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PRICE TWOPENCE.

JUBILEE PRAYERS.

QUEEN VICTORIA has been seated, metaphorically, on the throne of Great Britain and Ireland for sixty years. That it has agreed with her is proved by her tough old age, which threatens to eliminate the last hair from the too-smooth head of the Prince of Wales before he has a chance of trying what it is to be a king. It would be quite natural for Her Majesty to feel grateful to God, or whoever or whatever presides over mortal destinies; and if she were to spend a whole week on her knees in thanksgiving, we should not raise the slightest objection. What we are unable to see is why the British and Irish people should wear out their knee-caps in the same pious exercise. It is said that the Queen is a good woman; granted, but are good women so scarce in this country that the sight of one should send us into hysterics of admiration? We humbly and loyally conceive that if the Queen had died forty years ago, or if she had never lived at all, the progress of the nineteenth century would have been just the same. It seems to us an absurdity to suppose that the stout, motherly-looking old lady, whose photographs abound in the shop-windows, has been for sixty years the presiding genius of our science, art, literature, commerce, and industry. Of course we speak under correction, and with a due sense of human fallibility; but that is how it strikes our poor intelligence.

However, it is decided that the whole nation—that is to say, all who choose to include themselves in the business—shall join the Queen in thanking God for all she has received. There is to be an *al fresco* Thanksgiving Service (D.V. and weather permitting) outside St. Paul's Cathedral on Jubilee Day; and, whether angels look on invisibly or not, the spectacle will be witnessed by thousands of persons able to pay from five to twenty guineas for a seat at some neighboring window. Naturally the Church of England will be the cock of the walk on that occasion; but we understand that Catholics and Dissenters are to be allowed a certain inferior position, as a kind of acknowledgment that they also are of the Christian family, and not exactly foreigners to God Almighty.

There is likewise to be a general Thanksgiving Service in all the State churches and chapels in England and Wales on Sunday, June 20; special forms for which have been drawn up by the heads of the Church, and published by the Queen's printers. We have read these through carefully, and cannot help feeling how little brains are necessary in the heads of the Church to prepare such documents. Barring meal-times and sleep, any person with a sufficient supply of pens, ink, and paper might go on producing such stuff for seven years at a stretch, unless the task produced softening of the cerebrum before the end of that period.

The combined intelligence, piety, and literary skill of the heads of the Church are responsible for the following addition to "the Suffrages next after the Creed":—

Priest.—O Lord save the Queen;

ANSWER.—Who putteth her trust in Thee.

Priest.—Send her help from Thy holy place.

ANSWER.—And evermore mightily defend her.

Priest.—Let her enemies have no advantage of her.

ANSWER.—Let not the wicked approach to hurt her.

One would think Her Majesty was surrounded with wicked enemies, and that the united prayers of her people were necessary to her safety—to say nothing of the Horse Guards. All this, of course, is pious fudge. Neither the Queen nor the nation is in any special peril, but it is the

business of the clergy to obtain God Almighty's protection, even when it is not requisite.

After this bit of exquisite originality comes the comic old passage in the Litany:—

Priest.—Give peace, in our time, O Lord.

ANSWER.—Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only Thou, O God.

What a beautiful compliment to Omnipotence! It reminds us of the common expression, "God help you," which means it is all up with you. And how sincere and pathetic is the prayer for peace in our time, from another point of view, when we reflect that during the Queen's reign of sixty years we have had about the same number of wars in various parts of the Empire.

The next little original prayer is that the Queen "may so wisely govern this kingdom that in her time the Church may be in safety." The *nation* takes a back seat; the safety of the *Church* is the great object of clerical anxiety. This is perhaps only natural. But why should the episcopal flunkies speak of the Queen as *governing* this kingdom? In a constitutional monarchy the sovereign reigns, but does not govern—and the clergy should know it.

A special prayer asks that God will give all the royal family such blessings as health, peace, joy, and honor, and "long and happy lives upon earth." When they *must* quit this miserable vale of tears, God is asked to give them "everlasting life and glory." For our part, we are not averse to their receiving this *future* blessing, so long as they do not cost the taxpayers a monstrous sum per annum in this life. If they will only support themselves, and leave public charity to the indigent and destitute, we shall cheerfully wish them joy of all they can obtain in kingdom-come.

The special form contains another prayer "for unity" in the Church, which is in "great danger" from her "unhappy divisions." The great danger, we presume, arises from the presence of a common enemy outside—namely, the scepticism which is permeating all classes of the community. That the Christian Church should close up its ranks is only too obvious; but the man who thinks that this prayer will produce concord and unity is an optimist who ought to be in heaven.

Perhaps the most remarkable part of this precious document is the special Thanksgiving with which it concludes. God is thanked for the "many blessings" he has bestowed upon this nation "during the sixty years of the happy reign of our gracious Queen Victoria."

"We thank Thee for progress made in knowledge of Thy marvellous works, for increase of comfort given to human life, for kindlier feeling between rich and poor, for wonderful preaching of the Gospel to many nations."

How some of the clergy must laugh when they read this! The scientific progress, for which God is thanked, was steadily resisted and sneered at by the Church; the increased comfort of life is simply a result of the application of that science through the useful arts; while the kindlier feeling between rich and poor, as far as it really exists, is due to the spread of democracy and a shrewd suspicion on the part of the rich that charity is "ransom money," which must be paid in the interest of the social arrangements that guarantee their privileges. It is difficult to see where the Church and religion come in. As for the "wonderful" preaching of the Gospel to many nations, one is lost in amazement at the unfortunate felicity of the expression. When we think of South Africa, for instance, it is *wonderful* indeed.

G. W. FOOTE.

SHOULD WOMEN OBEY?

"The woman's cause is man's."

THE record reign of Queen Victoria will, perhaps, be chiefly memorable to the future sociologist as that in which the question of woman's position first came clearly to the front. In the past of humanity, ever since patriarchal times—for, when fathers were unknown, mothers perforce had the rule of their families—the position of woman has been distinctly subordinate; from cradle to grave subject to the power and control of man. This position has been thought natural and of divine right. But with the growth of inquiry has come the questioning of all old conventions. It has come to be seen that the test of civilization is the place which it affords to women, and that the measure of man's elevation is also the measure of woman's education and freedom. Find a place where woman is little better than a beast of burden—as she still is in parts of England, nail-making, chain-making, or in alkali and white-lead factories—and you will be among men who are low and degraded. Freethinkers like Condorcet, Mary Wollstonecraft, Shelley, and John Stuart Mill led the way in the assertion of women's rights. The generation which has passed since the publication of *The Subjection of Women* has seen the advent of the New Woman, and many are the discussions as to what it portends. There need be no alarm. Whatever women attempt, they will not cease to be women, and become abortive men. Nature always takes care of herself.

Last week the members of the Women's International Progressive Union assembled at Mowbray House to discuss "Marriage—A Just and Honorable Partnership." It is eminently satisfactory to Freethinkers to find a number of women able and willing to state their views fully and fairly on such topics. Every woman who takes an interest in politics or social affairs already commands more influence than the average man. She is a premonition of a new type of woman—free, and man's companion. It is, then, distinctly as a sympathizer that I venture on a little criticism of these Progressive women. According to the report in the *Daily News*, "the discussion drifted into a criticism of the marriage service, particularly with regard to the word 'obey,' which, it was contended, had caused more trouble than many people imagined. It enabled men to tyrannize over their wives, who were often the victims of injustice, against which the Union firmly protested." The Union, I opine, does right to protest. In "just and honorable partnership" there is, and should be, no talk of obedience. Each partner does the work for which *se** is most adapted. Only tyranny can require vows of obedience on either side. Well, here women have the remedy in their own hands. It is only the Church service which demands a vow of obedience. Civil marriage asks for no such perjury. Women who have the sense to be married by the registrar need take no objectionable and impossible vows. But will the W. I. P. U. recommend their sisters to dispense with the Church ceremony? Till they do so they need not wonder if males laugh at their inconsistency, and point out how "they hate war but adore the army, long for freedom and coddle the clergy."†

The women of the Progressive Union say "the doctrine of submission should be strenuously opposed." They profess, most of them, to believe in the Bible as a divine revelation, but they shirk any appeal to its authority. Their attitude reminds one of Fielding's description of the quarrel between Parson and Mrs. Adams. When he rebuked her for contumacy, and quoted texts to prove that the husband was the head of the wife and her duty was to obey, she answered that "it was blasphemy to talk scripture out of church; that such things were very proper in the pulpit, but profane in common talk." Now, the whole tenor and spirit of the Bible inculcates the doctrine of submission, and is in blank opposition to the new claims of women. The pioneers of the movement for emancipation, such as Frances Wright, Emma Martin, Ernestine Rose, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony, have seen and proclaimed this. The Bible is throughout a *he* book. It distinctly proclaims that "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" (1 Cor. xi. 8, 9). The account of Genesis is thus made the foundation of man's supremacy. Again, we are reminded that "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression" (1 Timothy ii. 14); and this is given as a reason for the injunction, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection; I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." Wives are ordered to "submit yourselves to your husbands as unto the Lord." "As the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything" (Eph. v. 24).

If the Bible be authoritative, it is clear that the duty of the wife is to obey her husband, even to the extent of giving him control over her person—a barbarity against which the women of the I. P. U. do right to protest. But these ladies should know that they cannot maintain their position without repudiating some of the clearest teaching of the Holy Book. To pretend to respect the Bible as divine, and yet to reject those portions which come in conflict with their own claims, will not enhance their reputation for consistency. Let them, if they wish to command respect, come boldly out as Freethinkers, who only acknowledge Biblical teachings so far as in conformity with their own reason and conscience. Of all tyrannies, superstition is the worst. When women clear their minds of that, they will find the road clear to further freedom. The priests well know the influence and value of women in any cause in which their affections are engaged. When women come to see that their cause is the cause of Freethought, the Churches will cease to be built on their slavery, and the old fable of the fall through woman's transgression will be replaced by the fact of man's elevation through her virtues.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE NEW THEOLOGY.

IT is interesting and instructive to observe the many changes that theology has undergone during the last few decades, both in its character and mode of advocacy. Secularists and Freethinkers have ample justification for feeling proud of the results of their persistent and self-denying labors in the endeavor to secure the emancipation of the human mind from the influence of creeds and dogmas which for ages stultified the mental growth of the nation. Fifty years ago the belief in the Biblical account of the Creation and the Fall of Man was strictly adhered to, while to-day it finds no supporters among the more intelligent exponents of theology. The belief in the theory of Evolution, and in the moral progress of the human race, has supplanted the faith once entertained as to the origin of the universe and the career of man. Doctrines which our forefathers devoutly cherished are now cheerfully given up. Such writers as Canon Driver, Canon Farrar, Dr. Horton, Dr. Fremantle, and other advanced theologians, are seeking to divest Christianity and the Bible of features that were regarded by their predecessors as sacred and invulnerable. Even the pious London *Daily Chronicle*, of May 11, in its review of Dean Farrar's recent book on the Bible, says: "One of the most remarkable characteristics of the Victorian age is the abandonment of theological positions which, at the beginning of the Queen's reign, were regarded as strongholds of the Faith. Few, if any, Protestant Churchmen now preach the doctrine of eternal punishment. It was said at the time of the decision in the Williams' case that Lord Westbury had 'dismissed hell with costs, and taken away from orthodox members of the Church of England their last hope of everlasting damnation.' Whether, however, it was Lord Westbury, or Darwin, or Mill, or Huxley, who effected the change, we cannot say; but it is, nevertheless, a fact that the doctrine of eternal damnation, pretty generally held by theologians fifty years ago, has now been abandoned in favor of the doctrine of eternal hope. An equally remarkable change of theological position has been the substitution of the doctrine of progressive revelation for that of direct and final inspiration." The writer adds that, if Dean Farrar had "written his book fifty years ago, he would have been denounced with all the bitterness and malice with which the author of *The Age of Reason* was assailed."

* For "he or she."

† Professor Goldwin Smith says: "Female suffrage would give a vast increase of power to the clergy." I would not therefore say with Hanno, "the demand is just, and I will not vote for granting it"; but I would "educate our masters."

