

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

PARSONS AND PUBS.

THE London United Temperance Council held its third anniversary "festival" in the Queen's Hall on Monday evening. At least it is called a festival in the newspaper reports. But it does not appear to have been a very joyous gathering. How indeed could it be when its one object was the manufacture of strait waistcoats for the English people? Nor was the assembly one which could be brought together for any other purpose. There sat the Archbishop of Canterbury cheek by jowl with the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes. They agreed for once, and, like the gentleman in the play, when they do agree their unanimity is wonderful. There were also a couple of non-macerated Canons beside the pious vegetarian, Mr. A. F. Hills, who by some subtle mental process finds an argument against flesh-eating in the story of Jehovah's accepting Abel's roast mutton and rejecting Cain's turnips and potatoes. Then there was Lady Elizabeth Biddulph, representing the considerable host of women who want to keep men at home by the aid of the constable. A number of other names were paraded in connection with this "festival," but they were the names of absentees. The Duke of York and Dr. Collins, Chairman of the London County Council, were among those who sent "letters expressing regret at being unable to attend." Everybody knows what *that* means; still, the distinguished names strike the eye well at the top of the report, and lend a certain fictitious importance to the meeting.

Probably there was not a single person on the Queen's Hall platform who would not have thought it dreadful to be suspected of not being a Christian. Probably every one of them is ready to take a solemn affidavit that the Bible is the Word of God, to be believed and obeyed on penalty of eternal damnation. Now, if they have read the Bible, and recollect what they have read, they must know that it is by no means a teetotal text-book. It speaks of wine, for instance, as cheering God and man. It relates that Jesus Christ, who was God incarnate, turned a vast quantity of water into wine at a marriage feast, when all the liquor laid in was exhausted; a miracle which John Ruskin regards as absolutely decisive against Christian teetotalism. Further, the Bible tells all the poor and unhappy to drink themselves into forgetfulness. Of course we do not say that this is right. What we say is, it is Bible teaching. And in face of it we can only admire (in the old sense of the word) the cool cheek of the Christian advocates who demand the total suppression of the liquor traffic in the name of the Lord. Why, the Bible God, unless the Bible lies, loves a drink himself; and is he to be told by his own disciples that all liquor—bad as well as good—must be banished from his own particular planet? Perish the thought! And let those beware who are wise above what is written, lest Jehovah visit them with a deluge that will make them as sick of water as poor old Noah was after the Flood.

The special resolution passed at this grotesque "festival" ran as follows:—

"This meeting views with satisfaction the great blessings that have accrued to Scotland, Ireland, and Wales from the enactment of Acts of Parliament closing licensed premises on the Lord's Day; and hereby affirms the principle of Imperial Sunday Closing for the whole of the United Kingdom."

Now, the consumption of spirits—disembottled, not dis-
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embodied—in Scotland is (we believe) about three times as great per head of the population as it is in England. Is this one of the "blessings" referred to in the resolution? Some Scotchmen spread their seven days' drinking over six days, others keep a good supply at home for the holy Sabbath, while thousands of others drink dear, bad whisky in all sorts of illicit places. And if anybody wants to see the moral and æsthetic effects of Sunday Closing on that very part of the population of Scotland which is supposed to be influenced by it, let him walk through (say) Argyle-street, Glasgow, late on Saturday evening, and witness the edifying preparations that thousands have made for a sober Sabbath.

England, however, is to be attacked now. The Archbishop of Canterbury declared at this "festival" that they must have Sunday Closing, though that was only an instalment of what they wanted. "This is the Lord's doing," he said, "and it is marvellous in our eyes." Mr. Price Hughes thought they ought to have a Sunday Closing Bill this session. He also thought that all clubs should be licensed and subject to inspection. By this little dodge, of course, the clubs would all be closed on Sunday as well as the public-houses.

It is not difficult to perceive the real object of these Puritans. If they simply wanted to cure the drinking habits of the English people—who, by the way, are far less drunken than they used to be—they would command our respect. Even if they carried on a thorough Prohibition crusade, we could understand them, although we did not approve their policy. But they are not doing this—at least at present. They demand Sunday Closing. And why? Does whisky intoxicate more on Sunday than on Monday? Is it worse to drink a glass of beer on Sunday than on Saturday? Why is Sunday picked out as the day for this Puritan experiment? The answer is obvious. The principle involved is pure Sabbatarianism. And this is further demonstrated, if that were necessary, by the fact that these very Puritans, who call for Sunday Closing of public-houses, are the very people who fiercely oppose the Sunday Opening of museums, art galleries, public libraries, and similar institutions. No less fiercely do they oppose an amendment of that stupid and bigoted old law which prevents a charge being made for admission to Sunday lectures, and thus cripples the Societies that aim at providing instruction for the millions who do not and will not go to church. What these Puritans demand, and what they oppose, are twin demonstrations of their real object. They wish to make the Sunday the priests' day. They are working in the interest of clerical trade protection. They imagine that if the English people have nowhere else to go they will be driven into churches and chapels. Even the teetotaler who does not see this is as muddled as if he were fuddled.

