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PRICE TWOPENCE.

A CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST.

A Creed for Socialists: With Expositions. By Charles William Stubbs, D.D., Dean of Ely. (London: William Reeves.)

DR. STUBBS is apparently a disciple of Frederic Denison Maurice, a man of fine nature, who exercised a very considerable influence in his day, although it must be said of him (as Matthew Arnold did say) that he was perpetually beating the bush without ever starting the hare. Maurice, like Kingsley, had great gifts, but he lacked intellectual trenchancy. There was no logical basis to his philosophy, which was always nebulous, yet suffused at times with a certain beauty. Color it had, but no form. He was essentially an impressionist. And this weakness is shared by all his disciples; very often, in fact, they share nothing else; and what was tolerable thirty or forty years ago is quite intolerable in an age which has been leavened with the great work of Darwin and a host of other laborers in the splendid field of Evolution.

Maurice and Kingsley started Christian Socialism. They were animated by a genuine sympathy with the working classes, and they thought the people's charter was to be found within the covers of the Four Gospels. The truth is, they were Churchmen to the heart's core; and they cherished the dream that the Church would dominate the new life as it had dominated the old life of England. This dream is still cherished by their disciples, an exposition of whose hopes is to be found in Dr. Stubbs's pages, in which we find a certain facile eloquence, suited to the pulpit, but not very powerful and not very convincing.

Dr. Stubbs opens with a quotation from the Encyclical of the Anglican Bishops at the Lambeth Conference in 1887, which states that it is the business of the Christian Church to "aid every wise endeavor which has for its object the material and the moral welfare of the poor." This is a platitude that may mean anything or nothing, according to the exigency of circumstances. But the Bishops proceed to make a rather more definite assertion. "Her Master," they say of the Church, "taught her that all men are brethren, not because they share the same blood, but because they have a common heavenly Father." Begging their pardon, he taught nothing of the kind. Jesus Christ distinctly said that he was only sent unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel. He strictly enjoined his apostles not to preach unto the Gentiles, nor even unto the Samaritans, who were first cousins to the Jews. It was Paul who said that God had made all nations of one blood; at the same time quoting a Greek poet, who said all men were God's children, and thus showing that there was nothing new in the doctrine of human brotherhood. The Bishops, therefore, are simply reading into the Gospels what it would be very convenient for them to find there.

Let us now come to Dr. Stubbs's "Christian Socialist Creed." Its first article is this: "We believe in one God, the Father and Educator of Humanity." A remarkably careless father, we may say, and a remarkably slow educator. The second article is this: "We believe in Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, the Pre-incarnate Word, by Whom," etc. After a number of mystical statements about Jesus Christ, which do not seem to have the remotest relation to the progress of the working classes, an article is given to the poor "Holy Spirit," who is kept an unconscionable time waiting for recognition. Then follow some hazy articles on Revelation, which we have not time to discuss. An article is given to Liberty—defined as

freedom to do what one ought; and another to Fraternity, which Dr. Stubbs claims as the exclusive monopoly of Christians; for no man, he asserts, can "say sincerely" that mankind are his brethren unless he has learned to say "Our Father which art in heaven." This note of exclusiveness is a characteristic of Christianity, and it can never be abandoned. For this reason, if for no other, Christianity is doomed to perish in the world-wide development of civilization and cosmopolitanism.

With regard to that curious science called "Christian Economics," Dr. Stubbs tells us a number of things which are, after all, but the commonplaces of advanced Democracy. Trade Unionism, for instance, is justified—rather late in the day, and Churchmen are told that they really ought not to oppose it or frown upon it, but give it a helping hand, or at least a cordial recognition. Dr. Stubbs forgets that the very fact of his having to appeal to Churchmen, and chiefly parsons, in this way, is itself a proof of how little Trade Unionism is indebted to Christianity. He also forgets that there is nothing about Trade Unionism, or anything of the kind, in the New Testament. Dr. Stubbs argues, at bottom, in this fashion: Every good thing is somehow derived from Christianity, Trade Unionism is a good thing, therefore Trade Unionism is derived from Christianity. It is delightfully simple logic—only it overlooks the fact that a good many people have heads on their shoulders.

Dr. Stubbs wishes to see poverty abolished. So does everyone who is not an absolute brute. The important question is, How to abolish it? This is never tackled by Dr. Stubbs. It is not even seriously confronted. No reference is made to the population question, which is so vastly important, even if Henry George's fallacies on this point are taken as sound argument; for too many children tend to produce poverty within the family, and poverty is a great cause of low wages, since men with pressing wants and no resources must grasp at any opportunity of obtaining a subsistence.

Some persons contend that the Bible does not contemplate the abolition of poverty. They quote the words of Jesus: "The poor ye have always with you." Dr. Stubbs knocks them down with another text about the time "when there shall be no poor among you." But he may be knocked down in turn with the other text which says that "the poor shall never cease out of the land."

The proposals of Dr. Stubbs for ameliorating the condition of the poor are mostly familiar to reformers: such as, justice between class and class; a recognition that workers are men, and not machines; the abolition of "sweating"; the establishment of a "living wage"; the moralization of capital as a social product which should be used for social ends; municipal efforts to secure pure air, pure food, and pure water for all citizens; and the elevation of the peasantry by Parish Councils and similar agencies. But these proposals do not involve Socialism, in any proper sense of the word; for Socialism means nothing at all unless it means the nationalization of every agency and instrument of production. On the whole, we suspect that Christian Socialism is either a pious sentimentalism, or a scheme for exploiting real Socialism in the interest of the Church.

Christian Socialists talk consumedly about Christ the working man, Christ the carpenter, and so forth. Dr. Stubbs has a whole chapter on "Christ the Comrade-King." He does not explain how a comrade can be a king, or a king a comrade. Nor does he show that Christ has really helped the working classes. To say that Christianity

abolished slavery, for instance, is to say what cannot be justified by an appeal to history. Dr. Stubbs is obliged to admit that many will regard the statement as a "bold pretension." He contends, however, that slavery was abolished by "the spirit of Christ"—a contention that does not admit of any practical discussion. It is obvious to any student of history that "the spirit of Christ" is very slow in its operations. That is true, says Dr. Stubbs, but "if it took several hundreds of thousands of centuries to change a beast into a man, it may well take as many centuries to change earth into heaven, the kingdom of man into the kingdom of God and His Christ."

We respectfully suggest that this is a terrible time to wait for the Christian Socialist millennium. It appears to us that human progress could be effected far more rapidly by science, common sense, and natural good feeling. We also feel certain that all this adoration of Christ the man is but the afterglow of the sunken sun of Christ the god. That likewise will fade and disappear; for the making of one man the pivot of the whole world's hopes and aspirations is the very lunacy of hero-worship.

G. W. FOOTE.

THE CHURCH AND SCIENCE.

DR. ZAHM, who is extolled by the Catholic world as a priestly scientist, in his book on *Catholic Science and Catholic Scientists* lays it down that the Catholic scientist can be almost, if not quite, untrammelled in his work. He can even accept the doctrine of Evolution, though not exactly in the sense in which it was accepted by Huxley and Darwin. The last-named great naturalist, according to Dr. Zahm, was much overrated. The Catholic scientist has the cheek to say: "The author of *The Descent of Man* and *The Origin of Species*, far from originality, has not even the merit of novelty. He simply brings together and collates the observations of others, and, adding to them his own, gives forth to a sensation-loving world an old theory decked out in a garment of many colors, and cut according to the requirements of the prevailing fashion of that capricious *modiste*yclept 'Modern Science.'" After this we find a sense that the views of the far-from-original Darwin had, nevertheless, been accepted by men of science, for we read: "All that would logically follow from the demonstration of the animal origin of man would be a modification of the traditional view regarding the origin of the body of our first ancestor. We should be obliged to revise the interpretation that has usually been given to the words of scripture which refer to the formation of Adam's body, and read these words in the sense which Evolution demands." That's it. The words of the Bible are so truly divine that they can be read in any sense you please. Science says that the motion of the moon has been one of uninterrupted revolution about the earth for the last ten thousand years. The Bible says that in the time of Joshua the sun and moon stayed. But it is easy to square the two by saying one is fact, the other poetry; or, if this cannot be done, we can revise the interpretation. Days may be prolonged to periods to suit the conclusions of geology, or any other little alteration may be made so as to read the Bible in the sense which science demands.

It is true that Canon IV., § 2, of the last Vatican Council lays it down that "if anyone shall say that human sciences are to be so freely treated that their assertions, although opposed to revealed doctrine, are to be held as true, and cannot be condemned by the Church, let him be anathema." But this only means that you must never say that science is opposed to revealed doctrine. You must manage to make them square. One good reason, according to Zahm, for the Church not being in opposition to science is because, as Darwin said, "Science has nothing to do with Christ." The doctrines of theology are outside its scope—the existence of God, the Creation of the World, the Immortality of the Soul, the Immaculate Conception, the Virgin Birth of Christ, the Doctrine of the Trinity, the Doctrine of the Devil and Demons, and the Doctrine of the Resurrection. Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory are, it is said, all beyond the range of scientific investigation.

I submit, however, that the whole trend of science is to show that every one of these doctrines is a mistake. In place of the pseudo-science of theology there is growing up the real science of anthropology. Among its clearest

deductions are that man is no fallen creature, but one who has risen from savage ancestors, and that in his religion he has inherited the animism which is at the root of superstition. It is just as true and just as false to contend that science has nothing to say against the existence of witches as to assert that it has nothing to say against the existence of angels or devils.

Readers of Professor White's *Warfare of Science and Theology* know that, with every extension of the domain of knowledge, the outcry has ever come from the priests that the new learning was going to upset the old faith; but as soon as the new learning established itself they set to work to accommodate the old faith to its teachings. Those who read Professor White's account of the proceedings of the Church of Rome in the matter of Galileo and his opinions will be very apt to conclude that the Catholic Church on this occasion made an error, which is fatal to her claims of infallibility. A simple list of the dignitaries of the Church who worked and wrote to crush Galileo and his theory would fill many pages. But Protestant ministers have scarcely been one whit behind in their opposition to the conclusions of science, and Dr. Zahm is able to show that the Catholic Church has been as ready to accommodate itself to ugly facts as the rest of the Christian world.

What Dr. Zahm really does is to demonstrate that his Church is not "always and everywhere the same," but that it is at the present day modifying its teaching and accommodating itself to the thought of the age. It has to do this under the penalty of being left entirely to the ignorant and the interested. The Church has made the discovery that evolution may be tolerated and manipulated in the service of the faith. But science can no longer be treated as a servant. Let it once enter, and it will in time assume its own place as master, and evolution will be seen to explain the Church as well as other human institutions.

J. M. WHEELER.

CHRISTIAN HOPE AND SECULAR REALIZATION.

ONE of the most useful distinctions between Secularism and Christianity is that the latter is largely based upon hope, while the former rests its claims upon realization. Christians boast that they have an advantage in entertaining "a sure and certain hope" of a life beyond the grave. The true value, however, of such a hope depends upon whether or not it is well founded. To desire something for which there is no reasonable evidence that it will ever be realized is not wise, and can but afford, at the most, only a fleeting consolation. The correct definition of hope is the desire for some object the attainment of which is at least probable. Now, the Christian's hope of a life beyond the present one is by no means certain, and, even if it were, there is no evidence available for proving it as such. The fact is that concerning whatever may exist "hereafter" (if there should be anything which we doubt) there can be nothing but conjecture, and the nature of such a conjecture depends upon the feelings and wishes of the believer in a future life. The Secularists, instead of indulging in what appears to them to be vain hopes, seek to secure the realization of the highest advantages of our present existence, and from such a course they derive sweeter and more enduring consolations than those afforded by the mere speculations of theology. It is true St. Paul despised and repudiated the Secular view here expressed, but that in no way invalidates its truth. "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," is not such a terrible notion after all, for if we did not eat and drink, certain it is that death would speedily overtake us. Besides, if life is the special gift of God, the habit of sustaining it needs no justification, whether it is enjoyed for a day or for an indefinite time.