These progressive changes in theology are exceedingly encouraging, for they not only indicate the inherent weakness of the once popular faith, but they show that the efforts of Freethinkers, who have had to brave bitter and cruel persecution from professed Christians, have not been in vain. If that theology which in the past was thought to bear upon it the impress of "divinity" is now discovered to have been erroneous, what guarantee have we that in the future the new theology will not share the same fate? If Christianity and the Bible came originally from a perfect being termed "God," it should have been beyond the power of man to improve either. But the fact that both the faith and the book, when tested by cultivated intellect, have proved to be defective, is evidence that the human mind is superior to the alleged "divine" power. It is absurd to talk about the "progressive nature of Christianity." The "progress" is not in the faith, but in man's conception of it, which shows its utterly changeable and indefinite character. The man of war and the man of peace; the persecutor and the friend of "toleration" (we prefer the term "justice"); the progressive thinker and the stern adherent to tradition; and many others who hold divergent opinions, profess to find a justification for their views in the Christian scheme. Dean Farrar says: "In the mirror of the Bible each partizan will practically see nothing but his own face." And this is equally applicable to the faith which is supposed to be based upon the book.

The Dean, in his recent work, *The Bible: Its Meaning and Supremacy*, really admits this, for he says: "What some Christians, even in the same Church, regard as dogmas and practices of consummate sacredness, others, quite as able and quite as sincere, despise as specimens of crude materialism and unworthy fetish-worship. Whence come the separation of antagonistic Churches and the multiplicity of dissident sects? The Romanist (if I may adopt with some modification the words of another) reads the Bible, and he finds in it the primacy of Peter, the supremacy of the Church, and the direction to do penance for the forgiveness of sins. The Protestant reads it, and he discovers that Rome is the 'mystic Babylon,' the 'mother of harlots,' the 'abomination of desolation'..... The Baptist looks into it, and thinks that in baptism true believers must go under water as adults; most other Christians think that infants should be baptized, and that sprinkling is sufficient. Cromwell and his Roundheads read it, and saw everywhere the Lord of Hosts leading on his followers to battle. The Quaker reads it, finds only the Prince of Peace, and declares: 'He that takes the sword shall perish with the sword.'..... The Calvinist sees the dreadful image of wrath flaming over all its pages, and says to his enemies: 'Our God is a consuming fire.' The Universalist only sees the loving Father, and explains the most awful forebodings as Oriental tropes and pictorial rhetoric. The Mormon picks out phrases to bolster up his polygamy. The monogamist cries out even against divorce. The Shaker and his congeners in all ages forbid or disparage all wedded unions whatever. The American of the Northern States loaded his gun with texts and went out to fight for freedom. The Southerner quoted the curse of Ham and the Epistle to Philemon, declared that slavery was a divine institution, and that it was impious unbelief to regard it as a crime" (pp. 143-4).

We have quoted this from Dean Farrar because, in our opinion, his presentation of the contradictory views that are held as to what the Bible and Christianity teach thoroughly justifies our estimation of the uncertain character of the Bible as a guide, and also of the obscure meaning of Christianity. Now, how do the exponents of the new theology deal with this difficulty? First, we are told that the Bible contains the word of God, but that the whole of it must not be so regarded, inasmuch as it is interwoven with the recorded opinions of man. This new view of the Bible places the impartial student in a greater dilemma than did the old orthodox theory. For, from a Christian's standpoint, we can understand believers accepting the teaching that the Scriptures were inspired by God; but to us it is incomprehensible how anyone can suppose that a portion only of the Bible is the "word of God." Who is to determine which is that portion? If the question had to be decided by the leaders of Unitarianism and Trinitarianism, by the legitimate followers of John Wesley and C. H. Spurgeon, or by Canon Driver and Canon Farrar, the conclusions arrived at would differ

widely from each other. Besides, such a theory makes man the arbiter of what is natural and what is "supernatural." The question then arises, What materials exist to permit of such an arbitrament? How can we differentiate the human from the alleged divine? Wherein do they differ, and what are the distinctive features belonging to each? Is it not evident that the decision arrived at will depend, not upon any exceptional value or meaning of the words of the Bible, but upon the opinions entertained by those who seek to make a distinction in the book.

We are also informed that Christianity means "Christ," apart from all creeds and doctrines. This is another fallacy of the new theology. Exclude from the Christian faith its creeds and doctrines, and there is nothing left to distinguish it from other professed religions. Take from the system the story of the Fall and the theory of original sin, and the Atonement goes with them. True, we are reminded that Christ would remain. His personality, however, whatever it might have been, is insufficient to base a practical religion upon. It is conceded by Christians that he has been dead nearly two thousand years, and many of them admit that the record of his life appears in gospels so vague and contradictory in their statements that (we submit) no concise and uniform conclusion can be reasonably arrived at as to the exact nature of his person or his teachings. Hence, by some he is supposed to have been equal with God, by others that he was the chosen son of God, and by others again he is looked upon as a great moral teacher. That a marked diversity of opinion obtains within the Christian fold as to what he really taught is unmistakably shown in the existence of the numerous sects, all of whom differ in their interpretation of the language ascribed to him. This theoretical adoration of Christ, which is so extensively professed by the advocates of the new theology, is a melancholy prostration of reason to emotional gratification. Not one of the many Christian denominations, who so loudly parade their "love for Christ," ever makes a serious effort to emulate his conduct, or to obey his instructions. The name of Jesus is used to allure the credulous and to support the promoters of the greatest religious sham of the age.

The change which has taken place within the last few years in the mode of Christian advocacy is as palpable as that which has occurred in reference to the nature and teaching of the faith. A quarter of a century ago there was no lack of debaters on the Christian side who were ready to champion their cause. It is not so to-day; the leading clergy of the Church will preach and write books in favor of their faith, but they cannot be induced to engage in fair and open discussion with their Freethought opponents. We grant that this evinces discretion, for experience has taught theologians that debating does not add to the glory and honor of their faith. At the same time, it is an exhibition of weakness which Secularists would be reluctant to manifest. Principles that cannot stand the test of honest debate are not in touch with modern thought. Even in this particular Christian ministers ignore the instructions of the Bible and the example of their Master and his chief successor, St. Paul. For we read in the "word of God": "Debate thy cause with thy neighbor himself" (Proverbs xxv. 9), and "Come now and let us reason together" (Isaiah i. 18); also, that very early in his career Jesus was found in the temple in the midst of doctors, "both hearing them and asking them questions," and that St. Paul "disputed in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him, and spake boldly for the space of three months" (Acts xvii. 17; xix. 8). The fact is, the new theology, like the old, is the result of priestly machinations. It is illogical in its teachings and pernicious in its influence, and the sooner it is replaced by truths based upon cultivated mentality and the rational scientific interpretation of the facts of existence, the better it will be for the progress and ethical elevation of the human race.

CHARLES WATTS.

Both Jesus and Paul (if correctly reported) breathe, at times, a spirit of bitter hatred and bigotry, such as is nowhere to be found animating the prophets of any other religion worthy of the name; a hatred and bigotry that produced their due development in Cyril of Alexandria, Torquemada, Bonner, and that Caiaphas of Convocation who howled the loudest for the destruction of Colenso.—*"Antidotes to Superstition,"* p. 15.]

THREE RELIGIOUS APOLOGISTS.

Pseudo-Philosophy at the End of the Nineteenth Century. By Hugh Mortimer Cecil. I. An Irrationalist Trio: Kidd—Drummond—Balfour. (London: The University Press.)

THREE apologies for religion in general, and Christianity in particular, have won high-praise in orthodox circles during recent years. The first is that of Mr. Benjamin Kidd, who devotes the larger part of his *Social Evolution* to a pretended demonstration that reason is the disintegrating and religion the preservative force in human society. The second is that of the late Professor Drummond, whose *Ascent of Man* is an endeavor to show how Infinite Love, in concert we suppose with Infinite Wisdom, has justified itself by the evolution of ethics through the action of the reproductive instinct in the midst of the struggle for existence. The third is that of Mr. Balfour, whose *Foundations of Belief* is, in substance, an airy and a cynical attempt to establish the position that, as the human intellect can never know anything for certain, Christianity is just as likely to be true as any form of Naturalism, and that men's choice between the two has to be decided by their feelings, when it is not already decided by authority.

Mr. Cecil takes each of these books in turn, and laboriously—some will think *too* laboriously—exposes its fallacies and bad argumentation. He has done his work very thoroughly, but we think it would have been more effective if it had been compressed into a hundred and fifty instead of three hundred pages. That he could have done this is clear from the Preface, which is terse and pregnant; its literary form contrasting with the looser character of some of the subsequent writing. We imagine that Mr. Cecil is a young man; if so, there is time for the discipline of his powers. He has knowledge, ability, logical acumen, and dialectical force; and it must be admitted that he plays terrible havoc with the objects of his attack.

Of old, as Mr. Cecil points out in his Preface, science had to fight an uphill battle against theology; now, however, their positions are reversed; science has captured the lofty citadel, and theology is engaged in attacking it. Mr. Cecil suggests that theology should "leave the hill of reason in possession of the enemy, and settle down comfortably and bovinely on the fat plains of sentiment below." Brains that are unfit to tackle Darwin and Spencer may feed on the religion of Mrs. Humphrey Ward, the geology of Sir J. W. Dawson, the apologetics of Mr. Gladstone, and the biographies of Jesus, said to be preparing by Mr. Hall Caine, Mr. Ian Maclaren, and Mr. Crockett—three gentlemen "whose capacity for sentimental fiction is the best guarantee of their fitness for such a task."

Mr. Cecil's object is to show how three religious champions have fared in their attempts to capture the scientific fortress. The three books he selects for criticism, particularly those of Mr. Drummond and Mr. Kidd, he does not consider worthy of detailed examination; but he remarks that "the state of the intellectual world in which such works can command an enormous sale, and receive almost unstinted commendation from many of the literary reviews, is undoubtedly a serious matter for rationalists."

Mr. Kidd's book is written in a pompous, oracular style, as Mr. Cecil does not fail to note; indeed, he pens a comic imaginary passage, in which Mr. Kidd is made to announce, in his own way, that Queen Anne is dead, and that twice two make four. The substance of Mr. Kidd's book might be vulgarly, but not inaccurately, described as "kidding." It is an attempt to show, by the use of reason, that reason is of inferior importance, and is not the commanding factor in social evolution. This factor is religion, which is always irrational; indeed, a "rational religion is a scientific impossibility." Mr. Cecil replies that religion *is* rational, in the sense that there is always a reason for religious belief. A savage thinks he has reasons for his belief in ghosts; he believes in ghosts, not because he does not reason, but because he reasons badly. From this point Mr. Cecil carries on a most destructive attack on Mr. Kidd, whose book he finally stigmatizes as "the most ignorant book of modern times." This is perhaps deciding an insoluble problem. Nothing, however, could be more absurd than the pitting of reason against feeling, and of feeling against reason. Nor is it true, as Mr. Kidd presumes, that reason prompts a man to war against society for his own personal ends. There is no essential antagonism

between the welfare of society and the welfare of the individual; and, if Christianity supposes there is, it occupies a lower level of character and intelligence than that of the Stoical philosophy of Marcus Aurelius, who said that men were made for co-operation, that what is not good for the hive neither is it good for the single bee, and that what is not good for the single bee neither is it good for the hive. And if this antagonism does not exist, religion does not fulfil the function which Mr. Kidd assigns it, and consequently his treatise is a huge blunder founded upon an initial misconception.

Passing to Mr. Drummond, Mr. Cecil notes in him a "gift for expounding the scientific doctrines of other men," and a great faculty for cheerful paralogism and broad and serene fallacy. Mr. Drummond's argument in a nutshell is this. The struggle for existence is counteracted by the struggle for the life of others; that is to say, the instinct of self-preservation is checked by the instinct of reproduction, out of which arises care for offspring, which is the beginning of love as distinguished from lust. God was caring for man all along; the evil of the struggle for existence was destined to be overcome by the good of the struggle for the life of others; morality was fated, in the long run, to triumph over brute force; the millennium, so to speak, is approaching, and man now understands that the God of the universe is indeed his Heavenly Father.