For centuries the parsons and the publicans got on very well together. Both businesses were licensed, and each dealt in spirits. And there was room for both, even on Sunday, for people who wanted to do something with their time had no third alternative. But now that the competition is wider and more strenuous the clergy can no longer remain with the saloon-keepers in one peaceful brotherhood. So the gospel-shop casts an envious eye on the gin-shop, and wants to get at its customers. This is the real secret of the Sunday Closing agitation. Both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes are anxious to drive the English people into their penfolds, and we hope the English people will not be fools enough to be driven.

G. W. FOOTE.

WHY MIRACLES HAVE CEASED.

ACCORDING to the New Testament, Jesus Christ was not only himself a wonder-worker of the first order, but promised: "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to the Father" (John xiv. 12). He specifically declares that "these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark xvi.). The promise accompanies the injunction to preach the gospel to every creature, and is without any limitation whatever.

The supernatural gift was to serve as attestation of the true faith. Its absence may be taken as a sign that faith is wanting. Let us suppose Mr. Price Hughes able to demonstrate his faith Sunday after Sunday in St. James's Hall by taking up rattlesnakes and drinking prussic acid. Is it not clear that scepticism would soon hide its diminished head? Yet the faithful, who should be endowed with this irresistible power of conviction, have the impudence to rail at unbelief. Failing to give the signs that should follow belief, the unavoidable inference is either that they are themselves unbelievers, or that Christ's promise was not true.

Protestants usually seek to avoid the horns of this dilemma by alleging that the signs did follow believers in New Testament times. The apostles did speak with new tongues, did take up serpents with impunity, as in the case of Paul. But the terms of the promise make no restriction to the Apostolic age. They were to follow those that believe, and Matthew, in reporting the same last commission of Christ, has the words: "Lo, I am with you always; even unto the end of the world."

Of the apostles and their immediate successors it is asserted that they cast out demons, restored the blind to sight, and wrought a variety of other miracles. That this power remained in the Church was only disputed by heretics until, in the last century, the Rev. Conyers Middleton, a suspected infidel, published his *Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers which are supposed to have subsisted in the Christian Church from the Earliest Ages through several successive Centuries*. He conclusively showed the unsatisfactory character of the testimony of the early fathers to the existence of miracles in their time, prudently concealing the fact that the gospels have come down to us on the evidence of the self-same fathers.

Middleton easily carried the day against the Protestant theologians, who at first arrayed themselves in numbers against him. Learning, sense, and the growing scientific spirit of the time were with him. His ablest opponent was an anonymous Catholic, the author of *The Miraculous Powers of the Church of Christ; Asserted through each Successive Century, from the Apostles down to the Present Time. 1756*. This writer saw that the weakness of the Protestants was that, having asserted the existence of miracles, they all stopped short, whether in the first, second, third, or fourth century, when there was even better evidence of miracles still nearer in point of time, the denial of which involved the denial of all preceding miracles. Some of this evidence he gave, but it fell on Protestants like water on a duck's back. The miracles of St. Francis and St. Bernard, which found universal credence in their own days, made no impression on the Protestant mind. Evidence, which was ample for believers, was altogether inadequate for those endowed with any share of scepticism.

When genuine miracles came to an end, and whether they ceased suddenly or became gradually rarer, is still a question among Protestant theologians, who, however, generally agree that the alleged miracles of the mediæval saints were false reports, without any sufficient evidence. The annual miracle of the liquefaction of the blood of San Gennario, at Naples, they characterize as a gross fraud; while the cures at Lourdes they ascribe partly to deceit, and partly to the imaginations of the patients. They point to the fact that such things are not said to occur in London, Paris, or Berlin, where they can be tested by scientific men, but in out-of-the-way places among a superstitious and ignorant population. So may it be pointed out that the Bible miracles never happened at Rome, Athens, or Alexandria. In other words, they happen

where faith abounds. Where people believe in miracles, miracles occur. Where they believe in ghosts, witches, or fairies, these supernatural beings appear. Where charms, prayers, and dreams are credited, there are they efficacious. Miracles, which ought to convert the unbelievers, only happen among the believers. If once needed, they are certainly needed now more than ever. Scepticism abounds, but no miracle is forthcoming to strike the sceptic dumb.

Miracles, to be of any moment, must have occurred a long way off, and a good while ago. They improve, like wine, by age, and distance lends enchantment to the view. People who would smile at the story that an angel came down at a certain season into the fountain at Trafalgar-square and troubled the waters, healing the first who stepped therein of whatever disease he had, will look very grave if asked about a similar tale related of a pool at Jerusalem, and remind us that "with God everything is possible," which is only saying "Open your gullet wide enough and you can swallow anything." With a personal, infinite creator from nothing all is easy. The assertors of modern miracles can claim that their alleged phenomena have appeared in a comparatively enlightened and an inquiring age. The alleged miracles of the Bible were produced under the very opposite conditions. Everyone believed in miracles, so that even Christ was said to be John the Baptist risen from the dead (Luke ix. 7). Paul and Barnabas were taken for gods (Acts xiv. 11), and Christ himself allowed that the sons of the Pharisees cast out devils (Luke xi. 19). "The Christian miracles," writes Lecky, "floated into the world on a wave of credulity." The testimony of one living man who can be cross-examined should outweigh that of evangelists who cannot.

In the Buddhist Jataka* is told a story which appears to be the original of that related of Peter in Matthew xiv. 28-31. A disciple of the Buddha, by faith in his master, boldly crossed a river walking on the water. When he arrived in mid-stream, his ecstasy subsiding, his feet began to sink. He strung up his faith to high tension, and walked on over the water. Here we have the philosophy of miracles in a nutshell. Miracles flourish when faith flourishes, and decay as faith decays. Those only work them who believe they can do so, and now-a-days these people are mostly in lunatic asylums.

