

# The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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## IN GOD'S HANDS.

MAIDSTONE has been harried by an epidemic of typhoid fever, which is happily abating, although the town is far from being out of danger. Nobody seems to know the precise cause of the mischief, but every one who is not an absolutely brainless Christian is perfectly certain that there has been some neglect of the material conditions of health. Perhaps the most curious thing about it is that the Town Council and the Churches are a good deal in opposition to each other. The city fathers suggest that the clergy have been remiss in obtaining the help of God Almighty, while the clergy suggest that the city fathers have been remiss in attending to the drainage, the water supply, and other elements of sanitation. By this time, however, the spiritual and temporal authorities have settled down more or less amicably together, and by means of prayer and disinfectants they are waging a fairly successful war against the typhoid bacillus.

While the town is struggling to recover its normal condition it is the recipient of many messages of sympathy. One of them comes from the high and mighty Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. His Grace has sent the following letter, which was publicly read by Canon Joy from the pulpit of All Saints' Church last Sunday:—

"Will you, in whatever way you may think most satisfactory, convey to the people of Maidstone my deep sympathy with them in their present severe trouble? At such a time we are all in God's hands, and the one great support of our courage is reliance on His unfailing love. 'Are ye not of more value than many sparrows?' are His tender words, and even the sparrows are not beneath his care. His life overshadows even when death is standing at every door, and when we cannot see any token of his tenderness, yet that tenderness does not fail. May the Lord soften our hearts by the work of His Holy Spirit, and make us cast our care on him.—Yours faithfully in Christ, F. CANTAUR."

The first observation we have to make on this precious letter is a personal one. Maidstone, we believe, is in the diocese of Canterbury; but in the day of its distress the Archbishop keeps at a respectful distance. He does not visit the town himself, to console the sick and administer consolation to the dying. He prefers to send a little cheap sympathy by the post. It would be a dreadful thing to run the risk of catching typhoid fever, of going to heaven prematurely, and of leaving that fifteen thousand a year behind.

We are all in God's hands, the Archbishop says. Yes, but he likes to keep as near the edge as possible. To get within the clasp of the thumb and fingers is a tax on the most submissive piety.

Let us look into this expression about our being "in God's hands." It is at "such a time" that we are in this position; that is to say, in a time of "severe trouble." The Archbishop does not say in whose hands we are on other occasions, whether in the Devil's or in our own. One would think that we were always in God's hands, if he is an infinite being. How can we escape from Omnipotence, or evade the attention of Omniscience? Perhaps the Archbishop, like many other Christians, remembers the inspired text that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. When people are safe and sound, happy and prosperous, they are apt to be worldly; but when they are in misery and adversity they begin to be religious. In the sunlight they laugh; in the darkness

they pray. When mischief is about they soon see "the finger of God."

Curiously enough, the Archbishop turns right about face in the very next sentence. The one great support of our courage, he says, is reliance on God's unfailing love. But if the Deity is to be introduced in the matter, one is justified in asking why he sent typhoid fever to Maidstone at all; or why, if it got there without his direct orders, he did not banish it as soon as he was aware of its ravages. To let the doctors and the sanitary engineers fight it, and the clergy pray against it, while hundreds sicken and many perish, seems a strange exhibition of divine providence. On the whole, we believe the people of Maidstone would rather see the fever depart than receive such holy consolation as the Archbishop forwards them through the Post Office department. Their "courage" will rise to its normal level when the town resumes its wonted condition.

His Grace's reference to "sparrows" is extremely ill-advised. Jesus Christ's words about these little feathered bipeds may be very "tender," but they are not very scientific. Sparrows, like other birds, die wholesale in hard weather; and even in the migration of birds, which used to be given as an instance of providential instinct, we now know that there is a most terrible slaughter, myriads falling by the way or being dashed against obstacles to their flight. If the Deity cares for us as he cares for the sparrows, there is no occasion for many thanksgiving services.

Even the Archbishop is not exactly jubilant over God's "unfailing love." His letter is rather funereal. Faith protests somewhat feebly against the suggestions of Reason. She tries to look assured, but her eyes are moist, and her mouth trembles. God's tenderness "does not fail," but oh that he would show it more convincingly!

We have now a very straight question to ask the Archbishop, though we do not expect he will give us an answer. If we are all in God's hands, and if the recognition of this fact is the one great support of our courage in times of sickness, what is the matter with the Peculiar People? These sincere superstitionists quote New Testament texts precisely like the Archbishop of Canterbury. Moreover, they believe in those texts up to the point of acting upon them. For doing so they are committed for trial on the charge of manslaughter. Yet the Archbishop does not say a single word in their favor. He leaves them to their fate. Does it not seem, therefore, that his talk about Providence, in this letter to the afflicted town of Maidstone, is mere professional cant? The poor Peculiar People stake their own lives, and the lives of their children, on the truth of the doctrine of Providence; while the rich Archbishop would not stake the life of his own pet dog or of his wife's favorite cat.

Finally, we have to note the unction of the Archbishop's concluding hope that the Lord will "soften our hearts." He does not appear to have softened that organ in His Grace's anatomy. It is the Archbishop's head that seems most affected. Many a Christian fancies his heart is softening when his brain is growing pappy. In spiritual as in medical science, the greatest difficulty is diagnosis. Certainly there must be something wrong in the Archbishop's upper storey when he chooses a time like this to prate about casting our care on the Lord. It is obvious that the Lord does not accept the transfer. Maidstone will have to cast its care on Science.

G. W. FOOTE.

## COMPARATIVE RELIGION.\*

JUDAISM being the Asiatic religion which has had most influence on the rest of the world, the chapters given to this subject by Major-General Forlong are the most important in the volume. One is devoted to "The Elohim of the Hebrews," and another to "The Jehovah of the Hebrews." Much time and attention are given to these names and their cognates. Elohim is derived from Al, "the Spirit High and Strong One," who dwelt in sacred trees, fire, lofty hills like Sinai, etc. Such deities are common throughout Asia, and their usual symbols are rude monoliths, men-hirs (or "man-stones"), pillars, robust tree stems, like the pine or rubor oak, the *Alun*, also called in Hebrew the stout and strong Al or Ol—"The High One." How suggestive, too, is it to read that אל, translated God 272 times in the Old Testament, is to be identified with איל, a ram, and with אלון, a robust tree. Elohim, translated God many hundreds of times in the Old Testament, is, of course, a plural, indicating that the monotheism of the Jews, as that of every other nation, began in polytheism. It has the signification of gods, spirits, oaks, rams, strong or great ones, lords of creation, kings, and judges. Our author very properly differentiates names which are translated as "God" in the Bible. Elohim dwelt not only in trees, fire, and arks, but in wells, priestly garments, ephods, urim, thamim, and such-like charms as the teraphim, which Rachel hid under her "camel saddle." Hosea thought it terrible to be without teraphim and ephods (iii. 4), so these existed in the temple along with the brazen serpent and other solar and lunar symbolisms, like the sacred pillars, Jachin and Boaz, and the *Od-uth*, or little stone symbols in the innermost adytum of the Ark. So we find these commonly in Eastern temples, and before them placed rice, fruit, and flowers, as Moses told Aaron to put manna before his *Od-uth* (Exodus xvi. 34).

The Elohim, Major-General Forlong points out, are partial, hating, loving, and jealous—features common to most early gods; for, says our author, "fear has always been man's first god, and whoso feared not had no gods, and was therefore called without religion." From the song of Hannah and the story of the Witch of Endor we learn that the Elohim existed not only in earth and skies, but in *Sheol* (the grave or pit), where they dwelt quietly with the dead, and did not like to be disturbed. In this section our author goes into the symbols of the Ashera, mistranslated "groves" in our Authorized Version. He finds that Israel, or rather Ishr-al, is a Hebraized form of the Ashr-al or Ashrim divinities. Readers of my *Bible Studies* know how these were connected with a phallic cult, of which there were clear traces among the Jews. Into this subject our author has gone very fully in his *Rivers of Life*, some of the many illustrations in which are here reprinted. He enters into the various forms of the word found in the Bible. *Ashr* and *Asheré* are in the Old Testament translated "groves" thirty-nine times, but *Ashl*, "a tree," occurs only twice, and is also so translated—see Genesis xxi. 33, where Abram plants an *Ashl* when he wanted to worship "Yahue, the Eternal, by the well of the oath." The second *Ashl* is also clearly "a tree," under which Saul sat at Ramah (see 1 Samuel xxii. 6). Not only Elohim, "but all Syrians and Arabians, were great *Ash*-or tree-worshippers, as personal and local names show; nor till about 625 B.C. was any real attempt made by Hebrews to ignore Ashls, Ashrs, and Asheras, and this then hastened the fall of the monarchy."

The worship of Jah, Yahve, or Jehovah, our author traces back to the Akkadian Ea. The Hittite connection is seen in such texts as 2 Samuel viii. 10, and throughout 2 Kings viii. 33, where Joram ("Jah has created") is the Hittite name of the son of Toi, King of Hamath. The proof that the Hebrew gods were in no way distinguished from the gods of the nations around is indeed abundant, and fully pointed out in these studies. The author holds that Judaism, as a distinct religion, only arose when Hebrews were in the grip of Assyria during the eighth and seventh centuries.

One point brought out very clearly is that all the gods are but evolutions. We can but trace them like words and ideas through the ages. The use of such terms as

"God," "Lord," etc., in the Bible completely veils the early meanings, which are traced and elucidated in this volume. Of Yahve our author says: "He was anything but an immaculate God—indeed, partook of many of the frailties of Zeus, Jove, and Indra. He was 'cheered' with wine, and took his share of the captive Midian maidens—say the mites of Joshua and Numbers. At Nebo he was a Baal, symbolized and worshipped in Baal Phegors (lingams), trees, stones, sun, etc. The early Gnostic Christian looked back on him as on a devil."

Major-General Forlong remarks:—

"Throughout the early centuries of Christianity many learned Christians taught, and thousands believed, that 'Jehovah was an evil spirit and the author of the Old Testament'; that he had an angel son Lucifer, who led astray many angels whom he imprisoned in human bodies, and that Christ was another angel who visited earth to redeem them. These beliefs were largely held and taught by southern and eastern Christians down to the Crusades, and by pious and often evangelical sects. From early Gnostics they passed to Paulicians of the sixth century; and north to the cruelly persecuted Albigenses, and like sects, who continued the so-called dual doctrine of the antagonism of evil and good from all eternity—teaching which Christians would obtain from Zoroastrians. Thus Yahve has not escaped the universal law of all existences; birth, life, and old age, if not yet death; and, after a close, calm, unbiassed study of the Hebrew God-idea, we wonder not that religious men gradually framed a new God and found him in a good and pious 'Son of man.'"

Major-General Forlong's next article deals with the "Sacred Books of the West in their Chronological and Historical Aspects." This is sufficiently important to deserve a separate notice. J. M. WHEELER.

## CHRIST-LIKE FALLACIES.

THE person of Christ as delineated in the New Testament is surrounded by fallacies as great and as palpable as ever deceived the credulous and unsuspecting mind. We certainly have no sympathy with the idea which appears to be more general among a certain class than its members would like to acknowledge—namely, that a belief which is not exactly true, and founded on certitude, should be retained in the interests of the masses. This is too much like the policy adopted by a section of the early Christians, who deemed lying and deceit to be virtues if indulged in for pious purposes. Even St. Paul seems to have justified such questionable conduct, for he exclaims: "If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?" (Romans iii. 7). According to Secular ethics, that belief only which is calculated to satisfy the requirements of the most rigid inquirer is at all fit to be inculcated among the general mass of mankind. To teach a falsehood is to endanger truth, imperil the world's welfare, and impede its amelioration. To practise falsehood is a serious danger to the well-being of a community, for it tends to destroy that confidence between its members which is so necessary to build up the stability of the commonwealth. Laplace wisely observes: "Truth and justice are the immutable laws of social order. Far from us be the dangerous maxim, that it is sometimes useful to mislead, to onslave, and to deceive mankind, to ensure their happiness." Equally correct was Bacon when he said: "Truth which doth only judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of truth is the love-making or wooing of it; the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it; and the belief of truth, which is the enjoyment of it; is the sovereign good of human nature."

