

The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

VOL. XVII.—No. 41.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1897.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE DEATH OF PRAYER.

WE have written two consecutive articles on the recent cases of Peculiar People, who have had to appear at coroners' inquests on the dead bodies of their children. The father of one of these deceased children, as our readers will recollect, stands committed for trial on the charge of manslaughter. Another was severely censured, after the style of the old magistrate whose judgment was "Not guilty: but don't do it again." A further case has occurred since our last issue. This time a jurymen wanted to have a Biblical discussion with the Peculiar father, but was checked by the coroner, who did not care to have his court turned into an arena of theological debate.

Another fact which we desire to notice is this. The medical witness in this fresh instance was asked whether a doctor would have prolonged the child's life, and he was unable to answer the question. It was an ordinary case of pneumonia, yet it was impossible to say whether a doctor would have done any good or not. Could there be a more striking illustration of the empirical character of the "art of healing"? Does it not warrant a strong opposition to the overweening pretensions of the medical profession? Does it not justify us in refusing to be ruled by so-called experts? Does it not warrant us in declining to invest their nostrums with any sort of privilege? The medical art is in many ways a noble one. Its object is, or should be, the alleviation of human suffering, and the prolongation of human life. But when the doctor seeks to invade our homes with compulsory powers we have a right to investigate his scientific credentials; and when we find that doctors are very much at variance with each other, that fundamental points of treatment are still in dispute, and that a medical dogma like vaccination is easily riddled by evidence, and especially by statistics, we have a clear right to ask these gentlemen to be more modest, and to fall into a line with the general body of their fellow citizens.

This point, however, is collateral. Our primary object is to deal with the doctrine of prayer. And we venture to assert that this doctrine is practically dead. It has a semblance of life, but no reality; and the committal of one of these Peculiar People on a charge of manslaughter is the first stroke of the bell at its funeral.

For a long time the clergy who come into contact with thinking people, and have to face an educated opinion, have been very chary about pressing the doctrine of prayer in the good old-fashioned style. When the late Professor Tyndall suggested that the efficacy of prayer should be submitted to a scientific test, a wily clergyman replied that it was absurd to expect God Almighty to let himself be made the subject of an experiment. And when Mr. Galton investigated backwards, in the region of the unalterable past, and proved by statistics that the efficacy of prayer was absolutely imperceptible, the clergy took shelter behind a dignified silence. We still find ministers like Mr. Price Hughes successfully praying for the exact sum

of one thousand pounds; and Muller's orphanage is still supported by the wide and constant advertisement that he relies entirely upon the Lord. But every man of the world smiles at such equivocal simplicities. They are relics of a bygone age of credulity. The general tendency of the age is to ignore prayer altogether, except in the perfunctory rites of "divine worship." Insurance companies treat it with quiet disdain. Christians have to pay the same life-policy premiums as infidels, and churches have to be protected by lightning conductors. Underwriters never trouble themselves about the religious or irreligious habits of the captain of a ship, or whether his list of passengers is hallowed by the presence of a bishop or damnified by the presence of an Atheist lecturer. The rate of insurance depends entirely upon secular considerations. When a town is visited by an epidemic fever, the citizens know very well that the remedy must be found in improved sanitation, and they look upon church prayers as a harmless ceremony of the time-honored clerical profession. The town councillor who proposed a religious procession, and general supplication to God, would be laughed at as an old fogey. That sort of thing has been impossible ever since Lord Palmerston told the Town Council of Edinburgh to try whitewash instead of prayer against the cholera.

The Church of England has forms of prayer for rain and fine weather, but it rarely uses them, and some day or other they will be dropped out of the Prayer Book. The most thick-headed farmer, in these days of scientific agriculture, and international competition in the food market, is quite aware that it is no use relying upon the parson. Thanksgiving services are still held; they have been holding them down in devastated Essex; but they are regarded as routine ceremonies, without any real relation to the character of the harvest.

The scientific spirit is gradually but surely permeating the public mind; and science knows nothing of miracle, and every answer to prayer *is* a miracle.

The clergy who try to reconcile science with miracle only do so metaphysically. All they urge at bottom is this, that if there be a God he can work miracles if he chooses. No one denies this hypothetical proposition. The only practical question is this: If there be a God, *does* he work miracles? In other words, do miracles occur? That question is to be settled by evidence, and all the evidence we have points to the negative. Every man of science believes in natural causation and the unbroken order of nature.

Prayer is now generally recommended as a pious exercise. But whoever prays to God without expecting an answer is, as Coleridge said, indulging in a species of self-magnetism. It is like any other kind of dram or drug. A Christian soldier might fight better after a prayer, but so he might after a glass of brandy. It may be said that prayer is at least a conscious communion with one's ideal, but that is possible without simulation and self-deception.

G. W. FOOTE.

INGERSOLL ON SHAKESPEARE.*

WHAT can be said of Shakespeare? The theme is inexhaustible; the expression necessarily inadequate. To do it justice would need "a muse of fire that would ascend the brightest heaven of invention." To understand Shakespeare in his height and depth and fulness needs a poet and genius of masculine strength and feminine tenderness, with clear, freethinking brain and mighty heart, worthy to be the peer of the poet himself. Some of our greatest literary men—among them Samuel Johnson, Coleridge, Carlyle, Hazlitt, Lamb, Bagehot, Massey, Swinburne, and Dowden—have said their best and written at length on Shakespeare. I have read them all, besides an immense mass of critics and commentators who hold their farthing candle to the sun, and I do not think there is any one of them I would not give to hear Colonel Ingersoll deliver the lecture of which a copy lies before me. For it glows with noble eloquence; its words are warm from the heart, and instinct with the insight which comes from sympathy. The utterance needs but the tones of the orator's voice to make us thrill in unison, and simply to read it is a delight. The secret of this is that we are for the time both made the companion of the great myriad-minded English dramatist, whose words are rooted in our common speech, and likewise let into the very heart of the great American orator. It is Ingersoll's personality which adds to our enjoyment. Shakespeare touches Ingersoll not on one side only, but all round. He can appreciate his heroic words of fire, and also his fun and frolic; the drollery of his Dogberry as well as the tragic sublimity of his Lear; and as he takes us over the plays, pointing out the exquisite beauties and summarizing the characters in well-chosen Shakespearean words, we are enraptured with his admiration, and enjoy all the familiar scenes with keener zest because he enjoys them so keenly.

Ingersoll opens with the trumpet tones of a herald proclaiming a hero monarch's might:—

"William Shakespeare was the greatest genius of our world. He left to us the richest legacy of all the dead—the treasures of the rarest soul that ever lived and loved and wrought of words the statues, pictures, robes, and gems of thought. He was the greatest man that ever touched this grain of sand and tear we call the world."

Here is none of the cautious and delicate approach of a man who is afraid of his cause. It is rather the forthright utterance of a plain, blunt man who loves his friend; and every item of the lecture shows how Ingersoll has taken Shakespeare to his heart of hearts, and made him the companion of his life.

I rejoice that a citizen of the great Transatlantic Republic should so justly appreciate our mighty poet. For, be it said without offence, our ears have been assailed by a long asinine bray from across the herring-pond asserting evidence, God wot, that the plays of Shakespeare were the production of Lord Bacon. We have had good Shakespearean studies from America, but the work of men like Hudson, Furness, White, and Rolfe has been almost lost amid the noise made by this stupid folly, which, although it has found scant footing in England, has infected some of the small Germans. Very effectively does Ingersoll dispose of this nonsense. Knowing Bacon as well as Shakespeare, he shows how utterly dissimilar are the characters displayed in their various writings. The section devoted to this subject is simply unanswerable, and should relegate the Bacon bogey born from the muddled brain of Delia Bacon, and hatched by the ingenuity of Ignatius Donnelly, into the limbo of obscurity.

My notice must not be all panegyric, and there is just one statement to which I take exception. The Colonel says of his hero: "Nothing is known of his mother except her beautiful name—Mary Arden." This is not quite correct. Her descent and connections are known. She was of gentle birth from an old county family, and although Colonel Ingersoll guardedly says there "does not seem to be as much in heredity as most people think," I venture to believe that she brought to her household priceless elements of character and culture. But I shall not enter into controversy with the Colonel on the fruitless topic of

explaining Shakespeare. His own few words on the poet's environment are much to the point:—

"Shakespeare lived during the great awakening of the world, when Europe emerged from the darkness of the Middle Ages, when the discovery of America had made England, that blossom of the Gulf Stream, the centre of commerce, and during a period when some of the greatest writers, thinkers, soldiers, and discoverers were produced.

"Cervantes was born in 1547, dying on the same day that Shakespeare died. He was undoubtedly the greatest writer that Spain produced. Rubens was born in 1577; Camoens, the Portuguese, the author of *The Lusiad*, died in 1597; Giordano Bruno—greatest of martyrs—was born in 1548, visited London in Shakespeare's time, delivered lectures at Oxford, and called that institution 'the widow of learning'; Drake circled the globe in 1580; Galileo was born in 1564—the same year with Shakespeare; Michael Angelo died in 1563; Kepler—he of the *Three Laws*—born in 1571; Calderon the Spanish dramatist, born in 1601; Corneille, the French poet, in 1606; Rembrandt, greatest of painters, 1607; Shakespeare was born in 1564; in that year John Calvin died. What a glorious exchange!"

There are many little Freethought touches like this last which give piquancy to the address. There are also some capital criticisms and suggestions, as that the poet's epitaph was the production of Dr. John Hall, his son-in-law.

I fancy Colonel Ingersoll somewhat underrated Shakespeare's reading. He says we know Shakespeare's Library. But the books he shows acquaintance with are neither few nor mean. Plutarch, Montaigne, Seneca, Ovid, and Terence are world classics. Beyond published works many translations circulated in manuscript at that time. The average standard of the reading man was far higher then than now. There were no distracting newspapers, and less trash. If Shakespeare had little Latin and less Greek, he utilized what he had, and supplemented it with French and Italian. It did not take him long to learn, and he had native English force which enabled him to soar above—

All that insolent Greece or haughty Rome
Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.

Certainly Shakespeare's was never the mere bookman's outlook on life. He had not what, to avoid a coarser expression, I call the sedentary view of affairs which characterizes our modern erotic, neurotic, and tommyrotic poets, the decadent duffers who, snuggled on absinthe, can find only smut in Shakespeare's sonnets, and are positive that the creator of Rosalind, Perdita, Hermione, Miranda, Desdemona, Imogen, and Cordelia was unhappy in marriage and unfortunate in his relations with women. Shakespeare was Nature's oracle. He loved his country:—

With shadowy forest and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads.

He read man and nature direct with his own eyes, but he also had the mind to assimilate the best that the past had left of towering thought or noble example.

One strong impression left after reading this lecture is that it is the healthy, hearty admirer, and not the mere critic with measuring rule and microscopic eyes for defects, who makes the best guide to works of genius. It is the magnanimous nature that can most thoroughly understand art. The beauties of Shakespeare are best brought out by a pellucid and penetrating intellect, united to keen, deep, and sympathetic emotions. Such a man is Colonel Ingersoll. Hence his lecture is worthy of its subject. It can have no higher praise. From start to finish it is a splendid piece of sustained eloquence. It closes with a fine peroration, sonorous as the surge of rolling billows on the resounding shore:—

"Shakespeare was an intellectual ocean, whose waves touched all the shores of thought; within which were all the tides and waves of destiny and will; over which swept all the storms of fate, ambition, and revenge; upon which fell the gloom and darkness of despair and death, and all the sunlight of content and love, and within which was the inverted sky lit with the eternal stars—an intellectual ocean—towards which all rivers ran, and from which now the isles and continents of thought receive their dew and rain."

To read the lecture is to wish to hear it all over again from the lips of the orator, and makes us ask when is the Colonel going to visit "our precious stone set in the silver sea," and let his English admirers listen to his eloquence.

J. M. WHEELER.

* *Shakespeare. A Lecture.* By Robert G. Ingersoll. Price 6d. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.)

THE VALUE OF PUBLIC DEBATE.

FROM an intellectual standpoint, an honest and well-conducted public discussion is most valuable. It enables a comparison of views to be made, and thus an opportunity is afforded of distinguishing truth from error. Bacon says: "To believe without examination is no belief in reality, but merely an assent that such and such things are believed by others, and is, in fact, only believing that we believe." And Mansfield observes: "The judgment must be employed to discern the truth or falsehood of assertions, by attending to the credibility and consistency of the different parts of the story; the veracity and character of witnesses in other respects; by comparing the assertions with accounts received from other witnesses, who could not be ignorant of the facts; and, lastly, by bringing the test of a comparison with known and admitted facts." Secularists are in favor of real debate because, in addition to the advantages above indicated, it is the means of imparting to professed Christians a knowledge of Secular principles and teachings. Believers in the Bible and the supposed followers of Christ should be equally favorable to controversy, inasmuch as their Bible enjoins them, and their Master and St. Paul set them the example, to "Debate thy cause with thy neighbor himself" (Proverbs xxv. 9). We read in the "Word of God": "Come now and let us reason together" (Isaiah i. 18); also, that very early in his career Jesus was found in the temple in the midst of doctors, "both hearing them and asking them questions," and that St. Paul "disputed in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him, and spake boldly for the space of three months" (Acts xvii. 17; xix. 8).

Christians of the present day are not anxious, however, to obey the teachings of the Bible, or to follow the example of Jesus and St. Paul in this matter, any more than they are in many other things. Twenty or thirty years ago the leading exponents of the Christian faith were "eager for the fray," and willing to "stand the hazard of the die"; but now the first-rate men in the Church cannot be induced to enter the arena to debate with the representatives of Secularism. The equals in controversial ability of the Rev. T. D. Matthias, Dr. McCann, Dr. Harrison, Dr. Smith of Edinburgh, Rev. W. Adamson, Rev. A. Stewart, and Dr. Sexton, are not forthcoming in these times. It has been my pleasure to discuss with all of the above Christian exponents, and I should be only too glad to once more meet upon the platform opponents of such polemical calibre.