J. M. WHEELER.

CHRIST AND REDEMPTION.

It is said that two thousand years ago Christ came on earth for the avowed object of redeeming the people from the condition into which, through "God's Providence," they had fallen. It is not quite so clear, as some professed Christians allege, that Christ's mission was to achieve universal salvation, for we are told that certain persons were "of old ordained" to condemnation, and that others were "chosen in him before the foundation of the world" to "be holy and without blame." Besides, we have Christ's own statement: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But, whatever his mission was, we have the declaration: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." Now, the question is, supposing Christ appeared, as he is stated to have done, did he redeem the human race from its state of degradation, and did he take away the sins of the world? A negative answer must be given to both questions.

There is no lack of historical evidence which shows that for centuries after the supposed advent of Jesus crimes, wrongs, misery, and injustice continued to mar personal happiness, and to retard national progress. Even among the avowed followers of Christ, the worse forms of immorality, with all their blighting consequences, obtained. The Christian historian, Mosheim, frankly admits that "the Church was contaminated with shoals of profligate Christians.....It cannot be affirmed that even true Christians were entirely innocent and irreproachable in this matter" (*Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i., pp. 55, 77, 102, 193). Salvain, an eminent pious clergyman of the fifth century, writes: "With the exception of a very few who flee from vice, what is almost every Christian congregation but a sink of vices? For you will find in the Church scarcely one who is not either a drunkard, a glutton, or an adulterer.....or

* Jataka 190 (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. ii., p. 77).

a robber, or a man-slayer, and, what is worse than all, almost all these without limit" (Miall's *Memorials of Early Christianity*, p. 366). Dr. Cave, in his *Primitive Christianity* (p. 2), observes: "If a modest and honest heathen were to estimate Christianity by the lives of its professors, he would certainly proscribe it as the vilest religion in the world." Dr. Dicks, in his *Philosophy of Religion* (pp. 366-7), also states: "There is nothing which so strikingly marks the character of the Christian world in general as the want of candor [and the existence of] the spirit of jealousy.....Slander, dishonesty, falsehood, and cheating are far from being uncommon among those who profess to be united in the bonds of a common Christianity." Wesley once gave a picture of Christian society, which indicates the "high morality" produced where "gospel truths" are disseminated. After stating that "Bible-reading England" was guilty of every species of vice, even those that nature itself abhors, this Christian author thus concludes: "Such a complication of villanies of every kind considered with all their aggravations; such a scorn of whatever bears the face of virtue; such injustice, fraud, and falsehood; above all, such perjury and such a method of law, we may defy the whole world to produce" (*Sermons*, vol. xii., p. 223). If the reader will carefully study Lecky's *History of European Morals* (vol. ii.), he will learn that for ages the clergy were guilty of the grossest forms of licentiousness, that chastity was comparatively unknown, that the lowest kind of Pagan vices were practised, and that female virtue was sacrificed to the animal desires of the "servants of the Lord."

No, despite the boast of Christians to the contrary, the Galilean hero did not redeem the world from its folly, vice, and corruption. His faith, before it became allied with modern secular agencies, produced little or no improvement in the condition of the people. Christians were not purer, braver, and more truthful, and also more useful to the community, than were the Greeks and the Romans. The ethics of the Church were in many respects inferior to those of the Pagan philosophers. Lecky, writing of Rome, observes: "We find a system of ethics of which, when we consider the range and beauty of its precepts, the sublimity of the motives to which it appealed, and the perfect freedom from superstitious elements, it is not too much to say that, though it may have been equalled, it has never been surpassed.....The habits of men were unaffected, frugal, honorable, and laborious. A sense of duty was very widely diffused, and a deep attachment to the interests of the city became the parent of many virtues.....The love of truth in many forms was exhibited among the Pagan philosophers to a degree which has never been surpassed" (*History of European Morals*, vol. i., pp. 308-9, 236-7, and 429-30; the italics are ours). The erection of the Cross in no way frightened the miscreant, or appalled the tyrant. The voice from the heights of Sinai failed to reach the captive, and to bid the slave go free. And even down to the present time it has not abolished ignorance, crime, and oppression, nor made permanent knowledge, virtue, and justice. Neither has it, with all its power, produced those conditions of society in which it would be impossible for man to be depraved or poor. As an eminent French writer exclaimed: "Two thousand years have passed, during which entire nations have knelt before a gibbet, adoring, in the sufferer who gave himself up to death, the Savior of mankind. And yet what slavery still! What lepers in our moral world! What unfortunate beings in the visible and feeling world! What triumphant iniquity, what tyranny enjoying at its ease the scandal of its own impunity! The Savior has come—whence comes salvation?"