The fallacy of all theological religions has been proved by their incompatibility with human needs, and their failure to regenerate society. The Paganism of Greece could not keep the people moral, nor preserve them from falling into decay. The many gods in Rome did not prevent the people becoming victims to the curse of Caesarian despotism. The Ten Commandments ascribed to Moses could not restrain the evil inclinations of the Hebrews; and Christ and the Gospels have failed utterly to effect the moral redemption of Europe. The strife, vice, crime, and misery by which we are surrounded are truly appalling. Such a horrible condition of things is a

\* *Short Studies in the Science of Comparative Religions.* By Major-General J. G. R. Forlong, author of *Rivers of Life*. (London: Quaritch, Piccadilly; 1897.)

national disgrace. We may well exclaim: If the Savior has come, "whence comes salvation?" With the theologies of the past we have now but little concern, except by way of comparison; but the theology of the present, with all its fallacies and power for mischief, still claims our attention. True, to a large extent it has become a "creed outworn," yet there remains enough of the evil to justify us in exposing its fallacies with the view of endeavoring to prevent its further contaminating the minds of the weak and the unwary. Some may point to our high degree of civilization, to our respect for law, to our morality, to our dominion over the non-Christian races, and they may affirm that "the Bible is the source of our greatness"; but the truth is, we owe what civilization we have to those dauntless pioneers who have at their own risk and cost resisted the "powers that be," in spite of St. Paul's threat that they shall "receive to themselves damnation"; and also to those practical scientists who have, figuratively speaking, bridged oceans, spanned rivers, and annihilated the restrictions of time and distance. As to morality, we are indebted for that to the ever-developing nature of man; and the decay of supernatural religion is shown by the fact that, in proportion as the "divine" hypothesis of existence is discredited and set aside, so does the general morality (in its truest sense) of the world increase and improve.

If it be true that whatever is built upon a mistake must be a mistake also, then Christianity is a most fallacious system. Christ is regarded as being the founder of the Christian faith, and but few men, if any, are associated in their lives and teachings with more errors than he is. According to portions of the Gospels, Christ evidently thought that he was a Divine Being. He professed to be the judge of all mankind, and to possess a knowledge as to the time when he would reappear and "reward every man according to his works" (Matt. xvi. 27). He also said: "I am the light of the world" (John viii. 12). Of course there are many other instances recorded in the Gospels wherein it is manifested that Christ was fallacious in his statements; but these three will suffice for the purpose of showing that Christianity is based upon a mistake. The doctrine of the Trinity rests upon the supposition that Christ was a part of the Godhead, and Jesus himself says: "I and my Father are one" (John x. 30); also, "All things are delivered to me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" (Matt. xi. 27). "Before Abraham was, I am" (John viii. 58). It is true there are numerous passages in the Gospels which contradict the deity of Christ. For instance, he says: "My Father is greater than I" (John xiv. 28). "The Son can do nothing of himself" (John v. 19). There is ample evidence in the New Testament to justify us in believing that Christ claimed to be equal with God; and in the same book ample proof is furnished to indicate that his claim was fallacious. He was subject to hunger, anger, and reckless passion; he lacked power, wisdom, and a general knowledge of science, philosophy, and an acquaintance with the daily requirements of human life. He therefore lacked those characteristics which are supposed to belong to a Divine or Supreme Being.

Equally fallacious was his declaration, "I am the light of the world." How could he be "the Light of the world" when up to the present date two-thirds of its inhabitants have not heard of him? Taking the earth's population to be 1,500,000,000, only one-fourth are even nominal Christians, and this number is made up by counting the whole population of a country as Christians where the Christian faith is professed. In such a calculation Agnostics, Secularists, Atheists, Deists, Positivists, etc., are all classed as "Christians." But even where Christ has been heard of, where was "light" introduced? Not upon morals; for they existed before his advent, and he failed to teach anything new of an ethical character. Not upon God and immortality; for we are told that the ancient beliefs upon these subjects "were as pure, as exalted, and as free from superstitious mixture" as those professed by "any people or any age." Not upon the secret of a nation's progress; for general advancement was comparatively unknown until the light of science and education illumined the human mind. Not upon the means of establishing "peace and goodwill" among mankind; for during the Christian era "wars and rumors of war"

have devastated the world, and provoked the exercise of the worst passions of human nature. No, this assumption of Christ's that he was "the Light" has proved to be a palpable fallacy.

He was equally in error in his announcements as to his immediate second coming. In Matt. xvi. 28; xxiii. 36, 39; xxiv. 34; Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 27; xi. 32, his speedy return to earth was plainly indicated. Jesus himself is alleged to have said: "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." This time has shown to have been a delusion. Now, if the Master committed so many mistakes, it is not altogether surprising that his emotional followers should also have indulged in Christ-like fallacies. That they did so we hope to demonstrate in our next article.

CHARLES WATTS.

(To be concluded.)

## THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES.

### X.—THE GREAT COMMANDMENT.

In the three Synoptical Gospels we find recorded an incident consisting chiefly of a question and an answer respecting the "great" commandment of the law, which incident may be taken as a fair sample of the wisdom ascribed to Jesus, and also as a specimen of what the original Gospel writer considered a smart reply.

#### 1. Matthew's account (xxii. 35-39):—

"And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, saying, Master, *which is the great commandment in the law?* And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hangeth the whole law and the prophets."

Here a "lawyer"—that is, a teacher and interpreter of the Mosaic law—is represented as asking Jesus which was the great, or the greatest, commandment in the decalogue (or, possibly, the greatest of the commands attributed to Moses), and receives the evasive answer that he is to love God with heart, soul, and mind. This, it is scarcely necessary to say, was not a reply to the question at all. There cannot be a doubt that the breaking of some of the commandments would produce more evil results, and would evince more depravity of character on the part of the breaker, than some of the others; as, for instance, murder as compared with theft or with simply coveting other men's goods. That all the commandments were equal in the sight of Jehovah is disproved by scores of passages in the Old Testament. Anyone who reads that collection of books will not be long in seeing that the commandment which was of the most importance in the eyes of the Jewish Deity was the First—"Thou shalt have none other gods besides me"—and that for the infraction of this command the Israelites were most often punished, or were so represented by the sacred writers.

Supposing the incident to be historical, here was a grand opportunity for Jesus to give a sample of the divine wisdom which many believe him to have possessed. Instead of doing so, he evades a straightforward reply, and states what was considered man's duty to God and his neighbor.

#### 2. Mark's account (xii. 28-31):—

"And one of the scribes came, and.....asked him, *What commandment is the first of all?* Jesus answered, The first is, Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God, the Lord is one: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."

Here we see that Matthew and Mark have adhered fairly closely to the original narrative, though in the latter account it is a "scribe" who asked the question. Both evangelists represent Christ as epitomizing the ten commandments, and showing that they might be reduced to two; but neither of them states, nor even implies, that Jesus merely repeated the following well-known passages in the Old Testament:—

"Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one;

and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut. vi. 4, 5).

"Thou shalt not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Lev. xix. 18).

These passages were, of course, known to every Jewish rabbi and scribe of Christ's time, and this fact is a clear indication that the anecdote is a fabrication. According to the Gospel accounts, Jesus, by his reply, effectually silenced his questioner, and "no man after that durst ask him any questions." But there cannot be a doubt that, had Christ quoted the two foregoing passages as an answer to the query, Which was the greatest of the commandments? such an absurd and irrelevant reply would not have been allowed to pass unchallenged. Jesus was not asked what two passages of Scripture might be said to contain a summary of the Moral law; the lawyers and scribes knew these passages perfectly well themselves. They required an answer to a totally different question. Hence, Christ's evasive reply would certainly not have been received as an oracle; it would, more probably, be greeted with shouts of laughter. To say, then, that because Jesus, by his reply, demonstrated his inability to answer a question addressed to him, therefore the most learned among the Jews were, for that reason, afraid to ask him any more questions, is an absurdity that could emanate only from the addled brain of a Christian Gospel-monger.

### 3. Luke's account (x. 25-28):—

"And behold a certain lawyer stood up and tempted him, saying, Master, *what shall I do to inherit eternal life?* And he said unto him, What is written in the law? How readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live."

In this version, it will be observed, the lawyer asked, not which was the greatest of the commandments, but what he was to do to obtain "eternal life"—matters as wide asunder as the poles. Jesus, for answer, demanded what was required by the law of Moses. To this the lawyer replied that one should love God with heart, soul, strength, and mind, and should also love one's neighbor as one's self. Christ, hearing this reply, said he had answered rightly; if he did these things, he should "live." The very wide difference between this doctrine and that of salvation by faith only, as taught by Paul and the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel, needs scarcely to be stated. Setting aside this small matter—for that Christ should recommend different methods of getting to heaven at different times is not at all extraordinary; many people suffer from an occasional lapse of memory—it will be sufficient to note that, according to Matthew and Mark, one question was asked, and, according to Luke, another; also that, according to the first two evangelists, Jesus himself named the two new commandments, while, according to the Third evangelist, it was the lawyer who did so. Those who can believe, without a scrap of evidence, that Jesus said and taught all that is put in his mouth in the Gospels must be left to choose between these two conflicting accounts; but, as a mere matter of probability, neither of them appears to be deserving of the smallest credit. In both we see but an older anecdote in a new dress.

No reconciliation of these two divergent accounts is, of course, possible; and, this being the case, Christian commentators and reconcilers have but one means of harmonizing them—viz., by asserting that Luke's version refers to a second and similar incident. We are thus asked to believe that there were two occasions on which the two great commandments were quoted in public—once by Jesus, and once by a lawyer. Now, if it could be shown that the three Synoptical Gospels were independent histories, this might, perhaps, be admitted; but since it can be proved that nearly the whole of the Second Gospel and about three-fourths of the other two were compiled from older written narratives, the case is altered. If there were two incidents in which the duty to God and to one's neighbor figured, then how comes it that Matthew and Mark, who each made selections from copies of the same documents as those used by Luke, appear never to have seen the second? And how comes it, also, that Luke, with the same Gospel narratives before him, seems never to have seen the first?

When we compare the three Synoptical accounts we find that four questions were represented as asked in succession. These are: (1) The Pharisees' question concerning the giving tribute to Cæsar; (2) the Sadducees' question respecting a woman's seven husbands in the next life; (3) a lawyer's question as to which was the great commandment; and (4) a question by Jesus relative to "David's Lord." These are recorded as follows:—

	MATT.	MARK	LUKE
The Pharisees' question	xxii. 15	xii. 13	xx. 21
The Sadducees' question	xxii. 23	xii. 18	xx. 27
The lawyer's question	xxii. 34	xii. 28	—
Christ's question	xxii. 41	xii. 35	xx. 41

It will be seen from the foregoing that Luke has omitted to give the lawyer's question in the place where it evidently appeared in the primitive Gospel. Also, there can be little doubt that the four incidents were given together in the copies used by all three Synoptists. This being the case, we must look for the third anecdote in another part of Luke's Gospel, and we find it in chapter x.—the paragraph we are now discussing. That the Third evangelist has recast and re-written the incident does not affect the matter; he has done the same in his versions of the Call of Peter and the Supper at Bethany. One matter at least is clear from Luke's recasting of these three incidents. This is, that the anecdotes related of Christ could not have been regarded, in that compiler's day, as undoubted historical occurrences which no Christian writer was at liberty to alter. And this view is confirmed by Luke's reference to other existing Gospels—"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative," etc.—as well as by the number of lying stories in the Gospels which are now called apocryphal. ABRACADABRA.

## THE NEW "LOGIA" AND THE NEW TESTAMENT.

(Concluded from page 661.)

