

# The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

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## "THE RIGHTS OF RELIGION."

UNDER the above heading the *Rock* dated August 27 has a leading article in which the writer replies to my claim for Free Speech which was published in this journal of August 8. Therein I endeavored to show that the *Rock* favored the recent action of Sir Charles Warren in prohibiting the Secularists from continuing their propagandism on the Chatham Lines in New Brompton. I also reminded the pious editor of the harsh and insulting epithets which constantly appear in his paper in reference to the Roman Catholics and their religion, and drew his attention to the words ascribed to Christ: "Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye."

The main points in my article are left unnoticed by the editor. For instance, he is silent upon the passages given from the New Testament in favor of persecuting unbelievers, and upon the historical references presented, showing how the Christian Church from almost its inception had tortured and imprisoned those who did not accept the orthodox faith, and how that Church "was ever ready to resort to the civil power to compel obedience to her decisions." Were the Bible quotations and the facts of history too strong for the self-appointed "defender of the faith" to grapple with? He takes not the slightest notice of my request to know what he meant by writing of "the profanities of an infidel lecturer," who is alleged to have spoken "in very offensive terms of the Christian religion." Let me inform the editor of the *Rock* that nothing of the kind took place, and the report that it did was but a "weak invention of the enemy." Evidently the Biblical command, "Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbor" (Deut. v. 20), has no effect upon this Protestant exponent. His idea of the "rights of religion" appears to consist in assuming that his narrow and out-of-date view of religion is "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," and that those who cannot accept his pretensions deserve to be branded as "infidels," and to be exposed to the unjust imputations of theological bigotry. "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?" (Romans iii. 7).

The editor's reply to my article on "Free Speech" is a curious specimen of controversial evasion and theological juggling. He writes: "A writer for the Infidel—or, as he would prefer us to call it, Secularist—Press has lately been taking us to task, as by some process of reasoning peculiar to himself he has discovered that we approve of violent suppression of Atheist lecturers, without having the courage to say so in express terms. Our readers may remember that, in commenting on the hostility shown by a crowd to a propagandist of Secularism who had indulged in a very gross attack on the Christian religion, we, while distinctly condemning resort to violence in such circumstances, drew attention to the interest and significance of the occurrence, as it indicated that, in spite of much indifference and irreligion, there is still enough instinctive reverence among the masses of the people to make an ordinary gathering sharply resent any coarse handling of the holy things of religion. Our Rationalistic critic endeavors to justify the blasphemies of the Infidel by reference to the Protestant attack on Romanism. The Infidel has no Gospel." Here we have a tissue of misrepresentations and inaccuracies (to

use no harsher terms) which it would be difficult to find outside the columns of an orthodox paper. Why this repetition of the term "Infidel"? Is it employed to arouse religious prejudice and fanaticism against men and women who are no more "Infidels" than is the pious editor himself? Why this absence of that charity which "thinketh no evil" (1 Cor. xiii. 5)? This is another instance of orthodox hypocrisy, preaching one thing and practising another.

If words have any meaning at all, the editor approved of "violent suppression" of the Freethought lecturer. To him (the editor) it was "interesting to find that an ordinary working-class crowd can be stirred to such indignation" in preventing free speech upon the part of Secularists, "and satisfactory to learn from the sequel that authorities can act so firmly as has Major-General Sir Charles Warren, commanding the Thames district, who has given instructions that Secularist speakers are not to be allowed to address meetings on Chatham Lines." Is not this a direct approval of the attempt to suppress freedom of speech? If language has any clear signification, we allege that it is, although the editor lacks "the courage to say so in express terms." When his orthodox friends are treated in a similar manner, he whines at the injustice. For, in the article under consideration, when noticing that, at certain seaside resorts in the North, Protestant propagandism has been interfered with, he writes: "The sinister character of the interference which is going on with the right of public meeting and free speech is shown from the fact that in every case the sacerdotal party is very strong in the locality, still more from the fact that the public official immediately concerned is, in more than one instance, a Romanist, and aggressively asserts that *he* (mark you) will not allow Protestant evangelists to preach. The Town Clerk in one of these places, when appealed to, airily dismissed the protest by stating that 'the only right of the public on a highway is the right of passing along it'; a remarkable contention, surely, and fraught with amazing possibilities." Thus, while he rejoices that Secularists are interfered with in their open-air work, he winces and protests when professed Christians are treated in like manner. This, we suppose, is another instance of "the rights of religion." Theology is indeed potent in deadening all sense of justice and fairplay towards unbelievers in the Christian faith. This may be the *Rock's* notion of freedom, but it is a bitter satire upon the principle of true liberty.

It is a mere subterfuge to charge the propagandists of Secularism with indulging in "gross attacks on the Christian religion," and with "coarse handling" of "holy things." This did *not* happen on Chatham Lines. If it did, let the editor prove his charge. But is *he* justified in assuming the pharisaical *role*? Does *he* not, week after week, indulge in "gross attacks" on his co-religionists—the Roman Catholics? Is it not "coarse handling of the holy things of (the Catholic) religion" to call it "blood-stained," and to speak of its professors as "heretics," "seducers," "wolves in sheep's clothing," etc.? Yet this is the choice language the *Rock* employs towards the devotees of Catholicism. The editor says: "Our Rationalistic critic endeavors to justify the blasphemies of the Infidel." The critic does nothing of the kind, for the good reason that he knows of no such blasphemy; and, what is more, the *Rock* cannot impart that knowledge. It may suit this would-be-thought-sanctified journal to dish up for its credulous readers "idle tales" about

Secularist speakers, but the dignified and honorable course would be to adhere to truth, and not to slander those who have the courage of their opinions, and whose "religion" consists in doing good and in striving to remove the blight of superstition which supplies victims to the machinations of theological pretensions (see Revelation xxi. 8).

It would be well for the editor to acquaint himself with the principles of Secularism, and then perhaps he would not commit such a blunder as he does in saying "the Secularist has no Gospel." The truth is, the Secular Gospel is clear, definite, and practicable, and is proving more and more the "good news" to mankind. It is based upon cultivated reason, and teaches the necessity of truth, honor, and upright conduct. It enjoins love, justice, and mental freedom for the whole of the community. It deems the formation of good character more important than the profession of creeds and dogmas, and its value consists in its adaptability to the needs of the human race. This is more than can be truthfully said for the Gospel preached by the *Rock*. No nation has ever been able to adopt the Christian Gospel as a rule of life. The popular Liverpool preacher, Mr. Aked, admitted this in a sermon preached so recently as Sunday, August 22, in which he said: "It is a mistake to speak of this as a Christian country, or of our civilization as a Christian civilization. There is no Christian nation on earth to-day. At best there are only countries professing an official and ceremonial attachment to ecclesiastical institutions, partly Jewish, but more Pagan..... The plain fact is, that a man could not live the first-century oriental life in the midst of a nineteenth-century European civilization, and the grounds of sanity are departed from when he attempts to follow literally what he believes to be the literal teaching of Jesus. Neither our commerce nor our national life nor civilization itself could stand if these ideals were taken as commands, prosaic as a railway-guide, to be literally obeyed" (*Christian World*, August 26, 1897).

By all means let us have "the rights of religion," but those rights must not be secured through the infliction of wrongs upon those who are termed "irreligious." My desire is to see the "Rights of Man" established in this "Age of Reason," without special regard to any of the theological religions of the world.

CHARLES WATTS.

### CONVERTING THE CHRISTIANS.

THERE are always a few croakers who, usually doing little themselves, complain that nothing is being done for Free-thought. The latter-day Jeremiahs pour their lamentations over the decaying state of the movement. They have often some pet scheme, the non-adoption of which is responsible for the fact that the Church is still a thriving corporation, and Freethinkers have to fight for the right of being heard. One of these gentlemen pestered me so recently that I had to tell him: "Well, I try to do my little; suppose you try to do yours." I have heard so often the cry that we are making no advance that it has ceased to move me. For I have only to look round to see that an immense advance has been made since my young days.

Progress is slow, and is all the surer for being slow. The old creeds are dying. Year by year the Christians are being converted to once-stigmatized Darwinism, and they may alter the cry put by the monks into the mouth of the expiring Julian to "Thou hast conquered, O Evolution!" It is the same in the domain of criticism. The reviled views of Spinoza, Voltaire, Paine, Strauss, and Colenso now find utterance in the pulpits, and deans and canons of the Church of England are engaged in sapping the foundations of the creeds they are paid to support. Freethought, if still tabooed in some quarters, is leavening the entire lump of contemporary thought.

The Christianity of to-day is like the Irishman's old gun, which had had, in turn, a new lock, stock, and barrel. It would not be recognised by its original makers. All its characteristic features have been altered and modified to suit the exigencies of modern times. The Dean of Canterbury now admits there is a fallible human element in the Bible, and writes; "Christians must make their choice between freely admitting that there is a human, and therefore a fallible, element in the sixty-six books which we call the Bible; or the adoption of

'reconciliations' which 'may be accepted with ignominious rapture,' but which are so transparently casuistical as to shock the faith of men who are unprejudiced." He does not tell us where the divine and infallible element is to be found.

Since evolution has come in vogue, Christians have begun to speak of the development of their religion. It is not the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, but is, they pride themselves, a growing religion. It does indeed grow small by degrees and beautifully less. Every change that has been made in the faith has been by lopping something off. And as one by one its impedimenta are cast overboard, it is seen that something fresh must follow. With the story of the Creation goes that of the Fall, and tied on the heels of the Fall is the Redemption.

Belief in miracles is being abandoned. Joshua's astronomy raises a smile in the pew, while Jonah's whale is a laughing stock in the pulpit. The story of the creation is dismissed as an allegory, and the talking snake as a fable. The belief in original sin and infant damnation is extinct. Hell has refrigerated, and threatens to become a skating rink. The efficacy of the blood of Jesus has become as dubious as that of the pills to cure earthquakes.

All this nonsense has been driven out of the Churches by Freethought, and most of it within my own generation. Secularism, too, has come to the fore, and the Churches claim consideration on the ground that they are doing secular work and preaching the true Secularism.

On all sides we may see the increased attention given to the affairs of this life. As genuine Christianity has declined, secular progress has advanced. We know far more of the world and of its forces than did our pious forefathers. Care for souls has receded, but care for bodies has advanced. The average of human life has, by regard for sanitary conditions, been increased within our own generation. Our children have great facilities for education, and we have a vastly increased freedom on our one day of leisure. Our movement is extending in every country, and it is safe to say that Christians are being converted to some of the various forms of Rationalism far more rapidly than the heathen are becoming Christians.

But we have still a big work before us. We have to withdraw the children from the influence made by priestly dogmas on their plastic minds. We have to disestablish and disendow the Church, which has lost its intellectual foundation, and is sustained by the material wealth at its command. We must place its propaganda on a footing of equality with that of every other form of opinion. We have, too, to diffuse a knowledge of the results of science and criticism to people who sit in darkness. What is needed is, that those who stand aside and criticise should lend a hand and help to make things better. It is true the Church is still powerful, and still retains its bo-constrictor grip on the young; true that we have a heavy task before us; true we are not doing as well as we might. These should be but reasons for each doing his or her best to help. Let us think of the cause rather than of ourselves, and, putting aside minor differences, take "a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull all together."

J. M. WHEELER.

### THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES.

#### V.—MORE MANUFACTURED PROPHECIES.

IV. THE ingenious evangelist who has so specially distinguished himself in discovering prophecies relative to Christ further states, in his veracious history, that Herod the Great, desiring to slay the child Jesus, caused all the male children of Bethlehem under two years of age to be slaughtered, and that this inhuman act fulfilled another "prophecy"—one by Jeremiah:—

"Then Herod.....slew all the male children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the borders thereof, from two years old and under.....Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children; and she would not be comforted, because they are not" (Matt. ii. 18-19).

The quotation is from Jer. xxxi. 15-17.

"A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children; she refuseth

to be comforted for her children, because they are not. Thus saith the Lord: Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears.....and *they shall come again from the land of the enemy.* And there is hope in thy latter end, saith the Lord, that *thy children shall come again to their own border.*"

There were two cities named "Ramah," one within the territory of the tribe of Naphtali (Josh. xix. 36), and the other in that of Ephraim (1 Sam. i. 1, 19, etc.). In the paragraph just quoted the writer simply referred to the fact that many of the sons and daughters of the Israelites had been carried away captive to Babylon. He was therefore only stating what had already occurred when he spoke of "Rachel"—i.e., the mothers of Israel—"weeping for her children" in Ramah, as elsewhere. The captives would naturally be the youth of both sexes, the best fitted for slaves or concubines; old people would not be worth the trouble of carrying away.