Christ, then, has not redeemed the people from poverty and degradation, and it is equally apparent that he did not "take away the sins of the world." This is evident, for, had he done so, sin would not now abound; whereas we are told that society is honeycombed with sin as it has been ever since Christ, having eaten of broiled fish, was "carried up into heaven." It would be a grave misfortune to the thousands of clergymen and ministers who now thrive through the "sinful nature of man" if all sin had been removed. Their occupation would be gone, and they would have to adopt some other mode of earning their daily bread. The very fact of these "servants of the Lord" being constantly engaged in the endeavor to suppress sin is a proof that their Master did not succeed in the alleged object of his visiting this planet of ours. It

cannot with truth be said of him, "He came, he saw, he conquered." No wonder that, not finding his labors crowned with success, his career was ended in sorrow and disappointment. His conduct in the Garden of Gethsemane was not indicative of victory, but was a lamentable manifestation of defeat. During his sojourn on earth we are told that he preached a faith which, it was said, not only afforded consolation through life, but was also capable of robbing death of its terrors; yet when the hour of death approached, when the period had arrived for him to prove to the world the efficacy of his faith, we find him tortured with agony and racked with fear. In that scene, which was not only to rivet the attention of an amazed multitude, but also to consecrate a life of divinity—a scene which was not only to be the great climax to the scheme of redemption, but was also to remain a lasting monument of love to a wondering people; at this moment, when the hopes of his believers were about to be sealed, we find him weak, vacillating, and in bitter despair praying that the cup might pass from him.

The Christian plan of redemption must necessarily fail, inasmuch as it is based upon a forced belief in one person, of whom a very few, comparatively, of the human race have heard, and many of those to whom his name is familiar find it impossible to believe on him as the redeemer of man. We read: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The doctrine of rewards and punishments has always been a powerful factor in the promulgation of the orthodox faith. The Devil has been the clergyman's best friend, and now that it is acknowledged that the belief in the existence of such a being is a delusion, and that hell is a fiction, Christianity is losing its former influence over the human mind—the faith has to be reconstructed to suit the requirements of this sceptical age. Those who believe "in Christ and him crucified" ignore the elementary facts of nature, for in the constitution of man, and of nature in general, there is going on a perpetual struggle for existence, which does not harmonize with the alleged love of God for the world. It may be said that the existence of so much suffering and misery in the world is a mystery; but, if this is so, it does not dispose of the fact that such drawbacks to man's happiness are here, and no God of love is apparently disposed to remove them. Besides, it is difficult to believe that "God so loved the world" that he sent his son to be tortured on the Cross to achieve a purpose which God, if he were all-powerful, could have accomplished without this exhibition of cruelty and injustice. Surely persons who believe that Christ was really their crucified Savior can never fully recognise the horrible nature of "the agony and bloody sweat," the sufferings endured by the man of sorrow and grief, and the sadness experienced by him when abandoned by his God at the hour of death. Better to have had no "redemption" than to have acquired it by such cruel and unjust means.

The theological method of redemption is destitute of those elements which experience tells us are necessary as a regenerating force. Fortunately, a better method exists—one born of human genius and based upon the solid ground of natural law. What this method is I will state in my next article.

CHARLES WATTS.

WOMAN THE PROP OF CHRISTIANITY.

HOW THE PARSON FEEDS HIS FEMALE FLOCK.

I WRITE this on Sunday morning, while the church bells are ringing, and women and children are trooping to church. The thought that possesses me is this: What can women see in the Christian religion for themselves? I can see why some men might be Christians, because they can secure place, power, profit, and title; but what there is in it for women is more than I can divine. Then, for men, there is a Bible promise of being made angels in heaven. Of course there is some inferior angel material among men, but doubtless in the New Jerusalem they will be divided into winged seraphs and swamp angels, just as in this world they are divided into saints and sinners, common clay and the sifted dust of the earth.

The Bible promises nothing but subjection in this life for women, and no mention is made that there will be any

female seraphs in the angel throng. Holy Writ gives men alone a passport through the pearly gates of the heavenly city. The Bible says explicitly "it is not good for man to be alone," yet the Church to-day is a female institution. All men in heaven, and all women in the Church on earth. Strange, ain't it? The average woman makes a fetish of the Bible and a God of her preacher, but she does not understand either one of them. The preacher interprets the Bible for women. All the absurdities, cruelties veiled in liturgies and sermons, are explained to the trusting female Christian as "Divine Mysteries." The truth is, women have been fed on "Divine Mysteries" so long that they are the most mysterious creatures on earth. I ought to understand them, because my grandmother, mother, and all my female relations were women, and I am a woman myself; but I don't. For the most part women are good-hearted creatures, but they fail in judgment when you strike them on religion. The true Christian woman believes in the infallibility of her preacher. He defines her sphere and duty, and she proceeds to walk therein. Her sphere is silence and subjection, and her duty is to devise catch-penny devices to bring in the shekels and lay them on the altar of the Lord. Woman never knows what an exalted creature she is until the appeal is made for the collection; then her spiritual adviser gets off something after this fashion: O woman! woman, dearly beloved and tenderly esteemed woman, how much of our comfortable comfort do we owe to thy unselfish serving in the kitchen at home, and in the basement and scullery of the church. How many theological students rise up and call you blessed for your willingness to educate them to be your preachers. How well you have filled your womanly sphere as teachers to Indians where your scalps were in danger, or Feejees who relish quartered missionary as much as we do saddle rocks with liquid trimmings. Yet, dear sisters, you have done well building up congregations to which we men of God can preach. O, woman! pure, noble, holy, superlatively fine, and exquisitely superior woman, your bounden duty is to give generously of your labor and lucre, that we men of God may carry on our work amid the heathen at home and the pagans abroad. Set to work, dear sisters, as we men direct. If by squeezing the pennies out of your own pockets, or cajoling or managing your husbands into giving (as if it were really their own spontaneous masculine idea to pay the preacher) is not sufficient to deluge poor lost sinners with Amazing Grace, get up a festival with plenty of oysters in the soup, and a free ticket for your preacher, or a pound party, or a bazaar, or a dairy maid's fair, with a fish-pond and grab-bag, or a conundrum tea, or a neck-tie party, or a broom-drill, or a skirt-dance, and fill up the Lord's exchequer, and then at the end of the year we Doctors of Divinity will meet in council and proclaim to the world what the ministry is doing to save the race.