LET us see how these "sayings" affect the question of the Christ of the Gospels as an historic portraiture. Although in some two or three of these *logia* we catch an echo of those given in the Gospels, yet there are others which have caused our Christian friends to contemplate them with eyes wide open with astonishment and misgiving. The second *logion* runs: "Except ye fast ye shall in no wise find the kingdom of God, and except ye keep the Sabbath ye shall not see the Father"; and the fifth of the series: "Raise the stone, and there thou shalt find me; cleave the wood, and there am I." It is around these two *logia* that controversy has for the most part centred. In regard to the first, it has been recognised that, taken as it stands, the solemn obligation it imposes of keeping the Sabbath is quite out of keeping with the latitudinarian teaching and practice of the New Testament Jesus; and the second of the couplet is so distinctly Pantheistic that to conceive of Christ having uttered it would involve a complete change of notion on the part of the Christian on the subject of a personal God. But to suppose that these two sayings would be allowed to stand with their obvious meaning unchallenged would be to fail to reckon with the peculiar faculty of Christian apologists of reconciling the irreconcilable. Thus we have the Rev. H. R. Haweis bravely sailing into the task of demonstrating that the spirit at least, if not the letter, of these Logia is perfectly in harmony with the portrait of Christ as limned in the Canonical Gospels.

Of course Mr. Haweis takes it for granted that these "sayings" did actually emanate from an historical personage known as Jesus Christ, and his method is to take any *logion* which wears on the face of it an aspect of Hebraic severity and Judaistic bias, and, interpreting it in terms of a liberal and easy-going Hellenism, to convert an apparent disparity into an actual consistency with canonical utterances. In a sermon which Mr. Haweis delivered on September 12 he speaks as follows of the Sabbath *logion*: "He (Christ) meant 'Unless you assemble yourselves together; unless you are alone with your Father, although you are in contact with others, you shall not have the quiet heart, the celestial vision, the peace which passeth all understanding. Therefore I say unto you, so far from neglecting the things of religion, so far from holding aloof from

holy seasons, the House of Prayer, and the means of Grace; so far from neglecting these things, I say, unless you keep the Sabbath ye shall not see the Father." But this kind of verbal jugglery won't do. What we want to know is, whether the saying, ".....except ye keep the Sabbath ye shall not see the Father," had reference to the particular day instituted by Moses—that is, the seventh day? Assuming that there actually was a Jesus who uttered these words, then his hearers, being mostly Jews, would undoubtedly have understood him to have been referring to *their* Sabbath, and so would have found no difficulty in acting upon his instructions. But then the Christian Church has abolished the Sabbath day of Moses, and as it would never do to admit that such abolition had destroyed the chances of the millions of Christendom of ever beholding the face of the Father, recourse has to be had to Jesuitical methods of argument to show that Christ was not alluding to any particular day, but to a sort of metaphysical Sabbaticism, which could be made to apply to any day in the week! This kind of reasoning is not reasonable. Even Christ himself, following, as we are given to understand, the occupation of a carpenter during the six days of the week, would find it impossible to give undivided attention to spiritual things while making chairs and tables, and so would have been in the position of his compatriots—forced to confine their Sabbatic devotions to the day set apart for the purpose by the assumed founder of Judaism himself. If Mr. Haweis's method of interpretation were the correct one, there is no reason why the Israelites in the very days of Moses himself should not have flouted his commandment on the ground that they could Sabbatise any day in the week if they chose.

No, there never has been any sufficient reason why the first day of the week should have been substituted for the Mosaic seventh; but the Christian Church has done it without any warranty from its Jesus, but merely to conciliate and capture the Pagans; which is a fact of some evidential value in the direction of showing that Christianity as we have it was not constructed upon Judaistic lines of thought, but was an *olla podrida* of all religious and philosophic cults which exercised any sort of influence in the first few centuries of the so-called Christian era. But that present-day upholders of Christianity should be put to their wits' ends to reconcile these *logia* with Christian institutions and practices is no reason why we who care for nothing but the truth should be defrauded by a false criticism of a correct appraisal of the significance of these ancient documents.

If the Rev. Mr. Haweis is unfortunate in his manner of dealing with this *logion*, his treatment of that which runs, "Raise the stone, and there thou shalt find me; cleave the wood, and there am I," is nothing short of sacrilegious. Violent and strangulous hands does he lay upon this, squeezing out the very pith and marrow of it. Instead of allowing it to remain as a forcible, and perhaps beautiful, illustration of the Omnipresence of God, it is removed from its proper atmosphere, and forced into an odious comparison with a text in Ecclesiastes x., which is in unimpeachable literary relationship to the rest of the discourse therein embodied, and which on the ground of either sentiment or fact is without reproach. It is extremely unlikely that Jesus Christ would have missed the point of that discourse, as we should have to assume that he did if, as Mr. Haweis suggests, he found it necessary to isolate this particular text from the rest of the chapter, and controvert its imagined erroneous implication. Christ in this *logion* was not inculcating Pantheism, says Mr. Haweis; he "was merely referring to this passage in Ecclesiastes where men were advised not to raise stones or to cleave wood." Yes, Mr. Haweis actually commits himself to that piece of fatuity! *Ecclesiastes* advised men not to raise stones or to lift wood. Now, gentle reader, turn to Ecclesiastes x., and what will you find? A discourse on the qualities which distinguish wisdom from folly, and advice proffered in homely phrase and illustration, to the wise man as to his comportment when in the presence of a fool. Take, for example, the verses 11 and 12: "Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babbling is no better. The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself." Now compare these with verses 8, 9, and 10: "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge a serpent shall bite him. Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that

cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby. If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength; but wisdom is profitable to direct." It is obvious to the critically-minded that all this talk about the danger of lifting stones and cleaving wood is symbolical of what is likely to happen if a wise man finds himself yoked to a wooden-headed fool, or to one of the stoney-hearted variety. He will have to practise the utmost circumspection; if the weapon he employ to neutralize or destroy the folly be blunt, or one whetted to a sharp edge, it is necessary that it should be used with wise discretion, and in wise direction, if the bearer himself is not to be betrayed into folly. "He that cleaveth a wooden head with rough and overmasterful words shall by the rebound thereof be in danger of a wounded dignity." In the case of the babbling fool, as the serpent will bite without enchantment, don't attempt to silence his babbings by verbose controversy, but let him babble until he tires himself out, and then perhaps you may interpose a few gracious words with some effect.

It is obvious to me that our friend Ecclesiastes knew what he was talking about; and there is not the slightest reason to suppose, as Mr. Haweis does, and even asserts, that he intended to discourage the lifting of stones and cleaving of wood in the discharge of the industrial avocations of every-day life. The whole philosophy of this chapter is beyond adverse criticism, and I for one refuse to believe that Jesus Christ, if he existed at all, was capable of such a grotesque misapprehension of it as Mr. Haweis is desirous of holding him responsible for. But these *logia* are not the spontaneous utterances of a *bona fide* flesh-and-blood personality; they are literary productions composed in cool blood, under circumstances where it was inevitable that quite other considerations than those of homiletic appeal merely should arise in the mind—considerations, for example, which were engendered by the necessity of exploiting the resources of the mind to discover the most appropriate phrase to convey the idea. Moral fanaticism and artistic impulse are mutually destructive of each other's mood. Consider in the light of these dicta that strange *logion* running: "I stood in the midst of the world, and in the flesh I was seen of men, and I found all men drunken, and none were athirst; and my soul grieved for the sons of men because they are blind in heart." Now, if anybody tells me that that collocation of words, with its recurrent idea in different phrase, and its paradox of drunkenness in the absence of thirst, does not betray literary artifice, then he must be considered qualified to undertake Christian apologetics and to exegete Ecclesiastes. BLOOMFIELD STEVENS.

### A JEALOUS GOD.

"For thou shalt worship no other God; for Jahveh, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God."—EXODUS XXXIV. 14.

EDGAR ALLAN POE, in his melodious poem on "Annabel Lee," says:—

The angels not half so happy in heaven  
Went envying her and me.

This has been thought hyperbole in *excelsis*. Yet it would be easy to show that it faithfully reflects man's early conceptions of the supernatural. Among all races, moderation in prosperity has been enjoined, lest pride draw the attention of the gods, and be followed by a fall. This notion, of course, arose because the gods were created in man's image, and were regarded as human chieftains, who often despoiled the man who was getting on in the world. Herodotus (i. 32) says, "The gods are very jealous"; and in several passages gives instances of their jealousy (vii. 10; viii. 119). Arrian relates that when Alexander proposed to invest himself with divine honors Callisthenes expostulated, reminding him of how enraged he would be if any man usurped his royal title. Zeus, father of gods and men, was jealous because Prometheus provided man with fire, and Poseidon was jealous of the Athenians because their city was provided with walls. But of all the jealous gods the Lord God Jehovah was the worst. His proper name, as our text of holy writ assures us, was Jealous. Like a true Jew, he was a thorough monopolist. He proclaims: "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation."

If we may believe the clergy, which reason forbid, God was so jealous of his apples that, because Eve took some fruit, he damned her posterity to an eternity of torments midst fire and brimstone in some other world. When men built a big tower at Babel—perhaps for an observatory—the Lord God got so jealous that, in the words of holy writ, “the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded.” And the jealous God got in such a rage that he then and there confounded their language so that they could not understand one another’s speech. The Lord Jehovah was so jealous that he would allow no sculpture, lest it be worshipped. His first commandment was, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” And his second was like unto it: “Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.” He was so confoundedly jealous that it was death to enter his holy of holies (Numbers iv. 20), and he slew fifty thousand and seventy persons only for looking into his travelling carriage (1 Samuel vi. 19), which was a box of shittin wood (Exodus xxv. 10). Once, when shut up in this box, which was drawn by oxen, he slew Uzzah for merely putting his hand on to steady it when the oxen shook it (2 Samuel vi. 6, 7). He ordered death for those who kindled a fire on his Sabbath (Exodus xxxv. 2, 3), and even for picking up sticks on that day (Numbers xv. 32, 36).

But the Christians are even worse than the Jews. They make out that their jealous God needed an atonement of blood, and spared not his own Son. I guess that when Jehovah gets hold of them he will frizzle them well in hell for singing so many hymns to sweet Jesus, and so few to himself.

LUCIANUS.

## ACID DROPS.

THE Pope has fitted out a special expedition to conquer England in the interest of Rome. This new armada was solemnly blessed last Sunday at Paris. Cardinal Vaughan and a large number of English priests were present to give an air of actuality to the ceremony. No doubt this expedition will be as successful as the famous one in Elizabeth’s reign. There is little reason to fear that Cardinal Vaughan, or his successor, or *his* successor, will occupy the seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury. And we are glad of this, for Priest Log is a smaller nuisance than Priest Stork, who would soon have his long bill poking into the business of every heretic.

Cardinal Vaughan is reported as having said at Arles that, “according to the latest statistics, the conversions [of English Protestants] vary from six to seven hundred per month.” This is startling, if true. A few years back the *Quarterly Review* gave statistics showing that Roman Catholicism was not keeping pace with the increase of population, the leakage outnumbering the number of conversions. Perhaps the Cardinal will condescend to give exact particulars, but we rather expect he will not.

Someone has sent us bills of Sunday afternoon lectures at St. Giles’ Institute, Dyott-street, New Oxford-street, London, W. The lecturer for the three Sundays, October 17-31, is the Rev. C. Lloyd Engström, secretary of the Christian Evidence Society, his subjects being “God,” “Man,” and “Infidelity.” We presume Mr. Engström uses the last invidious term on the plan of getting in the first blow in the fight. There is nothing like putting your adversary at a disadvantage before the first round.

The Rev. Dr. Berry, of Wolverhampton, once called Mr. Foote a “professional infidel.” Mr. Foote replied that Dr. Berry’s income was greater than that of all the “infidel” lecturers in England put together. Dr. Berry said no more.

This same Dr. Berry, in his presidential address to the Congregational Union at Birmingham, spoke of Secularism as “an inadequate and dishonoring doctrine of man and destiny.” But what is the use of these adjectives, especially the malicious second one? The only question that can really be discussed between a Christian and a Secularist is whether Christianity or Secularism is true. Truth, in the long run, carries beauty and usefulness with it. When men see that a certain principle is true, their emotions will sooner or later adjust themselves to the recognition.

