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THE BIBLE AND THE KORAN.

(Concluded from page 194.)

MOHAMMED, like most other religious teachers, enjoined almsgiving. Old Testament passages on this virtue will readily occur to the reader's recollection. In the New Testament, at least in the teaching of Jesus, it is carried to excess. According to the Prophet of Nazareth, we should give to everyone that asketh without discrimination, and the counsel of perfection he gave to an honorable young man was to sell all he had and give to the poor. In the Koran we find the following:—

"They will ask thee what it is they must give in alms. Say: Let what good ye give be for parents, and kinsfolk, and the orphan, and the needy, and the son of the road; and what good ye do, verily God knoweth it.....If ye give alms openly, it is well; but if ye conceal it, and give it to the poor, it is better for you."

Upon this and other texts the Mohammedan doctors have based an elaborate system of charity. Alms are of two kinds—legal and voluntary. The former is exacted, sometimes in money and sometimes in kind; the latter is left to a man's own determination, but he cannot enter Paradise if he neglects this duty. "The Mohammedans, therefore," says Sale, "esteem almsgiving to be highly meritorious, and many of them have been illustrious for the exercise thereof. Hasan, the son of Ali, and grandson of Mohammed, in particular, is related to have, thrice in his life, divided his substance equally between himself and the poor, and twice to have given away all he had: and the generality are so addicted to the doing of good that they extend their charity even to brutes." In one way or another, a Mohammedan, unless he is too poor to spare anything for the less fortunate, is expected to expend about a tenth of his means in relieving the needy and miserable.

Saint Paul, in the noblest passage of his writings, eulogized a higher form of benevolence than almsgiving, and said that it was useless to give all his substance to feed the poor if he lacked charity. Mohammed also taught that "kind speech and forgiveness is better than alms which vexation followeth." In the Table-Talk of Mohammed—a collection of sayings ascribed to him—there is the following:—

"Think not that any good act is contemptible, though it be but your brother's coming to you with an open countenance and good humor.

"There is alms for every man's joint, every day in which the sun riseth; doing justice between two people is alms; and assisting a man upon his beast, and his baggage, is alms; and pure words, for which are rewards; and answering a questioner with mildness is alms, and every step towards prayer is alms, and removing that which is an inconvenience, such as stones and thorns, is alms."

Christian charity has too largely taken the form of death-bed benevolence. A man gave away in this world what he could not take with him to the next. No doubt this is characteristic of human nature. At any rate, it is a very ancient phenomenon, for we find it censured in the Table-Talk of Mohammed. "A man's giving in alms one piece of silver in his lifetime," he says, "is better for him than giving one hundred when about to die."

We have already quoted Sale's remark, that the Mohammedans extend their charity to the brutes. This was written the better part of two hundred years ago, at a time

when there was little humanity shown to the lower animals in England. The exclamation of St. Paul, "Doth God care for oxen?" is in striking contrast to some touching passages in the Table-Talk of Mohammed. We read there of an adulteress who was forgiven because she once drew water from a well in her boot, and gave it to a dog who was holding out his tongue for thirst. Also of a man who brought Mohammed a present of some young birds, whose mother had fluttered about her brood, so that the man had to put her into the carpet with them. "Put them down," said the prophet; and then he addressed the man in this manner:—

"Do you wonder at the affection of the mother for her young? I swear by Him who hath sent me, verily God is more loving to his servants than the mother to these young birds. Return them to the place from which ye took them, and let their mother be with them."

Mohammed told his followers to fear God in respect of animals, to ride them when they were fit to be ridden, and to get off when they were tired.

With regard to the treatment of slaves, the Koran is superior to the Bible. In the Christian Scriptures, from the Mosaic Law to the epistle to Philemon, slavery is taken for granted as a permanent institution. "Servants, obey your masters" really means "Slaves, obey your owners." Saint Paul sent a runaway slave back to his master, enjoining the slave to be obedient, and the master to be kind. Mohammed took slavery for granted in precisely the same way. But he taught that the slave was, in a sense, a brother, that he was to be fed and clothed like his master, that he was not to be overworked or beaten, and that a man who ill-used his slave would not enter Paradise. When slaves desired their freedom, we read in the Koran, their masters are to give them a deed of manumission; and the Prophet adds: "Give them a portion of the wealth of God, which He hath given you." Mohammed, in the Koran, also tells his followers that they must not force their female slaves into sin. Compare this with the brutal treatment of female captives permitted under the Mosaic Law; women being captured, violated, and then (if the men did not care to keep them) turned out of doors, helpless and friendless, in a foreign land (Deut. xxi. 10, 14; xxiv. 1, 3; Numbers xxxi. 18, 35). A Hebrew master might also beat his slave to death, provided that he did not kill him on the spot.

"And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished; for he is his money" (Exodus xxi. 20, 21).

The penalty for the Hebrew master who killed his slave on the spot is not defined. Probably it was very slight, and seldom inflicted. Even in the eighteenth century, in Poland, a Christian country, if a gentleman killed a serf, the matter was settled by paying a fine of twelve shillings.

No doubt the Jews, in their later history, after the captivity, outgrew the Mosaic Law in the treatment of their slaves; but the institution was never abolished, and the causes of improvement were not religious, but social and political. Slavery in Mohammedan countries, however, seems to have always been of a comparatively mild type. "It is not the slavery of the field," says Mr. Ingram, "but of the household. The slave is a member of the family, and is, in general, treated with tenderness and affection."

It is worth noting that slavery was abolished in Turkey earlier than in the United States. When the Sultan, in 1846, issued a firman granting to Mohammed Ali the government of the conquered provinces in the Soudan, he declared the slave-trade to be "contrary to the laws of religion and justice." Firmans issued in 1857-8 prohibited the slave-traffic throughout the Ottoman dominions. The slaves in the Southern States were not liberated by Lincoln's proclamation till January 1, 1863. Slavery was not abolished in Brazil, another Christian country, till 1888. When we consider that less than a hundred years ago the African slave-trade was in full swing, with all its hellish horrors undiminished, and that the major part of the trade was carried on by Christian England, we can easily see what little right this country has to shriek out its moral indignation at the Mohammedans.

There is little in the Bible about children, and not much in the Koran. Mohammed did not teach, however, as Solomon is supposed to have done, that children should be beaten into sense and goodness. "He was very fond of children," says Deutsch, "and would stop them in the streets and pat their little heads. He never struck anyone in his life." One of his sayings in the Table-Talk is noble and pathetic: "Whoso comforteth a woman who has lost her child will be covered with a garment in Paradise." The strong man, said Mohammed, is not he who throws people down; he is strong who withholds himself from anger. A man who felt angry should sit down; and, if his anger did not depart, he should lie down. This is very quaint, yet perhaps very good advice.

Mohammed was asked what relation was most worthy of doing good to. He replied, "Your mother." This he repeated thrice. "After her," he added, "your father, and after him your other relations by propinquity." "The most valuable thing in the world," he said, "is a virtuous woman." The Koran allows polygamy as the Bible does, but it expressly limits the number of wives and concubines together to four (chap. iv.). Its laws of divorce are modelled on those of the Jews, although it guards the wife's property if she is not guilty of adultery. Sale remarked that the Mohammedans seldom proceed to the extremity of divorce, it being reckoned a disgrace to do so. Mohammed is reported to have said that divorce was lawful, but disliked by God. He was severe against that "foul thing" in chastity in both sexes alike. As a matter of fact, there is very little prostitution in Mohammedan countries. Where it does exist, the people have generally been corrupted by contact with Christians.

The Bible teaches children to honor their fathers and their mothers, but it does not equal the tenderness of the Koran in the following passage:—

"And kindness to your parents, whether one or both of them attain old age with thee: then say not to them 'Fie!' neither reproach them; but speak to them generous words, and droop the wing of humility to them out of compassion, and say: 'Lord, have compassion on them, like as they fostered me when I was little.'"

It is objected that the Paradise of the Koran is a sensual one, with its luscious food and drinks, and its dark-eyed amorous houris. But is there anything very spiritual in the Heaven of the book of Revelation, with its golden floors and jewelled walls? A material Hell must be balanced by a material Heaven. Spiritualize the one, and you must spiritualize the other. Mohammedans of refinement explain the language of the Koran as allegorical, and the same has to be done with the language of the Bible before its future life can be made suitable to persons of any elevation of spirit. We have no doubt that Mohammed believed in a material Heaven and Hell, but so did the writers of the New Testament. His descriptions of Hell are tremendous; as far as they go, they are little inferior to those of Dante.

Mohammed insisted on faith as an essential virtue. But the Bible does the same. Those who believe will be saved, and those who disbelieve will be damned.

It must be said, however, that the Koran insists equally on good deeds. Paradise is not open to the believer unless his good works outweigh his evil works. It must be noted, too, that Mohammed made cleanliness a part of godliness. Bodily purity is a part of the Mohammedan faith. When water is not obtainable, or is too scarce for ablutions, the Moslems scour themselves with sand. Turkish baths come to us from Constantinople. Baths of any kind are very

recent in Christian cities, but they abounded in the fine cities of the Moors in the south of Spain, before their civilization was drowned by the Christian Spaniards in a deluge of blood.

Christians who shut their eyes to the brutalities of the Old Testament, and ignore the fact that toleration is not taught even in the New Testament, object to the Koran because it enjoins war against infidels. Let us see what it actually says:—

"Fight in the path of God with those who fight with you; but exceed not; verily, God loveth not those who exceed. And kill them wheresoever ye find them, and thrust them out from whence they thrust you out.....But if they desist, then verily God is forgiving and merciful. But fight them till there be no dissent, and the worship be only to God; but, if they desist, then let there be no hostility save against the transgressors."

This language is not too clear, but where it is clear it negatives the idea that Mohammedans are bound for ever to propagate their religion with the sword. It does not appear that the Koran authorizes them to commence hostilities. Besides, the forty-seventh chapter of the Koran was really directed against the Arabian idolators, who constantly harassed the Moslems. It is absurd to assert that Mohammed taught his followers to fight and kill Christians and Jews. He himself did not oppress the Christians who would live at peace with him; he readily granted (as Gibbon observes) the "security of their persons, the freedom of their trade, the property of their goods, and the toleration of their worship." Christian churches were freely allowed in Mohammedan states, at a time when no Christian state would have tolerated a Mohammedan mosque.

Nor is it true that the Koran orders the massacre of women and children. Mohammed is represented as expressly saying in the Table-Talk: "Kill not the old men who cannot fight, nor young children, nor women."

Salé points out what small right the Christians have to object to the Koran in this respect. The Jews were ordered by Jehovah to kill every male in some places, and every married woman, and to keep the virgins for themselves; in other places, they were to kill all, men, women, and children, and leave alive nothing that breathed. Jehovah was far more cruel and bloody than Allah. And as to holy wars, why, the Christians waged such against the Mohammedans for centuries, and only ceased when they were thoroughly exhausted.

There is a church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, which is in the Sultan's dominions. Greek and Latin Christians both worship in it, and a guard of Turkish soldiers stands between them to keep them from cutting each other's throats. What a picture! And what a sarcasm on the pretensions of Christianity!

G. W. FOOTE.

GOD'S VIEWS ON WOMEN.

GERTRUDE AHERTON, an American authoress, says of men: "They admire God because he made himself of their gender, and knew what he was about when he invented woman." According to the Bible, however, woman was merely an afterthought of creation, and "brought sin into the world and all our woe," shortly after her appearance on the scene. She owes to man the rib for her manufacture. Eve, says Paul, was in the transgression. She had the curse which involves most suffering, and "He shall rule over thee" was a prophetic portion thereof. From first to last the Bible is a he-book. God is masculine, and his only-begotten child is a son. Why did he not beget a daughter to right the wrong Mother Eve is said to have committed? The Roman Catholics have endeavored to supply this omission by elevating Mary to a position of more importance than God the Father himself.

Throughout the Bible women are treated with contempt. All God's favorites were polygamists. Women were bought and sold in the same way as other merchandise. Rebekah was virtually bought by Abraham's servant for Isaac. In the Ten Commandments a man's wife is classed with his ox, his ass, or anything which is his. In the chapter following the Decalogue permission is given to fathers to sell their daughters into slavery. Sarah gave Hagar, her female slave, "to her husband,

Abraham, to be his wife," and when he was tired of her he cast her with her child into the desert. "And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bond-woman."