After the collection the sphere of woman is rigidly defined in the texts, "I suffer not a woman to teach." "But I would have you know that the head of the woman is the man." "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection." "The woman being deceived was first in the transgression." "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church." "If a woman would know anything, let her learn of her husband at home." "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine." This is some of the "spiritual" pabulum on which the parson feeds his female flock, and women seem to like it. Indeed, the "lovely Christian woman" seems to enjoy the silence, subjection, martyr, and sacrifice business. I cannot see how self-respecting women can enjoy the "divine mystery" of being classed with the ox and the ass, yet the Tenth Commandment does this very thing. Psalm li. 5 reads: "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

As the Bible makes women the fountain of iniquity, I have often wondered how the "sons of God" could so lower themselves as to marry the "daughters of men." Notwithstanding their celestial lineage, they seem willing to be born of, and wedded to, them.

The Bible says, too, if we "would be saved we must be born again." Now, I object to being born again, whatever other women may do. One ordeal of that sort is enough for me. If children are "conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity," there should be a law passed prohibiting anyone being born once, thus making it impossible to be "born

again." The clergy are so busy keeping the women in harness that they ignore other commands of the Bible. Celibacy is as positive a command as any that Paul gives. Both Paul and Christ taught and practised it; but, excepting the Roman Catholic clergy, the way the Doctors of Divinity observe the command of celibacy is to get them a wife often before they are out of their theological swaddling-clothes, and before congregations can be found who will suffer the infliction of their expounding of Holy Writ; and while they are preaching, with all the eloquence at their command, against "the lusts of the flesh," a dozen young olive branches take their seats at the parson's table, whose worldly comfort would be scant indeed if it were not for the donation parties, pink teas, and grab-bag games the women of the Church resort to, to keep the larder and the wardrobe of the D.D.'s and their olive branches well supplied. Yet women are so blinded by faith that they are oblivious to the injustice and insult dealt out to them.

The genuine pot-and-pan-souled women, frightened to death at the theological mumbo-jumbo, fall at their master's feet and cry: "Kick us again, dear rulers; we like it, indeed we do." The fact is, the only prop of Christianity to-day is the subjection of women. The whole system is like unto an elegant chariot—caparisoned, cushioned, and curtained—wherein sit the councils, synods, conferences, priests, and laymen, who, with wise looks and sanctimonious air, hold their conclave, and interpret to the women the "Word of God."

The women are harnessed to this chariot, and, with bits in their mouths, are pulling the man-made system. If the wheels clog, the "Sisters" are called upon by the holy men to use their strength, means, and ingenuity to apply axle-grease, so the deliberations of the "holy men" may not be disturbed. They exhort the dear sisters to renewed effort and patience, holding out the hope of reward when they have landed the chariot with its precious cargo within the heavenly gates.

The cry from the pulpit is: "Cling to the religion learned from your mother's knee." We are glad that the clergy make an open confession that the intellect of the orthodox mother is located in her knee; for the impossible Bible-stories taught to children give no evidence that the brain power is called into action.

We do not wish to be understood as claiming that intellectual knees are always of the feminine gender, for we would not be so unjust to the vast army of bishops, priests, and deacons who muzzle the women, and reserve an intimate acquaintance with the Deity for themselves. The real truth is, women do not know what the Bible teaches for them. Only one-eleventh of the Holy Book is devoted to them, and much of that is so obscene that no preacher would dare read it to his congregation. Bible women are a sorry lot. The Bible values woman chiefly for her anatomy, and because she is a race preserver.

If this falls under the eye of any Christian woman, let me beg of you "to enter into thy closet, and when thou hast entered in" open your holy Bible and read in the light of reason the doom pronounced on women that thundered from Sinai; read what the "Lord spake unto Moses" in the fifth chapter of Numbers; read the thirty-first chapter of Numbers, and keep turning the leaves of "God's word," and find countless passages concerning women which are too diabolical to go in print at this day. Take these, dear sister, to your preacher, and ask him to call a meeting "for women only" and explain these commands of the Lord concerning the mothers of the race. Do you think, dear sister, there is a preacher in Christendom who would dare do it? Not one.

Keep on searching the Scriptures, dear sister—that is a Bible command; and if your preacher will not interpret the diabolisms against your sex, be a self-respecting woman and interpret them for yourself; then read the history of Christianity, and you will come face to face with the truth that Christian women are the slaves of a superstition that degrades them.

JOSEPHINE K. HENRY.

—*Cincinnati Free Opinion.*

While life is governed by the laws of habit and the empire, literature bows only to its own dictators. Knowing this single restraint, it is otherwise untrammelled as freedom itself; and he who would throw a needless chain upon it might as well attempt to stem the torrent or fetter the whirlwind.—*Charles Wiley.*

SUCH A SILLY CREED!