Commenting on Dr. Berry’s address, the *Leamington Chronicle* remarks that “such forms of Secularism as are represented by the verses and illustrations of the *Free-*

*thinker* are utterly repugnant to the average mind.” If the writer had just inserted one word, and made it read “the average Christian mind,” he would have been quite accurate. By the way, he hasn’t a very intimate acquaintance with the *Freethinker*, or he wouldn’t talk so glibly about its “illustrations.”

Mr. Hall Caine’s novel, *The Christian*, contains an account of the visit of John Storm, priest and Christian Socialist, to Glory Quayle, the actress, his old sweetheart. John is going to kill her body to save her soul, and she saves her life by playing upon his amorous emotions. “Kiss me!” she cries at the end of the scene, and he does so. Her hair falls loose, her dress is disordered, her arms are about John Storm and his arms are about her, and the curtain drops on the enamored couple. The next morning John Storm creeps along the streets like a culprit, and Glory Quayle lies in bed with a smile and a long-drawn sigh. “Oh, delicious mystery! Oh, joy of joys!” That is how Mr. Caine goes on, and Mr. W. T. Stead concluded, as every sane person would, that Glory Quayle had surrendered her body to the final embrace of John Storm, or, as Dr. Farrar puts it, committed mortal sin. Mr. Caine denies that he meant this, and calls Mr. Stead’s interpretation “an outrage both on art and morals.” Mr. Stead replies by printing Glory Quayle’s adventure side by side with the “fall” of Kate in *The Munsterman*, and they are wonderfully alike, only the former is rather more luscious and suggestive.

Log-rolling is becoming a fine art, and Mr. Hall Caine is an adept. Dr. Parker preached on *The Christian* at the City Temple. Mr. Caine at once telegraphed to the *Daily Chronicle* word of the fact, and added: “I should be profoundly grateful if you could give a report.” The *Chronicle* complied, but cruelly printed Mr. Hall Caine’s telegram. And now the world begins to see how certain books, like certain pills, get a vogue by dint of persistent advertising. Dr. Parker, by the way, stated how Mr. Caine had previously called on him to inform him that his next novel would be a religious one.

The Metropolitan Board Teachers’ Association has just held its twenty-fifth annual meeting in the Memorial Hall. Mr. Bowers, the new president, gave an address on “The Ethics of the Coming School Board Election,” and warned the sacerdotal party that if they captured the schools they would not capture the teachers. These were brave words, and were doubtless well-meant. But what is their real value? Mr. Bowers must know, after all, that the teachers are not, and never can be, the masters of the situation. Those who pay the salaries will always have the whip-hand over those who receive them. If the sacerdotalists capture the Board schools, they will rule in them just as much as they do in the Church schools.

Mr. Bowers went on to say that the present system, under which the children are taught simple Bible truths in simple language, produced the maximum of good with the minimum of friction. He forgot that this can only be true from the standpoint of the average Christian. Citizens who are not Christians, or who do not believe in the State’s right to teach religion, regard Bible reading (simple or otherwise; but we dare say it is *simple* enough) as a violation of the principles of civil and religious liberty.

Not satisfied with this statement, Mr. Bowers proceeded to denounce the proposal which is being made to transfer religious instruction from the teachers to the clergy. So far as he wishes to keep the clergy out of the schools, he commands our sympathy. At the same time, we venture to observe that if religion is taught at all it should be taught by professionals, and not by amateurs—by clergymen, for instance, and not by school-teachers. However much this may be disliked, there is only one ground for resisting it. The clergy can be kept out of the schools by keeping religion out of the schools. Logically there is no other method of opposition. And it is curious how logic wins in the long run.

Parliamentary grants now pay very nearly three-fourths of the educational expenditure of the country, the larger proportion being taken by Church and Roman Catholic schools, although these are relatively less efficient. Despite the endowments of Voluntary schools, the Board schools take higher grants per scholar. Yet the Government have been devoting £600,000 a year to the Voluntary schools—a sum as large as all voluntary subscriptions put together. With Government help, voluntary subscriptions have steadily declined. In 1877 they represented 9s. 6d. per scholar; in 1894, 6s. 7½d.; and there has been a further diminution since.

Education has become virtually a State department, with the control still in clerical hands. The posts in all denominational schools are filled on a thorough system of religious test—a system now happily abolished in other departments of our public service. This means, for instance, that in the

case of Church schools, nearly one-half of all the schools together, the teacherships are closed against all who are not members of the Church of England, and this although six-sevenths of the total income of these schools is provided by the taxpayer.

"A poor lady" advertises in the *Christian World* for someone to "help her purchase a bicycle," as she is "anxious to take up Christian work in an outlying parish." This is the easiest way of getting a bicycle we ever heard of. It beats the hire system hollow.

Henry Varley, of London, and other evangelists, addressed a crowded meeting of the Christian Missionary Alliance at a New York theatre last Sunday. Funds were pleaded for to send soul-savers to Africa, India, and China. When the enthusiasm was at concert pitch the collection was taken up. Men, women, and children emptied their pockets, giving money, cheques, watches, and jewellery. One man gave a New Jersey farm. Altogether, the sum of seventy thousand dollars was realized. All that money will be spent on catching the heathen. Meanwhile thousands of people in New York are in a state of destitution. Yes, the missionary game is a most admirable one—for the soul-savers.

From Colombo, Ceylon, we receive a reprint of "The Great Controversy on Missions, Missionaries, and Native Ministers," reprinted from the local newspapers. It is stated that the letters have been reprinted at the request of a large number of laymen interested in the welfare and progress of Christian missions; but the pamphlet is sent to us by a Buddhist, who thinks it well calculated to serve the cause of Buddhism.

It appears that Christianity was introduced from Persia into Ceylon at a very early period by Nestorian missionaries. The Catholics under Sir Francis Xavier had considerable success. They are still the largest item in the Christian population, the figures in 1891 being:—Buddhists, 1,877,043; Hindus, 615,932; Mohammedans, 211,999; Roman Catholics, 246,214; Protestants, 55,913. The number of Protestants do not keep pace with the increase of population.

The controversy which has been going on in the local press has mainly centred round the treatment of native ministers. These, if we may credit some of the letters, not only have a sharp line of demarcation drawn between them and their white brethren-in-Christ, but are also paid at about the same rate as the white padre's menials. The European missionaries travel as saloon or cabin passengers, with the attendant comforts and convenience, while their unfortunate colleagues, the native men of God, travel as deck passengers with ordinary coolies. How, it is asked, can it be expected that educated and self-respecting men will preach a religion of brotherhood which sets them such examples?

The European missionary in Ceylon gets a salary ranging from £40 a month, coupled with increase for every addition to his family, and the promise of its free education in England. They have spacious bungalows, rent free, carriages, and tennis grounds; while the native ministers who do the hard work get very poorly paid. If the subscribers to missions fancy it is the white missionaries who labor hard among the wild Singhalese, they appear to be very much mistaken. Christianity as practised by the white missionaries in Ceylon appears to be a broad satire on the teaching that all are brethren in Christ.

At Maitland (N.S.W.) two Chinamen became alle same Christians last week, per medium of the Scotch Church. The baptism was a success financially, the collection, twenty-two shillings, or thereabouts, going to pay the Chow missioner's back screw. One of the converts took the name of Jacob Napoleon, and the other Joshua Andrew. Both made statements after the hymn, "Safe in the Arms," had been sung. Jacob stated that he had heard the Lord for six months, and was almost sure he was right; but he was not questioned as to whether he kept the spare cabbage under his bed. This, however, the *Bulletin* does not think any Presbyterian Chinaman would do. Joshua Andrew said that he only studied the Bible for three months and two days; he then felt the Spirit burn brightly within him. It was announced that the Mission was just struggling—pulling the devil by the pig-tail, as it were. They had captured five converts during the last eighteen months; one of these, however, had hanged himself a few weeks ago, and two others had fallen away again. In conclusion, the young ladies of the church were implored to gather the yellow heathen into the fold. (Loud and prolonged Chinese cheers.)

By the way, a Chinese parson is this week to be married in Sydney to a nice white lady, who teaches a Chinese Sunday-school.—*Bulletin*.

Geelong parson, preaching from text, "Thou shalt not leave His soul in Hell," uses the word "Hades" all through his sermon. After church, old lady (*log.*): "Well, I really can't make it out. It's been hell ever since I was a girl, and hell's quite good enough for me."

There is no country like Abyssinia for seeing Christianity in its primitive aspect. The isolation of the country has kept its religion in much the same condition as when imported in the time of Constantine. It is there seen to be a system of monkery and mendicancy, with a detrimental influence on civilization rather than the reverse.

Even the Christian churches in Abyssinia throw light on early Christianity. They are built in the midst of groves. They are round in shape, with conical roofs, and are divided into three parts. The outer court is open. The inner, which is closed, is used for public worship. The third enclosure corresponds to the holy of holies, and is only entered by the priests. The exterior of this enclosure is painted with sacred subjects by native artists, of great amusement to Europeans. The saints are wondrous to behold, and J. C. is always a swarthy Ethiopian with a halo of glory.

H. C. Richards, the inexpressibly dreary English M.P. for Finsbury, now tottering around in Victoria, and advertised as having given to St. Paul's Church a Bible used for many years at St. Paul's, London, is the pious barrister who opposed Bradlaugh in his Northampton elections during the oath-question struggle. The parsons prayed for the success of Richards; but, heaven having no vote, Bradlaugh won every time. One parson, after an election, preached from the text, "Not this man, but Barabbas." Richards was "this man"; Bradlaugh was "Barabbas." The Iconoclast colossus said that he could not have said anything half so blasphemous if he had tried. Richards is a pet of the Primrose League, but otherwise a person of no consequence.—*Sydney Bulletin*.

I note that the Wrong-Reverend E. H. Harman, formerly presiding elder of the Methodist church at Brenham, but given the grand bounce for getting too gay at Galveston, where, in company with another sanctified ministerial hypocrite, named Wimberly, he had "a hot time in the old town" with hacks, harlots, and barrel-house booze, has been converted to the Christian (or Campbellite) faith, and proposes to preach. Possibly his conversion is genuine; but it is worthy of remark that he saw nothing attractive in the Christian cult until no longer allowed to occupy a Methodist pulpit—until reduced to the necessity of either seeking a job in a new corner of the Lord's vineyard or taking a fall out of the lowly cotton patch.—*Iconoclast*.

The French papers having written with horror of the employment of bullets against the Afridis which make a terrible wound, the *Daily Messenger*, the English organ in Paris, remarks that "no severity ever practised by the harshest of English officers could be a patch on the severity of the old Israelitish military leaders acting under the direct instigation of Jehovah.....And it was the method of Moses (acting on divine directions) to slay not only combatants, but all who would at any future time be of trouble to his people. 'And now therefore kill every male among the little ones,' and was 'wrath,' as the sacred record has it, when these instructions were not carried out to the letter. He had a weakness for 'putting every living thing to the sword,' and we learn later that the 'man after God's own heart' not only followed a similar policy, but 'houghed' or hamstrung all the horses of the enemy. But, notwithstanding that all this had divine approval in dealing with the Afridis of five thousand years ago, what would Exeter Hall say if half as much were resorted to to-day?" What brutality is there that cannot be defended by an appeal to the Divine book?

The murderous state of mind is often closely allied to the religious. The man Cooper, who shot at his wife at Croydon, said: "I thought if I killed Mary I should send her to heaven. I should follow myself, and the shock of it all would kill my dear old mother, and then we should be all right and happy together."

Vacher, the French Ripper, says he has murdered eight persons, and was "chosen by God to make victims on earth. He felt ever so much better after carrying out these divine behests. For of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Under the heading "The Bible and the Bike," the *Bulletin*, of Sydney, gives a caricature of a cyclist bent almost double over his machine. Underneath is the text: "This only I know: God hath made man upright; but man hath sought out many inventions" (Eccles. v.).

A Melbourne pastor, who loans the use of his little bethel for "skirt-dancing and other dancing," quotes the Rev. Stewart Headlam (satirized in *Vicar of Bray*) to the effect

that "The Ballet is Worship." Everything is worship if you only open the proceedings with a short prayer and end it with a collection.

