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Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

MEDICINE AND PRAYER.

THERE are two extremes in the Christian camp. At one end we find the Higher Critics, who make the Bible mean anything you please. At the other end we find the Peculiar People, who think the Bible means what it says. Moreover they try to follow its teachings. Whatever may be thought of their intelligence, no one can deny their honesty; which is a great deal more than can be said of the gentlemen who endeavor to keep the clerical business going by proving that, if you only read the Bible upside down, or sideways, you will see that it thoroughly agrees with all the latest ideas of modern civilization.

The only peculiarity about these Peculiar People, after all, is that they are straightforward Christians. But it must be admitted that this is a very striking peculiarity in the present state of the Christian world.

When one of these Peculiar People falls ill, he does not call in a doctor. That is simply ignoring God's providence. He calls in the elders, who anoint him with oil and pray over him. Sometimes he recovers, and that proves the efficacy of prayer. Sometimes he dies, and that proves there was a good reason for his not recovering.

The ordinary Christian professes to believe in prayer, but he prefers to combine it with medicine. He thinks that Providence is more reliable in partnership with a doctor. He is neither a believer nor an unbeliever, but a sophistical mixture of both.

Ordinary Christians, however, are in the majority, and they persecute the extraordinary Christians. One of these Peculiar People in the east of London has just been found guilty of manslaughter by a coroner's jury. He followed the prayer-and-oil treatment in the case of his sick child, instead of calling in a doctor, and he is held to have been contributory to its death.

A coroner's is only a court of first instance. The case will have to be tried, if it ever is tried, by a superior court. Perhaps the grand jury will throw out the indictment, in order to prevent a scientific exposure of Christianity.

There is no law in England compelling a man to hire a doctor. Apart from the religious issues of this case there is a legal issue. Doctors follow a better profession than priests, but doctorcraft is no more respectable than priestcraft. One tyranny is as bad as another. Doctors sometimes save lives, but how many do they kill? There is no satisfactory debit and credit account, and until there is it does not seem the business of the law to find them patients.

Should this Peculiar Person be found guilty in a superior court, and be punished with fine or imprisonment, it will be a severe condemnation of the Bible as a practical guide. It will also be a gross exhibition of Christian hypocrisy.

The Bible is set up as the Word of God. It is forced into the hands of children in our public schools. It is used as a swearing-block in our courts of justice. Even members of parliament are sworn in on a copy of the New Testament. Now it is this very book which the Peculiar People obey, and to punish them for it in a Christian country is an act of consummate duplicity.

In the Old Testament we read that King Hezekiah's life was saved, not by the fig-poultice that was put upon his boil, but by his tears and prayers. King Asa was perfect before the Lord all his days, and his long reign of forty-one years seems to have been a beneficent one for his

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subjects. But it is mentioned to his discredit, and apparently by way of censure, that in the disease which carried him off he "sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians."

In the New Testament we find a statement by Jesus Christ of the signs which should follow belief. In his name the believers were to cast out devils, take up serpents, drink poison, and "lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." This is precisely what the Peculiar People do. Jesus Christ said nothing about calling in a doctor. There was no room for doctors if his teaching was true. Faith was sufficient, and science was unnecessary.

James, who is alleged to have been Jesus Christ's brother, and who should therefore have been most familiar with his teaching, gives the following instructions in cases of sickness:—

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up."

Surely this is clear and explicit. It is not open to misunderstanding. It is incapable of two interpretations. Every sincere Christian, with that text in front of him, knows exactly what to do. If he calls in a doctor for himself, his wife, or his child, he is flying in the face of the New Testament. He is following custom, or his own judgment, and not the Word of God.

Everywhere in the New Testament we find the supernatural theory of disease, which was therefore to be cured by supernatural agency. Jesus Christ "rebuked" a fever, which "left" the patient. This shows that he, or the writer of the story, shared the belief of African savages that disease is the work of evil spirits. Curing disease and casting out devils were two branches of the same business, as they still are in uncivilized countries. Peter healed the sick by letting his shadow fall upon them. Paul healed them by sending them his handkerchiefs. Both are instances of savage superstition. The shadow is held to be a part of a man's personality, and therefore to participate in his virtues; and the same characteristic is ascribed to articles that come into close and immediate contact with him.

It is perfectly obvious to any unbiassed reader that these Peculiar People obey the spirit as well as the letter of the Bible. They are thoroughly consistent; that is to say, they are real Christians. They do not try to reconcile God's wisdom with human science, and they do the Holy Ghost the credit of believing that it meant what it said.

What right have ordinary Christians to punish these people? Do not ordinary Christians profess to believe what these people practise? Are not all the Churches ready to maintain against "infidels" the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer? Have we not recently seen a number of Christian ministers contributing to a certain religious journal a quantity of instances of prayer being most circumstantially answered? Does not the Prayer Book of the Church of England, as by law established, contain set forms of prayer for rain, for fine weather, and for recovery from sickness? Do not Church clergymen and congregations regularly beseech God to prolong the life of the Queen? Why then is it wrong for a poor father to beseech God to spare the life of his child? Perhaps the ordinary Christian will reply that it is not wrong to pray, but wrong to refrain from using natural

remedies. But what does this mean? It means that it is wrong to trust in God implicitly, that infinite wisdom and power should be supplemented, that the mysterious Spirit of the Universe should be assisted by another mystery in the form of a bottle of medicine.

Several years ago the Prince of Wales was dangerously ill of gastric fever. Christian congregations all over the land prayed for his recovery, and when he was himself again a solemn thanksgiving service was held in St. Paul's Cathedral. The people were assured that God had answered their prayers. At the same time, the doctors were not forgotten. They were handsomely paid, and the principal one was knighted. But this was highly inconsistent. If the doctors saved the Prince's life, God did not; and if God saved his life, the doctors did not. To say it was a case of co-operation is nothing less than ridiculous blasphemy.

Over in America there are many honest Christians called Adventists. They read the Bible without orthodox spectacles, and they find that the second coming of Christ is an event to be expected. It may happen to-day or to-morrow, and they think it right to be ready. They also find that the New Testament does not really change the Sabbath from the last to the first day of the week. They therefore keep the old Sabbath on what we call Saturday, and disregard the sanctity of Sunday. For this crime they are sent to prison by their fellow Christians. They are chained and set to work on the roads by Protestants, who declare that every man has the right of private judgment.

Will the Christians in this country make a similar exhibition of hypocrisy? Will they punish men for being *real* Christians? Or will this East-end case be stifled by the grand jury, to avoid a scandal? From the Freethought point of view, it would be an advantage to have the case tried in a superior court. The trial would be reported in all the newspapers, and would set people thinking. It would draw general attention to the antagonism between the Bible and science. It would do more good than a hundred Freethought lectures, because it would reach the right people.

G. W. FOOTE

SLAVERY AND THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND.

DURING the Middle Ages, the palmy days of the Church, when religion claimed paramount rule over secular affairs, slaves were kept by ecclesiastics exactly as by seculars, both on the continent and in England. The former is dealt with by M. Patrice Larroque in his work, *L'Eglise et L'Esclavage*. Doomsday Book (i. 239) mentions slaves among the possessions of the English abbeys. It was the custom for the slaves to go with the estate on which they were placed, and when the clergy induced pious scoundrels to save their souls by bequeathing their lands to the Church the legacy included the serfs upon the land as much as the trees which adorned it. Besides becoming possessed of them in this way, the bishops obtained them through the misconduct of the clergy. By the canons of Anselm, 1108, c. 10, cited in Johnson's *Ecclesiastical Laws*, if a priest was found harboring a concubine, the woman was not permitted to return to secular uses, but was forfeited as a slave to the bishop, who doubtless restored her to virtuous ways.

Pike, in his *History of Crime in England*, says: "The boundary which divided the free from the unfree was so slight that the churl was always in danger of passing over it. The infliction of a penalty which he could not pay, and which none would pay for him, rendered him utterly bankrupt in freedom." Pike states, too, that "in the law of a King of Wessex, who lived at the end of the seventh and beginning of the eighth century, the purchase of wives is deliberately sanctioned; and it is stated in the preface that the compilation was drawn up with the assistance of the Bishop of Winchester and a large assembly of 'God's servants.'"

In old records may be found many a tragic touch concerning the Church and slavery. Thus, in the middle of the thirteenth century the Abbot of Bourne sold Hugo the Shepherd for four shillings, and about the same time bought a slave from Matilda, the widow of John the

physician, for twenty shillings.* Sometimes we have a more noble record, as in the book of Exeter the item: "Edric of Fordham bought his daughter of Alfrige, the Abbot of Bath, and restored her and her offspring to everlasting freedom," which opens up a scene of long peasant toil crowned by the joy of redeeming a daughter from ignoble captivity.

I do not want to make the picture too black against the clergy. Just as to-day one may find a Dennis Hird or a Parson Fillingham standing out against the remnants of servitude, so through the Middle Ages there were noble men in the Church who taught kindness towards the serf, and who in some instances gave freedom to their own, or who, like John Ball, pleaded for the rights of the peasantry, often, like him, to their own detriment. But the institution of slavery was never denounced by the Church. On the contrary, it was believed to have divine sanction, as assuredly it had the support of both the Bible and the Church. It was English slaves whom Gregory saw in the market-place at Rome, *non Angli sed angeli*. The 17th and 70th Canons of the Council of Toledo, A.D. 623, decreed that once a slave of the Church, always a slave; so Archbishop Egbert, while denouncing the sale of Christians to Jews or Pagans, told the Saxons that an abbot or monk could not bestow freedom upon a slave of the monastery; for it is impious, he exclaims, that he should damage the Church.* It was considered a worthy thing to make slaves for the benefit of the Church. Thus Michael, Abbot of Glastonbury, is extolled by John the monk because, finding thirty-two poor peasants called Gracians or freemen, he reduced sixteen to slavery; but, alas! he was unable to bring the others under, because of their powerful friends. Chattel slavery lasted in England right from the time of the Saxons till after the Black Death, when new sociological conditions—not Christianity—altered the position of the peasant. Macaulay remarks that the end of slavery was silently brought about "neither by legislative regulation nor by physical force." None can fix the moment when it ceased. "Some faint traces of the institution of villenage were detected by the curious so late as the days of the Stuarts; nor has that institution ever, to this hour, been abolished by statute."†

Mental slavery is of all servitude the worst. From the earliest times the Church has persistently done its utmost to rivet its own intellectual thralldom upon the masses, and to this day it does its worst to thwart the establishment of any schools save those where the teaching is under parsonic influence. The Church is still the bulwark of slavery.

J. M. WHEELER.

CHRISTIANITY AS A MORAL FORCE.

LAST week we corrected some glaring errors into which the editor of the *Rock* had fallen in his article on "Modern Rationalism," which appeared in that journal dated August 20. We propose now to endeavor to correct his further mistakes, and in so doing we hope to vindicate the Secular position. It is to be regretted that theological writers are so prone to misrepresent their opponents' views, and to urge the most extravagant claims on behalf of their own faith. So long, however, as they do so, it will be our duty to expose their tactics, and to state the *facts* bearing upon the questions at issue. The three inaccuracies of the editor of the *Rock* with which we are concerned on this occasion are as follows: (1) "*Very few men indeed have ever earned for themselves the right to disbelieve.*" (2) There was no *vital* morality "till the advent of Christ." (3) "*There can be no morality apart from God.*" The italics are the editor's, and therefore we presume he wishes to emphasize his allegations.

(1) What is meant by denying to men the legitimate right to disbelieve? We are told: "Most disbelief is moral, not intellectual; men do not desire to have Divine leading or enlightenment, for the heart of man is possessed with pride." This is sheer orthodox nonsense. Disbelief is both moral and intellectual. To refuse to believe that to which our reason cannot assent is undoubtedly moral, and if this ethical principle were acted upon more than it is, there would be less hypocrisy than we now find both in and out of the Church. As to disbelief not being intellectual,

* Madox's *Formulare Angli* (418).

* Johnson's *Ecclesiastical Laws*, i. 740.