Mr. Cecil makes short work of this argument. He points out that, if God designed evil for an ultimately good purpose, he also designed the moral repugnance with which we regard it, and the moral opprobrium which we attach to the creator of it. "The spectacle of a Deity," he says, "anxious to make a perfect world, carefully making it imperfect, and then leaving it to struggle for countless ages in pain and misery, until the earth is once more swallowed up in night, is too grotesque for anything." Of course, there is much more than this in Mr. Cecil's reply; we merely take this as a pointed specimen.

The reply to Mr. Balfour is extremely good. Mr. Cecil tracks him step by step; shows his loose employment of terms, now in one sense and now in another; exhibits his evasion of every real difficulty; and tells him, at last, that if Christianity *is* to be judged by its conduciveness to moral conduct, instead of by the truth or falsity of its doctrines, it will cut a sorry figure before an honest tribunal. "Tried by such a test," he says, "Christianity fails ignominiously; it fails in the case of Mr. Balfour himself." For was it not Mr. Balfour who made so mean an opposition to the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh into Parliament?

Those who are fond of vigorous thinking and trenchant writing will find plenty of enjoyment in Mr. Cecil's pages. We hope his book will have many readers. It is bound to do good, for it possesses a tonic quality.

G. W. F.

HOLY GROUND!

"Already have we been the nothing we dread to be."—*Herman Melville.*

IN these days, when crematoriums, or crematoria, are beginning to be reborn, when the older and more sanitary method of purifying the mortal clay which has lost its human habitant is being readopted, and when cleansing fires are deemed, by increasing numbers of our fellows, as more respectful destinations for our worn-out bodies than a hole in the ground, "where the vile worms throng"; in these same days there still remain grown men—so far as pounds-avoirdupois and years will make a grown man—who are ready to squabble about the respective merits of consecrated and natural earth. At least, so it seems at Leicester.

Personally, I take but slight interest in such a squabble. Let me live as I please, and, when I have done living, others may do as *they* please with what is left of "me." I detest a damp bed now; a damp and wormy bed will be entirely as comfortable as any other to my "remains" after I am no more; for "as a man was before he was born, so shall a man be after he is dead."

And what millenniums all we poor humans have had of death! In our previous death no care whatever sat upon our brows, and our dust and ashes were as indifferent to the incantations of priestly mummery as they will again be. We lay for untold myriads of years dreamlessly asleep in

inorganic contempt of creeds or deeds; and, with all this vast and universal ante-natal experience of death, we are talked at by our bogie-terrified brothers as though a return to that which we have already been full of terrors unutterable, and of brainless, soulless joys, even more terrible than all the terrors of the pit!

Is it too silly an occupation to criticize the consecrators? Perhaps; but let us unbend for a few minutes, and slay once more one of the never-dying superstitions of ghoulish man. Taking a couple of handfuls of our common natural earth, one consecrated, the other in its primal state—"just as God made it," as the old folk say—chemical analysis cannot distinguish one from the other; they are as alike as are fresh water and holy water, providing the latter be also really fresh. The instructed and experienced agriculturalist would as soon grow turnips in one soil as the other, for, like the chemist, he "can't tell 't'other from which."

As for the dead, they seem as quiet and well-behaved in natural loam as in "consecrated" earth. Nor has there been known any instance of those buried in unsophisticated soil making any attempt to cross over into holy ground. They dissolve away equally well in either place; and the cosmopolitan worm pays impartial attention to the "poor inhabitant below" either the natural or supernaturalized soil. Nay, so evanescent is the effect of consecration that even the consecrator himself cannot, five seconds afterwards, discover, in inspecting several samples of similar soil, which is the one he has just consecrated; they all smell so holy—i.e., healthy. Indeed, the thinker is further confounded by the fact that an analysis of the consecrator would show no difference that could not be attributed reasonably to natural causes, between him and any other fellow worm who had no gift for consecration. Actually, a top dressing of guano would make more alteration in a given soil in ten seconds than a continuous ceremony of consecration by all our medicine men lasting over a million years. As for the "lower" animals, they display a quite cheerful indifference to consecrated ground. In the churchyard near my house the cats pursue their nocturnal philanderings with as much assiduity as in my back garden.

And similarly with baptism and the churching of women; neither in body nor mind can you discover any supernatural difference between the sprinkled and unsprinkled babe, between the churched child-bearer and the natural one. These rites, together with numerous others connected with supernatural religion, are as empty as Glendower's invocation of the spirits from the vasty deep, except in one respect; and herein lies their significance.

All these rites either bring in gold or *prestige* to the dancing dervishes of our blessed England; and priestly *prestige* is only an indirect source of gold and more gold, and gold always and for ever! Seeing what a prolific source of revenue these different rites are, we are the more surprised that the rite of the Church which can be demonstrated to create a difference from others in the male or female submitting to it—we mean the rite of circumcision—should have been abandoned by the various Christian sects. The memory of this rite recalls the story told by that great pagan poet, Heine, of the little Swabian maiden who, at a Church-school examination, being asked by the bishop-examiner how the woman of Samaria knew when she met Jesus at the well that he was a Jew, replied, "*A la circoncision, monsieur!*"

Seriously, the one practical rite to which Jesus submitted is discarded by his pseudo-followers; while a host of other rites, which he neither knew of nor established, and which are mere hocus-pocus and hierophantic flummery, are on a level with the superstitions of the least intelligent savages.

A rite like circumcision, to which even their God himself submitted, is surely of prime importance in the long list of those indulged in by the two hundred and odd different sects of so-called Christians. And yet the rite in question is abandoned by the followers of the Circumcised One to that race from which he sprang on his mother's side; just as they illogically harp and insist on the marriage rite, while their God's father dispensed with it entirely, and their God himself never seems to have either regretted his irregular parentage (possibly, like Vanini and Erasmus, he was rather proud of it), or to have laid any stress on any marriage rite whatever; and, added to this significant omission, the information that in heaven there would be neither marrying nor giving in marriage; which, seeing the

conduct attributed by revealed theology to the Lord of that wearisome conception, is not surprising; for Jah, by his own alleged autobiographical confessions, dispensed altogether with that rite on which, in its monogamic form, the "stability of civilization" is supposed to rest. Yea, even Solomon dispensed with it also on three hundred occasions!

We have wandered somewhat from the special rite we set out to review; but we will complete the circle of our wandering by a final reference to it. If there be any who honestly believe that they believe that by burial in "consecrated" soil they obtain any preferential consideration from any decent possible or impossible god, by all means let them demean their god by holding so pitiable a creed. As old Montaigne says: "It is far from honoring him who made us to honor him whom we have made. Man cannot make a flea, and yet he will be making gods by the dozen."

As for the mummeries of priests, with their senseless rites, any intelligent god would laugh at them as sardonically as even the most hardened human cynic—provided always that he (the god) were conscience-clear of having created wittingly the human race. We may be certain that no god with any sense of humor—such, for instance, as the *Bon Dieu* of the Frenchman, when he happens to have a god—will ever give a welcome to the fools and the superstitious.

PAGANUS.

GOSPEL DISCREPANCIES.

AMONG the most disingenuous chapters of that famous but most sophisticated work, Paley's *Evidences of Christianity*, is the first chapter of Part III, entitled "The Discrepancies between the Gospels." Paley is too cute to show the reader what and where these discrepancies are. To have gone into details would not have served his purpose, for he would thereby have let even the Christian reader see that there were difficulties in the Gospel stories which might otherwise pass unnoticed. Accordingly, he makes some general observations, such as "When accounts of a transaction come from the mouths of different witnesses, it is seldom that it is not possible to pick out apparent or real inconsistencies between them." All very good; but it is nothing to the issue. Everyone knows fallible witnesses make mistakes, and judges and experts soon see how far inconsistencies of testimony invalidate the evidence. Paley forgets, or conveniently glides over, the fact that the Gospels are put before us as a divine revelation. Any work inspired by omniscience should be without either real or apparent inconsistencies, and Paley well knew that the discrepancies alluded to are real, and not apparent.

Paley fortifies his position by the following well-known illustration:—

"In the account of the Marquis of Argyll's death, in the reign of Charles II., we have a very remarkable contradiction. Lord Clarendon relates that he was condemned to be hanged, which was performed the same day; on the contrary, Burnett, Woodrow, Heath, and Echard concur in stating that he was condemned upon the Saturday, and executed upon a Monday. Was any reader of English history ever sceptic enough to raise from hence a question whether the Marquis of Argyll was executed or not?"

What an awful perversion of an analogy! Let us try to complete it. Suppose Clarendon, Woodrow, Heath, and Burnet put before us as divine revelations. Suppose that they had told us that the Marquis of Argyll, after his execution, rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven. Suppose they were not only in disagreement as to the day on which he died, which, according to the generally-received account, was on a Sunday—a day when, like the Passover, no executions were permitted—but even as to the hour. Suppose it alleged that arrest, trial, and execution all took place in a few hours. Suppose the accounts of his trial were hopelessly at variance with the known forms of law, and grave judges were represented as spitting upon him. Suppose that their narratives of his resurrection from the dead and ascension into heaven were hopelessly at variance with one another. Suppose, further, that these narratives had come down to us across the night of dark ages, when all learning was in the hands of an interested corporation. Then I woe that sceptics might question even the fact of the execution; while the story of the resurrection would be summarily dismissed as too widely

improbable to deserve a hearing. I contend that, to anyone who knows the value of evidence, the discrepancies of the Gospels on matters of moment are such as to entirely invalidate their evidence.

Paley observes: "A great deal of the discrepancy observable in the Gospels arises from *omission*; from a fact or a passage of Christ's life being noticed by one writer which is unnoticed by another." But why should there be omission in any of the Gospels if all are inspired by the same omniscient mind? If Matthew, Mark, and Luke, who wrote earliest, mentioned nothing of the raising of Lazarus, does it not suggest that they knew nothing of this miracle, and that the story grew up afterwards? But I am not here concerned with omissions, but the downright contradictions, where the various gossellers disagree in their narration of the same event. The story of the resurrection is a crucial instance. Omitting minor discrepancies as to the number of women and angels, according to Matthew the stone was not gone when the women came, but on their arrival there was an earthquake, and an angel descended from heaven and rolled away the stone and sat upon it, and the guard who had been set over the tomb, having seen the miracle, were persuaded to say that his disciples stole his body while they slept, although it was death for Roman soldiers to sleep at their posts. The omission of this improbable story of the guard by all the other gossellers is suspicious; but the fact that they relate that when the women came early in the morning they found the tomb already empty is not to be reconciled by any theory of omission. No additional fact could make it come about that the tomb should have been sealed and guarded, yet not sealed and guarded; that the same women, at the same time and place, should have witnessed an earthquake, and yet not witnessed one; have found a stone already gone from a tomb, and yet not found it gone; have seen it rolled away, and yet not seen it. It is simply incredible that the other writers should have believed Matthew's story, and yet give a version which flatly contradicts it. When we remember that the Jews have ever denied the truth of the Christian story, and that their own tradition reports that Jesus met his death by stoning and hanging at Lud; when, too, we find that myths of walking on water, of multiplying food, and of dying and rising again, were told of various sun-gods of antiquity, are we not justified in regarding the Gospel discrepancies as evidences of the legendary character of the narratives?

BEN.

ACID DROPS.

THE Sultan's proposal to the Powers is decidedly Oriental. In Eastern bazaars the seller asks ten times as much as he is prepared to sell for, and the buyer offers a tenth part of what he is prepared to give. Then they chaffer and chaffer, until both sides hit the happy mean, and a bargain is effected.

Any extension of the Turkish Empire in Europe is utterly out of the question. The cession of Thessaly is an absurd idea, and no doubt the Turk understands this thoroughly. Were Greece friendless, he could dictate his own terms of peace; but happily the Powers stand behind Greece, and are able to save her from all ruin, except that which she has inflicted upon herself.

No doubt the Turk will be as stiff as he can, up to the point of rousing the anger of the Powers. One of the worst results of the mad action of Greece is the demonstration that the Turk is not at all played out from a military point of view. The war party is now in the ascendant at Constantinople, and the Powers will have to be firm and united if they mean to localize the trouble in south-east Europe.

