mangam. By this union Mr. Mangam's brother becomes the son-in-law of his own niece, Mr. Mangam becomes the grandfather of his own brother, while Mrs. Talmage becomes stepmother to her aunt and uncle, and possibly something or other to her own father. But we will let the horrors stop. Sufficient for the day are the matrimonial evils thereof.

It is alleged that in a Dundee school the other day the question was put: "Who was born on Christmas Day?" One child answered, "The Queen," and another risked the information that it was "Santa Claus."

Writing regarding the Confessional in the Church of England, Dr. Guinness Rogers, in the *Independent*, says: "It was my happiness to minister for years in a town where in the leases was a clause forbidding the erection of 'a Dissenting chapel, a slaughter-house, or other nuisance.'"

Some ingenious person has made an anagram on the word "Congregationalist," the letters being used to bring out "a scant religion." The utterances of Mr. Snell, and other favorites of the *Christian World*, seem to warrant the soft impeachment.

Christians who boast of hospitals should not only be reminded of the facts concerning pre-Christian hospitals (to be found in the *Secular Almanack*), but also that, until just a century ago, when William Tuke, a Quaker, opened a Retreat for lunatics at York, the entire Christian world treated the insane like wild beasts, with chains, straight waistcoats, and other brutality, arising from the belief that they were possessed by devils—a belief countenanced by the New Testament.

While the Christians thus treated the insane as demoniacs, the Moslems regarded them with reverence as inspired; and when you look into it you may discover that insanity and inspiration are very closely akin. Indeed, Dr. Maudesly refers to the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea as exhibiting signs of mental aberration.

Dr. Grant, the missionary among the Nestorians of Asia Minor, held that they were the lost ten tribes of Israel. Others have said these tribes are now in Afghanistan; others, in Malabar. Some hold they went to China; others, that they were the progenitors of the North American Indians; while a sect with papers of their own hold that the English are the descendants of these mysterious tribes. The Bible has set up many vagaries, but this which was started by Richard Brothers early in the century is about as absurd as any to be found in the course of history.

The *Catholic Gazette* says that during the past fifteen months nearly 15,000 converts have been received into the Church. There have been upwards of 2,000 in the diocese of Westminster alone. These last will include the workhouse people, whose conversion by an extra half-holiday we recently mentioned. The *Gazette* gives no account of the lapses and losses to the Church during the same period.

The French Chamber now has a Mohammedan deputy in the person of Dr. Grenier, who is member for Pontarlier, and will champion Algerian interests in the Chamber. He calls himself "a prophet of God," by which he explains that he means a reformer with a sense of a mission. He says: "The Koran is an admirable book; but its meaning is hidden, wrapped up in metaphors and parables. Hence, if I propose to the people of France to adopt the Mohammedan belief, it is a reformed belief, freed from superstition, without trace of fanaticism, walking hand-in-hand with science to the conquest of mankind. I consider Jesus and Mohammed are one and the same prophet. Mohammed is but a reincarnation of the Son of Man, of the Messiah." Islam-cum-Theosophy may yet be a fashionable fad in Paris.

Professor Elliot Coues, who is somewhat given to religious vagaries, has lately emerged from the toils of Theosophy, and celebrates his emancipation by the following remarks in the *Chicago Tribune*: "My compliments to the Theosophists of North America, or as many as can be found, and I want to give them some sound, wholesome advice. First, those who wish it can remain fools; second, let them get unfooled if they can; and, third, turn fakirs if they must. I have investigated the question of Theosophy, in both its psychological and its ethical aspects, and the conclusion I have reached is that it is a vile, wicked humbug."

The Rev. W. Carlile, of the Church Army, not content with his own sensational sermon on "Buried in a Bog," with limelight illustrations and a brass band, went to the performance of *The Pilgrim's Progress* at the Olympic, and rose to make his public protest against the rival religious entertainment. He has also written to the *Examiner* of Plays to condemn it as an indecent travesty of a sacred topic. Other men of God, however, declare that the performance is truly edifying, and the protest of the Church Army man of God is likely to prove a good advertisement.

The Rev. W. Carlile apparently does not see that the religious drama is the natural sequence of his own sensational sermons, which may be compared to a stimulant, of which the more one drinks the more he desires. Sipping



the holy spirit is often the prelude to other forms of intoxication. All medical men have noticed how religious hysteria runs into other forms of aberration.

Brann, referring to the number of religious dramas, such as *Mary Magdalene* and *Joseph of Canaan*, now announced in America, says: "The phenomenal success of Wilson Barrett's religio-libidinous drama, *The Sign of the Cross*, seems destined to have a far-reaching effect. It may even result in a complete transposition of the Church and Stage, assigning to the first the amusement of the worldly, and consecrating the latter to divine worship."

Brann observes: "Having begun to explore the Bible for startling plots that will permit of all kinds of 'specialties,' where will the enterprising playwrights pause? Are we foredoomed to have 'The Creation' in six acts, with Kryle Bellew speaking the Cosmos into existence, making man of mud and evolving Mrs. Potter from a spare-rib of our Edenic ancestor? Will E. Rice favor us with a realistic presentation of 'The Judgment Day'—with epilogue by Ingersoll? Just think what a howling 'hit' the tank-show manager could make with 'The Deluge'—the dead *in puris naturalibus*, à la Gustave Dore! 'Adam and Eve' would afford living-picture possibilities not yet dreamed of by the most progressive managers; 'David and Bath-Sheba,' with Fanny Davenport in the bath-tub act, would doubtless do much to popularize Biblical research; while 'Judah and Tamar' contains dramatic climaxes calculated to convince even an Agnostic that religion is a good thing, and induce him to push it along."

The Rev. John Whitehead, pastor of the New Jerusalem Church, of Alleghany, Pa., recently attacked the question of woman's rights in a sermon on "A Woman Shall not Put on the Garments of a Man." He denounced bloomers, and spoke of the Scriptural grounds against woman suffrage. His text was taken from Deuteronomy xxii. 5, which says: "There shall not be the garment of a man upon a woman, and a man shall not wear the garment of a woman, for an abomination to Jehovah, thy God, is everyone doing these things."

This text doubtless refers to a custom of exchanging garments which took place at certain heathen festivals, a remnant of which may be perhaps found in the holiday exchange of headgear by lads and lasses. The New Woman is little likely to heed the admonitions of the Old Man on her rational garments. Curiously enough, it has been the priests with their petticoats who have set the example of wearing feminine attire—an example which has spread little outside of the third sex.