What are the causes of this falling off in the ranks of first-class Christian debaters? Probably it has been found that discussion does not strengthen the Christian's position. The clergy, as a rule, are not being trained in the art of debate, and their general knowledge has, no doubt, convinced them that it is difficult in this critical age to harmonize Christian teachings with modern requirements. The recent changes and modifications which have occurred in the interpretation of the term "Christianity" have placed its advocates in a dilemma. The more intelligent adherents of the faith will not now accept it in the same sense as their predecessors did. Doctrines once regarded as essentials no longer command implicit belief. Hence the logical result of this "change of front" is, that Christianity was not originally perfect, in which case a severe blow is struck at its alleged "divinity"; or that man has so "improved" its nature that we do not now possess "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Moreover, it is evident that Christians do not attempt to practise what they preach, which shows the inutility of their teachings as a guide in human conduct. Christ's words: "Blessed be ye poor"; "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God"; "Love your enemies" and "your neighbor as yourself"; "Resist not evil"; "Lend, hoping for nothing again"; "Give to every man that asketh"; forgive your brother "seventy times seven"; "Take no thought for your life"—such sayings are unheeded, and never acted upon even by those who preach "Christ and him crucified." To reasonably defend in public debate such inconsistency as is manifested in putting forth these impracticable injunctions as the regulators of daily life is more than can be accomplished. And Christian advocates recognise this, which accounts for the fact that many of them who discuss will never touch

the main points at issue, but content themselves with dealing with side issues, and appealing to the religious emotions of their audiences.

The results of Freethought criticism furnish other reasons why the clergy will not debate the claims of their faith. It has been demonstrated particularly during the last two decades that the "divine" origin of Christianity cannot be proved; that probable causes for its human origination can be assigned; that its morality, doctrines, and ceremonies are not original; that belief in its teachings is not necessary to the living of moral lives; that it has not been the cause of modern progress; that its teaching that prayer is a source of material help, its demand for uniformity of belief, its threatened punishment for disbelief, and its sanctions of persecution are opposed to science, the nature of our mentality, the principle of justice, and the right of intellectual freedom. Finally, we discern a cause for the dislike of public debate upon the part of most of the professors of Christianity, in the growing desire for a different religion to that embodied in orthodoxy. There is at the present time a marked tendency to accept the term religion in its etymological and secular meaning, rather than in its alleged supernatural sense. Regarding true religion as ethical unity, established to promote the welfare of mankind on earth, its proper basis is enlightened benevolence. This great human instinct is not dependent upon any form of supernaturalism for its manifestation; its activity is evoked by a desire to alleviate the sufferings of the afflicted, and to enhance the happiness of the unfortunate. Emerson has said: "The mind of this age has fallen away from theology to morals. I conceive it to be an advance." Undoubtedly this is true, for the intellect of the age is more than ever finding its justification for being good in the results of action, rather than in the commands of creeds and dogmas. The inspiration to goodness is now recognised as coming from earth, not heaven; from man, not God.

To make public debate valuable it appears to me that the following method should be observed: (1) That principles, not men, should be discussed. "Black sheep" are to be found, unfortunately, in all sections of society; and Christianity, with all its wealth, power, and two thousand years of existence, has failed to remove them. (2) While, of course, some oratorical display is permissible, the main consideration in all discussions ought to be an argumentative exposition of a person's own views, and a fair and reasonable criticism of those of his opponents. (3) Warmth in debate cannot always be avoided, but loss of good temper should never occur. It impairs the reasoning powers, mars the function of judgment, and arouses the inferior passions of the audience. (4) Neither disputant should assume that he has "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" in his favor. The value of debate consists in the sincere endeavor to discover what truth obtains on either side. The mistake of some Christian disputants with whom I have debated has been that they have assumed they were absolutely right in their opinions, and that their opponents were unquestionably wrong in theirs. This is dogmatism, which, when exercised, must destroy the utility of debate. Dr. Watts, whose belief in Christianity will not be questioned, wrote very sensibly upon this point. He says: "A dogmatical spirit inclines a man to be censorious to his neighbors. Every one of his opinions appears to him written, as it were, with sunbeams, and he grows angry that his neighbors do not see it in the same light. He is tempted to disdain his correspondents as men of low and dark understandings, because they do not believe what he does." (5) If mistakes are made on either side, they should not be termed wilful misrepresentations. Such an imputation is a charge of dishonesty, which no disputant is justified in allowing to be made unrebuked. (6) The audiences ought to listen calmly to both speakers, as, presumably, those who attend debates are present for the purpose of hearing that from which they dissent. In the language of Dr. Watts, whose words should have weight with Christians, it is necessary to "keep up a just indifference to either side of the question if you would be led honestly into the truth; for a desire or inclination leaning to either side biasses the judgment strangely; whereas, by this indifference for everything but truth, you will be excited to examine fairly, instead of presuming, and your assent will be secured from going beyond your evidence."

In all discussions the disputants need not be regarded as necessarily personal enemies. Differences of opinion should not be allowed to destroy that friendship which is essential to the pleasantness and value of public debate.

CHARLES WATTS.

THE GOSPEL OF THOMAS.

PRESUMING, worthy reader, that you are of a sceptical disposition, you certainly ought to read the gospel of the doubting Thomas. If you do, and exercise your critical faculties, you may be led to some very sceptical conclusions indeed. The gospel exists in three forms—two in Greek, and one in Latin. All are translated by A. Walker in the volume of *Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, and Revelations*, in T. and T. Clark's *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*. But before we go any further it is necessary to warn the sceptical reader that he must neither take the alleged date of the Council of Nice [A.C. 325] for granted, nor that any given document is ante or post-Nicene. Let us see what Tommy has to say for himself. The first Greek form has nineteen sections, the second eleven, and the Latin is an amplification.

Tom sets out by informing us that he is an Israelite—presumably without guile—and is going to tell the miracles of our Lord Jesus Christ in his infancy for the benefit of the brethren among the heathen. First of all, at five years of age he made twelve mud sparrows on the Sabbath. He clapped his hands, and said, "Off you go," and the sparrows went off, like the twelve apostles. Then the son of Annas, the scribe, took a willow branch, and let out the waters Jesus had collected. Jesus withers him on the spot. He dried up. Then another boy ran against him. "And Jesus was angry, and said: Thou shalt not go back the way thou camest. And immediately he fell down dead." The complaisant Joseph expostulates with him, but he retorts by striking his accusers blind. Next he goes to Zachæus to learn his letters, but Jesus said to him: "Thou hypocrite! first, if thou knowest, teach the A, and then we shall believe thee about the B." Zachæus beseeches Joseph to take him home. Then we are told that, Jesus playing with some boys in a loft, one fell down and was killed. The parents reproached Jesus, who make him stand up and confess that he (Jesus) did not throw the boy down (as one might suspect from his usual behavior). Then he raises to life a young man who cut his foot with an axe, and died from loss of blood. Proverbs xxx. 4 asks: "Who hath bound his waters in a garment?" Tom takes the hint, and says that when J. C. was six years old his virgin mater sent him for water. He broke the pitcher, but brought back the water in his cloak. "And seeing this, she was struck with astonishment, and embraced him and kissed him." Anon he sows one grain of corn and reaps a hundred big baskets-full. Pater Joseph makes a bedstead too short, and Jesus pulls it out to the right length. Then he goes to school again, and says to his master: "Tell me the power of the Alpha, and I will tell thee the power of the Beta." James, his brother, is bitten by a viper and is healed, and Jesus restores a child to life and afterwards a man, and then is taken to the temple, and says the same as is recorded in the second chapter of Luke—which ends the gospel.

Let us suppose such a Gospel as this published for the first time to-day. Whether it appeared in the *Rock* or in the *Freethinker*, its author would be suspected of writing a skit on Christian credulity. Yet the book has as good claims to antiquity as any other portion of Christian literature. Either Justin Martyr used it, or it used Justin Martyr, for almost the same words are used in mentioning that Jesus made ploughs and yokes. Irenæus (*Against Heresies*, i. 20) tells the story about Alpha and Beta as among "an unspeakable number of apocryphal and spurious writings forged to bewilder the minds of foolish men." Origen, in his first Homily on Luke, explicitly mentions the Gospel of Thomas; and it is also mentioned in Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*, iii. 25. The evidence for its early existence is quite as clear as that for any of the Gospels. One point is particularly notable. In the Syriac recension of the Gospel of Thomas, Joseph is several times spoken of as the father of Jesus, exactly as he is in the Syriac Gospel discovered by Mrs. Lewis at Mount Sinai. This notable admission is struck out in the Greek

and Latin versions. But what living mortal would place the slightest credence on any one of its stories? The Gospel of Thomas is in many particulars very similar to the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy, which has claims of embodying stories clearly older than our canonical Gospels. Indeed, the comparative freedom from absurdities in these rather argues for their being of a later date.

Orthodox Christians make much of the puerility of the Apocryphal Gospels, and indeed, for stupid absurdities the Gospel of Thomas would be hard to beat. But it is rather rich of those who believe that Jesus was born of a virgin, that he was taken by the devil to the pinnacle of a temple, that he walked on the water, cast devils into pigs, and withered a fig-tree by cursing it for not bearing when the season of figs was not yet, to talk of puerile miracles. Those related by Tommy are meant as puerile. They concern Christ's childhood, and are just fit for those in a childish state of mind.

If we ask ourselves as to the probable origin of the Gospel of Thomas, few would dispute that it bears marks of being a concoction, based probably in part on tradition; part, as in the case of the water in the garment, on a ridiculous application of the Old Testament. But cannot exactly the same be said of Matthew? Does he not concoct the genealogies and fulfil the prophecies in just as barefaced a manner?

LUCIANUS

FISH STORIES.

A DOLPHIN carried the wonderful musician, Arion, to shore. He had made a great deal of money on a foreign professional tour, and was returning home by sea. The seamen flung him overboard, in order to secure his money for themselves. Arion played upon his harp, and a dolphin appeared and offered him his back, on which he safely rode home.

Fishes, and other denizens of the sea, have also played a most important part in the history of superstitions, and the Christian superstition is more or less permeated by that element, as we shall probably see.

The dolphin was a sacred, mystical symbol long before Arion's day, and it figured much in classical sculpture and painting. It also, at a much later period, figured in Christian symbolism. The meaning of the symbol may be learnt from my *Phallic Worship* pamphlet.

There is a fish called the *Remora*, or the Sucker-fish. It has a "sucking" apparatus on the back of its head and neck, by which it can attach itself to almost anything—fish, ships, etc. They have no swim-bladder, and therefore cannot rise and fall in the sea as other fishes can; but they attach themselves to others, and so rise or sink without effort, and at the expense of those which exert themselves.

The remora fastens itself to the bottoms of ships, and a great number of them would render sailing very slow, no doubt. The ancients, knowing the leading facts about the remora, proceeded to credit it with miraculous powers. It could stop a ship in the midst of the sea by simply clinging to its bottom or side; and nothing less than mystic or supernatural agency could release the vessel and enable her to proceed on her voyage. A French poet sang its praises:—

The Sucker, darting forth its feeble snout
Against the side of vessel tempest-tost,
In the mid-flood delays its onward course.

Tell us, O Remora! where thou dost hide
The anchor which can suddenly control
The movement of a bark, when struggling hard
With all the elements?

Ben Jonson says:—

I say a remora,
For it will stay a ship that's under sail.

Spenser sings:—

Looking far forth into the ocean wide,
A goodly ship, with bannors bravely dight,
And flag in her top-gallant, I espied,
Through the main sea making her merry flight;
Fair blew the wind into her bosom right,
And th' heavens looked lovely all the while
That she did seem to dance, as in delight,
And at her own felicity did smile;
All suddenly there clove unto her keel

A little fish which they call remora,
Which stopp'd her course, and held her by the heel.
Strange thing meseemeth that so small a thing
Should able be so great an one to wing.

This nonsense accords with what I was solemnly told when a boy—namely, that the breast-bone of the common toad, carefully cleaned by ants, in whose nest the toad had been buried for the purpose, would make its way in the sea against the strongest of tides; and that, carried in the pockets by any one on board, it would stop the swiftest vessel afloat. I believed it for a time, as I did Christianity; but by-and-bye grew out of both, and out of the one as naturally as out of the other.

Spenser, in the above quotation, marvels at the alleged power of the remora. Why? A man who could believe that faith like a grain of mustard seed could remove mountains, a word cure the most terrible diseases, and even raise the dead, ought surely to have been astonished at nothing. Those who believe that prayer can stay or speed a ship need not sneer at the remora or the bone of the toad. Common sense rejects them all and all alike; it treats every superstition in the same manner, and ascribes to Christ and God and saint and relic just the same power it does to that toad's bone—nay, something less. One superstition is as rational as any other, although tastes differ, and one man takes to this, another to that, for no other reason than that he was born to it and has not yet grown out of it.

JOS. SYMES.

APPEAL TO FREETHINKERS.

ONE of the most striking features of the present age in our country is the development of religious organizations. The Church of England is far stronger than it was thirty years ago, and its denominational schools are supported by immense sums of public money, which are really a fresh endowment. In these schools, which are more numerous than the Board schools under the control of the ratepayers, definite Church teaching is imparted to a vast multitude of children. Nor is the Catholic Church, although on a smaller scale, one whit behind the Church of England in extending and solidifying its power. Under the guidance of Cardinal Vaughan, it exhibits all its old mastery of the arts of priestcraft. On every side we are threatened by the forces of reaction. They are active, enterprising, haughty, and aggressive; and, in spite of the progress of science and general culture, they are a serious menace to liberty and civilization.

In these circumstances, it behoves Freethinkers to make a special effort to improve and fortify their own organization. The scientific arts of warfare on the one side cannot be successfully opposed by guerrilla fighting on the other. There must be union, concord, policy, discipline, and resources.