On June 2 the Moslem world enters upon its 1315th year since the Hegira of Mohammed. The Moharram festival, as it is called, is always a noisy one, and this year the Moslems will be specially excited by the Caliph having, with his army of half a million of the faithful, overcome a Christian power, supposed to be egged on by the rest of Christian Europe.

The New York *Tribune* speaks out boldly on the subject of Christian and Mohammedan cruelty, and maintains that it is six on the one side and half-a-dozen on the other. "If the adherents of the faith of Islam," it says, "were as completely in the power of the Christians of the East as the Armenians are in the power of the Turks, the latter would be outraged and murdered, just as have been the Armenians."

The atrocities of the Spanish *Conquistadores* in the New World seem almost equalled by those applied to the natives of the Congo by their Christian masters. They are forced to gather rubber, and laziness is punished by mutilation or death. Forty-five villages have been burnt down, and twenty-eight abandoned. A missionary testified that he has often seen dead bodies floating in the river or lying by the wayside, with the right hands cut off, all victims to the rubber question. Greed, extortion, robbery, and murder are the concomitants of Christian civilization. Small wonder the natives curse the day when the white devils first came to their country.

Sunday golf is agitating the minds of the Sunday Observance Committee of the Free Church Assembly of Scotland. In their annual report they say that the "thoughtless and selfish" Sabbath-breakers, who defy "the public sentiment and conscience of the community," are insensible to argument or appeal. "Some day," however, "they will find out their mistake, and will have to pay a dear price for their infatuation and folly." This is a parliamentary way of saying that Sunday golfers will find it much hotter than they like it in hell—the place to which the charitable godly always consign those who do not see eye to eye with them.

The pious commissioners of Dunoon Pier refused to countenance Sunday sailing on the Clyde, and when the *Victoria* landed its passengers kept them prisoners on the pier. Three thousand natives assembled, and when, headed by Commissioner Miller, they were released by breaking through a waiting-room window, their names were taken for prosecution. The proceedings and excitement consequent thereon will not aid the Sabbatarians, for the worst blow to their irrational superstition is to let the multitude know that the taboo is broken.

"Sunday" is the laconic title of a Bill to be introduced into the House of Lords by Lord Hobhouse. Its purpose is to remove the "scandal and vexation" caused by the operation of the Act of 1781.

How well Christians know their Bible! A correspondent in the London *Echo* asks: "What is the meaning of Rizpah, the title of one of Lord Leighton's pictures?" He adds that not one in the crowd of admirers, when he saw it, could give the meaning. The terrible story is to be found in the twenty-first chapter of the second book of Samuel. Rizpah was the mother of two sons by Saul, who were hung on a hill to stop a famine in the reign of the crafty and cruel David. The bereaved mother watched her sons' dead bodies by day and night, keeping off the birds of the air and the beasts of the field, until at last David was shamed into giving them decent sepulchre.

Dr. Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, contributed his share to the discussion in the House of Lords on the health of the Indian Army. We send thousands of unmarried soldiers out there, all in the prime of physical life; we feed them well, and give them exercise enough to keep them in first-class condition. Of course they seek to indulge their sexual appetites; and to expect the contrary of such men, in such circumstances, is the height of absurdity. This involves an enormous amount of prostitution, and the terrible spread of a certain disease. Well, what is Dr. Temple's remedy for this evil? "The authorities of the army," he said, "should make it clear that they looked upon this kind of indulgence as a very evil thing, which was to be condemned by every good man—nay, by every good soldier." Dr. Temple is as ridiculous as Mrs. Partington, who proposed to sweep back the Atlantic with a broom. It is such advice as his which shows the hopeless futility of Christian ethics. Facts are ignored, and moral teaching becomes hypocrisy.

The Archbishop of Canterbury proposes to "make the officers in some way responsible." How would it do to make the parsons in some way responsible, and cashier the chaplains or reduce their salaries for the proof palpable that their religious teaching is of no moral efficacy?

Dr. Temple's appearance in this debate is described in the *Weekly Sun*, the writer being presumably Mr. T. P. O'Connor:—"But the Archbishop of Canterbury is courageous, if he is anything, and, though his manner was not free from the sense of his remoteness from the Assembly, his sense of this was shown rather in dogged defiance than in modest self-effacement. He stood bolt upright, this man of seventy-five or seventy-six years, and it is hard to imagine a stranger, dour figure than he presented. The mouth is large, tight, and firm, like a great rat-trap; the face is square; the whiskers are still almost jet black, and so is the hair, of which there is still an abundance. And so you got the idea of some black-muzzled, sturdy, and almost ferocious old lion that faced the enemy with the courage unabated by age, or foes, or danger. The Archbishop's delivery is peculiar. He speaks with great slowness, and

apparently with great difficulty—the voice is loud and even strident—and the accent is so broad that it sounded to me as if the speaker were an Irishman. There was nothing very particular in what the Archbishop said; he did not give one the idea of a man of startling intellectual powers; but there were dogged determination, strength, and grimness in the tone; in short, it was the speech of a great temperament, and not of a fine intellect. I should not care to be under the Archbishop of Canterbury. There may be tenderness and softness somewhere under that black, forbidding, and grim exterior, but it must take a long time to reach it."

The Cardinal Archbishop of Paris, it is said, did not conceal his grief at the outrageous sermon of Pere Ollivier on the Paris fire. His grief was probably not so much at the sermon as at the general disgust it occasioned. It is not only the Catholic doctrine that innocent blood atones for sin; it is the very core of Christianity itself. No believer in the Atonement can get away from it.

As the one burneth, so burneth the other; yea, one thing befalleth them. It makes no difference to the laws of nature whether they have to do with the godly or the ungodly. Right on the heels of the great Charity Bazaar fire at Paris comes the destruction by fire of the Salvation Army shelter in Bermondsey. It was largely used for sorting and storing waste paper—including, we should imagine, a considerable quantity of old *War Crys*.

The Catholics boast that last Sunday they had in London, under the auspices of the Guild of Ransom, a bigger procession than has been known in England since the days when it acknowledged the supremacy of the Pope. Processions are a form of religious rite, found to be of far greater efficacy than prayer.

The *English Churchman* points to another evidence of the growth of Catholicism in a bill "announcing one of those blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits" condemned by the Articles," which is issued from the English Church of St. Columba, Kingsland-road. It advertises a Solemn Requiem Mass for the victims of the Paris fire for May 16, and has the intimation, "Congregation to wear black."

The High Church party is running headlong on the road towards Rome. Last Sunday morning, at the Church of St. Columba, Haggerston, a requiem was sung for the repose of the souls of those who perished in the Paris fire. Prayers for the dead are of more than doubtful utility, when they do so little for the living. Of course, the use of them is distinctly opposed to Protestant traditions.

Hooley is still awaiting his baronetcy for presenting the Hooley Communion Plate to St. Paul's. Meantime some of it is criticised by the *Church Times*, which says: "To our thinking, metal flagons for the wine and water are a mistake. The narrow-necked vessels will be very difficult to clean, and be inconvenient in other respects." Glass vessels are, of course, the proper thing, but Hooley, like Miss Kilmans-egg, must have everything in gold.

When Dr. Thomas Wilson, Prebendary of Westminster, preached before George III. in the Chapel Royal, he laid his fulsome flattery on so thick that Farmer George was constrained to say that "he came to chapel to hear the praises of God, and not his own." The parsons are all busy in preparing Diamond Jubilee sermons to celebrate the lady who has condescended long to reign over us. The men of God always shine on occasions which emphasize their position as intermediaries between the earthly and the heavenly powers. Special prayers have been issued by the archbishops for the occasion. Nominally addressed to deity, they are really dedicated to the Crown and the distributors of patronage under the Crown. We wonder the Lord is not disgusted at being approached with such offerings of soft soap and treacle.

In the published *Form of Prayer with Thanksgiving* the Epistle is from 1 Peter ii., ending with "Fear God, honor the King," and the Gospel from Matthew xxii., on the lawfulness of giving tribute to Caesar. The evasive logic of the Logos shines nowhere less conspicuously than in this story. Its moral, if it has one, is that all stamps and money marked with the Queen's image belong to her, and must be handed over. It is little wonder we are told that those who heard these words "marvelled and left him, and went their way."

It is said that recently two churches were consecrated in Berlin, and the Emperor presented a Bible to each. In one he wrote with his own Imperial fist part of the fifth verse of the fifteenth chapter of St. John: "Without me ye can do nothing," and in the other he wrote these very appropriate words from Jeremiah vii. 23: "Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people." If not true, the tale is at least well invented.

Pious Emperor William should really go a step further—the only step left him—in his career of egotistic despotism. He should abolish the law of treason, and make the law of blasphemy apply to himself as well as to God Almighty. Herr Bebel's recent speech in the Reichstag gave some curious instances of the operation of the existing law. The judges have taken to imprisoning people for "insulting" the Emperor, even though they never mentioned his name. One editor got a dose of imprisonment for writing about an historic personage, the Elector Joachim; the court assuming that, though he criticised the dead Elector, he really meant to reflect upon the living Emperor. Another editor was punished for denying that the late Emperor William deserved the name of "Great." Another, who described a certain battue of game as butchery, was sent to prison because the Emperor happened to be present at the shooting-party. It is getting to be a crime in Germany to suggest that William the Greatest is not the handsomest, bravest, and wisest man that ever lived.

The Pope wrote to the Sultan last summer, begging him to protect the Christians in Crete. The letter was presented to the Shadow of God by the papal delegate, Monsignor Bonetti, who brought back a very bad report, which led to the breaking off of relations between the Porte and the Holy See. The Sultan was very angry, and said, *sotto voce*: "Who is this Pope who is always meddling in our affairs of State?" Then, aloud, he said: "Tell His Holiness that it is my care to attend to the welfare of all my subjects." The Pope was much hurt, and applied to the French Government to obtain him some "satisfaction." He also wrote another letter to the Sultan, who returned no answer. Perhaps the Sultan recollects, from his reading of history, how the Popes of old got up crusades against the Mohammedans, and promised Paradise to all the criminals and scoundrels in Europe who would fight in the Holy War.

Dean Farrar, speaking at the annual congress of the Kent County Temperance Federation, at Tunbridge Wells, is reported in the *Alliance News* to have said: "He himself saw a thrill of emotion pass through that assembly when Mr. Gladstone made his declaration that drink was more deadly than the three great scourges of mankind." According to Mr. A. Biddlecombe, however, who writes to the *Westminster Gazette*, Mr. Gladstone never made such a declaration, and therefore the Very Rev. Dean could not have seen the thrill of emotion when he declared it. Mr. Biddlecombe accuses Dean Farrar of putting himself into a ludicrous and undignified position, and of "giving a dramatic setting to what is quite a hoary-headed false statement."

One Hines, a Weatherford preacher, said that "the man who will take a drink of liquor will steal." On which Brann observes: "That's a pretty hard rub on Jesus Christ, Noah, Solomon, and several other gentlemen whom we have been taught to regard as the equals in respectability of a Weatherford revivalist. Brer Hines should ask the Lord to assist him in the reformation of his own mouth. According to Scripture, it is not what goes into a man's face, but what comes out of it, that defiles him."

A lady at Kinsom, Dorsetshire, who objected to idolatry, got the key of the church, and herself removed the cross from the altar, putting it in an old trunk in the vestry. The Bishop of Salisbury was consulted, but apparently did not believe the proceedings were Satanic, as he only ordered that the lady should no more be entrusted with the key.

The King of Siam, who is an enthusiastic Buddhist on his way to England, is said to have been highly incensed at not being allowed by the priests to touch the Buddha's tooth, the most venerated of all relics, when at Kandy, in Ceylon. He perhaps might have discovered that the tooth is not a human tooth. Indeed, it is said to be clearly an animal one, and if it ever belonged to Buddha it must have been in some pre-human incarnation. The incident emphasizes the remark that priests are everywhere the same.

Colonel John Hay, the United States Ambassador, with Mrs. Hay and a number of fair American *debutantes*, attended the Queen's Drawing Room. It is said that a bystander in the Mall quoted from Hay's best-known poem that they, like the angels, might do "a derved sight better than be loafing around the Throne." But Colonel Hay referred to the Throne of Grace, round which the four-and-twenty elders continually cry "Holy, Holy, Holy!"