The patriarchal system had long been established when the Bible was compiled, although there are traces in the Old Testament records of a far earlier matriarchal stage, when kinship was traced through mothers, fathers being uncertain.* The power of the father was supreme, extending, as in the case of Abraham, to life and death. He never thought of consulting Sarah as to whether he should sacrifice her only son. According to the divine laws dictated by God to Moses, all that a husband had to do if his wife found no favor in his eyes was to "write her a bill of divorcement, give it in her hand, and send her out of his house" (Deut. xxiv. 1). The woman had no power of appeal. Her husband was accuser, judge, and jury. No remedy is offered to the woman if her husband finds no favor in her eyes. A female child was held to be an extra defilement to a woman, and an additional atonement was required.

Painters depict angels as feminine, but the Bible angels are all males. The three who appeared to Abraham were mistaken for men. The one who wrestled with Jacob is called a man. The angel that announced a child to Manoa's wife was "a man of God." The angel that announced to Zachariah the birth of John was a male, and so was the one who appeared to Mary. It is curious how often angelic visits were followed by births.

The preacher who writes in the name of the sensual sultan Solomon declares: "One man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found." This is put forward as God's word, and his opinion of his handiwork. Burns made God a better compliment when he wrote of Nature:—

Her pretence han' she tried on man,
And then she made the lasses, O!

The women most praised in the Bible are Rahab, the harlot, who betrayed her own people, and Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite, who basely assassinated a man who took refuge in her tent. If women had written the Bible, they would not have selected such heroines as these. No wonder some of them desire a revised Woman's Bible of their own!

God surely never meant women to read his holy volume, or he would have expunged the many shameless stories and filthy words which it contains. A decent deity would hardly have had the effrontery to inspire such narratives as those of Lot and his daughters, Tamar, the Levite's concubine, Bathsheba, Abishag, Aholah and Aholibah, and the details of Ezekiel, Hosea, and the Song of Solomon, if he had expected feminine readers. Had the Bible been written by women, be sure we should have had a different representation of them. Perhaps we might have read that it was Adam, not Eve, who was in the transgression.

The New Testament regards woman in much the same light as the Old. Paul says: "But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man" (1 Corinthians xi. 3). In his epistle to the Ephesians v. 22 he commands: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands as unto the Lord." That is to say, the submission must be unquestioning and complete. "For," he repeats, "the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is head of the Church..... Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything." No despot could require a larger charter than granted by Paul. Again he says: "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection" (1 Timothy ii. 7). He affirms, in the most pronounced terms, that the position of woman is a subordinate and servile one. "I suffer not a woman to teach," he exclaims with masculine arrogance (1 Timothy ii. 12).

In the seventh chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, where Paul deals with the marriage relation, he puts that institution on a purely bestial basis, and says: "He that giveth a virgin in marriage doeth well, but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better." Not a word as to the possibility of a girl having a will of her own in the matter. In a succeeding chapter (xi. 6-10) he insists that "the woman" must either be covered (wear a veil, as they do in the East) or "let her also be shorn." "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image

and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man." The verse which follows, "For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels," has puzzled the commentators. It is illustrated by similar precepts in the Koran. Paul, like Mohammed, thought that even the angels might fall into the snares of female beauty. A little further on (xiv. 34, 35) Paul again says: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." Paul well knew that the whole tenor and spirit of the Bible touching the status of woman is that her main mission is but to minister to man—his inferior, not his equal.

Our "great exemplar" was a male, who never married. The references of Jesus to the sex are entirely of a monkish character. "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" he brutally exclaims to his mother. His chosen disciples were men, though he let women minister unto him. He taught that marriage was an inferior state, praising those who made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake (Matthew xix. 12). In the Apocalypse we find that the elect of heaven are those "not defiled with women" (Rev. xiv. 4). The Catholic Church has always taught that unnatural celibacy is the higher state of life, and the early Christian Fathers unite in contemning the characters of women. Tertullian calls her "the gateway of hell." Through the ages when Christianity was predominant she was regarded emphatically as the temptress, the agent of Satan, to lead men from the holy life. Of the nine millions who, it has been computed, were slaughtered in the persecution of witchcraft, probably only one in five hundred was a male.

The teachings of the Bible have contributed to make slaves of women and tyrants of men. There are abundant signs that this old teaching will not suit the present day. Women, who desire the emancipation of their sex, should cease to work for the religion which has built its churches on their prostration, and have the courage to affirm that Paul's authority has no influence with them.

J. M. WHEELER.

ARROGANT PRETENSIONS OF CHRISTIANS.

(Concluded from page 196.)

THE present unfortunate Eastern crisis has afforded Christians another opportunity of reviving their old exaggerated charges against the followers of Mohammed. To avoid being misunderstood, it may be necessary for me to repeat that I have not the slightest sympathy with Turkey; in fact, I should rejoice if, by peaceful means, her position in Europe could be entirely destroyed. But I strongly object, just because the Cretans are nominal Christians, that we should be plunged into a war, the lamentable consequences of which no one can foretell. No doubt Crete will have autonomy of some kind, and will ultimately be united to Greece, as she ought to be, if the Cretans desire it. It is not, however, my purpose to write from a political standpoint; my intention is rather to exhibit the hollow and arrogant pretensions of those Christians who recklessly condemn everything connected with the Mohammedan faith. If those clamorous disciples of the "Prince of Peace" have their way, in all probability rivers of human blood will be shed to protect a handful of professed Christians, who are no less cruel than the Turks themselves. Let the pharisaical church-goers, who would make others fight while they remain at home in peace and comfort, remember that the Turks, bad as they are, may find a precedent for their cruelties in the Biblical record of the Jews. The Old Testament is reddened, in its books of their history, with the story of the shameful cruelty of which they were guilty—of tender children slaughtered, of whole cities put to the edge of the sword; and all this butchery done, it is said, in the name and at the command of the Lord, of whom their ideas were so gross that they more than once offered human sacrifices to him. And we all know what terrible wars and massacres have taken place in the name of that religion of which these self-satisfied accusers are the ministers. As the author of *The Land of*

* See *Bible Studies*, p. 118.

the *Bora*, a little work just published by Messrs. Kegan Paul and Co., remarks: "Western Europeans are too ready to jump to the conclusion that an Eastern community, just because it is labelled Christian, must be better than its neighbors. The Abyssinians are Christians; but they are as cruel, and as treacherous, and as disagreeable in their habits, and as arrant slave-owners, as any African heathens. The political talk about Christianity is mostly cant." And C. S. Horne, writing in the *Christian World* of March 18, referring to Palestine, remarks: "The Christian Churches are not ashamed to trade on the credulity of the ignorant, and often one is tempted to admire more the simplicity and earnestness of the Mohammedan."

Sir W. Muir says that "without the sword Islam would never have been planted even in Arabia, much less ever have spread to the countries beyond. The weapons of its warfare were 'carnal, material, and earthly,' and by them it conquered." The same may be said of Christianity, with this difference—that even with the sword, aided by "spiritual" weapons, it did not conquer. The religion of the Cross made but comparatively little progress before the time of Constantine, who may be termed a theological highwayman, with the sword in one hand and the Cross in the other, constantly engaged in demanding from his victims either their belief or their lives. With the blood-stained history of this pious Emperor before them, Christians should pause before they reproach Mohammed for his use of the sword. According to Mosheim, the causes of the rapid progress of his religion were that his law was "admirably adapted to the natural disposition of man," and that his system "was extremely simple, proposing few things to be believed." T. W. Arnold, B.A., has recently published a work entitled *The Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith*, in which a chapter is headed "Islam Spread by Missionary Methods, and not by the Sword." Here some very interesting facts are given which disprove much of the extravagance indulged in against the Arabian prophet by Christians. R. Bosworth Smith, M.A., writes that the Mohammedan faith "was propagated by missionaries who cared very much for the souls they could win, and nothing for the plunder they could carry off.....It is spread, not by the sword, but by earnest and simple-minded Arab missionaries" (*Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, pp. 33 and 40). Mr. Smith also adds that "Mohammedanism was introduced into Sierra Leone, not many years ago, by three zealous missionaries who came from a great distance." The same writer observes that "the Mussulman missionaries exhibit a forbearance, a sympathy, and a respect for native customs and prejudices, and even for the more harmless beliefs, which is no doubt one reason of their success, and which our own missionaries and schoolmasters would do well to imitate" (*ibid.*, p. 41).

The moral success of the faith of Mohammed in the East was also far greater than that of Christ; for we are told that "the most fatal hindrance to the spread of Christianity has been the lives of Christians"; and that "Christianity seems to have taken even less hold than Judaism of the Arab character.....Thus, neither Christianity nor Judaism ever struck deep root into the Arabian soil" (*ibid.*, pp. 34, 99, 100). Talboys Wheeler, in the preface to his *History of India*, says: "To all appearance, the people of India are drifting slowly but surely into the religion of the prophet of Arabia, rather than towards that Christianity which is freely offered to them, but which they will not accept." How different from this were the results of Mohammedan propagandism. Its faith was eagerly accepted upon every hand, and its acceptance was followed by the decline of polytheism, sorcery, human sacrifice, with all their attendant evils, prostitution, and drunkenness. A desire for literature was created, and science and philosophy found in the followers of Mohammed ready devotees. Draper puts it that "in science their great merit consists in this: that they cultivated it after the manner of the European Greeks. They perceived that it can never be advanced by mere speculation; its only sure progress is by the practical interrogation of Nature" (*Conflict between Religion and Science*, pp. 111, 112). Christians may extol their Christ, but even J. W. H. Stobart, B.A., who wrote his *Islam and its Founder* for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, is candid enough to admit: "Judged by the smallness of the means at his disposal, and the extent and permanence of the work he accomplished, no name in the world's story shines with a more specious lustre than that of the prophet of Mecca.....

Judged by the standard of human renown, the glory of what mortal can compare with his?" (p. 228).

The facts here given should be sufficient to cause Christians to cease boasting of the superiority of their faith over that of the Mohammedans. It is not here denied that the followers of the Arabian prophet have used the sword, and also that they have indulged in cruelties. It is unfortunate that the tendency of "supernatural" religion is frequently to produce within the minds of its adherents a fanatical passion which stifles the better part of their natures. But the fact that I wish to emphasize is, that Christians have been far from innocent in this matter. From the time when it is said that Christ stated, "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one," down through the history of their faith, Christians have been guilty of perpetrating the severest cruelties, and shedding indiscriminately the blood of their victims. As Baxter observes, "Blood, blood, stains the pages" of their history. Read the records of Charlemagne's attempt to convert the Saxons; of the efforts of Otho the Great to introduce Christianity among the Sclavonic tribes; of the conduct of Ethelbert towards the Danes, and of the means adopted by King Olaf to spread Christianity among his people; and then it will be seen that Christians should not be the people to accuse the followers of Mohammed of misdeeds. Call to mind the Crusaders, to whose cruelty and relentless use of the sword millions of human lives were sacrificed; the Spanish Inquisition, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, the ravishes of Magdeburg by Tilly, the bitter persecutions of the Manicheans in Greece, and the extirpation of the Moors and Jews in Spain. If the reader remember these instances of blood and carnage, which was the work of the followers of Jesus, he will be in a position to judge of the gross inconsistency of those Christians who at the present time are raising the fanatical cry against the Mohammedans of the East. It is, as Gerhard says in his *Coming Creed of the World*, "a painful fact in the history of the world that, immediately after the appearance of that man who was to bring peace and goodwill into the world, there followed many centuries of bloodshed and crime, greater than any which had preceded his coming" (p. 140).

CHARLES WATTS.

FREETHOUGHT IN LIVERPOOL.