Both in this chapter and in that proceeding, Jeremiah speaks of many of the Jewish race as captive in Babylon and other places; there was, therefore, plenty of "lamentation and bitter weeping" in the land. In the passage under consideration, however, Jeremiah tells the mothers of Ramah to refrain from weeping, and he endeavors to comfort them with the promise that their children should "come back again from the land of the enemy." There cannot, therefore, be the shadow of a doubt as to the meaning of the passage.

Yet, in the face of this very plain statement, Matthew has the effrontery to say that the writer was referring to an alleged massacre of infants, six hundred years later, by Herod the Great; and, in order to twist a statement of fact into a prophecy, Ramah, he says, means Bethlehem, and the mourning for grown-up sons and daughters deported to a distant country he represents as lamentation on account of an imaginary slaughter of babies by mothers then unborn. In vain does Jeremiah say that the weeping was heard in his own day, and in the city of Ramah, and also that the children mourned for should return; these facts, stated as plainly as words can express, had no power to deter the dishonest writer of the First Gospel from misrepresenting the Old Testament narrative. Prophecies had to be made, otherwise Christ could not be represented as fulfilling them.

Matthew's story of the massacre in Bethlehem must, of course, be set down as a fabrication. The reasons for this are three-fold.

In the first place, the only other evangelist who speaks of the Nativity, Luke, appears either never to have heard of this alleged slaughter, or not to have believed the story; for his own narrative not only makes no mention of it, but completely excludes it. According to the latter account, the child was born in Bethlehem, was circumcised when eight days old, and was taken by his parents shortly afterwards to the temple at Jerusalem. "And when they had accomplished all things that were according to the law of the Lord, *they returned into Galilee to their own city, Nazareth.* And the child grew, and waxed strong, becoming full of wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him" (ii. 39, 40). This account includes the whole of the infancy of Christ, and excludes the massacre at Bethlehem and the going to live in Egypt. Instead of these matters, Luke relates a story of an angel appearing to some shepherds near Bethlehem, and of the latter paying a visit to the child. This event he probably considered more credible than Matthew's fictions.

It has also to be borne in mind that Luke's narrative is given as a complete account, and that he professes to write "accurately," and to arrange the events "in order," so that Theophilus, for whose information the book was written, "might know the certainty" of the events and circumstances therein recorded (i. 3, 4). Luke also clearly implies that the other Gospels then in existence were either incorrect or untrustworthy. His omission, then, of the massacre and the flight into Egypt brands those stories as fabrications.

In the next place, there is not the smallest evidence that such a wanton act was ever perpetrated by Herod. Had such a massacre really taken place, the fact would have been well known, more especially since Bethlehem was but a few miles from Jerusalem, and accounts of it would doubtless have been preserved by various historians—and certainly by Josephus. But, it is scarcely necessary to say, no such record exists, nor was any such ever seen by

any of the Christian fathers, many of whom were most assiduous in searching for evidence that might corroborate the Gospel narratives.

Josephus has given a long and detailed account of the life of Herod the Great. In his twenty books of *Antiquities*, which embrace the events of 4,070 years (B.C. 4004—A.D. 66), he devotes thirty-seven chapters, or more than one-sixth of the whole, to this one man. Yet, though many iniquitous acts of Herod are faithfully recorded, we find no mention of a slaughter of children at Bethlehem, or elsewhere. There can be little doubt, then, that had such an event really occurred, it could not, both as a well-known fact of history and a notable circumstance in the life of this king, have been overlooked or omitted.

Lastly, we have only the bare word of Matthew himself for the truth of the story, and that is not worth the paper on which it is printed. As a mere matter of probability the narrative is, for this reason, more likely to be false than true; for a practised falsifier of facts, like the First evangelist, would scarcely be able to let a matter of history pass from his pen to the parchment without trying his hand upon it. The man who believes anything recorded by Matthew upon no other grounds than that it is vouched for by that pious perverter must be very far gone indeed.

In looking for the source of the massacre story, we find one of a similar nature related of the Hindu god, Krishna. At the time of the birth of this deity, Kansa, a tyrant and prince of the country, having been informed that a child was born who should overthrow his power, and being unable to lay hands upon him, ordered all the male infants in the district to be slaughtered; but the child-god, like Jesus, was warned and sent away to another part of the country, and so escaped. The *Bhagavat Gita*, in which the life of Krishna is given, is said to have been in existence several centuries before the time of Christ. But, whether this be so or not, it is certain that the stories related of Krishna were known long before the commencement of the Christian era.

If Matthew had heard the Hindu account of the massacre by Kansa, he would not have thought twice about altering the names and relating the story as an attempt by Herod on the life of the child Jesus. He would be able to do this with less fear of detection than in the case of the distorted prophecy of Jeremiah; and, regarded as a matter of probability, there can be little doubt that he did so. Like all the early Christians, he, no doubt, considered that the end justified the means.

V.—The same great distorter of Scripture texts—that is to say, Matthew—further states that Jesus came and lived in Nazareth in order to fulfil another "prophecy."

"He withdrew into the parts of Galilee, and came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene" (ii. 23).

There is no prediction in any of the Hebrew sacred writings that any person—priest, seer, savior, or messiah—should be called a *Nazarene*; neither does the name occur anywhere in the Old Testament. But, to be fair to Matthew, that writer does not say "Nazarene," but "Nazarite"; the first-named title is a mistranslation. In the revised Greek text of the New Testament, Christ is in eleven passages called "Jesus the Nazarite" (*Nazoraios*); in six passages he is named "Jesus the Nazarene" (*Nazarenos*), and in two only is he designated "Jesus of Nazareth" (*apo Nazaret*). Also, by a comparison of these texts it soon becomes evident that the last-named appellation results from error or interpolation. Hence Christ was never called "Jesus of Nazareth," but was spoken of either as "the Nazarite" or "the Nazarene." Matthew employs only the former term, and this occurs in his Gospel but twice—viz., xxvi. 71: "This man also was with Jesus the *Nazarite*"; ii. 23: "He shall be called a *Nazarite*."

The name, as amended, is found in several books of the Old Testament. A Nazarite was one who had made a vow to abstain from wine and intoxicating liquors, and not to permit his hair to be cut, as long as the vow lasted (Numbers vi. 1-21). Samson and Samuel are examples of Nazarites who had been dedicated to the service of God from their births (Judges xiii. 4; 1 Samuel i. 2). Jesus, according to the canonical Gospels, was not a Nazarite; but in the earliest Gospels, if we may judge by the stories related of his brother James, he was so represented. That holy man—whom Paul calls "the Lord's brother"—was said to have been "consecrated from his mother's womb," to

have "drunk neither wine nor strong drink," and to have "never allowed a razor to come upon his head." It is not in the least surprising, then, that the holier brother, Jesus, was considered "the Nazarite" *par excellence*, and was so designated.

It is scarcely necessary to say, however, that nothing is gained for Matthew's pretended prophecy by this emendation. The word occurs, it is true, in the Old Testament; but that is all. There is no prediction in any of those books of a savior who should be a Nazarite; neither, again, would the fact of residing in the city of Nazareth (assuming such a place to have existed) confer upon the resident the right to such a title; the term "Nazarite" had no connection whatever with the name Nazareth. Here Matthew's ignorance of a matter known to every few of his time is plainly manifest, which fact is one of the many indications which prove to us that we are not dealing with the narratives of an apostle, but with a non-Jewish second-century compiler.

But there can be little doubt that in this "prophecy," as in all the others, Matthew was referring to one particular text in the Old Testament; hence, knowing that perverter's methods—viz., to completely ignore the entire context—we have but to look for a passage in which it is stated that some child, then unborn, should be brought up as a Nazarite. Following this simple and admirable plan, we find that Matthew's prediction was taken from Judges xiii. 5, and reads:—

"For the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb."

This is the only passage in the Old Testament that is anything at all like the quotation, "He shall be called a Nazarite," and there can scarcely be a doubt as to its being the one referred to. The words, it is true, were addressed to Manoah's wife, and had reference solely to her promised son, Samson. But these circumstances are mere accessories, which Matthew, in his quest for prophecies, piously sets aside. There the prediction certainly is, and Christ certainly fulfilled it; for he went and lived in the undiscoverable city of Nazareth for the express purpose of doing so. Those who are not satisfied with this evidence, and who deny the truth of Matthew's statements, are nothing but unbelieving "Infidels" who wickedly reject the inspired word of God.

ABRACADABRA.

### BLASPHEMY, OBSCENITY, OR WHAT?

[We have already referred to the case of Mr. F. M. Browne, an artist, who lies in Chelmsford Prison, being committed for trial on a charge of sending obscene postcards through the post. Mr. Browne wrote to us that the postcards contained Bible texts, and that he had been driven to desperation by local bigotry in consequence of his refusing to let his children be dosed with religious instruction. The case seemed, at least, one for inquiry, and Mr. Forder undertook to run down last Saturday and learn, if possible, the real facts of the case. The result of his inquiry is sent to us in the form of a letter to the President of the National Secular Society, and in this form we let it appear without alteration.—EDITOR, *Freethinker*.]

ACTING on your instructions to make inquiry into the charge of sending "blasphemous, indecent, and obscene" postcards, I at once communicated with two gentlemen in the neighborhood in whom I had confidence, and I also wrote to the prisoner—F. M. Browne—now awaiting his trial in H.M. Prison at Chelmsford, and to Mrs. Browne. I impressed on the two latter that it was essential that, before we could take any steps to aid him in his defence, we must have the text of the cards which he sent through the post. His wife could not inform me, and Browne did not. So I wrote Browne that I would visit him on Saturday, taking the chance of its being a visiting day. I had been supplied by one of our friends at Maldon with a local paper, but I failed to find in the report a single reference to the "indecent" passages. One of the postcards was reported, and the prosecuting solicitor was so shocked by it that he appealed to the bench whether he was bound to read it. The report is as follows:—

#### ATTACK UPON A CLERGYMAN.

Mr. Dixon: There is drawn upon it a clergyman, with two children kneeling before him receiving his benediction.

Defendant: Not his benediction.

Mr. Dixon: The writing on the front of the card, below

the address, is as follows:—"Good children, when you were born and your pious mother came to be churched she put money in the bag. When you were christened she put money in the bag. When she died I got my fees. Do ye both likewise bring your pennies to me in your sweet childhood. Bring your tithes all your lives. Pay marriage fees pay, pay."

This may be to a clergyman annoying, and to many it may be inane; but that alone, out of a benighted corner of Essex, would hardly warrant a man being sent to prison to wait seven weeks to be tried by a jury. However, I imagined that when I got to the prison I should know the particulars of the "indecent" postcards. Travellers by the G.E.R. know that gloomy, hideous building on a hill outside of the town of Chelmsford. Beautiful country all around, charming villas, cottages smothered with creepers (vegetable), and fronted with copious flowers—geraniums, marguerites, asters, etc.; and such asters, some of them four feet high at a guess; and my thoughts reverted to those in my back yard which I have watched and watered with so fatherly a care for months past. But opposite was the prison, in which I was informed there were two hundred unfortunates, some of whom were lodgers—i.e., when there is a surplus in London a few get boarded out. I have had some experience in visiting prisons, and you will remember, Mr. President, my having a pleasant chat with you in Holloway, through two iron grids, some fourteen years ago, while you were "doing time" for "blasphemy." When I was admitted by a most civil warder, the very clang of the door of the lodge, coupled with the turn of the key in the big lock, brought to one's mind the line—is it Dante's?—"Abandon hope all ye who enter here." Having written to the prisoner, my name was known, and the telephone immediately brought the chief warder, who is, if one may judge from a forty minutes' experience of him, a kindly, humane, genial gentleman. His opinion was briefly: "At times Browne is quite rational, but at others on religion he is evidently mad." In a few minutes I was ushered into a small room with the inevitable double grid and a warder between Browne and me. My question was: "Why have you not written me the copy of the texts from the Bible that are charged against you as being indecent and obscene?" He at once said he had done so, but it seems the governor had prohibited the letter from being sent. Here let me remark that one of the evils of the prison system in this country struck me very forcibly. Browne was under committal, and a jury of his peers may acquit him as innocent. Yet in seeing me he was caged in like a wild beast, and from his neck was suspended a wooden or metal board with his letter and number, A 10, or G 60—I could not distinguish in the gloom what it was. After getting all the particulars that I could from him, I had a further chat with the chief warder in the prison yard. He had evidently been an unseen listener at the interview, for he had the committal warrant to show me which was the ordinary printed committal form, applicable to all offences, from wilful murder to breaking windows. Written in was the sole information of sending "blasphemous, obscene, and indecent postcards." All inquiries at Chelmsford, and subsequently at Maldon, prevented me from getting a sight of them, and no other course is open but to employ a solicitor, who could at once get copies.