† *History of England*, i. 23.

what about such men as Darwin, Clifford, Huxley, Tyndall, and a host of other sceptics who could be mentioned? Surely the disbelief of these men was the result of intellectual discrimination. To accuse them of mental indifference would be a stupid and malicious libel. It was not until after thorough investigation that they arrived at the conclusion that they could not honestly believe the prevalent teachings of theology. It is nothing less than pure orthodox slander to urge that it is "pride" which prevents men from desiring "Divine leading and enlightenment." Let such "divine" influence be demonstrated as a *fact*, and one calculated to enhance personal improvement, and disbelievers would be glad to avail themselves of the advantage.

(2) It is not true that there was no *vital* morality before the time of Christ. The highest and most practical ethics that ever illuminated the world were taught and practised long before the Christian era. Have we not the grandest and most consistent examples of moral lives in such characters as Socrates, Plato, Pythagoras, Euclid of Megara, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and many others, who will survive as ethical exemplars when the pernicious influence of orthodoxy shall be remembered only as a blight of the past? In the words of Joshua T. Smith: "Point to the works of moderns equal to those of Plato, either in vastness and majesty of conception, in extent and force of illustration, in beauty and elegance of sentiment, in depth and profundity of thought, or in mellowed grace, harmonious flow, and vigorous energy of language; and then you may sneer at the wisdom of the ancients—then may you despise their works, and scoff at their progress, advancement, and remains" (*Progress of Philosophy*, p. 328). "We need not hesitate to assert that few men have had their names recorded in the book of history whose lives and characters can afford, in the perusal, more deep gratification to the benevolent and virtuous inquiry—few more worthy of our admiration and our imitation" (*ibid.*, 303). In his work upon *Liberty*, J. S. Mill points out that "what little recognition the idea of obligation to the public obtains in modern morality is derived from Greek and Roman sources, not from Christian.... other ethics than any which can be evolved from exclusively Christian sources, must exist side by side with Christian ethics to produce the moral regeneration of mankind" (pp. 29 and 30, People's Edition). And the present Archbishop of Canterbury tells us: "It is in the history of Rome rather than in the Bible that we find our models of precepts of political duty, and especially of the duty of patriotism..... To the Greeks we owe the corrective which conscience needs to borrow from nature" (*Essay on the Education of the World*).

If it were true that no *vital* morality existed before Christ, it would indeed be a sad reflection upon "God's divine government." To leave the world, until about two thousand years ago, without any practical morality could not be the conduct of a loving father, to say the least. But what becomes of the boasted influence of the alleged moral teachings of the Old Testament, including the Ten Commandments, and the injunction, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Leviticus xix. 18)? Was there no "vital" morality in the ethical system of Buddha, and in the great religions of the world that flourished for ages before Christianity was known? And what was the "vitality" manifested after the "advent of Christ"? According to the New Testament, his influence did not prevent "contentions," "strife," and "indignation" among Paul and his contemporaries. And from that time down to the present, hatred, slander, cruelty, persecution, and oppression have marked the history of the Christian propaganda. This is a fact that even some Christians have been candid enough to admit. For instance, the Rev. T. Finch observes: "With few exceptions, religious sects manifest an ample portion of a savage spirit, and endeavor to vilify and destroy one another." Dr. Campbell exclaims: "Nothing can equal the dogmatism and arrogance with which one sect pronounces sentence against another, except, perhaps, the dogmatism with which the other retaliates upon them." Dr. Scott says of the Christian sects: "It is five hundred to one but that everyone is damned, because everyone damns all but itself, and itself is damned by four hundred and ninety-nine." Bennett writes: "Jealousy, detraction, and persecution are the sure attendants of a revival of religion." Chandler bursts forth: "What ruins and desolations—what rapines and murders—have been introduced

into the world under the pretended authority of Christ!" Wyvil records: "The barbarities which professed Christians have committed against unbelievers, and against their own brethren of the same faith, exceed in horror whatever acts of cruelty have been perpetrated by tyrants" (see *The Prophet of Nazareth*, pp. 608-9). It was this same Christian spirit that caused the rapine, desolation, and murders of the Holy Wars; that flooded the streets of Paris in the sixteenth century with human blood; that made the valleys of Piedmont a scene of most inhuman butchery; that instigated the sacrifice of more than three millions of lives by the conductors of the Inquisition; that prompted the enactments of the horrors of the Star Chamber; that produced the St. Bartholomew massacre; that prosecuted and imprisoned Freethinkers; and that to-day keeps "Christian nations" armed to the very teeth in consequence of their dread of each other.

(3) If the belief in God were necessary to morality, we should of course expect to find that Atheists were destitute of ethical power, and that God-believers were remarkable for high-toned morality. Such, however, is not the case, inasmuch as we have shown that many of the very people who professed to know God, and to obey his commands, have been practically destitute of all moral principle; while, as Tyndall observed, Atheists are men "to whom moral shiftiness of any kind is subjectively unknown." The Bishop of Hereford, in his Bampton Lectures, admits: "The principles of morality are founded in our nature, independently of any religious belief, and are, in fact, obligatory even upon the Atheist." Dr. Chalmers, in his sermon on an "Estimate of Morality that is without Godliness," states that in the "region of Atheism the eye of the sentimentalist might expatiate among beautiful and interesting spectacles—amiable mothers shedding their graceful tears over the tomb of departed infancy—high-toned integrity maintaining itself unsullied amid allurements of corruption, benevolence plying its labors of usefulness, and patriotism earning its proud reward in the testimony of an approving people." The truth is, no form of supernatural faith is necessary as an incentive to good conduct. The origin of morality was different to that of religion, and the two have not always been allied in their development.

Fortunately, as Secularists, we have a moral force which depends upon no God. With us, the morality of an act consists in its ability to add to the welfare of the individual and to the progress of the commonwealth. The reasons, or sanctions, for a moral act are the improvement of individuals, the protection of society, and the necessity that exists for rendering practical service with a view of increasing the ethical value and stability of the general community. The incentive, or motive-power, prompting such moral conduct is the enlightenment and happiness of the human race, inasmuch as we know from experience that, in proportion as we foster the desire to augment this happiness, so will the miseries and drawbacks of life disappear, and mankind proportionately enjoy the material comforts and intellectual advantages of existence. The happiness to which we aspire will result from a condition of living in which moral instruction and general education shall be sufficient to enable man's character and intellect to be developed to the fullest extent of their capabilities. The realization of such a condition as is here indicated is, according to Secularism, necessary to proper and useful conduct. If a person cultivate his mental powers; if he shun actions grovelling in their nature and injurious in their influence; if he avoid the excessive indulgence of his animal passions; if he regulate his emotions by the exercise of his reason and judgment; if he adhere to truth for its own sake, and for the confidence it inspires; if he manifest fidelity to convictions that are the outcome of thought and earnest examination;—if a person do this, he will at least feel the happiness which accompanies the knowledge that his aim has been to adopt a course of conduct that will entail no misery upon others, and leave no injurious effects upon himself. Whatever is calculated to induce the discipline of a character of this description must surely be a moral force, and that force is supplied by the principal objects of Secular teaching.

CHARLES WATTS.

Announcement at a Limerick church:—

Sunday, THE REVEREND CANON—"Descended into Hell."
You are all affectionately invited.

THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES.

VII.—THE CALL OF ANDREW AND PETER.

It has been shown, in a former series of papers, that the three Synoptical writers were not independent historians, but that they took the matter which is common to two or to three of their histories from pre-existing narratives; that they were, in fact, mere compilers, who in the majority of cases followed both the order and the diction of the earlier Gospel. The evidence of this fact is too clear to be denied by any one who has taken the trouble to investigate the matter; hence, the more advanced among the professional reconcilers endeavor to account for it in one of two ways. The first is by declaring the Gospel accounts to have been composed under the divine influence of inspiration. This claim, as we have seen, is nothing but an impudent and baseless assumption, which cannot for a moment be sustained.

The second way of accounting for the identity of arrangement and the verbal agreement is by asserting that the Gospel writers were either apostles, or companions of apostles, who went about narrating the various circumstances in the life of Christ; and, the same story being told again and again, in course of time it came to be related in something of the same way; consequently, each writer, with perfect independence, recorded the same matters in the same order, and often in the very same words.

According to this apologetic statement, the first promulgators of the Christian religion were a set of cranks, who had learnt all the stories and anecdotes common to the three Synoptics by heart, and went about, parrot-like, repeating them. In their first addresses they recited the early chapters; in their next they took up the narrative where they had left off; so that in a series of addresses they would get through the whole list of Gospel events, including the sayings and parables, and would then begin again. A good memory and a loud voice were the only qualifications needed.

It is scarcely necessary to consider this absurd contention seriously. Sufficient it is to say that Paul, the greatest of the early teachers and the real founder of Christianity, did not employ this method. So far from this, if we may judge from his epistles, he had no knowledge whatever of the events and circumstances now recorded in the Gospels. Those matters were fabricated after his time.

In comparing the accounts in the three Synoptical Gospels we find also, as a fact deserving of notice, that whenever the writers have not adhered strictly to the original narratives they almost invariably contradict each other. While they keep to the earlier account they are safe; but the moment they diverge in the slightest degree from the pre-existing cut-and-dried narrative, contradictions and discrepancies are the result. As an illustration of this fact, I will now examine the four Gospel accounts of the call of Andrew and Peter to the apostleship.

1. Matthew's account (iv. 18-20):—

"And, walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left the nets, and followed him."

Nothing can be plainer than this. Jesus, while walking near the Sea of Galilee, saw the two brothers engaged in fishing, and he then and there called them to be his disciples. Though he had at that time done nothing to show the possession of wisdom or supernatural power, the brothers had such faith in him that they immediately left their occupation and followed him.

2. Mark's account (i. 16-18):—

"And, passing along by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew the brother of Simon, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they left the nets, and followed him."

These two evangelists, it will at once be seen, have adhered pretty closely to their copies, and have employed almost identically the same words. There are, consequently, no contradictions.

3. Luke's account (v. 1-11):—

"Now it came to pass, while the multitude pressed upon him and heard the word of God, that.....he entered

into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the multitude out of the boat. And when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Put out into the deep, and let your nets down for a draught.....And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes, and their nets were breaking; and they beckoned unto their partners in the other boat that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink..... And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their boats to land, they left all and followed him."

Here we have a totally different account to that given by Matthew or Mark. According to this version, Jesus did not, while walking near the Sea of Galilee, see the brothers fishing and call them to follow him. He went into a boat belonging to one of them, and after giving a long discourse which displayed his wisdom, and after performing a conjuring feat which proved his power to work miracles, he called them to follow him. They did so, because they had heard his teaching and had beheld an exhibition of his wonderful power, and so believed him to be, at the very least, a great prophet. Luke would have done better to have kept to the original narrative. His idea of writing an "accurate" account (i. 3) was to completely alter and embellish the story, so as to transform it almost beyond recognition. He has not mentioned Andrew, it is true; but there can be no doubt that the narrative represents the same incident.

According to all three Synoptists, Jesus makes his first public appearance in Judea, and, after being baptized by John in the Jordan, fasts forty days in the wilderness, where he is tempted by the devil; then, after the Baptist is cast into prison, he departs for Galilee and commences his public ministry (Matt. iv. 12-17; Mark i. 14, 15; Luke iv. 14, 15).

Jesus came to Galilee alone, and, after preaching there for some unstated time, began to choose his disciples. While walking near the sea he saw Andrew and Peter fishing, and, as we have seen, called them to follow him. Then, according to Matthew and Mark, walking a little farther he saw, on the same occasion, James and John mending their nets in a boat, and he also called them to follow him. It was these two brothers whom Luke describes as "their partners in the other boat"—the pronoun "their" referring to Peter and someone with him who is not named, probably Andrew. That it is the same incident is, further, placed beyond a doubt by the words "from henceforth thou shalt catch men.....they left all and followed him."

4. John's account (i. 35-43):—

"Again on the morrow, John [the Baptist] was standing, and two of his disciples: and he looked upon Jesus as he walked, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.....They came, therefore, and saw where he abode; and they abode with him that day.....One of the two that heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He findeth first his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah (which is, being interpreted, Christ). He brought him unto Jesus. Jesus looked upon him and said, Thou art Simon, the son of John: thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation Peter). On the morrow he was minded to go forth into Galilee, and he findeth Philip: and Jesus saith unto him, Follow me."