CHRISTIANS maintain that their God has but one grand audit; and some of the foolhardy sort have even ventured the day and the hour when that trying and tedious ordeal will commence—which scrupulous particularity is excruciatingly droll. They are not, however, without their prototypes. Did not a seventeenth-century divine compute with fastidious exactitude, not only the year and the month, but the day and the hour, of the beginnings of things? And, ever since, a *real* disciple of the Cross (how scarce they are becoming!) has but to mumble incoherently—like Paddy, taters, and whiskey—Dr. Lightfoot, Vice-Chancellor, etc.—in the presence of a jabbering geologist, babbling biologist, or any other saturnine scientific specialist, to insure a facial transformation as well as an instantaneous rapid movement of "shanks's pony" that are, paradoxical as it may sound, simultaneously provocative of uncontrollable hilarity and heart-lacerating grief.

It has even been insinuated that if Lord Kelvin, forsooth, but accidentally confront a Baxter, it is a certain signal for that august personage to betake himself with undignified haste to the nearest station, and there join the first express—not, be it noted, as has been sapiently suggested, for the purpose of solving, amid the whirr and oscillation necessarily attendant upon fast railway travelling, some highly complex mathematical problem, but simply to get away—away! The reason for such a prodigious procedure is transparently obvious. Has not my lord, in the days of his lordlessness, to be sure, predicted that the earth will be capable of sustaining life, even as we know it, for some millions of years more? Hence my lord's preternatural perturbations upon casually meeting a follower of the true and only Baxter. Verily, the path of the scientist is hard; yet let him be of good cheer, for it is softening, tactually softening, and the process will go on directly proportional to the hardening of the brain of man.

kind. And when that brain but attains that healthy consistency compatible with sound thinking, then, and then only, will the path of the scientist become as velvet. I am, however, strangely straying from what I intimated at the outset as to God's ways of balancing, or, rather, auditing, accounts, and which was intended as a contrastment of the ways of Liverpool Secularists, who, in a most ungodlike fashion, insist upon having at least one annual searching scrutiny into their financial and other positions; and so it came about that last Sunday evening was appointed for a general meeting, whereat to report the result of the aforementioned investigation. The work accomplished during the expired financial period was everything but meagre—comprising, as it did, special lectures delivered by Messrs. Foote, Watts, Robertson, Moss, and Cohen; Mr. Foote delivering no less than ten lectures under the auspices of the Branch, one of which was delivered under the Lecture Scheme in the Picton Hall, to a large audience, and was attendable, like the procuration of salvation, without money or price. The Sundays upon which there were no special lectures were occupied in the delivery of lectures upon divers subjects by local talents, possessing as we do a veritable galaxy. We also had two nights' state debates at Hope Hall; one between Mr. Foote and Mr. Lee on "Christianity or Secularism: Which is the Better System?" and the second between Mr. Cohen and Mr. Wise on "Is there a Life beyond the Grave?" both of which were numerous attended. I must not omit, also, to mention a two Sunday evenings' tussle among the local saints themselves, on the vexed question of "Weismannism." To attempt to award honors in the foregoing major and minor debates would be an invidious task indeed.

Besides other literature, there were distributed some thousands of syllabuses, including, in addition to lecture announcements, the principles as well as some of the immediate practical objects of the N. S. S. The syllabus was daintily executed (thanks to the printer) on pale-green glazed paper, that color being selected presumably out of compliment to one of our most esteemed workers, since it is emblematic of the country whence he hails. The Branch had also unsuccessfully endeavored to bring about a debate with one or more of the local leading clergy. The replies to the invitation from some of those worthies were eminently psychologically suggestive. Two were severely sarcastic, in perusing which one felt an irresistible tendency to fall instantly on one's stiff marrow-bones in glorious gratitude for being alive in the rapidly-expiring last decade of the nineteenth century, and not in the gentle throes of the Inquisition period, when those gentlemen would doubtlessly have held the congenial position of feeders to the Inquisitional Crushing Machine. Another response was couched in language gushingly fraternal, despite which, however, one was forcibly reminded of Lady Macbeth's words: "Your hand, your tongue, look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under 't." The tenor of the whole of the clerical replies, in fact, conjured up in the imagination the picture of their—upon reading the invitation—brokenly ejaculating that "The time is out of joint; cursed be this spite, that we were born in the post period of the Spanish Maiden to put it right." That paraphrase I take as best embodying in language their probable radical feelings. *Ex pedé Herculem.*

In brief, such was the retrospect of the work done as presented to the general meeting. Unfortunately, the monetary position was not of an equally flourishing kind; but no sooner had the meeting terminated than that important aspect of the report was righted, which augurs well for the ensuing year being a signal success. It only remains for me to add that a strong committee was formed, composed of a healthy admixture of honored age and promising youth; and if the Branch but receives during the ensuing year a continuation of the moral and material support it princely received at that meeting, matters pertaining to Freethought will be made to hum delightfully. It is but truth to say that the time was never more opportune for such a consummation. The Government Education Bill passed with two hundred of a majority. Imagine, within less than four years of the end of this brilliant century, an iniquitous Bill of that character passing with such a majority! And everywhere are to be perceived the forces of irrationalism sinking their petty internecine strifes, and forming themselves into one solid phalanx, in order to combat the more effectively the terriblest foe they have yet had to encounter. Freethinking Liverpooldians require not

an object-lesson to bestir themselves in the cause of Rationalism; for have they not witnessed, during the last few weeks, the insane influence of a contemptuous superstition, as manifested in the teeming thousands that have besieged Hengler's Circus for the purpose of listening to a man of the mental calibre of John MacNeil? If that spectacle be not sufficient, let them cast their eyes across the centuries, and, in imagination, behold the result of the opening of the floodgates of superstition in large-minded, cultivated, and humane Athens; how in the end Socrates had to drink the poisoned potion; how Aristotle had to flee to save a similar sacrilege being perpetrated upon philosophy; to observe the fate of Anaxagoras in his collision with the great god, Demos—superstition; not to mention other persecutions for heresy, such as those of Theodorus the Atheist, Protagoras, and Diogenes of Appolonia. But it is idle to advise the straining of our visions into the few reaches of time, when here and now are obtrusive evidences, legible and audible even of those who, by the stress of brutal competition, are most intensely engaged in the sordid cares of keen commercial enterprises.

R.

THE SPIRIT VENDETTA.

"YOUR sister Alaiava has come to the next village, and she lies there sick," they said to Siati.

"Kalofa!" he answered; "may she recover soon."

"She longs with a sick longing for *sou'as* and sucking pig."

"Kalofa! *Sou'as* have I none, and my pigs are old for sucklings; moreover, flesh is bad for the sick. May she eat *vaisalo* and cooked *esi* and recover."

And he went not to see her.

"It is bad," said the others. "Brothers should go to their sisters when illness comes."

And Alaiava recovered not, but died; and they made her a fine funeral with baked meats.

To the funeral came Siati, bringing a pig, and empty *papalangi* beer-bottles to border the grave, and a *papalangi* bowl to place on it; and round the grave they planted the *ti-ula*, the red-leaved dracena, with white flower spikes.

But they said: "It is not well for brothers to bring bottles and bowls after death, when they deny food in life."

And the swallows swooped low around Alaiav's grave, and she rested not in it.

After that there was much commotion among the spirits of the dead in the village of Valevao, in the Island of Savaii, where was Alaiava's home in her lifetime; and the spirits held a *fono* round the mausoleum of the greatest traditionary chief in the village. Then all those belonging to Alaiava's family drew apart, and travelled away together.

That night a wise woman of Siati's village, who had been holding converse with the owls and the butterflies, spoke to the villagers, and said: "There are too many spirits around our village to-night. The *ungunga* (soul) of Alaiava has brought them. Evil will come of it."

And the next day Siati sickened, and three days after he was dead.

They made a great funeral for him, and forbade the Siva and the song all through the district, and kept the high-road and the waterway sacred from the passing of strangers; for he was a chief, and deserved such honors. But they sighed, with anxious faces, for they said: "Behold, it is not well for a brother to neglect his sick sister; evil must come of it, and who knows where the evil shall end?"

And the face of Siati's next brother waxed pale, and his bones ached with cold, and he trembled with fear.

Then the wise woman, who was also the village doctor, spake to him, saying: "Send to the wise man at Valevao to know the truth of this matter, lest thou also perish; for my medicines cannot help thee."

And the brother went himself to consult the wise man.

"It is even so," said the wise man, when he had thought deeply; "I have known it for some days. The *anganga* of Alaiava was wrath with Siati for that he had not visited her when she was sick. And her soul came to the tombs of her ancestors and told the spirits of her uncles and aunts

and grandparents, and they also were wroth with Siati. So they all went to pay him a visit, and of that visit he died."

"And is it ended?" asked the trembling brother.

"Nay, not so; for even now the spirit of Siati is angered, and he would punish one of his sister's family in Valevao, which is not the right way to make peace. For the wrath of Alaiava's spirits continues therefore, and they seek another victim. Thou art the next in line."

"And what shall be done to make peace?"

"Bring mats," said the wise man.

So the brother went home and told his village. Whereat they held a *fono* and decided to spare all the mats they could, for fear of further mischief. They brought together mats in abundance, each household one or more, and those households that had no mats to offer brought rolls of *siapo*. The mats and the *siapo* were all placed on the large village-boat, and the chiefs and their sons started off in it, each man taking an oar. But there was but one flag flying, and that a black one, and there was neither drum nor bugle heard; and the chiefs wore no *ti* girdles, and no wreaths save a white strip of pandanus fibre; and as they rowed they neither chanted nor laughed to the stroke of their oars.

Thus they arrived at Valevao, in Savaii; but when the people there saw the mats that they had brought they welcomed them gladly, and killed pigs, and lighted the ovens, and made *tafalo*, and there was much feasting and rejoicing.

Thus were the spirits of the uncles and aunts and grandparents of Alaiava appeased, and the *anganga* of Alaiava came back to its tomb and rested there; and the spirit of Siati forgot to be angry, for it saw that it was in the wrong. So the brethren of Siati came home and worked in their taro-fields, and planted their yams and cut down their nuts for copra in peace.

And the swallows flew high, and nobody sickened in the village, for the mats had brought pardon.

And this happened in the Islands of Savaii in this present year 1896, within a month of the writing thereof. And if any doubt—there lie the mats.

Savaii, Navigator Islands.

ROSE DE BOHEME.

—*Sydney Bulletin*.

SECULARISM.

SECULARISM is the religion of humanity; it embraces the affairs of this world; it is interested in everything that touches the welfare of a sentient being; it advocates attention to the particular planet in which we happen to live; it means that each individual counts for something; it is a declaration of intellectual independence; it means that the pew is superior to the pulpit, that those who bear the burdens shall have the profits, and that they who fill the purse shall hold the strings. It is a protest against theological oppression, against ecclesiastical tyranny, against being the serf, subject, or slave of any phantom, or of the priest of any phantom. It is a protest against wasting this life for the sake of one that we know not of. It proposes to let the gods take care of themselves. It is another name for common sense; that is to say, the adaptation of means to such ends as are desired and understood. Secularism believes in building a home here, in this world. It trusts to individual effort, to energy, to intelligence, to observation and experience, rather than to the unknown and supernatural. It desires to be happy on this side the grave.

Secularism means food and fireside, roof and raiment, reasonable work and reasonable leisure, the cultivation of the tastes, the acquisition of knowledge, the enjoyment of the arts, and it promises for the human race comfort, independence, intelligence, and, above all, liberty. It means the abolition of sectarian feuds, of theological hatreds. It means the cultivation of friendship and intellectual hospitality. It means living for ourselves and each other; for the present instead of the past; for this world rather than for another. It means the right to express your thought in spite of popes, and priests, and gods. It means that impudent idleness shall no longer live upon the labor of honest men. It means the destruction of the business of those who trade in fear. It proposes to give serenity and

content to the human soul. It will put out the fires of eternal pain. It is striving to do away with violence and vice, with ignorance, poverty, and disease. It lives for the ever-present *to-day*, and the ever-coming *to-morrow*. It does not believe in praying and receiving, but in earning and deserving. It regards work as worship, labor as prayer, and wisdom as the savior of mankind. It says to every human being: "Take care of yourself, so that you may be able to help others; adorn your life with the gems called good deeds; illumine your path with the sunlight called friendship and love."