The Vicar of Christ Church, Doncaster, is very proud of the petticoats the ladies of his parish have given him to wear. In his *Parish Magazine* he says: "Our new black high mass vestments form a very nice addition to our set of vestments. They are made of rich black silk, the chasuble, tunicle, and dalmatic being adorned with handsome white and gold brocades; the two latter vestments having rich gold and black cord and tassels." Such an expert in "man millinery" should be eligible as writer of the woman's columns in the papers.

The *Lagos Weekly Record* says that the natives who are Moslems are less superstitious than those who are Christians. "And in respect to polygamy, they all practise it—the Moslems openly, the Christians covertly. If polygamy is a sin, then the Moslems commit one sin openly, while the Christians, by practising a deception, commit two."

Mr. J. Spencer Curwen, discussing before the Tonic Sol-fa Association the decline of congregational singing in churches, said that men think so much of modes, love so much sensuous elegance, richness of detail, and harmony of effect, that the conduct of worship is becoming a sort of depraved fine art.

Miss Mac Kelly, a very estimable lady of Duluth, Minn., fell dead on the evening of the 10th ult., while singing "He giveth His Beloved Sleep," at a Catholic fair. Colonel Ingersoll is only prodded with severe neuralgic pains for his blasphemy; while those engaged in adulation of the Supreme are killed outright. Tickling the ear of Omnipotence with praise does not seem to meet with approbation in heavenly circles.—*Progressive Thinker*.

The Nepaulese believe that during the *Saon* (a period commencing in July and ending in the first part of August) their deity leaves the upper world and lives underground for a month. While he is in darkness they must not be merry, so they go into mourning. They will neither cut their hair and nails nor shave. They live on vegetable food. No sacrifices may be offered, nor any marriages be celebrated, as the deity cannot bestow his blessing. New friendships may not be made, and musical instruments

must not be touched, till the god comes back to live among his people.

There were registered in England and Wales in 1895, according to *Whitaker's Almanack*, 276 religious sects and organizations. Among them were organizations bearing the following extraordinary names:—Army of the Lord, Baptized Believers, Believers in Joanna Southcott, Benevolent Methodists, Bunyan Baptists, Eclectics, Children of God, Christians owning no name but Lord Jesus, Hosanna Army, Loving Brethren, Particular Baptists, Peculiar People, Ranters, Recreative Religionists, Strict Baptists, Theistic Church, Universal Christians, Worshipers of God, etc.

It is a singular fact that of all classes of the community sky-pilots are the most bellicose. Within the last half century this country has been engaged in probably thirty wars—wars of aggression and conquest in India, Burmah, China, Japan, South Africa, etc. But in no instance can we remember that the parsons, as representing the Christian Church, have made any united or effective protest against any of them. On the contrary, speaking generally, they have, as a body, either been silent, or they have actively and strenuously, on one pretext or another, promoted and vindicated war.

The alleged birthday of the "Prince of Peace" has been celebrated by the adoption of new devices of manslaughter by the Governments of Europe. The new French Canet gun and the rival field weapon possessed by the Germans promise to make the battlefields of the future Gehennas, as compared with the most sanguinary fights of the past.

"Ian Maclaren," in the intervals of a lecturing tour in the United States, has found time to preach. Recently he officiated at a New York Presbyterian bethel. An enormous crowd gathered before the opening of the doors, and, after a portion of this crowd had entered, many ladies fainted.

Colonel Ingersoll would understand that people should faint after a Presbyterian sermon; but even Colonel "Bob" would have to worry over a reason for anyone fainting before.

The *Sydney Bulletin* says: "The Victoria Presbyterian General Assembly protests against Sunday excursion trains, 'as they could now run on the Saturday half-holiday.' As some of the leading lights of the kirk in Melbourne fought tooth-and-nail against the half-holiday legislation, this suggestion strikes the average citizen as stupendously cool."

In a rural parish in the Mearns, the other week, says the *Edinburgh Dispatch*, an Aberdeen divine occupied the pulpit. Only one person attended service, and the minister apologized for the length of his discourse. His audience signified his approval of his preaching, and the minister continued. Guess his consternation when he discovered his audience consisted of his driver, who had been engaged by the hour! The preacher's eyesight was none of the best.

"Prohibited in Canada" is printed on the top of our New York contemporary, the *Truthseeker*. That journal is principally circulated through the mail, and the late Postmaster-General of Canada, being a good bigoted Christian, took it into his head to confiscate all copies sent into the Dominion. There is now a new Postmaster-General, and we hope to hear that he has altered this disgraceful state of things. People don't pay the head of the Post Office to tell them what they shall read. His business is to carry and deliver, and not to cry "Stand and deliver!" to decent editors.

Professor G. T. Purves, of Princeton Theological Seminary, offers yet another reconciliation of the stories of the birth of the Christian God as related by Matthew and Luke. Matthew, says he, in the *Biblical World*, sought to establish the legal heirship of Jesus to the throne of David. He says: "The events of the infancy also, as given by Matthew—the visit of the Magi, the flight into Egypt, the slaughter of the children, the final settlement in Nazareth—are all introduced for the purpose of exhibiting in them the fulfilments of prophecy pertaining to Messiah. His object was thus not to give a complete history of the birth of Jesus, but to bring out the cogent proofs which it provided of the royal Messianic dignity of Joseph's and Mary's child." Free-thinkers have often pointed this out, and noticed, too, that Matthew manipulates his facts and prophecies to suit his purpose.

Luke's object, according to Professor Purves, was different. He gave the facts as he heard them from the family circle in which the events occurred. Unfortunately, Luke omitted to state which of "the family circle" it was who supplied him with information. There are obvious difficulties in supposing it to have been either Mary or Joseph.



### Mr. Foote's Engagements

Sunday, January 10, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road, at 7.30, subject, "The Throning of Archbishop Temple."

January 24, Glasgow; 31, Liverpool.

February 7, Manchester.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—January 10, Sheffield; 17, Manchester; 24, Athenæum, London; 31, Athenæum, London. February 7, Athenæum, London; 14, Leicester; 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.