On St. Edward the Confessor's Day a number of Roman Catholic priests and laymen visited the tomb in Westminster Abbey. Many of them touched the tomb with their rosaries and pocket-handkerchiefs, that some of the virtue of the stone around the long-mouldered dust might come in contact with their own persons. Evidently fetishism is by no means extinct.

The Rev. W. D. Armstrong, pastor of the Church of Seventh-Day Adventists, of West Washington, has been arrested and imprisoned on a charge of working on the Lord's Day. He had kept the Lord's Day as ordered in the Bible, and the Christians punish him because he does not keep also the day they have, without authority, put instead of the Sabbath. There is not a preacher of any intelligence in America who does not positively know that the Seventh-Day Adventist is right in claiming that Saturday is the Sabbath, and the only Sabbath that the Bible knows anything about. Yet they punish a fellow Christian who follows the Bible and his own conscience in the matter; and this in the land of liberty!

There is a good deal of liberty in England for those who take it in the name of the Lord. George Knight is one of these. He and his band with concertina and zither, have a Sunday evening pitch at St. Thomas's-road, Finsbury Park, where they sing and shout and make collections so that lodgers leave to avoid the disturbances. 150 householders petition against the nuisance; but the magistrate only mildly advises its abatement.

A "divine-healer," named Miller, was doing a good business at faith-curing in Atlanta, Ga., until he had the misfortune to "over-drink himself," when he was ejected from his hotel. As the *Atlanta Journal* puts it, "his light went out in a baptism of booze."

Fifty thoughtless persons spoiled a great moral lesson by being killed in a church instead of a dance-hall when the earthquake struck the Leeward Islands.—*Detroit News*.

The *Boston Globe* has had a symposium on "Is there a Personal Devil?" contributed to by some of the leading sky-pilots of the hub of the universe. The Rev. C. A. Dickenson believes there are many devils. The Rev. A. Connolly (R.C.) believes there is one. Rabbi Fleischer says he doesn't know, and inclines to doubt. The Rev. G. C. Lorimer (Baptist) says he believes in the existence of what he calls a malignant spirit; but what particular form it may take, and to what extent its influence operates in the universe, he says that it is not easy to state. The Rev. G. L. Perin (Universalist) does not believe in one, and says that only insane persons do. The *Globe* should now discuss "Is there a Personal God?"

In a paper on "The Psychology of Belief," in the *Popular Science Monthly* for October, W. B. Parker points out the close relation of love and religion. He says: "It is, I think, remarkable how many women, disappointed in love, turn to religion for consolation. Girls and women, who have never revealed the slightest interest in church or creed, become, under the influence of an unrequited passion, the most ardent believers." This indicates how much belief depends on emotion. Women are so devoted to God because man has been hard to them. To make them irreligious, the first thing is to make them happy.

Mr. Parker holds with Bain that the chief fact of belief was primitive credulity. "We are all naturally and primarily credulous; scepticism is a later development, and comes from the sort of experience that makes sadder but wiser men of us." The creeds of Christianity, as he justly remarks, come to us with the force of centuries' unwisdom behind them. They are accepted in their traditional form chiefly because, by multitudinous repetitions, they have been beaten in upon the mind, and in most cases have been yielded credence without question or reasoning.

Father Damien, who died of leprosy among the lepers of Molokai, was a young Belgian priest of the Catholic Church. Perhaps this is the reason why the Rev. J. A. Cullen, one of the missionaries of the Church Missionary Society, is "able to state on the highest authority that Father Damien had contracted the disease of leprosy before he commenced his work at Molokai." If the statement be true, however, it tremendously discounts the rapturous eulogies of Father Damien by Robert Louis Stevenson and others.

Mr. Harold Blindloss, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* makes a statement which is calculated to raise every hair on the

heads of the gentlemen who run the Missionary Societies. Writing on the Western Sahara, he says that "any negro with a trace of Arab blood in him is invariably a Moslem, and the Mohammedan black is generally head and shoulders above either heathen or, it is to be regretted, Christian (or semi-Christian) negro in the qualities of sobriety, courage, and fidelity."

The Vienna correspondent of the *Daily News* thought it worth while to telegraph an account of the execution of a vulgar murderer named Dolezal, who robbed and killed two aged women. The fellow occupied the "Poor Sinners' Cell" in the prison, and by means of the assiduous attentions of his father confessor he "found peace with God." He appears to have made an edifying end, and is presumably now in heaven. What place his two aged victims went to is a problem that gives nobody any concern. Such is the delightful ethics of orthodox Christianity.

Said the *Speaker* recently: "When one thinks of the uses men have made of the words 'religion' and 'Christianity'—the former of which does not occur in the Four Gospels, nor the latter in the whole New Testament—one is tempted to wish that some others could be found to do duty for them." Although a great fuss is made about them, they never would be missed. People who say how cold the world would be without religion forget the wise words of Bishop Butler: "Things are as they are, and their consequences will be what they will be."

An esteemed correspondent writes us anent Moody's yarn: "There is a grave in Watford Churchyard with a fig-tree growing out, which has split the tomb all to pieces. There is another at Aldenham, near here. The Watford one has got the Atheist lady stony tacked on to it."

The curate of Pakefield, near Lowestoft, is a muscular Christian, and has started a football club. The rector does not approve of it, and in a sermon plainly denounced it as a device of the Devil. "Satan," said he, "was a successful practitioner, and if any in the congregation preferred attendance at a football match to going to a prayer-meeting, they belonged to Satan's flock." This is Christian logic. The Church being run by the deity, all rival agencies must be run by his antagonist.

At Brisbane (Q.) Exhibition Art Gallery there was an ideal portrait of Christ, and alongside it a likeness of Kaiser William the Sudden, of Yairmany. Somehow the numbers were transposed; therefore, visitors who went by the catalogue found the Redeemer with a uniform on, and a big, brassy helmet, and a sword, and a moustache, and with a martial glare in his eye. Yet no one did anything to correct the mistake until a German, full of wüirst and bock and indignation, interviewed the management, and desired to bump its head against the doorstep. And his grievance was that a gross insult had been offered to Kaiser Bill.—*Sydney Bulletin*.

Rev. Canon Berry (Melbourne): "We have been on the down-grade in enlarging the franchise, and the end of the journey will be the granting of womanhood suffrage." Frightful to think of! And yet, if it were not for women, what would become of the clergy? Women are their chief supporters and admirers. Is Canon Berry afraid that if they get the right to vote they will also want to compete with the cloth? Female preachers—if reasonably pretty—would almost certainly draw more men to church than the present class of male expounders. A female bishop in gaiters would be a pleasing novelty. Moody and Sankey used to ask, "Why should the Devil have all the best tunes?" Similarly, it might be inquired, "Why should the Devil have (on the stage, which numbers of the clergy call Satan's Church) all the best-looking legs enlisted in his service?" And what harm has the enlargement of the suffrage done to Canon Berry, anyhow?

Why, O Canon Berry,  
Like the heathen rage?  
Surely you are very  
Far behind the ago!

Which would suit your palate,  
Which would you think right—  
Men to vote by ballot,  
Or by dynamite?

—*Sydney Bulletin*.

The *Torch of Reason* says that an Alabama murderer addressed the following note to the governor: "I wish you would grant me a thirty-day respite. I am short on religion. I intended to get it last week, but was too busy."

The Rev. Frank H. Cumming, Methodist, of Geneseo, N.Y., has fallen. Two young women fall with him.



**Mr. Foote's Engagements.**

Sunday, October 24, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road, at 7.30, subject, "The Apostles' Creed: or, What The Church Party want in the Schools."  
 October 31, Camberwell.  
 November 23, Leicester.

**TO CORRESPONDENTS.**

MR. WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—October 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.

WALWORTH FREETHINKER.—You are quite right. Mr. Holyoake is mistaken. Mrs. Harriet Law did not start the *Secular Chronicle*. It was started by Mr. Reddalls, of Birmingham, and was purchased by Mrs. Law some time after his decease.

F. A.—A very old joke. We printed it in the *Freethinker* twelve or thirteen years ago. It is a good one, we admit.

UNKNOWN.—Matthew ix. 12 does not hit the Peculiar People. Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees, not to his own followers. Not, of course, that it much matters from our point of view.—We noticed that whale story before. It seems to have been started as a joke in Paris. Silly Christians took it up seriously on this side of the Channel. Rev. Dr. Townsend, and the readers of the *Christian*, must be in a hopeless condition if they really believe that a missing sailor was found all alive in a whale's belly a day and a night later.

J. F. HAMPSON.—We hope you will return both candidates. See paragraph.

J. G. DOBSON has left Workington, and returned to his old address at 33 Trent-street, Stockton-on-Tees. Mr. Dobson was discharged from his employment at Workington on the ground that his Atheism was the talk of the town. His employer "had not read enough" to "argue the matter," but is prepared to give him the best of references. Well, that is something. Not so very long ago such an employer's reference would have read like this—"He ought to be in hell, and I wish he was there."

HORACE W. PARSONS promises £5 annually towards the N.S.S. Financial Reorganization Scheme.

R. E. H.—Thanks. We had already received copies of the bill and written a paragraph upon it.

N.S.S. TREASURER'S SCHEME.—Miss E. M. Vance acknowledges the following fresh promises:—D. Clarke, £1 (*p*); P. P., £1 1s.; J. H. Ridgway, 10s. 6d.

N. S. S. TREASURER'S SCHEME.—The following promises have been sent to us:—L. Fox, 5s.; S. Holmes, 10s.; J. P. Brown, 10s. (*p*); D. Prossor, 5s.; J. Hayes, 5s. (*p*).

T. BELLAMY, 6 Thorosby-street, Sneinton, Nottingham, acknowledges the following subscriptions on behalf of the veteran J. Hooper, who is in very necessitous circumstances:—J. Cooper, 5s.; W. Numby, 5s.; A Friend, 6s. We advise Mr. Bellamy to formally apply to the N.S.S. secretary, 376-7 Strand, London, W.C., with a view to a grant from the Benevolent Fund.

WE have received for the J. Hooper Fund:—G. W. Foote, 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. J. Neate, 2s. 6d.

W. H. SPIVEY, Huddersfield, writing in high appreciation of Mr. Watts's lectures there on Sunday, mentions that £1 was collected in the evening and handed to Mr. Watts in aid of the veteran J. Hooper.

CASTOR.—Always glad to receive useful cuttings. Readers who send us such assist us, and help to make this journal more interesting for themselves.

RICHARD WOODS.—Don't trouble about the abridgment. Read Gibbon in his entirety. The best edition at a reasonable price is that edited by Professor Bury. It is now appearing, and is to be completed in seven volumes at 3s. 6d. each. You could probably pick up a second-hand copy of one of the older editions, containing Gibbon's text and his own notes, for ten shillings, or perhaps less. Your order is handed to Mr. Forder.

J. G. BARTRAM.—See "Sugar Plums." Have you no hall available for lectures now in Newcastle?

C. C. TURNER.—See paragraph.

POLICE SERGEANT.—Thanks for your interesting letter. Best to move along carefully.

W. S. CLOGG.—Thanks. See paragraph.

S. HOLMES.—Better late than never, far better. A good many who could subscribe don't even see that they are late.

W. G. MACFARLANE.—Thanks. See our leading article. Pleased to hear you have read the *Freethinker* for many years, and "can bear testimony to the good it does."

OLD BRADLAUGHIAN.—Certainly it is amusing to see the names of G. J. Holyoake and Touzoau Parris in the list of the late Charles Bradlaugh's "lieutenants." They must be laughing themselves at this remarkable incongruity. With regard to the other matter, it is of course very easy for mere malignance to do mischief, but the N. S. S. has nothing to fear in the long run from enemies who cannot draw audiences or maintain journals, and have no capacity for organization. Now and then, in some part of a river, you will see a backwash. It looks to be setting up on its own account, and threatening to absorb the whole stream. But it doesn't. It holds back but a little water after all. The main volume always sweeps on its natural course.