The hope of another and a better life may not be in itself objectionable, supposing it is not assumed to be a certainty, and one that ought to override the claims of the life that now is. But, regarding the perpetual continuity of life as if it were ordained and ruled by infinite wisdom and power, the existence beyond the grave should be neither better nor worse than any other existence similarly ordained and ruled. The true, the useful, and the beautiful on earth cannot cease to be so even if there are millions of other states where similar advantages are to be realized by us. The Secularists are therefore justified upon Theistic

grounds in observing, and holding fast, the good nearest to hand, whatever may be in store for them in some future state. But, of all people, professed Christians are the most anxious to realize the good things of this life. Practically they seldom act up to the injunction, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things [food, drink, and clothes] shall be added unto you." No doubt Mr. Moody, the enthusiast revivalist, has experienced greater pleasure in receiving the donation of between two and three thousand pounds, which we read was recently sent him from this country, than he would from indulging in any hope of receiving a reward when he has "shuffled off the mortal coil." Upon the principle that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, these professed believers in their providence prefer the realization of advantages in time to the hope of something that may come in "eternity."

It is very evident that those very persons who pretend to have their eyes fixed on heaven have their minds fully occupied with things of the earth. While having no desire to limit the aspirations of men, we do urge that this life is the only known existence where such aspirations can be realized. "If in this life only we have hope," why should we be, as St. Paul asserts, "of all men the most miserable"? It is not a question of "this life only" which determines our happiness or our misery, but rather the conditions which regulate the life. Even the Christian, with all his hope, can only live this life while he is here; is he, therefore, the "most miserable"? Let the bishops, who live in costly mansions surrounded by wealth and comfort, answer the question. There is not the slightest logical connection between the number of lives we may live and the happiness or misery to be experienced. The case would be different if the conditions of "this life only" depended upon, or were influenced by, a belief in another; but it is not so, for the number of persons who subordinate secular concerns to spiritual requirements is too small to form a factor in the matter. Christians do not fear to accumulate treasures on earth, although Christ is said to have warned them against possible burglary, the earth being a place where thieves "break through and steal."

It may be said that Christians do not fix all "their affections on things above," but that they divide them between earth and heaven with a view of making the "best of both worlds"; to which we reply that such conduct upon the part of Christians is very inconsistent, inasmuch as the New Testament enjoins them to do the very opposite. Still, such a division of their attention is less unwise than neglecting this world entirely. As Secularists, we hold that the study of the order and the proper use of life, as we know it, is not only of the first importance, but it transcends in value all speculations about any hereafter. It must not be overlooked that those who in their imaginations build a heaven to gratify their longings have to confront the notion of a hell in which pain and misery reign supreme. One place is quite as sure as the other. The dread of the abode of torments is as justifiable, from a Christian standpoint, as is the hope to share the "paradise of bliss." In fact, if all the human family indulged in the hope of heaven, in the majority of cases that hope would be, if the Bible is true, falsified; for therein we are told that "many are called, but few are chosen."

Of course we are aware that the hope of heaven is fostered as a kind of consolation during the trials and sufferings endured on earth. But surely, if God is the author of the present world, he could have made it free from the defects which so extensively mar it, and his failure to do so is a bad recommendation for us to hope that he will improve upon things in any other world of his creation. After all, the Christian hope of heaven is entirely dependent upon a gigantic miracle being performed at the judgment day, when, as St. Paul says, we are "all to be changed in the twinkling of an eye," and then will follow our reward or punishment. Now, as Secularists, we regard this as too long to wait to realize the result of our actions. Our hope is for the triumph of liberty, justice, and truth in the life we now have. And if we can but realize this desire, the consolation will be great indeed. Whether, however, we can or not, Secularism teaches us that our duty is to deal with requirements based on knowledge, not with those created by hopes that may be false. The task of to-day appears to us to be, not to bother about the past, but rather to learn the lessons it imparts; not to worry in reference to the future, but to so

live in the present that we may be enabled to realize whatever is good and true in any other conditions of existence that may be imposed upon us.

That such a mode of living is possible without entertaining any "hope in Christ" is now admitted by Christians. The belief in Christianity is no longer claimed by the more intelligent believers of the faith to be necessary to enable us to make the best of this world—which is the wisest preparation for any other that would be worth having. In the *North British Mail*, of February 24, appeared a report of a sermon preached on the previous day in the United Presbyterian College, Edinburgh, by the Rev. David W. Forrest, M.A., in which he said that "multitudes had never heard of the Incarnation; many who had heard of it had no true idea of what it meant; many who had rejected it had manifested a purity, patience, and unselfishness which, were they found in a Christian believer, would at once be described as the fruit of the Spirit. There were others who disowned the Church's interpretation of Christ's personal claim on account of speculative difficulties, which were to them insuperable, yet who frequently manifested in a high degree those qualities of disposition, self-denial, forbearance, love, which it was Christ's mission to quicken in human souls, and which were often so conspicuously lacking in many within the Church." Here we have a frank admission that all that can add dignity, honor, and usefulness to this life can be realized apart from the Christian faith, and with that knowledge we, as Secularists, are prepared to live, feeling assured that from it a consolation can be realized that will prove an all-sufficient solace and comfort in the hour of death.

CHARLES WATTS.

THE CREDIBILITY OF THE GOSPELS.

THE GOSPEL SAYINGS.

DURING the lifetime of the first propagators of the Christian religion no attempt appears to have been made to write any account of the sayings and doings of the reputed founder. The historical Jesus wrote nothing himself, neither could he have had the smallest idea that a generation or two after his death a large number of moral sayings, parables, and discourses, besides works of a supernatural character, would be ascribed to him. We have seen that, judging by their complete silence, neither Paul nor the apostle John (the writer of the "Revelation") had any knowledge of these sayings or miracles. The Epistles of Paul seem to have constituted the earliest literature bearing upon the Christian religion in use among Christians—at least, among the Gentile Churches; for the apostolic party, as evidenced both by the Pauline Epistles and the Apocalypse, would have nothing to do with Paul or his writings. But after a time the Judaizing Christians (who in later times formed two kindred sects—the Ebionites and the Nazarenes) began to make collections of precepts and moral sayings which either they or a succeeding generation—the latter is the more probable—attributed to Jesus. If he had not said them, he was, at any rate, a great prophet possessed of divine wisdom, and could have said them.

Some of these sayings, doubtless, formed part of the teachings peculiar to the sect; others were common to the devout Jews of all sects, examples of which are still preserved in ancient Jewish writings. Many of the sayings, again, were simply proverbs or maxims that were in use among the Jews towards the end of the first century. Among the latter may be cited the giving alms in secret, passing judgment upon one's neighbors, the mote and the beam in the eye, the Golden Rule, the camel and the needle's eye, and the parable of the house built upon sand and rock (Matthew vi. 1-4; vii. 2, 3, 4, 12; xix. 24; vii. 26-28), which are still preserved in the Talmud. The whole collection of maxims, precepts, and rules for conduct was called the *Logia*, and Papias tells us that it was originally written in Hebrew.

The sayings in their primitive form were short and few compared with those in our present Gospels. According to Renan, small collections of sayings and anecdotes, sentences and parables, were made by the Jewish Christians, and "each author sought to make his copy complete by consulting the papers of others." Everything that was

in conformity with what was believed to be "the spirit of Jesus" was eagerly seized upon and inserted in the collection, and these collections were afterwards combined and revised. It is probable that by the end of the first quarter of the second century the greater part of the Gospel sayings had been written, though not exactly in their present form. A comparison of Justin's quotations with Matthew's version proves that additions were made after A.D. 150. There can be no doubt that the quotations of Clement, Polycarp, and Justin were taken from copies then existing. The apologetic contention that they quoted "freely from memory" from the canonical Gospels is a ridiculous assumption, not supported by any kind of evidence.

A comparison of Matthew's version of the "Sermon on the Mount" with that given by Luke, and the latter with the few scattered sayings recorded by Mark, will give some idea of the evolution of the Logia. Mark, for example, gives but twelve verses of this notable Sermon, and these are recorded as having been uttered on several different occasions (iv. 21, 24; ix. 43-47, 50; x. 11; xi. 24-26). Luke's version comprises thirty verses (vi. 20-49), which are represented as all delivered upon one day, and upon a "level place." Matthew's version extends to as many as 107 verses (v., vi., vii.), and these, like those in the Third Gospel, are set down as all spoken upon one occasion, but upon an unnamed mountain. It needs but little critical knowledge to see that this Sermon is in its character and structure as much a literary collection of sayings as the Proverbs which are ascribed to Solomon, and that it is a purely written composition which was never uttered extempore upon any single occasion, as two of the evangelists represent. Matthew's version is, in fact, somewhat of the nature of a poetical composition, as may be seen from the following example:—

"Ask, and it shall be given you;
Seek, and ye shall find;
Knock, and it shall be opened upon you.
For every one that asketh receiveth;
And he that seeketh findeth;
And to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

"The Hebrew genius," says Renan, "had always excelled in moral sentences."

A comparison of the events recorded in the three Synoptical Gospels makes it clear that this so-called "Sermon" was not delivered as represented, and was probably unknown to Mark. Taking Mark's Gospel as the earliest, we find that Matthew has inserted the Sermon in one place, and Luke in another, as will be seen from the following:—

MARK'S GOSPEL.

i. 39. Jesus "went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee," etc. (=Matthew iv. 23).

[Matthew's Sermon on the Mount, v. vi. vii.]

i. 40. "And there came to him a leper beseeching him," etc. (=Matthew viii. 2).

ii. 1. Jesus "entered again into Capernaum" (=Matthew viii. 5).

ii. 3. Jesus healed a man "sick of the palsy" (=Matthew ix. 2).

iii. 14. Jesus chose twelve to be called apostles (=Luke vi. 13).

iii. 16. The names of the twelve apostles (=Luke vi. 14).

[Luke's Sermon on the Plain, vi. 20-49.]

Thus Matthew and Luke, besides differing as to the subject matter of this Sermon, represent it as spoken on two different occasions.

Now, apart from the fact that Mark apparently knew nothing of the Sermon, it may be argued, with respect to Luke's and Matthew's versions, that Luke was either acquainted with the whole 107 verses given by Matthew, or he was not. If he knew of this long discourse, he must have rejected all but thirty verses of it as spurious; for he professes to give a perfectly accurate account of all that was believed of Jesus in his day. If he did not know of this Sermon as a whole, then the probability is that it had not, in his time, reached its present bulky form; for we know that he had read "many" Gospels before writing his own.

In Matthew's version of the Sermon is found the well-known collection of sentences called the "Lord's Prayer." This the writer of the First Gospel represents as spoken publicly before "the multitudes" with the rest of the Sermon. But if we turn to Luke xi. 2-4 we find that the prayer is there stated to have been given to the disciples

only, and in private, and then but in answer to the request of one of them.

"And it came to pass, as he was praying in a certain place, then, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John [the Baptist] also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Father, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come," etc.

Here it is clearly implied that the disciples had never heard the prayer before. Now, it is scarcely necessary to say that, if it was given under the circumstances just narrated, it could not have been delivered at the time or in the place described by Matthew. We have thus presumptive evidence that the prayer was never spoken on either of the occasions represented.

Again, when we compare Matthew's and Luke's versions, we find that they are not in all respects the same. Luke's prayer commences, "Father, hallowed be thy name"; while that of Matthew begins, "Our Father, which art in heaven." Luke, again, omits "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen." Also, the two oldest MSS. of Luke's Gospel do not contain the words, "But deliver us from the Evil One."