F. N.—Thanks. Some further particulars of "The Female Infidel" were given in the *Secular Almanack* for 1895.

R. P. BALMORE.—(1) William Cobbett's *History of the Protestant Reformation* is racy reading, and his exposure of the Protestant leaders is often effective. But he is absurdly partial to the Catholics, which is the reason why they print and circulate his book on their own account. Of course Cobbett is not an "authority." He was simply a tremendous polemist, with a wonderful command of pure and vigorous English. (2) Mr. Foote is trying to gain leisure for completing *Crimes of Christianity* with Mr. Wheeler. His official duties sadly interfere with his literary work. (3) We note your father's promise in regard to a possible Secular Sunday School.

A. B. MOSS.—We reciprocate your good wishes for the new year.

W. W. ROBERTS.—Thanks for your "best wishes for 1897." Order handed to Mr. Forder.

HENRY R. CLIFTON, Finsbury Park Branch, has changed his address to 25a Princess May-road, Stoke Newington, N.

BABYLON.—We really cannot write a dissertation on Prophecy in this column. The book of Daniel, at any rate, was written long after the time of the events predicted in it. See Canon Driver's *Introduction*. You would find our *Bible Handbook* useful. It contains a large section on "Unfulfilled Prophecies."

FLORENCE BRADSHAW.—Very sorry, but it is too late to be of any value now.

R. HOWARTH.—We quite understand your sadness at the news of Putnam's death; it is indeed a grievous loss; but your suggestion that his memory should be honoured by a statue is rather one for the American Liberals than for the English Freethinkers. Personally, we are against erecting statues until the persons thus commemorated have been dead at least a quarter of a century. We thank you for your good wishes for the editor and Mr. Watts.

C. E. SMITH, sending a batch of useful "bits," desires to express his high appreciation of Mr. G. L. Mackenzie's witty verses. "He is an exceedingly clever phrase-maker, and a humorist of no common ability."

A. KOHN.—Goldziher's *Mythology Among the Hebrews* is translated into English. There is a similar work in German—*Mythologie der Alten Hebräer*, by Dr. J. Bergel.

HIRAEETHOG.—Received, and under consideration.

A. W. STAVERS.—Thanks for new year's good wishes.

ANONYMOUS correspondents are warned that their letters cannot be attended to. Names and addresses are necessary, not always for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.

J. ROBERTS, 199 Saxony-road, Liverpool, would be glad to hear from any Welsh Freethinkers who are interested in the mental emancipation of their fellow countrymen. Catholics and Protestants are very active at present in the Principality, and something should be done to counteract the efforts of both parties.

C. B. SNELLING.—Pleased to hear from you. Have passed on your letter to Miss Vance.

J. G. BARTRAM (Newcastle) points out that Alderman Stephenson has not built a library for Heaton, but only offered to do so on condition of its being shut on Sunday. He has built or paid for a branch library at Elswick, on the objectionable conditions, and thus seeks dictation to the east and west end of the city, comprising the bulk of the population. The Central Library is open every Sunday from 2 to 9 p.m.

G. ROBERTS, Beaumont-road, is the new secretary of the Plymouth Branch, in succession to H. J. Barter.

W. BENFIELD.—Several half-crown volumes of Schopenhauer, translated by Mr. Bailey Saunders, are published by Sonnenschein & Co. All of them are well worth reading.

H. J. BARTER.—Best wishes for you and yours.

COTTONOPOLIS.—Mr. Foote and Mr. Watts could both make money by a lecture tour in America, if it were managed by a business man over there. Their recent tour was very much mismanaged, and they only went through with it for the sake of the Liberal movement. As a matter of fact, their receipts in America just covered their expenses while there, and the subscription raised here just covered the cost of the two Atlantic voyages; so that they lost all they would have earned during ten weeks in England, and Mr. Foote had to meet extra expenses on the *Freethinker* during that time. However, Colonel Ingersoll is coming over; and all's well that ends well.

W. TODD.—We note your "deep regret" at the news of S. P. Putnam's death, and that you thought his discourses at Liverpool "eloquent and impressive."

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Cosmo—The Twentieth Century—Blue Grass Blade—Dominion Review—Secular Thought—Glasgow Mail—New York Public Opinion—Firebrand—Open Court—Lindsey and Lincolnshire Star—Two Worlds—Progressive Thinker—The Torch of Reason—Literary Guide—Glasgow Evening News—Echo—Truthseeker—Boston Investigator—New York Times—Freidenker—Der Arme Teufel—Positivist Review.

THE National Secular Society's new office is at No. 377 Strand, London, where all letters should be addressed to Miss Vance.

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.

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

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.

SOME well-meaning persons, and some otherwise, are loudly asserting that the National Secular Society ought not to have a President; in fact, that it would be much better without one than with one.

I am aware that there is not time at our brief Annual Conference to discuss this point thoroughly. I therefore open the columns of the *Freethinker* to a discussion of it by correspondence. The only condition I make is that the letters shall be as brief as possible and strictly to the point, and that personality shall be scrupulously avoided.

I shall not take part in the discussion myself. But I may say that I shall not be distressed if the general view is that the presidency should be abolished. I fill an office which I did not seek. It entails upon me much work, more worry, and heavy responsibilities. Those who imagine that I profit by it are mistaken. I am sure that I should gain financially, as well as in peace of mind, by simply attending to my own business.

Many of my readers will understand me when I say that I decline to fill this journal with replies to my critics. It would be very lively reading if I were to hit out all round, but the movement could hardly gain by such a performance, however it might afford me a personal gratification. I was present at the last Conference, and I daresay I shall be present at the next.

Besides, I want all the energy and alertness of mind I may possess to push on with my scheme of an Incorporated Society, through which money may be given and willed for Secular purposes. During the last few days I have conversed with one gentleman from the provinces who is anxious to leave several thousand pounds to our party, and I hope my scheme will meet with the legal approval of his solicitor.

(G. W. FOOTE.)

### SUGAR PLUMS.

THERE was another crowded audience at the Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, on Sunday evening, when Mr. Foote lectured on "The Doom of the Gods." Mr. C. Cohen occupied the chair, and made a neat introductory speech. Mr. Foote's lecture was freely punctuated with laughter and applause. Subsequently he made a statement with respect to the Freethought movement in general, and the National Secular Society in particular. His remarks on his own position as President were warmly cheered. The substance of them appears in another place.

Several new members have been enrolled in the National Secular Society in connection with these Athenæum Hall lectures. One of these new members paid Miss Vance £5 as his annual subscription. This gentleman has also offered to render Mr. Foote handsome assistance for another course



of lectures at St. James's Hall—which may be arranged next month.