Where these postcards are is also a mystery, but an attorney would soon find out. I went, on leaving the gaol, to Maldon, and had a brief interview with one of our friends there, and a record ride back to London. Maldon is 39½ miles, if the fare of 3s. 3½d. enable one to judge. Leaving there at 5.10, I arrived at Liverpool-street at 8.35, about the time one could get to Manchester or Leeds. Desirous of getting more information on the spot, I, accompanied by Mr. George Ward, went down on Monday to see Mrs. Browne and her children at Ashingdon. How many of your London readers know where Ashingdon is? Booking clerks at Fenchurch-street knew it not; the guard of the train had never heard of it, but advised us to go to Southend, for there, he said, the cabbies knew everywhere. Instead of a cabby, we at once repaired to our old and still energetic friend Sykes. He soon put us in the way of getting there by cab—six miles. The village has no pub and no post-office, but there is a pillar-box erected outside a farmhouse, in commemoration of Her Majesty's Jubilee of 1887. I doubt if we should ever have found "Brotherhood Cottage" if we had not met a country

postman, who was collecting letters and selling stamps to people at their gates. We had to leave cab at top of a narrow lane, but even here men at work did not know where Browne lived. But the name of the cottage acted like magic on their minds: "Turn to the right; third one." Here let me say that I had no idea of finding such a lovely scene. In a beautiful garden, with fruit-bushes and flowers in profusion, stood a model dwelling (one of several), at the back of which was a splendid view of Essex pastoral scenery; a neat parlour, clean to perfection, and seven robust, hearty children, ranging in age from sixteen (a girl) to three, and all speaking in affectionate terms of their "dad." They were being looked after by a kind neighbor, for their mother—whom we had journeyed to see—had just left for Hockley to post letters to her husband. We had not time to await her return, but we gathered that these little ones were living on the most meagre fare. Two of them (the eldest twelve) had tramped, on the previous Friday, twelve miles each way to see their father. Now I know where Ashingdon is, and how to get there, I shall go down again on Saturday afternoon, and see Mrs. Browne.

In the meantime let me give my first-hand impression of what we ought to do. The man may be a hot-headed fanatic, and his place rightly may be an asylum, and not a prison; or he may be a man smarting under what he thinks is tyranny, and has not considered the proprieties in making his assumed or real wrongs public. Yet I think we ought to see that, until his trial, his wife and children shall not want bread. I, therefore, would suggest to you, Mr. President, that four hundred of your readers should subscribe sixpence each—ten pounds. Seven pounds of this should be devoted to giving the family a pound a week until the trial, and three pounds should be expended for getting a solicitor at Southend or Maldon to obtain a copy of the depositions and indictment. I can undertake to get several of our friends at Southend to administer the fund to save expense.

ROBERT FORDER, Hon. Sec., N. S. S.

[Mr. Forder's interesting letter does not contain much fresh information, though that is not exactly his fault, but rather Mr. Browne's. Of course one would like to know what he wrote on those postcards. If he quoted dirty Bible texts, he was very foolish; but the dirtiness, after all, belongs to the Bible. I fancy Mr. Browne is in a condition bordering on irresponsibility, and it would be a great pity to let him be pushed over the border. I approve Mr. Forder's suggestion that he should have a fair trial, and that his wife and children should be assisted; and I shall be happy to receive any subscriptions for this purpose. I give my own 5s., and Mr. Wheeler adds his 2s. 6d.—G. W. FOOTE.]

### "HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT SHALL BE DAMNED."

IN that declaration you have the quintessence of Christianity; and a more absurd or more wicked pronouncement never fell from the lips of man.

Its absurdity lies in the assumption that it ever can be a duty to believe. If a judge were to tell a jury that they were bound to believe certain testimony they had heard, the jury would at once see that the judge was either a fool who did not understand his business, or a villain who wished to lead them to give an unjust verdict. Let a teacher tell his pupils that they must believe or be damned, and he'll turn them into imbeciles or rebels and scorners of his dictum.

It can never, in any case, be a moral duty to believe; and that is just where Christ and his party show themselves most absurd. Let the doctrine be true and its evidence good, and the belief will arise spontaneously where the case is understood. If the doctrine is untrue, or appears to be so, and the evidences very unsatisfactory, doubt or disbelief is the only possible condition of mind for a person who understands the merits of the case. If Jesus, or rather the inventors of the gospel-yarns, had understood and acted upon it, what a world of hypocrisy and tyranny we should have escaped! How different the history of Europe and Europeans would have been! In that case, there never would have been a church, or bishop, or inquisitor, nor any persecution or religious wars. People would have been left to believe what they could, to doubt and disbelieve what they could not accept; and no more would ever have troubled them.

The worst and most prolonged miseries of the past 1800 years have arisen quite naturally out of the stupid and savage threat, "He that believeth not shall be damned." There is the root of all the persecution the Christians have inflicted, and must ever inflict so long as that brutal declaration sways them.

No matter what may be a man's character or abilities, if he does not believe the gospel rubbish and fudge, he must be damned; and the Christians do their best to damn him. They make his life as wretched as they are able, by way of showing what a blessed religion theirs is, and how much better they are than their neighbors.

The author of "He that believeth not shall be damned" must have been full of malice, a being who resented as an insult all independence of thought, a thing too ignorant to reason, as certain of his own opinions as perfect ignorance could make him. And this monster the Christians set up as their model, example, and ideal! No wonder they should be so foolish and so wicked!

"He that believeth not shall be damned" is the spontaneous language of absolute and savage tyranny. No man who respects his neighbors could utter it. It is the language of a savage brute who will frighten you if he can; and he would frighten you because he has no rational means of bringing you over to his side. He cannot reason, he will not try to convince you; he does not understand the meaning of reason and conviction. He therefore resorts to brute force in its worst possible form, and sets up a perpetual Reign of Terror by way of gaining adherents.

Such was Jesus, such are his real followers—the most detestable of all that is human and all that is legendary. The only person in the case who ought to be damned is the brute who utters the threat.

JOS. SYMES.

### ACID DROPS.

SOME time ago the Archbishop of Canterbury, and a lot of other Church of England dignitaries, gave an ecclesiastical performance at Ebbsfleet, near Ramsgate, where a memorial marks the supposed landing-place of St. Augustine, the supposed introducer of Christianity into England. Cardinal Vaughan saw in this a fine opportunity for his own Church. St. Augustine was, of course, a Catholic, and the Church of England is to be forcibly reminded of the fact. On September 14 the Romanists will have a most imposing celebration at Ebbsfleet—the most imposing, it is said, that they have ever had in this country since the Reformation. All the religious orders will be represented. Franciscans, Dominicans, Benedictines, Jesuits, Servites, Oratorians, Oblates of Mary, and Oblates of St. Charles Borromeo, all dressed in their special garbs, will form a grand procession, with a host of secular priests. Cardinal Vaughan means to show Archbishop Temple that "they do these things better at Rome."

Jacob Primmer, the Scotch ultra-Protestant, is disappointed. He is also indignant. It appears that he sent a copy of his book, entitled *Jacob Primmer in Rome*, to the Queen, and Her Majesty's private secretary replied: "I regret to inform you that I am unable to lay this work before Her Majesty, and consequently must beg you to allow me to return it." Whereat the reverend gentleman stares and rages. This is impudence, he says; my book has been sent to the Pope, the King of Italy, and Mr. Gladstone, and they have not returned it. Very likely, Jacob; but have they read it? Or has it been put to baser uses?

The *Christian Herald* for September 2 prints a sermon by the Rev. Dr. Talmage. It is entitled "The Power of Christianity," and it certainly shows what Cobbett would have called the preacher's power of face. Talmage has a sling at Voltaire, whom he fantastically describes as "the most notorious libertine of the century." This is really too absurd for criticism. We therefore pass to the next assertion, that Voltaire in his last hour "asked for Christian burial, and asked his friends to give him the sacrament of the Lord Jesus Christ." Anyone who reads Mr. Foote's *Infidel Death-Beds* will see that this is a monstrous falsehood. Voltaire did want his body to be buried, and not flung into a ditch, which was then the only alternative to being buried in a churchyard. But there is not a word of truth in the story that he asked his friends to give him the sacrament. The last moments of Voltaire have been recorded for English readers ever since Carlyle wrote his famous essay on the great French sceptic. Carlyle gives the evidence of eye-witnesses, relates the quiet and peaceful manner of Voltaire's death, and sneers at the "idle tales of

dying horrors" which were manufactured by the clergy. But all the eye-witnesses, and all the Carlyles in the world, count as nothing with a pulpit mountebank like Talmage.

Talmage is bad enough about Voltaire, but he is worse about Thomas Paine. This is what he regales the public with at this time of day: "Thomas Paine, the paragon of Bible-haters—about whom his brother-in-fidel, William Carver, wrote a letter (which I have in my house) saying that he drank a quart of rum a day and was too mean and too dishonest to pay for it—Thomas Paine, the adored of modern infidelity—Thomas Paine, who stole another man's wife in England and brought her to America—Thomas Paine, who was so squalid and so loathsome and so drunken and so profligate and so beastly in his habits—sometimes picked out of the ditch, sometimes too filthy to be picked out—Thomas Paine; one would have thought that he could be depended on for steadfastness against this great delusion. But no; in his dying hour he begs the Lord Jesus Christ for mercy."

The only proper answer to Talmage would be to kick him round the church in which he uttered these lies. Yes, *lies*; we repeat, *lies*. Talmage has told this yarn before, and seen it refuted. He knows what he is doing. He is lying deliberately, and should be told so. What is the use of considering the "feelings" of a brute like this?

Talmage knows very well that this William Carver was a malignant libeller. Paine prosecuted him before a jury and obtained damages. It was this Carver who accused him of adulterous relations with Bonneville's wife, and it was in respect to this very accusation that the jury gave a verdict in favor of Paine. Yet, after the lapse of nearly a century, the mendacious Talmage hides the facts and renews the libel. Such a calumnious beast is unfit for human society. He may be a Christian. He is not a man.

Paine did not drink a quart of rum a day, he was not profligate, he was not dirty in his habits. Every word of this is a lie. Nor did he die begging the Lord Jesus Christ for mercy. Talmage knows that well enough; only he is a liar by trade and inclination. Every biographer of Paine, including the malignant Cheetham, gives the lie to this pious story. Cheetham admits that Paine "died as he had lived, an enemy to the Christian religion." Cheetham would have been glad enough to publish that Paine had recanted, but he could not get such information. He applied to Dr. Manley, who attended Paine in his last illness, and Dr. Manley said that he had himself asked Paine whether he wished to believe in Jesus Christ. Paine's reply was: "I have no wish to believe on that subject."

Talmage is not the only sinner in this line. There is a clergyman called Beauchamp Stannas, who issues what he calls a magazine from Arrow Rectory. It consists of a letter to "My Dear Friends," printed on a flyleaf. In the copy before us this parson says that "the death-beds of Hume, Paine, and Voltaire were the scenes of greater mental agony than were ever witnessed on this side of Hell." Very likely Parson Stannas has taken his information (heaven save the mark!) from some religious tract. His letter shows him to be a great fool, and probably his reading is on a par with his intelligence. But he might, in some lucid interval, read Adam Smith's letter on David Hume's death, and learn how calmly and sweetly the great "infidel" passed out of life.

According to the *Saturday Review*, Mr. Caine is a shrewd man of business as well as a Christian. *The Christian* first appeared by instalments in the *Windsor Magazine*, and Messrs. Ward, Lock, and Co. spent lavishly in advertising it, expecting that the issue of the book would be in their hands. Mr. Caine, however, made other arrangements; and it is said that Messrs. Ward, Lock, and Co. will also make other arrangements with all future serial writers in their magazine.

Mr. Hall Caine is indifferent to criticism while he gets lumping cheques from his publisher. It is announced that *The Christian* is selling at the rate of a thousand copies a day. The first edition of fifty thousand is to be followed immediately by a second edition of twenty thousand. If Christianity had paid like this at the outset, Judas would never have ratted, and Jesus would never have been crucified. Probably the "Master" would have died at the good old age of eighty in a Galilean villa, and his wine would have come from the best merchants, instead of being manufactured out of cold water.