This account, it is scarcely necessary to say, differs entirely from the other three. According to this version, John the Baptist, who had disciples of his own, was baptizing at Bethany, a village about sixty miles south of the Sea of Galilee (which the writer erroneously places near the Jordan), when Jesus chanced to pass. John, by some mysterious means, knew Jesus, and pointed him out as "the Lamb of God," whereupon two of his disciples left him to follow Jesus. One of these was Andrew, who ought to have been fishing in Galilee. This apostle was so delighted at having found the Messiah that he sought out his brother Peter (who ought also to have been fishing in Galilee) and introduced him to Jesus. The latter, then and there, received them both as his disciples, and the next day left for Galilee to commence his public ministry accompanied by the brothers.

According to this account, Andrew and Peter became followers of Jesus, not because that personage had seen them fishing in the Sea of Galilee and had called them to follow him, nor because they had heard his teaching and

had witnessed a miracle, but because one of them had heard the Baptist call him "the Lamb of God." According to the two identical narratives of Matthew and Mark, these two disciples were perfect strangers to Jesus when that teacher commenced his preaching in Galilee; but, according to this last version, they had become his disciples in Judea, and accompanied him as such to Galilee. Further, in the accounts in the First and Second Gospels, Jesus did not commence his ministry in Galilee until *after* John had been cast into prison, and it was not until then that he began to choose his disciples.

"Now, after that John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of God..... And passing along by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew casting a net in the sea," etc. (Mark i. 14, 16).

But, in the account in the Fourth Gospel, the two brothers became Christ's disciples while John was baptizing, long before that individual was cast into prison. No reconciliation is thus possible. Amid all these contradictions, the only thing any rational person can do is to reject all four versions of the story—or rather, three, for those by Matthew and Mark, being the same, count only as one. In any case, it is certain that two out of the three accounts of the call of Peter and Andrew to the apostleship are fabrications, while it is very improbable indeed that one of them may be true; and since it is now impossible to say which two are certainly false, the only course open to us is to reject them all.

ABRACADABRA.

INSANITARY SAINTS.

THERE is a sect spreading in the south-western provinces of Russia who are named after their founder, Panjaschkovtzi. The central idea preached by Panjaschko is, that while the soul is immortal the body is of the Devil, and should, therefore, be neglected as far as possible. In pursuance of this idea, the Panjaschkovtzi never wash themselves, never shave, allow their nails to grow long, and do not change their clothes until the latter fall in rags off their backs. They never clean their houses, eat food scarcely fit for dogs, and have, in addition, very primitive conceptions of morality. Their religion may, in fact, be described as the gospel of uncleanness. These "reformers" are but attempting to get back to primitive times. Professor Lecky, in his *History of European Morals*, shows that the early Christian saints lived in a disgraceful state of dirt. Many refused to wash themselves. St. Athanasius, in his *Life of St. Antony*, the father of all hermits, relates with enthusiasm that the venerable devotee had never been guilty of washing his feet. St. Annon had never seen himself naked. St. Abraham the hermit, who lived for fifty years after his conversion, steadily refused from that day to wash even the exposed parts of his person, such as his face or his feet. St. Simeon Stylites spent years on a column—

From scalp to sole one slough and crust of dirt.

Tennyson, in his poem on Stylites, makes the saint say:—

For many weeks about my loins I wore
The rope that haled the buckets from the well,
Twisted as tight as I could knot the noose.

Gregory Nazianzen (Orat. 12) regards dirty and tangled hair, "naked feet in imitation of the apostles," and a scanty mantle, as among the principal characteristics of a monk. St. Labre, one of the latest additions to the Roman Calendar, who lived at Rome in the last century, went about with a ragged cloak bound round a cord. *The Life of the Venerable Servant of God, Benedict Joseph Labre* (p. 97), says: "The foul state of his clothes and linen, never washed, produced innumerable vermin; and, never trying to free himself from them, he gave them an opportunity of multiplying and attaching themselves more closely to him."

Most of the early monks allowed no change of garb. Indeed, such is not permitted in the instructions of Jesus to his disciples. He says: "Provide neither gold nor silver nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey; neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves" (Matthew x. 9, 10). They are to "take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on" (Matthew vi. 25). Jesus says explicitly: "If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

They were to be, in fact, mendicant monks, detached from all pertaining to this fleeting and sinful world.

The early Christians were called Ebionites or poor men, because they despised the body. Jesus says, "Blessed be ye poor." The name Christian may have come in from their anointing with oil; being equivalent to "greasers." It was a rule of the Nazarenes that no razor should touch their heads. John the Baptist had only a hairy garment, and lived on locusts and wild honey. The old Gymnosophists, we are told, passed their life naked, saying that the body was given as clothing for the soul.

Genuine Christianity cannot be separated from an ascetic view of life. It is monkish at the core. Nor can the monkery of Christianity be historically explained without looking back at that of Buddhism, and of the Hindu hermit system which preceded it. Paul says, "Though I give my body to be burned"; and the very phrase shows that he had heard of the Hindu Gymnosophists. In India these yogis and fakirs used to go stark naked, but British law compels them to adopt some slight clothing. It is quite possible the saints and apostles were hardly a whit more decent than the fakirs, whom they emulated in their mendicant monkery. Cleanliness is a part of godliness in Islam, while in the faith of Old Japan it is godliness itself. Shintoism has no creed or dogmas, but consists in a system of observances of which purification and ablutions are the chief items. Its one gospel is cleanliness. A gospel of uncleanness is reserved for Christians.

SHINTO.

REVIEW OF TALMAGE.

IT has long since become proverbial that the American people are fond of humbugs; probably the latent wisdom of this maxim throws a beam of light into the unsolved mystery of Talmage's popularity. He is a preacher of but little reason, and utterly devoid of that gift which distinguishes all those who are truly great—common sense. There are hundreds of common country preachers who can preach a more practical sermon than he can. He is simply a word-juggler, who amuses his audience with his sleight-of-tongue performances. None of his productions bear the stamp of original genius. They are a travesty upon the austere dignity which the pulpit assumes, and his bald and illogical ideas are an insult to common sense. In fact, his reverential harangues about some theological gewgaw or the keyhole of the pearly gates, and how the delinquent sinner can trick St. Peter and enter the New Jerusalem, remind us of good-natured mockery of religion, and sound like Washington Irving's burlesque on the battle of Fort Christina between Peter the Headstrong and Risingh. "Words," says a philosopher, "are the vehicles of thought." Verily Talmage possesses a multitude of vehicles which have never borne a burden save wind. His most marked characteristic is a natural predilection to hear his voice echo in his cranium. Let it be said, however, for his eternal credit, that, like that meek and obedient animal so conspicuous in Bible history and noted for its long ears and sonorous voice, he is perfectly harmless. The power to do good is inseparably linked to the power to do harm, and whether a man who possesses native force of character is good or bad depends principally upon his early raising and teaching, and his own choice and application. While Talmage does but little good, it must be said he does no harm. His mind is passive, and not active; he receives, but he does not create, ideas. He has a good command of language, and as a reciter of historical scenes and incidents he stands pre-eminent. He would have made a much better actor than he is a preacher, and as a noise producer even the most sanguine quail to question his right to the world's championship. He is considered great by those discordant thinkers who mistake sound for sense and brass for brains. His exhortations are frequently as inflammatory as the vapid howlings of a frenzied female fanatic proclaiming the blessings and glory of the Salvation Army; and, antithetically considered, his pulpit palaver is a splendid argument for free thought and infidelity. Judging from his utterances, he is either densely credulous, or cunningly designs to mislead his hearers by incensing their fears and figments and fanning the flames of denominational rancor. He preaches the Bible, with all its idiotic theories and silly fables, as being

the unerring masterpiece of the great Creator; and when his audience grows a trifle listless he spurs them to animation by telling them when and where and how the indignant Almighty struck dead some scoffing sinner. According to him, this harmonious universe is governed by two omnipotent rulers, each the implacable foe of the other—viz., God and Devil. Isn't it anomalous that two such beings, so radically different, can get along together so amicably! In all the great events of history which have resulted for the good of mankind Talmage can clearly see the blessed hand of God; but in those which have resulted in human misery and added to the sum of our sorrows he can plainly see the finger-marks of the slimy hands of Satan. Of course he has not yet invented a middle deity to which he could attribute those events which have been intermediate, neither good nor bad.

Talmage is the Warrior of Words, the Napoleon of verbal array. He robs the dictionary of the mightiest treasures and crams them into his voice-box. He marshals them with mystic and masterful skill, and when he commands them to charge, too fierce and frosty for deliberate and efficient work, they rush to that famous aperture below his nose, and tumble and roll over each other like apparitions in a drunken devil's dream. Oh, truly, to slightly change a Bible sentence, "He shaketh his tongue like the cedar; his strength is in the muscles of his lunge, and the sinews of his jaws are wrapped together" (see Job xl. 16, 17).

Samson slew a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass, but the Rev. T. De Witt, being more humane and merciful, uses the same instrument to tickle the vanity and charm the ears of reverential audiences. Where and how he acquired his marvellous adeptness in using such lingual monstrosities is an unsolvable mystery, as deep and dark as any which ever benighted the minds and bewildered the visions of the riddle-solvers in this world of wonders and witches. He can take an infinitesimal thought and girdle it with a tiara of verbal abortions and Talmagian thunder. He can bury a pismire idea under a mountain of sesquipedalian words. An English king so loved tall soldiers that he searched his kingdom, picking out the lengthy men for his body-guard. Talmage rakes the dictionary for words, measuring their merit by their horizontal hugeness. Stew down his ocean of noise, and you will not have a quart of common sense. But he is a typical Christian. In fact, he is the Tamerlane of modern orthodoxy. His tongue is his sword, and his garrulous verbosity his artillery. Thus heroically formidably accoutered, he is Gehenna's sleepless and unbending foe, perpetually bombarding the helmeted hosts of hell, and emptying the quivers of his virulent and untoward wrath in endeavoring to pierce the rhinoceros hide of the Devil.

When the Brooklyn Tabernacle was last destroyed by fire, the Doctor is quite sure that the Lord postponed the conflagration, for he says: "Had the fire commenced thirty minutes sooner, the most appalling catastrophe of the century would have happened." If the Lord held the fire in check for thirty minutes, why didn't he go to the less trouble of totally extinguishing it? Secret societies attribute the death of their members to God, but Talmage makes him a common incendiary, sneaking around burning churches, his own temples, and disturbing the congregations which love him so dearly! He knows well the prodigious depths of human credulity, and, like all other preachers, his favorite text is: "God loveth a cheerful giver." He is the most colossal pious snide of the age, and his hodge-podge homilies display a knowledge of the sycophant's art which only an adroit hocus-pocus could possess. We dismiss him with Horace Greeley's crushing blow: "His title to eminence rests on his ability to be a thousand different kinds of fools." J. KAZAD.

—Free Thought Magazine.

A Choice.

Not endless life, but endless love, I crave,
The gladness and the calm of holier springs,
The hope that makes men resolute and brave,
The joyful life in the great life of things.
The soul that loves and works will need no praise;
But, fed with sunlight and with morning breath,
Will make our common days eternal days,
And fearless greet the mild and gracious death.

—W. M. W. Call.

ACID DROPS.

CARDINAL VAUGHAN is dreaming of the conquest of England by the Papacy, but over in Italy the people have just been commemorating the twenty-seventh anniversary of the fall of the Pope's temporal power.

Other times, other manners! The newspapers announce that the Archbishop of Canterbury has been staying for some weeks in the Isle of Wight. His Grace is the first Christian in England, unless the honor is disputed by Cardinal Vaughan. But how funny it would have looked, eighteen hundred years ago, if newspapers had been able to make similar announcements concerning the founder of Christianity. Fancy something like this in the *Jerusalem Gazette*:—"The eminent preacher, Joshua Davidson, has taken a villa during August and September at Joppa"; or, still more plainly, "The celebrated Mr. Jesus is now recruiting his health in a yachting trip on the Sea of Galilee." We shudder to think of it.