It was Mr. Foote's intention to give a couple of semi-literary lectures at the Athenæum Hall on Sundays, January 10 and 17, after which Mr. Watts will occupy the platform. But, in view of a possible course of lectures at St. James's Hall, this intention is abandoned. The subject for this evening (January 10) will be "The Throning of Archbishop Temple." The new Archbishop's progress from the old *Essays and Reviews* days to his present elevation is a good subject for lively treatment.

There was an unfortunate omission in Mr. Foote's final letter from America, which appeared in our last issue. Mr. Watts and Mr. Foote left New York in a blizzard that prevented their friends from seeing them off. After the boat started, however, they went down to their cabin, and found a parcel placed there for them. It had been sent down in the snowstorm by Colonel Ingersoll, perhaps through Mr. Farrell. At any rate, it had been delivered to the steward. It contained two magnificent portraits of Ingersoll, and two copies of the handsomely-printed *Prose Poems and Selections*. One portrait bore the inscription, "To G. W. Foote, from his friend, R. G. Ingersoll." There was a similar inscription on the one intended for Mr. Watts. Mr. Foote is having his presentation portrait of Ingersoll suitably framed, and will have it on view at the London Freethinkers' Annual Dinner on Monday evening (Jan. 11)—which happens to be Mr. Foote's forty-seventh birthday.

Another article on view at the Dinner will be the handsome lace handkerchief that was presented to Mr. Foote at the Chicago Congress. It was worked by Mrs. Macdonald, the mother of the two Macdonalds, Eugene and George, who conduct the New York *Truthseeker*. She gave it as her contribution to the funds of the Congress; and the ladies, led by Mrs. Johnson, bought it by subscription, and presented it through President Putnam to the President of the National Secular Society of Great Britain. Mr. Foote handed it over to Mrs. Foote, who has had it mounted for hanging on a wall in their residence.

This Annual Dinner takes place at the Holborn Restaurant. The tickets are four shillings each. They can be obtained from Miss Vance, at the N.S.S. office, 377 Strand; from Mr. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street; and at the Athenæum Hall on the previous evening—at the very latest. Mr. Foote will preside, and will be supported by Mr. C. Watts, Mr. J. M. Wheeler, Mr. R. Forder, and other well-known Secularists.

Mr. Charles Watts faces an English audience to-day (January 10) as a lecturer for the first time since his return from America. He speaks in the Hall of Science, Sheffield, morning, afternoon, and evening. The evening subject is a new one—"Sin and Secular Salvation." The morning subject is both new and old—"Colonel Ingersoll and Freethought in America."

Mr. C. Cohen is arranging a lecture tour in the West of England, and will be pleased to hear from friends in the neighborhoods of Bristol, Cardiff, Swansea, and Plymouth who would assist in organizing week-night meetings under Mr. Foote's Lecture Scheme. Mr. Cohen has fixed the following dates:—Bristol, February 21; Cardiff, March 7. Plymouth and Swansea will probably take February 28 and March 14.

The South Shields Branch passed a vote of condolence and sympathy with the American Freethinkers and relatives of the late S. P. Putnam, whose untimely death was announced at the last meeting of the Branch.

The *Weekly Times and Echo* has been celebrating its jubilee. We congratulate our contemporary upon its fifty years of devotion to "Progress and the People." Mr. G. J. Holyoake, in a letter on the subject, gives three illustrations of improvements during the half century:—(1) Making knowledge free; (2) increasing the number of voters; (3) the extension of school instruction. In helping on all these measures Freethinkers have been foremost, while to them it is entirely due that the taxes on knowledge were swept away.

*Public Opinion*, of New York, has in its number for December 24 a very fair review of Mr. Holyoake's latest book on Secularism. It says: "We are impressed with the dignity of the writing. There is never the slightest approach to the harsh or revolting. The book is broad in the true sense."

The supplement to the *Literary Guide* for January is a summary of the *Autobiography* of John Stuart Mill, by Dr. Bithell. It is well done, and should excite interest in the leading exponent of Utilitarianism after Bentham. The

contents of the *Guide* itself are full of interest. It is an excellent twopennyworth.

Occasions continually arise when a seasonable letter in the local press may be of service to Freethought. Thus Mr. J. Cherry makes an utterance by the Rev. T. G. Thomas on Foreign Missions the occasion of a capital letter on the subject in the *Lindsey Star*.

The *Secular Almanack* for 1897 is still on sale at Mr. Forder's. All the copies left should be cleared out promptly by the members and friends of the National Secular Society, in whose interest it is edited and published. Besides a fine calendar, giving the birth and death dates of hundreds of Freethought worthies, there are special articles by Mr. Foote, who writes on "Hamlet's Last Words"; by Mr. Wheeler, whose facts on "Hospitals Not of Christian Origin" are of great value; by Mr. Charles Watts, who writes on "The Glory of Unbelief"; and by Mr. W. Heaford on "Worship and Imagination." There is also an excellent satirical poem by G. L. Mackenzie. The *Almanack* is well got up, and should be at every Freethinker's hand for frequent consultation, containing as it does a full list of Freethought organisations in this country and in other parts of the world.

Among the many notable Liberals whom Mr. Foote met at Chicago was Mr. H. L. Green, proprietor and editor of the *Freethought Magazine*, which is one of our most welcome exchanges. Mr. Green has conducted this valuable magazine with much ability for several years, and we hope it has by this time a good paying circulation.

The January number of the *Freethought Magazine* opens with a portrait of the Rev. Jenkin Lloyd Jones, an eloquent and effective speaker, who has got even beyond Unitarianism, and is now secretary of the Liberal Religious Congress. Some of the articles which follow are interesting and important. Mr. Green devotes some pages to the Chicago Liberal Congress. "Everybody," he says, "was pleased to see and listen to those noted English Freethinkers, Messrs. Foote and Watts. Mr. Watts, of course, was no stranger to the Liberals of America, as he has heretofore spent a number of years in this country, and his eloquent and impressive voice has been heard in all the leading towns of the United States and Canada. But G. W. Foote, the editor of the London *Freethinker*, was mainly known here through his popular journal, that ought to be subscribed for by every Freethinker in this country, as we know of no abler advocate of Secularism published. We shall publish, in the near future, a fine likeness of Brother Foote as a frontispiece to this magazine."

The January number of *Cosme*, the monthly organ of a Socialist teetotal colony at Cosme, Paraguay, reaches us from its office, 220 Goswell-road, E.C. The account of the colony is interesting, but in view of the break-up of a similar one at Topalobampo, Mexico, people should be very cautious before selling up to settle in Paraguay.