The only extensive organization of Freethought in Great Britain is the National Secular Society, which was founded by the late Charles Bradlaugh, who remained its President until a few months before his death, when he resigned on account of broken health and the pressure of other engagements. Under his leadership the Society became widely known, and it powerfully assisted him in his splendid struggle for constitutional rights against the House of Commons. But it was never an effective organization apart from his personality, and it never enjoyed an approach to an adequate income. During the past eight years the Society has been conducted, more or less on the old lines, under the presidency of Charles Bradlaugh's successor, Mr. G. W. Foote. To him has been mainly left the task of carrying on the Society's business, and of raising funds from time to time for that purpose. But it is now felt by the Executive and most of the party, as he himself has felt all along, that this is by no means the best policy. Less responsibility should be thrown upon the President; others should take their proper share in the Society's operations; the policy pursued should be at once more general and more settled; and, above all, the Society's finances should be placed upon a business-like and solid foundation.

A scheme designed on these lines was brought forward by the new Treasurer, Mr. S. Hartmann, shortly before the last Whit-Sunday Conference. The Conference remitted it to the Executive, with authority to put it in

operation as far as might be found advisable, and also feasible. The Executive has adopted the Scheme broadly, and has appointed a special sub-committee to see to its promotion.

Mr. Hartmann proposes to retain the Society's central office in London and the services of its paid Secretary. Hitherto these have been the sole regular expenses of the organization. But it is now proposed to go much farther. *First*, to pay the President a salary, so that he may superintend the Society's affairs without loss. Should it be possible to make this salary adequate, it is contemplated that the President should lecture (say) half the Sundays in the year for provincial Branches gratuitously. *Second*, to engage a financial secretary, whose duty would be to travel through the country, visiting Branches with a view to assisting their organization, and calling upon members and sympathizers with a view to obtaining subscriptions. *Third*, to engage three Lecturers at a reasonable salary, who would deliver lectures in London and in the provinces without a fee. *Fourth*, to circulate leaflets, manifestoes, and other literature, including the Society's old-established Almanack, and to organize a system of correspondence in the press and otherwise on matters in which the Society is interested.

This Scheme could be carried out on an income of £1,500 a year. To raise this it is proposed to obtain promises of regular annual subscriptions, ranging from £100 (or more) down to 5s. Mr. Hartmann himself leads off with a promise of £50, at least for the first year. It is thought that other considerable subscriptions may be forthcoming, that a few may subscribe £20, more £10, still more £5, a large number £1, and a very much larger number 10s., or even 5s.

A number of such promises have already been obtained, and acknowledged week by week in the *Freethinker*; and it is hoped that this appeal, in circular form, will induce a large accession of subscribers. It is not necessary to pay the promised amount at once, although of course a prompt remittance is always welcome. A list of promises will be kept at the Society's office, and they can be redeemed during the year at the subscribers' convenience.

Besides a public acknowledgment in the *Freethinker*, every subscriber (as far as possible) will receive an official receipt from the Society's secretary.

All the money received will pass through the Treasurer's hands, and a balance-sheet will be published annually, duly certified by the Society's auditors.

The expenditure will be watched in detail by the special sub-committee, and in general by the Executive, to which the sub-committee reports at every monthly meeting. The President has always the right to attend committee-meetings when he deems it advisable, and as he always occupies the chair at the Executive meetings there is no fear of the working of the Scheme falling into the hands of any partial or irresponsible clique. Indeed, the machinery seems to promise the utmost safety and efficiency.

Should this Scheme be carried into effect, it will immensely promote the progress and organization of Freethought in Great Britain; and it can be developed indefinitely with the increase of financial resources. It now remains to be seen whether the Freethought party will give it their effective support. That they are able to do so is beyond a doubt. They are numerous enough, and, although they are a comparatively poor party, they are also rich enough for this. What is asked of them is not an intolerable tax upon their generosity. If every one does something, according to his means and opportunity, the sum of £1,500 a year can be raised without a strain. In making this appeal, therefore, its promoters are not without a reasonable hope of success. They await with some confidence the response of the Freethinkers of Great Britain.

(On behalf of the Executive)

G. W. FOOTE (*President*).
S. HARTMANN (*Treasurer*).
R. FORDER (*Hon. Secretary*).
E. M. VANCE (*Secretary*).
E. BATER
T. GORNIOT
E. W. QUAY
G. J. WARREN

Sub-
Committee.

National Secular Society's Office, 366-7, Strand, London, W.

A MYSTERY UNVEILED.

I DREAMED. Perhaps a heavy supper accounted for it, but I prefer to imagine it a revelation from the Almighty—one-third of deity. An angel stood by the side of my bed in the regulation white robe, draped like a Grecian statue, with long wings folded at her—his—oh, hang it—its side. Remembering the legend of "Rabbi ben Levi," I did not fear this mysterious visitor, who, when it saw that I was awake, spoke as follows: "Being of earth, blessed art thou above all men (what price the Virgin Mary now? thought I), for thou shalt see the mystery of the Trinity unveiled. Come with me." I objected that I could not fly, and incidentally mentioned that I was somewhat sceptical as to whether it (the angel) could, without a tail, properly steer itself to its destination. Being, however, somewhat sharply admonished, and told to "cut it short" by my heavenly visitor, I announced myself as ready to accompany it, whereupon it laid its hand on my head. The room and all familiar surroundings disappeared, I felt myself travel at a prodigious rate through space, then suddenly stop, my eyes growing slowly accustomed to the dazzling light that met their gaze. "Behold," said the angel, "time is annihilated; you shall see the mystery of ages, the problem of mankind ever since man took it into his head that his God was three persons, and yet only one God; for God is the embodiment of man's idea, and is doomed by his own act of creation to be whatever his creatures make him look and understand."

I looked, and when I could see a little clearer I saw what seemed like a gigantic path encircling the universe, for all the world like a cycle track. Suddenly, as I looked, the angels, myriads of which were seated round the track ("throne" must be a mistranslation in St. John's nightmare), struck up "Holy, holy, holy" in such a variety of keys that I was forced to put my fingers into my ears to prevent the drums being split. "You'll soon get accustomed to that," said my guide, when I had recovered myself a little. "Here they come." I looked, and the mystery was clear; the word "in," in the "three-in-one" doctrine, should have been, and was probably, originally "on"—three on one. It was clear now, clear as crystal; for down the long track came a triplet, with God the Father on the front seat, God the Son on the middle, and God the Holy Ghost occupying the back, and twisting his ethereal legs round the back stays in an endeavor to escape doing any work—a peculiarity which is even now apparent among some of his followers. As they went along, behind their pace, which consisted of a quad "manned" by Gabriel and three other leading lights of heaven, the rows of angels, archangels, cherubim, and seraphim, and the other holy spectators and animals, made space hideous with the continued twanging of harps that had evidently not been tuned since the inauguration of heaven, and cries of "Holy, holy," etc., until they had passed, when the cry was taken up further along the vast circle, until it died away in illimitable space.

Then my guide turned to me and said: "Even as the Gods of Christianity are man's own creation, so are the others you will see"; and as I looked I saw Buddha, mounted on a single path racer, being paced by three Hindu Gods who were pointed out to me as Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. Immediately following him came Mohammed on a tandem with one of his chosen ones, whom I did not know, occupying the back seat, followed by numerous gods and goddesses, some of whom I recognised as the old Greek deities, and whom I noted were absolutely out of the running now, and simply rode round and round—played-out gods of a departed age.

I followed them with my eyes as far as I could, then turned and looked along the track in the opposite direction. Could I believe my senses? Coming straight towards me was a quintette, and the front rider was—yes, it was Charles Darwin. As it drew nearer I saw the other riders, and recognised Huxley, Bradlaugh, Voltaire, and Paine, while "hanging on" behind, with his front wheel a few inches away from their back one, seated well over his work, and pedalling with the steady perseverance of a machine, was a youth with dogged resolution written all over his face, and whose eyes flashed defiance at the rows of heavenly inhabitants as he rode along. His approach was not heralded with the music (save the mark) that signalled the approach of the others; on the contrary, there were a few hisses and groans, but for the most part dead silence. As he passed I turned to the angel. "Who is that," I asked; he answered, "That is Reason." "And has Reason always ridden against the gods?" He appeared somewhat reluctant to answer. "Well," he said, "if you must know, he has always *tried* to ride, but up to the last century or so he has had but little chance of success, it taking him nearly all his time to repair damages caused by the others, who, although at enmity with each other, yet unite in hemming in or trying to overturn him if he is anywhere near them. Of late years, however, he has been getting on slightly better, for, with the new scientific pacing, the others are somewhat chary of interfering with him; and although they could, when he was alone, give him a nasty fall, the chances are that, now he is

stronger and is paced in a proper and methodical manner, that particular deity who tried to throw him would get thrown himself. But here they come again." Once more the triple deity of Christianity went by; again the other gods followed at about the same distance; while looking down the track I could see Reason coming along with a regular swing, swing of his pedals, but a little nearer than before. "He has a lot of work to do yet," said my guide. The last of the gods had passed, and as I waited I noticed how pale and worn they looked. Their time had nearly come. With the regularity of clockwork the quintette drew nearer. I could contain myself no longer; I sprang to my feet, and with a loud "hurrah!" I—awoke. PERSEUS.

ACID DROPS.

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL, who is (we believe) a sort of a Christian Socialist, recently delivered an address as president of the Bedford Liberal Association. Bedford is a very pious town, and Mr. Russell humored its bigotry. Referring to the recent war between Greece and Turkey, he described it as "a prolonged and desperate encounter between the powers of light and darkness, between civilization and barbarism, between Christianity and Islam." Now, this "prolonged" encounter lasted a few weeks, and this "desperate" encounter was marked by the Greeks running away every time the Turks came up to fight a battle. So much for the plain facts of the case. And as to the statement that Christianity stands for light and Islam for darkness, one has only to refer Mr. Russell to the history of these two religions in relation to each other. Christianity has sinned more against Islam than Islam has ever sinned against Christianity; and certainly the Mohammedans have never equalled the Christians in domestic quarrels and butcheries over disputed points of faith.

We advise Mr. George Russell, before he talks any more about Christian light and Mohammedan darkness, to look at the last monthly report of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. During one month this Society inquired into 2,153 complaints of neglect, ill-treatment, and other wrongs, of which 1,939 were dealt with, and 214 are pending. The cases found to be true were 1,807. The welfare of 4,921 children was affected, and there were 2,759 offenders. Of these 1,428 were warned, and 169 prosecuted, only ten being discharged, and the other 186 being convicted. The punishments inflicted amounted altogether to £41 in fines and 32 years of imprisonment. That is the record for one single month in "the most Christian country in the world," while no Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children is wanted in Mohammedan countries, not even in Turkey. The average Turk, hearing of such cruelties to little children, would raise his hands to heaven and exclaim: "Great Allah! why dost thou suffer these infidel dogs to pollute the earth?"

Mr. Russell would also do well to read the interview with Madame Hyacinthe Loyson, wife of the famous Catholic reformer, Père Hyacinthe, published in the *Westminster Gazette* of Wednesday, September 29. This lady with her husband spent nearly two years in North Africa, Palestine, and Syria, and is about to publish a book on "The Lands of Islam." She went to the East with the usual Christian prejudice against the Mussulman faith and morals, and she came back considerably disabused. "We have heard much lately," she says, "about the persecuting intolerance of Islam. Of course, there can be no justification on either side for the recent atrocious massacres, but it is nevertheless true that no creed in the world is more tolerant than the Mohammedan of other varieties of monotheistic belief. They are intolerant only of idolatry. To say that the Mussulman has any *religious* feeling against the Christian which is not the reflection of wanton contempt on the Christian's part is absurd."

Even in the matter of morality, Madame Loyson says that the Moslem women have no very high opinion of the Christians. The Moslem women are chaste, and their homes are sacred. Polygamy is rarely practised, and when it is it is far superior to prostitution and adultery. The Moslem women say: "We have a legal and limited polygamy; with you it is illicit and promiscuous." Madame Loyson found material devotion and domestic happiness everywhere. The youths were as shy and chaste as maidens; there were not two codes of morals, one for men and one for women; and flirtation was absolutely unknown. Madame Loyson still believes in Christian civilization "as it should be," but as matters stand she denies that Christian nations can claim moral superiority over the Moslem world.

Mr. Andrew Carnegie has just been declaring that "rank and wealth are clogs upon the energies of man"—a declaration which the poor people of Kingussie greeted with loud

applause. Whenever this millionaire proposes to unload we are quite ready to take over his burden.

Almost at the same time, Archbishop Temple was holding forth at the Church Congress on the deceitfulness of riches. He doesn't propose to unload either. At least he doesn't make any sign. What he does is this: he tells us that "genuine self-denying Christians" seldom fall into poverty and trouble. Very likely. There aren't many of them to fall into it.

The other evening the *Westminster Gazette* published a statement, summarized from the *Australian Review of Reviews*, concerning the expurgation of school books in Victoria, in which it was stated that "even the name of Christ was blotted out as an evil thing," and that classic pieces of literature by Burns, Longfellow, and other writers, were mutilated in this way to fit them for the palate of Victorian children. The next evening the *Westminster* published a correction by a correspondent, who put the case as follows: "Before the schools were taken over by the State, religion was hardly taught in them, although the clergy had it all their own way. The late Minister of Instruction, Dr. Pierson, believed firmly in the religious education of children, but the difficulties were very great in compulsory education for all denominations; and he did not approve of a master teaching what he probably disbelieved himself. The denominations could not agree as to the form of religion to be taught. Dr. Pierson then gave the clergy of different denominations the right to teach so many hours in the schools. But very few availed themselves of the privilege."