The parsons' palaver at Nottingham, which, had it fallen on the usual date, the first Thursday in October, would have come into dangerous competition with the Goose Fair, means to take the winds out of the sails of the cacklers who follow. To attract the public it announces that there will be on exhibition a portrait of John Bunyan, the Puritan who was opposed to prelacy, and "a missionary's travelling case of vessels for the administration of the sacrament, designed by the missionary himself, and used in his long journeys. The case is strapped to the saddle, or carried by a strap over the shoulder." Surely good Church people will come from near and far to see these rare sights.

And the papers set down for discussion are so attractive! The Trades Union Congresses and Social Science Associations are not in it when the Church once begins to show its concern for the people. Ecclesiastical subjects, sacerdotal privileges, and the dogmatic side of Church teaching are almost entirely left out of sight. The Church is ready to become all things to all men so long as it may retain its endowments.

Jesus Christ was "lifted up" on a cross. The Bishop of Bristol will soon be hoisted more agreeably. His enthronement takes place on October 28. Of course a bishop wants a special residence. What suits ordinary mortals is not good enough for him. But his lordship's mansion, alas, is not yet provided, and until it is ready he has to put up with a house at Clifton.

The Pope, says the *Tablet*, has "concentrated upon the Isle of Britain the prayer of Christendom." How kind! Pecci has established an Archeonfraternity in wicked Paris, of all places in the world, "which shall gather the prayers of all the world for the conversion of this single isle." Meanwhile, after concentrating all its efforts on the conversion of the rich, the Church got 160 persons to take guinea seats for its greatest function, and complains of a serious leakage among the poor.

Dr. Grünhut, a Hungarian Jew, who is headmaster of a German school in Jerusalem, says the city cannot comfortably hold more Jews than it already contains. There are about thirty thousand, and, with the exception of four hundred Sephardim and three hundred Askenasi families which follow some trade, they all live on alms from their European co-religionists. They include 1,200 Austrians and Hungarians, all very poor; but the most wretched are the Morocco Jews, who must live on about two shillings a month! Dr. Grünhut might approve of Zionism if the rich Jews would go and settle in Palestine, but he says they are already overstocked with the impoverished.

Wonderfully good business is being done with Lives of Christ. The latest is by M. Tissot, the French artist, and is said to be a splendid production. The English edition is being issued in twelve monthly numbers, each costing a guinea. Mr. Gladstone has accepted the dedication. He is the Grand Old Christian of this country, and his Christianity is as old as his age.

Mr. Gladstone describes M. Tissot's work as a "monumental" one, "conceived and executed for the honor of our Lord and Savior." Why certainly; but a good deal of cash by the way is not at all unwelcome.

M. Tissot has gone to Palestine for the scenery of his pictures. He surprised his own father by telling him that Mount Calvary was only twenty-two feet high. It is as much a mountain as Snow-hill in the City of London.

The Bishop of Majorca has excommunicated the Spanish Minister of Finance for not sufficiently respecting Church

property. That is always the greatest sin in the eyes of ecclesiastics. Unfortunately, the Finance Minister is weak enough to feel his excommunication. Perhaps the poor man thinks that, if he were to die before it is taken off, he would probably go to the wrong establishment. Anyhow, the Spanish Ambassador at the Vatican is instructed to lay the matter before the Pope, who wields God's thunder with a due regard to conflicting interests.

Wherever there is a corporation like the clergy, which is always gathering and never dissipating, the time is sure to arrive when the State, in self-defence, finds it necessary to lay hand on the stored-up wealth, which has usually been largely gained by frightening fools about their death-beds.

The vicar of Linby, near Hucknall Torkard, Notts, coolly tells parishioners, who desire the banns put up for marriage, that he is going for a holiday and the church will be shut up. Among the implied conditions of his tenancy is keeping the church open and attending to the needs of the parish. When he takes a holiday he should find a *locum tenens*, and his parishioners ought to see that he is made aware of this.

In Gadsden, Alabama, there is every prospect that a race religious war will be aroused over the interpretation of certain Christian doctrines. A colored woman preacher, known as Sister Sapp, announcing herself as the agent of the Messiah, wrought upon the negroes and "poor whites" to wash each other's feet, and to salute each other with the kiss of brotherhood. At news of this the educated whites undertook to banish Sister Sapp, and a riot occurred, in which she was horsewhipped. Her followers declare that they will exterminate the better classes.

It is reported from O'Neill City, Nebraska, that the Rev. Mr. Beackim, the pastor of a negro church, is now urging the members of his flock to put out one of their eyes in order to comply with the Savior's command. He seems to have had the courage of his convictions, for he gouged out one of his own eyes. The inflammation which has set in will probably cause him to lose the sight of the other eye also. He says that the Almighty approves of men with one eye, and he quotes the Gospel of Matthew (vi. 22) in support of this contention.

There were seventy-one summonses under the Lord's Day Act heard recently in Hull, and the number, says the *Hull Daily News*, is on the increase. Customers are plentiful, and extra is charged on Sunday in order to pay the fine, which cannot exceed five shillings.

The Rev. Dawson Burns, D.D., writes in the *Daily News* on the Revised Version. He says: "Considering its incomparable superiority over the Authorized Version, I am surprised that so many men of education, ministers of the Church of England and Nonconformist denominations, should be content to make only occasional and incidental use of the Revised Version. Why, too, is so little done to extend its use in Bible classes, Sunday-schools, etc.?" The reason is patent. To let young or ignorant and credulous people know that the word of God needed revision might lead to inquiry, leading to disproof of its being the word of God at all. So the Bible Society goes on multiplying myriads of copies of the Authorized Version, although, as Dr. Burns says, "one of two things is certain—either the Authorized Version is free from the faults which were thought to render a Revised Version necessary, or the Committee of the Bible Society are persisting, without consulting its members, to give to the people a version chargeable with serious faults, when they might issue a version more accurate and faithful."

That the Revised Version is, in critical matters, an improvement may be seen in the passage referred to in this issue by "Abracadabra" and "Chilperic," where "a virgin shall conceive" is, in the margin, "a maiden is with child." Other Messianic prophecies get knocked on the head in the margin, as in Genesis xlix. 10, Psalms ii. 11, xxii. 16, xlv. 6; while the future tense of Isaiah liii., being properly changed into the past, shows that the servant spoken of is Israel, not Jesus. In Haggai ii. 7 "the desire of all nations" is altered to "the desirable things of all nations," that being what the Jews really wanted. Then the Revised Version leaves out the forged 1 John v. 7, and notices the addition of the last twelve verses of Mark.

"Heretic" writes in the *Sydney Bulletin*: "The rabid parson's pathetic ignorance of men's real minds is well exemplified by the Rev. Dill Mackay's assertion that, with the exception of a very few infidels and Agnostics, all the people of N. S. W. want God's name in the Constitution. The infidel-positive certainly doesn't grow on every tree, but the ostensibly orthodox person who doubts-and-daren't-say-so is nearly as common now-a-days as the outsider who simply laughs at the notion of taking a fellow-creature's word for what can't possibly be known."

The *American Hebrew*, alluding to the Anglican Bishops' Pastoral reference to the Jews, observes: "From time to time we read *exposés* of converted Jews. We are told from time to time of Jews converted. We know them to be Russian Jews. We know that they could have escaped persecution and all disabilities in Russia had they embraced Christianity. We know they refused, and preferred to suffer. Why should they be converted here? We answer that their conversion is false; it is assumed for worldly gain. We dare assert that out of five hundred 'converted Jews'—if, indeed, that number has been converted—four hundred and fifty shake off their baptism in as many days, or when they move away. And we dare assert that it is doubtful if even one out of the whole five hundred fails to die a Jew. O bishops of the Anglican Church, stop this hypocrisy!"

When the Jews have freedom they become Freethinkers. According to the *New York Herald's* report of the recent Jewish Chautauqua Assembly, a Conference on Jewish Education, one Rabbi expressed the belief that the story of Moses is a most dangerous one to take up in a Sunday-school. Another Rabbi "was satisfied that the Book of Daniel was written to please the people of his time." Yet another Rabbi spoke against the Book of Esther. The Convention of American Rabbis at Montreal, recently, both transacted business and went for an excursion on Saturday, and the Rabbis "disavowed any plans for the re-establishment of a Jewish State." This, by implication, includes the plans set forth by the prophets.

Schrader, the divine healer who perambulates the country on a bicycle, is now fooling the people of New York. He has rented a store in Harlem, where he receives his patients and their offerings publicly. He thinks he can beat the relic of St. Ann effecting cures, because, while St. Ann was only the grandmother of Christ, he is Christ himself. Many visit him out of curiosity, and some say they have been benefited by his treatment.

A writer in the *Indian Witness* says: "The stolidity of Indian students under Gospel fire is one of the amazing—and shall I say humiliating?—phenomena of missionary work in this land. They listen with attention and respect to the plainest and direct presentation of divine truth without betraying the slightest emotion." The truth is, Hindu students, all of the upper castes, have learned to use their brains, and wonder that intelligent, rational beings can credit such nonsense as the teachings of Christianity.

Talmage's *Life of Christ* is entitled "From Manger to Throne." It wouldn't have been so romantic had the title been "From Cowshed to Crucifixion."

The Very Rev. Monsignor Croke Robinson, preaching at the Church of St. Francis De Sales, Tottenham, on Sunday week, said that a man who did not believe in God was not worth arguing with, but should be sent to the nearest lunatic asylum. He omitted to mention to what institution the people should be sent who accepted without question all the ridiculous nonsense uttered in the Roman Catholic pulpits. It requires some brains to become a lunatic; none worth speaking of to be an idiot.

A special commissioner of the *Christian Commonwealth* has interviewed an Australian gentleman who has come to England to carry on an anti-infidel crusade, although there are several gentlemen already occupied in that business, with fifty or sixty thousand professional soul-savers to back them up in case of necessity. This special commissioner gives a little preface of his own to the interview. He says it is rare for a Christian to become a pervert to infidelity, and when a case does occur "the wanderer is almost certain to return." On the other hand, he says, it is common enough for "an infidel of talent and power to yield to the force of the truth he has assailed." Now we should like to feel that special commissioner's bumps. We fancy he has "imagination" large and "conscientiousness" minute. The fact is, the Christians make a great noise over every infidel they capture, though they seldom give the real history of the transaction. Freethinkers, however, see nothing to make a noise about when they capture a Christian, partly because they capture so many. Eight out of every ten Freethinkers are "perverted" Christians.

At the Young Men's Christian Association Conference Mr. D. M. West (Glasgow), in the course of a vigorous speech on "The Dangers of the Y. M. C. A.," pointed out that hundreds of young men pass through the associations without ever being touched by the religious agencies. It was a real danger to have a social club under the name of a Christian institute where the greater part of the management was devoted to secondary purposes, to the exclusion of Scripture study and the encouragement of the Christian life. He suggested the establishment of a travelling lecture-ship to advance the study of the Bible throughout the country.

The American men of God are alive to the secularizing influence of the bicycle. The Rev. Dr. McConnell, rector of Holy Trinity, Brooklyn, declares in print that it is the most important matter that confronts the churches, which he confesses it has depleted. He says: "There are tens of thousands of men and women who five years ago were in the habit of attending church on Sunday who now spend the day riding in the country. During the same period other outdoor games on Sunday have wonderfully increased in popularity. As a result of it all the Church is confronted with the gravest situation she has faced since the Reformation."

Dr. John M. Watson, "Ian Maclaren" of that ilk, has been lecturing on the old book, under the auspices of the Bible Society of Clackmannan. He told the good Clackmannanites that long ago those that loved the Bible had learnt that, whatever the Bible was intended to teach them, it was not physical science. But he seems to think that Biblical failure in a matter where its statements can be tested is a good ground for believing it on subjects where no test was possible.

Dr. Watson said that "perhaps, by-and-bye, they would reach such a state of contrition that they would repent of having ill-treated the critics, and would remember with great tenderness of heart how their learned and good men gave of their time and their knowledge to aid the search after truth in a better understanding of the Scripture narrative." The report says his lecture "evoked subdued laughter" at many points. No wonder.