This prayer, there can be little doubt, was made up by one of the early Christians, who took probably the following passages as his model:—

1. "Blessed be thou, O Lord, the God of Israel, our Father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power and glory.....thine is the kingdom, O Lord" (1 Chron. xxix. 10, 11).

2. "Blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise" (Neh. ix. 6).

3. "Feed me with the bread that is needful for me" (Prov. xxx. 8).

4. "Then hear thou from heaven, even from thy dwelling place.....and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee" (2 Chron. vi. 39).

5. "Forgive thy neighbor the hurt that he hath done unto thee; so shall thy sins also be forgiven when thou prayest" (Ecclesiasticus xxviii. 2).

6. "Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man" (Psalm cxl. 1).

Three of these passages (Nos. 1, 2, and 4) are portions of prayers, and the last is also of the nature of a prayer. With these before him the original Gospel writer would need little scholarship or ingenuity to construct a prayer which he might piously ascribe to "the Lord." Also, the following passage, which was written before any of the Gospels, gives us the sentence, "Thy kingdom come":—

Rev. xi. 15.—"The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever."

The most important fact, however, in connection with the Gospel sayings is that these sayings are not original; that is, as far as the subject-matter is concerned. The Gospel-makers took this matter from pre-existing writings, and these second-hand precepts were afterwards revised and polished up, and placed in the mouth of Jesus. But even in their latest form, as we have them in the canonical Gospels, there still remain a sufficient number of verbal coincidences to indicate the passages from which they were originally derived. The majority of the sayings were taken from, or suggested by, the older Jewish writings; but some can be traced to other sources. Professor Max Müller, for instance, tells us that the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke xv. 11-32) is found in the Buddhist sacred books, which were committed to writing not later than the first century B.C.

The following are examples of sayings manufactured from the Hebrew writings:—

GOSPEL SAYINGS.

"Every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. v. 28).

"But I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil" (Matt. v. 39).

"But whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matt. v. 39).

OLDER SAYINGS.

"He who regards a woman with an impure intention has already, as it were, committed adultery" (Talmud). "Lust not after her beauty in thine heart" (Prov. vi. 25).

"Say not thou, I will recompense evil.....say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me" (Prov. xx. 22; xxiv. 29).

"It is good for man that he bear the yoke in his youth.....Let him give his cheek to him that smiteth him" Lam. iii. 27, 30).

"And in praying, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Matt. vi. 7).

"I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.....God be merciful to me, a sinner" (Luke v. 32; xviii. 13).

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. xiii. 43).

"Woe unto that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed. Good were it for that man if he had not been born" (Matt. xxvi. 24).

"And shall not God avenge his elect, which cry to him day and night, and he is long suffering over them? I say unto you that he will avenge them speedily" (Luke xviii. 7, 8).

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. xxiii. 37, 38; Luke xiii. 34, 35).

(Jesus to the Apostles): "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given" (Matt. xiii. 11).

Several pages of these borrowed sayings might be given, did space allow. It will be seen in the foregoing passages that, apart from the verbal coincidences, which plainly indicate the source, there is not a single idea in the words ascribed to Jesus which is not also contained in the pre-existing sayings. Jesus knew only what the Gospel-writers knew, and the Gospel-writers knew only what was contained in earlier writings. Hence, assuming that Jesus really uttered the sayings attributed to him in the Gospels, he said nothing new, and revealed nothing to mankind. All the evidence, however, tends to show that these sayings were never originally spoken by anyone; but, like the Gospel miracles, were fabricated after the time of Paul.

ABRACADABRA.

A DISCREDITED DEITY.

AND it came to pass in those days that man made God in his own image, and he saw that it was good, and he fell down and worshipped the thing that he had made.

Lest someone should ask me in what days this wonderful miracle was performed, I will say at the outset that it is never well to pry too deep into dark and hidden mysteries like this one. I was not present at the time, for our race was very, very young when it happened. It must be a child yet, for it thinks as a child and speaks as a child, and has not yet put away childish things. But I wander from my subject. This should be proof to everybody that I was fore-ordained to preach. Well, I know that God was made in man's image, because he is so like man. I have the word of the celestial tax-gatherer for it, and who will dare say that is not evidence? Look how peevish this God is. Something displeases him (no mortal ever knows what it is), and he spits fire and destroys a

"Let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God.....let thy words be few.....Make not vain repetitions when thou prayest" (Ecclesiasticus v. 2; vii. 14).

"Thou, therefore, O Lord,.....hast not appointed repentance to the just.....but thou hast appointed repentance unto me that am a sinner" (Prayer of Manasses).

"Their face shall begin to shine as the sun, and they shall be made like unto the light of the stars, henceforth no more to return to corruption" (2 Esdras vii. 97).

"—those who have rejected the Lord of Spirits. It would have been better for them if they had never been born" (Enoch xxxviii. 2).

"Behold the innocent and righteous blood crieth unto me, and the souls of the just complain continually. And therefore, saith the Lord, I will surely avenge them..... For how long is the time during which the Most High hath been long suffering towards those who dwell on the earth" (2 Esdras xv. 89; vii. 73).

"Thus saith the Almighty Lord.....I gathered you together, as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings; but now what shall I do unto you?.....I sent unto you my servants the prophets, whom ye have taken and slain..... Thus saith the Almighty Lord, Your house is desolate, and I will cast you out as the wind doth stubble" (2 Esdras i. 28-33).

(Jehovah to Esdras): "These things have I not showed unto all men, but unto thee, and a few like thee" (2 Esdras viii. 62).

beautiful house, erected for the express purpose of collecting supplies for him and his household. I have known gentle spring to just get herself nicely dressed—yes, even to get the fruit formed—when (the tax-gatherer is again my authority) this irritable deity would sneak along and blight and blacken everything under the sun except the potato-bug, grasshoppers, and army-worms. Who has not met men just mean enough to spoil what they did not need or could not appreciate?

I know that he is like the men who made him, because he likes to be told what a fine fellow he is. He has an excellent opinion of himself, and talks that way.

Some good people say he is our Father. That is another proof that he is just like the men who made him. He is so fond of his children that he will not give them what he knows they need and should have, till, with streaming eyes, they fall at his feet, clasp his knees, and in broken tones entreat him to supply their wants or heal their ills. Does he do it, then? Not by a large pitcher-full. Do you think he is a fool? If he did what the people ask him to do, they would have all they need, and would have no further use for him or his tax-gatherer. We should not like to have an earthly father who could so lightly regard our likes and dislikes, and our comfort to boot; but that is the kind of heavenly father Man, the wonder-worker, has made for us, and he is just like his creator.

I know that he was made long, long ago, for he is now in his dotage. Old men and matrons, young men and maidens, and children of tender years, on the first day of the week congregate to sing to him and talk to him about divers things, and tell him a great deal that he ought to know much better than they. Like Paul of old, he seems to be often seized and held by the spirit of melancholy, and the Devil only knows what would happen if his creators could not sing, or play upon all sorts of instruments of music.

His occupation, too, proves that he is childish, and altogether like those who made him. Look at him sitting (I do not know where) and counting the birds as they pass, or finding for his infinite satisfaction how many hairs have firm root in the scalp of some tax-gatherer. This is just as sensible a performance as that of the British legislators, who voted large sums of the people's earnings to drain the fens of Scotland, while they allowed a titled aristocracy to retain as pleasure-grounds thousands of acres of the richest land on the island. It is of a piece, too, with "General" Booth's colonization scheme.

This deity is very poor. I do not inadvisedly make this assertion, for within a mile of where I sit are nine or ten depôts for the collection of tithes, taxes, or alms, for (as I am solemnly informed) the Lord. He is not over particular as to the means employed to raise funds for his support. Ballet dancers, minstrel troupes, conundrum and birthday socials, Church fairs and bazaars galore, all lend their aid. Perhaps he is a firm believer in the proverb, "Beggars should not be choosers." If so, he is more consistent than his makers. I might say a great deal more, but I never did believe in long sermons, so will sit down and let the brother take up the collection. W. A. RATCLIFFE.

—Secular Thought.

THE ANTIQUITY OF THE TALMUD.

WHEN Sceptics or Jews point out to Christians that many of the good sayings ascribed to Jesus, including the Lord's Prayer and the bulk of the Sermon on the Mount, are plums picked out from the Talmud, they often retort that the Talmud was compiled later than the Gospels, and that consequently it may be indebted to the latter. I need not here remark on the greater likelihood of a collection of sayings being culled from many quarters, and but incidentally point out that Christians allow that, for instance, Rabbi Hillel, who taught what they call the Golden Rule, lived a little before the time of Christ. It should be noted, too, that the mere title of the Babylonian Talmud implies its compilation from the time of the Babylonian captivity.

But there is an argument which, I think, may come more home to Christians. Jesus, in Matthew v. 21, says: "Thou shalt not kill"; and *whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment.* Now, this last clause is not to be found in the laws ascribed to Moses, but is a Talmudical gloss upon them. Yet Jesus cites it as of old time, and as of equal authority with Moses. I should like to know how Christians deal with this point. CALAPHAS.

GOD AND THE KING.

ON January 21, 1535, a dismal tragedy was exhibited in Paris. In consequence of the detection of certain secret intrigues in which Francis I. had been engaged with the infidel, Solyman the Magnificent, grave doubts had arisen as to the orthodoxy of the French king—doubts which his notorious connection with the schismatic Henry VIII. had no tendency to remove. Irritated by such unworthy suspicions, the descendant of St. Louis resolved to put beyond all question his zeal for the Holy Catholic Church; and, in those days, the burning of heretics was universally recognized as the most appropriate display of fiery zeal. But, as the suspicions just mentioned were very strong, he felt himself constrained, as the eldest son of the Church, to make some *special* manifestation. Therefore, despising the mawkish humanity of the Inquisitors, who finished off their victims by one steady, uninterrupted roast, he contrived a new machine, which had the advantage of very greatly protracting the execution. In six different parts of Paris wheels, of large diameter, were erected, so arranged that each of them, revolving slowly, with a wretched "heretic" attached to one of the spokes, plunged him for a few seconds into a roaring furnace, once in each revolution. The torment was thus enormously protracted, and was especially devised and celebrated as a foretaste of the hell to which the king of kings and lord of lords had foredoomed heretics, "all for his glory." The device approved by Francis seems to us worthy of the Devil. Yet note this. The French king only provided the populace with a few hours' sport. The most rabid were satisfied as the shrieks of the victims, becoming weaker and weaker, were at length stifled in death. Yet God, the divine king, is supposed to have devised a hell where "the smoke of their torment ascendeth for ever and ever." What difference is there between such a God and a Devil?

LUCIANUS.

THE CHAMPION JUMPERS OF JUDEA.

To justly judge his joss-house jump with Jesus in his oter—
I mean Old Nick's—
Remember that a jumper now would certainly make folk stir
With six feet six.

To clear a height of five feet six, although with nought to
carry,
Makes all admire;
Yet, handicapped by bearing up a ten-stone god, Old Harry
Once cleared a spire.

But Satan's jump, though dev'lish good, as judged by sport-
ing people—
His foes and friends—
Was beaten by the very Jew he stuck upon the steeple
For business ends.

This Jew, although a joiner's son, had little taste for timber—
Save heads of wood—
But as for jumping! never man had limbs so lithe and
limber,
Nor hams so good!

One day, while talking with his chums—a loafing gang of
numskulls—
He jumped on high;
A standing jump, without a run—though wicked brains in
some skulls
The fact deny.

The height he jumped may ne'er be known exactly to a
fraction;
But few deny
He reached the moon, or else went on beyond the earth's
attraction—
"How's that for high?"