The *Westminster* adds that it finds the following words in a pamphlet issued by Dr. Pierson himself: "The men who first started the statement that the name of God had been expunged from our readers must have known that they were propagating a deliberate lie." By the way, this "Dr. Pierson" was really Dr. Charles H. Pearson, author of that most able and interesting book on *National Life and Character*.

The Congress of the Holy Synod of Russia has determined that the schools of Raskolniks (Dissenters) are to be immediately and permanently closed. Membership of any of the extreme sects is to be treated as a criminal offence, and the authorities of the commune in which such sectarians are domiciled are to have the power of banishing them to Siberia. The ecclesiastical authorities are to be empowered to take away Raskolnik children from their parents and place them in orthodox educational establishments. Once again the saying of Christ is to be fulfilled, and the fathers set at variance with the children, and the children with their fathers.

The persecution of Christians by Christians is narrated in a shilling book on *Christian Martyrdom in Russia*, by V. Tchertkoff, which has been published by the Brotherhood Publishing Company. There are, it seems, in Russia some 20,000 Doukhoborts, or Spirit-wrestlers, who hold with Tolstoi and the Quakers that Christianity forbids the taking up of arms or going to law. They and their families have been relentlessly beaten, robbed, exiled, starved, and imprisoned for not conforming to the behests of the Christian State in which they have the misfortune to dwell.

"Blessed are ye when men shall persecute you," said Christ; but these fanatical followers, in the policy of non-resistance, seem to have undergone every variety of outrage and oppression, and the remnants of them left are in such necessitous circumstances that an appeal has to be made for them in other countries than that dominated by God and the Czar.

It is said that about eight thousand Nestorians in Persia are preparing to enter the orthodox Greek Church. This is to put themselves under the protection of Russia. The Nestorians object to calling Mary the mother of God; but that is a trifle easily swallowed when compared with the possibility of incurring martyrdom at the hands of the Kurds.

Tibet, where the Mahatmas come from, has been displaying its standard of civilization by the torture of Mr. Henry Savage Landor, the distinguished artist and traveller. But for the interference of the Grand Lama he would have been decapitated. He has now returned to India with injured spine and twenty-two wounds.

On Sunday last all the Roman Catholic churches and chapels in England were solemnly dedicated to the Mother of God. England is called the Dowry of Mary. Unfortunately, she cannot realize upon it yet. When she does she will be able to increase poor old Joseph's pin money.

After the dedication to Mary, the Mother of God was

solemnly besought to "intercede with her Divine Son to bring England back to the Catholic faith." But we guess it will take a lot of praying to accomplish this. Mary and Jesus don't seem to be moving very rapidly towards it. Their motto seems to be *festina lente*—with heavy stress on the *lente*. England, as a matter of fact, is less Catholic now than she was soon after the Reformation. Catholicism continued to be strong, though it grew feebler and feebler, and made its last splash in the days of the Young Pretender.

We quite understand the desire of the Catholic Church to recapture England. She is the centre of a wide empire, and the richest country in the world. The priests *pray for* England in the hope that they may yet be able to *prey on* England.

Josephine Coquard, who stabbed the Abbé Ménard, curé of St. Médard, Paris, is unmarried, and is said to have pestered the Abbé for the last three years with her cases of conscience and wild declarations of love. Confession sometimes proves a trying ordeal for both penitent and priest.

The Archbishop of Vienna having interceded with the Pope on behalf of Count Badeni, on account of his duel, the Papal absolution was sent by telegraph. Without it the Count must have been excommunicated, and doomed to Davy Jones's locker.

More troubles have arisen in Uganda, where, we were told a little ago by the Bible Society, the natives display an extraordinary desire for copies of the Word of God, which they, with reason, regard as the white man's fetish. King Mwanga, a convert, has risen in rebellion, and, according to a missionary's letter, it appears that the revolt was an "anti-European and anti-religious affair." Mwanga was restive under British control, and, in the view of the missionaries, his sympathizers were black sheep; for, runs the letter, "all the Baganda who have at present joined the king are either those who have been excommunicated, or who have been threatened with excommunication." The process of conversion is by no means a guarantee of good behavior, or the Church would not so often have to bring excommunication into use.

The Rev. Mr. Haweis has been facetiously earnest on the subject of church collections. According to the *Daily News*, he last Sunday brought his congregation perilously near to an explosion of laughter. After stating that Christians did not worship copper, but sometimes worshipped gold, he bethought himself and acknowledged that they sometimes sacrificed to the god of copper in church. There was a sanction in the Christian records for copper tribute in the story of the widow's mite, because she gave all she had. Then he added that it sometimes seemed to him that he had been preaching to a church full of widows.

It was with dreadful alarm we turned over the pages of the *Nineteenth Century* to read "The Coming Revolt of the Clergy!" by the Rev. Heneage Jebb. What outburst of revolution was to be expected from our magnificent army of sky-pilots? Would the State, the bishops, or only society in general, be overturned? Happily we discovered nothing but a country cleric's grumble, that he had not benefited as he expected under the Agricultural Rates Act. It is only a parson considering his own pecuniary interests. We breathe again.

At the Church Congress there was lamentation at the decline in the supply of curates. The sky-pilot business is still fairly attractive, needing little brains and less work. But it is not esteemed as formerly, and young men of talent will not choose a career in which they must either be dull or dishonest.

Man millinery is still a great attraction in the Church. Canon Streatfield, Vicar of Emmanuel Church, Streatham, has withdrawn his acceptance of the living of Clifton, Bristol, owing to the disapproval of the trustees of his proposal to preach, not in a black gown, but in his surplice. A year ago the point was seriously argued in a court of law that the surplice was alone the legal vestment of the clergy in the pulpit, and that the use of the black gown was an irregularity, and that therefore a bequest left for the maintenance of a church at Eastbourne, conditional on the use of the black gown in the pulpit, was valid, notwithstanding the abandonment of the black gown for the surplice. The Court, however, scouted the contention.

Heinrich Wintzer, who has spent a number of years in Mexico, says that in the churches the priest himself sells the candles that are sacrificed to Mary, and when the person that has bought the sacrifice has left, the priest blows out the candle and sells it over again. The clergy still have

a strong influence over the semi-barbaric Indians and uncultured women; but the leading men are Freemasons or adherents of "a rationalistic system of philosophy closely akin to that of the French Encyclopædists." They never go to church except as a matter of form.

Some very orthodox person, who has far more money than sense, has, for a long time past, advertised in the leading daily papers texts of Scripture, as "Without shedding of blood is no remission of sins," and "He that believeth not shall be damned." Doubtless he is one of the undesigned agencies of Freethought, for the perusal of his texts must tend to bring the old book into disrepute.

Moody has been telling an American yarn of an Atheist, out of whose grave a tree is shown which grew as proof there is a God. A German correspondent says the same tale is told of a countess at Hanover. In England a tree is shown growing out of a grave in Tuan Churchyard, near Welwyn, Herts, and the same story is told of a lady in that district. In each case, however, the story was not known till long after the tree had sprouted. At Hanover, according to Herr Dorscher, the lady out of whose grave a tree sprang was a Christian.

The Rev. John McNeill is one of those believers who, when they have once opened their gullet, do not balk at what they are asked to swallow. Preaching, it is said, before close on five thousand people in St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, he took his text from the opening verses of 1 Kings vi., which relate how the bald-headed Elisha, without any magnet, caused an axe to swim. "That is a swimming story, isn't it?" he asked. "Jonah and the whale, the axe made to swim, and the Jericho that fell down flat without striking a blow! Isn't it strange, let's frankly admit, that God should [have put stories like these into this book of his." But, says the Rev. J. McNeill, he thanks God for these miraculous stories. He poohpoohs those who would like to reduce the Bible to a mere collection of moral and spiritual maxims and precepts, and follows the Salvationist who shouted after quoting the text, "Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him," hallelujah! Enoch arrived at heaven in his boots. Mr. McNeill shows what suits him, but we suspect there were a few shrewd Scotsmen even among his audience who would "ha'e their doots."

James Campbell, of no address, is under remand on a charge of stealing silver spoons and ivory-handled knives from the Rev. Dr. Patterson, at St. Mary's Rectory, Cadogan-street, Chelsea. Instead of presenting him with the other contents of his plate-chest, the rev. gentleman, who is Catholic Bishop of Emmans, is prosecuting the prisoner, whose sole treasures will soon be where thieves cannot break through and steal.

The Puget Sound Methodist Conference has convicted and expelled the Rev. W. T. Ford, of Everett, Wash. The Rev. Mr. Ford was found guilty of ministerial conduct involving the virtue of his servant girl.

In the case of Henry Scott, a yachtsman of Chelmon-diston, Suffolk, who committed suicide by hanging himself to a tree on Sunday morning, some little girls leaving chapel saw the deceased hanging, and they told the adult worshippers; but not one of them would touch the deceased until a police-constable arrived on the spot. This was almost as absurd as the case where the coroner asked: "Did you cut the man down?" "I did not." "And why not? Do you know that had you cut the rope this man might have been living now?" "Yes," responded the witness sulkily—"living, and suing me for the price of the rope."

Noticing the Rev. G. C. Bateman's work on *The Vivarium*, the *Daily News* observes that the common smooth snake has no venom, as the barbarians of Malta—where the snake is still found—discovered to their astonishment when, on a certain memorable occasion, there came a "viper" out of the heat and fastened on Paul's hand. The story in Acts xxviii. 6 says that on this account they "said that he was a god"—a little fact which, like the saying of Herod that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead, proves the credulity of the age when Christianity was first promulgated.

A Star and Cross of the Order of Christ of Portugal, composed of a large number of fine brilliants, was offered for sale by auction at Debenham, Storr, and Sons' Rooms in Covent Garden, but were withdrawn at £520. The order of Christ seems to be of much more value than the order of Jesus.

"Vindex" sent to the *Daily News* an amusing vindication of the Authorized Version of the Bible as against the Revised, in answer to the strictures of the Rev. Dawson Burns. His first contention is that in 2 Samuel xv. 7 they have actually

retained the manifestly absurd and impossible translation "forty years"—"It came to pass, after forty years, that Absalom said unto the King," etc. But if this is the reading of the last MSS., who is "Vindex" that he should undertake to say the Holy Ghost did not mean forty years when he says forty? "Vindex" would say "four" is more probable. So it is more probable that Methusaleh lived 96 years than 996.

Then he says: "In 2 Kings ii. 23 the term 'little children,' used of those who mocked Elisha, is retained; whereas it is understood that they were almost 'grown-up' young people." "Vindex" does not seem to relish the two she-bears gobbling up forty-two little children, but the job would have been harder were they grown-up. Lastly, "Vindex" objects to the unwise use of the word "whale" in Matthew xii. 40. The Revisers were too scrupulous for "Vindex."

General Bailey (we see from the New York *Truthseeker*) is travelling as a lecturer in the Southern States, and from Columbus, Missouri, he writes to a Story county paper, Indiana, of his experiences there. He says that the Missis-sippians don't know what ham and eggs really are, and that cooks should be sent along from the North instead of missionaries. "Bibles are plenty," he says, "but the cooking is awful." "The boy who cleans my room," he adds, "and helps me kill bed bugs, said sorrowfully, 'Boss, I wish I could read.' Poor nigger! And yet Bishop Taylor is wanting money for Africa."

An amusing little occurrence is reported from Baden-Baden. An over-zealous policeman noticed two gentlemen buying flowers at an hour when, according to Sunday regulations, selling is prohibited. The policeman immediately walked up and asked them for their names. The one proved to be the Oberbürgermeister of Stuttgart, Herr Ruemelin; the other the Chancellor, Prince Hohenlohe.

The *Bulletin* says that many Christian churches, mortgaged to the very apex of their steeples, are sacking paid bell-ringers, organists, etc.; the ubiquitous bun-struggle and bazaar have to be run for all they are worth to rake in money enough to keep the show going; and some ministers, rather than submit to the "special effort" humiliation, forego a slice of their stipends every year. Verily the Kaws is sick, and the pietist waxes too mean to pay for his own salvation.

Parkfield Wesleyan Mission, Stockton-on-Tees, is getting up a Christmas Goose Club. The printed handbill of this enterprise contains a portrait of one of the intended victims. We suppose it is imaginary, and not from life, unless a Mission convert sat as the artist's model.

A writer in the *Daily News* says: "Apropos of my remarks on the sometimes conflicting ideals of religion and gentlemanliness, a lady sends me an amusing anecdote of a friend who bewailed to her the loss of a somewhat ill-bred but extremely wealthy neighbor who had been very liberal in his help to her country charities. 'Miss X. is dead,' said she; 'he was so good and kind and helpful to me in all sorts of ways; he was so vulgar, poor dear fellow, we could not know him in London; but we shall meet in heaven.'"

Mr. E. T. Hargrove, the President of the Theosophical Society of America, has resigned in the midst of his term of office, which does not expire until next April. Mr. E. A. Neresheimer is nominated as the next President. At the same time, the *Theosophical News*, edited by Mr. Crosbie, gives up the ghost, and is to be reincarnated as the *New Century*, which is to be edited by Mrs. K. A. Tingley, the leader of the movement in America, who is understood to be on speaking terms with the Mahatmas.

Adam Oldfield, a Bethnal-green dock laborer, suffered many years from chronic rheumatic gout, and often expressed a wish that God would give him a happy release. At last he took the matter into his own hands, and drowned himself in the River Lea. The jury brought in the usual verdict of temporary insanity. No doubt they thought the poor fellow should have gone on praying to God. But that is a justification of the Peculiar People. Christian juries are evidently in a very mixed condition.

"The Wonders of Prayer" are trumpeted in the *British Evangelist*, and an anonymous infidel is silenced by a Christian lady who prays for cash to carry on her mission work, and gets it. This pious journal, however, has nothing to say on behalf of the Peculiar People. It only believes in prayer with proper reservations.