"Visiting recently in the East Riding of Yorkshire," writes a correspondent of the *Christian World*, "I met with an instance of superstition hardly to be credited in this enlightened age. Walking through a churchyard, I noticed that the late vicar had been buried at the east end of the graveyard, but instead of being laid facing the east, as is usual, had been laid in the opposite direction—namely, facing the west. He had left instructions that he should be buried wearing his cassock and surplice, shoes on his feet, and an open prayer-book in his hand, in order that on the resurrection morn he might rise up facing his parishioners, prepared to resume the duties which he had discharged while living among them." Well, the *Christian World* believes in the resurrection of the body, and the old vicar was only logically carrying it out.

Dr. R. F. Horton is heterodox on the question of inspiration, but he can't give up the dear old Devil, who, in the Gospels at least, is quite as distinct a personality as the Father himself, and more distinct than the Ghost. He says: "There was a power at work in this world which could not be better described than the 'Prince of Darkness,' the Tempter of the Soul; and it was no exaggeration to speak of the power—though it was a bold figure—as a roaring lion, who goes about seeking whom he may devour." This, says the *Glasgow Weekly Citizen*, "is surely an unnecessary revival of a crude superstition." The superstition is found in its crudest form in the Gospels.

Mr. David Macrae, in his book of stories entitled *Repartee*, fathers one of the best Wilkes stories on Campbell of Monzie. Wilkes was soliciting a vote, and the man said he would sooner vote for the Devil. "Yes," said Wilkes, "but if your friend doesn't stand?"

The Herald of the Golden Age sneers at those who justify meat-eating by quotations from Hebrew patriarchs. It says that the teaching of Jesus Christ forms the standard of morality to-day. But where does Jesus Christ say anything in favor of vegetarianism? We pause for a reply.

Lloyds' quarterly report shows the loss by shipwreck, fire, or other casualty, of 254 vessels of 212,094 tons within the three months. Under the distressing category of missing ships there are 29 vessels of 29,550 tons. Providence is conspicuous by its absence from Lloyds' list.

Mr. Nisbet gives another instance of Providence in that fully one-third of all human beings born into this world quit it before they are five years of age, and another very large portion, making at least one-half, before they are twenty-one—that is, before they have really begun to feel their responsibilities.

In his book on *Nippur*, Dr. Peters, the director of the explorations there, says that the temple of Bel in that city was the religious centre of "the dominant people of the world at a period as much prior to the time of Abraham as the time of Abraham is prior to our day." The director says that some of the written records found by him are six thousand years old, and that other remains prove the existence of an organized society there at a period two thousand years earlier than the oldest written documents. All which

carries us back eight thousand years. Dr. Peters at Nippur claims to have carried the history of human society back to a date two thousand years earlier than that assigned to the creation of the world by the chronology of the Bible. Adam and Eve threaten to become quite modern people, as indeed they do in the light of anthropology, for there must have been an immense period of savagery behind the barbaric civilization of Babylonia.

Christian Work, of New York, says all denominations indulge in the practice of building beyond their means in the present and mortgaging the future. To put a heavy mortgage on a church and "trust God for the future" is often nothing else than to put the church under the domination of the commercial spirit, trusting to business to make the venture profitable. This is the way many of the unendowed churches and chapels are run in England, and Scotland also.

The Bishop of Ballarat contributes a short sermon on Procrastination in last week's *Lloyd's*. He says that the Holy Ghost alone can rid us of this vice. Sa, my lord, so? How is it then that Jesus Christ is such a procrastinator? He promised to come again in the lifetime of some persons who were listening to him. That was eighteen hundred years ago, and he hasn't come yet. On the whole, the Holy Ghost seems a bad doctor for this complaint.

Apropos of the new ghost discovered down in Kent by a *Daily Chronicle* reporter, the *Westminster Gazette* observes: "Really these ghosts are very silly creatures. They have great opportunities for doing good. They might act as detectives and reveal many mysteries, but they don't. When they happen to know the details of a mysterious crime, instead of going and telling the nearest policeman they moon about for centuries, making themselves and everybody else around them unhappy, and in the end they go and worry someone who is not in the slightest degree interested in the occurrence."

A New York policeman the other day found the Rev. Father Edward Holden, a Catholic priest, unconscious in the street. In great alarm, the officer summoned an ambulance and had the reverend gentleman conveyed to Bellevue hospital, where the doctor, after smelling the priest's breath, predicted an early recovery. The clerical dress saved the patient from the station house and a police court.

The Rev. Harry Hess, a noted evangelist, sometimes called the boy preacher, is wanted in Johnstown, Pa. A sixteen-year-old girl wishes him to acknowledge the paternity of her unborn child, and several married men whose homes he has darkened would be glad to give their testimony against him. Hess is a great fund raiser, and the most powerful exhorter who ever appeared in Johnstown.—*Truthseeker*.

The Leamington Town Council has done well in refusing to celebrate Trafalgar Day. It was Nelson, more than Wellington, who broke the colossal despotism of Napoleon; and from the historic point of view the Battle of Trafalgar was of immense importance to the whole of Europe. Nevertheless, it is a shabby mistake to celebrate the event as an illustration of British prowess, and that is all the celebration means to everybody but the students of modern history. To strut about at the end of the nineteenth century because we beat the French at the beginning of the nineteenth century is a piece of extremely bad taste, and a wanton irritation of our gallant French neighbors. What would the chivalrous Sir Philip Sidney have thought of it—he who coined that delightful phrase about "our sweet enemy" France?

A well-known Rand parson, says the *African Critic*, resigned his billet, and the following announcement was issued:—"This evening the Rev. — will preach his farewell sermon, and the congregation will render a thanksgiving, composed for the occasion."

A Maritzburg paper reports the arrest of "an idle and suspicious person in clerical attire" up Natal way. There are lots such awaiting arrest in England.—*African Critic*.

A revelation is only a revelation to the individual to whom (if such a thing be possible) it is made. His account of it to another is not a revelation, and whoever puts faith in that account puts it in the man from whom the account comes; and that man may be deceived, or he may have dreamed it, or he may be an impostor and may lie. There is no possible criterion whereby to judge of the truth of what he tells, for even the morality of it would be no proof of revelation.—*Paine's "Age of Reason."*

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, September 26, Bristol-street Board School, Birmingham: at 11, "Man's Origin and Destiny"; at 3, "Who was Moses?" at 7, "God and the Devil."

October 3, Athenæum Hall, London; 10, Glasgow.

November 28, Leicester.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. C. WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—September 26, Athenæum Hall. October 3, Sheffield; 5 and 6, debate at Birmingham; 10, 11, and 12, Birmingham; 13 and 14, debate at Bradford; 17, Huddersfield; 31, Stanley, Durham; October 30, November 1, 2, and 3, debate at Stanley; 7, Glasgow; 14, Edinburgh. 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.

FOR THE BROWNE FAMILY.—We have received:—R. Johnson, 2s.; A. W. S., 2s.; Brewster, 1s.; Hornby, 1s.; H. Lees Sumner, 2s.; Lyon, 1s.; T. W. G., 1s. *Per Miss Vance*: W. S. M., 2s. 6d.; H. P., 2s.; E. L., 2s. 6d.; Thorney, 6d.; B. E. Marks, 5s.

GEORGE WISE (Liverpool) writes: "Permit me to thank you for your excellent article on 'Back to Rome.' It is a noble protest. You have expressed the true sentiment of every broad-minded man."

Laura Cook.—See paragraph.

F. LODGE.—Your letter is well-meant and well-written—very well-written, and we are obliged to you for the trouble you have taken. We say this sincerely, without a taint of sarcasm. But have you allowed for differences of temperament? Writers vary, so do readers, and a journal edited in one vein would have few subscribers. Different pens are at work in this journal, and, if you find something that you like, you might leave the rest to readers of other tastes.

SECRETARIES of N. S. S. Branches are requested to send particulars for insertion in the Almanack for 1898 to Miss Vance, 377 Strand, W.C.

R. JOHNSON (Manchester), promising £1 yearly towards the new (Treasurer's) Financial Scheme, says: "I think this is a very good idea, and the first year's result ought to rouse those Freethinkers who seem always hanging about to see if there is anything to grumble at, instead of trying to help."

G. THWAITES, subscribing to the N. S. S. Treasurer's Scheme, wishes he could send twenty times as much, and hopes all Secularists will give the Scheme their best support.

F. W. SWAIN.—See paragraph.

G. PROCTOR.—Thanks for the three promises for the Treasurer's Scheme. We hope you will succeed, as you anticipate, in getting others.

G. ROBERTS.—Pleased to hear that Mr. Watts was in such good form at Plymouth. We note that Mr. E. P. Luke, the converted Wesleyan local preacher, lectures this evening (September 26) for your Branch on "Some Bible Saints." Please send lecture notices on separate slips of paper.

DUDLEY WRIGHT.—Will try to find room next week.

STUDENT.—Gibbon's great work can be obtained in all sorts of editions. The best is the one in eight volumes, edited by Dean Milman, and re-edited by Dr. W. Smith. It is expensive. Even a good second-hand copy would cost £2 10s. or more. Professor Bury's edition is cheaper, but is not yet completed.

N. S. S. TREASURER'S SCHEME.—We have received the following fresh promises:—G. Thwaites, 10s. (*p*); G. Proctor, 10s.; K. Blossom, 10s.; R. Gillon, 10s.; E. F. B., 5s. (*p*), half-yearly; Rd. Johnson, £1.

W. S.—(1) We could not follow all the intricate details of the case, but we understand that Mr. Symes's troubles were mainly caused by professed Freethinkers, some of whom were Anarchists or Socialists. Apparently by trickery they excluded him from the hall which had been built by his exertions. Mr. Symes appealed to the courts, but he obtained no redress. A marked "infidel" of his standing and calibre is sure to suffer injustice. He has also been a target for unlimited calumny. (2) Much pleased to hear that a lecture by Mr. Foote in Finsbury Park some years ago was the cause of your being liberated from Christian superstition, after an experience of five years as a Sunday-school teacher; also that you look upon the *Freethinker* as a treat every Thursday afternoon.

A. E. DAVIS.—It was an excellent letter. Such correspondence in local newspapers is of great assistance to Freethought.

LYON and **T. W. G.**—You say the shilling is for the Jones case. We presume you mean the Browne case.

J. EASTON.—(1) We fear our readers are not interested in the Rev. Walter Walsh's movements. (2) Benjamin Franklin invented the lightning conductor.

TREASURER'S SCHEME.—Miss Vance, N. S. S. Secretary, has received the following fresh promises: W. S. M., 10s. (*p*); J. Oram, 2s. 6d. (*p*); E. G., 10s. (*p*); J. Rose, £1; C. Harwood, 5s.; G. A. Lupton, £4 4s.; Mario du Bois, £1; A. E. Lupton, £1.

G. HILL.—Rather too long; it would have been better for much compression. Otherwise it does you credit. By the way, the saying you attribute to Cicero belongs to Confucius.

GLASWEGIAN.—Statements in court are privileged.

H. LEES SUMNER.—Thanks for a sight of the interesting enclosures.

J. McDONALD.—We hope the South London Freethinkers will rally to the support of the Camberwell Branch, which has done, and is doing, such excellent work. It is not creditable, as you say, to leave all the burden on a few shoulders. Mr. Foote will visit Camberwell shortly.

W. TURNER.—After the Trafalgar-square meeting in behalf of the Spanish exiles, the *Sun* insinuated that the speakers divided the collection among themselves. A suggestion was made on the Committee that the *Sun* should be proceeded against for libel. Mr. Foote took the view that the *Sun* was best left to public contempt, as it would be practically impossible for marked men in the advanced camp to obtain a verdict. A single thorough-paced bigot on the jury would prevent that. In the Hall of Science libel case, although the facts were incontestable, and the libel was described by Mr. Justice Wright as about the worst he had ever seen, we happen to know that it was touch-and-go with the jury. Had Mr. Foote appeared in the case himself, it would certainly have ended in defeat. Mr. Bradlaugh had the greatest difficulty with juries. He only won his litigation in respect of his seat in the House of Commons on the off-chance of a final appeal in the House of Lords. The President of the National Secular Society must expect to be libelled. Only last week a most atrocious slander was communicated to us from Bristol, where a Christian stated that Mr. Foote had been obliged to contribute to the support of two bastard children at Plymouth. The only proper answer to these libellous wretches is a good thrashing, and Mr. Foote's fingers sometimes itch to administer it. But it would be undignified. Besides, if he once began thrashing one of these wretches, he is not quite sure that he would leave off in time. It might result in some such heading as this in the newspapers:—"Deadly Assault by a Well-known Secularist. The Victim in the Hospital." On the whole, it is best to let the heathen rage, if they must, and get on with the work for Freethought.