His jump may not be finished *yet*; perhaps he missed the
locus
At which he aimed,
And, captured by some "system," spins, fast tethered to its
focus,
Unknown, unnamed.

It wasn't bad to jump aloft—without a run, remember!—
Right out of sight!
N.B.—The man who doubts will be an everlasting ember
Through endless night!

G. L. MACKENZIE.

ACID DROPS.

THE news from Crete amply confirms the argument of our last week's leading article. Between Christian and Mohammedan, in the matter of massacre, the only difference is one of power and opportunity. According to the *Daily News* correspondent at Canea, the condition of the island is becoming every day more desperate. "Telegrams from Candia (Heraklion) state that the Moslem population and refugees from the neighboring hills, numbering some twenty-five thousand souls, are in imminent danger of famine. The flocks they have brought in with them are dying wholesale for want of food. A cordon of Cretans surrounds the town, and is absolutely impassable. A telegram implores aid from the fleets of the Powers." There is a similar difficulty at Selino, where the Moslems are hemmed in, and are daily expecting to fall into the hands of their Christian enemies, who are certain to indulge in an orgie of blood. Should a massacre occur at Selino, it will incense the Moslem population at Canea, where they are in the majority, and they will make reprisals on the Christians there.

It is the Christians in Crete who have to be restrained. Unless the Powers intervene, they will murder all the Mohammedans on the island. Then the Turks will slaughter another batch of Armenians, and so the bloody business of religious fanaticism will continue its infamous course.

After Mr. Foote's lecture at the Athenæum Hall on the Cretan question, a gentleman in the audience said he had attended the St. Martin's Hall meeting, and heard Sir Walter Phillimore say that he was taking part in the agitation because the sufferers were Christians; in fact, the pious baronet, this gentleman said, confirmed the lecturer's view that Christians only deprecated outrage when inflicted upon their co-religionists. Another gentleman in the audience got up and contradicted this; he said that he also was present at the St. Martin's Hall meeting, and that Sir Walter Phillimore never said anything of the kind. Mr. Foote remarked that it was an interesting conflict of testimony, and the matter was allowed to drop. Since then, however, the first gentleman has written to Sir Walter Phillimore, and obtained the following answer, dated from 86, Eaton-place, on February 24:—"Dear Sir,—As far as I can remember, I only gave utterance to the rather obvious sentiment that to me, as a Christian, the sufferings of Christians appealed more forcibly than the sufferings of non-Christians. Just as I should have said, if the case had arisen, that the sufferings of Englishmen appealed more forcibly to me than the sufferings of foreigners. I added that to a Christian all human suffering necessarily appealed.—Your obedient servant, WALTER G. F. PHILLIMORE."

Sir Walter Phillimore's letter is a beautiful illustration of the breadth and depth of Christian charity. He feels for suffering Christians first of all. Other people's sufferings come in as an afterthought.

The Rev. Hugh Price Hughes tells a pretty tall story to illustrate the efficacy of prayer. Some time ago, he says in the *Sunday Magazine*, the West London Mission was greatly in want of money; so the faithful Hughes invited his principal colleague to a midnight prayer-meeting, where the two wrestled with the Lord as tenaciously as good old Jacob. They implored the Lord to send them £1,000 by a particular day. Mr. Hughes's colleague was convinced that the prayer would be answered, and Mr. Hughes himself, being a remarkably modest and diffident gentleman, also "believed," but with "trembling."

Mr. Hughes shall be allowed to tell the rest of the story in his own way: "It appeared that in a very short time, and in very extraordinary ways, £990 had been sent to the West London Mission. I confess that, as a theologian, I was perplexed. We had asked for a thousand, there was a deficiency of ten. I could not understand it. I went home trying to explain the discrepancy. As I entered my house, and was engaged in taking off my hat and coat, I noticed a letter on the table in the hall. I remembered that it had been lying there when I went out, but I was in a great hurry and did not stop to open it. I took it up, opened it, and discovered that it contained a cheque for £10 for the West London Mission, bringing up the amount needed for that day to the exact sum which we had named in our midnight prayer-meeting."

Now, is not this delicious? Mr. Hughes dealt fairly and squarely with God Almighty. "Look you now! no humbug!" he says to the Lord; "I'm in want, and you have plenty to give, and you can give it easily. So I'll name a sum, and a day on which you are to send it, and if you don't—well, we shall know the sort of God you are." God

Almighty enters into the spirit of this joke and sends the exact amount—£990 first of all, and the final £10 at the very last minute, just as Mr. Hughes was getting distrustful of the Lord's memory, or his powers of arithmetic, or his punctiliousness in obliging his friends. We fancy we trace in this story the same fine and free imagination which was conspicuous in the story of the Atheist Shoemaker.

Mr. Price Hughes's little story is made the subject of a satirical article in the *Glasgow Herald* (February 26). After noticing the business-like way in which Mr. Hughes kept Omnipotence up to the scratch with regard to the last £10, our Scottish contemporary concludes in this fashion: "Mr. Hughes and his colleagues of the West London Mission stand approved by divine response as men of spiritual substance and solvency, whose drafts for hard cash on the bank of heaven are punctually honored, and the world has one more proof of the sad old truth that there are some minds in which the habit of prayer, instead of producing its normal effect of pious and modest humility, serves only to develop the most blatant and vulgar irreverence and self-conceit."

Christ has appeared. It was at the Salvation Army Barracks, Portsmouth. Miss Ada Ward, the actress, was the only person who saw him. He induced her to leave her vocation and sign the "articles of war," drawn up by General Booth. She told an interviewer: "I saw the figure of the Savior as distinctly and plainly as I see you." It is very questionable, however, if, attired in a poke bonnet, she will be so great an emotional and moral force as in her character of Lady Isabel in East Lynne; so, perhaps, she was mistaken in her vision, for we are told that Satan can transform himself into an angel of light.

Henceforth Miss Ward will preach instead of act, although she may act a little too. We presume she could not get her living on the stage and at the same time be a Salvationist. These primitive Christians look upon the theatre as the Devil's house. Sir Henry Irving himself is in the service of Old Nick, while every little Cockney Boothite is in the service of "Gawd."

The *New York World* says: "Speculation regarding Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll's destiny was never so busy or so frequent in the West during the Colonel's recent illness. The possibility of his death at the time aroused afresh discussions which never seemed quite so pertinent before. The case of a man who at sixty years of age is as active as ever in denouncing Christian doctrine, and destroying his only chance of 'salvation,' is an interesting one for theological experts to puzzle over. And, according to their expressed opinion, the outlook for the Colonel was, at best, not an encouraging one. The Rev. Dr. A. C. Dixon, of Brooklyn, did not hesitate to predict an after-existence of endless fire and torment. 'Ingersoll,' he said, 'could not enjoy heaven. Eternal punishment of the sort that the Bible tells us may be expected in Gehenna will be meted out to him. The infidel cannot repent after death, and will spend eternity in torment. This is no private theory or opinion of my own, but simply the teaching of Christ, who is my Master.'"

Moody, too, was asked. The revivalist said in reply: "I don't want to prophesy about the future of any living man, but I will say that I think no sinner who repents is beyond God's grace." Then the enterprising interviewer showed their opinions to the Colonel, who is worth many dead ones yet, and asked what he thought of them. He replied: "In the first place, it is well enough to say that these pious gentlemen know nothing whatever about any world or life beyond this, and very little about this. They do not know whether or not there is a heaven, or a hell, or a God, or anything after death. They talk as though they were raised with God, and had played marbles with Christ. Mr. Moody takes the ground that a man must repent before he dies—up to the last breath God loves him as a mother loves her babe; but a second after his soul has left his body this divine love changes to hatred, and God damns the poor devil as quickly as he can. This is Mr. Moody's theology. Nothing could be more absurd."

"The dogma of eternal pain is infinitely savage. If Mr. Dixon is right, his God is an infinite fiend. He thinks that I could not be happy in heaven. In that he is right. I could not be happy in heaven—neither could any decent human being, if Dixon's God is to be there. Dixon's heaven would be a hell of a place. Of course, all the orthodox preachers are happy in the thought that I am going to hell; that God is going to have his revenge, and that they (the preachers), when heaven gets dull, can look over the Jasper walls of paradise and see me struggling in the coils of the worm that never dies. The sight will fill their pious souls with joy. They know that they can never get even with me in this world, and so they are savagely waiting for the next. But these men are not worth answering."

The *New York Journal* devotes a page to "A Startling Discovery about Noah's Ark." The discovery is nearly thirty years old, but Professor Paul Haupt has put out a new book on the subject of the Babylonian Tablet, which gives an account of the Deluge in Mesopotamia, and tells how the god Ea commanded Par-napistim to make an ark and take in the animals. The book of Genesis was probably not compiled much earlier than 500 B.C. But this Babylonian tablet was baked at least 2,500 years B.C.

Of course, the *Journal* asked Ingersoll's opinion. Equally, of course, the Colonel was familiar with the story. He said: "I hope all the faithful will read the Assyrian story about the Flood. They will see that it is just as credible as the one written by Noah, and that the Assyrian gods were just as malevolent and foolish as our own Jehovah."

Secular Thought, of Toronto, reports the following story from Montreal:—About three years ago a burglary was committed at the jewellery store of M. Cochenthaler, on James-street, Montreal. The contents of the store were insured with the Dominion Burglary Guarantee Co., and, as all the efforts of the police were unsuccessful in tracing the stolen goods, that company paid over their value in full to Mr. Cochenthaler. About two weeks ago, however, a John Kiernan, who had been a watchman at the time of the burglary, was arrested on another charge, and upon searching his house a quantity of the goods stolen from Mr. Cochenthaler was found, and, by means of confession of Kiernan, other portions were traced. After a deal of persuasion, the bulk of the property being still missing, Kiernan at length confessed that, his conscience troubling him, he went about a year ago to Father Saurin, of Notre Dame Church, confessed his crime, and was advised by the Father to restore the stolen goods. He, however, explained that the goods had been insured, and that their loss had been made good by the Burglary Company. The Father then suggested that the valuable articles should be given to the cause of charity, and, accordingly, during the past year, they were raffled at various times throughout the city of Montreal for the benefit of the Indian Missions. Father Saurin admitted to detective Campeau, who waited upon him, that Kiernan's story was true. The question now is, Will the Burglary Company prosecute the Church as a receiver of stolen goods?

Illustrated Bits says: "Our poet, who has been known to now and then tell the truth, relates this story of his little daughter. Her mother overheard her expounding the origin of sex to her family of dolls. 'You see, childrens,' she said, 'Adam was a man all alone, and he was ever so lonely-ponely, and Dod put him to sleep, and then he took his brains out and made a nice lady for him.'" Evidently this Adam must have developed into a preacher-man, the brain-pan still being somewhat defective.

The *Church Times*, alluding to the Catholic boast of conversions, says: "Between 1841 and 1891 the population of these islands increased by 11,000,000, yet there were, in 1891, 1,500,000 fewer Roman Catholics than there were half a century before. This does not look like progress, and we doubt if the Holy Father would feel much satisfaction if he were made aware of all the circumstances that are known here to exist. Is he, for instance, made aware of the terrible defection of those who seem to make the Roman Church a half-way house on the road to Socinianism and Agnosticism?"

Père Jourdain, who is working miracles of healing by magnetized sugar at the Rue Dondeauville, Montmartre, Paris, is, it is said, becoming rapidly rich. He was an agricultural labourer, but heard voices telling him to go to Paris to heal the sick. According to his own account, the spirits who assist him in his work are those of Lamennais, Saint Victorine and Saint Louis, who respectively represent Faith Hope, and Charity. Père Jourdain does his miracles at five francs per time, and the patients have to bring their own sugar. Of course, the doctors ridicule his pretensions, but there is no doubt that he can boast many cures in cases where a lively expectation operates.