A William Morris Labor Church has been erected and opened at Leek. If there is anything in the name, the teachings in this church should be devoid of all the cant of religion.

The *English Mechanic* is always full of a variety of up-to-date information, and, as an instance, the article in the January number, illustrating how "Human Blood Foretells Disease," opens up the desirable possibility that the doctors of the future will be the preventers, rather than the healers of disease. Some correspondents of the *E. M.* write about spiritual existences as if they understood all about them; but the paper confines itself to fact, and does good secular work.

By some accident or other, Mr. Forder's name, as publisher of the *Freethinker*, got omitted from our "Correspondents" column during the editor's absence in America. It must have been dropped out in the make-up on some occasion, and forgotten to be restored. It is now in its old place again. Of course we much regret the accident, but these things will happen in this fallible world.

Nothing appears to be really durable, eternal, and worthy of the name of a principle save matter only. Matter, as the Absolute, includes within itself all forms and dimensions. But the infinity of forms under which matter appears is not accepted by her from another, nor, as it were, only in outward appearance; but she brings them forth from herself, and bears them from her own womb. Where we say there is death, there is only the outgoing towards new life, a loosing of one union which is the binding into a new.—*Giordano Bruno*.



## FATE AND THE ANCIENTS.

(Concluded from page 11.)

THE celebrated Chrysippus (concerning whom it was said that, "if Chrysippus had not been, the Porch [the Stoics] had never been") adopted a medium course between the extreme teaching of Zeno and the complete non-fatalism of Epicurus. He did not admit *absolute* necessity, and yet maintained that nothing happened without antecedent causes. We read that he distinguished two sorts of causes, thus seeking to escape necessity while he retained a *fatum*. Cicero says that this philosopher entangled himself so much that, whether he would or not, he confirmed the absolute necessity of fate. Aulus Gellius writes of him:—

"Chrysippus, the prince of the Stoic philosophers, defines fate almost after this manner: 'Fate is a certain eternal and unchangeable series and chain of things, winding and turning itself in perpetual revolutions of successions, of which it is composed and linked together.....'"

The philosophers of the other sects made the following objections to this definition:—

"If Chrysippus thinks that all things are moved and regulated by fate in such a manner that its influence and course can by no means be turned off nor avoided, then the very sins and evil actions of men are not to be charged upon nor ascribed to their will, but to a certain necessity, which is unavoidable and comes from fate; such a necessity as governs and rules everything, and by which whatever is to come *must absolutely happen*; whence it follows that the laws are unjust which subject the guilty to punishment, if men do not willingly commit evil actions, but are forced to do so by fate."

To which Chrysippus replied:—

"That though it be true that all things are fatally connected and linked together by a Principal Cause, yet our minds are subject to fate in such a manner as is proper to their nature and qualities; for if at first they have been well and usefully framed by nature, that whole energy of fate passes through them in a more easy and gentle manner. But if they are unpolished, unlearned, and rude, and unprovided with those helps which the liberal arts procure, though the influence they suffer from fate were very small, or none at all, yet by their own unskilfulness, and by the impetuosity of their will, they would run into continual crimes and errors. And that this happens so is the effect of that natural and necessary connection of things which are called *fate*."

Such is the verbose explanation of his doctrine given by Chrysippus.

"It is easy to observe," remarks a learned commentator, "that this philosopher could not extricate himself out of the labyrinth in which he was engaged, and that his distinction of external causes which necessitated, and those which did not necessitate, was of no use to him. He only winds and turns himself about; and at last he proves to be exactly where they are who submit everything to the unavoidable necessity of destiny."

Chrysippus, we read, confounded Zeus with the fatal necessity—the unalterable truth of future events. This philosopher has been much attacked by Plutarch, who, in his *Contradictions of the Stoics*, alleges that Chrysippus accuses God of being the author of evil. We can scarcely see how the clear-headed Tarsian could have arrived at any other conclusion. This remarkable man died 207 B.C. Epicurus, the founder of the sect bearing his name, denied this *εἰμαρμένη* altogether. Plutarch observed, wittily enough, of this philosopher that he took away Providence in order that he might leave the Deity in repose.

Posidonius, in a work, *Of the Nature of the Gods*, observes that Epicurus believed in no gods at all, and that all he had said concerning them (Epicurus had written a book on Sanctity) was done only from a desire to avoid unpopularity.

Cicero, in his remarks on Epicurus, writes:—

"I do not think it possible for anyone to give greater support to the arguments of fate and necessity and universal compulsion, or more completely to deprive the soul of all freedom of volition, than Epicurus has done, when he confesses that he could never otherwise have resisted fate if he had not taken refuge in these imaginary declinations."

(Epicurus, in order to escape necessity, had originated the theory of a *fortuitous* concurrence of atoms.) A letter of this

great man's has been preserved, and inserted by his biographer, Diogenes Laertius, in his life of the philosopher. Written to one Menæceus, it runs as follows:—

"It would be better to follow the fables about the gods than to be a slave to the 'fate' of the natural philosopher; for the fables which are told give us a sketch, as if we could avert the wrath of God by paying him honor; but the other presents us with necessity which is inexorable."

Marcus Tullius himself has written a masterly treatise on the subject of fate.

"Cicero," says Francis Barham, in his preface, "regards fate or destiny as the decree of God, the dictum of Providence. But he supposes that it is essentially conditional, and that it goes hand-in-hand with free-will, since free-will is one condition of fate itself. While on one side he defends the decrees of Deity, on the other he defends the liberty of man in a qualified sense, and rescues his readers at once from impiety and fatalism." What an example of *ingens torrens verborum*! But "we must," says Cicero, "maintain that doctrine which Chrysippus has proved—namely, that every proposition is either true or false." Then, if fate be *true*, why limit its universal application? If *false*, why speak of it as the "dictum of Providence"? "I ask," demands Tully, "—and this principle is capable of extensive application—if there were absolutely no such name, no such nature, and no such influence as that of fate, and if, as a general rule, the majority of events, or every event, happened at random and by chance, would they happen otherwise than they do? Why, then, should we always resort to fate, when, without any such principle, the cause of every event may be fairly referred to nature or to fortune?"

Speaking of the Stoics, our author remarks:—

"If it be admitted that nothing can happen without some anterior cause, what is gained by that if this cause is not said to be linked to an infinite series of causes?"

Where, then, is the "First Cause"?

Cicero admits that he is of the same opinion as Diodorus, the Megarean, who said that what happens alone is possible, and that all which does not happen is impossible.