Secularism is a religion—a religion that is understood. It has no mysteries, no mummeries, no priests, no ceremonies, no falsehoods, no miracles, and no persecutions. It considers the lilies of the fields, and takes thought for the morrow. It says to the whole world: "Work, that you may eat, drink, and be clothed; work, that you may enjoy; work, that you may not want; work, that you may give, and never need." ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

ACID DROPS.

THERE is danger of a religious war breaking out in the East of Europe. If it occurs, it is sure to be marked with the usual atrocities on both sides; for if the Mohammedan is six in this line, the Christian is half-a-dozen. Forty Greeks came all the way from South America, and on their way through London the head of the Greek Church in our metropolis told them, "This is a fight for Christianity; go in the name of God." On the other hand, it is reported that the Turkish soldiers massed near the Greek frontier are satisfied that Islam has to fight for its very existence, and are resolved to conquer or die. We shudder to think of the carnage and cruelty that will ensue if this religious hatred develops into actual warfare.

There is a good Coleridge story in *Cornhill*, told by Sir Edward Strachey. It appears that Professor Buckland, the geologist, in conversation with Coleridge, used the word "Nature" in a way which caused the poet to exclaim, "Why do you say Nature when you mean God?" Buckland's answer was, "I think it more reverent; but you think both words have the same meaning, do you not?" To which Coleridge rejoined, indignantly: "I think God and Nature the same! I think Nature is the Devil in a strait-waist-coat."

Coleridge borrowed this idea, of course, from the Platonic philosophy; summing up Plato's metaphysics of evil in one masterly sentence. God is perfectly good, but matter is essentially evil and intractable, and the deity does the best in the circumstances. But, as Bentham said, there is just as much reason to reverse the position, and to assert that matter is essentially good, while the deity is essentially evil.

The *Sydney Bulletin* notes the following as an item of the eternal tragedy of the backblocks. A drover perished with his flock while travelling recently from the Flinders. His horse was found dead a few miles from his body; a sheep, whose throat had been cut for a draught of blood, lay beside the dead man; and 14,000 merinoes, all victims to thirst, were scattered over the ridges. Ye gods, what a holocaust! The owner would hardly think, with the Psalmist, that God's mercy is over all his works.

Floods in the Mississippi valley have inundated vast tracts of the lowland, and the loss of property is enormous. Relief steamers go out daily to pick up the victims. Fifty persons have been drowned in the immediate vicinity of Memphis, and five thousand refugees are gathered there and at Dyersburg.

Mr. Morrison Davidson, in an incisive article on "The Two Jubilees—the People's and the Queen's," which he contributes to the *Weekly Times and Echo*, points to the Biblical laws of the Jubilee, when "Ye shall return every man into his possession, and every man unto his family." "The Jubilee," he says, "was a great Act of National Land Restoration." Yes, but is there any evidence that it was ever carried into effect, or was other than ideal legislation?

Mr. Davidson says that "Holy Writ, instead of sanctioning any form of Royal Jubilee, condemns the institution of Monarchy in unmeasured terms." It is true that Samuel, who was a judge, and also had priestly power, pointed out that, if the Jews took a king, he would take their sons to be his warriors and servants, and their daughters to be concubines, and cooks, and bakers. This, as James

Thomson said, was the truth, but it was not the whole truth; "for the sons have been taken to be far worse than mere warriors and servants, and the daughters for much viler purposes than cooking and baking." Of course, the judges of Israel never did these things. But when Monarchy was established, and even under the Roman Empire, Peter taught, "Fear God, and honor the king"; and Paul, writing to the Romans at a time when Nero was reigning, said: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God." The Bible is too much a nose of wax to be a text-book of democracy.

The Church and Throne are very good friends. The Prince of Wales has not much respect for the Establishment of which he is the prospective head, but even he goes to Monte Carlo to enjoy his Sunday diversion of yacht racing.

The parsons, not satisfied with dipping their hands into John Bull's pockets to support their Church schools, have been clamoring for relief from taxation, and they are going to get it. Already there is a good deal of ecclesiastical property which, so far from being over-taxed, escapes the ordinary burdens. The clergy of the wealthiest Church in the world are always pretending that their treasure is in heaven, but they take good care they shall have a tidy instalment upon earth.

The Ecclesiastical Commissioners hold in trust three hundred thousand a year from ground rents, a hundred thousand from beneficial rents, three hundred and fifty thousand from mining rents, and a quarter of a million from tithes. These large sums escape not merely succession duty, but also the annual equivalent of five per cent. levied upon other corporations.

According to the *Official Year Book of the Church of England*, the number of estimated communicants of the Church is 1,840,351, out of a population of some thirty millions. The confirmations in 1896 numbered only 228,002, of which the bulk were girls. In the diocese of London, with a population exceeding three millions, the number of persons confirmed in the Church was but 19,828; while in the diocese of Rochester, which comprises part of South London, the confirmations show no appreciable increase for the past ten years, despite the immense increase of population. In York, where there are nearly a million and a half of population, only 9,725 were confirmed. This hardly looks as if the Church was conquering the world.

The *Church Times* disapproves of the Established Church in Scotland, and, writing on the case of Dean Lefroy, who was prohibited by the Bishop of Aberdeen from preaching before the University, it says: "If Presbyterian communion were a Church with a valid ministry, the Bishop of Aberdeen would be an intruder in Scotland. But in the view of the Churches of England and Scotland he is not, and a priest of either of those Churches, by preaching in a Presbyterian pulpit, would be practically traversing that view." The Queen, when in Scotland, always "sits under" a Presbyterian pulpit. Does, not, then, the head of the Church also practically traverse the view of the *Church Times*?

The secession of the Rev. B. W. Maturin, one of the Cowley Fathers, to the Church of Rome is making some stir in the Church papers. It is not long since—indeed, within the present year—that Father Maturin was going about the country lecturing under the auspices of the English Church Union, which resents so much being characterized as a Romanising body.

St. Mary's Church, Tyndall's Park, Bristol, issues a special program for Lent. On Wednesday, March 31, there is to be a discourse on "An Enquiry into the Nature and Place of Hell" (with two maps of the Infernal Regions). "There is a Green hill" is the anthem for this occasion. We suppose the Green Hill is the other place. There is not enough moisture in Hell for vegetation. Heaven is the green place, and, apparently, all the green people go there.

We should like to see those maps of Hell. No doubt it would pay to publish them—a penny plain, and twopence colored. We are ready to order two copies, on condition that old Nick certifies their genuineness.

Mr. A. E. Clarke—we don't know whether he is a reverend or not—writing to the *Westminster Gazette*, suggests that the Queen's Diamond Jubilee might be commemorated by issuing a "popular" translation of the Scriptures, if only (he says) it could consist of the words of Jesus Christ, speaking as a working man to working men. How pretty! But does not Mr. Clarke overlook the fact that Jesus Christ gave up the working-man business before he became a "son of the road" and an open-air preacher. We are told that rich women ministered unto him of their substance. If that

were said of a working-man to-day, and there were any truth in it, people would turn up their eyes and say "Oh!" And if the said working-man had a wife, the matter might end in the divorce-court.

The rectory of Petworth, in Sussex, is vacant. The living is worth £800 a year, with residence. It will not be vacant long. Heaps of clergymen prefer a place like that to heaven. Good air, good company, moderate work, £15 7s. 8d. a week, and a house rent free.

During the five years ending September, 1893, as a Parliamentary return shows, the London clergy received no less than £27,000 as fees for interments, apart altogether from their services at funerals. The vicar of Hampstead is entitled to 33s. 5d. for every interment in Hampstead Cemetery. This is said to yield him £577 a year. Good old Mother Church! Who can help admiring her poverty and self-denial?

Welsh is a peculiar language. It seems to be pronounced, as Hebrew was written, without vowels. In the mouth of a pretty woman, with a soft, sweet voice, it sounds very nicely, of course; but when it is spoken by men it sounds like the first day's attempts at conversation after the confusion of tongues at Babel. The Welsh language, however, still holds its own in some parts of the Principality. There are even Welsh chapels in London, and quite recently a new Welsh church has been opened by the Archbishop of Canterbury at Paddington. The ceremony was fixed for March 31, perhaps to avoid the first of April.

The *New York Voice*—a Prohibition organ—says that if Jesus was an American citizen he would vote for Prohibition. Brother Moore, who is an Infidel Prohibitionist, opines that he would not. He says: "Jesus certainly is not on record as having said a single word against liquor-drinking, and there were those who said of him that he was a 'wine-bibber and a glutton'; and he certainly is on record as having drunk wine at his meals, and as having made wine for others to drink, and as having taught his disciples to drink wine; and Paul, the chief writer of his religion, advised the drinking of wine."

Catalogues are occasionally humorous reading. Here, for example, is an entry from the list of a Birmingham curiosity dealer, quoted by the diarist in the *April Cornhill*:—

CLERGYMEN.—A fine collection of 200 clergymen, consisting of Protestant ministers, Roman Catholics, Wesleyan Methodists, Unitarians, and Presbyterians; nice clean lot, 5s.

Assuming the clergymen to be all of equal value, the sum works out at a little more than a farthing per head, which, as the diarist observes, sounds almost too cheap, even in the present depressed state of the market.

It is said that the habit of holding the German elections on a week-day, and not, as in France, on a Sunday, is a strong obstacle to Liberalism, because it prevents so many artisans from voting.

M. Saurin, the priest who received the jewellery, the proceeds of the Cochenthaler robbery, has at length settled with the Guarantee Company, who paid for the loss. The priest offered at first \$400, but was compelled to make the entire loss good. His resources were exhausted at \$1,500, and "the Church" came to his assistance with the remainder in order to avoid a public exposure and scandal. How the priest can escape official prosecution of the offence is a mystery. The law in Quebec wants revising.—*Secular Thought*.

It appears from a review of *The Life and Letters of Benjamin Jowett*, in the *Daily News*, that on the subject of the Athanasian Creed Mr. Jowett expressed himself with candor to his friends. "I am afraid," he wrote to Dean Stanley, on April 28, 1873, "that we fight the battle about the Athanasian Creed in too gentle a manner. As Wesley says of predestination, if the damnatory clauses are true, God is worse than the Devil. Better far to be an Atheist than to believe them." At the same time, there is truth in the criticism that if you leave out the damnatory clauses you expunge the only intelligible part of the document.

Jowett's sympathy with Liberalism was mainly academic, or he would not have taken orders and kept in the Church. "Considering how little sympathy I have with the clergy," he wrote to Stanley in 1846, "for I never hear a sermon, scarcely, which does not seem equally divided between truth and falsehood, it seems like a kind of treachery to be one of them. But I really believe that treachery to the clergy is loyalty to the Church, and that, if religion is to be saved at all, it must be through the laity and statesmen, not through the clergy. Is there any reason to think that if the clergy, with their present intolerance, narrowness, and

love of pious frauds, could succeed to the utmost of their wishes, they would produce any other revival than such a one as seems to be going on in France—at present four out of five women made semi-Catholics, four out of five men made semi-Infidels?"

The British and Foreign Bible Society says the Gospel is received eagerly by the heathen. Just so. Persian papier maché articles are made of the Bibles sent out by British mission societies, according to Mr. Hodgetts, a recent traveller in the East. He quotes the British consul at Tabreez as saying: "You have no idea what a boon these Bibles are to the village industries of Persia." Sometimes the holy book is put to more objectionable uses.

At the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish war an immense number of New Testaments in Russian were distributed to the Russian soldiers, who carried them in their knapsacks. After a battle, in which the Russians had been defeated, the field, so correspondents reported, would be found strewn with remains of testaments, torn to pieces, and scattered by the Bashibazouks and others engaged in stripping the Russian dead and wounded. They nearly all bore unmistakable signs of hardly ever having been opened before; for the mass of the Russian soldiers cannot read.

Jews occasionally ask for the whole Bible. Then they tear out the New Testament, retaining the Old for their own use.