The *Morning Leader* (February 27) is severely sarcastic on the King's Cross-road "evangelist," whose Anti-Infidel Tract Enterprise is £200 in debt, which sum the Rev. T. A. Clark, vicar of St. George the Martyr, invites the British public to clear off by way of celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The *Leader* hopes its readers will not tear their cheque-books to pieces in their "wild impatience to be in this remarkably soft thing." Of the King's Cross-road evangelist the *Leader* says that he is the "good, good brother of that naughty Charles Bradlaugh who died some years ago. It often happens that, were it not for a naughty brother, the good brother in a family would never be heard of. It is certainly so with the Bradlaugh's, for dear, good 'W. R.' has basked in the reflected light of sad, bad Charles for many a year."

Mr. Labouchere is on the track of another pious hero, Mr. Robert Couch, of Nunhead, who boasts of having been Mr. Bradlaugh's "right-hand supporter in the early part of his infidel career," and of having besides the "personal acquaintance of Holyoake, Foote, etc." "God in his mercy" led Mr. Couch to see the error of his ways, but the Almighty does not appear to have taken any further interest in him, since he is now suffering from paralysis. Still, he wishes to use his pen for his Master, and he means to write a book, copies of which shall be sent "on publication" to sympathetic persons who send him "any aid." Mr. Labouchere states (in *Truth*) that this Mr. Couch was formerly (a very long time ago!) connected with a body called the South London Secular Society. He changed his opinions and became secretary to a Wesleyan Mission. "He migrated into another religious body, and then into one of her Majesty's prisons, having been sentenced at Middlesex Sessions, in November, 1878, to twelve months' hard labor for defrauding a gentleman of £400." Since his exit from prison, says Mr. Labouchere, this pious gentleman has been "chiefly engaged in beggar-letter writing, and in various shady philanthropic efforts." He has been for many years on the black list of the Charity Organization Society. "It seems quite time," Mr. Labouchere adds sarcastically, "that somebody brought his claims before Mr. Balfour." —

A dispatch to the *New York Herald* from Wichita, Kan., says: "Mrs. J. L. Treadwell, a well-known society woman of Emporia, has sacrificed a pet poodle dog as a burnt-offering, declaring that she did so in order to propitiate an offended god, who, she believes, has decreed the death of her two children. She declares she saw the Lord face to face in a vision, and he told her to offer up a living sacrifice." Mrs. Treadwell has recently become deeply interested in religion; hence her insanity. —

The Rev. Mr. Bolton has left his church in Chicago, under the delusion, so his friends say, that his wife accuses him of scandalous conduct with six or seven women. What basis there is for the delusion none but the reverend gentleman knows. —

The Church Missionary Society is like most similar institutions—in perpetual want of cash. The deficit of 1895-6 of £10,000 will, it is anticipated, be trebled unless the annual offertories made this month show a considerable increase on previous years. Up to the present the bequests from legacies are £10,040 below those of the former twelve months. —

The Society says that its expenses have much increased in Persia, which "we have found a most difficult field to cultivate." The missionaries have no success, so complain that they are persecuted. It is doubtful if they have suffered as much as the Moslem colony at Liverpool, yet the Foreign Office has several times been appealed to on their behalf. —

Some religious papers express regrets that a company of the Salvation Army burned Colonel Ingersoll in effigy. Of course they do; but what have these orthodox journals got to say about a God they believe intends to burn his soul forever in hell? Those ignorant and brutal Salvationists doubtless felt that, inasmuch as God will burn the Colonel's soul in hell, they might as well burn his lifeless effigy on earth. Whatever wrong there was in the barbarous act is due to the very religion advocated by these papers. Their regrets at the action of the Salvationists reflect some credit upon them from the standpoint of humanity, but it is at the expense of their religion. —

The Rev. Mr. Plater, Unity Church, Islington, has resigned because he feels out of sympathy with the present trend of Unitarian thought. Mr. Plater thinks that if they give up miracles they will have to give up God, and that, in short, they don't know where they are; which is exactly what most of them think of the Rev. Mr. Plater. —

It seems likely that the application of the Rev. Ellison A. Voysey, a younger son of the Rev. C. Voysey, of the Theistic Church, to become a Unitarian minister, while disclaiming the title of Christian, will occasion a considerable shaking of the dry bones in the Unitarian valley, to the encouragement, let us hope, of honest outspokenness. —

In a Suffolk village, the other Sunday, the rector's wife was giving a Bible lesson, and came to the word "mystery." "What is a mystery?" was her natural question. "A dreadful murder," was the instant answer of a very good little girl. She was the police constable's daughter. Some time ago the teacher of a Sunday-school class asked her poor children why Adam and Eve were driven out of paradise. A little girl replied, "Because they had not paid their rent." —

The *English Mechanic*, in its March part, reprints Dr.

Lionel Beale's lengthy discourse on Vitality, upon which "A Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society" pithily remarks that it "seems almost incredible that a man of Dr. Lionel Beale's real scientific eminence should delude himself, and try to delude others, with such a metaphysical figment as 'vital force,' were there not some theological hypothesis lurking in the background. I wonder what would be thought of a man who postulated a 'watch force' as the only conceivable explanation of the going of a chronometer?" —

Eric Parker, who contributes an excellent article on "Private Schools, Ancient and Modern" to the new number of *Longman's*, tells a tale of flogging Keate of Eton. It was related to Mr. Parker by the late Sir Thomas Whichcote, who stated that once in his Eton days he was walking through Fourth Form-passage when "the Head" met him and stopped. "Boy," said the terrible pedagogue, "what is that book you are carrying?" It proved to be nothing less innocent than a dictionary, but it sufficed not the less for the text of a grim warning. "I thought it was a Bible," was the reply. "Read your Bible, boy, or I'll flog you." The Bible, with its recommendation of the rod, has been the occasion of much brutality. —

The *Crescent* (February 24) cites the *Arjuna*, a Hindu paper of Lahore, as saying: "If Christianity is to spread in India, it will not spread by the eloquence of an apostle, but by the good of famine. Was there ever a time when the missionary reaped so plentiful and splendid a harvest as he is busy reaping at the present moment, when the gaunt spectre of famine is stalking fearlessly in every nook and corner in India, and striking all he comes in contact with dead? The present religions of India are all grander and sublimer by far in their teaching than Christianity, and no Hindu, possessing a rightly constituted mind and able to think and judge for himself, can ever embrace Christianity for its own sake. The wealth of Christianity alone can get its converts; it is the hunger of the body that can help Christianity on in its mission in this land. One may well say, 'Blessed are the famines, for they shall usher the heathen into the kingdom of heaven!'" —

At Irthlingborough (Northamptonshire) Parish Church a sensation was caused by the action of Mr. Robinson, an Evangelical churchwarden, who, at the commencement of the service, walked up to the Communion Table and blew out the lighted candles. The Romanizing Vicar (the Rev. J. K. Taylor) at once relighted them, whereupon Mr. Robinson, who had taken his seat, returned to the chancel and blew them out a second time. Some words were then exchanged, and a number of the congregation left the church. The service proceeded with unlighted candles. When the vicar got to the pulpit he had his turn, and hit out straight at the un-Christian conduct of his opponent. —

Harry Long, the Glasgow infidel-slayer, who did not debate with Bradlaugh, has at last departed for the Antipodes, where we commend him to the good offices of our friend, Joseph Symes. —

At the Newcastle Police-court recently the magistrate, Mr. Roberts, ordered the court Testament to be burnt and another one put in its place. No disinfection but fire was held good enough for the filthy volume. —

The Rev. Henry Robert Davies has obtained a divorce from his wife for adultery with a negro singer whom she met on the beach at the seaside. The man of God is seventy-two, and his wife, when he married her, was but seventeen. —

A deputation of the Watford clergy, including both ministers of the Establishment and Nonconformist Churches, waited on the Earl of Essex at Little Cashiobury, with a view of getting his lordship to stop the playing of golf on Sunday in Cashiobury-park. What transpired, however, is not known, as the press were not invited to attend. —

Poor old Isaiah is said to have been sawn asunder, and the Higher Critics are declared to be doing the job afresh. The dear old lady who runs the *Christian Commonwealth* is literally aghast at the way the old prophet is cut into pieces in the Cambridge Bible Series. She protests: "We have not all given up Moses to please Wellhausen, nor yet Daniel at the dictation of the Dean of Canterbury." She really will not have the greatest of the prophets dissected into scraps. —

Bishop Blyth, of Jerusalem, receives £300 a year of his stipend from the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews. He, however, sends a circular to all churches asking for a collection for his own special mission work. The *English Churchman* says: "It does look like a want of good taste, to say the least of it, for Bishop Blyth to set up a rival organization to that from which he derives a considerable portion of his own income." —

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, March 14, Derby.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—March 7, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road, London; 14, Athenæum Hall; 21 and 28, Camberwell. April 4, Sheffield; 10, 11 and 12, Stanley, Durham. 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.

L. points out that in connection with the passage in Pliny it should be noted that two of the most renowned of the Apostolical Fathers, Clement and Ignatius, are said to have suffered under Trajan. The martyrdom of the first is without evidence, if not wholly bogus, and critics have never yet settled whether Ignatius suffered at Rome or at Antioch.

A. LEVETT.—Jokes received with thanks.

R. LEES.—The texts should be Jer. xxv. 15, 27, 28, and Matt. xxvi. 27.

J. WATTS TREASURE.—We are glad to hear that the attendance at Mr. Cohen's lectures in Bristol was "larger than at any previous lectures this winter"; but this is quite consistent with our statement that the meetings were not as large as they should have been. No reflection was intended on the Branch officers. We are sorry to hear of your attack of influenza, and hope you are now recovered.

G. DIXON.—Our sub-editor generally acknowledges the papers sent us. You referred to an *enclosure*. That misled us. Sorry for the mishap.

LUCIFER.—Your letters in the *Watford Observer* ought to do good. Dr. Lees is a poor controversialist.

E. J. E.—Your suggestions *re* the Athenæum Hall shall be considered. You take no "liberty" in sending them. We are always pleased to receive friendly hints. One head cannot think of everything.

J. B. PRIMMER.—We do not issue volumes of the *Freethinker* with an index. To do so would involve considerable trouble and expense, which would probably not be covered by the demand. Thanks for your interesting and encouraging letter.

HARRY RICHARDSON, 9 Tenby-road, Maryland-point, Stratford, E., will be happy to distribute any Secular literature that may be sent to him for the purpose.

SARAH A. THOMPSON.—Your letter on Woman's Work in the Secular Movement shall appear in our next; it is too late for the present issue. You have our sincere sympathy in the matter. We are sorry to hear of Mr. Thompson's continued ill health, but glad to hear that other things are fairly prosperous with you.

A. B. MOSS.—Hope you will have a successful meeting at New Brompton, where we are happy to see that the "saints" are active. We note the other matter. Thanks. We should like to see you, and other lecturers, more occupied in London, especially in the populous suburban parts; but this wish cannot be realized unless the Lecture Scheme is better supported.

CHARLES FREEMAN.—We never heard of Mr. Harris's death. It is impossible for us to gain knowledge by intuition. We depend, in all such matters, on the information vouchsafed to us by correspondents. Thomas Dunbar Harris was a sturdy Free-thinker, and we much regret to hear that he has joined the majority.

PETE KAVANAGH.—It is useless to insert further letters in favor of retaining the N. S. S. presidency, when there are no letters against it. We agree with all you say about the Irish party.

A. J. LYE (Coventry).—You can join the N. S. S. through the secretary (Miss Vance) at the Society's office, 377 Strand, London, W.C. The minimum subscription is one shilling per year. Pleased to hear that you will "endeavor in future to be a regular, if small, contributor" to the Lecture Scheme.