Carneades, the academic and anti-fatalist, demanded to know what the Deity could have beheld (*par exemple*) to make him say that Marcellus, who was thrice consul, would perish in the sea? "The event was indeed *true* from all eternity, but it had no efficient *cause*."

Tully complains of the Stoics (believers in divination) — "which is of no use to us whatever to warn us to be more prudent, if all things happen by destiny."

Come we now to the poet and philosopher, Seneca, of whom St. Augustine observes: "This illustrious senator worshipped what he reprobated, acted what he disliked, and adored what he condemned." Of fate Seneca wrote:—

"It is an irrevocable and invincible and an unchangeable decree; a necessity of all things and actions, according to eternal appointment.....He knows little of God that imagines it may be controlled. There is no changing of the purpose even of a wise man, for he sees beforehand what will be the best for the future. How much more unchangeable, then, is the Almighty, to whom all futurity is always present?"

"Then, why offer up prayers?" was the question thereupon asked of the Spanish sage. To which the artful Seneca made reply:—

"That there are some things which Providence has left so far in suspense that they seem to be (in a manner) conditional; in such sort that even appearing evils may, upon our prayers and supplications, be turned into goods."

"But," naturally objected his opponents, "a thing is either to be or *not* to be; what, then, can prayer effect?" To this Seneca answered:—

"That the proposition is false, for want of the middle exception betwixt the one and the other. A thing will be (say I) if any prayers interpose in the case. But, then, do they object on the other side that this very thing also is necessary, for it is likewise determined by fate whether we shall pray or not? What if I should now grant you that there is a fate also even in our very prayers; a determination that we shall pray; and that, therefore, we shall pray?"

Thus, after some trumpery evasions, we are brought back to the starting point—the immutability of destiny, the helplessness of human endeavor.



Fate decrees from eternity that one man shall be good and another bad; but the latter, poor devil, is to be punished in the "infernal regions" for what surely is not his own fault, while the lucky one spends infinity in Elysium! The old gods, despite their many vices and immoralities, were not wholly bad. They did not decree mundane wretchedness; they were not responsible for human crimes and human misery. All sin and evil things came from an independent cause, a fatal necessity. What is to be said of an all-powerful Deity who suffers wickedness, being able to prevent it? The ancients would have expelled such a one from their pantheon with deserving scorn.

FLORENCE BRADSHAW.

### THE BEATITUDES.

• (See Luke vi. 20-23.)

#### NEW VERSION.

TAKE comfort, ye down-trodden poor, though wretched is your lot;

You'll be all right when you have kicked the bucket.  
Don't take the slightest notice of Reformers' ranting rot,  
But tell them, when you hear them spout, to "chuck it."

The root of evil's L.S.D.—so blessed be ye poor,  
Whose pockets of that article are minus;  
To Jahveh's mansion, when you're dead and buried, you  
will soar,  
And dwell in bliss with His Almighty Highness.

And blessed are the hungry, who, through want of grub,  
are killed;  
So do not, if you're starving in a slum, ax  
To be supplied with provender; for you will all be filled  
When decomposed, and destitute of stomachs.

And blessed are all ye who bitter tears on earth do shed;  
You won't have any cause to weep hereafter:  
When just about as much as door-nails all of you are dead,  
In heaven you'll shake your sides with laughter.

Thrice blest are ye "Salvationists," who big drums loudly  
bang,  
Who are reviled, and voted "off your crumpets";  
As soon as you have shuffled off the mortal coil, you'll gang  
Aloft, and play on golden harps and trumpets!

ESS JAY BEE.

### FREETHOUGHT IN DENMARK.

I THINK it is a pity Denmark is not a big country. If it were, it might take the lead in the progress of the world, and it would set it a good example. I think, too, it is a pity that there is no Freethought advocacy there. A Freethought journal in Copenhagen, conducted by competent men, might do well. There are no Secularist orators; but nearly all Christian leaders seem to gradually become sceptics, more or less. There has recently been an awful stir in the press. The little Denmark has trembled to her very foundations concerning religion. The professors of theology at the University have made an attack upon the unerrancy of the Bible, and one single good old man of God, Wilhelm Beck, the shepherd of the sheep of the "Inner Mission," has dared to, as he says, "for conscience sake," defend his God and His book. A former heretical minister, Henning Jensen, has, after the fierce cannonade has calmed down, written an article, which goes in a neutral strain, reviewing the situation after the battle. He says he has a kind of sympathy for Wilhelm Beck—"the same kind of pity that we always have for the last man in the trench." But what will it be when the students, who are now being taught by those erratic Doctors of Divinity, as you would call them in your British tongue, in later years go out among the people and disseminate this teaching among them?

There have lately been erected all over the country several "Inner Mission" High schools; but I do not regret this. Spiritual life, of whatever kind, is better than absolute apathy; and the Inner Mission, or Pietists, form an almost inevitable link in the mental evolution; the course it, as a rule, takes being from apathy to pietyism, then to Grundtvigianism, and thence into Scepticism; and thus the more Pietists, the speedier will be the evolutionary process.

J. K. MAAGAARD.

Abuse of free speech is a much less evil than the denial of free speech.—C. L. James.

The part which God takes in any matter is greater in proportion to the weakness of man.—Renan.

### Growth Essential to Life.

If the mind is artistic, it must not sit down in hopeless awe before the monuments of the great masters, as if heights so lofty could have no heaven beyond them. Still less must it tremble before the conventionalism of one age, when its mission may be to form the whole life of the age succeeding. No amount of erudition or mechanical skill or critical power can absolve the mind from the necessity of creating, if it would grow. The first condition of mental development is that the mind should be creative rather than acquisitive; or, as it has been well said, that intellectual food should go to make up mental muscle, and not mental fat. A mind that would grow must let no ideas become permanent except such as lead to action. Towards all others it must maintain an attitude of absolute receptivity; admitting all, being modified by all, but permanently biassed by none. To become crystallized, fixed in opinion and mode of thought, is to lose the great characteristic of life. Propriety is the crystallization of a race. And if we consider that a race, in proportion as it is plastic and capable of change, may be regarded as young and vigorous, while a race which is fixed, persistent in form, unable to change, is as surely effete, worn out, in peril of extinction, we shall see the immense importance to a nation of checking its conventionalities. The positive condition is that the mind should act rather than assimilate, that its attitude should be one of creation rather than of acquisition.—William Kingdon Clifford.