Every theologian knows that this is the best of all possible worlds. But optimism has its trials outside as well as inside Voltaire's *Candide*. The other evening we met with the following in a London paper. A stranger committed suicide by taking oxalic acid in Watergate-street-row, Chester. He had written upon a piece of paper: "Am mechanic out of work. Am knocked up with tramping

from place to place, and cannot get food. I am better dead than living." What a tragical commentary on the cheap providential doctrine of Jesus Christ! "Give us this day our daily bread" and "Your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of these things" must be read sarcastically while honest workers commit suicide to escape the terrible strain of non-employment and destitution.

The same evening paper reported the suicide of a Spanish lady married to an English magician. The poor fellow had been out of employment since last April, but had picked up a little occasionally by tuning pianos. He and his wife had often but little to eat. They owed five weeks' rent, and were afraid of being turned out. So the poor lady got some poison, and said she was not coming to bed for fear of the cramp. Her husband fell asleep, but awoke at half-past one, and saw her standing by a chest of drawers mending his socks. What a touch! And what a hint for a tragic novelist! Still the poor lady refused to go to bed, and the husband dropped off to sleep again. At ten minutes to three she aroused him by calling "Anselm, Anselm!" The poor lady had taken the poison, her stomach was being burnt out by it, and she called for the last time the name of the man who had been hers, and she his, for twenty years.

We haven't done yet. That same evening paper contained a report of another suicide in Paris. A funeral was passing through the Rue de Flandre when the chief mourner suddenly threw himself under the hearse, the wheels of which passed over his head. He was a young man of twenty-two, inconsolable for the loss of his wife six months after marriage.

All three of these cases were in one evening paper. Multiply them by three hundred and sixty-five—and that is really a small estimate—and you may form some idea of what a beautiful world this often is for the children (or victims) of "Providence."

"Storms and Floods"; "Damage to Crops"; "Gloomy Harvest Prospects"; "Rain and Ruin in Ireland"; "Destitution in the Hop Fields"; "Earthquake in Japan, Great Loss of Life"; "Volcanic Eruption in Luzon; Enormous Loss of Life," are among recent newspaper captions reminding us that we live under the loving protection of our Almighty Father.

It is curious to find William II. of Germany using the same expressions as Charles I. of England. Both declared themselves kings by the grace of God, and responsible alone to God; but two hundred and fifty years ago the English king was taught a different lesson.

God and the Emperor appear to rule jointly in Germany. God, by the way, is always an imperialist; we hear much of his kingdom, but never of his republic. The double rule involves a slavish militarism which is by no means congenial to the people, and Dr. Reinhold predicts that the next elections will show the spectacle of an irritated people making a determined front against the power of the Government.

The Fribourg Roman Catholic Conference shows there is a large number of the better-educated priests who are prepared to put aside the Bible, so long as they can hold on to the Church. Nonetheless, the fact remains that the Church has largely been built on the book, and damage to its authority will react on the Church. The story of Redemption is founded on the Fall, and when Genesis goes Jesuitism should go with it. But the Church has a double doctrine. It will meet scientific thought with a theory of evolution, while it teaches the old legends of creation to the children.

This is what the Evangelical *English Churchman* says of the present position of things in the Church of England: "Our sacerdotalist bishops, with Lord Salisbury at their back, are carrying matters with a high hand, and unless men with stern resolutions be raised up to protest, there will be no evangelicals left in the Church of England. Utterly unsound books are prescribed for candidates to study; Romanizers are selected to address them before ordination; Romanizing churches and preachers are provided at their ordination."

The progressive party at Birmingham seem somewhat more worthy the name than those in London. They announce as their policy for the coming School Board Election: "Making the people's schools as good as they can be made, keeping them absolutely free from sectarian influences, and securing the best teachers without regard to religious tests." The only way to keep schools absolutely free from sectarian influences is not to include the Bible or any form of religious teaching.

The *Freeman* says there are 80,000 children of Nonconformist parents in England attending Church schools

simply because there are no elementary unsectarian schools within their reach.

The New York *Sun* has a Roman Catholic correspondent at Rome. This is not surprising, for the *Sun* seeks the suffrages of the Catholics of New York; but it allows its correspondent, who signs himself "Innominato," to stuff its readers with the most egregious nonsense concerning Italian and Papal affairs. It represents the Marquis of Rudini's policy as "a step towards the evacuation of the Eternal City," and says that the Italian Government will have to give up the temporal to the Pope as surely as Bismarck was brought to Canossa. "Innominato" says it is the law of history. "Every time that the temporal power attacks an impregnable foundation of the Church or an essential interest of the Papacy, there comes a moment when to draw back and to sign peace becomes a condition of existence." Evidently "Innominato" reads history through priestly spectacles.

Father Mylott, who of course is a devout Catholic, preached at Cleveland, Ohio, recently, on the need of prayer. He said: "Man, bending to his own passions, if left to follow the whims of his own desires and inclinations, lives as the brute and dies as the brute; but he does not cease to exist, for he is endowed with an immortal soul that cannot die; he exists himself, soul and body, in the eternal abyss of hell." When the holy father receives his female parishioners at the confessional, history records that he often "follows the whims of his own desires in putting curious and disgusting questions to them, such as no decent woman would tolerate."

In Father Chiniquy's book, *The Priest, Woman, and Confessional*, page 266, Agnes Catherine Byrne says: "I do now publicly and with shame acknowledge that I have carefully perused the translations of *Dens' Theology*, where alone the true practice of the Roman Catholic confessional is to be found.....I solemnly declare, in the presence of my Maker, that, horrible and unspeakably vile as that book is, I had a hundred times more disgusting questions put to me in the confessional, which I was obliged to answer, under pain of being told 'that, being ashamed of answering him, I was in a state of mortal sin.'" Father Mylott, perhaps, knows how it is himself.—*Progressive Thinker*.

In the case of the death of Arthur Vince, the infant son of one of the Peculiar People, the jury have brought in a verdict of manslaughter against George Vince, the child's father. This man will now have to take his trial for following the directions of the New Testament with regard to the treatment of the sick. He prayed to the Lord, and he called in an elder who laid hands on the deceased and prayed as prescribed by James; but the words of the apostle, that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick," were not borne out by the event.

The coroner, in summing up, said "the law was quite clear with reference to a case of this description—the parents are compelled to call in a doctor. If the death was accelerated in any way by their failing to do their duty, they were liable to punishment; their religion had nothing to do with it." As a matter of fact, their religion had everything to do with it, and the verdict of the jury is really a censure upon the New Testament.

There was a curious service at All Saints, Wittram, Essex, last week, when the Rev. Canon Ingles thought it necessary to shrive a pervert who had gone over to Rome and returned. The penitent was put on his marrow-bones at the communion rail, and in abject tones proclaimed that he would never go there any more. Canon Ingles then absolved him in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, after which he retired, looking a good deal better.

The co-operators have declined to adopt the Bishop of Chester's suggestion, that they should run breweries and public-houses. They mistrust this method of promoting temperance; besides, they don't want to dabble in the liquor traffic at any price. All that remains for the Bishop of Chester to do is to make a final proposal to the next meeting of Convocation. Let the clergy take it up, and sell wine for the Timothy-stomach complaint, and short drinks for those who wish to forget their poverty and misery. Communion port is already well known. Why not follow it up with Bible beer and Gospel whiskey?

There is a gentleman named Burrow at Exmouth who has just leapt into notoriety. In the absence of his father, the borough coroner, this gentleman conducted the inquest on a drowned yachtsman. One of the jury, a Scotchman named Axon, wished to be sworn in the Scotch fashion, with up-lifted right hand. Mr. Burrow insisted on his using the English form of imprecation as well, and on his refusing to do so he was promptly fined forty shillings—which ought to be spent on law books for the use of the court. But

something worse followed. After the jury had been dismissed, one of them, a Mr. Firth, told the coroner that he did not administer the Scotch oath correctly. Mr. Firth was smoking, and the coroner ordered him to take the pipe out of his mouth. This he refused to do, as the inquest was over and the place was a public-house. Thereupon the coroner made out an order for his committal to prison for contempt, and Mr. Firth was conveyed to Exeter Gaol, although an order was obtained for his release the next day. The sequel to all this will be an action by Mr. Firth against the coroner for wrongful imprisonment.

Two reflections are suggested by this incident. The first is, that men soon lose their tempers over matters in any way connected with religion. Most men, as Swift said, have just enough religion to make them hate each other. It is therefore an act of prudence to banish religion altogether from the public sphere. The oath in courts of law is simply a nuisance, as is felt by many of the judges themselves.

The second reflection is this: That "contempt of court" is a matter which requires drastic revision. At present a judge can send a man to prison for contempt, and keep him there as long as he pleases. Now this is a monstrous and wicked absurdity. We are far from denying that a judge should have power to protect his court from disorder and defiance, but when a man is once in custody his punishment ought not to be determined by the person he has aggrieved. The offence of contempt of court should be legally defined, and a person alleged to have committed it should be tried in the ordinary way, in which case the judge whose authority he has contemned would not be able to preside at the trial.

Before leaving this subject, we venture to make an observation on the scandalous way in which persons are sent to prison by County Court judges. Imprisonment for debt is abolished in England, but the judges have re-established it under the disguise of contempt of court. No less than eleven thousand debtors were imprisoned in England last year. Orders for their incarceration are often obtained in the loosest manner. Sometimes a poor man is summoned to appear at a great distance from his abode. He cannot plead in the nearest court, but if an order is obtained against him in the distant one it can be transferred to the nearest court, and he can be summarily arrested, without the slightest proof of his ability to pay. Cases of this kind happen every day in the week, and lives are embittered and homes ruined by a process which is a scandal to civilization.

Sometimes a creditor uses the "contempt of court" dodge to put pressure upon a debtor's relatives. He knows that the debtor himself is, at any rate for the time, incapable of discharging the liability; but he argues that if an order is obtained against him—and in some courts it is obtainable with great ease and celerity—his relatives will club together and pay the debt themselves sooner than see him go to prison.

In view of these and similar facts, it was argued by Robert Lowe, and it has been argued by Professor Newman, that it would really be better to abolish legal recovery of debt altogether, leaving creditors to exercise more prudence in trading, and curtailing the scope of improvident credit.

Some weeks ago we reported the case of a New York "drunk and disorderly," whose defence before the magistrate was the quotation of the text in Proverbs—"Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more." The magistrate's sentence consisted of one word, "Discharged."

Thomas Osbourne was less lucky than that New York prisoner. Brought before Sir John Bridge, at Bow-street, for begging in the streets, Thomas Osbourne was committed for trial. The Bible texts he was in the habit of quoting in the public thoroughfares made no impression on the magistrate—such texts as "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver," "They that give to the poor lend unto the Lord." Sir John Bridge cannot check the cheerful giver, but he apparently means to prevent the poor borrower from negotiating a loan for the Lord.

Mr. Ichiro Tokutomi, editor of the *Kokumin Shinbun* (*The Nation*), a most important Japanese paper, now on a visit to England, has been interviewed by the *Daily News*. This gentleman is outspoken enough on the subject of religion, and what he says corroborates the statements made some time ago to the same journal by the Marquis Ito, Prime Minister of Japan during the war with China. "Our country," he says, "is our idol, and patriotism our first doctrine. From the Emperor downward, the vast majority have no other religion." There are professed Buddhists and Confucians, and a handful of professed Christians; but all

these beliefs are "Japanised." The practical religion of the country is hero-worship. Temples are erected to national heroes; generals, statesmen, poets, and philosophers. The virtues and services of the great dead are celebrated by the admiring and grateful living; which seems an improvement on our plan of worshipping a mythical character as a God.

In New Guinea it is said to be no uncommon thing for the Missionary Flag to be seen floating above the Union Jack. This paper does not feel hurt about it, but "what-ever will they say hin Hingland?"—*Sydney Bulletin*.

Here is a verse of a poem, "From Australia to England," sent by John Farrell at Jubilee time:—

Red sins were yours: the avid greed  
Of pirate fathers, smocked as Grace,  
Sent Judas missionaries to read  
Christ's Word to many a feebler race—  
False priests of Truth who made their tryst  
At Mammon's shrine, and reft or slew—  
Some hands you taught to pray for Christ  
Have prayed His curse to rest on you!

The Rev. W. H. Watkinson, president of the Wesleyan Conference, tells the ministers that the power of Methodism lies in the pulpit. He apparently has not yet learned the secret of General Booth, that the power lies in the orchestra. The Pleasant Sunday Afternooners, too, have discovered that the man of God can much better be dispensed with than the choir.

The Rev. W. H. Watkinson went on to say there is only one Name given whereby men can be saved. This may do for the followers of Wesley, but will hardly go down with those who look up to Buddha, Confucius, or Mohammed.