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

F. R. LANSDELL.—At Ipswich, as elsewhere, it seems to us the clear duty of Secularists to do their utmost in support of the new Treasurer's Scheme, which, as a centralized effort, will do more than any spasmodic local action, at least until Branches stand on a firm, independent footing. No doubt the sub-committee will try to provide you with some lectures, if you only show a reasonable interest in the Scheme.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—L' Etoile Socialiste—East London Observer—Liberator—Egoism—New Century—Two Worlds—Progressive Thinker—Torch of Reason—Freethought Magazine—Secular Thought—People's Newspaper—Morning Leader—Crescent—Boston Investigator—Islamic World—Herts Leader—New Age—Truthseeker—Birmingham Post—Leamington Chronicle—Isle of Man Times.

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.**

FOR the "first time in history" the Oxford Music Hall was opened on Sunday evening for a "sacred concert." Prices of admission were as usual, and the place was crowded. If this sort of thing continues and spreads—and why shouldn't it?—the Sunday League will simply expire in the final blaze of its own triumph.

Of course the Oxford Music Hall concert was a formidable opposition to the "divine services" going on in the neighborhood, but it did not affect Mr. Foote's audience at the Athenæum Hall, which is only three minutes' walk further up Tottenham Court-road. The meeting was large and enthusiastic. The lecture, entitled "In Abraham's Bosom," provoked endless laughter and applause.

Mr. Foote occupies the Athenæum Hall platform again this evening (October 24), taking for his subject, "The Apostles' Creed: or, What the Church Party want in the Schools." This is a matter which is not sufficiently understood, and the lecture should prove instructive to orthodox Christians, as well as interesting to Freethinkers. Mr. Forder will take the chair.

Councillor Mitchell was unable to take the chair on the four evenings of Mr. Foote's debate with Mr. W. T. Lee at Glasgow. The municipal election meetings were in full swing, and Mr. Mitchell had to look to his seat. He came and took the chair on the second evening, thinking he would have two hours' freedom; but before an hour had elapsed he was summoned away to a meeting he had overlooked. Mr. D. Black took the chair instead of Mr. Mitchell, and filled it with dignity. At the close of the debate, in response to a vote of thanks, he expressed his gratification at the gentlemanly way in which Mr. Lee had conducted his side of the debate. As a Secularist, he thought it would not be right on his part to say anything in praise of Mr. Foote. Mr. Lee, however, was a comparative stranger; in fact, it was his first visit to Glasgow; but the favorable impression he had made was an augury that it would not be his last. Mr. Black also complimented the audience on the remarkable order, good-temper, and impartiality they had maintained throughout.

Mr. Watts informs us that he was much pleased at his debate last week in Birmingham with the Rev. A. J. Waldron. It was carried on in the most amicable spirit, both disputants being in good form. In fact, it was, as Mr. Ridgway, the chairman, said, an excellent discussion in every way. Mr. Watts speaks in the highest terms of the local Branch for the successful manner in which they arranged the debate. There were capital audiences both nights. Mr. Ridgway made a first-rate chairman.

On Sunday last Mr. Watts lectured twice in Huddersfield. The audiences were good, but not so large as he has had in that town in former years. The whole districts of Huddersfield and Bradford require waking up. There are plenty of Freethinkers in those places, but of late lectures there have been too few and far between. On Sunday Mr. and Mrs.

Gott came from Bradford, and other friends were present from Dewsbury and Leeds.

This evening, Sunday, October 24, Mr. Watts lectures at the Secular Hall, New Church-road, Camberwell, London, taking for his subject "The Triumph of Reason over Faith." Next Saturday evening, October 30, he commences a four nights' debate with Mr. Waldron at Stanley, Durham. We are informed that great interest is manifested throughout the local districts at this coming intellectual encounter.

Mr. A. B. Moss lectured last Sunday morning at the North Camberwell Radical Club on "Man and Evolution." He had an audience of 250 men, who listened most attentively, and heartily applauded at the finish. The Club is desirous of having more Freethought lectures. Mr. Moss lectured in the evening at Wood Green.

On Monday, October 11, the Newcastle Secularists held a social gathering to celebrate the ninetieth birthday of their oldest member, Mr. W. Bennett. Mr. Bennett was presented with a neatly-framed photograph of the committee and some of the members, himself being the central figure of the group. Mr. C. Cohen and his wife were present, and a beautiful oil portrait was presented to him of the late Charles Bradlaugh, painted by a member, Mr. Brownlow, which was very much admired. Mr. Cohen returned thanks in a humorous speech. He pleaded guilty to having got married, but it was the first time he had ever done so, and he sincerely hoped it would be the last.

The Ipswich friends are holding a meeting at the G. E. R., Commercial-road, at 7 this evening (Oct. 24), to consider the immediate future of Freethought organization in the city. All are invited to attend.

The Tyneside Sunday Lecture Society's *Weekly Notes*, commenting on a bishop's statement that if Lord Hobhouse's bill were carried there would be no barrier left against the complete secularization of Sunday, asks: "What price the influence of the Church of England?" Had an Atheist made this statement (it says) the "Fetter-Day Society" would have shown that religion rests on the desires and necessities of God-fearing people, and not on the policeman's baton; but "the bishops evidently think that, if the baton be withdrawn, all other aids to sanctification will go for nought."

Lovers of Shelley will be interested to know that within the last few days a memorial tablet has been affixed to the house in Pisa where the poet wrote "Adonais." The house is on the south side of the Lung' Arno, a few paces below the Ponte Vecchio. The palace where Byron lived is on the other side of the river, nearly opposite the Shelley House.

Dr. Stanton Coit, of the Ethical Society, writing to a correspondent of ours, says that he was misrepresented by the *Chronicle*. "I do not believe in non-moral education," he says, "as I think that morality is the supreme end of education. I think that we had better have the Compromise than to drive out all moral instruction. The High Church wish to drive out all moral teaching, so that the priests may have a monopoly of the child's soul. I am opposed to theological teaching of morals, and rather than introduce any more theology at present I would stand by the Compromise. But I hate the Compromise. I would advocate it only in face of the two worse alternatives. I advocate substituting secular ethical teaching as soon as teachers and parents can be trained to admit it." After considering this carefully, we cannot help feeling that Dr. Coit is in a state of confusion. Morals or no morals, religion ought not to be taught in the ratepayers' schools. On the other hand, the sanction is nearly all that is in dispute in morality, and we can but admire the light and airy way in which Dr. Coit assumes that the leaders of religion, Church and Nonconformist alike, are going to allow the *natural* instead of the *supernatural* sanction of morality to be taught in the schools. Sooner than do that, they would go in for a purely scientific curriculum.

We are happy to hear that the Camberwell Branch has taken a new lease of life, and is making rapid progress. Its open-air meetings on Peckham Rye, as well as at Station-road, have been very successful, and its indoor meetings on Sunday evening have been steadily improving. The Branch is now running its own bookstall, and the secretary informs us that forty copies of the *Freethinker*, besides other literature, were sold last Sunday. This evening (Oct. 24) the Secular Hall platform is occupied by Mr. Charles Watts, who discourses on "The Triumph of Reason over Faith." On the following Sunday evening the lecturer will be Mr. Foote.

The *Progressive Thinker*, of Chicago, remarks: "Rev. Dr. Thomas, the liberal clergyman of this city, says six orthodox preachers have made application for the vacant place in

his pulpit made by the resignation of Rev. Vrooman. We venture the opinion, if there were a thousand vacant places to be filled in churches which deny a triple-headed God, they could all be filled inside of a week from good orthodox pulpits. The churches for centuries have ridiculed the three-headed god Brahma, but lately they have turned their eyes within, and behold, the God they worship has as many heads as has the Hindoo deity."

*Nya Sanningar*, the organ of the Swedish Freethinkers, has changed its title to *Fria Tankar*. It is now under the editorship of Karl J. Ellington, and is giving its readers portraits of Freethinkers, commencing with Camille Flammarion. Ernst Hellborg has a poem entitled "Fria Tankar."

Sabbatarianism is declining even in the capital of Scotland. Sunday steamboats are now thought little of, and the performance of the band of the regiment which garrisons the castle—once thought monstrous by the unco' guid—now attracts large crowds.

Appleton's *Popular Science Monthly* has a capital article on "Christian Science and Science," by the editor, W. J. Youmans. Science, he says, has revealed itself as the helper and guide of mankind, and, in reply to all questioning of its claims, points to the works it has wrought. "They are they," it may say, "which testify of me." Science has all truth for its domain, and for that reason there can be but one science. To apply to science such an epithet as "Christian" involves a total misunderstanding of what science is. Science can do no more than investigate *all* truth; nor can it consistently, with its essential nature, do less. Mr. Youmans shows that it is science that has relieved human suffering and prolonged human life; it has almost extirpated certain diseases, and greatly mitigated the virulence of others. He draws a picture of what bodily suffering was before the use of anaesthetics, and asks, When did relief come? "From any hocus-pocus speculations upon mind and matter? From any looking away from phenomena, and trying to disbelieve them out of existence? No, but from assuming the reality of phenomena, and bringing a material agent to bear on a physical condition."

The *Glasgow Weekly Citizen* is always worth reading for its excellent selections; and the "Papers by a Special Contributor" often contain matter of much interest to Freethinkers.

A good portrait of John Burns appears in the new number of Mr. Stead's *Review of Reviews*. Beneath it is John's signature, and his motto from Thomas Paine—"The world is my country, and to do good is my religion."

In the *Liberator* of September 11 Mr. Joseph Symes reprints our tribute to the memory of Mrs. Law. At the end appears the following: "I must add my note of sympathetic remembrance of Mrs. Law. I had often heard her name before I became a Freethinker, and, taking my cue from slanderous Christian tongues, regarded her as an ogre of some horrid sort. When I first met Mrs. Law my views and feelings changed, and I was not long finding out how venomously the Christians had slandered her for her honest and earnest attempt to spread the truth and improve the condition of mankind. Few women (or men) ever possessed more sound sense and honesty of purpose; and few Freethinkers ever worked so well and so unselfishly as she to spread our principles. The fact that she was so bitterly hated by the bigots is perhaps the best testimony to her worth. I very much regretted that Mrs. Law dropped gradually out of our work as Mrs. Besant rose in popularity. Time has shown that she was worth a dozen Mrs. Besants, both in sound sense, self-reliance, and sterling honesty. I am sorry so good a woman and so good a worker in the best of causes should die at so comparatively early an age. Her memory will be cherished by thousands."

The Bolton Secularists, those at least belonging to the N. S. S. Branch, have decided to support Miss Reddish and Mr. Joseph Shufflebottom in the approaching School Board elections. We hope these candidates will receive the support of all the local Freethinkers. The gentleman is a member of the N. S. S. Branch, and the lady is a believer in its principles. Both are thoroughly sound on the question of Secular Education.

Next Monday, at 8 p.m., Mr. H. Coryn delivers an address on "Mind as Disease Producer," at St. Martin's Town Hall, under the auspices of the Humanitarian League. This is the first of a new series of Humane Science Lectures; Mr. Coryn being followed on November 23 by Mr. Campbell Black, and on December 21 by J. Arthur Thomas, M.A.

If people can get along six days in the week without religion, why not seven?—*Investigator*.

## ADAM, WHERE ART THOU?

WHEN the writer of this paper was a very young man and studying for the ministry, he believed implicitly in the story of Adam. In later years the romance began to seem a little absurd, and, after counselling among his fellow pastors he agreed with them that the best thing to do about Adam and the rib business was to pretend to believe it, because the whole scheme of man's salvation was based on Adam's fall, and if Adam never existed the whole plan would "fall" worse than Adam did. As there seems to be considerable doubt among the stiff-necked and unregenerate as to whether Adam was really the first human being, it may be proper to inquire into this circumstance, which is reported to have occurred about 6,000 years ago.

Adam seems to have been a failure from the start. He made an awful mess of his first business venture. If we are to believe the account in Genesis, the creation of man wasn't worth patenting as a paying venture, and the creator has been losing money on the thing ever since. Recent discoveries in the east on the site of the ancient city of Nippur show that mankind was civilized, and that man knew how to express his thoughts in writing over 11,000 years ago; and even these writings tell of other ages reaching through countless years beyond the knowledge of men. Oh, Adam! where art thou?