W. SIMONS.—Your list of notices had to be abbreviated. We only announce public functions of a Freethought character.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Edinburgh Evening Dispatch—Blue Grass Blade—L'Etoile Socialiste—Progressive Thinker—Two Worlds—New York Public Opinion—Echo—Glasgow Saturday Weekly Citizen—Islington Gazette—Christian Commonwealth—Pacific Theosophist—McClure's Magazine—Liberty—Autonomist—Der Arme Teufel—Freidenker—Isle of Man Times—Secular Thought—Liberator—Boston Investigator—Truthseeker—Torch of Reason.

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

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.

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.

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE had a fine audience at the Athenæum Hall on Sunday evening. His lecture on "Christian Hypocrites and Honest Peculiar People" was much applauded. Mr. Marriott occupied the chair. Mr. Foote lectures to-day (Sept. 26) at Birmingham. His subjects are attractive, and no doubt there will be large meetings.

The Birmingham Branch has arranged for an active winter's campaign, and engaged the large hall of the Bristol-street Board School for Sunday lectures. Mr. Foote will be followed a fortnight later by Mr. Charles Watts, who will also hold a two-nights' debate, besides lecturing in the district under the new Financial Scheme. Other lectures will be delivered by Messrs. Cohen, Forder, Snell, Ward, and Armfield, and Mrs. Bradlaugh-Bonner. Unfortunately, it is impossible to make a charge for admission. The Branch, therefore, relies upon local Freethinkers to render their utmost financial support.

Last Sunday Mr. Charles Watts lectured twice in Plymouth. He had an enthusiastic reception, and both lectures were highly appreciated. On Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday he debated in the same town. Next week Mr. Watts will have something to say about the discussion.

This evening, Sunday, September 26, Mr. Watts lectures in the Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, taking for his subject "The Theory of the Resurrection."

Mr. Cohen had three good meetings at Glasgow on Sunday, and was in excellent form. A correspondent of ours walked twelve miles to hear him, and was well repaid.

Mr. Cohen is authorized to collect subscriptions under the new N. S. S. Financial Reorganization Scheme. All he receives will be acknowledged in the *Freethinker* first, and afterwards by the secretary at headquarters, who will forward an official receipt. Mr. Cohen sends the following (second) list from Glasgow, those marked (p) being paid: B. D., 10s. (p); W. Allen, 1s. (p); Mr. and Mrs. Jones, 5s. (p); A Friend, £2 (p); W. Turnbull, 5s. (p); Mr. and Mrs. Turnbull, 10s. (p); O. Jamieson, 5s.; A. Paton, 10s.; Mrs. Faulkner, 2s. 6d.; J. Turnbull, 5s.

We are always glad to receive our American exchange, the *New York Truthseeker*, which is conducted with such signal ability and devotion by Eugene and George Macdonald. The former is nominally the editor, but really the work is done (we believe) under a free-and-easy brotherly arrangement. The last number to hand contains a leaderette referring to our article on "Anarchy and Assassination." Mr. Macdonald (we don't know which is the writer) endorses the view we expressed. "The Governments and States," he says, "now having the life or death of citizens at their disposal keep the world well supplied with executions, and an extension of capital privileges to societies and individuals is a tendency that cannot be curbed too soon."

George Macdonald has a beautiful vein of sly facetiousness in his composition, derived no doubt from a pawky Scotch ancestor. It lends a charm to his weekly "Observations." The Free Lovers among the American Secularists don't appear to like the conduct of other Secularists who decline to be Free Lovers. They have, therefore, decided to form a separate organization. George Macdonald, however, is satisfied with a Freethought Society that sticks to Freethought, and leaves its members their right of individual liberty on other questions. "Of course," he says, "I cannot join the new organization, even as a passive member, nor can I attend its conventions. It is a man's duty to defend the sanctity of his fireside; hence, in these days, when time-honored institutions are imperilled, he should stay at home to work the gatling gun against the would-be destroyers of his domestic peace, and send his wife and children to foregather with the social innovators." That will do, George; you won't improve it.

The Watford Exchange Society is formed for study and free discussion. The syllabus for the autumn session announces debates on Monarchy, Vivisection, Foreign Missions, and Ibsen's Dramas. November 5 is to be a Shakespearean evening, with special reference to Colonel Ingersoll's grand lecture on the immortal dramatist.

Mr. Moss informs us that he had a large audience in Victoria Park last Sunday, including the veterans R. A. Cooper and W. P. Ball. This Sunday morning Mr. Moss lectures on Peckham Rye, and in the evening at Camberwell.

The Bradlaugh Club holds two public meetings on the evenings of September 28 and October 1 as a "Bradlaugh Celebration." At the first, addresses will be delivered on Bradlaugh's freethought work, at the second on his political and social work. The speakers announced are G. J. Holyoake, George Howell, A. B. Moss, F. J. Gould, Dr. Drysdale, Stewart D. Headlam, W. Heaford, H. P. Ward, and "Chilperic."

The *New York Missionary Review* publishes an article on Japan by the Rev. W. E. Griffis, D.D., who sadly confesses that the gospel of Herbert Spencer is the favorite creed of the average educated Japanese. The reverend gentleman comes to the conclusion that the Japanese are not a religious people. Perhaps this accounts for the wonderful progress they have made during the last half century.

Mr. Swain, secretary of the Derby Branch, sends us a highly flattering report of the week's Freethought mission conducted by Mr. Percy Ward. The meetings increased in size and enthusiasm, and we are informed that Mr. Ward was brilliant in discussion. The Branch has to struggle against financial difficulties, but its propaganda is telling on the town.

Our East London friends have already issued tickets for a Tea and Concert which they intend holding on Sunday, October 10, at the King's Hall, 83 and 85 Commercial-road, E. There is to be a good entertainment, and ladies are specially invited. Tickets may be obtained from G. J. Warren, 20 Rhodeswell-road, E., J. Neate, 385 Bethnal Green-road, and at the lecture stations.

Mr. W. D. Rolley would make an active member of a Freethought Letter-Writing Corps, were one formed. He has a capital reply in the *Islington Gazette* to a well-known

Christian Evidence man, whom the editor seems to have permitted to wander at large.

September 16 was the jubilee of the purchase of Shakespeare's House at Stratford-on-Avon. In the agitation for a committee to acquire the house Harriet Martineau took a leading part.

The *Glasgow Saturday Weekly Citizen*, which always knows a good thing when it sees it, says of Ingersoll's lecture on Shakespeare: "The principal feature of this lecture is the enthusiastic appreciation which thrills in every line. Sharp, vivid sentences, often eloquent, always forcible, are scattered in abundance. The lecturer has evidently adopted no conventional plan of treatment. He elucidates, as far as possible, the main characteristics of Shakespeare's genius, and quotes with an aptness which many may envy. This lecture is so different in style and matter from any known criticism or appreciation of Shakespeare that it is difficult to estimate its value with reference to the mass of literature about the great poet. It stands quite apart."

We have nothing further to report concerning the Browne case. Mr. Forder has been burying his mother, who died suddenly at Yarmouth at a very advanced age. When he returns to London and business we shall request him to obtain the one thing indispensable, without which it will be impossible to judge what should be done with respect to Mr. Browne's trial—the assistance of his wife and children being a comparatively simple matter. We must have a copy of what was written on those postcards. To proceed without it is merely acting blindfold.

Secular Thought, of Toronto, is reprinting from our columns the articles of "Abracadabra" on the Gospel Narratives. These papers, like his former series, are well worth republishing in more permanent form.

THOSE KIDS.

A LITTLE girl was watching the moon one evening as it rose over the hill, and finally she turned to her grandmother and asked: "Grandma, who made the moon?" "Why," replied the old lady, "God did, my child." The little girl thought for a moment, and then replied: "Well, anyhow, he made it with a mighty dirty face."

Professor Sully tells in *Children's Ways* of an American little girl who, on being told that God watches us always and everywhere, declared that she "would not be so tagged."

Divine Omniscience struck another little fellow as equally incredible with Divine Omnipresence: "I know a 'ickle more than Kitty, and you know a 'ickle more than me; and God knows a 'ickle more than you, I s'pose; then he can't know so very much, after all."

One little offender of four, when reminded by his sister—two years older—that he would be shut out from heaven, retorted impiously, "I don't care"; adding, for reasons best known to himself, "Uncle won't go—I'll stay with him."

"Ma," inquired Bobby, "hasn't pa a queer idea of heaven?" "Well, I think not, Bobby. Why?" "I heard him say that the week you spent in Brighton seemed like heaven to him."

Even in an advanced stage of civilization there is always a tendency to prefer those parts of literature which favor ancient prejudices rather than those which oppose them. And in cases where this tendency is very strong the only effect of great learning will be to supply the materials which may corroborate old errors and confirm old superstitions. In our time such instances are not uncommon, and we frequently meet with men whose erudition ministers to their ignorance, and who, the more they read, the less they know. There have been states of society in which this disposition was so general that literature has done far more harm than good. Thus, for example, in the whole period from the sixth to the tenth centuries there were not in all Europe more than three or four men who dared to think for themselves, and even they were obliged to veil their meaning in obscure and mystical language. The remaining part of society was, during those four centuries, sunk in the most degrading ignorance. Under these circumstances, the few who were able to read confined their studies to works which encouraged and strengthened their superstition, such as the legends of the saints and the homilies of the "fathers." From these sources they drew those lying and impudent fables of which the theology of that time is principally composed.—H. T. Buckle.

IVORY, APES, AND PEACOCKS.

In the veracious old documents concerning Sheikh Solomon it is related that "the king had at sea a navy of Tarshish with the navy of of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tarshish bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes, and peacocks. So King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom" (1 Kings x. 22, 23). The parallel passage (2 Chron. ix. 21) says: "The king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram: every three years once came the ships of Tarshish bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes, and peacocks."

Many have been the disquisitions upon ancient history and geography founded on this passage. Tarshish has been located in various quarters, but a consensus of opinion now identifies it with Tartessus, the Phœnician colony near Granada, in Spain, referred to by Arrian. Eusebius says Tarshish was in Spain. The only trouble is that neither ivory, apes, nor peacocks are found there, unless we translate kophim or apes as Gibraltar monkeys. But this word has been identified with the Sanskrit *kapi*, ape, and *habbu* for ivory, with the Egyptian *ebu*.

Dr. Keil, the learned German commentator on Kings, tries to slope out of any difficulty by suggesting that the word for peacocks "probably denotes *aves Numidicæ*, a choice delicacy of the later Romans, which comes from Tucca, a town of Mauretania and Numidia." This is hardly satisfactory. Peacocks were a royal sign known to the Persians, and also to the Greeks, who associated them with Hera, as the Latins did with Juno. The only other passage translated peacocks is in Job xxxix. 13; but there the Hebrew word is totally different, and is properly translated "ostrich" in the Revised Version. A long while ago Sir Emerson Tennant pointed out in his *Ceylon* (ii. 102) that "the terms by which these articles (ivory, apes, and peacocks) are designated in the Hebrew Scriptures are identical with the Tamil names, by which some of them are called in Ceylon to the present day—Turkeyim may be recognised in *Tokei*, the modern name for these birds." In Sanskrit "peacocks" are *Cikbi*, but the word seems to be an onomatop, or descriptive imitative name like, maybe, our "chicken."