A young woman named McMurdo, charged at Llanidloes with concealment of birth, stated that the Rev. Thomas L. Martin, the late pastor of the Congregational Church at Llanidloes, and now pastor of a church at Berriew, Montgomery, is the father of her child. According to her statement, the man of God had apartments in the house of her uncle, where she resided, and seduced her under promise of marriage. When aware she was pregnant, he, according to her account, would only marry her provided she handed over to him £300. The woman McMurdo is committed to the next assize court at Ruthvin; the man Martin is preaching the gospel of the Lord.

The *Tablet* says: "Speculative Freemasonry was founded by Theophile Desaguliers, George Payne, and James Anderson at London on June 24, 1717. From the outset Freemasonry declared its real character, which has been pithily described by saying that, discarding faith and hope, it retained and made much of a kind of charity which was certainly not the Christian virtue described by St. Paul. The days of the foundation of Freemasonry were the days in which the English Deists, Toland, Anthony Collins, Matthew Tindal, Thomas Chubb, Thomas Woolston, and Lord Bolingbroke were propagating their ideas in England, and the spirit of Freemasonry from the outset was the spirit of undogmatic and anti-supernatural Deism."

The *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch* (September 4) records the sad story of an evangelist who believed he had reclaimed a burgling jail-bird in the Calton Jail. The prisoner got a letter saying a relative had died and left him £500. The evangelist looked on this as an intervention of Providence, and the prisoner professed his anxiety to devote the legacy to the work of the Lord. When liberated, he induced the evangelist to provide him with two suits, a watch and cash, to look after his legacy. He departed to do so, but never returned. The legacy-letter, it is suspected, was written by a "pal."

"The evangelist's story of the Son of Joseph and Mary of Bethlehem reads like some far-off dream, or as the ancient allegory of Job. It is outside our present-day experiences." So writes a contributor to the correspondence on Jesus Christ now going on in Mr. Fletcher's *New Age*.

The proposal to put God in the constitution of federated Australia is, of course, to be followed by that of the appointment of a chaplain. On this the *Sydney Bulletin* observes: "To impose the chaplain of Faith on the consciences and pockets of the holders of Unfaith would be to introduce into a country now free from all religious tests an incubus identical in character with that of the Established State Church which for generations turned the blood of Ireland into gall, or that of the millions-grabbing episcopacy which, by tithing bludgeons and other legitimized burglars' jemmies, at present robs the Nonconformists and non-religionists of England."

Last week we mentioned the new American journal,

*Monumental Records*. The editor, the Rev. H. M. Baum, it appears, inspired an article in the *New York Herald* on "The Story of the Creation from the Ruins of Nineveh," which is reprinted in *Public Opinion*. Everything in America is large, and the Rev. Baum's ignorance is something stupendous. He talks of "Professor Smith, the famous English Assyriologist." The late Mr. George Smith was never a professor at all, although he was a far more able man than the majority of those who boast that title. The *New York Herald* article is full of mistakes that we will charitably suppose are printers' errors. But when we are coolly told that "Sennacherib sent copyists to all parts of the world to gather up the important documents bearing upon the origin of the world, the birth of man, and the deluge," it is evident that the Rev. Baum does not know an atom of what he is talking about. He has apparently read some secondhand account of the library of Assurbanipal, the grandson of Sennacherib, and has not understood it. The Rev. Baum winds up with the statement that "the explorations have brought to light seven distinct accounts of the creation. They have each been carefully studied by the most eminent scholars in both this country and abroad, and the consensus of opinion of these learned men is that they all corroborate the main features of the origin of the world as given in the Bible." It is hardly conceivable that newspapers of the standing of the *New York Herald* can print such utter rubbish. *Monumental Records* will not enlighten the American people in the slightest degree, and we do not know which is the greater feature of the rev. editor, his mendacity or his foolishness.

The Church Congress has got to be such a parade of Ritualism that the Evangelical Alliance is holding its Conference at Cambridge at the same time as the Black Palaver takes place at Nottingham, a week before the Goose Fair.

When the *National Observer* merged into the *British Review* it was the beginning of the end. From Henley to Mallock was too big a downfall for the reputation of any paper.

The *New York Critic* prints the following story from a correspondent: "We have a Methodist colored church here, and, as the newspapers say, 'there has been a religious awakening' in it recently. One of the dusky exhorters, speaking of the condescension of the Savior, said that while on earth he did not hesitate to associate with 'publishers and sinners.'"

Mr. Howard Evans, in an article on "The Sects" in the *Contemporary Review*, gives the following figures concerning the clergy: Incumbents, 13,802; curates, 6,463; bishops and cathedral clergy, 230; making a total of 20,495. Taking the nine leading free churches, there are only 8,369; but these are supplemented by local preachers to the tune of 49,947. These are all of the nine churches aforesaid, Mr. Evans pooh-poohing the long list of denominations given in *Whitaker's Almanac*.

The *Tablet* is responsible for the statement that Her Majesty's decision, granting to the children of Legal Life Peers the right to be styled "Honorable," has stirred dissatisfaction in the breasts of the Spiritual Peers, and, it is suspected, also certain feminine ambitions within the episcopal palaces. It is urged that if the son of a Law Lord is to be an "honorable," and have precedence of baronets and knights, the progeny of a Right Reverend Father-in-God should be no less favored. It is a standing grievance with bishops' wives that they have no precedence at all, and merely rank as plain Mrs. So-and-so, as Mrs. Proudie used to complain.

A contemporary has been discussing, "Why are the Clergy Unpopular?" It suggests because they are a caste giving themselves peculiar airs, and dangling with women rather than meeting the society of men. This does not seem to hit the bull's eye. Is it not a fact that they are generally recognised as charlatans, assuming to teach what they know nothing of, and pretending to virtues which are conspicuous by their absence?

It is said that the proposal for the establishment of a bishopric in South Yorkshire is dead. The committee appointed to carry it out has made no progress, and no offers of money have been received. It is further alleged that the collapse has arrived because evangelicals will not subscribe for a new bishop, since all Lord Salisbury's episcopal appointments have been Ritualists.

Mr. J. F. Nisbet says in the *Referee*: "I have always had a sneaking regard for Pontius Pilate, who looked down with good-natured indifference upon the squabbles of the Jewish cliques who came before him, and I agree with Matthew Arnold that it would be extremely interesting to have his notes of the famous case that it fell to his lot to try."



**Mr. Foote's Engagements.**

September 26, Birmingham.

October 10, Glasgow.

**TO CORRESPONDENTS.**

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—September 12, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road, London; 15 and 16, debate at Athenæum Hall, London; 19, Plymouth; 21, 22, 23, 24, debate at Plymouth; 26, Athenæum Hall. October 3, Sheffield; 10, Birmingham; 24, Halifax Sunday Society; 31, Stanley, Durham. November 2, 3, 4, and 5, debate at Stanley; 7, Glasgow. December 5, Manchester.—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.

LOVER OF TRUTH.—If you read Mr. Foote's *Infidel Death-Beds*, you will see what truth there is in the common religious stories of the last hours of great *Freethinkers*. Accurate references are given to unquestionable authorities. Mr. Foote's little book is not merely a polemic; it is a history.

THOMAS MACLEISH.—Mr. Foote accedes to your request, and will give a poetical reading before his evening lecture at Glasgow.

J. PARTRIDGE.—Postcard to hand. Thanks.

JOHN BAIN.—Dr. Smith's book of stories for the young is entitled *Steps to the Temple of Happiness*. The publisher is *Sonnenschein*, and the price 5s.

J. COLLINSON.—Thanks for cuttings.

P. GORRIE.—See our leading article. If the book of Revelation be true, Talmage will have a warm place in the lake that burneth with brimstone and fire; that is to say, he will burn and stink to all eternity.

F. W. SWAIN.—Sorry to hear the Derby Branch's excursion was spoiled by the rain, though glad to know that the few who braved the weather had a good time after all. See paragraph.

MISS VANCE acknowledges on behalf of the Spanish Exiles' Fund: R. Malcolm, 1s.; J. Garven, 1s.; A. B. Moss, 2s.; T. Dobson, 1s.; A. J. Gimson, £2 2s.

J. ROBERTS.—Why is not a hall large enough obtainable for lectures by Mr. Foote at Liverpool? Is the Oddfellows' Hall no longer available? Or cannot you try for the Picton Hall again?

J. K. MAAGAARD.—Shall appear.

A. J. GIMSON (Leicester), sending a cheque for the Spanish Exiles' Fund, says: "I find you have my brother's comments in print. I am of the same mind."

ALERT.—Freethinkers do real service to the cause by taking part in controversial correspondence in public journals.

A. E. ASPINALL.—See the paragraph in "Acid Drops." Your order is handed to Mr. Forder.

N. S. S. TREASURER'S SCHEME.—We have received the following promises:—J. W., 10s. (p); J. H. Foster, £1 (p); J. Wacker, 5s. (p).

N. S. S. TREASURER'S SCHEME.—Miss Vance has received the following promises:—W. Elcoat, 10s. (p); R. Fountain, 2s. 6d. (p); H. Good, 10s. (p); J. Garven, 5s.

J. H. FOSTER, sending a donation, hopes that every Freethinker will support the new Financial Scheme.

J. W. hopes to subscribe his 10s. annually.

J. WACKER will endeavor to obtain other subscribers at Motherwell.

E. P. LUKE.—Order handed to Mr. Forder, to whom please send direct in future.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—The New Age—Liberator—Truthseeker—Two Worlds—Isle of Man Times—Phonetic Journal—Southend Times—Progressive Thinker—Glasgow Weekly Citizen—De Dagblad—Freidenker—Glasgow Daily Record—Crescent—Unigraphy—Echo—L'Etoile Socialiste—Lucifer—Ourselves—Age of Thought.

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

It being contrary to Post-Office regulations to announce on the wrapper when the subscription is due, subscribers will receive the number in a colored wrapper when their subscription expires.

LECTURE NOTICES must reach 23 Stonecutter-street by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

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

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

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

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

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

**SPECIAL.**

IN accordance with my promise, now that the summer is broken and the winter season is approaching, I recur to the matter of the Treasurer's Scheme for the financial reorganization of the National Secular Society.

Mr. Hartmann's Scheme has already been explained in the *Freethinker*. Briefly, it is as follows:—He proposes to raise an income of £1,500 a year, by means of regular annual donations from members and friends. Mr. Hartmann promises £50 himself for the first year, and will make it £75 if four others subscribe the same amount by October 1. He is sanguine enough to hope that one or two Freethinkers may be found to give £100 a year each, and another one or two £50. More might give £20, still more £10, and a larger number £5. A good many might give £1, and hundreds might give five shillings or ten shillings.

Of course the first thing needful is to obtain these donations. They can be paid during the year at the subscribers' convenience. Money is not asked for immediately, although it is naturally welcome. What we want at once is promises, so that we may have an approximate idea of our financial prospect. These promises can be sent to me at 28 Stonecutter-street, or to Mr. Hartmann or Miss Vance at the N. S. S. office, 376-7 Strand, London, W.C. A list of them will be carefully kept, and in the course of time reminders will be sent to the givers who have not redeemed them.

A full list is printed this week of the promises acknowledged up to the publication of last week's *Freethinker*. It will be reprinted from time to time, with additions up to date.

Now for the way in which it is proposed to expend the income thus raised. There is the N. S. S. office rent, and also the secretary's salary. Those are the standing expenses already. Mr. Hartmann proposes, in addition, to keep two or three lecturers travelling through the country at a fixed salary, whose services would be available to all the Branches gratuitously, on condition of their paying their own local expenses. He also proposes to have a salaried travelling secretary, to promote organization and solicit subscriptions personally from sympathizers in all parts of the country. Finally, he proposes to pay the President a salary, so that he may attend to the Society's business without loss, and also lecture (say) twenty-six Sundays a year in the provinces without a charge to the local committees. Other matters are proposed, such as issuing tracts, manifestoes, etc., and keeping up correspondence in newspapers; but these can be dwelt upon hereafter.

This is a large, ambitious scheme, which cannot be carried out suddenly. It will take time, but it ought not to be impossible. There are Freethinkers enough to find the requisite funds, if they will only rouse themselves and do their duty. The same number of Christians would be expected to do more.

A sub-committee, consisting of Messrs. Warren, Bate, Gorniot, and Quay, has been appointed to give special attention to this Scheme. I have been asked to write a circular for wide distribution, and this will be done immediately. As a first step in the direction of activity, Mr. Cohen has been engaged up to Christmas by way of experiment. He will act as travelling agent for the committee, soliciting subscriptions, and delivering week-night lectures on similar conditions to those which obtained under my Lecture Scheme.