G. CRUDDAS.—We did not keep the correspondent's letter, so cannot refer to it. Glad to receive the thanks of the Ox Hill and Stanley Branch for assistance from Mr. Foote's Lecture Scheme, which you promise to do your best to support.

MRS. GILBERT.—Dr. Downes' reference to Carlyle is not accurate. Mr. Froude records that Carlyle said it was mathematically certain that the miracles of the New Testament never happened.

ANNUAL CHILDREN'S PARTY.—R. Forder, hon. treasurer, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C., acknowledges:—Per W. Leat, 6s.; A. Saint, 6d.; M. Christopher, 1s. Per S. Hones, 3s. 6d. Further donations are urgently needed.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURE SCHEME.—S. Burgon, 5s.; G. Dixon, 2s.; J. G. Dobson, 2s.; M. Christopher, 5s.; J. Hayes, 2s.; A. G. Lyo, 2s.; A. J. H., 1s.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Dorby Telegraph—New York Public Opinion—Truthseeker—Humanity—Zoophilist—Independent Pulpit—New York Herald—World—Echo—Secular Thought—Sydney Bulletin—Clarion—Boston Investigator—People's Newspaper—Christian Life—Morning Leader—Progressive Thinker—Two Worlds—Newcastle Leader—Freidenker—Der Arme Teufel—Nya Sanningar—Daily Mail.

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.

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

THE National Secular Society's 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.

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.

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

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS.—Thirty words, 1s. 8d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—One inch, 4s. 6d.; half column, £1 2s. 6d.; column, £2 5s. Special terms for repetitions.

SPECIAL.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURE FUND.

My appeal for the Lecture Scheme has not yet borne much fruit, but friends are collecting in different places, and time must be allowed for their efforts. I shall keep the subscription open during March, which will be a "Shilling Month." All who want to see this Scheme continued—and it is the only one in operation, the only one that carries the light of Freethought into the darker haunts of superstition—should forward a donation at the earliest opportunity. There are hundreds of my readers—I might say thousands—who can easily send a shilling, if no more. Let the mass of Freethinkers bestir themselves, and do something, however trifling, for the practical success of the movement. Shillings are pouring in for the Prince of Wales's hospital scheme. Surely they are just as much needed to cure the mental disease of the people of this country; particularly as the disease of superstition is the parent of so many other diseases, and curing it is going to the root of the evil.

G. W. FOOTE.

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE'S lecture at the Athenæum Hall (73, Tottenham Court-road) last Saturday evening, on "The Prince of Wales's Hospital Fund," drew a fair audience, though not as large as he is accustomed to—which seems to falsify the sanguine prophecies of those who advise the "socialization" of the National Secular Society. The history of hospitals was treated, then the condition and character of present-day hospitals, and finally it was urged that these institutions, which were not really "private," should be brought under public control, and, if possible, municipalized. The Prince of Wales's scheme for raising funds would, in the lecturer's opinion, only serve to stave off the question of hospital reform, by virtually endowing the hospitals under their present management.

Mr. Charles Watts is back from Scotland, where he has been working very hard—too hard, we fear, for a man of his age. Our friend and colleague has just seen his sixtieth birthday, and cannot do with impunity what he did twenty years ago. Unfortunately he caught a nasty cold, and had to cut his lecture short on Sunday evening. He speaks in the highest terms of the kindness of the Glasgow friends on that occasion.

Mr. Watts lectures at the Athenæum Hall this evening (March 7), taking for his subject, "The New Christianity, according to Ward Beecher's Successor." Dr. Lyman Abbott, the preacher in question, is the gentleman who has lately been laughing at Jonah's missionary adventures. He has published a new work on Christianity, with which Mr. Watts will deal. Mr. Foote will probably take the chair, having a Sunday free in consequence of the Birmingham friends being unable to obtain a hall for that date.

The date for the Children's Party is now fixed. It will take place in the Large Hall, Club Union Buildings, Clerkenwell-road, adjoining Holborn Town Hall, on Wednesday, March 31. Tea at 5.30 p.m. Members of branches can obtain tickets from their respective secretaries. Members unattached should apply to the Secretary, Miss Vance (enclosing stamped envelope), who will lay their applications before the Committee. Gallery tickets admitting parents or friends to view the party from the gallery

can be obtained from the Secretary or Treasurer, price 3d. Friends who are sending presents of sweets, cakes, or toys should forward them direct to the Society's office, 377, Strand. Subscriptions should be sent to Mr. R. Forder, 28, Stonecutter-street, E.C., who acts as Treasurer.

The South Shields friends are looking forward to Mr. Snell's lecture on "Charles Bradlaugh," to be delivered in the People's Palace, Ocean-road, this Sunday evening. It is the first lecture in this hall, and Freethinkers are requested to note the address.

There ought to be a Branch of the National Secular Society in Dublin. Any readers of the *Freethinker* in that city, who would like to co-operate in starting one, are invited to communicate with Mr. Pete Kavanagh, 2, Drumcondra Park, Dublin.

Speaking in St. George's Hall, Bradford, on Monday evening, Mr. Asquith attacked the Government Education Bill. In the course of his address he said: "Some, like his friend Mr. Illingworth, held that it was the business of the State to give secular education, and secular education only. With that view he heartily concurred, but in 1870 it did not prevail. They arrived at a compromise, and by that compromise they were prepared to stand." We are glad to see that Mr. Asquith is abstractly in favor of secular education. At the same time, we regret to see him propping up the rotten old compromise of 1870. Some day or other Liberal statesmen may regard principles as the proper guides of policy, and not mere objects of platonic affection.

The Independent Pulpit, conducted by J. D. Shaw, of Waco, Texas, has now completed its fourteenth year. It has kept the Freethought banner waving with credit in the Southern States, and we hope it has a long career of usefulness before it. The February number copies Mr. Wheeler's article on Harriet Martineau from our columns. Mr. J. P. Richardson always writes with spirit, and we may reciprocate by reproducing one of his contributions to the *Independent Pulpit*.

Even the Unitarians are now taking up Giordano Bruno. The Rev. S. Fletcher Williams has an article on the Freethought Martyr in the *Echo* of March 2. He concludes by saying: "When the Calendar of the Church of the Future comes into operation, Saint Giordano Bruno's day will be a great festival."

M. Ferdinand Danton, a great grandson of Jacques Danton, has become engaged to Viviane Marat, great grand-daughter of Jean Paul Marat. He is an artist in New York, and she lives in Paris. They first met when at the unveiling of a statue to Danton on the Place de la Republique.

The Free Review for March opens with an able article on "The Church and Evolution," by W. T. Husband, who sees plainly that the revised attitude of the Church is due to a lively recollection of the loaves and fishes. "It is impossible even for a Bishop to serve the anthropomorphic God of Moses wrapped in the Articles of Religion, and at the same time subscribe to Evolution." Mr. Verinder continues his papers on the Blasphemy Laws; Mr. Newcombe writes on the poet, Arthur Hugh Clough; and Mr. J. M. Wheeler on Mr. Robertson's "Saxon and the Celt." Messrs. H. S. Salt and Geoffrey Mortimer carry on a controversy on animal treatment, and another centres round former articles on "Stagnant Virginity."

Andrew Carnegie has secured the consent of Herbert Spencer to sit for his portrait to Artist A. R. Oules. When completed, the painting will be placed in Mr. Carnegie's Art Gallery in Pittsburgh, Pa.

We have received from Mr. Thomas MacLeish a paper—too late for insertion in this week's *Freethinker*, though it will appear in our next issue—on the Progress of Freethought in the West of Scotland. Mr. MacLeish gives a highly encouraging account of the courses of lectures recently delivered in the district by Messrs. Watts and Cohen. These lectures were all organized by the Glasgow Branch, under Mr. Foote's Lecture Scheme. Audiences continue to improve, the sale of literature increases, and there is every prospect of good Branches being established in the places visited. "That the Lecture Scheme," says Mr. MacLeish, "is the only method whereby this object can be attained we are fully convinced. We can justly claim to speak authoritatively on its behalf, as we have thoroughly tested it. Forty-three lectures under Mr. Foote's scheme have been organized and delivered under the auspices of the Glasgow Branch—a record which we regard with a pardonable amount of pride. We are satisfied that the Scheme, if properly supported throughout the country, will be the means of adding numerous recruits to our ranks."

ATHEISM.

AMONG the many misrepresentations that Atheism is heir to, none is calculated to do more damage than that which arises from a combination of ignorance and calumny—viz. that Atheism is a denial of the existence of God. For years it has been the tantalizing task for Atheists to be continually repudiating this illogical definition. Christian Evidence (?) lecturers have shouted themselves hoarse qualifying Atheism with such adjectives as "blatant," "ribald," etc., simply because their opponents would not accept this definition knowing full well that Atheism, as understood by Atheists, is simply being "without God," and that is the definition upon which Atheistic scientists have taken their stand. 'Tis true that dictionaries define Atheism as being "a denial of the existence of God"; but if we want to know what is meant by Christianity we do not go to dictionaries—we are bound by honesty to find out what Christians mean by the term. The same applies to Buddhism or any religion—we must have the term explained by the devotee. And so with Atheism; if we want to know what Atheism is, we must find out what Atheists mean by the term. Of course it is difficult to get some bigoted Christians to understand that the Atheist is entitled to the same consideration as themselves; but we hope, by dint of perseverance, to override this difficulty, and establish the fact that "Atheism is a fruitful affirmation of all truth."

Charles Bradlaugh, in his *Plea for Atheism* (p. 4), says: "The Atheist does not say there is no God, but he says I do not know what you mean by God.....The word 'God' is to me a sound, conveying no clear or distinct affirmation. I do not deny God, because I cannot deny that of which I have no conception." With this clear statement before them, no one but a calumniator would charge an Atheist with denying the existence of God. The London *Echo* (a most carefully-conducted paper), in a leading article (June 30, 1896), says: "The plain man, rejecting tradition, interpreting the Scriptures according to his conscience, is invested with the dignity and virility which come of earnest striving after truth." This is exactly what the Atheist does; he casts aside the theological fetters, and arrives at his conclusions by the exercise of the greatest faculty man possesses—Reason; which, as Bishop Butler remarks, "is the only faculty we have wherewith to judge concerning things, even revelation itself" (*Analogy of Religion*, chap. iii.).

Professor Tyndall, although rejecting Atheism himself, spoke thus of Atheists in the *Portnightly Review*, 1877: "If I wished to find men who are scrupulous in their adherence to engagements, whose words are their bond, and to whom moral shiftiness of any kind is subjectively unknown; if I wanted a loving father, a faithful husband, an honorable neighbor, and a just citizen, I would seek him among the band of Atheists to which I refer. I have known some of the most pronounced among them, not only in life, but in death; seen them approaching with open eyes the inexorable goal, with no dread of a 'hangman's whip,' with no hope of a heavenly crown, and still as mindful of their duties, and as faithful in the discharge of them, as if their eternal future depended upon their last deeds."

WILLIAM D. ROLLEY.

AN EARLY BIBLICAL CRITIC.

LOOKING up the question of Pliny, I took occasion to note something of the life of an early challenger of the forgery, Johann Salomo Semler, who deserves the title, after Lessing, of the first German Rationalist, and, after Spinoza, of the founder of historical Bible criticism. Born at Saalfeld December 8, 1725, he entered the University of Halle, and had some intimations of the difference between theology and religion. He became professor here in 1757, and, by asserting the right of freedom of thought and investigation, drew down on himself the opprobrium of the orthodox. The *Nova bibliotheca ecclesiastica* called him "an impious man, and worse than the Jews" (*homo impius et Judeis pejor*). His reputation increased with the students in proportion to the attacks from without. Up till his time it had been taught that the Bible was a homogeneous whole, inspired throughout. He shattered this doctrine by showing that the books of the canon of various dates and authority were brought together by accidental considerations, and not according to any defined plan. He also showed the text had many variations. He issued in all a hundred and seventy publications, which were not without their influence in broadening thought in Germany, and prepared the way for Baur, Strauss, and Harnack.