Re the "godless system of education": Phillips, the self-confessed murderer of Brady, in Melbourne, was a church-going cherub, and wore a nice white surplice, which looks lovely in his daily-paper portrait. Butler, the alleged Glenbrook murderer, proved himself, on his voyage to San Francisco, to be a man of great piety. Stephen Boshier, doing two years for bigamy, and also being tried for the midnight butchery of an old man and woman at Petone (M.L.), was a devout Salvationist. Lyfield—accused, in Victoria, of the murder of his wife and two children, and the seduction of his daughter and granddaughter—and his daughter, who says she lived immorally with him for about thirty years, both belong to the old days when education in Australia was conducted on a strictly religious basis. Where does the "godless education" theory come in among this latest batch of horrors?—*Sydney Bulletin*.

Dr. Lyman Abbott, preaching on "The Psalms," stated that David wrote but fifteen of the 130. The authorship of the others was quite unknown, and they had been collected by some unknown compiler. With which we may agree, perhaps, except as to the statement about David. We do not believe there is any more evidence that David wrote any of the Psalms than there is that Jesus Christ wrote letters to Abgarus.

Rabbi Kohler has published in the *New York Journal* his account of *The Testament of Job*—a work referred to as apocryphal by the edict of Pope Gelasius, dated about 496. Fabricius probably thought that the Testament of Jacob was intended. The work was, however, published by Cardinal Mai in 1833. *The Testament of Job* gives testimony to the patience, not of Job, but of his wife, Sitis, who is said to have sold her hair to Satan in order to buy bread for her afflicted husband. This part of the story is more pathetic than anything in the Bible.

Mrs. Besant has been lecturing in New York on "A Glimpse of the Unseen World: the Human Aura," with limelight illustrations. Limelight illustrations of the unseen are distinctly good. None of Mrs. Besant's auditors will be able to dispute their accuracy.

Mrs. Besant seems to have got at loggerheads with the American Theosophists. They have a lady leader, Mrs. Tingley, who claims that Madame Blavatsky's astral spirit is now inside her. Mrs. Besant, on the other hand, says it is inside a Hindu boy. The only way to compromise the quarrel is to let the boy get old enough and marry Mrs. Tingley.

There has been a considerable correspondence in the *Reading Observer* on the subject of Confession. One who signs himself "Anti-Humbog" says: "Let me tell a true, unvarnished tale. Time—during the last Mission. Hour—about 10 p.m., or later. Some young women remaining behind. The Mission priest, hovering about, approaches one of these and says: 'Will you come and confess to me?' She replied: 'Do not confessions belong to God?' 'Yes, but if you told me your sins I could wipe them out!' Rising instantly, she said: 'Thank you, no! I wish you good evening, sir,' and hurried away. I have often wondered how many did accept his invitation."

Dr. Taft, the vicar of the well-to-do congregation of St. James's, West Hampstead, had to complain that the offertory-

bag contained buttons when coins of the realm were expected. The offenders were not mischievous children, for the articles had been given at a service in which only adults had taken part. Many people have been troubled in mind as to what constitutes the sin against the Holy Ghost; but there is much reason to suppose that it lies in pretending to give God, or his Church, one thing, and giving something of less value. This was the sin for which Ananias and Sapphira came to such suspiciously sudden deaths.

Those who think there is little need for militant Free-thought might remember that the *Christian Herald and Signs of the Times* boasts the largest circulation of any Christian journal, and that crowds still attend to hear its editor, the Rev. M. Baxter, author of *Louis Napoleon: The Destined Monarch of the World*, proclaim the near advent of the end of the world. Every year, as Easter approaches, Baxter announces the beginning of the end. The day and hour he continues to date a little further on, but there seems no diminution in the number of gulls that flock to hear the glad or dreadful tidings from this mountebank.

People are connecting the additional self-denial week of the Salvation Army with the recent collapse of the Salvation Army Building Society, and predicting a financial failure. But Booth has a knack of emerging from difficulties.

Ballington Booth points out, in a letter to "General" Booth, just published, that his family had declared he would "come to the stage, the dunghill, and the devil," and that they had heaped curses on his head. The writer also says to his father that a staff officer of the Salvation Army had said that insanity was in the Booth family, and that it had culminated in his son, Ballington Booth. "A letter which we have in possession," he says further, concerning Salvation Army attacks, "contains a vile and slanderous story, being an attack upon a dear maid's moral character."—*New York World*.

The following letter to our Sydney contemporary explains itself: "Dear *Bulletin*,—I am a convalescent patient in the fever ward of a W. A. hospital. Three days ago a clergyman cast his holy eye around the premises, and, spotting a youth of sixteen with typhoid, who, up till then, was rapidly getting better, started, in an almost crying tone, to invoke the Almighty's goodwill to take this poor boy to the mansions bright above, and, 'dear Lord, do not let him die in sin.' The unfortunate youth thought his time had come, his temperature jumped degrees, and he was delirious next day. I saw him carried out a few minutes ago. Is this manslaughter or—murder?—H. V. BOOMLAND."

Antonio Conseilheiro, the Brazilian "envoy of God," who, at the head of some 9,000 converts, is plundering the provinces, is said to have been the actor in a terrific drama. His mother used continually to stir him up against his wife, and one night told him that, by keeping watch, he could obtain sure proof of her infidelity. Conseilheiro kept watch, but was armed, and, on seeing a man leave his house, fired and killed him. Without listening to his wife's explanations, he murdered her also, and then went to examine the man. He found he had killed his mother, who had disguised herself in masculine clothing, so as to carry out her plot against her daughter-in-law. Conseilheiro took refuge in the forests, where he lived a hermit's life for some years, and acquired, in the solitude, the idea that he had become a saint, whose mission it was to regenerate the world.

The Paris correspondent of the *Sunday Chronicle* gives a long account of the trial of a French doctor for practising unlawful operations. One lady who died under his hands had a lover who committed suicide. Altogether it is a very nasty affair. But why on earth does the *Chronicle* correspondent cry out that "Atheism is the enemy"? What possible connection can there be between Atheism and suicide, or Atheism and abortion? The truth is obvious to every man of experience and common sense, that certain vices are always to be found in great cities, where luxury and vanity are rampant, and where vicious people can hide themselves from the influence of public opinion. London is quite as bad as Paris, and perhaps worse.

Cardinal Moran: "Religion must be the base of the Australian Commonwealth"—

A base of many rocks, of rubble stone,
Without cohesion, mouldering here and there;
Smooth, rounded rocks, that cannot stand alone,
And will not stand together anywhere.

Mrs. Fitzsimmons ascribes the victory over Corbett to her prayers. As an act of thankfulness, she says she will place more dependence on the Deity in future. Her favorite text is, "Hit his eye, Peter, be not afraid."

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, April 4, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road, at 7.30, "Jesus Christ and the Lady Novelists."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. C. WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—April 4, Sheffield; 10, 11, and 12, Stanley, Durham; 25, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road. May 2, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road. —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.

H. W. PARSONS.—The evil eye is supposed to be alluded to in Galatians iii. 1—"who hath bewitched you." The word translated bewitched, *baskainō*, means to smite with the eye. In the Vulgate it is *facinarii*. Among other passages you may notice Deuteronomy xxviii. 54, 56; Job vii. 8; Psalms xxxv. 21, liv. 7, liv. 10, xcii. 11; Proverbs vi. 13, xxii. 6, xxviii. 22; Isaiah xiii. 18; Lamentations ii. 4; Ezekiel ix. 5; Matthew vi. 22, xx. 15; Mark vii. 22; and Luke xi. 34.

FRANK RUSH.—It was referred to a fortnight ago in the *Freethinker*. Dr. F. R. Lees has a creative imagination. Instead of railing at Charles Bradlaugh, who is dead and cannot answer, he should reply to Mr. Foote's *Bible and Beer*.

W. E. W.—There is more affinity between the English and the Hindus than with the lost tribes of any Semitic race.

LOUIS LEVINE (Charleston).—Many thanks for papers, which are always useful and welcome.

W. LAMB.—Thanks for your good wishes with subscription.

W. BURNHILL.—A miner's mite is appreciated. We wish the wealthier would all subscribe in proportion. Glad to hear you have derived advantage from reading *Flowers of Freethought*.

T. MAY.—Sad if true, but the matter seems a private one, and we do not play Paul Pry to evangelists' and other men's families.

J. PARTRIDGE.—Good for Birmingham!

J. H. BAIN.—We shall be glad if any of our friends can induce newsagents to display a contents-sheet of the *Freethinker*, which will be sent weekly post free for that purpose by our publisher, R. Forder, 28, Stonecutter-street, E.C. We are making arrangements for advertising this journal in other ways. It is impossible to sell the *Freethinker* for a penny. We maintained it at that price for years at a loss of hundreds of pounds—a loss which, alas, we still feel. It has been stated that Mr. Foote is paid £500 a year to edit the *Freethinker*. We don't know who pays him. It would be pleasant if those who publish Mr. Foote's income would make it up to their imaginary figures.

H. LEES SUMNER.—Thanks. See acknowledgment. Pleased to have your good wishes for the Lecture Scheme. Papers that reach us are acknowledged. Cobbett's *History of the Protestant Reformation* is still published and easily obtainable.

W. HEARDMANN.—Glad to know that you look forward every week for the *Freethinker* with so much pleasure.

POLICE OFFICER.—We note your wish that your shilling could be twenty pounds, and that we and our colleagues may long be spared to preach the Gospel of Freethought in this priest-ridden land.

E. COLE.—If all the "admirers of the *Freethinker*" subscribed something, however little, there would be ample sinews of war in this campaign.

SHILLING MONTH.—W. Lamb, 10s.; Harwood, 1s.; Britton, 1s.; Winsor, 1s.; W. Burnhill, 1s.; B. Parsons, 1s.; R. A. Millichamp, 1s.; J. Terry, 1s.; C. Ashton, 1s.; W. Hopkins, 1s.; W. T. Pitt, 1s.; Mrs. Pope, 1s.; J. P., 1s.; T. Harwick, 1s.; T. Hibbott, 1s.; John Sumner, 4s.; H. Lees Sumner, 4s.; W. Heardmann, 1s.; C. Hall, 5s.; G. W. Irving, 2s. 6d.; H. Smith, 1s.; W. Brown, 1s.; F. Hobdale, 1s.; J. Coppins, 1s.; J. Riddle, 6d.; G. Wright, 6d.; J. Phillips, 1s.; Police Officer, 1s.; W. Walker, 1s.; W. Waymark, 1s.; J. H. Cooke, 2s. 6d.; John Dennis, 5s.; E. Cole, 1s.; W. B. D., 2s. 6d.; A. S. Coleman, 5s.; M. Christopher, 2s.; Stanningley Branch, 3s. 6d.; A. Bullock, 1s.; W. Bailey, 4s.; T. Elwen, 10s.; T. H. Elwen, 10s.; J. Lawson, 1s.; R. Richard, 5s.; J. T. Ross, 2s. 6d.; C. Atkinson, 2s.; R. Brookes, 2s. 6d.; F. Morgan, 2s. 6d.; H. S. Ashford, 5s.; T. Edmonds, 2s.; S. Hudson, 5s.; Macclesfield Admirers, 3s.; R. Wills, 1s. 6d.; G. Lucas, 2s. 6d.; J. Chorry, 1s.; E. C., 1s. *Per R. Forder*—W. W. Roberts, 2s.; E. Shackleton, 2s.; G. Childs, 2s. 6d.; A. Waymark, 2s.; W. E. Smith, 1s.; C. Stafford, 1s. *Glasgow List*—Hugh Thomson (Renfrew), 5s.; James Thomson (Renfrew), 2s.; A. W. Crystall, 1s. 6d.; John Hutchieson, 1s.; Walter Lennox, 1s.; D. Prosser, 1s.; T. Robertson, 5s.; W. A. C., 2s.; D. Halstead, 2s. 6d.; Friend, 3s.; W. G. Wrinch, 2s.; G. Faulkner, 1s.; D. Black, 1s.; Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Turnbull, 2s. 6d.; Mr. Jones and Friend, 4s.; R. Turnbull, 2s.; W. Turnbull, 2s.; Maggie Turnbull, 1s.; Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, 2s. *Greenock List*—Hugh Kennedy, 10s. 6d.; Lizzie Kennedy, 5s.; James Fulton, 10s. 6d.; Robert Kerr, 5s.; D. E., 3s.; D. K., 5s.; J. K., 2s. 6d.; T. R., 3s.; Christian, 2s. 6d.; W. Macfarlan, 5s.; J. M., 2s.; R. M., 1s.; J. L., 1s.; A. M., 1s.; G. W. N., 1s.; Widow's Mite, 1s.; D. Freedman, 6d.; A. Freedman, 1s.; Typo, 1s.; H. P., 1s.; Friend, 1s.; J. H., 6d.; Friend, 6d.; A. M. Stubbs, 2s.; W. Dingwall, 1s.; G. Peters, 6d.; O. Jamieson, 1s.; H. C. P., 2s.