Professor Max Müller, who was very loth to believe that Buddhism could have influenced Christianity, even after Alexander had opened up the route to India, and Asoka, the Indian Buddhist king, had sent missionaries to Antiochus, King of Syria, yet says: "That a channel of communication was open between India, Syria, and Palestine, in the time of Solomon, is established beyond doubt, by certain Sanskrit words which occur in the Bible as names of articles of export from Ophir, which, taken together, could not have been exported from any country but India." So far from this being established beyond doubt, we shall see, I think, there is ample reason for questioning it, so far at least as regards Solomon's alleged "navy." Professor Max Müller seems to associate the ivory, apes, and peacocks of Tarshish with the statement (1 Kings x. 11), that "the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug-trees and precious stones"—and to take the almug-trees for sandal-wood from India. But the passage with which we are concerned implies that the ivory, apes, and peacocks came from Tarshish; and Tarshish, we gather, even from the story of Jonah, lay to the west of Joppa. There is more difficulty about the situation of Ophir. Some make it India, others Cush (wherever Cush may have been); some place it on the Persian Gulf, others on the Red Sea, and yet others on the east coast of Africa. Certainly ivory, apes, and peacocks might come by way of Ophir; only Ophir is not mentioned where they are spoken of.

Speaking of this passage to my friend "Chilperic," he pointed out that the peacocks, which alone would decisively show a connection with India, are entirely wanting in the Septuagint. This version, which is far more ancient than any Hebrew manuscript, reads the passage in Kings thus: "Solomon had a ship of Tharsis in the sea with the ships of Chiram: one ship came to the king every three years out of Tharsis, laden with gold and silver, and wrought stones and hewn stones"—a more profitable cargo than apes and peacocks, though one would think they had plenty of stones in Palestine. The passage in Chronicles reads in the LXX.: "For a ship went for the king to Tharsis with the servants of Chiram: once every three years came vessels from Tharsis to the king, laden with gold and silver and ivory and apes." Here we have the apes, but not the peacocks, and of course all these may have come from Africa by way of Carthage. It is notable that the LXX. reads "Carthage" for Tarshish" in Isaiah xxiii. 1, 6, 10, and 14. The passage in Chronicles is mere Midrash, written eight hundred years or so after the supposed time of Solomon, whose wealth increased in imagination as he was farther removed in fact. And it appears likely from the Septuagint that the ivory, apes, and peacocks crept into Kings from Chronicles, as the seven hundred horsemen of 2 Samuel viii. 4 become the seven thousand of 1 Chronicles xviii. 4. All the stories told of Solomon's wealth are downright fables. 1 Kings x. 14 says:

"The weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred three-score and six talents of gold." This would be over £4,000,000 annual income. Yet only in the previous generation "there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel" (1 Samuel xiii. 19). "All the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon" (2 Chron. ix. 23). Yet the position of Palestine shows it must have been tributary to either Egypt or Assyria, while the plateau on which Jerusalem is built could never have accommodated more than forty or fifty thousand inhabitants. Solomon's temple, according to the record itself, was a mere shanty, ninety feet by thirty; and probably the sensual old sultan had fewer wives and concubines than a mid-African chief. Not a single shekel of his fabulous wealth has been discovered by the Palestine Exploration Fund, nor even the tomb of David and all his successors who slept with their fathers. Of course these things may yet providentially turn up, together with the ivory and skeletons of apes and peacocks.

J. M. W.

TIMES CHANGE.

GOSPEL SHOPS FOR SALE!

PASSING along Gresham-street westward the other day, I noticed a large black board which caused me to recall Matt. xxi. 13, having in large white letters, "London Joint Stock Bank. Site of the Wood-street Branch." Just below this new staring notice is an old, time-worn, almost illegible notice board setting forth various details, the heading of which is Church of St. Michael, Wood-street, and St. Mary Staining; so that, in spite of the dual protection of two patron saints, the house of prayer changes its character, as set forth two thousand years ago. Will this be taken by the faithful as a fulfilment of prophecy?

The earliest record of this church dates somewhere about 1328, and old Stow speaks of the St. Michael of his time as a "proper thing," and tells a tall yarn in connection with the head of James IV. of Scotland, which head seems to have had a rough time after the battle of Flodden Field. The head, after being chopped off by some workmen, was brought by one Young, a master glazier, to Elizabeth, to Wood-street, where he lived, keeping it because of the sweet savor given forth. When this savor became a bit too strong the head was given to the sexton of St. Mike's to bury.

The present building was built by Wren, 1675, for £2,554, and the ecclesiastical commissioners have now sold building and freehold for £31,500. In a short time there will probably be—when the builder's men start in with pick and shovel—quite an assemblage of sweet savors, and several more verses of Holy Scripture fulfilled to the utmost letter.

One thing is very completely proved by the above. To build churches in the City of London is certainly *not* the way to perpetuate one's name; Wren's churches must be getting scarce, and there are certainly more banks.

It would seem that the old phrase, "nothing sacred to the sapper," will in this connection have to be recast and "auctioneer" substituted, for in an advertisement of a sale to take place at the Mart, on September 6th, we find it blasphemously suggested that Jezreel's Tower at New Brompton affords a suitable building and site for cement factory or brewery or lunatic asylum.

Recalling the history of this building, and the money which the dupes of the clever James White Jershom Jezreel must have poured out to buy the freehold and erect the massive tower, this last mention of "lunatic asylum" was very unkind of the knight of the hammer. Buyers of ascensionite towers seem scarce, and the Jezreelites have yet a chance of using their upper floor as a starting place of the 144,000: the highest bid was £3950; withdrawn, not sold.

T. SHORE.

Volcanoes and Hell.

It would be a gross omission, in treating of the popular errors connected with volcanoes, to neglect that which considers sulphur to be the source of fire in eruptions. Burning sulphur was of old supposed to be the cause of the phenomena. The terror that volcanic eruptions excited in the minds of primitive man caused him to link them with the work of destructive gods. The seed thus sown bore fruit in various ways as time rolled on. Greek mythology wrought strange stories of the Immortals and the volcanoes of Vulcano and Etna. It remained for Christians to associate the doctrine of eternal torment in a fiery hell with the phenomena of volcanoes. The "Lake of Fire," which burned and burned, but was never consumed, was but a reminiscence of the crater of a volcano. So close indeed was the connection that Vulcano was long regarded as the place of everlasting punishment of the Emperor Theodosius; and the unfortunate Anne Boleyn was, in the ecclesiastical imagination of the age, spending the remaining portion of eternity in the heart of Etna. Similar ideas are reported by travellers as existing among the savage tribes of to-day.

—Glasgow "Weekly Citizen."

THE DYING ATHEIST.

THE tract literature of orthodox Christianity contains many recorded cases of the death-beds of Freethinkers, Deists, Infidels, Atheists, etc. In every case these persons are represented as suffering great mental trouble—some in agony and fear of hell, and others crying in vain for mercy of an offended God; the object of such tracts being to show the awful effects of the sin of unbelief in the doctrines taught by the Churches. The writer (rapidly approaching the age of fourscore) has been a confirmed Atheist upwards of forty years; and by the word Atheist he means a person who utterly rejects the idea that this world of humanity is governed and controlled by an all-powerful, wise, and good Being. The conditions under which the race has existed for thousands of years, and still continues, contradict this teaching. Among savage races cruelty and cannibalism is the long-time record, while another variety of horrors is manifest where so-called civilization prevails. The punishment attached to unbelief is unjust. If a man believes without evidence, he is a fool; and if he believes contrary to evidence, he is a knave. An intelligent God could never punish a man because he believed according to the best and honest conviction of his senses. Such a course would arraign him as a monster of injustice.

With regard to a life beyond the grave, outside of the fairy tales of spiritualism and the insane idiotisms of Theosophy, there is not a particle of evidence tending to prove the fact; men and animals go through the same routine, from youth to age; the accidents which destroy vast numbers of men and animals show no especial care for either, and imply complete indifference. It is not denied that an ignorant faith may supply comfort to its votaries, and this is equally true of all religions and among all races.

The believers in an immortality seem to forget that it requires an eternity to prove it, while they fail to suggest any intelligent occupation in another or spiritual world throughout the ages.

To the Atheist death is the end of life. Where, then, and what is his consolation? I reply: In the course of a long life I have enjoyed the loving regard of very dear friends. Many of them are passed away, leaving a delightful memory of faithfulness. Friends and enemies are both gone, but I am spared the thought that any of them are in a place of torment. In place of the Christian's God—"past finding out"—I have nature and her laws to be studied and obeyed, accepting the inevitable without fear and looking forward at last to a time of eternal rest. Who can look at the events occurring in the world to-day in the shape of earthquakes, tornadoes, pestilence, and war, and believe in a personal benign Ruler? The late Oliver Wendell Holmes exclaims: "How can God bear it, this ball of anguish forever spinning around before him, and the great hum of its misery going up to his ears?"

The Atheist is spared this horrible thought. Nature, to him, has no mercies and no revenges; the great tides of life ebb and flow, not for him alone, but as a part of a universe of millions of worlds; his philosophy is to observe, to learn, to obey, to love the sunshine, to appreciate the beauty of the stars, to value the sympathy and love of friends, to help those in need, and recognise the universal brotherhood of man in joy and sorrow. He loves life, but does not fear death, and at the end "he sleeps the sleep that knows no waking." Have believers in a heaven and hell greater consolation than this?

The Christians' claim, that their God sent his son into the world nineteen hundred years ago to save mankind, is not borne out by facts. Leaving out entirely the history of the past since then, what is man's condition at present? In India, in 1895, over thirty thousand human beings were destroyed by poisonous snakes, or killed and eaten by hungry tigers. Cannibalism is still rife over a large part of Africa, while the great Governments of Europe keep vast armies to destroy each other when opportunity offers. The claim that God governs by certain laws becomes childish when we remember that a God who made the laws must also have made the consequences attending a breach of them. The crowning question of the Christian believer is this: "Who made this world and the universe we see?" I reply honestly, I do not know. But Atheism and science agree in this, that matter is eternal. Life is a phenomenon of matter in motion, and men and animals—from the lowest to the highest—have the same origin and the same destiny. I have been told by men calling themselves good Christians that their God is leading me blindfold down to hell, forgetting that such a statement pictures him as a monster unworthy of respect. As for the priests and preachers who for pay and power occupy themselves in flattering their credulous hearers, and in talking of goodness from Pope to street-talker, the Atheist has for such men the most supreme contempt.

T. C.

Confine your thoughts to what is real,
And cease to nurse a vain ideal.—R. H. Shepherd.

BOOK CHAT.

MORISON BROS., of Glasgow, publish in their "Pennyworth Series" *A Pennyworth of Repartee*, by the Rev. David Macrae. It is a cheap pen'orth at which we may pause awhile. Repartee is not defined by Mr. Macrae beyond its being a smart reply. But its essential character is the giving tit-for-tat in a witty and conclusive way. A good illustration was supplied by a genial Radical and Freethinking Alderman of Margate, who never loses temper. An ill-mannered and bigoted mayor alluded to him as a blackguard. In reply he said smilingly: "Calling me a blackguard will not make me one, any more than calling the mayor a gentleman would make him one." Mr. Macrae's first illustration is scarcely so good as this. Here it is: A bumptious man, with a shock of flaming red hair, was bantering a bald-headed Yankee about his smooth pate. "Where were you," he said, "when the Almighty was giving out hair?" "I was there all right," said the Yankee, calmly; "but before the Almighty got my length he had nothing left but red hair; so I declined with thanks."

* * *

Of course we have some Scotch specimens. For instance: A Scotch sky-pilot went into a barber's shop to get shaved. The barber, unfortunately, was addicted to the use of whiskey, and his hand that day shook so much that a gash was made in the minister's cheek. "Eh, John, John!" cried the minister; "it's a terrible thing that whiskey." To which the barber replied: "Ay, sir, it maks the skin unco tender."

* * *

Mr. Macrae gives among repartees what is usually called "capping" a boasting remark or story. Thus, three men speaking of likenesses, one said he had several times been taken for Lord Salisbury. The other capped this by saying that he had been taken once for the German Emperor. The third declared that he had once a still more remarkable experience. A friend who had been away for years in Australia met him unexpectedly, and, after staring at him for a moment, exclaimed, "Holy Moses! is that you?" This is the revised version of an old profane joke in which the original version, as given in the *Freethinker* a dozen years ago, read "Good God" for "Holy Moses." But Mr. Macrae has already supplied us with a good "*Pennyworth of Chestnuts*."

* * *

Gay and Bird publish *Walt Whitman: The Man*, by Thomas Donaldson, a work giving thirty years' reminiscences of the good grey poet, by one of his intimate friends. The same firm issue Whitman's works, and a portrait etched by Leon Richeton.