J. M. W.

Medium (to party at sitting)—"The spirit of your deceased husband desires to converse with you." Wife—"Huh! if he ain't got no more spirit now than he had when he died, he ain't worth troubling about."

HELL UNREVISED.

ONE has but to read the orthodox writers of a few generations ago to see what changes Christian belief has undergone. Such preaching as was common a hundred, fifty, or even twenty-five years ago, would not be tolerated by Christian congregations now. A few extracts from some of the theological teachers and popular writers of the past are sufficient to indicate the contrast.

Dr. Jonathan Edwards, the head of orthodoxy in America, and its greatest mind, said: "Every time they (the saints) look upon the damned, it will excite in them a lively and admiring sense of the grace of God, in making them so to differ. The sight of hell torments will exalt the happiness of the saints for ever.

"The saints will not be sorry for the damned; it will cause no uneasiness or dissatisfaction to them; but, on the contrary, when they see the sight, it will occasion rejoicing and excite them to joyful praise.

"When you come to be a fire-brand of hell, you will be a fire-brand in two respects—viz., as you will be all on fire, full of the fire of God's wrath; and also as you will be all in a blaze with spite and malice towards God, you will be as full of the fire of malice as you will of the fire of divine vengeance; and both will make you full of torment. . . . Then will you, as a serpent, spit poison at God, and vent your rage and malice in fearful blasphemies against God. Out of that mouth, out of which when you open it will proceed flames, will also proceed dreadful blasphemies against God.

"When you shall wish that you might be turned into nothing, but shall have no hope of it; when you shall wish you might be turned into a toad or serpent, but shall have no hope of it; when you would rejoice if you might have any relief after you have endured these torments millions of ages, but shall have no hope of it; when you have worn out the ages of the sun in your dolorous groans and lamentations; without rest, day or night, or one minute's ease, yet you will have no hope of ever being delivered; when after you have worn out a thousand more such ages, yet you shall have no hope, but shall know that you are not one whit nearer the end of your torments, but that still there are the same groans, the same shrieks, the same doleful cries, incessantly to be made by you, and that the smoke of your torment shall still ascend forever and ever; and that your souls, which have been agitated by the wrath of God all this while, will yet exist, to bear more wrath; your bodies, which have been roasting all this time in these glowing flames, yet shall not have been consumed, but will be made to roast through an eternity yet, which shall not have been at all shortened by what shall have been passed."

Patten, in "Sermons to the Young," preached at Enfield, Mass., said: "But tell me, tell me, O, my young friends, can you dwell with devouring fire? Can you dwell with everlasting burnings? Can you make your bed in hell? Can you lie down in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, and be wrapped in sheets of flame? Can you howl and groan with devils to all eternity? How will you quake when devils, like lions, shall be seen to fall upon your guilty souls and drag them down to hell! . . . O, dear hearts, how can we endure to see you roaring in these flames and the devils tormenting you? But God will enable us to do it, and if you perish we shall glorify him to all eternity, and sing sweet hallelujahs in your damnation."

Another celebrated American theologian, Dr. Emmons, wrote: "One part of the business of the blessed is to celebrate the doctrine of reprobation. While the decree of reprobation is eternally executing on vessels of wrath, the smoke of their torment will be eternally ascending in view of the vessels of mercy, who, instead of taking part with those miserable objects, will say Amen, Hallelujah, praise the Lord."

The Rev. Josiah Spalding, in combatting Universalism, said: "They (the saints) look down and see their own dearest kindred in hell, under all the bitter agonies of death, and they stand unmoved at the sight—they maintain perfect calmness and undisturbed joy. They hear the Judge pronounce the final sentence; they see all the wicked sink down to hell moved with devouring flames to meet them; a sight infinitely more dreadful than the sinking of worlds. At the same time they begin the triumph song;

they see the power of God employed in the most terrible manner to make their dearest and nearest connections forever miserable. And for this display of his power they ascribe unto him blessings and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving. This consideration, were there no other, is proof that the redeemed in heaven stand complete in holiness. They feel exactly as God feels, according to their measure, as they are filled with all the fullness of God."

In describing the damned, Bishop Jeremy Taylor said: "Every member of their bodies shall suffer more pain and torment than if it were torn from the body. If one cannot tell how to suffer a toothache, headache, or pain of the colic, what will it be when there shall not be any joint, or the least part of the body, which shall not cause him an intolerable pain; not only the head, or teeth, but also the breasts, side, shoulders, the back, the heart and marrow."

The great French preacher, Saurin, when preaching on hell, said: "I sink! I sink under the weight of my subject; and I declare when I see my friends, my relations, the people of my charge, this whole congregation; when I think that I, that you, that we are all threatened with this torment; when I see in the lukewarmness of my devotions, in the languor of my love, in the levity of my resolutions and designs, the least evidence, though it be only presumptive, of my future misery; yet I find in the thought a mortal poison which diffuseth into every period of my life, rendering society irksome, nourishment insipid, pleasure disgusting, and life itself a cruel bitter."

Pollock, in his *Course of Time*, a book which was read by the higher classes in the public schools in New England when I was a boy, describes hell as "that dungeon of unfading fire," where—

Most miserable beings walk
Burning continually, yet unconsumed;
Forever wasting, yet enduring still;
Dying perpetually, yet never dead.
Some wandered lonely in the desert flames,
And some in fell encounter fiercely met,
With curses loud and blasphemies, that made
The cheek of darkness pale, and as they fought,
And cursed and gnashed their teeth and wished to die,
Their hollow eyes did utter streams of woe,
And there were groans that ended not, and sighs
That always sighed, and tears that ever wept,
And ever fell, but not in Mercy's sight.

The celebrated scholar and preacher, Albert Barnes, said that why "any should suffer forever—lingering on in hopeless despair, and rolling amid infinite torments without the possibility of alleviation and without end," he could not understand. "I have not," he said, "seen a particle of light thrown on these subjects that has given a moment's ease to my tortured mind; nor have I an explanation to offer, or a thought to suggest, which would be of relief to you. . . . It is all dark, dark, dark to my soul, and I cannot disguise it."

Enough! If there are any conceptions of God and of man's destiny more savage, brutal, and abhorrent to all the finer feelings of the human heart, than can be found in Christian theological literature, I do not know where to look for them. According to the descriptions of Edwards, Taylor, Spalding, and others, God is an almighty fiend, full of revenge, hate, and unspeakable cruelty, compared with whom tigers are gentle and merciful; and such monsters of meanness and malignity as men can be are paragons of goodness. And the character of the redeemed, the saved, is not much better than that of their God. Naturally, as the Rev. Joseph Spalding says, "They feel exactly as God feels, according to their measure, as they are filled with all the fullness of God." They are not as bad as God because they have not the "measure" the capacity for so much vindictiveness and villainy. They rejoice in the never-ending tortures of the damned; as they see multitudes of their fellow creatures, including "their nearest and dearest connections, sink down into hell, they begin the triumph song." "The sight of hell torments," wrote Edwards, "will exalt the happiness of saints forever."

I have seen something of war; I have been in battle, and have been one of the wounded on the battle-field after the engagement, when the ground was strewn with the dead, dying, and disabled, and the air was filled with groans and cries of pain; but I never saw a soldier who would not, if he could, give water from his canteen to quench the thirst of one of the enemy—of a soldier who had fallen wounded fighting against him and his comrades. While these

unregenerate soldiers feel pity even for an enemy fallen into their hands, who has been hurt in battle, the saved in heaven (the saints) feel glad when they witness the tortures of the damned, which excite in them a lively and admiring sense of the grace of God in making them to so differ; the sight of the damned will "occasion rejoicing and excite them to joyful praises."

As for the damned, it is not alleged by Edwards *et id omne genus* that they derive any satisfaction from one another's sufferings. They are not so cruel and mean as to delight in the torture of fellow beings who have done them no harm. The worst said of them is, that while they are roasting in a lake of fire and brimstone in their inconceivable agony, crazed with torment, they curse the author of their misfortunes, and plead for death to relieve them from their sufferings—offences (?) which, to a mind unperverted by a hellish theological superstition, appear small indeed in comparison with the unrelenting cruelty of God (as represented), and with the revelry of rejoicing of the redeemed over the horrible, ceaseless, and unending tortures of the damned.

Let us feel grateful that hell has been revised.

—*Independent Pulpit.*

B. F. UNDERWOOD.

A FRAGMENT.

THE long drought was evidently coming to an end. Every morning for weeks and weeks I had been awakened at four or five o'clock in the morning by the blazing sunshine. The grass on the Town Moor was brown and parched, and the roads inches deep in dust. The lady cyclists ploughed along in halos of dust. I had done my day's work, and was sitting at my desk preparing for the evening's toil. I lighted my pipe, and was successful in filling the little parlor with a dense smoke. Outside, the clouds were scudding before a slight breeze, and a few large drops of rain had fallen on the pavement like black five-shilling pieces. Down at the bottom of the street, where the park lay, the children were trudging homeward in belated groups, and the tennis-ground and bowling-grounds were deserted. I was glad.

My God! said I, how delighted the poor farmers will be with this rain; ah! and the poor cattle and sheep. Well, well, I had also made two bets of half-a-crown each that it would rain before midnight, and I saw that I had won my money.

There was a heavy knock at the front door. The postman. "Loudonia!" Loudonia is my wife, brought over from New York some years ago. "Loudonia!"

"Yes, dear."

"It is the Young Men's Christian Magazine for Amateur Authors, and I must write a pious article for it at once."

"Yes, dear."

"Bring me those fine pointed pens from the window-shelf, and glance along the second shelf in the recess and get me some books."

"Yes, dear."

"If you will look along that row, you will see some of Farrar's works, and then pull down Milman's *History of the Jews*. I must write an article for these religious fellows, so run away for an hour."

"Yes, dear"; and I was alone.

Poor Loudonia was brown, but comely, a Creole—but no matter. I prepared to write an essay on the Christian religion, and, accidentally opening a book, read the following passage:—

"There is nothing human in nature. The earth, though loved so dearly, would let me perish on the ground, and neither bring forth food nor water. Burning in the sky, the great sun, of whose company I have been so fond, would merely burn on, and make no motion to assist me. Those who have been in an open boat at sea without water have proved the mercies of the sun, and of the deity who did not give them one drop of rain, dying in misery under the same rays that smile so beautifully on the flowers. In the south the sun is the enemy; night and coolness and rain are the friends of man."

An hour later and Loudonia put her black head into the room, and, looking wistfully at me, said: "Have you finished, dear?"

"No, my love; I cannot write to-night. Put the Young Men's Christian Magazine away, and let us walk out in the rain."

E. A. BAILEY.

Let the priests of any religion have power, and let men speak for themselves in opposition to their doctrines; in this case persecution is sure to follow.—*Lord Brougham, Speech in the House of Commons, May 10, 1825, on Roman Catholic Relief Bill.*

A PO'ERFU' PREACHER.

Oh, fervent the sowl o' guid Sandy McPhee,
An' thrillin' the po'er o' his word;
When he pitched up his voice, in a falsetto key,
It pierced like the point o' a sword.

An' when he cam' doon, wi' a quiverin' croon,
That trembled wi' haly fervor,
Ilka hearer wad grue, as if jagged through an' through,
An' even the hardened wad co'er.

Oh, the cast o' his e'e was a queer thing to see,
An' the hang o' his sappy grey jowls,
When he lifted his palm to administer balm
To our droopin' an' languishin' sowls.