As we cannot afford to sit still while the Treasurer's Scheme is maturing, I have, on my own responsibility, authorized Mr. Watts to make some week-night engagements in the neighborhoods of Glasgow, Birmingham, etc. Of course he will do his best for the scheme as well as Mr. Cohen, though more incidentally.

Personally, I do not intend to be any burden upon the new Fund, at least until it is fairly flourishing. As everybody knows, I have a princely income, derived from mysterious sources. Meanwhile, it cannot be said that I am

neglecting the Scheme. I am giving it a big advertisement on gratuitous terms, and using all my influence to secure its success. Nobody will be better pleased than I to see the N. S. S. self-sustaining. Far too much has hitherto been left to the President, who has had to take heavy responsibilities, for which he has not always been thanked.

The matter is now one for the whole Secular party. We have an earnest, substantial Treasurer, who will hold the key of the exchequer, and a capable sub-committee of the Executive to look after the working of the Scheme. Let the party, then, supply the sinews of war if they want to see a really vigorous campaign. Grumbling and criticism can be postponed for a while. What is wanted is work, and this cannot be done without money. This is the plain (or, if you like, brutal) truth. We ask for promises for the first year, and hundreds of them, from £100 down to 5s.

G. W. FOOTE  
(President, N. S. S.)

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S  
FINANCIAL REORGANIZATION SCHEME.

Promises for the First Year received up to September 5.

£ s. d.		£ s. d.	
S. Hartmann ...	50 0 0	Dr. T. Bulloms ...	1 1 0
S. Munns ...	5 0 0	W. H. Wood ...	1 1 0
J. Fulton ...	5 0 0	J. P. ...	1 1 0
W. H. Harrap ...	1 0 0	J. Sumner ...	0 10 6
J. Hughes ...	1 1 0	C. H. Cattell ...	0 5 0
W. Davey ...	0 5 0	R. Meredith ...	0 5 0
F. Oscar ...	0 5 0	W. T. Pitt ...	1 1 0
R. Axleby ...	0 5 0	S. Armfield ...	1 1 0
J. G. Dobson (p) ...	0 10 0	J. Terry ...	1 1 0
J. J. Wyand ...	5 0 0	Lees Sumner (p) ...	1 0 0
E. Lawson ...	5 0 0	R. Taylor ...	0 10 6
H. Thomas ...	0 5 0	B. A. Millichamp ...	0 5 0
J. Thomas ...	0 5 0	G. Dixon ...	2 0 0
W. M. Franklin ...	0 5 0	Dr. Walker ...	2 0 0
H. McGuinness ...	0 5 0	F. H. ...	0 5 0
Mrs. McGuinness ...	0 5 0	A. Tripp (p) ...	2 0 0
J. A. (Edinburgh) ...	0 10 0	J. W. Gott ...	0 10 0
Lancashire Friend ...	2 0 0	J. Cuff ...	1 0 0
Dr. Mortimer ...	1 0 0	Alert ...	0 5 0
Tom Beach ...	1 0 0	J. Ralston ...	0 10 0
W. Lewis ...	0 5 0	Mr. Ralston ...	0 10 0
G. H. Gask (p) ...	0 5 0	James Stanway ...	0 10 0
D. T. Snow ...	0 5 0	J. C. Bridge ...	0 10 6
J. T. Lewis ...	0 5 0	W. H. Witney ...	0 10 0
J. Williams ...	0 5 0	G. Harper ...	0 5 0
W. Waymark ...	0 5 0	F. W. Swan ...	0 5 0
J. Unsworth ...	0 5 0	J. Brownwood ...	0 5 0
S. J. B. ...	0 5 0	T. Newton ...	0 5 0
T. Dobson ...	0 5 0	J. Brooks ...	0 5 0
T. J. Head ...	0 5 0	T. Gorbell ...	0 5 0
C. Cattell ...	0 5 0	J. Edwards ...	0 5 0
F. Collins ...	0 10 0	Mr. Todd ...	0 5 0
E. D. H. Daly ...	2 0 0	Mr. Fish ...	0 5 0
W. W. Roberts ...	0 10 0	J. Kimberley ...	0 15 0
J. Hayes ...	0 5 0	F. Simons ...	0 15 0
J. Barks ...	0 5 0	L. Brooker ...	0 10 0
A. Hurren ...	0 10 0	James Boorman ...	0 10 0
A. G. Lye ...	0 10 0	J. Martin ...	0 5 0
W. Muir ...	0 5 0	E. Barker ...	0 5 0
C. Heaton ...	0 5 0	O. Ford ...	0 5 0
S. Graham ...	0 5 0	G. Heritage ...	0 5 0
Cardiff Branch ...	1 15 0	R. Wellings ...	0 2 6
F. T. Brookes ...	0 5 0	G. Lander ...	0 2 6
T. Gorbell ...	0 10 0	Mrs. Lander ...	0 2 6
A. C. Byrom ...	0 10 0	C. Heald (p) ...	0 5 0
F. Theobalds ...	0 5 0	C. Davies ...	0 5 0
B. Waterhouse (p) ...	1 0 0	G. Brady ...	6 0 0
F. W. Donaldson (p) ...	0 10 6	H. Smith (p) ...	0 10 0
W. H. Spivey (p) ...	0 10 0	W. Ingram (p) ...	0 10 0
W. Lamb (p) ...	1 0 0	C. Mascall (p) ...	0 10 0
T. Ollerenshaw (p) ...	0 10 0	W. Stewart ...	0 5 0
G. R. ...	2 0 0	J. F. Hampson ...	1 0 0
E. Truelove ...	2 0 0	Mrs. J. F. Hampson ...	1 0 0
J. H. R. ...	0 10 6		

[Any error or omission in the list should be communicated at once to Mr. Foote.]

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE'S visit to Manchester was very successful, in spite of the wretched weather. The morning audience was moderate, the afternoon's extremely good, and the evening's crowded. Altogether the meetings were the largest that

have been seen in the Secular Hall for some years. Friends attended from Bolton, Wigan, Chester, and other places; some travelling over forty miles to be present. There was a noticeable warmth in the reception given to the N. S. S. President, which was not without significance. Collections were made during the day on behalf of the N. S. S. General Fund.

The Manchester Secular Hall looks all the better for the recent repairs and redecoration. It is pleasant to the eye all over, from the entrance to the wall behind the platform, from which stand out in bold relief the picture and the bust of Charles Bradlaugh. We are glad to know, too, that the Manchester Branch is starting the winter season with an improved prospect. Certain discordant elements having been eliminated, the committee are now working amicably and harmoniously together.

Notwithstanding the heavy rain on Sunday last, Mr. Watts had a good audience in the evening at the Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road. His new lecture on "The Triumph of Reason" was enthusiastically applauded, and we are informed that Mr. Watts was at his best. Mr. Kay presided, and drew attention to Mr. Hartmann's Financial Scheme. There was no debate, although it was specially invited.

Mr. Watts will again occupy the same platform this evening, Sunday, September 12, taking for his subject, "Is Christ Possible?" Previous to the lecture Mrs. Charles Watts will give a reading.

On the following Wednesday and Thursday, September 15 and 16, Mr. Watts debates at the same hall with the Rev. Mr. Waldron. The admission will be by ticket only, which can be obtained of Miss Vance at the office of the National Secular Society, 376 Strand, and at 17 Johnson's-court, Fleet-street.

The Glasgow Branch's winter session begins to-day (September 12) with three lectures by Mr. C. Cohen, who will give three more lectures on September 19. The committee hope to see a large rally of members and friends on these occasions. They have spared no pains to make up a fine program for the season, and have secured the services of the most prominent Freethought lecturers. Messrs. Foote and Watts are included. The former, in addition to a course of Sunday lectures, is to debate for four nights (October 12-15) with Mr. W. T. Lee. Mr. A. G. Nostick, F.G.S., has undertaken to deliver lectures on geology and other scientific subjects. The prospects of the Branch were never brighter, and it only requires the steady co-operation of members and friends to make the new session thoroughly successful.

Mr. Percy Ward, the latest promising recruit to the N.S.S. platform, carries on a week's Freethought mission at Derby, from Sept. 12 to Sept. 19 inclusive. He lectures morning and evening both Sundays, and every intervening week-night, in the Athenæum, Victoria-street, under the auspices of the Derby Branch. Admission is free, with a collection towards defraying the expenses. Of course discussion is invited, and we hope plenty will be forthcoming.

The Liverpool Branch has removed from the Oddfellows' Hall and taken the smaller Alexandra Hall, Islington-square, for regular Sunday lectures. Mr. J. M. Robertson occupies the platform from Sept 12 to Oct. 3 inclusive, lecturing twice each Sunday, at 3 and 7 o'clock. The subjects are calculated to attract good meetings. Local speakers fill up the program till Christmas.

The Bradlaugh Club is organizing a Bradlaugh Celebration during the week commencing on Sunday, Sept. 26 (Charles Bradlaugh's birthday). There will be a tea and *soirée* on that day, and two public meetings on Sept. 28 and Oct. 1, at which addresses will be delivered on Bradlaugh's freethought and political work. The remainder of the week will be filled up with amusement.

A lengthy correspondence on the subject, "Is Jesus Christ Possible?" has been going on in *The New Age*. "Alert" contributes a letter giving the Secularist side of the question.

A writer on "Science, Sentiment, and the Soul," in the *Glasgow Weekly Citizen*, observes: "The idea of a soul, mysterious, impalpable, and indestructible, imprisoned in a corruptible and relatively unimportant body, gives place to the modern idea, which is more in line with the doctrine of evolution. Men of science are beginning to regard the higher powers of man, the attributes of the 'soul,' as developed from the simple mental and emotional characteristics of primitive man and the higher animals. The chain of continuous evolution from animals to man was previously supposed to be broken by the supernatural inbreathing of the

immortal soul. The modern view places the 'soul' as the highest product of an evolution, continuous, wonderful, and all due to the unwavering action of the inevitable Laws of the Universe." This would have been considered rank heresy but a little while ago.

The *People's Newspaper*, of Rockhampton, Central Queensland, gives a full report of a lecture on "The Theory of Evolution," by Wallace Nelson, who, our Sheffield friends will be pleased to hear, seems now to be a person of some importance in that district.

In *Science and Progress*, an American magazine, Professor Poulton calls attention to the services of James Cowles Prichard as a founder of true anthropology and a forerunner of Darwin. His *Researches into the Physical History of Mankind*, of which the first edition appeared in 1813, was certainly a remarkable step in the right direction.

A. H. Gerhard conducts *De Dageraad*, the organ of the Dutch Freethought Society, in a very able manner. His own articles always hit the topics of the day. In the September number Herr Ten Bokkel continues his studies of mythology, and, under the sarcastic title of "Suffer Little Children to Come unto Me," "Jan" exposes the truly puerile character of religious instruction in Holland.

### THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

REPORT of special Executive meeting held at the Society's offices, August 20, 1897. The President in the chair. Present:—Messrs. M. Loafer, W. Leat, E. W. Quay, C. Mascall, Stanley Jones, E. Bater, T. Gorniot, H. J. Stace, G. J. Warren, J. M. Wheeler, W. Heaford, V. Roger, C. Cohen, and the Secretary. Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed.

The President reported the result of the delegation to the Spanish Atrocities Committee. Personally, he was satisfied that the allegations of torture were substantiated. Mr. Wheeler moved, and Mr. Heaford seconded: "That this Executive, having heard the report of its delegates to the Spanish Exiles Committee, requests them also to attend and speak on their behalf at the Trafalgar-square meeting." Carried unanimously.

It was then moved by Mr. Roger, seconded by Mr. Cohen: "That the President be requested to open an N. S. S. subscription in the *Freethinker* for the Spanish Atrocities Committee's work in the relief of the Spanish Exiles, and that this Executive head the list with a donation of two guineas, the subscription to be paid to the Committee as the contribution of the N. S. S." Carried unanimously.

Messrs. G. J. Warren, E. W. Quay, E. Bater, and T. Gorniot were then elected as a sub-committee to report upon matters in connection with the working of the Treasurer's Scheme at the next meeting of the Executive.

It was resolved to issue the Society's Almanack for 1898, and Mr. G. W. Foote and Mr. J. M. Wheeler kindly undertook the editorial work. The secretary was instructed to report names of branches in arrears with subscriptions, and the meeting adjourned until Thursday, September 2.