W. B. D.—Glad you are pleased with our article on the Bible and the Koran. Sorry to hear of your domestic affliction. Mr. Foote hopes to be in the north shortly.

NEMO.—It is a trite argument, not a novel one, as you seem to imagine. The matter in animals' bodies changes exactly like the matter in men's bodies. Does that prove that animals have indivisible and immortal souls? And if not, why not?

D. NIMMO.—We do not recollect the letter you refer to, or the question relating to Robert Taylor. What were the details? Dr. Marshall Lang's address shall be dealt with next week.

W. BAILEY.—Your subscription may save some souls, as the Christians would say. There is no knowing what seed of Freethought may be sown in fruitful soil, even in a single lecture.

F. BRADSHAW points out that the end of the second paragraph on p. 197 should read "according to the *System of Origen*."

T. ROBERTSON.—Of course, we could wish the list to have been longer, and heavier, but Glasgow has done excellently. We wish other Branches were as active. The attempt to wreck your Branch has been a very signal failure.

J. T. ROSS.—Pleased to hear that the Liverpool Branch fronts its new year's work with such good spirits. Thanks for your contribution to the Lecture Scheme. We note your view of the other matter. What you say is entitled to consideration.

H. KENNEDY.—Our best thanks to the Greenock friends who have so handsomely responded to our appeal for the Lecture Scheme. It proves that the Scheme is valued where it has been tried.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—New York Journal—Sydney Bulletin—Secular Thought—Truthseeker—Humanity—Two Worlds—Progressive Thinker—Echo—Reading Observer—Cheshire County News—Metropolitan—New York World—English Mechanic—Daily News—People's Newspaper—Isle of Man Times—Newcastle Daily News—Christchurch Times—Nya Sanningar—Freidenker—Der Army Teufel—Leader—Diamond Fields Advertiser—The North Middlesex Chronicle—Yarmouth Independent.

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.

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

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.

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.

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

SPECIAL.

ALL subscriptions received up to the time of our going to press are acknowledged in this week's *Freethinker*. Late subscriptions will be acknowledged in the next issue, when I will state the total amount that has been realized. Some persons who have given nothing, and never have given anything, are very anxious to know the details of the expenditure of my Lecture Scheme Fund, but they will not be gratified. As soon as the Society is able and willing to work the Scheme itself, I will gladly hand it over; until then I shall continue to work it at my own discretion. Our party has its share of critics and do-nothings.

G. W. FOOTE.

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE had good audiences at Huddersfield on Sunday, in spite of the wet weather. Several friends came in from Dewsbury, Barnsley, Heckmondwike, and other places. One earnest Freethinker tramped six miles through the rain, as there was no sort of conveyance from where he lived. The lectures were apparently highly relished. This was most noticeable in the evening, when the audience included a considerable number of ladies. It was pleasant to see the veteran Mr. Mitchell, who took the chair in the afternoon, and who bears his great age wonderfully. His heart is as much in the cause as ever.

Mr. Foote lectures this evening (April 4), in the Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, London, W. His subject will be "Jesus Christ and the Lady Novelists." It should interest and amuse Freethinkers, and might be of some interest and amusement even to Christians.

This morning (April 4) the Camberwell Branch has arranged for a concert to take place on behalf of Lord Penrhyn's quarrymen. The Bethesda Male Choir, consisting of quarrymen, will discourse music, and there should be a crowded attendance of South London Freethinkers and their friends. The admission is free, but a good collection

is expected. Prior to the collection a brief address will be delivered by Mr. G. W. Foote.

Last Sunday evening Mr. Charles Watts had a large and very appreciative audience at the Secular Hall, Camberwell, when he lectured upon "The New Christianity." The applause throughout the lecture was frequent and enthusiastic, and at the close Mr. Watts received quite an ovation. Mr. Hartmann presided.

To-day, Sunday, April 4, Mr. Watts lectures three times in the Hall of Science, Rockingham-street, Sheffield. All the lectures are new, having reference to current events. In the morning he speaks upon the Mohammedan faith and the Eastern crisis; in the afternoon upon the Churches' last attempt to defend the Bible; and in the evening upon "The New Christianity." These questions ought to draw large audiences.

Mr. Cohen has been lecturing recently at Derby, Huddersfield, etc., under Mr. Foote's Lecture Scheme. He is also lecturing under the Scheme to-day (April 4) at Hull, an exception as to Sunday lectures being made there, owing to special local circumstances. Mr. Cohen lectures there again next Sunday under local arrangement.

The West London Branch commence their outdoor propaganda to-day (Sunday) in Hyde Park, Hammersmith, and Kilburn; and also open a new station at the corner of Walerton-road, Harrow-road, W., at 3.30. Freethinkers in this district are requested to attend and support the platform, when Mr. A. B. Moss will lecture.

At the last meeting of the N. S. S. Executive the Treasurer, Mr. S. Hartmann, submitted a large financial scheme for future organization, and a sub-committee was appointed to discuss it with him in detail, with a view to a full and definite report at the next Executive meeting. Should the Executive favor the scheme, as reported upon by the sub-committee, it will be placed upon the Agenda for consideration at the Conference.

The National Secular Society's Conference would have been held in Derby this year, but, unfortunately, the Branch has been refused the use of every hall suitable for the occasion. Such bigotry is deeply regrettable, but is not very surprising, for Derby is far behind other towns in the matter of religious toleration. As the Derby friends were most anxious to have the Conference in their town, they are naturally much disappointed. We hope they will be more fortunate in the not too distant future.

Arrangements are being made by the Executive for the holding of the Conference in another Midland town, and a definite announcement will be made in our next issue.

The Humanitarian League is arranging some special lectures in different parts of London. Next Wednesday evening (April 7) one of these lectures will be delivered by the Rev. J. Page Hopps, at South-place Chapel, Mr. Moncure Conway in the chair. The subject is, "Rescue or Revenge in Prison Treatment: A Review of the Elmira Experiment." Admission is free. We do not know whether any discussion follows the lecture, but we fancy it does.

Mr. George Anderson has given Miss Vance fifty thousand tracts, both, we believe, written by Mr. Watts, to be allotted at her discretion among the London Branches for distribution at open-air lectures. Branches should apply to Miss Vance at once, at the N. S. S. office, 377 Strand, W.C. Country Branches are not to have them free, like the London Branches, but they can have five hundred for one shilling, or one thousand for eighteenpence. No doubt these tracts will soon be cleared out, and their distribution will be of great service to the cause.

Members and friends of the N. S. S. in the Westminster district are earnestly invited to attend at the residence of Mr. H. J. Stace, 42 Vincent-street, S.W., next Sunday evening (April 11), at 8 o'clock. The object of the meeting is to arrange for an open-air campaign during the summer at some suitable spot in Westminster. Assistance to this effort will be rendered, if necessary, by the President and other members of the Executive.

The trustees of the National Portrait Gallery give notice that the rooms will be opened on Sunday afternoons, from 2.30 to 5.30, from April 4 to September 26 inclusive.

The *University Magazine and Free Review* comes to us with a new name and new cover. Mr. J. M. Robertson leads off with an article on "The Case of Dr. Romanes," whose breakdown is dealt with gently but firmly. R. de Villiers has a notable article on "Cardinal Manning, the Sceptic," giving some personal experience of the Cardinal.

F. Sarritor writes on "The Inertia of English Universities," and Chilperic reviews *The Bible and the Child*. E. Newman has a study of the Russian novelist, Tourgenieff; and Karl Blind of the poet, Roden Noel. Geoffrey Mortimer has a paper entitled "The Whole Duty of Woman." F. Verinder concludes his paper on "The Blasphemy Laws." A. Hamon writes on "The Intellectual Movement in France," and W. S. Sparrow reviews periodicals. There is also a novelette by H. J. Cressingham.

The *Literary Guide* for April is an excellent number. It opens with a capital review of Mr. Gould's *Christian Origins*, and another of *Essays* by the late Dr. Romanes. There are many other interesting items. The supplement gives an admirable summary of Herbert Spencer's *Data of Ethics*. Amos Waters contributes a sympathetic notice of the late Dr. Brewer.

Mr. George Jacob Holyoake, the veteran journalist and reformer, will be entertained on April 12 by his numerous friends and admirers at the National Liberal Club, in celebration of his eightieth birthday. Mr. John Morley, M.P., has been asked to take the chair.

A THEOSOPHIST PANTHEIST.

A VERY old woman had a very old cheese.

The age of this cheese still remains a great riddle;

In summer 'twould thaw, in winter 'twould freeze;

But a grub reincarnate once appeared in its middle.

When that cheese froze again, this grub was no more;

His soul, now decarnate, floated off in the cheese;

But this theosophic grub had left millions of spore;

So when this cheese thawed, many grubs came from these.

Thus, year after year, grubs went and grubs came;

Till tradition e'en failed to explain their beginning;

But a scientific grub, reincarnate, now came,

Born again in this cheese, to atone for old sinning.

For ages and ages he'd floated in space,

All through this great cheese—so surely 'twas old—

All the time looking out for a suitable place

In which to incarnate and further unfold.

Being now a wise grub, far wiser than others;

Like Blavatsky, or Olcott, he resolved to advise;

And the many wise doctrines he preached to his brothers

Were received with great joy, and with wide-open eyes.

So he called a convention, most solemn and odd—

Big grubs, little grubs, grubs of all age;

The question to discuss was: "What, and where's God?"

This question he answered—this scientific sage.

Quoth he: "Silly grubs, in learning I'm skilled;

I've been born and have died many hundred times o'er.

Now to you I declare that all space is filled

With God—which is cheese—there can be nothing more.

"There exists but one substance, and that is pure cheese;

As cheese you can see it, but as God it is smell.

[Just here this sage stopped until he could sneeze;

And they all said they knew about God, very well.]

"Now we're in the cheese, and the cheese is in us;

With cheese we are filled, and we fill the cheese

I adjourn this convention, without further fuss.

Go—g naw, and be happy—you are all God and cheese.

K. D. WISE.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF HELL.

BEFORE making an unknown journey, we generally examine a map of the place we book for. Instead of a map, however we read a "Universal Description of the Theatre of Heaven and Earth," by the celebrated Dr. Risaccio, published in Venice, 1620. In chapter ii. the author gives the *exact dimensions* of Hell, and the regions round about.

"First, Hell (City).—The sphere of Hell, or, to speak more properly, the circumference of Hell, is the lowest part of the Earth, and the bigness of it is 7,975 miles; the breadth of it—that is to say, the diameter—is the third part of the circumference; its distance from us is 3,750 miles and a QUARTER!

"Second, Purgatory (Province).—Above the sphere of Hell is that of Purgatory, 15,750 miles in circuit, and distant from us 2,500 miles and a HALF!

"Third, Limbus Patrum (Manufacturing District).—Above the sphere of Purgatory is that of Limbus Patrum, which is 23,625 miles, and distant from us 1,252 miles.

"Fourth, Abraham's Bosom (Agricultural Country).—Above this is Abraham's Bosom, MUCH ABOUT THE SAME LENGTH AND DISTANCE AS THE OTHER."

PETER BAYLE—LIBRE-PENSEUR.

(Continued from page 198.)

IN 1702 appeared King's renowned treatise, *De Origine Mali* (On the Origin of Evil), which work Bayle submitted to an examination in his *Response aux Questions d'un Provincial*. In it the French critic denied the truth of King's assertion—viz., that there is more natural good than evil in the world. He demanded to know the use of pain, and, for example, asked what possible purpose the suffering involved in childbirth could serve. Bayle would not admit that it was necessary to man's happiness that he should imagine himself a *free agent* (here Peter meant to throw a doubt on the much-vaunted blessing of *free-will*).