WHAT an ineffably silly creed Christianity is, when you come to think of it, and to look into it! But for the fact that this creed is used by a section of the community to exploit the pockets and the brains of the toilers, it would not be worth a moment's consideration. But upon the basis of this silly creed has been erected a huge monster—the Church—whose maw has ravined the blood of thousands of earth's best and brightest sons. In collating the crimes of the Church emphasis has been chiefly, if not wholly, laid upon the corporeal outrages it has inflicted upon those whom it has chosen to designate heretics. But to those who love humanity there is, perhaps, even a sadder side to its criminality than that supplied by the rack and the stake. What of emotions starved; what of affections wasted and blighted, of intelligences bright with promise palsied and atrophied; what of the temporal eternity of hypochondriacal gloom and despondency which have been the lot of so many of our human brothers and sisters, as the result of imbibing the gloomy doctrines of Christianity? In many a home how often a silent tragedy has been enacted due to the fact that some member thereof, a little brighter, and freer, and healthier-spirited than the rest, has allowed himself to modify somewhat the traditional religious views of his family, and has thenceforth become an object of suspicion and distrust and ghoulish sneers on the part of those for whom, in spite of all, he retained the best affection of his nature, and from whom he should have been the recipient in like kind and degree? Could a worse crime be alleged against any creed or church than that it stifled and crushed the filial affections, blinding the mother to the good qualities latent in the son, inducing her to systematically misinterpret his motives and character, and withholding from him her sympathy and encouragement, so that as the years go on the spirit is heavy and sick with memories of religious rancor, and black hatred in place of a legacy of motherly love and loyalty undeviatingly displayed. Under such circumstances it is, indeed, necessary to be somewhat of a Stoic, and to sink domestic relationships in the wider and deeper affinities of the race.

There is a tragedy of another sort—that exhibited in the case of the man who, not possessing any particular merits or demerits, goes through life with his mind dominated by the fear that he may not be one of God's elect, and whose imagination is constantly appalled by the contemplation of the excruciating sufferings in an eternal hell which may be his lot; although the thought that, even in the event of his escaping, the great mass of his fellow creatures will inevitably suffer the doom of the damned, costs him never a pang of sympathy or regret. How sad it is that lives which should, and would, have been bright and happy should be darkened and rendered a continuous nightmare by a creed which, on examination, turns out to be so silly! There are thousands of such cases. They are to be met with chiefly in little Bethels, and particularly among the congregations who imbibe the sweet consolations of Calvinism unmitigated by rhetorical sugar. Here men, strong and muscular of build, become weak and effeminate, robbed of their virility, displaying to their God an attitude of crawling, lachrymose sycophancy, and elsewhere to their fellow men a demeanor of suspicion and dislike and gloomy malevolence. Priests prate of blasphemy against God; what about blasphemy against man? And no greater blasphemy ever entered into the head of man to conceive than that which has been perpetrated against our common human nature by the doctrines and practice of the Church. And to think that the sentiment of human sympathy and comradeship should be thus crushed by a creed which is so superlatively silly!

Passing over the stupid six days' story of creation, what could be more silly than the doctrine of the Fall, unless it be the Scheme of Redemption? Eve takes a bite at an apple, Adam follows suit, and immediately the whole of the children thereafter to be born into the world (even the stillborn ones) are doomed to be masses of moral corruption, deserving torture forever in a burning hell, which had already been prepared for them by their loving Father in heaven before the foundation of the world.

B. STEVENS.

(To be concluded.)

THE ABUSE OF WORDS.

HELVETIUS is a writer who, though little read now-a-days, bears with Montaigne the character that "where you cut him he bleeds." He is always shrewd and thoughtful. Indeed, it is he who is said to have first betrayed the universal secret, that all actions arise from self-interest. In his work, *de l'Esprit*, he points out how men are deceived and errors arise from the abuse of words and the want of clearness in the ideas attached to them. He adduces such words as Matter, Space, Infinity, and Freedom of the Will as examples. They suggest the mystery made to surround the great conjuring word of God, which has almost as many meanings as speakers.

Among English original thinkers no one was a more determined and formidable adversary to the mysticism and jargon of the schoolmen than stout old Hobbes. Words, said he, are the counters of wise men, the money of fools. How similar is the exclamation of Flaubert: "We pay ourselves with words." Yet, as the sage of Malmesbury notes, "the most necessary and important study is the study of words," and "etymologies are not definitions, but the best help to definitions." Burly Johnson said: "Words are of earth, but things of heaven." For that very reason, that words are imperfect and corrupt, they need study. "Seeing that truth," says Hobbes, "consisteth in the right ordering of names in our affirmations, a man that seeketh precise truth had need to remember what every name he uses stands for, and to place it accordingly; else he will find himself entangled in words, as a bird in lime twigs; the more he struggles the more belimed."

When a theologian deals in such terms as God, Spirit, Holy Ghost, angels, devils, grace, conversion, sin, salvation, etc., the first thing to do is to inquire exactly what idea is attached to the term. The *onus probandi* ever rests on the asserter of a proposition, and a sufficient reply to all theology is usually to compel the theologian to declare exactly what it is that his words stand for. For the most part they will be found to be, as Hamlet says, "Words, words, words."