The union of Christianity and Humanity was displayed by the thirteen Salvationists who rode seven miles from Chesterton in a cab with one horse.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, October 10, Lecture Hall, 110 Brunswick-street, Glasgow: 11.30, "Giving up the Bible"; 2.30, "Is Christ Possible?" 6.30, "God and the Devil."

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, October 12-15, City Hall (North Saloon), at 8 p.m., Debate with Rev. W. T. Lee; subjects, "Is there a Future Life?" and "Did Jesus Christ Rise from the Dead?" Councillor George Mitchell in the chair.

October 17 and 24, Athenæum Hall, London; 31, Camberwell.

November 23, Leicester.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. C. WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—October 10, Birmingham; 11 and 12, debate at Bristol-street Board School, Birmingham; 13 and 14, debate at Bradford; 17, Huddersfield; 18 and 19, lectures at Bristol-street Board School, Birmingham, under the Hartmann Scheme; 24, Camberwell, London; 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.

J. N. L.—Both jokes are "chestnuts." We printed them more years ago than we care to remember.

H. LEES SUMNER.—Thanks. See paragraphs.

SHREDS.—Your verse begins well, but does not keep up to the same level. But do not be dismayed. In this, as in other matters, the way to succeed is to keep trying.

W. ELCOATS.—Thanks. See paragraph.

MONCURE D. CONWAY writes us from New York: "Two corrections are needed in my rejoinder to Mr. Wheeler. 1. Dr. Cooper died in 1839, not 1840. 2. The lithograph of Paine, circulated at Paine's death, is from a portrait of him painted by the elder Jarvis in 1805, the only portrait of him ever painted by Jarvis."

G. ROBERTS.—See paragraph. Mr. Heaford cannot be well-known when he visits a town for the first time. We have no doubt whatever that his audiences will improve now that he has introduced himself at Plymouth.

MRS E. M. VANCE, N. S. S. Secretary, acknowledges the following fresh promises towards the Treasurer's Scheme, those marked (p) being paid:—Dr. W. Hardwicke, £1 1s.; W. H. Deakin, 10s. 6d.; Mrs. W. H. Deakin, 10s. 6d.; W. Davey, 5s. (p); J. Rees, £1 (p); G. H. Bligh, 2s. (p).

J. K. MAAGAARD.—Positivism, at least as taught by Auguste Comte, deserves different treatment. Comte used the word *religion* in a purely natural sense. There may never be a Religion of Humanity, as Thomas Paine dreamed before Comte, and as Shelley dreamed before him too; but the conception is a great one, and Freethinkers should treat it with respect.

R. E. HOLDING.—See "Sugar Plums."

N. S. S. FINANCIAL REORGANIZATION SCHEME.—G. Brady sends us £1, being two monthly contributions of 10s.

ALERT.—(1) Thanks for the enclosures. Pleased to hear you appreciate our articles on the case of the Peculiar People. (2) You overlooked our paragraph on Mr. Ward's week at Derby. No report was sent us of the Watts and Waldron debate. We do not keep a staff of reporters. (3) What reason is there why the same subject should not be debated in another town? You might as well say that the same lecture should not be delivered twice. As a matter of fact, fresh points do arise in those debates, although, of course, the leading arguments are fixed and unalterable. Ingersoll himself cannot start a new argument against Christianity. The value of a lecture consists in its force and originality of presentation. (4) The only persons who have any right of complaint against any officer of a Society are its members. Those who scream from outside deserve, and as far as we are concerned will receive, but silent contempt.

C. COHEN acknowledges the following promises to the N. S. S. Treasurer's Scheme:—H. Irving, £1; S. Rodger, £1.

R. TEMPLEMAN.—We are neither for nor against Socialism in this journal, which is devoted to Freethought. Many Freethinkers are Socialists, and many are opposed to Socialism. Why should we introduce unnecessary antagonisms? Outside topics can be discussed in outside journals.

F. FARRINGTON.—Next week.

C. WRIGHT.—Buckle's statement is that "It is idle to attribute the destruction of superstition to the Reformation. Protestants were as superstitious as Catholics."

W. WITT LEAVIS.—Shall appear.

G. L. MACKENZIE.—Crowded this week. In our next.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Liverpool Echo—People's Newspaper—Torch of Reason—Der Arme Teufel—Two Worlds—Truthseeker—Liberty—Freidenker—Fur Unsere Jugend—L'Etoile Socialiste—Essex Weekly News—Sunderland Echo—Progressive Thinker—Wood Green Sentinel—New York Public Opinion—Secular Thought—Herts Leader—Isle of Man Times—Glasgow Weekly Citizen.

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'S lecture on "Man's Origin and Destiny" drew a crowded audience to the Athenæum Hall on Sunday evening. Mr. Percy Ward occupied the chair. The last time (he said) that he had stood on the same platform with Mr. Foote it was as an opponent. He never dreamt then that he would stand on the same platform with him again in such an altered position.

Mr. A. B. Moss occupies the Athenæum Hall platform this evening (Oct. 10). We hope he will have a good audience and a hearty welcome. Mr. Moss has labored long and earnestly for Freethought.

Mr. Foote lectures to-day (Oct. 10) at Glasgow. His subjects are attractive, and no doubt he will have large meetings. On Monday he takes a rest, and on the following four evenings he debates publicly with Mr. W. T. Lee in the minor City Hall; the questions for discussion being, "Is there a Future Life?" and "Did Jesus Christ Rise from the Dead?" On the following two Sundays he will be at the Athenæum Hall again, and the Sunday after that (the last in October) he pays a visit to the Camberwell Secular Hall.

Councillor George Mitchell takes the chair at the Glasgow debate between Mr. Foote and Mr. Lee. Proceedings open each evening at 8 punctually. For the sake of friends who may come in from outlying or even distant places, we add that the prices of admission are one shilling and sixpence. Course tickets for the four nights can be obtained at 3s. and 1s. 6d. respectively at Mr. Lindsay's news-shop, 82 Ingram-street. The entrance to the City Hall (North Saloon) is from the Candleriggs.

Last Sunday Mr. Charles Watts had three excellent audiences at Sheffield. Friends were present from the surrounding districts, and some came from distances such as Redford, Doncaster, and Barnsley. Each lecture was received enthusiastically, and the many ladies present added to the interest of the meetings.

Mr. Watts will have a busy time during the present week. To-day, Sunday, October 10, he lectures morning and evening in the Bristol-street Board-school, Birmingham. On Monday and Tuesday he debates in the same place, and on Wednesday and Thursday he discusses at Bradford. We hope the friends will muster in good force at all the meetings.

We extremely regret the necessity for such a correspondence as appears in our columns this week concerning the Lee-Watts debate at Plymouth. Mr. Lee, in a private letter accompanying his public communication, after thanking us for our impartiality, says: "If you think it desirable, I am prepared to submit the whole case to arbitration. If this cannot be done, nothing will remain but to publish my letters in the Plymouth papers, with such evidence in my favor as published books and pamphlets may supply." We do not think, however, that we are called upon to intervene. We have given both sides fair play, and the rest must be left to themselves. Our own feeling is one of regret that Mr. Lee did not go to the hall on the last night of the debate, and insist there and then on having a redress of any wrong which he held to have

been committed. The public, as well as the disputants, has always to be considered.

The Freethinking Jews of East London have an Ethical Society of their own, and the members have been celebrating the Great Day of Atonement in a heterodox fashion at South Place Institute. As the function took place after this week's *Freethinker* went to press, we must content ourselves for the present with saying that Mr. G. W. Foote accepted an invitation to be one of the speakers, though he could not undertake to discourse in Yiddish.

This Sunday our East London friends are starting the winter season with a tea and concert at the King's Hall, 83 Commercial-road, commencing at 5.30. Tickets can be obtained from G. Warren, 20 Rhodeswell-road, E., or J. Neale, 385 Bethnal Green-road.

The Camberwell Branch is also leading off with a dance and entertainment, which they expect to be largely attended this Sunday evening.

The report of the National Secular Society's Executive meeting has to stand over till next week. It reached us a little late, when we were already overset for this week's issue.

Mr. Forder also sends us, similarly late, a letter on the Browne case, which we are compelled to summarize. Mr. Browne, who is still in Chelmsford Gaol awaiting trial, has written a postcard to his wife, ordering her not to take any more money from the Secularists, on the ground (apparently) that Mr. Forder suggested the possibility of his being temporarily beside himself. Mrs. Browne is in a state of destitution, but is afraid to disobey her husband's orders. Mr. Forder has now obtained a copy of the depositions, and of the incriminated postcards. Had we seen these at first, we should have declined to meddle with the case. Mr. Browne's postcard to a lady school-teacher is of such a character that we could not possibly take any share in defending it. The only charitable supposition is that he is distracted by real or imaginary grievances. Mr. Forder will make another effort to help the wife and family, since there is money in hand; but, if this is impossible, the balance will be handed over to the N. S. S. Benevolent Fund.

We gather from a circular, issued by the Committee of the Leicester Secular Society, that an endeavor will be made to arrange with Mr. H. Snell to stay permanently in Leicester to organize the Society and help with its Sunday-school and meetings for young people.

Our appeal on behalf of the Spanish exiles realized £9 9s., which we have handed over to Mr. S. Hartmann, the National Secular Society's Treasurer. The sum of £1 16s. was sent to Miss Vance. Including also the Executive's vote of £2 2s., the total is £13 7s. We do not make any further appeal, as this is a fair contribution from one society. Should there be any real necessity for reopening the matter, our readers will be duly apprised of the fact.

The New Pontypridd Branch of the N. S. S. is still working with spirit and enterprise. Mr. J. W. Cox, an ex-reverend, seems to be lecturing for the branch in both English and Welsh; and he appears to attract good and attentive audiences. This Branch held a successful social party in commemoration of Charles Bradlaugh's birthday. Altogether it has been deemed necessary by the orthodox to import an infidel-slayer from London; and we are glad to hear it, for agitation is always to the advantage of Freethought. Mr. Foote is earnestly invited to visit Pontypridd, and he will try to do so in November.

The King of Siam went to Madame Tussaud's exhibition, and readily recognised the celebrities. He pointed out Voltaire, Bismarck, and Bradlaugh. His Majesty is an all-round man and up to date.

Mr. Hall Caine's new novel is roughly handled in *Lloyd's*. It describes the hero of *The Christian* as being "full of contradictions," and speaks of his religion as being "rasping," as well as "rhapsodical." It points out, as we did, the

absurdity of Mr. Caine's descriptions of London life, especially in hospitals; and ends by saying that the story is "not one upon which the author can be congratulated." We are sorry to see *Reynolds'* puffing this ridiculous book as a great democratic novel. John Storm, the Christian Socialist, is a moral prig, with no intellectual power, and a strong dash of insanity.

Mr. F. J. Jones is a candidate for the new London School Board in the Chelsea division. His address is already in circulation. He is a Socialist and Trade Union candidate, but he does not go in for the ridiculous policy of "free maintenance" for all children. His program is solid and sensible, and he stands for secular education, in the sense that "no education of a theological character shall be given in any Board school." No doubt the Freethinkers in Chelsea will give Mr. Jones their support.

The Wood Green Branch of the N. S. S., having secured the People's Hall, Station-road, opposite the tramway terminus, has made a good start for the winter campaign. The hall holds from two to three hundred. It was opened on October 3 with a successful tea-meeting. Mr. Forder followed with a short lecture, and there was also an entertainment, to which our venerable friend Mr. Truelove, Mr. Herzfeld, Mr. Blanchard, Mr. Ward, Master Lewis, Mrs. Stewart, Mrs. Wheeler, and others, contributed. Mr. Lewis presided. This Sunday Mr. A. Guest takes the platform.

Mr. Truelove on Oct. 29 enters on his eighty-ninth year. His interest in Freethought is shown by his still demanding work, and his help to the Wood Green Branch should stimulate the youngsters. We are glad to say he is in fair health, despite a recent fall, and he recited "Job's Patience" in capital style. His has been the example of a well-spent life, which we trust may yet long abide with us.

Mr. W. Heaford delivered three lectures on Sunday at Plymouth, and gave great satisfaction to those who heard him. We regret to hear that the audiences were not as large as they should have been, and we hope there will be a considerable improvement to-day (October 10), when Mr. Heaford delivers three more lectures in the Co-operative Hall. During the week he has been lecturing at Devonport under the Treasurer's Scheme.

"A. G. H.," who is well known to some of our North London friends, has a very good article in the *Echo* entitled "Hints to School Board Electors." He deals specially with "German Methods." He says Wurtemberg and Baden have for centuries been very forward in educational matters, and, the inhabitants of both being very freethinking, religion has never been a stumbling block. Bavaria, being partly hemmed in by the two former States, was obliged, although deeply Roman Catholic, to keep in line with them.

In Saxony the greatest tolerance in religious matters always prevailed, in consequence of the Court being Roman Catholic, and the bulk of the people Protestants. Of the smaller States for centuries nearly all their princes have been learned in art and science, and have always been anxious to establish the best schools for their subjects. Religion was put into the background, and it may safely be assumed that of all the Germans those of the smaller Principalities are the best educated.

In Prussia, by an Act of Frederick the Great, religion was excluded from the curriculum, but if the clergy wished to teach it they might do so out of school hours, for which purpose the schoolrooms would be lent to them, both to Catholics and Protestants. Sects were not acknowledged, and no child need attend if parents, guardians, or relatives objected. On no account were teachers to be subjected to any religious test. Clergymen could be neither teachers nor school inspectors, unless they resigned their spiritual office, and qualified, by examination, like any other person. In 1852, in the reaction after '48, these wise rules were rescinded by the Black Brigade, and what is known as the dark age of Prussian education set in till 1872, when the clergy and religion were again bundled out of schools, and the old rule restored, to the advantage of Germany. France, at the same time, not only copied the

Prussian system of education, but went one better, and banished all religion—yes, even the name of God from public schools; and Matthew Arnold was of opinion that he liked the French system best.