The smaller room at Exeter Hall was only partially filled at the fifty-fourth annual meeting of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jew. The motto of the Society is: "The World for Christ through the Jews." The chosen race does not, however, seem to come rapidly to the front as preachers of Christianity, and it was noteworthy that the speakers, instead of boasting of converts, spoke merely of men like Disraeli and Lord Herschel, who, though of Jewish stock, left Judaism without becoming preachers

of Christ. The Society says that its urgent needs are "a reserve fund of £2,000 and £10,000 annual subscriptions of a guinea each." With such an income as this we would guarantee to bring twenty Jews to Freethought for every one brought to Christ.

Some of the items of Jewish missionary reports are amusing. Thus Mr. Strasser, of the East London Mission, says: "There are a few Jews to be seen at our Reading-room, which is open daily from three to seven p.m. I am sorry I cannot speak encouragingly of those who come, and I fear they do not come to hear the truth, but in the hope of securing temporal gain. Sometimes they are very impudent, and even threatening. One said to me the other day that, unless the missionary gives help to every comer, his attendance at the Mission House is useless." This seems to be a very truthful item, which is more than can be said of all missionary reports.

In Acts x. (see also xi.) Peter sees a vision; a *bundle* (*skeuos*) descends from heaven; the bundle contains four-footed beasts and creeping things. Peter is told to slay and eat. Peter bluntly refuses; nothing unclean had ever travelled down Peter's gullet. Then the heavenly voice says: "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." The learned Rabbi, J. M. Wise, calls attention to a remarkable coincidence between the statement in Acts xi. (wherein Peter speaks of the vision recorded in Acts xi.) and a passage in the Talmud; a coincidence never before noticed. "In the Talmud it is another Simon (Simon ben Chalafta) who eats food which had come down from heaven. He also goes to his colleagues to tell them the story in the academy. They also object that the food was unclean. The Simon in the Talmud, without any vision or voice from heaven, makes the same statement, 'Nothing unclean cometh down from heaven.' The two Simons are said to have been contemporaries; which of the twain invented the story?" That is the conundrum the rabbi would like to see solved.

A press dispatch from St. Cloud, Minnesota, states that "Judges Baxter and Searle, of the District Court, have just handed down an important decision in what is known as the Avon school case, whereby the school district and its teachers are enjoined from using the school-house to give religious instruction, or to teach the Roman Catholic Catechism. The decision applies to all public schools in the State, and to all religious creeds. The practice of teaching the catechism is held to be contrary to the constitutional guarantee of freedom of conscience."

In the United States the population may be roughly classed into Catholics, Protestants, and non-church-goers. Of these, only the first and last are increasing. The Catholics have, as actual communicants, over a tenth of the population. The doctrine of the Church is "Increase and multiply," in the hope of overwhelming, by sheer force of numbers, those who restrain their population. But the teaching of biology is certainly not that the most prolific breeders come to the top.

The Rev. Alexander Rogers, lecturer to the Protestant Alliance, has been lecturing at Holywell against Roman Catholicism and the superstition in connection with St. Winifred's Well. When walking past the well with two Nonconformist ministers, he was set upon by two Catholics and knocked down. The Rev. I. Edwards was also struck. The assaulters were afterwards arrested, and probably regard themselves as martyrs.

General Booth's Missionary Tea League has been started in New South Wales. The Salvation Army has prepared a special blend of tea, and all joining the League are required to pledge themselves to use no other for the space of twelve months.

O I'm glad salvation's free;
And prepared for you and me
Is a special blend of tea!
'Allelujay!

For the next twelve months to come
We will knock off beer and rum,
And we'll make the tea trade hum!
'Allelujay!!!

Matthew, Mark, and Luke and John,
Go and put the kettle on;
And bring forth the bun and scone.
'Allelujay!!!

For the next twelve months on end
To the mandate we will bend,
And quaff the heavenly blend.
'Allelujay!!!!

Should the Devil ask a pot,
Brew it for him on the spot;
Let 'im 'ave it piping 'ot!
'Allelujay!!!!

—Sydney Bulletin.

Hall Caine, at the Vagabond Club, told a story of an old Manx Methodist woman who could never be satisfied with her preachers. One of them, being about to leave, called to say good-bye. "Well good-bye," she said, "and God bless ye; and may the Lord send a better man in your place." Next day his successor came to see her. "Well, I hope the Lord has sent a good man," she said; "but there's none so good that comes as them that goes."

An abandoned church in a Western town bears over the entrance the inscription: "This is the gate of Heaven." Beneath it is a sheriff's notice containing this line: "Closed by order of the American Loan Company."—*New York Weekly*.

The Rev. Dr. Hubbard C. Farrar, who was president of the New York State Sunday-school Association for several years, has been publicly expelled from the ministry for breaches of the Seventh Commandment.

John D. Rockefeller, the American millionaire, is described as "the richest Baptist in the world." He made his pile through the Standard Oil Trust—a corporation run on the most unscrupulous lines of Yankee "business." He teaches in a Sunday-school, and is a man of exemplary "piety," giving large sums of money to religious objects. He has a special seat reserved in heaven.

A Western interviewer asked Moody what he thought of Ingersoll. The evangelist replied, "Why don't you ask me what I think of Corbett, seeing I don't know either of them?" This is a fair specimen of Moody's "humor." The palest little scintillation is reckoned flashing wit in a hell-fire preacher.

Christian fanaticism has had a striking illustration in Russia, where a report was prevalent that the beginning of 1897 would witness the end of the world and the day of judgment. Seventeen hermits were said to have emigrated out of fear. Nothing more was heard of them, and nobody knew where they had gone. A sectarian named Kowalend has now confessed that on the entreaties of these supposititious emigrants, who wished to gain a martyr's crown, he had walled them up alive. He described the spot, which was examined by the police, and the man's story was confirmed in the most horrible manner.

George Morley, writing in *Knowledge*, says that there were at Long Compton, Warwickshire, in September, 1874, in the opinion of James Heywood, a dweller in the locality, no less than sixteen witches in the village of Long Compton. This person stabbed one of them, Ann Tennant, with a pitchfork to draw blood, and so severely that the wound proved fatal, and the poor victim of deeply-seated superstition died almost immediately. Heywood, in his defence, said the witches had killed many persons. He might have cited the text, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."

The Church Association has presented a memorial to the Queen, signed by 36,876 women, praying Her Majesty to take steps for the repression of Romanizing innovations, to repress the attempts being made within the Church of England to revive the confessional, and to restore again the "Sacrifice of the Mass," which Her Majesty, on accession to the Throne, publicly declared to be both "superstitious and idolatrous." The Home Secretary has acknowledged the memorial in a very stiff letter.

Mr. Birkhead, a newsagent, of 142 Ilkeston-road, Radford, Nottingham, exposes the *Freethinker* in his window. Last week a sky-pilot walked in and asked him whether he did not think he was doing a lot of harm by selling such a paper. Mr. Birkhead replied: "No, it is a matter of business; I get any paper for anybody." After a warmish bit of conversation, the man of God said: "Well, I'll take that copy out of the window." The accommodating newsagent handed it to him, and filled the vacancy with another copy. "Shall I get it for you regularly?" he asked, with a twinkle in his eye. "Oh dear no," said the baffled minister, who thought, perhaps, that by getting that copy out of the window he had saved the neighborhood from the plague of "infidelity." What ideas of business these men have, to be sure!

The Rev. F. B. Zincke, in *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, tells how, when he returned, one of his parishioners said: "They tell me, sir, you have been a long way off."

"Yes, neighbor; I've been to Jerusalem."

"What! Jerusalem, sir?" with great surprise.

"Yes, Jerusalem."

"Now, sir, you have surprised me. I did not know that there was such a place as Jerusalem in the world. I had always thought that Jerusalem was only a Bible word."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. C. WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—May 23 and 30, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road. June 6, Leicester, Conference of the N. S. S.; 13, 14, and 15, Birmingham and district. August 15, New Brompton.—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.

ENQUIRE.—Pascal, in his *Provincial Letters*, gives many instances of the Jesuit doctrine, that the end justifies the means. Others are plentiful. Thus Busebaum, whose *Medulla Theologicæ Moralis* has been printed by the Propaganda at Rome as the best book on its subject, says: "When the end is licit, the means also are licit"; and again: "To whom the end is lawful, the means also are lawful." Layman, S.J., also a writer of high repute, says in his *Theologia Moralis*: "To whomso the end is conceded, the means fitted to that end are also conceded." And Voit, another popular author, whose *Moral Theology* has gone through at least twelve editions, puts the case of a condemned murderer breaking out of prison, knowing that he will thereby cause grievous injury to the prison authorities. Has he done wrong thereby? "No," says Voit, "since to whom the end is licit, the means are also permitted." Of course, there is a sense in which it is true, that if you may do a given thing, you must be allowed some way of doing it; but these moralists allow you to do it in any way you can.

S. R. THOMPSON, 75 Ashgrove Wavertree, Liverpool, who reports that his lectures at Rochdale were well received, mentions that Mr. Collier, grandson of "Tim Bobbin," the Lancashire poet, has a number of paintings and sketches by his grandfather to dispose of. Collectors might apply to Mr. Thompson.

E. H. T.—(1) It is not universally admitted that Luke was the author of the third gospel. Its preamble shows the writer was only a chronicler. (2) We should say Mr. Grant Allen is a Freethinker, but do not undertake to define other people's views. What do you mean by being an authority upon questions? (3) Smith & Sons taboo many publications besides ours. You should put your question to them. (4) Sachs is an authority on the facts of botany.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURE SCHEME.—W. McLean, 10s. *Per C. Cohen*: Seth Swale, 5s.

G. BERRY.—We wish the Stockton Branch all success in its fresh enterprise. Mr. Foote has had to postpone his visit to the north till after the Conference.

J. F. BIRKHEAD.—Contents-sheet shall be sent regularly. Thanks for your efforts to promote our circulation. See paragraph.

THOMAS MACLEISH.—Pleased to hear that you and Mr. Black are coming to Leicester as delegates from the Glasgow Branch; also that your members' list shows a substantial increase.

W. PORTER.—Always glad to insert such paragraph announcements for the Branches.

R. FRANCIS.—Jeremy Taylor is the most eloquent of the old English divines, Hooker the most majestic. There is wonderfully fine writing in South, admirable matter in Barrow, and any amount of genius in Donne. The last was a fine poet, whose verses will survive the criticism of Johnson; although, of course, he will always be "caviar to the general." Few modern sermons are worth reading, because Christianity is intellectually played out. When its doctrines were practically undisputed, a great man could enter the pulpit and put his genius into his sermons. Not so now.

D.—All the contents of the *Freethinker* will hardly suit one person's taste exactly. If you find what you appreciate, and perhaps admire, why not leave the rest to other readers with a less educated palate?

E. PINDER (Leicester).—Thanks for your fraternal letter. It is good of the Leicester friends to be so attentive. We have put the information in "Sugar Plums."

W. J. LEWIS.—You can obtain back numbers of the *Freethinker* by applying to our publisher, R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C. You should find the works of Professor Clifford, Büchner, Spencer, and Huxley in any good Public Library. Bradlaugh's and Holyoake's will be found in some.

IGNORUS.—Dean Farrar's new book on the Bible is of importance, merely on account of its rationalistic admissions. It will be reviewed at length by Mr. Foote, probably in our next issue. Canon Driver's book on the Old Testament is able and valuable, and carries what is called the Higher Criticism to its farthest limits. He makes a footnote reservation on behalf of the New Testament, however, which he would find it very difficult to defend. The fact is, the criticism of the New Testament is only half begun; that of the Old Testament is nearly completed.

R. D. R.—Mr. Axolby has forwarded your letter, which is interesting. You have our sympathy in your somewhat unfortunate position, and we are glad to know that you derive some pleasure from reading the *Freethinker*. Never mind the bigots telling you that you will go to hell. In all probability there is no such place, and if there is, they cannot send you there. They may go there themselves, and look for you in vain.

W. FOWLER.—Thanks for the cutting from the *Birmingham Gazette*. The plan referred to was not carried into effect. Mr. Baker altered his mind and made other and, as he held, better arrangements. We do not wish to have any controversy on the matter now.