The famous Anthony Collins (who had also attacked the Archbishop) observed on this occasion that "His Grace" had given up the cause "to Mr. Bayle." We must here remark that (by a mere coincidence, of course) the "orthodox" Pierre Bayle disputed on the sceptical side in every controversy he engaged. He had two important arguments with James Bernard, of which we must not omit to take some note. The first was, "Whether the general agreement of all nations in the behalf of a deity be a good proof of the existence of God?" Bayle maintained that this was not a conclusive argument—firstly, "because we are not acquainted with all the nations in the world, there being a great many countries which are still unknown, and as long as we do not know what the men in these countries believe, we cannot positively assert that all the nations in the world believe in a god." He then went on to instance the Atheistical peoples mentioned by Strabo, and by modern travellers in Africa and America. Secondly, he remarked that this argument supposes that "what all men agree to must be necessarily true. But this is not very evident. We have been children before we were men; we have been capable of receiving all kind of impressions which they who had the care of our education were pleased to give us; we took more delight in fables than in true histories; and who is there but knows how difficult it is to get rid afterwards of all these notions which we have imbibed in our childhood?" Thirdly, Bayle asserted that, granting the validity of this argument, it would prove not one, but many, gods, "since there was a time when all the nations upon earth, the Jews only excepted, worshipped a great many gods." (This statement is not quite accurate, as the Hebrews were primarily a polytheistic people, the subsequent supremacy of Jahveh being only an illustration of the survival of the fittest.) Fourthly, "This argument," wrote Bayle, "is proper only to engage every nation to prefer the religion of their ancestors before any other. The professors of every false religion make use of this argument when they can boast either of a great extension or a great antiquity in their favor. The heathens insulted the first Christians on account of their small number, and opposed to them their own antiquity and the consent of an infinite number of nations..... Fifthly and lastly, a great many errors and superstitions may be defended by the same argument, as astrology, the presages of eclipses, the power of the dog-star and of the moon..... Who would admit all this merely because it is generally believed?"

M. Bernard replied in his *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres*, which journal he had undertaken to continue. He held "that we ought not to explode an opinion, especially when it is generally received, only because it is attended with some difficulties; for is there anything in the world upon which men do not, or may not, dispute?..... When a proposition is grounded upon clear and evident arguments, we must admit it as unquestionable, notwithstanding the great difficulties to which it is liable, and which are owing only to the narrow bounds of our understanding." He remarked that the argument in question (the general agreement of mankind, etc.) having been admitted by a number of great men, "the difficulties against it must have the greatest strength imaginable to overthrow it." He wrote: "It is pretended that the consent is not so general as is imagined, because we do not know all the nations upon earth, and that all those we know do not admit the being of a god. The first part of this objection is of no weight, because it is grounded only upon a *perhaps*, to which we may oppose another *perhaps*, which is not less probable. For *perhaps* the countries which we do not know are not inhabited, or, if they are, *perhaps* we shall

find there, when they shall be discovered, what has been found everywhere else—I mean some notion of a deity."

The divine proceeded to throw some doubts on the accounts given by the travellers of his day as to the existence of such Atheistical peoples.

Further, he observed "that the argument in question must be not only that all nations acknowledge the being of a god, but also, and especially, that as much as we know of their history they have always been of that opinion, and that no time can be determined when they passed from Atheism to the belief in a god." He held that a pure monotheism, which afterwards degenerated into polytheism, was the original religion of the human race.

In reply, Bayle remarked that the question in debate was grounded on the proposition that whatever is believed by all nations is true. But this proposition is not self-evident, as is plain from the number of errors indulged in by all peoples. Regarding his opponent's observation, that perhaps the unknown nations admit a deity, Bayle said that those who deny "the consent of all nations are not obliged to prove that there are some which have no knowledge of God; it is enough for them to say that *they do not know* whether there be such nations. But they who maintain the argument in question are obliged to prove positively and evidently that there is not one nation in the world but has some notion of a god. So that, if it can only be suspected that some nation or other lives without the knowledge of a deity, their argument is at a stand." He urged that, granting the accounts as given by travellers are to be suspected, all judgment on the matter should be suspended until such time as the question is decided authoritatively one way or the other. He held that the consent of the most savage peoples was of no weight in deciding, as they would derive their belief from nature, instead of from education. He conjectured that the philosophers of old, who postulated a supreme being, did so in order to account for the phenomena of nature, and "that these philosophers, finding the hypothesis useful for the good of society, recommended it to the magistrates to be established as a fundamental law in every commonwealth."

In reply to the divine's fifth remark, Bayle held that it only served to make the proof of this general acquiescence more hard to obtain. "For," wrote the sceptical contender, "the question must now be proposed thus: 'All the nations upon earth have *always* agreed in the belief in a deity'; and to convince an Atheist it is not enough to observe that no time can be marked when any nation passed from Atheism to the belief in a god; it must be proved that they never were Atheists, otherwise the argument will not be convincing, but at most only probable." He made a long answer to the eighth observation, in the course of which he remarked: "Must we understand by the word 'deity' a *specific* nature which contains several individuals, or one single and essentially incommunicable nature, which can exist only in one individual? If M. Bernard takes that word in the first sense, he grants that men have said, *with one voice*, that there are several gods. If he takes the word in the second sense, we defy him to prove his assertion—namely, that all nations have said, with one voice, that there is but one deity, or single and essentially incommunicable nature."

The second controversy was, "Whether Atheism be Worse than Idolatry." Bayle maintained that the idolatry of the old "heathens" is a greater crime than the disbelief in Deity. He maintained that Atheists "can admit, and have really admitted, a distinction between moral good and evil..... it is not easily comprehended how a man who does not believe a God can have any notions of virtue; so that it is thought that such a man is always ready to commit all sorts of crimes if he can but escape the law. They who think so are certainly mistaken, since the very Epicureans have done several good actions, which they could avoid without fearing the least punishment, and by which they made a sacrifice of their own interest and pleasure to virtue. *Right reason taught the ancient sages that they ought to do good for the sake of good itself, that virtue carries with it its own reward, and that he must be a wicked man who abstains from evil only for fear of being punished.*"

He then held that Atheists may have moral principles. But this his opponent denied, asserting that "the distinction of moral good and evil can be grounded only upon the unchangeable nature of an eternal, intelligent being; so that, if there be no such being, there can be no such distinction."

Bayle thereupon retorted that, "if we could not conceive that an action is morally good without considering the command of an eternal Law-giver, and his promises and threatenings, it would be certain that Atheists cannot judge that there is any difference between moral good and evil; but if, independently of such a command, we can know that virtue is agreeable to right reason, and discover the principles of morality as we do those of logic, Mr. Bernard's objection will be of no force. He will therefore be obliged to prove that, though we can discover the rules of logic without a positive command from God, yet we cannot discover those of morality....." The question then turned on "whether a society or commonwealth only composed of true Christians, but surrounded on every side with infidel nations or worldly Christians, such as are now, and have been long ago, the nations among which Christianity is publicly established, would not be capable of maintaining itself."

Bayle maintained the negative, declaring (and we cannot do better than quote his own words) that "true Christians would consider themselves upon earth only as travellers and pilgrims, aiming only at heaven, their true country.....They would not interrupt their prayers and works of charity to procure a worldly gain, not even by lawful means; *having food and raiment, they would be content* (1 Timothy vi. 1); and, far from giving themselves any trouble to enrich their children, they would think that they left them a sufficient inheritance if they only taught them to despise worldly riches, never to revenge themselves, and to *live soberly, righteously, and godly* (Titus ii. 11). If you will seriously reflect upon this, you will easily find that a nation wholly composed of such people would soon be subdued if a formidable enemy endeavored to conquer it, for they could not be furnished with good soldiers, nor with money enough to support the expenses of a war. Such Christians would not be fit for a battle; being used to patience, meekness, sufferance, mortification, prayer, and the contemplation of heavenly things, they would be like sheep among wolves, if they were sent to the borders of their country to repulse an army composed of old, experienced soldiers and officers.....Add to this that the commanders and leaders of these good men, being themselves pious Christians, would be too scrupulous to make use of a thousand tricks and artifices, without which it is impossible to resist a skilful enemy."

In reply, Bernard referred his opponent to Tillotson and Sharp, whose Christianity was more accommodating than that brought forward by Bayle. He maintained that "there is no religion more capable than that of Christ to procure the happiness, not only of private men, but even of whole societies."

He pertinently demanded what use virtue can be "if fraud, violence, covetousness, ambition, and all sorts of vices, be absolutely necessary for maintaining the civil society among men.....Does not this principle tend to ruin the distinction of moral good and evil, and even to raise a throne unto vice upon the ruins of virtue, and consequently to overthrow the doctrine of the being of a God? Fourthly, those passages which seem to contain too rigorous precepts must be understood in a milder sense. For instance, Christ tells us, '*Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.*' Divines would not have us take this passage in the *literal and strict* sense, because Christ himself did not understand it so; for, when he was struck, he reproved severely the person who struck him. The Gospel forbids us the love of riches, whence it is concluded that we ought not to endeavor either to get them or to preserve those we have. But we do not find that St. Paul explains the precept in that sense. When Lydia, the seller of purple, had been converted by his preaching, he did not command her to abandon her riches, nor to leave off the trade by which she had got them. It is certain that the Gospel only restored the Law of Nature."

Bayle made a long reply, in which he maintained that "all we can infer from the passage of St. Matthew, quoted above (Matthew v. 39), and our Savior's conduct, is that, when we receive an injury, we may modestly represent to the person who affronts us the wrong he does us; but not that we are at liberty to give stroke for stroke, or to apply to a Court of Justice, till we have received such satisfaction as the custom of what is called the points of honor requires according to the world. If that had been Christ's meaning, he would have used other words; those he

employed cannot admit of such a construction by any rules, either of grammar or analogy. What would Infidels say if they were told that, when Christ would leave every one of us the liberty of defending himself, he expressed his meaning in such words as signified quite the contrary, especially if we consider that the passage quoted is preceded immediately by these words, '*Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil, but whosoever,*' etc. We have here," continued Bayle, "positively a declaration which puts a restraint upon the liberty allowed by the Jews of rendering evil for evil."

Regarding Bernard's citation of the case of Lydia, Bayle remarked: "This instance is so much the more plausible, because her trade was not of those things which are absolutely necessary, but only of those which serve to gratify men's pride and luxury; and there is no trade which more deserves to be prohibited to all true Christians than that; and yet St. Paul did not order Lydia to leave it off. This, then, is the *Argumentum Achilleum*, the impregnable fort of the favorers of remissness in morality. But a cause," said Bayle, "must be very desperate when it cannot be supported by better arguments. All that the Scripture tells us of Lydia is, that she was a seller of purple and worshipped God, and that, *having attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul, she was baptized with all her household*, and that St. Paul lodged at her house. If we found in the Acts of the Apostles a particular account of what St. Paul permitted, ordered, or forbade her, the historian's silence about the purple trade would be a good proof that St. Paul gave her leave to continue that trade. But a general silence with regard to all this cannot give us occasion to draw such a consequence; and, therefore, they expose themselves to error who, to gratify their desire of gathering treasures, prefer this negative proof before so many express passages in the holy Scripture, which condemn the love of worldly things."

FLORENCE BRADSHAW.

(To be concluded.)

ANOTHER EXPLANATION OF JONAH.