Subscriptions are being asked for the support of Dr. Bruno Wille in prison. The treasurer of the fund is J. Hoch, 23 I Markt-strasse, Wiesbaden. Dr. Bruno Wille is a leading Freethinker of Berlin, a doctor of philosophy of the university of Kiel, editor of *Der Freidenker*, and writer, speaker, and teacher for the Free Religious Society of the German capital. He is idolized by the hundreds of children in the society's school. Several times, under the bigoted government of Emperor William, he has been fined and imprisoned. His last arrest was for delivering a lecture at Gratz on "Religion and Joy." His case will be laid before the National Secular Society's Executive at its next meeting. Meanwhile we shall be happy so receive any subscription that may be sent to us, with a view to forwarding the same before the Executive meeting (if necessary) to Mr. J. Hoch, with whom we have just communicated, asking him for further information.

The *Secular Almanack* (issued by the National Secular Society) for 1898 is in the press. Secretaries of Branches should send in their reports at once. It is a pity there is so much delay. Advertisements also are wanted. Freethinkers should occasionally patronize their own publications in this way. The Almanack is the property of the N. S. S., all the work on it is done gratuitously, and any profit accrues to the Society's exchequer.

Admirers of Colonel Ingersoll will doubtless hasten to provide themselves with a copy of *The House of Death*, which is advertised on the last page of this week's *Freethinker*. It contains some of his most beautiful utterances. Most of these pieces have never been printed before on this side of the Atlantic. They are now offered to the English public in a very attractive form; print, paper, and binding being all that could be desired. Every Freethinker should keep a copy of this noble little volume by him; first, to read for himself again and again; secondly, to lend to a less heterodox friend, especially at a time of bereavement. Ingersoll speaks of death and its issues with so much sympathy and tenderness, and poetry, as to make this little volume an excellent thing to place in the hands of those who have just felt the pang of separation from wife, or child, or relative, or friend. At such a moment the grief-smitten would find it medicinal, and it might lead them on to an acceptance of Ingersoll's philosophy of life and death.

SPURGEON'S HELL.

REALISM IN THEOLOGY.

In our issue of September 11 a paragraph appeared dealing with the recent lapsing in the Methodist Church, which had been revealed by the statistics published in the pastoral letter of the Wesleyan Conference. The remedy officially proposed for this lapsing was the more emphatic preaching of the great doctrine of repentance, and the inevitable punishment hereafter of the unrepentant sinner. It was suggested, in opposition to this view of the matter, that this very doctrine was the cause of the lapsing. The logical outcome of this doctrine is vividly expressed in the accompanying extract, which is from the second series of sermons by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. After a perusal of it, one is struck with wonder, not only that a man could include this view of things in a message purporting to be "good news," but that he should have been, for many years in the latter half of this century of enlightenment, a preacher with an immense and enthusiastic following:—

"There is a real fire in hell, as truly as you have now a real body—a fire exactly like that which we have on earth in everything except this, that it will not consume, though it will torture you.....When thou diest thy soul will be tormented alone—that will be a hell for it, but—at the Day of Judgment thy body will join thy soul, and then thou wilt have twin hells, body and soul shall be together, each brimful of pain, thy soul sweating in its inmost pores drops of blood, and thy body from head to foot suffused with agony; conscience, judgment, memory, all tortured; but more, thy head tormented with racking pains, thine eyes starting from their sockets with sights of blood and woe; thine ears tormented with 'sullen moans and hollow groans and shrieks

of tortured ghosts, thine heart beating higher with fever, thy pulse rattling at an enormous rate in agony, thy limbs cracking like the martyrs in the fire, and yet unburned; thyself put in a vessel of hot oil, pained, yet undestroyed; all thy veins becoming a road for the hot feet of pain to travel on; every nerve a string on which the Devil shall ever play his diabolical tune of Hell's Unutterable Lament."

—Glasgow "Weekly Citizen."

BETTER THAN THE RIB STORY.

AMONG the many interesting traditions which have recently been brought to light by a man who has been making a careful study of the legends and the folk-lore of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians, of the Indian Territory, is one that accounts in a singular way for the origin of woman. The Indians of these tribes sniff disdainfully at the rib theory when the resident missionaries try to teach them the initial lessons of the Old Testament regarding their first parents. The wise men of their tribes wrestled with the fundamental facts of the creation long ago, and evolved theories concerning it which, with the lapse of time, have come to be looked upon by the Indians of to-day as historical truths.

It is little wonder that the Cheyenne and Arapahoe braves look down upon their women as inferior beings, in view of their supposed origin. The legend says that originally all men were created with long, sleek, and comely tails. These tails were their delight, and they adorned them with paint, beads, and wampum. Then the world was at peace; wars and discord were unknown. Men became prosperous and proud, forgot their Maker, and became envious and quarrelsome. Their Maker became displeased with them, and sent a scourge upon them to teach them humility, and to make them realize their dependence upon the Great Spirit. He amputated their tails, and out of these beautiful members he fashioned women.

ANONYMOUS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOLY SPAIN.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—From my own personal knowledge and experience in a Spanish city, I can testify that any man who is more or less of a Radical or Freethinker, or a Reformer or Freemason, is considered as an active or passive Anarchist. A physician of my acquaintance, with French and German college degrees, wealthy, and who practised medicine without fee, often furnishing both food and medicine as well as advice to those he treated, wrote some pamphlets against cruelty to animals and bull-fights. For this he was cried down, insulted, and cut by former friends. He left the town in disgust, and went to Madrid, where he learned, from friends in the Government, that he had been shadowed as a suspected Anarchist. Another English M.D. tried to establish a secular school in the Spanish seaport where he resided. This brought the priests down on him, and when he died burial was refused. In my own case, though I have tried in many ways to benefit the town, in connection with public works, necessary charity, and fighting the cholera, there is a class of priest-ridden bigots here who would like to crucify me, and I dare not make my name and address public for fear of consequences, as I am aware that, being a Freethinker and Freemason, I am under suspicion as an Anarchist, like my friend, the first-mentioned Doctor, though we have never had a word together on the subject of Anarchism.

Quite recently the governor of a province in Southern Spain sent for the editor of the local paper, and bullied and threatened him as an Anarchist, because he had commented on the sad condition of the agricultural laborers of Spain, their long hours, starvation wages, bad food, and want of the decencies of life. The governor could not contradict the statements, which the laborers themselves could not read, for ninety-eight per cent. of them neither read nor write.

Since the Barcelona affair fifteen months ago I can never get my mail straight. The reader may be quite sure that it does not take much to bring the stigma of Anarchist upon a man in Spain, and also that a man can be charged with being an Anarchist without a shred of proof. The bigotry of the sermons preached here is beyond belief in England. And they are implicitly believed by the women. The people are purposely kept ignorant by the priests, and then provided with holy shows, gaudy processions, and bull-fights.

English people usually know as much about Mars as they do about Spain. In this very year at a bull-fight hundreds broke into the ring and attacked one of the bulls with broken bottles, stones, clubs, and knives. And these same

people are docile worshippers of the priests. Assassinations are common; a mass is soon said, and the affair is forgotten. Not so if any gewgaw is stolen from the image of a saint. That evokes a prolonged howl of rage. (The only exception to this is when some valuable church jewellery and a priest are both missing at the same time; then nothing is said.) No resident in Spain cares to tell the truth, for should his name be known his business will be ruined, and a gang of bigots soon have their knives in him. Of course, there are Englishmen who know how to avoid all risks. They wear a red sash, join the Catholic Church, ohum with the priests, and go to the bull-fights. They are more Spanish than the Spaniards, and say it is policy to be so. Some of my best friends are Spaniards, and among them are men of liberal and advanced ideas. I assure the reader that these men constantly look towards England to aid them in the moral redemption of their country. VALDOSERA.

THE WATTS AND LEE DEBATE AT PLYMOUTH.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Your readers will doubtless be interested to read some local impressions concerning this debate, which, at the end, turned out such a fiasco, thanks to the Christian advocate's display of white feather, and his utter disregard of duty to the public whom he had invited to hear him. Mr. Lee's manner (or rather want of manners) throughout the debate was, to say the least, tantalizing, both to his opponent and to the audience. He fell out with each chairman as to his ruling, and refused to propose a vote of thanks on the third night to the chairman, Mr. E. P. Luke; seconding it, however, on pressure, as "a matter of form." He seemed to assume that he alone possessed all the knowledge, and more than once accused Mr. Watts of ignorance of his subject, and deliberate disregard of questions to which he (Mr. Lee) required replies. In dealing with statements made by Mr. Watts, he would lean across the table, facing his opponent instead of the audience, and tauntingly say: "Where did you get that information, Mr. Watts?" or, "Who told you that, Mr. Watts?" "Mistake No. 1, Mr. Watts; mistake No. 2, Mr. Watts." Now, such conduct is not calculated to ensure that calm, dispassionate treatment of a subject which is expected from two experienced debaters of well-known ability.

For the first two nights Mr. Watts endured this treatment with marvellous equanimity; indeed, at the close of the meeting some of his friends remonstrated with him for not resenting it. On Mr. Watts quoting a passage from *Acts xxii.*, Mr. Lee denied that any such words occurred in *Acts xxvii.* Mr. Watts retorted that he did not say the 27th, and, even if he did, Mr. Lee must be aware of the passage he quoted, and was unfairly attempting to make capital out of an imaginary error; that, in fact, Mr. Lee was equivocating. Then came an exhibition of Christian charity and forbearance. Says Mr. Lee: "Mr. Watts charges me with equivocation, which is equivalent to calling me a liar. I now charge Mr. Watts with uttering a deliberate and barefaced falsehood, which, unless he retracts, I shall decline to continue this debate after to-night." At the close of the meeting the disputants expressed their mutual regret at what had occurred, and, cordially shaking hands, agreed that no such unpleasantness should mar the future. They parted the best of friends, after arranging a meeting at my house next morning for a friendly chat. That appointment Mr. Lee never kept, but sent a note instead, stating that he had reconsidered his position, and imposing the impossible condition that, unless Mr. Watts furnished him with a *written withdrawal* of two statements he had made, he should decline to continue the debate. Mr. Watts very properly refused to place such a weapon in Mr. Lee's hands.

At the evening meeting Mr. Watts and the chairman, Mr. Page (who, by the way, was Mr. Lee's host for the week, and whose conduct throughout was most gentlemanly and dignified), put in an appearance, but no Mr. Lee. The chairman and Mr. Watts placed the position very fairly before the audience, the latter putting himself entirely in their hands as to the disposal of the evening, and the return of the entrance money. A resolution was then proposed by a Secularist, seconded and supported by two Christians; the supporter stating that he had never before heard a Secularist speak in public, but was so charmed with Mr. Watts's manly, straightforward bearing that he could listen to him with pleasure for twenty nights running. The resolution, a vote of confidence in Mr. Watts, and thanks for his valuable services and honorable conduct, was *unanimously* carried by a meeting of about an equal number of Christians and Secularists. A suggestion was then made that Mr. Watts should deliver a lecture; upon which the chairman stated that, as a Christian, he should prefer to vacate the chair in that case. Mr. Chubb, a broad-minded Deist, was then voted to the chair, from which he stated that he had listened to Mr. Watts twenty-five years ago in the Midlands, and, although not always agreeing with him, had always admired him, and

sympathized with him very much in his treatment that night.

On being requested to deliver a lecture, Mr. Watts, in a few brave words, pointed out that he could not lecture except upon the subject of the debate, in which his treatment by Mr. Lee would necessarily be referred to; but in the absence of that gentleman he declined to take any unfair advantage. He, however, was prepared to continue the debate if any clergyman (and there were some in the hall) would volunteer to fill Mr. Lee's place. The challenge was not accepted, but his chivalry won him friends all round. A clergyman who had occupied a front seat throughout the debate came forward, shook him by the hand, sympathized with him, and expressed his disapproval of his opponent's discreditable tactics.

Members of Mr. Lee's committee felt ashamed of him, and intimated that reasons other than those he had given must have kept him away; and, from what I have heard, I am inclined to concur with them in that opinion. It will, I think, be a long time before Mr. Lee will again venture to face the music of a Plymouth audience.

H. J. BARTER.

75 King Gardens, Plymouth.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—The dispute between Mr. Watts and myself is one which has to do wholly and solely with a simple matter of fact—viz., Were the principles expounded by Mr. Watts on the third night of our debate at Plymouth the authorized principles of the N. S. S., or the private opinions of Mr. Watts? My opponent again and again asserted that they were the authorized principles of the N. S. S., and I again and again denied the accuracy of his statements. And, at the close of the debate, I went to Mr. Watts, before he left the platform, and demanded, in the name of truth, that he should promise to put the matter right the next night, or I should refuse to continue the discussion. Mr. Watts promised to do as I wished. The next morning I wrote Mr. Watts, asking for a written guarantee. He called at the house where I was staying, and left a verbal promise. As this did not satisfy me, I wrote him again, and told him that, unless I got his written promise to put matters right, I should decline to go on with the discussion. Copies of these letters I now enclose, and shall thank you to print them, as they fully and frankly explain my position.—Yours truly, October 1, 1897. W. T. LEE.

Copies of Letters to Mr. Watts.

42, Woolster-street, Plymouth, September 24, 1897.

DEAR MR. WATTS,—It is a very real grief to me to feel compelled to depart, in ever so slight a degree, from the usual methods of public debate. I want you, therefore, to believe that, in sending this letter, my one desire is the vindication of truth and right. In our discussion last night you again and again stated that the *seven principles* which you brought before the audience were the authorized principles of the National Secular Society. And, though I again and again took exception to your statements, and said your seven principles had never been accepted by the N. S. S. as the authorized principles of that Society; and, further, that the authorized principles of the N. S. S. are *different* from the seven principles expounded by you, you nevertheless persisted in your statements that your *seven principles* were the authorized principles of the N. S. S., and that I was guilty of equivocation in saying they were not. Again, you stated time after time that I had misrepresented you, put words in your mouth you had never used, and had not hesitated to reserve statements which I knew to be untrue until my last speech on Wednesday, when I knew you could not reply to me. In proof of this, among other things, you said I had told the people that you were unable to give the names of any Church which disbelieved in the resurrection of Christ; and you asserted that I was guilty of misrepresentation, as you had given the names of three Churches which did not believe in the resurrection of Christ.