N. S. S. BENEVOLENT FUND.—Miss E. M. Vance acknowledges: East London Branch, 6s.; W. Heath, 1s. 10d.; Huddersfield, 10s.; N. W. London Branch, 2s. 6d.; G. G. Ross, 5s.; Barnsley Branch, 10s.

R. AXELBY.—It is good of you to send the *Freethinker* to such a place, where the inmates are so pestered with pious attentions, and where a little Freethought must often come as a great relief.

J. G. MAAGAARD.—Received with thanks.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—South London Observer—Sydney Bulletin—Herald of the Golden Age—Vegetarian—Dunoon Observer—Western Morning News—Truthseeker—Boston Investigator—De Dageraad—Firebrand—Freidenker—Torch of Reason—Two Worlds—Secular Thought—Dominion Review—Freethought Ideal—Freethought Magazine—Open Court—Western Figaro—Isle of Man Times—Progressive Thinker—World's Advance Thought—Egoism—Echo—Referee.

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

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

LECTURE NOTICES must reach 28 Stonecutter-street by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

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

The *Freethinker* will be forwarded, direct from the publishing office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 10s. 6d.; Half Year, 5s. 3d.; Three Months, 2s. 8d.

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

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE lectured to a good audience at the Athenæum Hall on Sunday evening, his subject being "Christ's Desertion of the Soldiers of the Cross." One of the most appreciative listeners in a front seat was a Dundee "saint," Mr. W. McLean, in London for a few days on business. The chair was occupied by Mr. Charles Watts, who lectures himself at the Athenæum Hall this evening (May 23), taking for his subject "The New Religious Revival."

This number of the *Freethinker* contains the agenda of the National Secular Society's Annual Conference, which will be held at Leicester on Whit Sunday. It bristles with important and debateable items, and there will doubtless be a large attendance of Branch delegates and individual members.

The Leicester Secular Society, which places its hall gratuitously at the service of the Conference, has formed a sub-committee to carry out all the local arrangements. Several local friends are willing to entertain delegates at their houses—in some cases one, and in others two. Those who would like such accommodation should communicate with Mr. E. Pinder, secretary, Secular Society, Humberstone-gate, Leicester. Delegates not so provided for will have accommodation booked for them, on application to Mr. Pinder, at hotels, temperance or otherwise, as preferred. Individual members from a distance will come under the same heading.

Delegates and individual members should also inform Mr. Pinder whether they intend to stay over till Monday, when a drive will be arranged through some of the very beautiful scenery in the vicinity of Leicester. It is intended to return from the drive at (say) seven o'clock, in time for the night trains, with possibly an hour's conviviality afterwards at the Club. Those who wish to participate in this pleasant outing should lose no time in informing Mr. Pinder, who wants to get good vehicles and the pick of horses for it. Sunday, May 30, is the last day on which he ought to have this information.

Mr. A. B. Moss lectures this afternoon (May 23) on Peckham Rye, for the Camberwell Branch. This will be the first time he has spoken there for fifteen years. We hope the South London "saints" will rally round him on this occasion.

Mr. W. W. Kelly, an American, who is managing a play produced in Wolverhampton, when interviewed by the local *Express and Star* said: "I began my career, strange though it may appear, in connection with the Church, so to speak. I took Talmage, who, by the way, was my old Sunday school teacher, on tour. I can't say that I was particularly impressed by my connection with the rev. gentleman; but then that was only a matter of opinion. My next 'star' was Colonel Bob Ingersoll, with whom I travelled all over the States. I have heard all the great orators in this country, I have listened to the most brilliant public speakers on the other side, but above them all stands R. G. Ingersoll. If ever a man spoke with a tongue of silver, it was he; and a more perfect gentleman I have never met."

This Sunday the Chatham Secular Sunday School hold

their anniversary. A tea will be provided in the afternoon, and a cantata entitled *Daisy Bell* will be given in the evening. Considerable outlay and labour has been spent on costumes, etc., and the entertainment should be a big success.

The Stockton Branch has been languishing since it lost (by removal) its energetic secretary, Mr. Dobson. However, an effort is now being made to reorganize it for fresh activity. Freethinkers in the district are desired to meet this evening (May 23) at Mr. Griffith's, 1, Langley-street. We hope there will be a good attendance.

The last number of the *Truthseeker* (New York) to hand contains a portrait and biography of Dr. E. B. Foote senior, who is a most generous (and unostentatious) supporter of the Freethought movement in America. Dr. Foote was born February 20, 1829, and is therefore nearly seventy years old—a weight of years which he bears well, for he looks healthy and is full of good spirits. It is a pity that the Liberal cause has not a hundred staunch friends like Dr. Foote.

The *Dominion Review* has an excellent list of contents, including Goldwin Smith on "The Miraculous Element in Christ," Charles Etler on "Protestant and Catholic Idolatry," and Professor Dolbear on "The Physical Basis of Life." It also reprints "The Monk, the Maid, and the Monkey," from our issue of March 28. We are glad to see that the *Dominion Review* has become more pronounced in its Freethought advocacy. This should recommend it to the support of all Canadian Freethinkers.

The Sunday Lecture Society has issued a very temperate criticism of the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Lord's Day Act (1781), by Mr. Arthur F. V. Wild. The circulation of the pamphlet should help the Society to the much-needed amendment of the Act.

The Wood Green Branch has its annual excursion on June 20, this time to Epping Forest. The tickets, including train to Loughton and back, dinner and tea, are five shillings each, and can be obtained of the secretary, Mr. W. Porter, 24 West Beech-road, Wood Green, N.

This Sunday the Bradlaugh Club and Institute celebrate the birthday of John Stuart Mill with a tea, soirée, and dance. During the evening *Oliver Twist* will be played by the Dramatic Society.

We see from the *Washington Post* and *Morning Times* that Mr. L. K. Washburn has been giving Freethought lectures in the United States capital. Mr. Washburn is a very capable man, and we expect to see him take a leading part in Freethought propaganda among our American brethren.

Brann, writing from the Deistic standpoint on "The Passing of Protestantism," says: "It is little more than 400 years since Luther first saw the light; hence Protestantism is as yet but an experiment, a schism which may go the way of many predecessors. The Christian cultus itself is young, and we have no assurance that, long ere it has attained to the age at which those of Baal and Isis and Ashtaroth perished, it, too, will not pass from earth. Protestantism is to-day little more than an army of generals, its supposed strength but the populace attracted by their gaudy uniforms and the music of its mercenaries."

Mr. Passmore Edwards is the Cræsus of modern benevolence. We have received an illustrated list of twenty-six institutional buildings which he has erected, or is erecting, in various parts of the country, in commemoration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. They comprise Free Libraries, Convalescent Homes, Technical Schools, Homes for Epileptics, Cottage Hospitals, and one Settlement in London under the care of Mrs. Humphry Ward and her colleagues. All this is in addition to the institutes which Mr. Passmore Edwards has built at his own cost during the past ten or fifteen years. It is good to see a man of wealth who regards his great resources as a social trust to be used for the benefit of the community.

The *Freethought Magazine* for May (2b, East Indiana-street, Chicago) has a good number of articles, and portraits of the contributors accompany each of them, in addition to a frontispiece representing Professor J. E. Hosmer, the editor of the *Torch of Reason*. Mr. J. C. Hannon has an article on "The Mythology of St. Patrick," which we hope will receive attention from Irish Americans and all devotees of that mythical saint.

The May number of the *Open Court* gives reproductions of portraits of the great German Atheist thinker, Schopenhauer, with an article on "The Prophet of Pessimism," by Dr. P. Carus. There is also an illustrated sketch of the Jews since their return from Babylon, and a good obituary notice of the late Professor F. D. Cope.

PATRONIZING GOD.

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE SERVICE IN ST. PAUL'S.

THE British God Almighty must a proud God feel to know

That Britain's Queen and Empress has made up her mind to go

To London's Mumbo-Jumbo House, with princes and with peers,

To compliment Him on the sense He's shown for sixty years.

Poor common folk who work for bread, and often work in vain,

Must keep their sorrows to themselves, nor of their lot complain;

They ought to know that when the Queen and noble dames and peers

Are patting God upon the back, 'tis not a time for tears.

What if the workers have been starved, and common folk have wept?—

The noble idlers, and the great, in fatness have been kept;

Let Hunger hide its hollow cheeks while wealth its grossness rears

To compliment God's management of things for sixty years.

A common democratic God would ne'er have had the sense

To pamper swells, for sixty years, at poorer folk's expense;

Let all aristocrats, then, praise this Gentleman Divine,

Who has displayed, for sixty years, a taste so superfine.

If this West-end and Masher-God were Christ, the foreign Jew—

The joiner's vagrant beggar son who cursed the "well-to-do"—

He'd double up his thread-bare sleeves, and lash the humbugs well

With tongue and whip whose cords would swish from Ludgate-hill to Hell!

G. L. MACKENZIE.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

SECULAR HALL, LEICESTER, JUNE 6, 1897.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of last Conference.
2. Executive's Annual Report. By PRESIDENT.
3. Reception of Report.
4. Personal Statement by PRESIDENT.
5. Financial Report; with outlines of a financial scheme, submitted to Executive by Mr. Hartmann.
6. Election of President.
Motion by Finsbury Branch: "That Mr. G. W. Foote be re-elected President."
7. Election of Vice-Presidents.
(a) The following are nominated by the Executive for re-election: Dr. T. R. Allinson, G. Anderson, E. Bater, L. Büchner, C. Cohen, W. W. Collins, J. F. Dewar, R. Forder, J. Grange, T. Gorniot, S. Hartmann, W. Heaford, A. B. Moss, S. M. Peacock, C. Pegg, W. Pratt, V. Roger, J. H. Ridgway, F. K. Schaller, H. J. Stace, J. Synes, S. R. Thompson, E. Truelove, E. M. Vance, G. J. Warren, C. Watts, J. M. Wheeler.
(b) Nominated for election by the Executive: Miss Annie Brown.
8. Election of Honorary Secretary.
(a) Motion by C. Watts: "That the office of Honorary Secretary be abolished."
(b) Motion by Executive: "That Mr. R. Forder be re-elected Honorary Secretary."
9. Election of Auditors.
10. Motions by Bristol Branch:—
(a) "That the next Conference meeting-place be decided at the Annual Conference."
(b) "That country Branches may appoint a member of any of the London Branches to represent them upon the Executive."
(c) "That the rule relating to Corresponding Council members be abolished."
(d) "That Branches be informed of all business to be transacted at the Monthly Executive meeting."

11. Motions by the Finsbury Branch :—
 (a) "That the Annual Subscription to the Society should be raised to the minimum of two shillings per year; one shilling of which should go to the Central Fund, and the other shilling be retained by the Branches."
 (b) "That the General Secretary be instructed to furnish all provincial Branch secretaries with a copy of the minutes of the monthly Executive meetings."
12. Motion by the Chatham Branch :—
 "That it be an instruction to the next Executive to frame and carry into effect a Lecture Scheme for the propagandist work of the N. S. S."
13. Motion by the Derby Branch :—
 "That a sheet Almanack be published in addition to the one now issued."
14. Statement by Mr. G. W. Foote *re* his undertaking, in accordance with a resolution of the last Conference, to prepare for the incorporation of a Society to hold and use property, and to receive gifts and legacies, for Secular purposes.
15. Motion by Mr. Charles Watts :—
 "That, in the interest of vigor and continuity of action, it is advisable that, without any interference with the autonomy of the Branches, the Central Executive, which transacts all general business, should consist of a definite number of persons well known to the party at large; that these persons should be the President and the Vice-Presidents elected yearly at the annual Conference; and that such Vice-Presidents as, by reason of distance, cannot often attend the Executive meetings should be communicated with in regard to any matters of exceptional importance."
16. Motion by Mr. Charles Watts :—
 "That it is necessary that in our Secular advocacy the distinction between Secularism and mere Free-thought should be kept before the public."

SOME AUTHORITIES ON "LIFE."

JOHN FISKE : "The hypothesis of a 'vital principle' is now as completely discarded as the hypothesis of phlogiston in chemistry. No biologist with a reputation to lose would for a moment think of defending it" (*Cosmic Philosophy*, i. 422).