### Origin of Worship.

Among primitive peoples life in the other world is conceived as identical in nature with life in this world. Hence, as the living chief was supplied with food and drink, oblations are taken to his burial-place and libation poured out. As animals were killed for him while he lived, animals are sacrificed on his grave when he is dead. If he had been a great king, with a large retinue, the frequent slaughter of many beasts to maintain his court is paralleled by the hecatombs of cattle and sheep slain for the support of his ghosts and the ghosts of his attendants. If he was a cannibal, human victims are furnished to him dead as when alive, and their blood is poured on the grave-heap, or on the altar which represents the grave-heap. Having had servants in this world, he is supposed to need servants in the other, and frequently they are killed at his funeral or sent after him. When the women of his harem are not immolated at his burial-place, as they sometimes are, it is usual to reserve virgins for him in his temple. Visits of homage made to his residence become, in after times, pilgrimages made to his tomb or temple; and presents at the throne reappear as presents at the shrine. Prostrations, genuflexions, and other obeisances are made in his presence, along with various uncoverings; and worship in his temple has the like accompaniments. Laudations are uttered before him while he is alive, and the like or greater laudations when he is dead.—Herbert Spencer, "Principles of Sociology: Professional Institutions."

### Anæsthesia under Religious Mania.

At Fano, on the Adriatic, some thirty miles north-west of Ancona, a girl has had to be removed to the "manicomio" (madhouse) in circumstances more frequently met with in mediæval than in modern times. Till within a few days ago she was an inmate of the Theresian Nunnery, and shortly about to take the veil. But hysteria of a very aggravated kind declared itself, and she was transferred, as stated, to the "manicomio." Religious mania was the special form assumed by the malady, and her proceedings under its influence are pathologically interesting. Without the least sign or consciousness of pain, with almost ecstatic delight, she thrusts needles into various parts of her person. From the right mamma alone no fewer than thirty-eight have already been extracted. By her own confession she has swallowed a great number of needles, deriving, as she says, not pain, but pleasure, from the proceeding. Besides this, she has made repeated attempts to commit suicide. Whether religious mania, hysterically induced, can be developed in a patient whose family history presents no instance of mental disorder is an unsettled problem of medico-psychology. In this girl's case, a correspondent of the *Lancet* thinks, the history would favor a negative answer. She has had more than one certified lunatic among her ancestors.

Some amiable and heterodox sects retain heaven and abolish hell. A kingdom in the clouds may, of course, be portioned off according to pleasure. The doctrine, however, is interesting in an intellectual point of view only, as illustrating in the naivest fashion the common fallacy of confounding our wishes with our beliefs. The argument that, because evil and good are mixed wherever we can observe, therefore there is elsewhere unmixed good, does not obey any recognized canons of induction.—Leslie Stephen, "Essays on Freethinking," p. 336.



## BOOK CHAT.

MR. AUGUSTUS J. C. HARE, in his recent book, tells a good story of Father Healy, who once breakfasted with Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Gladstone said to him: "Father Healy, I went into a church in Rome once, and was offered a plenary indulgence for fifty francs. On what principle does your Church grant such things?" Father Healy replied: "Well, Mr. Gladstone, I don't want to go into theology with you, but all I can say is that, if my Church offered you a plenary indulgence for fifty francs, she let you off very cheap."

*Humanity*, the monthly organ of the Humanitarian League, for January is an interesting number. It contains large extracts from Mr. J. A. Thomson's lecture on "The Humane Study of Natural History," a sensible paper on "Imprisonment for Debt," which the law has abolished, but which the judges have restored under the ridiculous head of "contempt," and a bright article by Mr. H. S. Salt on "The Philosopher and the Pig," in reply to Mr. Leslie Stephen and Professor Ritchie.

The Rev. Mr. Brownjohn, who protested against the election of Dr. Temple, has published his letter to the Archbishop of York on the subject. It seems that Mr. Brownjohn resigned his benefice because of the incompatibility of science and evolution, and he wants to know why the Archbishop is in the Church and he out. He also accused Dr. Temple of the old heresies of Pelagius.

Gibbon's unpublished works will appear in three volumes, with portraits of the historian. Lord Sheffield, in his introduction, tells the story of the MSS. which for so long lay in the strong-room at Sheffield-park, and are now in the possession of the British Museum.

Any reader of Mr. P. G. Hamerton's *Intellectual Life*, and especially of his *Human Intercourse*, in which he regards religion as a great obstacle to true intercourse between man and man, will be assured that he was a heretic and unbeliever. In his *Autobiography* he says as much, and explains how he was driven to quiet studies, and to residence in France, because he found "that the liberty of thought which I valued above everything was incompatible in England with any desire to rise in the world, as unbelievers lay under a ban, and had no chance of social advancement without renouncing their opinions."

Dr. Weizsäcker's *Apostolical Age of the Christian Church* is scarcely as advanced as it should be; but the author's research and scholarship are unquestionable. He sees Paul as the first real figure of the Christian Church, and brings out the discrepancy between the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of the Apostle. He remarks: "The difference between the Galatian letter and the Acts of the Apostles is the difference between personal observation and the later narrative that brings its own conceptions to supply the want of direct knowledge" (vol. i., p. 201). To put the matter plainly, the "Acts" is nothing better than a concoction to suit the interests of the Church of the compilers, and reconcile the Petrine and Pauline sections.

In the second volume Dr. Weizsäcker discusses the secession of the Jewish Christians from Judaism. He holds that the reformers were clearly forced out of the old faith, and finally out of Jerusalem. According to the Jewish Christian Gospel, their prophet had proclaimed that he came not to destroy the law, and that he was but sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The Jewish Christians were long before they recognized that their new wine could not be put into the old bottles. The Jews, not the Christians, were the first to make this discovery; and they it was who forced the Christian Jews to see this, by casting them out of their synagogues, and out of the pale of Judaism. The Ebionites, or poor folk, thus cast out, did not cease their antagonism to Paul—who was emphatically "the enemy"—and his followers, who called themselves Jews, and were not were of the synagogue of Satan.

Dr. Weizsäcker does not show how Christianity got to Rome, but says Paul found it planted there on his arrival. That the Church there "was Jewish-Christian is suggested by Paul's having written to it with the greatest detail concerning the law, works, circumcision, and rites of the Jews" (p. 72). It was the hatred of the Jews that brought Paul, in chains, to Rome. But why Paul should be kept in prison two years, and then suffer martyrdom in Rome after his innocence was acknowledged by Felix Festus and the rest, he owns is a mystery. Dr. Weizsäcker thinks that Peter, too, was martyred in Rome; yet for this, or Paul's martyrdom either, there is, in our opinion, nothing but dubious tradition. What is certain is that, if the head of one section was said to be martyred, the head of the other would be put on the same pedestal.