L. COMPTON.

HYPOCRISY.

MORALITY rests essentially upon the basis of truth. It is this which makes all pretence and hypocrisy odious to the natural mind. The motto of society, however, is, Assume a virtue if you have it not. As with the churches, the more rottenness within the more paint outside. The merchant approaching bankruptcy is most assiduous in keeping up the appearance of a sumptuous establishment. To hide his secret vices, the pietist assumes an air of sanctity. The emperor, bent on self-aggrandizement, invokes on all occasions the aid of his dynastic deity to remind his subjects that he is appointed by God to govern and preside over their destiny. The pope assumes the title of holiness, and has the cross on his slipper kissed as the mark of his humility. He always says "Blessed are the poor," while himself amassing enormous wealth; and eulogizes the meek, while intriguing for the restoration of temporal power. Bishops, priests, parsons, and preachers are hypocrites of the same category. They set themselves up as sky-pilots, while their thoughts are of the earth earthy. They call themselves the successors of the Apostles; but, instead of dispensing spiritual manna without money and without price, they dispose thereof for the most valuable consideration they can obtain. They enjoin peace and goodwill, and yet consecrate banners and connive at war, visiting all unbelievers with hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. They pretend to believe the Bible, the Creeds, and the Articles of Religion, but never venture to defend them; indeed, they preach something quite different from that which they are sworn to believe and defend.

A. F.

Obituary.

MR. G. J. HOLYOAKE sends us a cutting from an American paper notifying the death at San Francisco, on January 2, of Thomas Curtis, at the age of seventy-seven. Mr. Curtis was a native of Devonshire. He contributed to the *Reasoner*, and wrote "Songs for Liberals" for early numbers of the *National Reformer*. He was a hearty Freethinker, and last autumn we printed in the *Freethinker* one of his papers entitled "An Atheist's Thoughts on Death." He was a frequent correspondent of Mr. Holyoake.

ACID DROPS.

MR. FREDERIC HARRISON'S annual address at Newton Hall is printed as a supplement to the February number of the *Positivist Review*. It is, of course, a graceful and interesting composition. With much of it we thoroughly concur, but we venture to offer a little criticism of some passages relating to religion.

"Heaven and Hell," says Mr. Harrison, "have now become pious opinions, and are no longer binding powers." This is true enough up to a certain point. The majority of Christians talk about Heaven and Hell, but their lives are governed by other ideas. But what does Mr. Harrison mean by asserting that "we"—that is, the Positivists—should "need no other sanctions" than Heaven and Hell "if we found them having practical effect still"? Surely this is a very gratuitous truckling to the conventional faith. What the majority of Freethinkers, or all of them, would say is this, that the hope of Heaven and the fear of Hell are not moral motives at all; and we should be much surprised if the majority of Positivists did not share this opinion. Can it be that Mr. Harrison is so enamored of religion that if he cannot have a true one he prefers a false one to none at all?

Mr. Harrison says that Agnosticism is "dying down" as a "barren negation." He thinks that Ethicism is taking the place of it, and is at the same time "an immense advance." But is there not a confusion here? Agnosticism was never put forward, by Professor Huxley or anyone else, as a philosophy of human progress. It has never been more than an attitude towards the dogmas of theology. The Agnostic says "I don't know, and I don't see that you do." And in this sense every Positivist is first of all an Agnostic.

There is a positive cant among Positivists about "barren negations." In one sense every negation is an affirmation, just as every affirmation is in one sense a negation. It all depends on the point of view. The Ten Commandments of the Old Testament all run, "Thou shalt not"; but does that make them barren negations? In this case, as in many others, the negative form is the most compendious and striking. "Thou shalt not steal," for instance, might be elaborated into a whole catalogue of positive honesties. Generally speaking, the law of England tells us what we must *not* do, and in that sense it is negative; but it exercises a very positive influence nevertheless. Similarly, an Agnostic who takes up a negative attitude towards (say) the dogma of Creation is in all probability a positive believer in Evolution.

Mr. Harrison prefers Ethicism to Agnosticism, and he prefers Ethical Religion to Ethicism, looking upon it as "inchoate and spontaneous Positivism." He speaks of Ethical Religion as asserting "the supremacy of the moral law as the ultimate standard of all human action." Well, so does Secularism, and so does every non-theological system the world has ever seen. Mr. Harrison's "discovery" would almost make one think, if one did not know better, that he has a very limited acquaintance with the history of human thought and the principles of modern reformers. Perhaps the true explanation is that he has suffered to some extent from what a recent author calls the blight of respectability.

However, we are quite at one with Mr. Harrison in his decisive condemnation of the religious attitude of Ethical Religion. Its talk about the Will of God and the Eternal Scheme of the Universe is merely the metaphysics of the old Theology. If we are to have that sort of thing at all, we may as well have it as complete and satisfactory as possible; in which case we should go straight to the Catholic Church, which the chief expounder of Ethical Religion has only recently abandoned.

They are going to take down the statue of George I., which in a most Pagan way has hitherto adorned the apex of the spire of St. George's, Hart-street, Bloomsbury. It elicited, when erected, the following epigram, said to be from the pen of Horace Walpole:—

When Henry VIII. left the Pope in the lurch,
The people of England made him head of the Church.
But George's good subjects—the Bloomsbury people,
Instead of the Church made him head of the steeple.