Report of meeting held on Thursday, September 2. The President in the chair. Present:—Messrs. E. Bater, S. Hartmann, F. Schaller, H. J. Stace, G. J. Warren, C. Watts, Annie Brown, J. M. Wheeler, W. Heaford, A. B. Moss, P. Sabine, W. Leat, E. W. Quay, C. Mascall, and the Secretary. Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed. Cash statement received. The President read correspondence from the Chatham Branch in regard to the action of Sir Charles Warren. It was resolved that the Chatham Branch be informed "That, as Sir Charles Warren has prohibited all lectures on the Chatham Lines, this Executive does not see that it can do anything specially in this matter, as the only successful action must, apparently, be local."

A letter was read from Mr. Harry Snell, asking the Executive to support the candidature of Mr. J. F. Green, a Socialist, who was in favor of Secular Education, and who intended to run for the Finsbury Division at the forthcoming School Board election. Mr. Wheeler moved, and Mr. Heaford seconded: "That the President be requested to interview Mr. Green, and find out if he is such a candidate as the Executive would wish to endorse." Carried.

The President reported further upon the delegation to the Spanish Atrocities Committee, and the treasurer was authorized to pay a cheque to the secretary of that Committee, on account of the subscription being raised in the *Freethinker*.

Mr. Charles Watts reported upon his attendance at the meetings of the Union of Ethical Societies.

The President advised the Wood Green Branch in regard to the hiring of a Lecture Hall.

The report and minutes of the Sub-Committee elected to carry into effect Mr. Hartmann's Scheme were then read and discussed.

Mr. Cohen had offered his services to the Committee until Christmas next; and, certain minor matters having been deleted with the consent of the Committee, the following recommendations were adopted:—

"That Miss Vance act as secretary to the Committee; that Mr. Cohen be appointed to collect subscriptions, and to lecture under the direction of the Committee upon week nights during his stay in the provinces; that the President be asked to write a circular, setting forth the Scheme, and inviting subscriptions, such circular to be signed by the President, treasurer, the secretaries, and the sub-committee, with the addresses of same, and that it be sent to all Branches, members, and sympathizers; that Branches be asked for names of persons known to be in sympathy with the cause in each town, and for the names of persons who might be asked to become collectors."

The Executive then passed, as an instruction to the Committee: "That the subscriptions collected by Mr. Cohen or other collectors be all acknowledged in the *Freethinker*, and that the secretary send an official receipt to subscribers wherever possible."

The meeting then adjourned.

EDITH M. VANCE, *Secretary*.

### SUNDAY AT THE SEASIDE.

ON the shore of the sea things are gay as can be; there's no end of amusement and fun; Every day—save the day that is frittered away in the worship of God and his Son—

There are plenty of sports, of all manner of sorts, for the men and the women and weans; Funny clowns (full of pranks), acrobats, charabancs, not to mention the bathing-machines; "Ethiopian" fellers—such blue-devil quellers—and character-tellers from bumps;

On a "Secular" day things are lively and gay, and you never feel down in the dumps.

But as soon as the Sabbath approaches,

How to spend it you puzzle your nut;

Things are slow as last century's coaches,

And as dense as a fog in the "Cut."

It is true there's a band that performs on the sand,

But to listen you are not enticed;

'Tis a "Salvation" mob that is out "on the job"

For the glorification of Christ.

They inform you in song that a gentleman long since deceased, whose initial was J.,

Made them clean as new pins, washed away all their sins— but you wish that he'd washed *them* away!

Then your hands you apply to your ears, and you fly from the sound of the hideous strains,

You are off like a shot from that terrible spot, if your noddles are furnished with brains;

Then you go for a stroll, meeting scarcely a soul, on the cliffs or the Grand Esplanade;

You are left in the lurch, other folks are in church, in their best Sunday garments arrayed,

For the bells that are hung in the steeple have rung, and the people have been since eleven

Where the party who lives on the jugginses gives them instructions for getting to heaven!

For as soon as the Sabbath approaches,

Opened wide as the mouth of a butt

Are the mouths of white-chokered "cockroaches,"

And the mouths of the "niggers" are shut.

Other days folks perhaps are intelligent chaps;

Common sense on *that* day's sacrificed;

They recline in their pews and they swallow the "news"

Of the crucified "infidel," Christ.

You're as wretched, no doubt, as a fish that is out of its element, sad and forlorn;

You are waiting for Monday, and wishing that Sunday had never, oh never been born.

Thank the Lord, there's some fun at a quarter to one, or for death you would certainly seek,

For the people then pour from the joss-house's door like the rats from the vessels that leak;

And their forms are displayed up and down the parade till it's time to be thinking of lunch;

You derive from those folks better fun than from jokes that appear in the pages of *Punch*.

They amuse you much better than jokers

That contribute to *Fun* or to *Cuts*,

Do these credulous dupes of white-chokers,

By their ludicrous antics and struts.

Quite forgotten, you ken, is the sermon, for then

Men and women, both single and "spliced,"

On the promenades walk, and they laugh and they talk—

But they're none of them talking of Christ!

ESS JAY BEE

## BOOK CHAT.

In a very interesting paper in *Scribner's Magazine* on "John Cabot," Lord Dufferin incidentally remarks that while the doctors and the divines of the Middle Ages persisted in regarding the earth as a plane surface, on the ground of such texts of Scripture as "Thou hast made all men to dwell on the 'face' of the earth," and denied its rotundity because the Psalmist says, "In his hands are all the 'corners' of the earth," or argued that "men at the supposed Antipodes could not walk with their heads downward," and that ships could not sail, nor rain fall, "upward," there existed all the time in the writings of Aristotle and of his heathen successors conceptions of the nature of the globe which came wonderfully near the truth. For instance, in his treatise on the heaven, Aristotle asserts that "the earth is not only round, but not so very large, and the sea which washes the shores outside the Pillars of Hercules bathes also the neighboring coasts of India." Eratosthenes not only proclaimed the earth a sphere, but attempted to measure its circumference. Macrobius says, in his *Dream of Scipio*, "If you go far enough west, you will come to the Antipodes." Here, as elsewhere, the old book stood in the way of progress, and when Magellan circumnavigated the earth he was refused credence on the ground that it was not according to holy writ.

The *Animals' Friend* for September gives a fine portrait of Robert Browning. In the accompanying sketch Dr. Berdoe gives a letter from the poet, in which he says: "I would rather submit to the worst of deaths, so far as pain goes, than have a single dog or cat tortured on the pretence of sparing me a twinge or two." His fine poem "Tray," it is said, describes an incident which was witnessed by one of his friends in Paris. The *Animals' Friend* mentions, as still existing this very year, a custom at a religious festival held on St. John's Day at Kalgouet, in Brittany, of burning alive a dozen cats, who are carried in a large open basket. A visitor expostulated, but he was simply told that it was the St. Jean, and that the cats were there to play the parts of sinners in hell, a sight in which the good Apostle was sure to find pleasure. "In older days," added the Breton, with a gesture of horror, "they used to keep for the St. Jean six criminals and burn them. But now-a-days, you understand, Monsieur, this would not do. Happily, we are more humane!"

Fisher Unwin has published *St. Mark's Indebtedness to St. Matthew*, by F. P. Badham, M.A., a stout attack on the priority of the Second Gospel, dedicated to Professor Hilgenfeld. The case seems to stand thus: There are clearly passages in which Mark is the earlier. There are also clearly passages in which he has copied from Matthew, or a gospel similar to Matthew. The result of an investigation tends to show that both are, strictly speaking, concoctions from other documents.

On the heels of *The Posthumous Memoirs of Madame Blavatsky* comes volume iii. of *The Secret Doctrine*. It is amusing to notice that Mr. Mead shifts all responsibility for it, and especially for the impossible Greek and doubtful Hebrew and Sanskrit, upon the shoulders of Mrs. Besant. That lady says herself concerning the Sections on "The Mystery of Buddha": "Together with some most suggestive thought, they contain very numerous errors of fact, and many statements based on exoteric writings, not on esoteric knowledge.....I do not feel justified in coming between the author and the public, either by altering the statements to make them consistent with fact, or by suppressing the Sections." What a wealth of estoric lore, says *Theosophy*, we have missed through Mrs. Besant's literary delicacy! She has published these erroneous statements of H. P. B., when she might with her own pen have given us the inside facts about the mystery of Buddha. According to Mr. Mead, volume iii. is composed mainly of fragments "excluded from volumes i. and ii., because of their inferiority to the rest of the work"; but he takes comfort in the small price of the book, which is but fifteen shillings net. Trash, however, is dear at any price.

In the *Contemporary* for the current month Mr. J. Rendel Harris gives his views on the *Logia and the Gospels*. With regard to that concerning the duty of fasting and keeping the Sabbath, under penalty of rejection of the kingdom of God, he pronounces the Logian "a genuine saying of Jesus Christ" anterior to the New Testament. He says: "The effect of this discovery of the antiquity of the recovered matter upon the criticism of the Gospels cannot fail to be great, for we find not only that we are behind the Gospels, but that there was more in the sources of the Gospels than is conserved in the Gospels themselves." It gives us, he says, "the suggestion of an earlier Gospel or Gospels than any of our existing volumes." On the other hand, since it is quoted by Clement and Polycarp, "it

prevents our quoting Clement and Polycarp as attesting the antiquity of the canonical Gospels."

The Rev. H. A. Redpath gives vent to a more doubtful theory of the *Logia* in the September *Expositor*. He says: "I believe we have in them a fragment of perhaps some apocryphal gospel claiming to give a sort of *procès verbal* of the indictment or evidence used at the trial of Jesus before the Jewish authorities, in much the same way as the trials of the early Christians before the heathen tribunal were officially recorded." The Rev. H. A. Redpath ought to know that there are no official reports of such trials, the stories of early Christian persecution being mainly bogus.

Madame Mary Darmesteter's *Life of Ernest Renan* will be published by Messrs. Methuen in the autumn. The authoress has been greatly helped in her labors, first by the late Madame Renan, and since her death by Madame Psichari, Renan's daughter, who has revised the proofs and supplied many of the facts. The only "Life" of Renan hitherto issued in this country is the little volume in the Great Writers Series, by Mr. Espinasse.

In his stanzas on "The Unknown God," in the September *Fortnightly*, William Watson repudiates the Old Testament Deity, and goes in for the one of the new-found *Logia*, as witness the following:—

A God like some imperious king,  
Wrath were his realm, not duly awed;  
A God for ever hearkening  
Unto his self-commanded law;  
A God for ever jealous grown  
Of carven wood and graven stone.

The God I know of I shall ne'er  
Know, tho' he dwells exceeding nigh;  
Raise thou the stone and find me there,  
Cleave thou the wood and there am I.  
Yea, in my flesh his spirit doth flow  
Too near, too far, for me to know.

The publishers ask that only two stanzas shall be quoted, or we might be tempted to give our readers more.

Mr. Watson's verses are pronounced by the *Academy* to be a challenge to Mr. Kipling's Jubilee Recessional. The refrain of that poem, "Lest we forget, lest we forget," is skilfully employed in one of the stanzas:—

Best by remembering God, say some,  
We keep our high imperial lot.  
Fortune, I fear, hath oftentimes come  
When we forgot—when we forgot!

From Mr. E. C. Walker, 244 West 143rd-street, New York, we receive some of his own pamphlets. One is on *Prohibition and Self-government*, illustrating their irreconcilable antagonisms; another on *Bible Temperance*, showing that the old book commends, defends, and enjoins liquor-drinking; a third is on *Love and the Law*; and a fourth on *What the Young Need to Know*. In all these Mr. Walker advocates the virtue that is based on knowledge and freedom.

Noticing Dean Farrar's latest book on the Bible, *Public Opinion*, of New York, remarks: "The importance attached to Old Testament teaching has had a pernicious influence upon character and conduct, and been responsible for the agony and desolation of many a blood-stained page of history, tolerating, if not sanctioning, passions, practices, and institutions abhorrent to conscience. The moral imperfections and unbecoming stories, the discrepancies, contradictions, erroneous, trivial, and unjust details, were softened by the allegorical method of interpretation which is justly ridiculed."

The *Vegetarian Messenger* for September gives a good portrait of Mr. W. E. A. Axon, the well-known man of letters, who at one time edited the *V. M.* Mr. H. S. Salt sends a letter with regard to the presidential address of Professor Mayor. He says: "When, therefore, he is reported in the *Vegetarian Messenger* as saying that 'they (vegetarians) went to the Scripture for guidance as to principles,' I am compelled, as a Freethinker, to ask whether he was speaking for himself and for those who think with him, or for the Vegetarian Society as a whole. I trust not for the Society—though his words, as reported, can scarcely be otherwise understood—because, if that were so, it would be impossible for Freethinkers like myself to continue to be members. Food reform is to me a secular question of morality, economy, and health; and nothing, in my opinion, could be more fatal to our cause than the impression conveyed by the *Vegetarian's* offer of a prize for the 'Ten best texts,' and confirmed by the President's remarks at the recent Jubilee meeting—that modern vegetarianism relies on the authority of the ancient Jewish Scriptures." Professor Mayor replies that in the main he agrees with Mr.