In Egypt, among the ruins of Dendera on the banks of the Nile, are the remains of what was once a magnificent temple. When this was unearthed two paintings were discovered representing the zodiac. In each the equinoctial point is drawn in Leo; hence the mighty march of time is shown by the equinoxes since the paintings of the zodiacs on the walls of the temple at Dendera. The equinoxes have passed, at the rate of 2,140 years to each sign, through 10,700 years, and even then man had passed from the savage and the stone age, and was building magnificent temples and palaces, reading the stories of the stars, and knew that the world was many ages old. And the whispering query comes across the countless centuries: "Oh, Adam! where art thou?"

From the remains taken from below the rocks that have formed in the Mississippi valley, from the disinterred temples ninety feet below the soil of Egypt, the tombs, pyramids, and stuccoes show us that the negro and white man existed 10,000 years ago in nearly the same type as he does to-day.

Adam, were you white or black? Which of your sons lived in ancient Nippur 15,000 years ago? And which one moved to New Orleans 57,000 years ago? And, Adam, where art thou?

In China, where we send the foreign missionary frauds, are the remains of long-lost cities with sculptured walls and tumbled towers, far beneath the surface; but the pictured signs of the zodiac show the equinoctial point to have been in Virgo, and it is easy to compute that vast ages have passed since these cities lost the hum of busy feet; yet we send missionaries there to teach them that six thousand years ago the first man, Adam, was made, who had trouble with his wife through a snake that walked on the end of his tail and talked Hebrew, and that his eating an apple caused sorrow to the whole human race.

Oh, Adam! why did you, and where art thou?

Adam, you are evidently an old fraud! The evidences of geology show that mankind existed before the glacial period, many thousands of years before there was a garden planted "to the eastward in Eden."

Good bye, missing progenitor! For six thousand years thou hast affrighted the weak-minded and hysterical with the story of thy fall. As one of thy descendants, I drop a tear to thy memory and thy many shortcomings. Like the fossil forests that lie buried one above the other, is buried deep the mystery of creation. The morning stars still "sing together" as they did in that far first morning; but from the mighty horscope of time comes no answer to the listening ages. Perhaps if we, with the mighty hosts who sleep "where rolls the far Oregon and hears no sound save its own dashing," and those who walked and talked in ancient Nippur, and on the deltas of the Nile and Mississippi, shall arise and wash the last long sleep from our eyes, we may hear among the "trees of the garden" the answer to the query, "Adam, where art thou?"

H. W. C.

## WHO CARES FOR CHRIST?

THE Christians are always cracking up their Christ; but none of them follow him or obey his orders. The Jews, who hate the name of Christ, are as fond of following him as the Christians. The Atheists, who laugh at Christ and treat him as a mere ghost, or something less, show as much assiduity in following Christ as do the saints about. Eh! You deny it? Let us see, then, whether you or I am right.

That you don't go out to a river to be dipped by some noted watermonger, nor go to the wilderness "to be tempted of the Devil," may be excused, for it does not appear that Jesus intended anybody to follow that portion of his example. Perhaps he repented of it afterwards, and so never recommended any such mad pranks to others. Let us hope that was so.

Of course, you do not fast as Jesus did, do you? Forty days upon the stretch is *rather* too long for you, eh? Perhaps you don't fast so much as that in a long lifetime, do you? And why should you, unless you find that you are eating too much? If Jesus had only had the sense to be born in our day, he would neither go to be baptized, go to the Devil, nor yet fast. Such ways are unfit for our busy, restless age and time; and, you know, Jesus was quite as much the creature of his time and circumstances as we are.

You do not cast out devils, as Jesus did, now, do you? I suppose you would not even know a devil if you met one? Nor do you believe that diseases are caused by the patient having devils in him; nay, even insane and mad people you now regard as diseased, not "possessed," or harboring devils, as Jesus was fool enough to believe.

Well, you see, you and I regard Jesus in the same light so far: he mistook diseases for devils; he who came to teach us all things never understood either himself or his neighbors. There was no poor ignorant Jew that ever lived more ignorant than poor Jesus.

You enjoy life, and lose none of its pleasures that you can secure, do you? Of course, you don't believe Jesus when he says, "Blessed (or happy) are they that mourn"—I am sure you don't; you think them distressed about something, don't you? If not, their mourning must be a sham.

You don't believe the "meek inherit the earth," I am sure. It is the warlike, the unprincipled, the ruthless, who inherit the earth, while the meek are trampled into the ground to fertilize the fields stolen from them. The parson who writes *Deeds that Won the Empire* has no more faith in meekness than a pirate has. *Only* he likes fools to fight for him. I am sure, my Christian friend or foe, that you think Christ must have been entirely in error when he uttered the above nonsense.

As for swearing, now, you think no more of taking an oath on the very book in which Christ bids you never to swear at all than you do of putting on or taking off your hat. Until your neighbor treats this command of Christ's with contempt, you never take his word in a court, do you? This shows how far you have left poor Jesus behind.

And do you ever turn the other cheek when smitten upon one? Do you, really? I wouldn't if I were you. Your own priest or parson will laugh at you for it, and tell you that Jesus was only joking.

You give the thief who steals your coat your cloak also, don't you? No! Then Jesus might as well have said, "If any man take *thy* coat, steal *his* in return."

You give to everyone who asks anything of you, do you not? and if your neighbor wants to borrow five pounds of you, you lend it at once, and ask if he wants any more? No! Oh, yes, you do. All Christians do, especially the clergy.

And when Jesus bids you not to pray in presence of others, and to pretend that you have taken your accustomed meals when fasting; and to take no thought for the morrow; to hate all you ought to love most ardently (Luke xiv. 26), you obey him? You don't! Well, give me your hand then. You are so far honest and rational. Now take the other step—you despise Christ and his horrid teaching; now have the decency to leave off pretending to be his follower. Be candid, and let the world know that you dare be true to your convictions, and to harmonize your conduct with your belief.

JOS. SYMES.

### HE DID THE BEST HE COULD.

"IN the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." We are not told what "beginning" is here meant; therefore, it is not quite as plain as it might be; but we will suppose that God did the best he could under the circumstances.

"The earth was without form and void." We suppose that God must have known the meaning of this; but the human mind cannot grasp the idea of earth without form. Now, this God is unchangeable, yet for millions of ages he existed, surrounded entirely with nothing. Did he weary of this useless kind of existence? Did he change his inactivity and become a worker? Had the immense quantity of nothing he had on hand just reached the right condition to make worlds of? "God formed man out of dust." Not, like the earth, out of nothing; and he pronounced everything good and very good. Was the devil alive then? If he was, did God know it? We suppose that God did the very best he could to make a perfect race and keep all things just right; but in a short time everything went wrong—mankind became so sinful that God, unchangeable, repented that he had made man. Was there any failure in this work and place? Did man make himself weak, liable to sin? Did he place the temptations before himself? Who was running things about these times? Could not God have made man to so abhor sin that he would have remained perfect? But things were in such an awful shape that God, in the greatness of his power and wisdom, resolved to kill off the race he has made a failure of, and try it over again; and his second effort was a worse failure than the first, for he never could say again that all was good and very good. And this undoubtedly must have been very discouraging, but God did not give up at two failures, and from the repeated trials we would judge that he was very much in earnest, and at all times did the very best he could. Now, it looks to our darkened minds that a being with all power and perfect wisdom could have done better than that. Man, even the godless, worldly man, can take the vicious brutes, and by careful breeding make them loving and kind. If God had only known the secret of thus producing a perfect race, it would have greatly relieved his mind. He would soon have had a race so prone to do good that all the hosts of hell and the numerous other places could not even have tempted him. Will some Reverend please make this suggestion to God?

Now, we are not trying to find fault with God. He surely is doing the best he can, but we do heartily wish that he could do better.

Just think of it: a big hell and a little heaven for God's own creation!

For a long, long time God accepted the blood of beasts as a sin offering, but he at last became dissatisfied, so that he sent his only Son and took his blood to try to better the condition of his own work, his own creation; but so far it is a failure. They (the Reverends) think that they have got a few safe—very few—in the Church to-day that are not sinners. Perhaps a Conservative would place the figures at one in a million. Remember that only a few of the professed Christians even claim to be without sin; then there are about twice as many people who worship Buddha, Mohammed, Brahma, etc., as there are Christians of all kinds, Catholic, Greek, and Protestant combined. Surely there be few—very few—that walk in the straight and narrow way. Then there are almost untold millions who make no profession of religion of any kind. Oh, what an awful mess! Yet, if God is good, he has done, and will do, the very best he can.

Do you think that God weeps—"sheds many bitter tears"—to see what few followers he has, quarrelling among themselves? There are hundreds of different divisions wrangling and striving to convert each other, each claiming that their little "ism" is the only right God-established "ism." Where a house is divided against itself it cannot stand.

The only time that God's people really reigned supreme affords a record of crime so great that it is referred to by all as the "Dark Ages."

Do you think we had better let them try it again?

Our "Christian civilization" is much better when it is largely made of infidels and other worldly people.

It is a little like the bran-and-sawdust slop for the cow—the more bran the better it is.

The more people we have who forsake the supernatural and make a study of the natural, the better it is. So it seems to us; but you should remember that we do not spiritualize; we see with the naked eye.

Everything is as God planned it, or willed it, or God has failed. Which is it? Could God have done better? How much worse could he do?

S. F. DAVIS.

—*Independent Pulpit.*

### THE SOCIAL CURATE.

THOUGH intellectually a duffer, the curate is still a power in the land, especially among the feminine portion of the community. The emoluments of the office do not tempt intellectual men, and thinking persons who have any share of mental integrity do not care to bind themselves to articles of belief. But the respectable position of a man of God still attracts the fool of many a family, and he soon finds out that the road to success is to make himself agreeable to the ladies. He speaks to them in dulcet tones of affected deference. He is indispensable at muffin worries, and looks in at Dorcas meetings, and delicately compliments the ladies on the chastity of the undergarments worked for the mission in Central Africa. He knows how to carry on a non-committal flirtation with the pretty young virgins of the congregation, and the wealthy old ones who are verging on the days when they give their hearts unreservedly to God because men will no longer look at them. He is great at five o'clock teas, and an authority on lawn tennis.

A brutal psychologist laid it down that emotional religion is a terrible strain on the Seventh Commandment; but there is an eunuch-like innocence about the social curate which guards him from danger. He is of the third sex. Nonetheless, there is something attractive to the average female in a flirtation with the being who addresses you on Sunday from the pedestal of holy superiority and divinely-ordained apostolical succession. It is pleasant to find that those soft, white hands, that have pointed so beautifully to heaven in prayer, can return a warm pressure, and that those eyes, that in the unapproachable holiness of the pulpit have appealed to the ceiling when addressing the infinite God, can still speak love to eyes which speak again. And then there is the devilish delight of bringing one's spiritual pastor and master to one's feet, which is enough in itself to tempt any ordinary daughter of Eve to flirtation. And the curate usually is by no means coy if only his enslaver is fairly endowed with the good things of this world. For the curate conceives himself as working in the Lord's vineyard for a very poor penny indeed; and, as the laborer is worthy of his hire, it behoves him not to throw his precious self away, but to carefully select such ewe lambs of his flock as are likely to prove most remunerative—ladies with fortune, or widows well provided for. Should he have the misfortune to be himself ensnared, and marry for love, woeful is his fate. From "that dear Mr. Verisopht" he becomes "that poor Mr. Verisopht," the epithet referring less to his poverty—that is probably conspicuous enough—than to his having been trapped by a designing hussey. Henceforward no more worked slippers, no more lawn tennis parties. He has to keep up the appearance of a gentleman on the stipend of a clerk, and with marriage his non-sexual characteristics depart, and he usually has so many children that the divine blessing on the man who has his quiver full reads remarkably like sarcasm.

GIGGAL.