EVERYBODY knows the rationalist's interpretation of the Jonah story as that of the prophet putting up for three nights at a pub with the sign of the whale, and being eventually kicked out. Another interpretation, and one more in accordance with the thoughts of the early makers of myths, is suggested in Ignaz Goldziher's *Mythology among the Hebrews*. Goldziher says: "When in ancient times men, dwelling by the seashore, saw the heavenly fire-ball in the evening dip into the sea, and the next morning issue shining at the opposite point of the sea line, what other idea could he conceive of this but that down in the sea the sun was swallowed by a monster, which spat out its prey again on the shore?" Isaiah says that Jahveh shall punish Leviathan and slay the dragon that is in the sea (xxvii. 1); and, Didst thou not kill the monster (rahabi) and wound the dragon (tannin)? This is the old combat of Bel and Tanit, or Bel and the Dragon, which we still have on our crown pieces as St. George and the Dragon (the victory of Light over Darkness), what I may venture to call the primæval myth. Goldziher says: "The most prominent mythical characteristic of the story of Jonah is his celebrated abode in the sea in the belly of the whale. This trait is eminently solar, and belongs to the group on which we are now engaged. As, on occasion of the storm, the storm-dragon or the storm-serpent swallows the sun; so when he sets he is swallowed by a mighty fish, waiting for him at the bottom of the sea. Then, when he appears again on the horizon, he is spit out on the shore by the sea-monster."

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BOOK CHAT.

To the April number of the *Cornhill Magazine* Sir Walter Besant contributes a vigorous appeal for the establishment of a day of celebration which is designed to focus the sentiment of the Anglo-Saxon race, the day suggested being the anniversary of Shakespeare's birth and death, April 23.

* * *

Mr. Thin, publisher to the University of Edinburgh, is about to publish in pamphlet form, and under the title of *Burns: Past, Present, and Future*, the address which Mr. William Wallace, editor of the new edition of Chambers's *Life and Works of Robert Burns*, delivered on January 25 last to the Ninety Burns Club in Edinburgh.

* * *

Mrs. Theophila Carlile Campbell, who is said to contemplate writing a life of her father, Richard Carlile, is at present in America. She married a son of Alexander Campbell, who was connected with a vegetarian Social Community at Ham Common, founded by James Pierrepont Graves.

* * *

It is a pleasure to take up *Steps to the Temple of Happiness: Thirty True Moral Stories for the Young; with Hints to Parents on the Education of Children*, by Henry Smith (London: Swan Sonnenschein; 1897). It is just the book to present to children, carefully written in plain, simple, and direct language, and it is beautifully illustrated by Owen Dalziel and Katie Hobbs.

* * *

There is no cant or religious nonsense about the moral stories. There is nothing here which children will have to unlearn and painfully find out that it is not true. On the contrary, the lessons which Dr. Smith teaches in friendly and loving fashion, of kindness, truth, honesty, mutual help, and of being rather than seeming, will grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength. Every child who reads the book should be the better for it, and their elders, too, will be none the worse. Dr. Smith aims frankly at happiness. His portrait, which appears as a frontispiece, might serve to illustrate the connection between kindness and happiness which he teaches throughout the book. We should like to know that *Steps to the Temple of Happiness* has a large sale. The sooner the religious namby-pamby so largely offered to children is displaced by books like this, the better for the coming generations.

* * *

The Romanes lecture at Oxford is to be delivered on Wednesday, June 2, by the Rt. Hon. John Morley, M.P., D.C.L., the subject being "Machiavelli."

Austin Holyoake.

On Saturday, April 10th, it will be twenty-three years since Austin Holyoake died, at the comparatively early age of forty-seven. To those Freethinkers who knew him, it must ever be a regret that he passed away in the maturity of his power. For he was untiring in the Freethought cause, and literally spent himself in its service. I remember him well, and the characteristics of amiability and energy with which he conducted the *National Reformer* during Mr. Bradlaugh's absence in America. I presume it was his elder brother, Mr. George Jacob Holyoake, happily yet alive and bright as ever, who led him in the Freethought path. Once there, he maintained his cause with zeal and modesty. Austin Holyoake was ever ready to do the work in the background, while others figured in the public eye. Doubtless, on the *Reasoner*, and with the publications of the Fleet-street House, as with the *National Reformer* when issued at 17 Johnson's-court, he did his share of the work. He also found time to produce pamphlets on *Heaven and Hell*, *Thoughts on Atheism*, *Ludicrous Aspects of Christianity*, *Facetiae for Freethinkers*, *Large or Small Families*, *The Book of Esther*, and *Daniel the Dreamer*. He also compiled a manual of secular songs and ceremonies, and composed a Secular Burial Service. As I have said in my *Biographical Dictionary of Freethinkers*, he took pride in the character of Freethought, and was ever zealous in promoting its welfare. He was buried in Highgate New Cemetery, and the remains of his friend Thomson, the poet (B.V.), were interred in the same spot.

J. M. WHEELER.

It is astonishing how a conception of original sin or total depravity, which transforms God from an object of adoration and affection into a hideous and detestable being, could at any time, however barbarous, have been found acceptable, or how the casuistries by which people strive to modify its hardness could ever have been listened to with common patience.—*Strauss*.

PROFANE JOKES.

THERE is a Theosophic sect in Ohio which believes that when human beings die they turn into cats. Doesn't it make a man shiver, though, to think that perhaps he has been throwing bootjacks all the winter at his wife's grandmother?

Country Rector—"My boy, it is a sad thing your father never comes to church. I am afraid he doesn't fear God." Boy—"Yes, he does, sir. He always takes his gun with him."

Daughter—"What is the meeting for to-night, pa?" Sky Pilot—"To save the young men of the country, my dear." Daughter—"I wish you'd save a nice one for me, pa!"

Sky Pilot—"What did God say to Adam in the Garden of Eden?" Tommy—"I don't know; I wasn't there."

An old Scotch lady was told that her minister used notes; she disbelieved it. Said one: "Go into the gallery and see." She did so, and saw the written sermon. After the luckless preacher had concluded his reading on the last page, he said, "But I will not enlarge." The old woman called out from her lofty position, "Ye canna, ye canna, for your paper's give oot!"

When the notorious Lueger, whose platform was the extinction of the Jews of Vienna, was up for election as Burgomaster of that town, a poor Jew took a bribe of a couple of florins to vote for him. "God will frustrate him," said the pious Jew. "Meanwhile, I have his money."

Mrs. Bowers—"I do wish you would go to church with me occasionally. How are people to know that I am married if they never see you with me?" Mr. Bowers—"Easy. Take the children with you."

"Father," began the prodigal son, as he knelt at his parent's feet, "are you going to kill the calf?" "I ought to," the father replied, "but you are such a fool I'll forgive you this time."

Fond parent (reprovingly)—"You should not say, Bobby, when you have been out on your wheel, that you have had a hell of a time." Bobby—"Why not, when I've been scorching?"

ATTRACTIVE SERVICES.

THE American struggle to popularize religion and keep the fat parson's table well supplied with buckwheat cakes and m'lasses is yearly growing harder. The most orthodox of worshippers now take their lectures on current topics mixed with arias by operatic stars. And the less orthodox—well, how their five-cent bits are gathered in is told by the Rev. W. B. Hale in the *Forum* for December. The American Church is rapidly being turned into a circus. To raise cash last year, for example, St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church, Toledo, gave a stimulating entertainment by the Peak Sisters, introducing that touching ballad, "Do You Know the Mouth of Man?" in which the gentle art of kissing is referred to ninety times.

At Fredonia, New York, the Sacred Female Minstrels only corked and wore bloomers; but at Woodside, Long Island, one of the holy band kicked a tamborine held above her head—all for the love of God, and dollars.

In the Tribly Social, given by the Suffren Methodist Episcopal Epworth League and the New Brunswick Protestant Episcopal Olive Branch Society, the young ladies of the church displayed their legs behind a curtain lifted to a height described as "tantalizing."

Few cities or towns have this year been without a Bicycle Service. Floral wheels make appropriate decorations, and if the organ has a Swiss Bell stop it may be appropriately played. A favorite text is Psalm lxxxiii. 13: "O, my God, make them like a wheel" (Hebrew *galgal*, a whirling thing).

The pastor of the Methodist Church of St. Louis, Michigan, having entertained firemen, veterans, and blacksmiths, outdid himself in a Barbers' Sunday Evening. Scissors, hair-dye, cups, soaps, brushes and combs, mirrors and washes, tastefully arranged on the walls and platform, with festoons of towels and rosettes of brilliantine and bay-rum bottles, gave a homelike appearance to the church; sitting in a barber's chair, the pastor gathered inspiration for his lecture, and then, rising, he pressed home, in the choicest terms of the tonsorial profession, the lesson of the razor and the strop.

At Otsego, Michigan, the pastor gave \$8 every night for a week to decipherers of his text, printed on the bill like this: "Text for Friday evening—Eodht anrfo ehfte litbso enout awsol belet eosfo dgons hdlse duhct hspud wteha rhaet vloen mawlh."

And so on, *ad infinitum*.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

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

LONDON.

THE ATHENÆUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "Jesus Christ and the Lady Novelists."
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 7.15, H. P. Ward, "The Faith that Failed." April 6, at 8.30, Long night dance; and Dramatic Class in "Little Faults."
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 11, The Bethesda Male Voice Choir; 7, Conversazione.
EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Libra-road, Old Ford): 7, F. J. Gould, "Goldwin Smith's Guesses at the Riddle of Existence."
KINGSLAND: 12, Meeting at Bradlaugh Club and Institute.
SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY, Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road: 11.15, Sunday-school; 7, Dr. Stanton Coit, "Carlyle."
WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall): 11.15, Dr. Stanton Coit, "Matthew Arnold."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

HAMMERSMITH (The Grove, near S.W.R. station): 7, A. B. Moss, "The Bible and the Child."
HARROW-ROAD (corner of Waltherton-road): 8.30, A. B. Moss, "Wandering Jews."
HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, A. B. Moss, "The Bible and the Child."
KILBURN (High-road, corner of Victoria-road): 7.30, J. Fagan will lecture.
LIMEHOUSE (Triangle, Salmon's-lane): 11.30, E. Pack, "Why I Ceased to Pray."
MILE END WASTE: 11.30, H. P. Ward, "Shall we Live after we are Dead?" 7, W. J. Ramsey, "The Curse of the Cross." April 7, at 8, W. J. Ramsey, "Life after Death."
WOOD GREEN (Jolly Butchers' Hill): 11.30, E. Calvert, "The March of Time."

COUNTRY.

BRISTOL BRANCH (Shepherds' Hall, Old Market-street): 7, Mr. Matthews, "The Origin of Religion."
CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 7, W. Heaford, "Brave Thoughts by a Freethinking Parson."
DERBY (Pollicott's Dining Rooms, Market-place): 7, Social evening.
GLASGOW (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12, Discussion Class; 6.30, J. Moir, "The Evolution of the Solar System."
LEEDS (Crampton's Hotel, Briggate): 6.30, Debate on "Scripture"—affirmative, J. Kushton; negative, S. P. Bell.
LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 7, Mr. L. Small, B.Sc., a lecture. Committee meeting after lecture.
MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Kusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, F. Evans, "The Ice Age and its Causes."
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Northumberland Hall, High Friar-street): 3, Members' monthly meeting—important business.
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): Charles Watts—11, "The Cross and the Crescent"; 3, "The New Christianity"; 7, "The Christians' Last Attempt to Rescue the Bible." Tea at 5.
SOUTH SHIELDS (People's Palace, Ocean-road): Harry Snell—11, "Was Jesus a Socialist?" 7, "The Ascent of Man."

Lecturers' Engagements.

O. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London, E.—April 4 and 11, Hull; 12, Felling; 18, Gateshead; 25, Sheffield.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, London, S.E.—April 4, m., Hyde Park; a., Harrow-road; e., Hammersmith. May 2, m., Hyde Park; a., Harrow-road; e., Kilburn. 9, m., Clerkenwell. 23, m., Camberwell; a., Peckham-ryc. 30, e., Edmonton.

POSITIVISM.

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

SUNDERLAND.—Church of Humanity, 23 Blandford-street. Service and discourse every Sunday morning at 11.

WEST HARTLEPOOL.—Druids' Hall, Tower-street. Meeting for inquirers, conducted by Mr. Malcolm Quin, first Wednesday of every month at 7.30.

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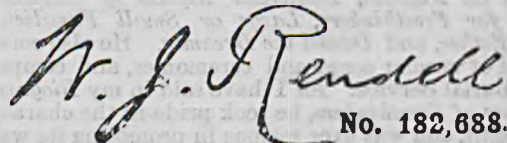
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