Now, I am writing this note to say that, unless I get your *written assurance* to put these two matters right at the very commencement of the meeting to-night—i.e., before my opening speech, I shall, in respect to myself, the interests of the audience, and, above all, in the sacred name of truth, decline to go on with the present discussion, and any other that may be contemplated by us.

Trusting that you will let me have an early reply to this note, I am, dear Mr. Watts, in the interests of truth, yours very truly, W. T. LEE.

42, Woolster-street, September 24, 1897.

DEAR MR. WATTS,—I very much regret that I was out when you called. Mr. Page very kindly gave me your message, and I would gladly accept your offer, but it does not go far enough, and does not really meet the points raised in my letter. I therefore feel, since truth is above everything, that I cannot consent to meet you to-night. I have

debated many times in this town with Mrs. Besant, Mr. Foote, and others I need not name, and have never had occasion to call in question the word of any opponent until now. Of course, you will not be ignorant of the fact that my experience is not singular; others have had occasion to make the same complaint. However, as things are, I feel I should do a wrong to myself, to the audience, and, above all, to the sacred name of truth, were I in any way to become a party to the passing over of the grave misstatements of fact made by you last night.

Though I may lay myself open to the charge of "cant," I cannot close this note without expressing the hope that the day is not far distant when you will give me the satisfaction of a full and frank withdrawal of the misstatements of last night.—With deepest regrets, I am yours truly, in the cause of truth,
W. T. LEE.

As I shall not come to the hall, you may take whatever action you feel to be right.

MR. WATTS'S REPLY.

I HAVE no wish to prolong this controversy with Mr. Lee. Evidently we each take a different view of the cause of the dispute. The only parties capable of giving valuable opinions upon the matter were those who were present; and this they did by passing a unanimous vote—Christians and Secularists alike—to the effect that my conduct was honorable and straightforward. I did not send a written reply to Mr. Lee's first letter, preferring to see him in the presence of his and my representative. Unfortunately, after waiting a considerable time, he failed to return home. I then left a message with Mr. Page (Mr. Lee's representative), saying that I never stated my "seven principles" were the authorized principles of the N. S. S. I had both there, and referred to each, and urged that they were not opposed to each other. I repeated this again and again. I also named three Churches (taking that word to represent a body of Christian worshippers) who did not believe in the resurrection of Christ. After the debate on the third night, I assured Mr. Lee that he had quite misunderstood me, and that I would fully explain the matter to the audience the next night. We parted, and he appeared satisfied with my assurance. After this he wrote the two letters printed above, and refused to go on with the debate. It is quite unnecessary for me to say more, as Mr. Barter has given a very fair and temperate statement of the facts.
CHARLES WATTS.

WHY NOT A FREETHOUGHT POSTAL MISSION?

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

Sir,—I think we Freethinkers might well take a leaf out of the Unitarians' book. They run a "Postal Mission." Advertisements are inserted in various papers offering to send certain tracts free. These Postal Missions do an immense amount of good; people are reached who would never otherwise be influenced. I wish the N. S. S. could do something similar. A Postal Mission Fund should be opened, and Postal Missionaries appointed to carry out the work in various parts of the country. I submit that this is worthy of your serious consideration.

Then I should like to see formed a "Correspondence League." Members pledged (1) to institute or take part in newspaper correspondences (giving the Secular views and philosophy). (2) To watch reports of Christian meetings, and get into controversy, if possible, with any of the speakers through something they have said. For instance, statements about "infidels" should be sifted, the speaker asked for his authority, etc. I remember once a speaker declared that "Scripture compared with Scripture" explained itself. I sent him a list of Scripture contradictions as a sample of "Scripture compared with Scripture." (3) To keep going some private correspondence with Christians. Personally I have nearly always a discussion going on with some one. I have just concluded a long correspondence with a Wesleyan minister on theological subjects. A remark of his in a sermon started it, and I trust it has been the means of him learning some good Secular truths. I do wish some definite movement could be made on these lines.
ALERT.

BOOK CHAT.

CARDINAL WISEMAN, the restorer of the Catholic hierarchy in England, would turn in his grave if he could see a book written by his grand nephew, M. W. Wiseman. It bears the title, *The Dynamics of Religion: An Essay in English Culture History*, and deals critically with the religious evolution from Henry VIII. to the end of the nineteenth century. The work is published by the University Press, and will be noticed at length later on.

Volume i. of the new edition of the Babylonian Talmud, revised by Rabbi Wise, gives the Tract "Sabbath." It has the following parallel to the Golden Rule: "Another Gentile came to Shamai, saying, Convert me on the condition that thou teach me the whole Torah, while I stand on one foot. Shamai pushed him away. He therefore came to Hillel, and the latter accepted him. He told him, What is hateful to thee do not unto thy fellow; this is the whole law. All the rest is a commentary to this law; go and learn it."

* * *
The *Literary Guide* for October reviews Mr. Robertson's new volume of *Essays Towards a Critical Method*. Besides other interesting contents, there is an interview with Professor Goldwin Smith; and a lengthy summary criticizing Dean Farrar's book on *The Bible: Its Meaning and Supremacy*, by Mr. F. J. Gould, is given as a supplement. Mr. Gould points out the Dean's admissions, and shows how far he shatters the old fetish, while extolling the beauty and value of the remaining fragments.
* * *

* * *
The Rev. J. A. Cross, M.A., writing in the *Expositor* on the newly-discovered "Sayings of Jesus," holds that they were written independently of the Gospels, and that the coincidences are due to the resemblance between two separate streams of tradition descending from the same source. Professor Rendel Harris goes a great deal farther, holding that the sayings are antecedent to the Gospels, and represent the original source from which these later documents sprang.
* * *

* * *
The latest reading of the most important of the newly-discovered *Logia* is an Atheistic one. It runs thus: "Jesus saith, 'Wherever there be men, even Atheists, and even be there but one alone, I say that I am with that one. Lift the stone, and there thou shalt find me. Split the wood, and I am there.'"
* * *

* * *
The catalogue of Mr. Bertram Dobell contains a number of the now scarce works of Thomas Taylor, the Platonist, a modern pagan. Mr. Dobell reprints an interesting advertisement by Hogarth which shows the painter's powers of sarcasm in speech. There are also sonnets on A. H. Clough and Man and Nature, by B. D., the latter of which we reprint:—

Here is the source of man's unhappiness:—
That he regards himself as nature's crown,
To pleasure whom Fate should relax its stress,
And humbly to his needs or whims bow down.
How small his part upon the Eternal Stage,
What petty passions rage within his breast,
His microscopic vision cannot gauge,
But magnifies his actions, worst and best,
To huge proportions. Will he learn at last
He's but a bubble on the ocean wave.
A grain of sand upon the seashore cast?
Learn this, all's learned; for thou he will not crave
What cannot be awarded, but will bend
His faculties to seek their proper end.
* * *

The *Westminster Review* departs from its usual custom in giving an anonymous article on "Magic and Primitive Man." The paper is a reply to Mr. Jevons, who has already been tackled by Mr. Wheeler in our own columns on this very point. We wish the present article had been signed, for it is a very good one, and we fancy the author's name would have added weight to his arguments.

PROFANE JOKES.

A PROVOST of Dundee, who was an Atheist, was going by sea from Dundee to London, accompanied by one of his Bailies, who was an elder in the kirk. A storm came on, and the Bailie anxiously inquired of the steward if "there was any danger?" "Weel, sir," said the steward, "I canna say; we maun just trust to Providence." "Guidness me," said the Bailie, whimpering, "has it cam' tae that?" "Hoot awa', Bailie," chimed in the Provost; "dinna greet, we maun a' dee some time!" "It's a' vera weel," was the reply, "for ye awtheistical deevils, but what's tae become o' me?"

A gentleman travelling in the wilds of Fayette county, Virginia, last winter, had to pass the night in the lowly home of a "broomsager," who, before the family retired, offered the following prayer: "Now we lay we 'uns down to sleep. We 'uns are not jealous of our betters, and if the snow fall fo' feet deep to-night, in the mawnin' perhaps the stranger will trade we 'uns his watch and chain even up fo' the old yellow mule."

Soul-saver—"Fine weather, Jones." Jones—"For them as ain't got to work, sur." Soul-saver—"Your garden looks well, Jones." Jones—"To them as doan't ha' to toil in it, sur." Soul-saver—"I'm glad the wife's better, Jones." Jones—"Them as doan't ha' to live wi' her may be!"

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, A. B. Moss, "Is Religion Necessary or Useful to Mankind?"
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (86 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 7.15, E. Pack, "An Hour with God." October 9, at 8.30, A. Concert. October 13, at 8.30, A. Dance.
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7, Dance and entertainment.
EAST LONDON BRANCH (King's Hall, 83 and 85 Commercial-road, E.): 5.30, Tea; 7, Concert. Tickets, 1s.
EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Libra-road, Old Ford): 7.30, F. J. Gould, "The Science of Ethics."
NORTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Dartmouth Park Lodge, N.W.): 7, Mrs. Miall Smith, "The Moral Training of Children."
SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road): 11.15, Sunday-school; 7, Dr. Stanton Coit, "Class Distinctions in England—(2) The Upper Middle Class."
WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall): 11.15, Dr. Stanton Coit, "The Upper Middle Class."
WEST LONDON BRANCH, 341 Harrow-road (near Westbourne Park Station): October 11, at 9, Business meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, Stanley Jones.
CAMBERWELL BRANCH (Peckham Rye): 8.15, E. Pack.
LIMEHOUSE (Triangle, Salmon-lane): 11.30, A. B. Moss.
MILE END WASTE: 11.30, E. Pack.
VICTORIA PARK (near the fountain): 8.15, H. P. Ward, "The Bible and the Child."

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM (Bristol-street Board School): 11, C. Watts, "The Triumph of Reason"; 7, "Sin and Secular Salvation." October 11 and 12, at 8, Debate with the Rev. W. A. Waldron, "That Secularism is Superior to Christianity, in that it is Better Adapted to the Nature and Needs of Mankind."
BRADFORD (Temperance Hall, Leeds-road): October 13 and 14, at 7.30, Debate between Charles Watts and Rev. A. J. Waldron, "That Secularism is Superior to Christianity for this Life or any Other."
CHATHAM SECULAR HALL (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 7, Stanley Jones, "Christianity and other Religions."
GLASGOW (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 11.30, G. W. Foote—11.30, "Giving up the Bible"; 2.30, "Is Christ Possible?" 6.30, "God and the Devil."
HULL (Obbden Hall, Storey-street): 7, S. Ackroyd, "The Education of the Young."
LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): J. M. Robertson—10.30, "Life and Morals without Religion"; 6.30, "The Reformation in the British Isles."
LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, The President, "The Bible as a Basis of Morals."
PLYMOUTH Co-operative Hall, Courtenay-street: W. Heaford—11, "Life, Death, and Immortality"; 3, "Christian Errors and Secular Antidotes"; 7, "A Freethinker's View of Christ."
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 8, Members' quarterly meeting; 5, Tea; 7, Mr. Dyson, "A Plea for Liberty."
SOUTH SHIELDS (Thornton's Variety Hall, Union-alley): 7, H. Snell, "Egypt and the Dawn of History."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Market Place): 11.30, H. Snell, An Address.

Lecturers' Engagements.

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

H. PERCY WARD, Leighton Hall, N.W.—October 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.—October 10, m, Mile End; e, Bradlaugh Club. 17, m, Camberwell; e, Camberwell Hall.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Oredon-road, London, S.E.—October 10, m, Limehouse; e, Athenæum Hall, London. 17, e, Wood Green. 24, m, Mile End. 31, m, Limehouse; e, Bradlaugh Club.

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.

UNIGRAPHIC SHORTHAND is the Briefest and most Perfect of all Systems. Parts I. to VIII. now ready. 7d. post free. P. W. BALDWIN, C.M., Ashton-on-Ribble.

Works by J. M. Wheeler.

Biographical Dictionary of Freethinkers of All Ages and Nations. Containing the Lives of over 1,600 Men and Women of Light and Leading. Reduced to 5s.

Footsteps of the Past. Essays on Human Evolution in Religion and Custom. 3s.

Bible Studies. Essays on Phallic Worship, Circumcision, Blood Rites, Jewish Sacrifices, Taboos, Ordeals, Witchcraft, Prophets, Song of Solomon, Etc. Cloth illustrated, 2s. 6d.

The Life and Writings of Voltaire. 1s. paper; 2s. cloth.

Secular Songs and Freethought Readings. 1s.

The Christian Doctrine of Hell. 2d.

Satan, Witchcraft, and the Bible. 2d.

Types of Religionists. 2d.

London: R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

THE ADULT.

THE JOURNAL OF SEX.

"Its views are clearly and moderately stated, and all who are interested in sex problems should not fail to peruse its pages."—*Clarion*.

"The most outspoken serial on this or any other planet."—*Agnostic Journal*.

Twopence Monthly.

16 John-street, Bedford-row, W.C.

THE BEST BOOK

ON NEO-MALTHUSIANISM IS, I BELIEVE,
TRUE MORALITY, or THE THEORY AND
PRACTICE OF NEO-MALTHUSIANISM.

By J. R. HOLMES, M.M.L., M.V.S., M.N.S.S.

160 pages, with portrait and autograph, bound in cloth, gilt lettered.
Price 1s., post free.

** In order to bring the information within the reach of the poor, the most important parts of the book are issued in a pamphlet of 112 pages at ONE PENNY, post free 2d. Copies of the pamphlet for distribution 1s. a dozen post free.