### The Religious Conscience.

A striking example of priest-guided human nature was the great emperor, Charles V. After spending his life in continual wars in the attempt to found a universal monarchy, he retired to a convent, and spent his last days in chanting hymns and self-maceration. And what was the subject of his penitence? He had not succeeded in his aim, and heresy had grown where he sought to establish faith. William Stirling, who tells the story of his cloister life, shows that the only sin which seemed to lie with any weight on his mind was that he had not violently exterminated Luther and his heresy. His last injunction on his successors was to carry out the most extreme measures against heretics.

### A Vulgar Error.

Pleasure and pride are not, as duty knows  
(Though parsons think them), virtue's deadliest foes.  
The vice which always serves the Devil best  
(Perhaps the parson) is self-interest.

J. T. ROGERS.

## BOOK CHAT.

It is just thirty years this October since Deutsch contributed to the *Quarterly Review* that notable article on the Talmud which showed how much Christianity was indebted to the old commentaries of the Jewish law. The article, with his equally concentrated and well-digested article on Islam, is reprinted in *The Remains of Emanuel Deutsch*.

\* \* \*

*The Martyrdom of Percy Whitcomb, Socialist and Agnostic*, edited by Erwin McCall, is a sad story of a United States Methodist minister, who, coming to see the falsity of his faith, blows out his brains at a Church Congress at Chicago (Watts & Co.; 6d.). The story is told with feeling, and even eloquence; but there is a suspicion of juvenility and rant about it, though Mr. McCall might point to the actual case of poor Edward Easton, who shot himself in St. Paul's as a protest against the dogmas he had been brought up to believe. Despite this juvenile air, there is real power in the little book, and the indictment brought by Percy Whitcomb is not wanting in shrewdness. For instance, he says: "Fellow truth-seekers, when you hear a man advocating any doctrine or maintaining any opinion, do you first ask yourselves, 'What is the relation subsisting between this doctrine and the salary received by the party advocating it?' And then, applying that logical principle of exclusion which you all learned in the schools, ask this other question, 'Would this person receive this salary just the same if he should perchance advocate an opposite doctrine?'" The hero-martyr is called Socialist and Agnostic. The author seems to be Egoist and Atheist. He is certainly worthy of something better than blowing out his brains, and we look forward to his yet giving us a work superior to the *brochure* before us.

\* \* \*

*The Triumph of Mammon; or, Christ Betrayed by the Clergy*, by Mme. Stella Beatti (Watts & Co.; 2d.), is another eloquent denunciation of clerical hypocrisy, cant, and lucre-loving, by one who is apparently a Christian, or who regards the Christian ideal with reverence. Mme. Beatti says that even now "were Christ to come again, in the guise of a poor man, associating with the poor and downtrodden, and uttering threats and denunciations against the proud ones, the rich ones, the titled ones of the earth, even now the chief priests would be foremost, and their voices loudest, in the ranks of those shouting, 'Away with him! Away with him!'"

\* \* \*

*The Old Bible from a New Point of View*, by "Incognito" (Watts & Co.; 2d.), shows how Dean Farrar really gives up all that gave vitality to the old faith. "Incognito" holds that the clergy were more honest and clear-sighted who stated that such criticism of the Bible would undermine faith in the mystery of Christ, and, indeed, in the supernatural deity.

\* \* \*

M. Guyau's *L'Irreligion de l'Avenir* has at last been published, by Heinemann, under the title of *The Non-Religion of the Future*. We hope to further direct the work to our readers' attention.

\* \* \*

Rather late in the day Mr. W. Walsh issues, through Swan Sonnenschein and Co., *The Secret History of the Oxford Movement*. The work is said to be the result of immense labor and expert acquaintance with the various phases of the revival of sacerdotalism.

\* \* \*

Sir Charles Gavan Duffy relates in the *Contemporary Review* that Browning confessed that his portrait of Bishop Blongram was intended for Cardinal Wiseman. There are, however, persons in the English Church for whom, with a few modifications, this subtle study of self-deceived, elaborate hypocrisy would serve.

## Obituary.

SOUTH SHIELDS.—A very quiet gathering attended at Harton Cemetery, on the 8th inst., to witness the interment of the remains of Captain John Thomson, a well-known and highly-respected member of the National Secular Society. Deceased had been in ill-health for some time, and died, firm in his convictions, on the 4th inst., aged 59. Mr. S. M. Peacock read the burial service, in the presence of a large number of members and friends.—R. CHAPMAN.

The late Edward Maitland was the son of a Brighton clergyman, and himself intended for holy orders. His revolt against the black business is seen in his one good work, *The Pilgrim and the Shrine*. He had travelled much, but, under the leading of Dr. Anna Bonus Kingsford, became a sort of Theosophist, and the founder of a new and strange "Gospel of Interpretation," which found few disciples. But for the early theological virus, he would have been a notable man.

## PAINE AND AMERICA.

A LONG and eloquent article on Paine and the American People appears in Brann's *Iconoclast*, of Texas. We must give space for the conclusion: "When *The Age of Reason* appeared, the Church of England people and the Puritans dominated the religious thought of this land. The clergymen of the first were royalists almost to a man, and hated Paine for political reasons; the parsons of the latter had not become broad enough to tolerate a man who objected to boring the tongues of quakers and witch-burrowing as mild religious diversions, no matter what services he had rendered their country and mankind. The author of our liberties was fairly hounded to death by these harpies, and ever since a putrid tide of 'Christian' calumny has rolled across his sepulchre. To this good day the makers of American histories and cyclopedias dare not accord to Thomas Paine the credit that is justly his due, lest they lose a few thirty dollars. The *Columbian Cyclopedic*, while admitting that he 'turned the tide' in favor of freedom, is so eager to belittle and belie him for its publisher's profit that it flatly contradicts itself and garbles dates in an heroic attempt to rehash all the old calumnies..... Gradually Paine's services to this country have been hidden under such piles of compost, and now the masses know him only as the man who dared deny in the shadow of guillotine that Jesus Christ was 'the only begotten Son of God.' But the tide of falsehood is ebbing, and some future generation will do him justice. The day will assuredly come when even the star of Washington will pale before that of Paine—when the creature of the Revolution will no longer outshine its creator. 'The years are seldom unjust.'"

## PROFANE JOKES.

A CLERGYMAN, visiting an old woman in the agricultural district, read to her the description of the crucifixion and the scenes previous to it. She listened very attentively and moaned audibly, and at last fairly cried. He was naturally pleased at such a proof of the power of his ministry, and, unwilling to weaken the effect, closed the book in silence. The old lady continued wiping her eyes with the corner of her apron. "Deed, sir, it's all vera sad, I'm sure; but," she added briskly, "as it happened a long way off, and a good while ago, let's hope it's not true."

"Who was St. Elizabeth?" Reply—"The Virgin Mary's husband's wife." So said a youngster to one of the Liverpool diocesan inspectors at an examination.

Minister (to candidate for church membership)—"Of course, Dugald, you have read the *Confession of Faith*?" Dugald—"No, intee, serr; I neffer do reat ta last dying speeches of condemt creeminals, neffer intee; and I do hope you do not think me so depased as to reat ta wan you hev shust mentioned."

Village Parson (entering country editor's office)—"You promised to publish my sermon on Monday, but I do not find it in the latest issue of your paper." Editor—"I sent it up. It surely went in. What was the name of it?" Parson—"Feed my lambs." Editor (after searching through paper)—"Ah—yes—um—here it is. You see, we've got a new foreman; he has put it under the head of 'Agricultural Notes,' as 'Hints on the Care of Sheep.'"

"Do you always say your prayers at bedtime?" asked the Sunday-school teacher affectionately. "No, miss, not regular, I don't," was the reply. "Why, Mary, are you not afraid to go to sleep at night without asking a blessing?" "Not when I sleep in the middle, I ain't, miss."

Sunday-school Teacher—"And when the prodigal son returned home, his father fell upon his neck and blessed him. Why did he do that?" Scholar—"Cause he was so glad to think he didn't come back with a wife and family, I s'pose."

"Well, Elsie," said Mrs. Moral Suasion to her three-year-old daughter, "did you tell God you were sorry for being naughty?" "Ess, I did, and he said: 'Great Scot, Elsie, zat's all right; zere's lot's of 'em worser zan you are.'"

Ignorance and fear generate and nourish superstition. By how much the more anyone's mind is weak and unenlightened, by so much the stronger will superstitious influence be found to have on it. With a much better prospect of success, therefore, if superstition stand in your way, may you undertake to convince ten men than one woman, or a hundred sensible and well-informed people than ten of such as are ignorant and stupid.—J. L. Mosheim.

The ignorant call him a heretic whom they cannot refute.—Thomaso Campanella.

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

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

### LONDON.

THE ATHENÆUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30. G. W. Foote, "The Apostles' Creed."  
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 7.15, Touzeau Parris, "Jesus Christ Neither God nor Man." October 27, at 8.30, Dance.  
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, C. Watts, "The Triumph of Reason over Faith."  
EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Libra-road, Old Ford): 7.30, F. J. Gould, "Character."  
SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road): 11.15, Sunday-school; 7, Dr. Stanton Coit, "Class Distinctions in England.—(4) The Lower Middle Class."  
WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall): 11.15, Dr. Stanton Coit, "The Lower Middle Class."  
WOOD GREEN (Station-road Hall): 7, W. Heaford, "The Gods and their Doom."

### OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, S. Jones.  
CAMBERWELL BRANCH (Peckham Rye): 8.15, R. P. Edwards.  
LIMEHOUSE (Triangle, Salmon-lane): 11.30, W. Heaford.  
MILE END WASTE: 11.30, A. B. Moss.  
VICTORIA PARK (near the fountain): 3.15, H. P. Ward, "Is there a God?"  
WEST LONDON BRANCH (Marble Arch): 11.30 and 3.30, A lecture.

### COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM (Bristol-street Board School): Stanley Jones—11, "Religion and Art"; 8, "Lord Salisbury and Evolution"; 7, "The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, Politician and Philosopher."  
BRISTOL BRANCH (Shepherds' Hall, Old Market-street): 7, J. Keast, "Re-organization."  
DERBY (Pollicott's Dining Rooms, Market-place): 7, H. McGuinness, "Clergy and Common Sense."  
GLASGOW (Brunswick Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner—12, "School-taught Morality"; 6.30, "Some Plain Words about India."  
HULL (Cobden Hall, Storey-street): 7, R. Manton, "The Age of Reason."  
IPSWICH (G.E.R., Commercial-road): 7, Members' meeting—"The Prospects of the Branch."  
LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Countess Alice Kearney, "Old Age Pensions and the Poor Law."  
LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, L. Small, B.Sc., "Nature Myths."  
MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, Ernest Evans, "Animals that are of Service to Plants and Plants that Live on Animals." Illustrated by limelight lantern views. Free.  
NEWCASTLE (Northumberland Hall, High Friar-street): O. Cohen—11, "Individual Liberty v. State Action"; 8, "Why we Reject Christianity"; 7, "Priest v. Teacher."  
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, Pleasant Musical evening, etc. 27, Members' and friends' Soirée and Ball. Tea at 5.30.  
SOUTH SHIELDS (Thornton's Variety Hall, Union-alley): 7, H. Snell, "Rome, Ancient and Modern."

### OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

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

### Lecturers' Engagements.

O. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London.—October 24, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 25 and 26, Stockton; 31, Sheffield. November 7, Blackburn; 14, Manchester; 21, Huddersfield.

H. PERCY WARD, Leighton Hall, N.W.—October 24, m., Westminster; a, Victoria Park. 31, Birmingham. November 7 to 14, Mission at Plymouth.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, London, S.E.—October 24, m., Mile End. 31, m., Limehouse; e., Ball's Pond. 28, m., Camberwell Radical Club. December 12, Camberwell Radical 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.

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. Contributions in money or articles from any Freethought well-wisher would be thankfully received.

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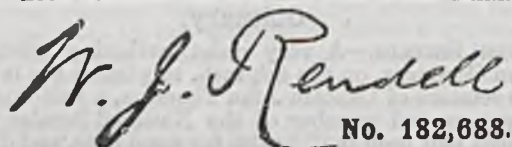
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