Salt. He says: "I read, from the chair at Ramsgate, the verses of Romans and 1 Corinthians, not to prove that every Christian must be a vegetarian, but to show that Christians are not bound by their religion, as Jews are, to eat flesh, even once a year." To make reformers of all grades place their views on the ground of humanity, rather than on fetish-book theology, is a great point gained.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### MANUFACTURED PROPHECIES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—There is one point with regard to the faked-up prophecies which "Abracadabra" has been so ably exposing that deserves, I think, further attention. When a lawyer has good witnesses, he dwells on the evidence. When he has none, he seeks to argue a case by appeals to his hearers' prepossessions. Now, one and all of the early Christian writers, from Paul and the Gospellers right through the Christian Fathers, appeal to the Old Testament to prove the things said to have occurred in the New. Does not this very fact show they had no evidence? We are told in Acts xvii. 8 that Paul alleged "that Christ needs must have suffered, and risen again from the dead," not that he *did* suffer and rise again, which would require proof. Again, in the famous 1 Corinthians xv., he says: "He rose again according to the Scriptures." At the date of that epistle the Christian Scriptures were not in existence, and the Jewish Scriptures have nothing whatever about rising on the third day. Paul's argument was a bit of pure bounce, in which he would not have indulged had he ready for cross-examination five hundred brethren who were said to have seen the risen Savior.

CATAPHAS.

### A FASHIONABLE METHODIST.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Under the above heading Uncle Ben satirizes the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes. As there are, in that satire, statements that are not strictly accurate, and as there are comments that are unfair, perhaps you will allow one who has known Mr. Hughes for several years, and one who is not blind to his many faults, to occupy a little of your space. You state in your leader on the Trafalgar-square meeting that you love freedom and hate cruelty. In the interests of true freedom and in opposition to cruelty, of perhaps the worse sort—i.e., misrepresentation—I feel impelled to write this letter. Uncle Ben's first hit is at Mr. Hughes's "consuming vanity." I don't think Mr. Hughes has a greater share of that vice than Uncle Ben or yourself. At any rate, a knowledge of Mr. Hughes's career would prove that vanity and self-profit have not, as Uncle Ben hints at, been the motive-powers of his life. To-day he could easily have been a richer, more fashionable man, had he been an Atheist instead of a believer in Jesus Christ (though it be the Christ of conventional religion). The result of his work in London, and of the West London Mission, has not been mainly a flourish of trumpets, but the brightening of many a life. The "lively and spiritual paper" was started a considerable time before the Mission was thought of. "Uncle Ben" knows that Mr. Hughes does not dress like a fop and affect West-end manners to attract the rich, and it is not his aim to dispense the "filthy" lucre of the rich. Mr. Hughes has, I believe, received more votes for the presidency than any Wesleyan minister of his age ever had, so the sneer as to that honor being "long deferred" is not well-founded. I am not a member of any church, and hope I am always open to conviction; but I cannot but admire the wonderful teaching and life of Christ, the beneficent result thereof, though I deplore the un-Christian conduct of the Churches, and of so many who claim to be his followers. At the same time, I am a searcher after truth, and that I am seeking for everywhere—even in the *Freethinker*. I admire, Sir, the article by yourself on the Spanish Anarchists, and other features of your paper; but I deplore the tone in which you and your contributors refer to your opponents. You deny to them the sincerity which you claim should be allowed yourselves; you so often use ridicule instead of argument, quibbles instead of reasons. Sayings taken from the Bible are taken literally or symbolically, quite apart from context and evident meaning. Surely, Sir, such methods as these are calculated neither to give us the truth nor to increase the number of Freethinkers. No man has exactly the same views as another on matters of opinion, but we who are seeking after truth, whether we be, according to our light, Methodists, Romanists, Agnostics, Atheists, Theosophists, Plymouth Brethren, or Buddhists—we can, *if we are sincere*, at least bear in mind that our common goal is truth, and we can, and therefore must, respect the sincere convictions of our fellow truthseekers, and we can and should exercise and extend the courtesy and liberty which we in our turn should expect.

FRED. H. GOOLE.

## PROFANE JOKES.

AN old Methodist hymn-book versified the Christian idea of the Atonement as follows:—

"Come filthy, come nasty, come dirty, come bare,  
You can't come too nasty; come just as you are."

"Gospel's free—free to all dis congregashun," said brother Sparhawk, "an' salvation's free. You only got to walk right up an' help yourself, or call on me to gib yo' some." But when the collection box was passed around there was a murmur of discontent, starting in the corner where sat the Venus chapter of the Sisters of Mary and extending to the masculine pillars of the church. "How yo' reckon salvation's free w'en yo' sergashiate de'lection box roun' de congregashun?" asked Mr. Smallwood. "W'y, it's dis way, frien's. Dar's a spring o' pure livin' water way up de mountain, free—free to all. But dere's pipin' laid to bring dat water down whar yo' all can use it, an' de pipin' costs money. Now de gospel fount am free, but de pipin' am 'spensive, an' I'm de pipin'."

SMITTEN.

(Up to date.)

His kiss was like a blow unto  
Her modesty. With meek  
And truly Christian spirit  
She turned the other cheek.

"Uncle Ben," said Miss B., "from what portion of the Bible do you derive so much comfort?" Laying his index finger in the palm of his hand, the old fellow proceeded as follows: "Well, de Bible says, 'Dem dat de Lord loveth he chases!' An' from de way he is bin chasin' o' me dis year, I know I mus' be one'er His favorites."

Tommy—"Pa, the Chinese invented gunpowder, didn't they?" Mr. Figg—"Yes; but it never really amounted to much for killing purposes until the Christian nations took hold of it."

## AN INSPIRED REVELATION.

IF it was worth God's while to make a revelation to man at all, it was certainly worth his while to see to it that it was correctly made. He would not have allowed the ideas and mistakes of pretended prophets and designing priests to become so mingled with the original text that it is impossible to tell where he ceased and where the priests and prophets began. Neither will it do to say that God adapted his revelation to the prejudices of mankind. Of course, it was necessary for an infinite being to adapt his revelation to the intellectual capacity of man; but why should God confirm a barbarian in his prejudices? Why should he fortify a heathen in his crimes? If a revelation is of any importance whatever, it is to eradicate prejudices from the human mind. It should be a lever with which to raise the human race. Theologians have exhausted their ingenuity in finding excuses for God. It seems to me that they would be better employed in finding excuses for men. They tell us that the Jews were so cruel and ignorant that God was compelled to justify, or nearly to justify, many of their crimes, in order to have any influence with them whatever. They tell us that, if he had declared slavery and polygamy to be criminal, the Jews would have declined to receive the Ten Commandments. They insist that, under the circumstances, God did the best he could—that his real intention was to lead them along slowly, step by step, so that in a few hundred years they would be induced to admit that it was hardly fair to steal a babe from its mother's breast.

—R. G. Ingersoll.

## LOVE THE UNKNOWN, OR BE DAMNED!

LOVE God with all your heart and strength,  
Or else you'll land in hell at length!  
Your fate will on your love depend,  
So love away! and mind your end!—  
The "end" that parsons call "your latter";  
But who the devil God might be—  
Ev'n if He be—God knows, not we;  
But, bless you! that's another matter!  
You simply have to love Him! See?

G. L. MACKENZIE.

The half-hearted religiosity of latter-day Christianity may choose to ignore the fact, but it remains none the less true that he who refuses to accept the demonology of the Gospels rejects the revelation of a spiritual world, made in them, as much as if he denied the existence of such a person as Jesus of Nazareth; and deserves, as much as any one can do, to be ear-marked "Infidel" by our gentle shepherds.—T. H. Huxley.

## 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 (78 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30. C. Watts, "Is Christ Possible?"  
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 7.15, H. W. Mengedobt, "Assyriology and the Book of Daniel." September 11, at 8.30, Concert.  
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, H. Snell, "Athens and Greek Civilization." Limelight illustrations.  
EAST LONDON BRANCH (Swaby's Coffee House, 103 Mile End-road): 8, Stanley Jones.  
WEST LONDON BRANCH, 341 Harrow-road (near Westbourne Park Station): September 13, at 9, Business meeting.

### OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, A lecture.  
CAMBERWELL BRANCH (Peckham Rye): 3.15, A lecture.  
CLERKENWELL GREEN (Finsbury Branch): 11.30, A. B. Moss, "Design and Natural Selection."  
EDMONTON (Angel-road): 7, W. J. Ramsey.  
FINSBURY PARK (near band-stand)—Finsbury Park Branch: 3.15, A. Guest, "Christianity a Secondhand Religion."  
HAMMERSMITH (The Grove, near S.W.B. station): 7, H. P. Edwards, "The Origin of Christianity."  
HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, H. P. Edwards; 3.30, R. Rosetti.  
ISLINGTON (Highbury Fields, Highbury Corner): 11.30, A. Guest, "Christianity a Secondhand Religion."  
KILBURN (High-road, corner of Victoria-road): 7, H. P. Edwards.  
KINGSLAND (Ridley-road, near Dalston Junction): 11.30, E. Calvert, "Religious Symbolism."  
LIMEHOUSE (Triangle, Salmon-lane): 11.30, A lecture. September 14, at 8, E. Pack.  
MILE END WASTE: 11.30, F. Haslam; 7, A lecture. September 15, at 8, A lecture.  
VICTORIA PARK (near the fountain): 3.15, Stanley Jones, "The Origin of Christianity."  
WOOD GREEN (Jolly Butchers' Hill): 11.30, Mr. Lewis.

### COUNTRY.

CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 7, W. Heaford, "Heresy in High Places".  
DERBY (Athenæum, Victoria-street): H. P. Ward—11, "What is Secularism?" 7, "From Wesleyan Pulpit to Secularist Platform."  
GLASGOW (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 11.30, C. Cohen, "Women: Past, Present, and Future"; 2.30, "The Dream of Immortality"; 6.30, "The Case for Secularism."  
LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 3, J. M. Robertson, "Christianity and the Ancient World"; 7, "Christian Evidences."  
PONTYPRIDD (23 Middle-street, Trallwn): Meetings every Sunday evening. Discussion invited.  
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): Last excursion. Members and friends meet in front of Victoria Station at 8.30, and will leave for Grimsby and Olethorpes by 8.45 train.  
SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, Business meeting.

### OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

CHATHAM (near corner of Lines): 11.15, W. Heaford, "The Failure of Christianity."

### Lecturers' Engagements.

O. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London.—September 12 and 19, Glasgow. 26, Edinburgh. October 10, Gateshead. 16, 17, and 18, Stanley. 24, Newcastle.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, London, S.E.—September 12, Clerkenwell.

J. FAGAN, 48 Popham-road, New North-road, London, N.—September 19, e., Hammersmith. 26, m., Hyde Park.

H. PERCY WARD, Leighton Hall, N.W.—September 12 to 13, Mission at Derby; 26, m., Clerkenwell Green; e., New Brompton. 29, e., Mile End Waste. October 3, m., Camberwell; a., Peckham Rye.

E. PACK, 90 Camden-street, N.W.—September 12, Northampton. 14, e., Limehouse. 19, m., Camberwell; a., Peckham Rye. 21, e., Limehouse. 26, m., Mile End; e., Limehouse; a., Finsbury Park. 28, e., Limehouse. October 10, Bradlaugh Club; 17, m. Camberwell.

## POSITIVISM.

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

SUNDERLAND.—Church of Humanity, 23 Bradford-street. Service and discourse every Sunday afternoon at 3.15.

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

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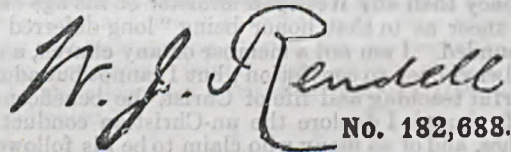
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SECULAR SUNDAY-SCHOOL, FAILSWORTH, near Manchester. The above SCHOOL having become too small for the requirements of the members they are desirous of EXTENDING it. To raise the necessary funds—about £500—they are promoting a BAZAAR to be held at the end of October next. Contributions in money or articles from any Freethought well-wisher would be thankfully received.

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