* * *

The Rev. William Henry Young, Professor of Homiletics, in Nova Scotia, writes a book on *How to Preach with Power*. Here is one of the most important items: "Scripture reveals the first process in correct breathing. When God made man He breathed into his NOSTRILS the breath of life; preachers are doctrinally wrong in sucking air through the mouth in defiance of this. *Always inhale through the nose alone.*" This combination of scripture and physiology is amusing.

* * *

The New Orthodoxy is the title of a new religious magazine which, we are informed, is to appear, under "the editorship of the Rev. Robert Tuck, B.A., in the early autumn." The magazine will "endeavor to aid in that reconstruction of the Evangelical faith which is demanded by the accepted results of modern science and criticism."

* * *

If the fragment of the Greek translation of the Old Testament MS. found by Mr. Burkitt, and ascribed to Aquila, be of the sixth century, the fact that the Tetragrammaton, name of Jahveh, is retained in the Phœnician character proves the late use of the old character and the comparative modernity of the Square Hebrew. This is another blow at the Massoretic Bible text on which Jews have built, and Christians have followed them.

* * *

D. Nutt announces the publication of volume ii. of a *Dictionary of British Folk-Lore*, and a work on *Babylonian Influence on the Bible and Popular Beliefs*, the latter being the work of the Rev. A. S. Palmer.

* * *

Thomas J. Wise is doing a careful Tennyson Bibliography in the *Athenæum*. He included Mr. Foot's penny pamphlet on *Atheism and Suicide*.

* * *

The *Daily News*, noticing a missionary book entitled *Africa Waiting: or, The Problem of Africa's Evangelization*, says: "It may be remarked here that the Mohammedans are far the most successful proselytizers in Africa—far ahead of Romanists and Protestants. Readers interested in this subject may find in a lately-published work on *The*

Preaching of Islam many striking passages about the spread of Mohammedanism in the Dark Continent." Curious that God should send the world a supernatural and exclusively divine revelation, and yet allow a rival religion to spread more rapidly than the only true faith.

* * *

The October number of the *Adult* is before us. It is published at the office of the Legitimation League, 16 John-street, Bedford-row, London, W.C., price twopence, and is devoted to the free discussion of sexual questions. Most of the writers are Free Lovers—that is to say, they are opposed to the institution of marriage. We have not the slightest objection to the discussion of the utility of this or any other institution. At the same time, we do not think that social progress is likely to be accelerated by jejune essays like some of those in the *Adult*. One article, signed "Lucy Stewart," denounces the Freethinker for getting "respectably married, just like his orthodox neighbor." The lady might just as well blame him for doing anything else like his orthodox neighbor; for instance, wearing trousers, shaving, and eating with a knife and fork. It is the sign of a small mind, not of a large one, to want to do everything as differently as possible from other people. Marriage existed before Christianity, and will probably outlive it; and the idea that Freethinkers should be Free Lovers because Christians get married needs only to be stated plainly to dispense with the necessity of criticism.

* * *

John Henry Mackay is engaged on a biography of Kasper Schmidt, the German Egoist, who wrote under the pseudonym of "Max Stirner," and who may be considered the John the Baptist of the insane Messiah of Egoism, Friedrich Nietzsche. The work is nearly finished, and will be published in German next February.

* * *

John M. Robertson's *Papers for the People*, which we have already noticed as they have been sent to us, are now issued in book form at eightpence. The volume contains twelve papers on Freethought, social, and political matters, and Mr. Robertson's pamphlet on *The Future of Liberalism*. The papers are written with much polemical vigor, and the first one, "The Priest and the Child," deserves extensive circulation at the present time.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SECOND COMING.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Zionism, which periodically asserts itself among a section of the Jewish race, is welcomed as much by the Christians as the Jews. The Jews believe that the repopulation by the Israelites of Palestine will at the same time witness the advent of the long-expected Messiah, while the Christians believe that the Jews must go back to the Holy Land before their Messiah can again appear. In the event of either or both appearing, how will the Jews or Christians know he is the right individual? What country will he visit first, and to what denomination will he first reveal himself? In the olden days his mode of travelling beat even the motor-car, for he often disappeared so quickly that no one saw him depart. Will he perform the same wonders as he did before, and visit the lunatic asylums, make all the insane people sane, and, on leaving—say, Battersea-park—to pay a visit to the old pensioners at Chelsea, discard the Albert Bridge and paddle across on the Thames? And, in visiting his followers in various parts of the world, will he patronize the famous Cook's excursions or make use of Shank's pony? If he appears to the Christians first, will the Jews string him up again? In this event, will he shuffle off this mortal coil for a period and then re-appear? It would be well for both Jews and Christians to consider these most important questions before raising that ten millions of money to buy back the land of Palestine. In the event of these wonders occurring, it may be assumed that Maskelyne and Cooke will have to retire.

DUDLEY WRIGHT.

ISAIAH VII. 14.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In reply to the remarks of Mr. Haining, I can only say that I did not consider the point he has mentioned of sufficient importance to make another paragraph. I am often obliged to curtail matters in order to bring them within the compass of a single article. In this case, the prediction, such as it was, having, beyond all doubt, been fulfilled at the time, I did not think it necessary to point out that the word *Almah*, which is translated "virgin," simply means "youth," and, being feminine, would be more correctly rendered "young woman." Had the writer intended to indicate what in the modern physiological sense of the word is termed a

"virgin," he should have employed the word *bethulah*. If Mr. Haining will turn to the passage in the Revised Version, he will see in the margin that this and the other point I mentioned are practically conceded. Here I may also take the opportunity of saying that I think the matters referred to by "Caiaphas"—but why such an inappropriate *nom de plume*?—are deserving of attention; but they in no way affect the only possible conclusions at which any rational person can arrive.

ABRACADABRA.

[On this same matter "Chilperic" writes: "Matthew i. 23 has nothing to do with the *Hebrew* text; it is the *Septuagint* that is quoted; and it is beside the mark to accuse the *Evangelist* of perverting the passage. The *Septuagint* translation of Isaiah vii. 14 is grammatically impossible. The revisers of the Old Testament recognised that the ordinary translation was wrong, but they only corrected it in the margin of the Revised Version. What the Hebrew says is: 'Behold the young woman, pregnant, and bearing a son, and she has called out his name, 'With us is El.'"]

THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Christians, we know, live in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection. They sing of the glorious times they are going to have "over there," but they usually exhibit particular anxiety not to go "over there." They not only call in the doctor at every ailment, but insist that others shall go and do likewise. To my mind, the conviction of one of the Peculiar People for following the injunctions of St James, calling in an elder while failing to call in a doctor, is going a shade too far. It is all very well to chaff them for depending on prayer; but it is a different matter to imprison them for not depending on the physician. Prayer is noxious when it frustrates available effort; but usually it is only a sedative, which, if it does no good, at least relieves the mind, and does no bodily harm. But a compulsory physician who is mistrusted, who may diagnose wrongly, and give drugs which may accelerate death instead of recovery, may be as much worse than prayer as hell is than purgatory. To compel parents to employ doctors they distrust—and in country districts there may be only one within a radius of many miles, and he perhaps a drunkard or incompetent for a difficult case—seems to me as gross a tyranny as that of compulsory vaccination. Parents should be responsible for giving careful nutrition, attention, and sanitary surroundings to their children; but State doctorcraft opens up as intolerable a prospect as State priestcraft. What is wanted is that all children shall be taught physiology in the schools. Then they may grow up able largely to dispense with the medicine man, and, when a doctor is called in, may be able to judge of his abilities for themselves. Every adult should be his or her own priest and own physician.

A PECULIAR SECULARIST.

PROFANE JOKES.

SUNDAY-school teacher (to Ah Sin, the laundryman)—"What are the wages of sin?" Ah Sin—"Sleventy-five cent a dozen. No checkee no washee."

At a church entertainment in Surrey the following item was seen on the program: "Miss Fisher—'Put me in my little bed.' Accompanied by the curate."

A newly-appointed Bishop of St. David's confided to an old Welsh clergyman his difficulty in mastering the Welsh double L. The parson replied: "Put the tip of your apostolic tongue in the roof of your episcopal mouth, my lord, and then hiss—hiss like — like a gander, my lord!"

Kettle—"Why do you think him insane?" Skillet—"He attends church every Sunday alone, though his wife is away at the seashore."

Freddy went to Sunday-school. One day his father said to him: "How is this, Freddy? You have been going to Sunday-school for a long time now, and have never yet brought home a good ticket. I am really ashamed of you." "Papa," said the little culprit, swelling up like a toad, "I—I'll bring home a good ticket next Sunday, if—if I have to hook it!"

The Vicar's Wife—"Don't you think, my dear, you might cultivate a little more vehemence in your sermons?" The Vicar—"No; I should be very unpopular if I woke up the congregation."

The Freethinker has no theory, no pet scapegoat upon which he can throw his sins, and thereby escape the natural consequences of his wrong-doing. He has no great bankrupt salvation scheme by which to get rid of paying his honest debts.—*B. F. Underwood.*

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

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

LONDON.

THE ATHENÆUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30, C. Watts, "The Theory of the Resurrection."

BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): Charles Bradlaugh's Birthday. Tea at 6, speeches at 7. Sketches ("Good for Nothing Nan" and "The Married Bachelor") to follow. September 28, at 8.15, Public meeting. October 1, at 8.15, Public meeting.

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, A. B. Moss, "Recollections of Charles Bradlaugh."

HAMMERSMITH (The Grove, near S.W.R. station): 7, Stanley Jones, A lecture.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, R. P. Edwards.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH (Peckham Rye): 3.15, A. B. Moss, A lecture. HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, J. Fagan; 3.30, Stanley Jones.

ISLINGTON (Highbury Fields, Highbury Corner): 11.30, A. Guest, "Paley's 'Evidences of Christianity.'"

KILBURN (High-road, corner of Victoria-road): 7, O. Durrant.

KINGSLAND (Ridley-road, near Dalston Junction): 11.30, E. Calvert, "Secularism and its Advocates." With special reference to the late Charles Bradlaugh.

LIMEHOUSE (Triangle, Salmon-lane): 11.30, F. Haslam. September 23, E. Pack.

MILE END WASTE: 11.30, E. Pack; 7, T. J. Thurlow. September 29, H. P. Ward.

VICTORIA PARK (near the fountain): 3.15, R. P. Edwards, A lecture. WOOD GREEN (Jolly Butchers' Hill): 11.30, Stanley Jones, A lecture.

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM (Bristol-street Board School): 11, G. W. Foote, "Man's Origin and Destiny"; 3, "Who was Moses?—A Reply to the King of Siam's Question"; 7, "God and the Devil."

CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 7, H. P. Ward, "Was Jesus an Infidel?"

GLASGOW (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 6.30, G. Faulkner, A lecture.

LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 3, J. M. Robertson, "The Reformation in the British Isles"; 7, "The Meaning of Atheism."

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Cocoa Rooms, Newbridge-street): September 28, at 8, Monthly meeting of members.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, King-street): 7, Business meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

DERBY (Market-place): 11, W. Dyson, "Facts for Christians; or, The Fight for the Children"; 7, "Is Jesus Christ Possible?—A Criticism of the *New Age*."

Lecturers' Engagements.

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

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

H. PEPCY WARD, Leighton Hall, N.W.—September 26, m., Clerkenwell Green; e., New Brompton. 29, e., Mile End Waste. October 3, m., Camberwell; a., Peckham Rye. 10, a., Victoria Park. 17, Manchester. 24, m., Westminster; a., Victoria Park. 31, Birmingham. November 7 to 14, Mission at Plymouth.

E. PACK, 90 Camden-street, N.W.—September 26, m., Mile End; e., Limehouse; a., Finsbury Park. 28, e., Limehouse. October 3, Chatham. 10, Bradlaugh Club; 17, m., Camberwell.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Oredon-road, London, S.E.—September 26, a., Peckham Rye; e., 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 Blandford-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.

Information and literature may be obtained from Mr. Malcolm Quin, Church of Humanity, Newcastle-on-Tyne, who will be willing to consider applications to deliver lectures on Positivism gratuitously and without expense, where such lectures may be desired.

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