*The Histoire Ancienne des Peuples de l'Orient Classique* of Professor Maspero, the eminent Egyptologist, has been translated and published by the S.P.C.K. And thereby hangs a tale. In the original work Professor Maspero treats the Old Testament from a decidedly critical standpoint, and often expresses such sympathy or agreement with critics as would possibly not be at all acceptable to clients of the S.P.C.K. In the translation such points of agreement are, it seems, blurred over. A general idea of the alterations may be conveyed by the fact that where M. Maspero writes "tradition" the translator says "sacred writings." The reader of the English version is, in fact, betrayed into the false belief that Maspero's views are of the orthodox hue. This is neither more nor less than a pious fraud, of which a non-religious firm of publishers would be ashamed.

Ibsen, according to Bjornson, "is not a Norwegian at all. He comes of a Scotch family, and that explains his Calvinism, his despairing views on life and men."

Max Müller tells in *Cosmopolis* the story of the burning of Froude's *Nemesis of Faith*, by Dr. Sewell at Oxford. Froude lost his Fellowship. His friends deserted him. Even his father cut him off with a shilling. And Professor Max Müller relates how he (Mr. Müller) received a cheque for £200 from an unknown friend with a request that he would hand it to Froude to show him that he had friends and sympathizers who would not forsake him.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

CHRIST SCHRADER.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Having read the paragraph in your paper of Nov. 15 relating to the so-called Christs which this country is troubled with, and as the one most particularly alluded to (Schrader) was performing in this city a short while ago, I have thought a little information about him might not be uninteresting. He calls himself "the divine healer," and his dress is thus placarded when he walks the streets. He dresses in a long robe, and wears his hair (whiskers, etc.) like the style shown in the pictures commonly supposed to represent Jesus Christ. He professes to charge nothing for his healing (?) services, but keeps a manager, who sells photos of Schrader and his mother, which are offered rather forcibly to all votaries returning from Schrader's presence; and, judging from the number sold in this city, there is no doubt the two make a very good thing out of the business. Schrader was proved to be an out-and-out impostor. He was here about four days. Crowds went to him, and received his hand treatment and prayers; but not one cure or marked alleviation was even reported by any trustworthy medium from him. He left the city suddenly, saying he was going to another part of the state, and would return shortly; instead of which it was found that he went away straight to another state many hundreds of miles away, and he has not come back.

W. BRYAN  
(Formerly member N.S.S.).

San Francisco, California, December 15, 1896.

## PROFANE JOKES.

SMALL BOY—"Does God make apologies?" Clerical Visitor—"Certainly not." Small Boy—"Didn't he make you?" Clerical Visitor—"Certainly." Small Boy—"Well, pa says you are only an apology for a man."

A clergyman in an Eastern town warned his hearers lately "not to walk in a slippery path, lest they be sucked, maelstrom-like, into its meshes." This metaphor suggests that of another clergyman, who prayed that the word might be as a nail driven in a sure place, sending its roots downward and its branches upward.

In a "Methodist" revival once, attended wholly by enthusiastic darkies, there ensued so much commotion during the hysterical excitement that the red-hot stove was overturned. The result was a small panic, but the white-wooled pastor rose up in the pulpit, and, stretching out his arms, shouted: "Pick it up, Brudder Granger, pick it up! De Lawd won't let it burn yuh!" Brother Granger, full of faith which was inspired by the revival, rushed forward and started to pick up the stove. A veil must be drawn over the details of the natural consequences that followed; but it was impossible not to hear Brother Granger's first remark, which was: "The hell he won't!"

Spiritual Comforter—"Ah, my friend, remember that, as 'the broad road leads to hell,' we should always take the 'narrow path——'" Sickun—"Not—when—yer—learnin'—ter ride a bike!"



## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

[Notices of Lectures, etc., must reach us by first post on Tuesday, and be marked "Lecture Notice," if not sent on post-card.]

### LONDON.

THE ATHENÆUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "The Throning of Archbishop Temple."

BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 7.15, Touzeau Parris, "Ancient Ideals of Religion." January 13, at 8.30, Debate on "Socialism" between G. Standing and T. Thurlow.

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, H. P. Ward, "From Wesleyan Pulpit to Secularist Platform."

EAST LONDON BRANCH (Swaby's Coffee House, 103 Mile End-road): 8, J. F. Haines, "Vaccination Lessons from Gloucester and Whitechapel."

EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Libra-road, Old Ford): 7, G. Spiller, "Christianity and its Hymns."

NORTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY, Athenæum, Camden-road, N.W.: 7, F. J. Gould, "The New Conversion."

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, Sunday-school; 7, Dr. Stanton Coit, "Cardinal Newman."

WEST LONDON BRANCH ("Sun in Splendor," Portobello-road, Notting Hill Gate): January 13, at 8.30, Business meeting.

### OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30 and 3.30, F. Haslam will lecture.

### COUNTRY.

BRISTOL BRANCH (Shepherd's Hall): 7, Discussion on "Why I am a Secularist."

DERBY (Athenæum Room): O. Cohen—11, "The Great French Revolution"—part i.; 3, "The Great French Revolution"—part ii.; 7, "Free-thought and Morals."

GLASGOW (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner—11, "The Persecuted Works of Thomas Paine"; 6.30, "The Queen's 'Reign of Peace.'"

LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, A lecture.

LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 7, H. Smith, "All the gods of the nations are idols"—Psalm xcvi. 5.

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholm-road, All Saints): 6.30, O. Corbett, "George Eliot and Her Works."

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): C. Watt—11, "Colonel Ingersoll and Freethought in America"; 3, "Is the Church a Friend to Human Progress?"; 7, "Sin and Secular Salvation." Tea at 5.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, Business meeting; 7.30, Discussion, "N.S.S. Organization."

### Lecturer's Engagements.

O. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—January 10, Derby; 12, Carlton; 16, 17, and 18, West Stanley; 19 and 24, Manchester; 25, Elmlington-street Labor Hall, Manchester; 27 and 28, Debate at Derby with Mr. G. Wise; 31, Edinburgh.

## POSITIVISM.

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

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