HAECKEL : "We can demonstrate the infinitely manifold and complicated physical and chemical properties of the albuminous bodies to be the real cause of organic or vital phenomena" (*History of Creation*, i. 330).

HOFFDING : "The aim of modern physiology is to conceive all organic processes as physical or chemical" (*Outlines of Psychology*, p. 57).

HELMHOLTZ : "Physiologists must expect to meet with an unconditional conformity to law of the forces of nature in their inquiries respecting the vital processes. They will have to apply themselves to the investigation of the physical and chemical processes going on within the organism" (*Scientific Lectures*, p. 384).

LANKESTER : "Zoology, the science which seeks to arrange and discuss the phenomena of animal life and form as the outcome of the operations of the laws of physics and chemistry" (*Ency. Brit.*, art. "Zoology").

HUXLEY : "It must not be supposed that the differences between living and not-living matter are such as to justify the assumption that the forces at work in the one are different from those to be met with in the other" (*Ency. Brit.*, art. "Biology").

Obituary.

TYNESIDE friends will deeply regret to learn that Mrs. Dawson, who left Newcastle-on-Tyne to join her husband in America in January, 1895, died at Ogden, Utah, on Sunday, April 25, 1897, after nine months of painful suffering resulting from childbirth. Deceased was a most cheerful and well-known worker of the Newcastle branch of the National Secular Society. Although removed from among us, she retained her membership to the time of her death, and, in her correspondence which she kept up with Mrs. Bartram, always inquired in a kindly manner after the branch and its members. Secularism has lost in her a gallant worker, who was proud of her opinions, and ever ready to defend them in a manner which many, with much stronger physique, might do well to emulate. I beg to tender to her sorrowing mother, sisters, and husband the heartfelt sympathies on behalf of the many friends and members of Newcastle and district.—J. G. BARTRAM, Hon. Sec.

THUS SAITH THE LORD.

STILL I'm asking, Did he say it?
 Did "Our Father" ever say
 Gird your sword, and each his neighbor—
 Each his friend and brother slay?
 (Ex. xxxii. 27.)

Did he say to any father:
 "Slay your only first-born son;
 Burn his body on the altar—
 I command, it must be done"
 (Gen. xx. 2.)

Did he say to any people:
 "I command you, go and kill
 All the men of such a nation—
 Go, it is my holy will"
 (Num. xxxi. 7.)

Only spare the female children
 And young women for your lust;
 'Tis not sin when God commands it—
 Thus the Lord saith, go ye must.
 (Num. xxxi. 17, 18.)

Homeward with their spoils returning,
 Did God crave those spoils to share,
 One of each five hundred cattle,
 Sheep and maidens young and fair?
 (Num. xxxi. 28.)

Did he say if one should gather
 Sticks upon the Sabbath day,
 Stone to death the vile offender—
 'Tis God speaks, ye must obey?
 (Num. xv. 32, 35.)

Did God fight one day for Israel,
 Made the sun and moon stand still,
 Cast great stones from heaven—yet tell
 Them solemnly, thou shalt not kill?
 (Joshua x. 11-13.)

In the bible these are written—
 "God's own book—his sacred word";
 Is it sin to doubt these horrors
 After a "Thus saith the Lord"?
 E. D. MORSE.

A CHANCE FOR MISSIONARIES.

THE intelligence of baboons has long been an accredited fact, but now they are highly praised for a new quality—that of gratitude. A man tells how he made up his mind never again to shoot a baboon. He says that he was shooting one day when his dogs set on a huge baboon, and were killing it when he came up, and were just about to finish it when it wailed just like a man. He was so sorry that he let it go. Sometime afterwards he was again hunting, and came across a troop of baboons. One brute attacked him, and was about to kill him, when another baboon came up and pulled his fellow away. The man recognised in his helper the baboon whom he had spared a few days ago.

What a glorious opportunity this fact opens for the Christian missionary! In future let him devote his wondrous energies to the conversion of baboons to Christianity. Fancy a fully-organized baboon Christian church in South Africa! What a triumph that would be for Christianity! Then look at it from a business point of view. See how many vacancies it will create for pale young curates. And, of course there will be a bishop to the baboons, and he must be a white man!

We know no one so suitable as Christian parsons and teachers to educate baboons; they are, to a certain extent, "to the manner born." The Scripture reader apes the class reader; the class reader apes the local preacher; the local preacher apes the dissenting minister; he in turn apes the church parson; the latter apes the Catholic priest, and he in turn apes the Buddhist monk; while the latter imitates, in many of his actions, an aboriginal ape. Thus the chain is complete; and we may, perhaps, yet see a society for the promotion of Christianity among the baboons.
 —*Bechuanaland News*.

The true character of miracles is at once betrayed by the fact that their supposed occurrence has been confined to ages of ignorance and superstition, and that they are absolutely unknown in any time or place where science has provided witnesses fitted to appreciate and ascertain the nature of such exhibitions of supernatural power.—"Supernatural Religion," ii., p. 479.

BITS FROM THE SYDNEY "BULLETIN."

REV. McDONALD, of Westralia, told in Rockhampton, the other day, how he preached at Mullewa (W.A.) in the dining-room of a large hotel. While preaching, he noticed the congregation kept slipping round a screen to the rear at intervals, and discovered, after service, that the bar-keeper had told the hearers that they could call round and have a drink if they felt at all dry during the sermon. What a magnificent idea!

They held a harvest festival at an up-country church. When completed, the arrangements made the edifice look like a vegetable John's cart. Marrows, pumpkins, smellful onions, even plebeian but well-washed "murphys," were shown conspicuously. Waving grasses tickled the preacher's ear at the reading-desk, and a good fruity trophy was fixed up in a large box loudly labelled "Keen's Mustard." Another case, on which stood a mighty melon, was marked "Somebody's Whisky." "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

At the wind-up of the Wesleyan Conference in Melbourne a resolution was carried to the effect that the Conference wishes "to secure the embodiment in the new Australian Federal Constitution of a formal acknowledgment of God as Ruler of Nations." And these are reverent men! Reverence, as generally existing among parsons, is a something that depends upon the total absence of a sense of humor and the existence of a bloated conceit—a form of moral elephantiasis.

The pietists of a staid suburb still bemoan the deceitfulness of human nature, as revealed by the conduct of a once-revered brother. The ancient in question, like St. Paul of old, posed priggishly as a celibate, contenting himself with the ministrations of a like-minded niece. This devout damsel employed her talents in collecting for righteous objects, and invariably prefaced her requests with the convincing words, "Uncle says Christians ought to distribute!" One morning fellow saints read, to their intense surprise, in the local paper, that someone described as the wife of the good man aforesaid had died in another province. Next day the widower and his alleged relative were seen coming out of a town church all blushes and orange-blossoms.

The old-time ironbark pro., who lately joined the Melbourne Salvation Army, and who slangwhanged the stage so vigorously, has "seceded" and gone back to the footlights. Religion, marrow bones and graft, and no treasury day, were tough morsels to swallow, and not half so nourishing as the old game, despite its many ups and downs.

Visitor—"My husband would like yer to come an' read the Bible to him; he thinks it would do him good."

Parson—"Is he dangerously ill?"

Visitor—"Well, no; the doctor calls it insomnia!"

THEN AND NOW.

THE Apostle Brann threatens to return to the Baptist ministry. In his *Iconoclast* he says: "Rev. Tommy Dixon recently assured his congregation that 'were David, or Solomon, or old Jacob, attempting to live their lives in New York, every one of them would be sent to the penitentiary.' How's this? Was I not deprived of my licence to preach for having delicately intimated that they ought to be? I demand that the Baptist church either reinstate me in my pastorate, or pull the Rev. Tommy off his sacerdotal perch. I have as good a right as any other preacher to criticize the patriarchs. Dixon further declared: 'I dare not open the Bible at random and read the first passage I come to in this assembly. There are verses that cannot be read in public, and I say this as a fact, and you may like it or not, as you please.' Yet for saying that, while I esteemed the Bible above all other books, I kept it under key with my copy of *Trilby*, *Don Juan*, and the *Decameron*, I have been denounced in a thousand pulpits, and my paper placed in the Baptist *Index Expurgatorius* as 'Atheistical.' What gentleman cares to have his little daughters peruse passages in the Scriptures which he dare not read to adults? I have thus far submitted patiently to discipline, but I serve notice right here that, unless Dixon is also called down, I'm going to start a schism and split the Baptist church wide open like a bootjack. 'Martinism' won't be in it as a disturbing element when I gird up my surcingle and strike the theological warpath with a whoop. Five years ago, when I said there was not in the Old Testament a single suggestion of the coming of Jesus, I was made the victim of a red-hot heresy hunt; now Dr. Abbott tells his congregation the same thing, and is applauded. I'm persecuted by my brother ministers simply because I'm popular with the sisters." 'Twas ever thus.

WAR WHOOP CITY'S NEW PASTOR.

"FELLERS," said Three-fingered Steve, as he entered Bowie Knife Jack's saloon and joined the red-shirted crowd around the bar, "there's a gospel sharp from ther States outside wot says he has come ter War Whoop city ter regenerate things. He remarks, furdernore, that this is Sunday, an' thet he's going ter hold meetin' in Slippery Sam's old dance hall across the way. All you coyotes has a pressin' invitation to be present."

"Don't believe this is Sunday," declared Dead-shot Davis, reflectively. "Howsumever, we can take his word for it. What does this hyer sermon-slinger look like, Steve?"

"Waal," replied Steve, a triffa doubtfully, "he seems a purty hefty kind of a cuss; ain't no slouch. Wears store clothes, but seems ter kinder know his business."

"Aw git out!" exclaimed War Whoop William, contemptuously. "What's got ther matter with yer, Steve? All these hyer glorification galoots is jest alike—long-faced, mealy-mouthed, white-livered cusses, ever' one. Don't we know 'em? Ain't they been hyer afore, an' didn't we run 'em out double quick? I'll tell yer what we'll do, fellers—we'll jest go over till Slippery Sam's in a body and listen ter his soft baby prattle fer ten minutes, and then we'll chase 'im outer ther camp."

"He'll be plumb skeered ter death when he sees us," observed Dead-shot Davis. "He won't be able ter speak above a whisper."

"We'll hev some fun with 'im," said Plute Pete. "I'll bet he'll say we're the finest-lookin' set of gents he ever clapped his peepers on, an' as fer morals—waaal, it'll take 'im about two minutes ter make up 'is mind that we can't be improved on none whatever. He'll see ter once thet we're already too good, an' he'll sling us a tribute o' praise thet'd bring tears ter the eyes on a bull purp."

Three-fingered Steve had nothing more to say, and seemed inclined to hang back as the crowd marched with heavy tread across the street and surged into the dance hall, with their eyes twinkling in anticipation of the sport ahead.

They took their seats with mock solemnity, and waited patiently for their victim to appear.

Presently he came in and took his stand behind a dry goods box that did duty as a pulpit, and the bad men of War Whoop noted with some surprise that he did not tremble and turn pale when he looked them over. He was tall and muscular, and, as Three-fingered Steve had said, "he seemed ter kinder know his business."

"I've come to this suburb of Hades," the preacher began in a loud voice, "to save the souls of the human wrecks that I see about me. I don't suppose there is a man here who has drawn a sober, honest breath in ten years. You are a lot of miserab'le gophers and rum-soaked renegades from a decent society, and as I look you over now I can say with truth that I never saw such a pusillanimous-looking lot of jack rabbits in my life."

The crowd gasped, and seemed to grow limp with amazement. All the "gospel sharps" they had ever seen had been meek and lowly of spirit, and this one—well, he fairly "knocked 'em silly," as War Whoop William afterwards expressed it. The preacher talked about in the same strain for ten minutes, and concluded by commanding all those who were going to try to be a little more decent to stand up. "The duffer that doesn't stand up," he added, "will have to account to me personally, and his funeral will be preached in this place immediately following the services."

Every man present stood up.

"Good enough!" said the preacher with satisfaction. "You're not quite so hopelessly lost to all sense of shame as I thought you were. Now, I'll take up the collection, and don't forget, a preacher's got to live as well as you lopsided loafers. Nothing less than a dollar goes, and I'll shoot a hole through the man that doesn't chip in."

He passed the hat with one hand, and held a large six-shooter in the other. The audience contributed liberally to a man.