The *National Reformer* of 4th September, 1892, says: "Mr Holmes' pamphlet . . . is an almost unexceptionable statement of the Neo-Malthusian theory and practice . . . and throughout appeals to moral feeling. . . . The special value of Mr. Holmes' service to the Neo-Malthusian cause and to human well-being generally is just his combination in his pamphlet of a plain statement of the physical and moral need for family limitation with a plain account of the means by which it can be secured, and an offer to all concerned of the requisites at the lowest possible prices."

The Council of the Malthusian League, Dr. Drysdale, Dr. Allbutt, and others, have also spoken of it in very high terms.

The Trade supplied by R. FORDER, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C. Other orders should be sent to the author.

J. R. HOLMES, HANNEY, WANTAGE, BERKS.

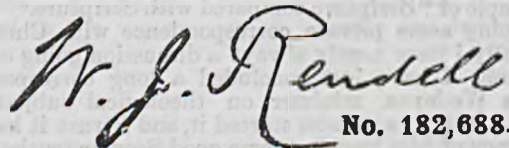
W. J. Rendell's "Wife's Friend"

Recommended by Mrs. Besant in *Law of Population*, p. 32, and Dr. Allbutt in *Wife's Handbook*, p. 51. Made ONLY at No. 15 Chadwell-street, Clerkenwell; 2s. per doz., post free (reduction in larger quantities). For particulars send stamped envelope.

IMPORTANT CAUTION.

BEWARE of useless imitations substituted by some dealers and chemists; the words "Rendell & Co" and "W. J. Rendell," etc., being speciously and plausibly introduced to deceive the public.

LOOK FOR AUTOGRAPH REGISTERED TRADE MARK


No. 182,688.

IN RED INK ON EACH BOX, WITHOUT WHICH NONE ARE GENUINE.

Higginson's Syringe, with Vertical and Reverse Current, 8s. 6d., 4s. 6d. and 6s. 6d. Dr. Palfrey's Powder, 1s. 2d. Quinine Compound, 1s. 2d. Dr. Allbutt's Quinine Powders, 8s. per doz. All prices pos. free.

W. J. RENDELL, 15 Chadwell-st., Clerkenwell, E.C.

STANTON, the People's Dentist, 335 Strand (opposite Somerset House).—TEETH on VULCANITE, 2s. 6d. each; upper or lower set, £1. Best Quality, 4s. each; upper or lower, £2. Completed in four hours when required; repairing or alterations in two hours. If you pay more than the above, they are fancy charges. Teeth on platinum, 7s. 6d. each; on 18 ct. gold, 15s.; stopping, 2s. 6d.; extraction, 1s.; painless by gas, 5s.

LESSONS IN FRENCH.—Monsieur JULES BAILLY desires Pupils. Easy plan and efficiency guaranteed. Terms very moderate. Address, 32 Store-street, Bedford-square, W.C.

WORKS BY G. W. FOOTE.

- Bible Handbook for Freethinkers and Inquiring Christians.** In parts 41. each.
- Was Jesus Insane?** A Searching Inquiry into the Mental Condition of the Prophet of Nazareth. 1d.
- Royal Paupers.** Showing what Royalty does for the People, and what the People do for Royalty. 2d.
- Philosophy of Secularism.** 3d.
- Atheism and Morality.** 2d.
- The Bible God.** 2d.
- Interview with the Devil.** 2d.
- The Dying Atheist.** A Story. 1d.
- Bible Romances.** New Edition. Revised and largely re-written. (1) Creation story 2d.; (2) Eve and the Apple, 1d.; (3) Cain and Abel, 1d.; (4) Noah's Flood, 1d.; (5) The Tower of Babel, 1d.; (6) Lot's Wife, 1d.; (7) The Ten Plagues, 1d.; (8) The Wandering Jews, 1d.; (9) Balaam's Ass, 1d.; (10) God in a Box, 1d.; (11) Jonah and the Whale, 1d.; (12) Bible Animals, 1d.; (13) A Virgin Mother, 1d.; (14) The Resurrection, 2d.; (15) The Crucifixion, 1d.; (16) John's Nightmare, 1d.
- Rome or Atheism—the Great Alternative.** 3d.
- Letters to Jesus Christ.** 4d.
- What was Christ?** A Reply to J. S. Mill. 2d.
- Christianity and Progress.** A Reply to Mr. Gladstone. 2d.
- Salvation Syrup; or, Light on Darkest England.** A Reply to General Booth. 2d.
- The Impossible Creed.** An Open Letter to Bishop Magee on the Sermon on the Mount. 2d.
- Ingersollism Defended against Archdeacon Farrar.** 2d.
- Mrs. Besant's Theosophy.** A Candid Criticism. 2d.
- Secularism and Theosophy.** A Rejoinder to Mrs. Besant. 2d.
- The Grand Old Book.** A Reply to the Gand Old Man. An exhaustive answer to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone's "Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture." 1s.; bound in cloth, 1s. 6d.
- Reminiscences of Charles Bradlaugh.** 6d.
- The Sign of the Cross.** A Candid Criticism of Wilson Barrett's Play. 48 pp., beautifully printed and elegantly bound, 6d.
- Bible and Beer.** 4d.
- Bible Heroes.** Cloth, 2s. 6d.
- Letters to the Clergy.** *First Series*, 128 pp., 1s.
- Christianity and Secularism.** Four Nights' Public Debate with the Rev. Dr. James McCann. 1s.; superior edition, in cloth, 1s. 6d.
- Infidel Death-Beds.** Second edition, much enlarged, 8d. On superfine paper, in cloth, 1s. 3d.
- Darwin on God.** 6d.; superior edition, in cloth, 1s.
- Comic Sermons and Other Fantasias.** 8d.
- Will Christ Save Us?** A Thorough Examination of the Claims of Jesus Christ to be considered the Savior of the World. 6d.
- Crimes of Christianity.** Vol. I. [Written in conjunction with J. M. Wheeler.] Hundreds of exact references to Standard Authorities. No pains spared to make it a complete, trustworthy, final, unanswerable indictment of Christianity. Cloth, gilt, 216 pp., 2s. 6d.

London: R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

Price One Shilling,

THEISM OR ATHEISM:

Which is the More Reasonable?

A PUBLIC DEBATE

BETWEEN

Mr. W. T. LEE, Lecturer to the Christian Evidence Society,

AND

Mr. G. W. FOOTE, President of the National Secular Society.

Held in the Temperance Hall, Derby, May 15 and 16, 1895.

CHAIRMAN—J. W. PIPER, Editor of the *Derby Daily Telegraph*.

REVISED BY BOTH DISPUTANTS.

London: R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

WORKS BY CHARLES WATTS.

- THE CLAIMS OF CHRISTIANITY EXAMINED, FROM A RATIONALIST STANDPOINT.** 64 pp., 6d., by post 7d.
- THE TEACHINGS OF SECULARISM COMPARED WITH ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY.** 1s., by post 1s. 2d.
- CHRISTIANITY: ITS ORIGIN, NATURE, AND INFLUENCE.** 4d., by post 5d.
- SECULARISM: DESTRUCTIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE.** 3d., by post 4d.
- AGNOSTICISM AND CHRISTIAN THEISM: WHICH IS THE MORE REASONABLE?** 8d., by post 4d.
- A REPLY TO FATHER LAMBERT'S "TACTICS OF INFIDELS."** 6d., by post 7d.
- THEOLOGICAL PRESUMPTION.** An Open Letter to the Rev. Dr. R. F. Burns, of Halifax, N.S. 2d., by post 2½d.
- THE NATURAL AND THE SUPERNATURAL; OR BELIEF AND KNOWLEDGE.** 3d., by post 4d.
- EVOLUTION AND SPECIAL CREATION.** 3d., by post 4d.
- HAPPINESS IN HELL AND MISERY IN HEAVEN.** 3d., by post 4d.
- SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE.** 4d., by post 5d.
- BIBLE MORALITY: Its Teachings Shown to be Contradictory and Defective as an Ethical Guide.** 3d., by post 3½d.
- SECULARISM: ITS RELATION TO THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF THE DAY.** 2d., by post 2½d.
- SECULARISM: IS IT FOUNDED ON REASON, AND IS IT SUFFICIENT TO MEET THE WANTS OF MANKIND?** Debate between the Editor of the *Evening Mail* (Halifax, N.S.) and Charles Watts. With Prefatory Letters by G. J. Holyoake and Colonel R. G. Ingersoll, and an Introduction by Helen H. Gardener. 1s., by post 1s. 2d.
- IS THERE A LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE?** Reply to Dr. R. B. Westbrook. 3d., by post 4d.
- SAINTS AND SINNERS: WHICH?** 3d., by post 4d.
- WHY DO RIGHT?** A Secularist's Answer. 3d., by post 4d.
- EDUCATION: TRUE AND FALSE.** 2d., by post 2½d.
- THE SUPERSTITION OF THE CHRISTIAN SUNDAY.** A Plea for Liberty and Justice. 3d., by post 4d.
- THE EXISTENCE OF GOD; OR, QUESTIONS FOR THEISTS.** 2d., by post 2½d.
- CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILIZATION.** 3d., by post 4d.
- London: Watts & Co., 17, Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, E.C.

FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT.

BY

G. W. FOOTE.

Second Series (cloth), 2s. 6d.

CONTENTS:—Luscious Piety—The Jewish Sabbath—God's Day—Professor Stokes on Immortality—Paul Bert—Converting a Corpse—Bradlaugh's Ghost—Christ and Brotherhood—The Sons of God—Melchizedek—S'w'elp me God—Infidel Homes—Are Atheists Cruel?—Are Atheists Wicked?—Rain Doctors—Pious Puerilities—"Thus Saith the Lord"—Believe or be Damned—Christian Charity—Religion and Money—Clotted Bosh—Lord Bacon on Atheism—Christianity and Slavery—Christ Up to Date—Secularism and Christianity—Altar and Throne—Martin Luther—The Praise of Folly—A Lost Soul—Happy in Hell—The Act of God—Keir Hardie on Christ—Blessed be ye Poor—Converted Infidels—Mrs. Booth's Ghost—Talmage on the Bible—Mrs. Besant on Death and After—The Poets and Liberal Theology—Christianity and Labor—Dueling—An Easter Egg for Christians—Down Among the Dead Men—Smirching a Hero—Kit Marlowe and Jesus Christ—Jehovah the Ripper—The Parson's Living Wage—Did Bradlaugh Backslide?—Frederic Harrison on Atheism—Save the Bible—Forgive and Forget—The Star of Bethlehem—The Great Ghost—Atheism and the French Revolution—Pigottism—Jesus at the Derby—Atheist Murderers—A Religion for Eunuchs—Rose-Water Religion.

London: R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

Now READY. Price Twopence.

What is the Use of Prayer?

By C. COHEN.

London: R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

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

H. TAYLOR, Sec., 428 Oldham-road, Failsworth.

SHAKESPEARE,

A LECTURE BY

COLONEL INGERSOLL.

HANDSOMELY PRINTED.

"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 that many might 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."—*Glasgow Weekly Citizen.*

"A powerful piece of literary and philosophical criticism. Ingersoll's glowing style, his forcible logic, and his acute discrimination make his panegyric of the Bard of Avon almost as interesting to read as, no doubt, his lecture was inspiring to hear."—*The Stage.*

Price Sixpence.

London: R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

STOCK NOW READY, WORK

THE HOUSE OF DEATH.

BEING

FUNERAL ORATIONS, ADDRESSES, ETC.

BY

COLONEL INGERSOLL.

BEAUTIFULLY PRINTED ON FINE THICK PAPER AND HANDSOMELY BOUND.

Contents:—

Speech at Walt Whitman's Burial—Tribute to Henry Ward Beecher—Tribute to Courtlandt Palmer—Tribute to Roscoe Conklin—In Memory of Abraham Lincoln—Tribute to Elizur Wright—Address at Horace Seaver's Grave—Mrs. Mary H. Fiske—Tribute to Richard H. Whiting—Mrs. Ida Whiting Knowles—At the Grave of Benjamin W. Parker—Tribute to Rev. Alexander Clark—Death of John G. Mills—At the Grave of Ebon C. Ingersoll—Death of Thomas Paine—Death of Voltaire—At the Tomb of Napoleon—Heroes of the American War—At a Child's Grave—Through Life to Death—Death of the Aged—If Death Ends All.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

London: R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

LOT 11

- 1 Pair Pure Wool Blankets.
- 1 Pair Large Bed-Sheets.
- 1 Beautiful Quilt.
- 1 Tablecloth.

To each customer for **Lot 11** we present a handsomely bound volume of John M. Robertson's *Papers for the People*, or with orders for **2 Lot 11** we give G. W. Foote's *Flowers of Freethought*, and with orders for **5 Lot 11** customers will receive Mrs. Bradlaugh-Bonner's *Life of Charles Bradlaugh*.

This offer is made during OCTOBER only.

WINTER PATTERNS NOW READY.

- Overcoatings
- Suitings
- Trouserings
- Jacket Cloths
- Costume Cloths
- Dress Fabrics

Patterns Post Free to any Address.

AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

Write for Terms.

STOCK SIZES.

25s.

30s.

35s.

Each.



TO MEASURE.

27s. 6d.

32s. 6d.

37s. 6d.

Each.

In Serges, Tweeds, Froizes, or Meltons, any Color. Patterns and Self-measurement Forms free to any Address. Every Garment well cut, made, and trimmed.

J. W. GOTT, 2 & 4 Union Street, BRADFORD.

SEWING MACHINES

- Umbrellas
- Carpets
- Blankets
- Quilts
- Sheets
- Corsets
- Skirts
- Shawls
- Shirts
- Furs

and all kinds of general Heavy Drapery.

Price List Free.

WORKING MEN,

You can add 10s. to 30s. per week to your Income by Selling Goods for us.

Write for Terms.