There was sowl-savin' grace in ilk grunt an' grimace
O' this guidly an' godly divine,
When, wi' snout in the air, he wad wrestle in prayer,
An' wheedle, an' whazle, an' whine.

Oh, fearsome an' fell were the things he wad tell,
O' the damned in the brimstone lake,
Where the glorified host see them wriggle an' roast,
But never no pity can take.

It was fearsome, but gran', when he lifted his han'
An' doon on the Bible would thresh;
Fra the saunt to the rake, he made ilka ane quake,
For the deeds that were done in the flesh.

But fearsomer still were his bodin's o' ill,
An' sterner the thump o' his neive,
When he thundered the doom that wad blast an' consume
The wretches wha widna believe.

But soothin' an' calm, like the sough o' a psalm,
Were his words to the lambs o' the flock,
Wha minded the plate, an' were aye in their sate,
An' believed a' the blethers he spoke.

Ay, fervent the sowl o' guid Sandy McPhee,
But his mind it made little advance;
For his havers took fine, an' it's hard to resign
Three hund'er a year an' a manse.

A. B.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

REPORT of Executive meeting, held at the Society's offices, 377, Strand, W., on Thursday evening, February 25; the President, Mr. G. W. Foote, in the chair. Present: Messrs. E. Bater, T. Gorniot, W. Heaford, S. Hartmann, V. Roger, H. J. Stace, P. Sabine, M. Loafer, W. Leat, H. R. Clifton, J. M. Wheeler, and the Secretary.

Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed; monthly cash statement read and adopted. The President reported on the legal aspect of the balance due to the Society from the Bradlaugh Memorial Fund, and, after discussion, it was resolved that (by permission of the editor of the *Freethinker*) a plain statement of the case should appear in that journal at an early date.

The Derby branch had intimated their willingness to receive the conference this year. The complete arrangements, however, were ordered to stand over until next meeting. The President reported that the manifesto ordered at the last meeting, on the Education Bill of the Government, was now in circulation. Copies had been sent to all the principal London and provincial newspapers, and to members of the School Board. The Camberwell branch, through its delegate, appealed for financial assistance, and the President offered to personally assist by contributing his share of the proceeds for one evening at his forthcoming debate with the Rev. W. T. Lee.

The Children's Party was discussed, and the Secretary was instructed to fix the date immediately. The meeting then adjourned.

EDITH M. VANCE, *Secretary.*

Obituary.

MRS. BOORMAN, mother of the secretary of the Chatham Branch of the N. S. S., expired on Sunday, February 21, after a brief and painful illness. She frequently attended the meetings of the Secular Society, but was unable to remove her early Theistic impressions, and, in deference to her wishes, received a Christian burial. She was well known to many of the Secularist lecturers who visited the Secular Hall, and who will learn of her death with regret.

BOOK CHAT.

Mr. STEAD has published a double number of "The Master-piece Library," entitled *Hymns that have Helped*. He obtained his collection by the method of sending out a circular broadcast. He did not get the answers he wanted from all those he addressed. The Dean of St. Paul's disapproved of the principle of the hymn-book. Mr. Andrew Lang said that the hymns that had helped him most were the Homeric Hymns addressed to Demeter and Aphrodite. Grant Allen wrote: "I do not remember that any hymn, or, for the matter of that, any text of scripture, maxim, or line of poetry, was ever of the least use to me. There are poems which I love, such as Shelley's 'Skylark'; but I cannot honestly say they ever 'helped' me. I never needed help, other than physical or monetary. My own philosophy has always amply sufficed me."

Mr. Herbert Spencer replied: "My own experience furnishes no examples of the kind you wish. If parents had more sense than is commonly found among them, they would never dream of setting their children to learn hymns as tasks. With me the effect was not to generate any liking for this or that hymn, but to generate a dislike for hymns at large. The process of learning was a penalty, and the feeling associated with that penalty became a feeling associated with hymns in general. Hence it results that I cannot name any 'hymn that has helped me.'" Mrs. Humphry Ward said the question asked was one that should not be answered.

It is curious that Mr. Stead should insert "The Marseillaise." True, it is among the national hymns, where it could scarcely be denied a place. But its goddess is Liberty, and its associations are all with infidel France. Garibaldi's hymn, which also is given, is likewise the revolutionary war-song of an Atheist.

Let us haste to more proper and pious productions, Toplady's "Rock of Ages" being the first favorite:—

Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy Cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die!

This fervent doggerel is said to have been helpful to the Prince Consort, while his eldest son rejoices in "Nearer my God to Thee." Fancy the Prince of Wales selecting the self-congratulatory "Nearer my God to Thee," of Mrs. Adams, who, by the way, was heterodox on the subject of the Trinity. It makes one wonder who or what the Prince of Wales's God may be. We fancy we can hear his jolly voice singing early in the morning:—

Though, like the wanderer,
Daylight all gone,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone;
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, to Thee—
Nearer to Thee!

The favorite hymn of the Duke of Cambridge, late Commander-in-Chief of the British army, was:—

Onward, Christian soldiers! marching as to war,
With the Cross of Jesus going on before,
With my umbrella I in the rear will roar.

The Duke of Argyll, with pride of ancestry, becoming a Macallum Mor, selects:—

O God of Bethel, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed;
Who through this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led.
Our vows, our prayers, we now present
Before Thy throne of grace;
God of our fathers, be the God
Of their succeeding race.

The Campbells, however, changed their old Catholic God for a Presbyterian one in the days of William of Orange.

Hugh Price Hughes gives as his favorite hymn Wesley's "Jesu, lover of my soul." One verse is very appropriate:—

Just and Holy is Thy name;
I am all unrighteousness;
False and full of sin I am;
Thou art full of truth and grace.

This, too, was the favorite of Henry Ward Beecher, and, with "Rock of Ages" and "Abide with me," received most votes for popularity.

Harry Furniss and Sir Edwin Arnold both gave Longfellow's "Psalm of Life" (which is no religious hymn at all) as their helper. Richard Le Gallienne, judging presumably

by poetic merit, voted for Cardinal Newman's "Lead, kindly light." Mrs. Meynell, who is a Catholic, voted for the evangelical "Abide with me." Mrs. Mona Caird's three favorite hymns are, "Lead, kindly light," "As pants the heart," and "Abide with me." "These three," she says, "possess for me the stay and power of succor. They seem to refer me back to the great unknown, in which and in whom all of us believe, whatever name we may give to our divinity."

* * *

It is notable how nebulous is the character of the bulk of the selections. The most pronounced is that which, in the language of the Shambles, proclaims:—

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.

This is the favorite both of the R. v. James and the Rev. T. Spurgeon. Some are almost entirely secular, as, for instance Goethe's "Ohne Hast und Ohne Rast":—

Without haste and without rest:
Bind the motto to thy breast,
Bear it with thee as a spell;
Storm or sunshine, guard it well!
Heed not flowers that round thee bloom;
Bear it onward to the tomb!

In giving which Mr. Stead says: "I would have liked to include the verses which Mr. Morley said came nearer expressing his ultimate thought than anything else, but I could not drag them even into my very wide net. So I content myself with this." Then there is, "Work, for the night is Coming," which expresses the very philosophy of Secularism:—

Work, for the night is coming!
Work through the morning hours;
Work while the dew is sparkling,
Work 'mid springing flowers;
Work when the day grows brighter,
Work in the glowing sun;
Work, for the night is coming,
When man's work is done.

PROFANE JOKES.

JOHNNIE—"What are yer cryin' for, Lizzie?" Lizzie—"My mother's dead, and gone to heaven!" Johnnie—"Never mind, don't cry—p'r'aps she ain't!"

Bobby—"Mommer, I have found something about bicycle in the Bible." Mrs. Ferry—"Why, Bobby!" "Yes m. It says, 'Blessed are the pacemakers.'"

Father—"What was the sermon about to-night?" Daughter (who went for a walk with her boy instead of going to church)—"Oh, about the debt on the church and collecting money for the heathen."

Speaker—"Now, what was it the rich man in hell called for? Was it whiskey? No. Was it brandy? No. Was it rum? No. It was water—water! Now, what does that show?" A Voice—"Shows where all you bloomin' teetotal fellows go to."

"Why do you insist upon being married on Friday, Whirly?" "So that her folks will charge all our bad luck to that fact instead of to me."

Mr. Watts—"The idea of the pastor getting up at the close o' the church fair and saying that he was deeply touched!" Mrs. Watts—"And why shouldn't he say so?" Mr. Watts—"Because he was the only man there who hadn't been; that's why."

A very small boy was recently present at a balloon ascension. As the gigantic machine sailed up into the clouds with its human freight, the small boy pulled his mother's dress excitedly, and exclaimed, "What will God say when he sees that a-coming?"

"Mamma," asked a small maiden just before Christmas, "does Santa Claus know my name, where I live, what I want, and where my stockings hung?" "Yes, dear, I guess he does." "My!" was the reply. "He's almost as cute as God, isn't he?"

"I shall hold him in sweet remembrance," said the potentate of Bwkplo. He could hardly have done otherwise. Even at home the young missionary had been spoken of as one of excellent taste.

The cause of reason has had more to confront than the cause of Christianity, which has always been on the side of power since the days of Christ. The two most influential ideas which, in every age since Christianity arose, have given it currency among the ignorant and the credulous have been the ideas of hell and prayer. Hell has been the terror, and prayer the bribe, which have won the allegiance of the timid and the needy.—G. J. Holyoake.

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 C. Watts, "The New Christianity."
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 7.15, P. Ward, "From Wesleyan Pulpit to Secular Platform."
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, Stanley Jones, "Evolution and Reaction."
EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Libra-road, Old Ford): 7, T. Okey, "Dante: Poet and Friend of the People."
KINGSLAND: 12, Meeting at Bradlaugh Club and Institute.
NORTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY, Athenæum, Camden-road, N.W.: 7, Mrs. Maud Hodgson, "Ruskin's *Unto this Last*."
NORTH LONDON ETHICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL, Leighton Hall, Kentish Town: 11, Lesson by F. J. Gould. Children invited.
SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY, Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road: 11.15, Sunday-school; 7, Dr. Stanton Coit, "Religious Revolutions."
WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall): 11.15, Dr. Stanton Coit, "Carlyle."
WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. ("Sun in Splendor," Portobello-road, Notting Hill Gate): March 9, at 9, Business meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, J. Fagan will lecture.

COUNTRY.

BARNESLEY (Black-a-moor Head Hotel): 1, Members' meeting—balance-sheet will be read.
CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 7, A. B. Moss, "The New Pilgrim's Progress."
DERBY (Pollicott's Dining Rooms, Market-place): 7, A Social.
GLASGOW (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12, Discussion Class—Impromptu Speeches; 6.30, A. G. Nostik, "The Geology of Glasgow and Surrounding District"—lantern illustrations.
LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, A lecture.
LEEDS (Compton's Hotel, Briggate): 7, J. Badlay, "National Education."
LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 7, J. Read, "Wait till you come to die." Committee meeting after lecture.
MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): Joseph Hyder—3, "Sixty Years of the House of Lords"; 6.30, "The Land and Labour Problem." Lantern views.
ROCHDALE (Co-operative Store, Toad-lane): 6.30, Members' meeting.
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Bockingham-street): W. Heaford—11, "Life, Death, and Immortality"; 3, "The Failure of Christianity"; 7, "The Religion of the Future." Tea at 5.
SOUTH SHIELDS (People's Palace, Ocean-road): H. Snell—11, "What is the Bible?" 7, "Charles Bradlaugh: Atheist and Reformer." Lantern views.

Lecturers' Engagements.

O. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—March 7 Cardiff; 15 to 21, Manchester; 23, Bradford.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, London, S.E.—March 7, New Brompton. April 4, m., Hyde Park; a., Harrow-road; e., Hammersmith.

POSITIVISM.

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