"There'll be a meeting here every Sunday for the next month," the preacher said in conclusion, "and if any of you tin-horn toughs backslide you'll have to settle with me. Don't do any shooting till you get outside the church."

—New York Journal.

An Old Precedent.

Mr. Blackbands—"Heresy is becoming distressingly frequent. I see that a minister has actually publicly rejected the story of Jonah as mere satire, instead of fact."

Mr. Pulpiteer—"Tut, tut! Why, then, he must reject all the miracles."

Mr. Moderne—"Not necessarily. The whale sot him the example in the one case."

Mr. Pulpiteer and Mr. Blackbands (simultaneously)—"Why, how?"

Mr. Moderne—"It rejected Jonah itself."

BOOK CHAT.

Food and Population, by W. A. Macdonald, author of *Humanitism, Science and Ethics, Reformed Dietetics*, etc. (London: The Ideal Publishing Union, Limited, Memorial Hall, 19 Farringdon-street, E.C.; 1s.), is mainly an argument for uncooked vegetarianism. It gives in its introduction an account of various views held on the subject of food and population, including a *résumé* of those of the Italian sociologist, Professor F. S. Nitti. Mr. Macdonald gives, too, a number of facts from Kropotkin to show that, with intensive culture, one acre cultivated by nine or ten persons could support 130. He contends that the support of the bullock takes up more acreage than the bullock is worth. In detailing his sociological experiments, he comes out as the apostle of nakedness. His own words are: "There is nothing, however, to compete with my ideal costume, which consists of a simple tunic with a hole in it, such holes being exactly the same size and shape as the tunic itself." The booklet has many illustrations of costumes, but does not give this ideal one.

* * *
A Pennyworth of Queer Epitaphs, by David Macrae, and *A Pennyworth of Chestnuts*, by the same author, come to us from Glasgow (Morison Bros., 52 Renfield-street). The titles sufficiently show the contents, and no one can complain of forty-eight pages of light reading matter for one penny.

* * *
Luther's Kleiner Katechismus und M. Fürbringer's Biblische Geschichten, by Dr. Voelkel, is a new explanation of the *Shorter Catechism* of Luther and the *Bible Stories* of M. Fürbringer, for use in the German Free Religious Communities. Dr. Voelkel gives the natural and rational explanation of moral duties, and shows what the actual teaching of the Bible is. The catechism is a careful attempt to bring theological information up to date, and should act as an eye-opener to those reared in orthodoxy.

* * *
 Madame Blavatsky has left many successors, and in *Temple Talks by One of the Magi* (Hermetic Publishing Co., Chicago) we seem to have an echo of *The Secret Doctrine*. It opens thusly: "The One is all. All includes the Existent, the Created, and the Created-Existent. The Existent is a name for the Nameless, which has neither beginning nor end. It is intelligence, force. It is the Spirit of Fire. Eastern philosophers have given it the name Forhat." Madame Blavatsky has Forhat. There is much more of the same kind in *Temple Talks*, but the Magi alone know what the *Talks* are driving at.

* * *
 America is fertile in the crop of cranks and charlatans, many of whom gather round Spiritism, Occult Science, etc. In neither class do we place Eleanor Kirk, the editress of *Eleanor Kirk's Idea*, though her paper is devoted to health and "mental healing." Eleanor has a touch of secular philosophy, which saves her from charlatany and crankness. Here is a verse of her writing:—

Oh, listen not to those who tell
 Of pleasures over yonder!
 Who bid you wait a future state,
 And spend this life in wonder.
 For it's not to-morrow nor to-night,
 But just this royal minute;
 It's not the distant by-and-bye
 That holds redemption in it.
 It's Now, Now, Now, this moment, here,
 We are to claim the glory,
 And sing the tidings far and near
 Of this most wondrous story.

In an article, too, on "Make Yourself at Home" we find so much common sense in Eleanor that we are astonished to read further on that "we are well on the road to perpetual youth."

Samples.

A Church of England clergyman, who was travelling on the continent, was exceedingly partial to a peculiarly hot kind of pickles, a bottle of which he invariably carried about with him wherever he went. An American, who was seated next to him one day at *table d'hote*, thinking these pickles were for general use, began to help himself.

"I beg your pardon, sir," interrupted the clergyman, "those pickles are mine; but help yourself by all means; you're quite welcome to try them."

The American thanked him, and tasted them.

"Stranger, I guess you're a parson."

"I am," responded the clergyman.

A slight pause.

"Stranger, do you believe in eternal punishment, everlasting fire, and that sort of thing?"

"Certainly I do. But what makes you ask?"

"I kinder thought so. Well, I calculate you're the fust parson I've met who carried samples about with him."

WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT ANGELS.

"AUNTIE, did the angels carry Charlie Jones's mother up to heaven?"

"Why, I think so, dear. Mrs. Jones was a good woman." "She was an awfully fat woman. The angels must be strong."

Passengers in the train from Watford turned to look at the six-year-old boy who was bent on getting information. He was a manly little fellow, with a bright, pretty face, that showed intelligence beyond his years. His young aunt seemed to be anxious to stop the flow of questions, but he was bound to know something more about angels then and there.

"How do you know there are angels, auntie?"

"Because we read about them. Wait until you can read and then you will know more about them."

"But why—why don't we see the angels? Did you ever see an angel?"

"Hum! Don't talk so loud, Charlie. Of course we don't see them, but we see their pictures. Don't you remember the angels in that pretty book that Uncle John sent you?"

"Yes, but—where do the angels get their pictures taken, auntie? Is there a gallery where they take pictures of angels—only just of angels?"

"Perhaps so. I don't know."

"Then why don't the angels put on more clothes when they have their pictures taken?"

"Oh, Charlie! Please be quiet! You will make auntie's head ache."

Charlie meditated in silence for a few minutes, and remarked:—

"I don't know why Mr. Brown said you were his——"

"Euston!" shouted a porter, and, as the train came to a standstill, the small boy got a shaking and a whispered warning that stopped all further talk about angels.

PROFANE JOKES.

THE Pastor—"Miss Ethel, you should be engaged in some missionary work." Miss Ethel—"Oh, I am, and have been for some time past." The Pastor—"I'm so gratified to hear you say so. In what field are you engaged?" Miss Ethel (proudly)—"I'm teaching my parrot not to swear."

"What did Noah live on when the flood subsided and his provisions in the ark were exhausted?" asked a Sunday-school teacher of her class. "I know," squeaked a little girl, after the others had given up. "Well, what?" inquired the teacher. "Dry land."

A good old deacon in Connecticut was very pious and fond of clams. When once upon a time he attended a Rhode Island clam-bake he over-taxed his capacity, and was sorely distressed. But his faith in prayer was unabated. Leaving the party, and going down on his knees behind a tree, he was heard to supplicate: "Forgive me, O Lord, this great sin of gluttony. Restore my health, and I will never eat any more clams." Then, after a pause: "Very few, if any. Amen."

A contemporary tells a good story of clerical presence of mind. A curate entered the pulpit, and was about to preach one of the late Rev. Charles Bradley's homilies. He was for a moment horror-struck by the sight of the Rev. Charles Bradley himself in a pew beneath him. Immediately he recovered enough self-possession to be able to say: "The beautiful sermon I am about to preach is by the Rev. Charles Bradley, whom I am glad to see in good health among us assembled here."

There is a growing impression that Lot's wife was only going back for her gloves.

The Earl of Carnarvon, at a banquet, in proposing "The Health of the Clergy," said that "in these days clergymen were expected to have the wisdom and learning of a Jeremy Taylor." His lordship was next day reported to have said: "In these days clergymen were expected to have the wisdom and learning of a journeyman tailor." This seemed more natural to the newspaper men, for divines like Jeremy have long been extinct.

Dean Ramsey relates that the Earl of Lauderdale was alarmingly ill, one distressing symptom being a total absence of sleep, without which the medical men declared he could not recover. His son, who was somewhat simple, was seated under the table, and cried out, "Sen' for that preaching man frae Livingstone, for fayer aye sleeps in the kirk." One of the doctors thought the hint worth attending to, and the experiment of "getting a minister till him" succeeded, for sleep came on, and the earl recovered.

A recently-ordained clergyman of the Church of England went into a tobacconist's and said: "Give me an ounce of 'baccy; I shan't get any in heaven." He may find plenty of smoke in another quarter.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

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

LONDON

THE ATHENÆUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30, C. Watts, "The New Religious Revival."
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): J. S. Mill's Birthday—6, tea; 7.30, Speeches; 8.30, Dramatic Performance of *Oliver Twist*, and dancing. May 22, at 8.30, Special Smoking Concert.
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, A. B. Moss.
SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY, Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road: 11.15, Sunday School; 7, Dr. Stanton Coit, "What Think Ye of Christ?"
WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall): 11.15, Dr. Stanton Coit, "The Forgiveness of Sins."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, A. B. Moss, "Good and Bad Gods."
CAMBERWELL BRANCH (Peckham Rye): 3.15, A. B. Moss, "How to Revise the Bible."
EDMONTON (Angel-road): 7, C. Cohen, "Why we Reject Christianity."
CLERKENWELL GREEN (Finsbury Branch): 11.30, H. P. Ward, "From Wesleyan Pulpit to Secularist Platform."
FINSBURY PARK (near band-stand)—Finsbury Park Branch: 3.15, H. P. Ward.
HAMMERSMITH (The Grove, near S.W.B. station): 7, J. Fagan.
HARROW-ROAD (corner of Walterton-road): 3.30, A. lecture.
HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, C. Cohen.
KILBURN (High-road, corner of Victoria-road): 7, R. Rosetti.
KINGSLAND (Ridley road, near Dalston Junction): 11.30, Stanley Jones.
LIMEHOUSE (Triangle, Salmon's lane): 11.30, F. Haslam.
MILE END WASTE: 11.30, E. Pack; 7, H. P. Ward. May 26, at 8, F. Haslam.
WOOD GREEN (Jolly Butchers' Hill): 11.30, A. Guest, "The Cross and the Crescent."
VICTORIA PARK (near the fountain): 8.15, C. Cohen.

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM (Bristol-street Board School): 7, G. Bayliffe, "Evolution v. Special Creation."
CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 7, Sunday School Anniversary, and cantata entitled *Daisy Dell*.
FAILSWORTH SECULAR SUNDAY-SCHOOL (Pole-lane): H. Snell—2.30. "The Foundations of the Bible"; 6.30, "The Conquest of Truth."
LEEDS (Crampton's Hotel, Briggate): 7, A. lecture.
LIVERPOOL (Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street): 7, S. Reeves, "Our Basis."
PONTYPRIDD (28 Middle-street, Trallwn): Meetings every Sunday evening. Discussion invited. A lecture at Porth on "Is the God of the Bible the God of Creation?"
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, Pleasant Sunday evening—Vocal and instrumental music, recitations, etc.; also statement as to trip on the 30th.
SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, Business meeting.

Lecturers' Engagements.

O COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London.—May 23, m., Hyde Park; a., Victoria Park; e., Edmonton. 30, m., Wood Green; a., Victoria Park. June 6, Leicester N. S. S. Conference. 13, m., Mile End; a., Victoria Park; e., Edmonton.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Oredon-road, London, S.E.—May 23, m., Camberwell; a., Peckham rye. 30, e., Edmonton. June 6, m., Hyde Park; a., Harrow-road; e., Hammersmith. 13, m., Camberwell; a., Peckham Rye. 27, m., Wood Green; e., Edmonton.

H. P. WARD, 9 Leighton-crescent, Leighton-road, N.W.—May 23, m., Clerkenwell Green; a., Finsbury Park; e., Mile End. 30, m., Camberwell; a., Peckham Rye; e., Camberwell Hall.

J. FAGAN, 48 Popham-road, New North-road, London, N.—May 23, e., Hammersmith. June 13, a., Harrow; e., Kilburn. July 11, e., Hammersmith. 18, m., Hyde Park. August 8, a., Harrow; e., Kilburn. September 19, e., Hammersmith. 26, m., Hyde Park.

J. T. THURLOW, 350 Old Ford-road, London, E.—July 4, Mile End Waste; e., Edmonton. September 5, Limehouse.

POSITIVISM.

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

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