The *Christian Standard* says there are two needed revivals—praying and paying. Since it is promised that what is asked in Christ's name shall be given, why do not the sky-pilots pay themselves by prayer?

We must confess to a little sympathy with the Rev. Vere Awdry, vicar of Ampfield. It appears that the Primitive

Methodists have just built the first Nonconformist chapel in the parish, and its minister, the Rev. J. Wellings, actually invited the vicar, as a brother soul-saver, to attend the opening flare-up. This invitation, however, the vicar declined. "Either you are right and I am wrong," he says, "or I am right and you are wrong." In either case there is only room for one, and the vicar means to stop. And really, if the human souls of Ampfield are not going to hell, it is difficult to see what the Primitive Methodist soul-saver wants there, except to do a little business for himself.

Klondike would be a very nice place for the poor devils in hell to go to occasionally for a cool off. One writer, describing the climate there, says: "I took a bucket of water off a stove, and put it right down beside the red-hot stove. The side next the stove kept warm, but the other side froze solid." Of course nobody is bound to believe this. It is as credible as most things in religion, but there is no "believe or be damned" about it. That is one of the charms of a good tall story.

It is said that the Gallas tribe in Africa kill cows on every possible occasion. Not because they hate cows or are fond of cow-flesh, but because a cow once swallowed a certain sacred volume which the natives want to recover. This is ridiculous enough, of course; but is it really more ridiculous than a paste wafer becoming the very body of God Almighty, which is then carnivorously swallowed by his Christian devotees?

In a Sydney denominational school Billy Smith is reading the Bible, and comes on something which to the average sinful mind looks interesting, whereupon the watery-eyed teacher orders him to stop, and commence again on next page. The class giggles, and at first opportunity turns back and reads the prohibited matter. Sometimes, in his hurry to avoid full-flavored passages, teacher stumbles on even spicier intelligence, and the class giggles even more. Teaching Bible to a juvenile class is like galloping in the scrub after dark. The only really logical sectarian I ever came across was a German pastor, who hung out temporarily in a Sydney suburb many years ago. He took the Scriptures as they came, and waded through everything with the seven-league boots of faith; and even when he arrived at the most awful particulars he beamed on them through his big blue spectacles, and read right on. His church was just getting popular when he left, or was fired out.—*J. F. D.*

A Wellington (M. L.) family (writes "Basto") went to church one Sunday when it had been raining for two days. The parson preached about God—the gloomy, cruel, vindictive brand of him—and on returning home the family were confronted with about twenty tons of the adjoining cliff, which had slid down and piled itself up against the house, smashing in walls and windows, and nearly shoving the whole concern over. Father and mother looked on in mute despair, till their six-year-old cherub explained: "I know!—it's that horrid God!" And yet people want the Bible in State schools.—*Bulletin.*

"Keep the Bible in the schools!" shouts the sky-pilot, and the cry is echoed by the Philistine. But what other book would they have in the schools which gave injunctions for barbarity and indecency, slaughter and slavery and polygamy, and is filled with representations of events as controlled by divine intervention? The Bible deals in miracles from first to last, and that fact alone should be sufficient warrant for its exclusion from schools where the principles of science should be taught.

The Salvation leaders, William Booth and Co., are the Jesuits of Protestantism, with all the bigotry and superstitious fanaticism, but without the learning and literary acquirement of the members of that order. For this they substitute the trading instinct, and there is no branch of business which they have not developed with a view to keeping the money in the firm. Booth and Co. are bankers, life-insurance agents, bicycle makers, biscuit dealers, and crockery sellers, and go on the principle of every convert a customer. Booth finds that nothing pays likes religion, and derives large profits from such sensational works as that proposing to abolish poverty; while every poor cadet has to be a seller of the *War Cry*, with its sickening cant on the dupes who fall into the fountain, and so become customers of Booth and Co.

The *British Weekly* has an article on the letters received with regard to the effect of the Christian Endeavor Movement on the Churches. It says that, while there was never so much Christian endeavor, the results are disappointing. "Nearly all the replies received from Scotland, and a great many of those from Congregationalists, are to the effect that the Society is not only not helpful to the Church, but distinctly harmful." Some leading Baptist ministers are also hostile to the movement.

Someone sends us a sketch of a bill to be issued as a proof of the truth of Bible prophecy. A bear is depicted with its paw on a port in China, represented by a dragon. The prophecy is that in Rev. xiii. 2: "And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion; and the dragon gave him his power and his seat, and great authority." South well said that the interpretation of the Apocalypse usually found men cracked, or left them so.

Archbishop Cleary in Canada, in reproving a Catholic young lady for taking part at a Protestant wedding, definitely stated that, in the eyes of the Church, no marriages were true ones save those performed by the ministers of the true Church. Thus all the children of Protestants are bastards.

Until November 10 last a young couple could not get legally married in Peru unless the ceremony was performed by a Catholic priest. It was only by listening to the gibberish of some monk that a legal wife could be obtained. On that date the Peruvian Congress passed a Bill legalizing marriages performed by the civil authorities. Of course the priests fought desperately, but had to give way to modern ideas. Gradually the priesthood is losing its grip, even in South America.

The Papal denial of the validity of Anglican orders has been followed by negotiations with the Greek Church, which has so far responded that the Moscow Sacerdotal Academy, a body which is stated to include the *élite* of Russian ecclesiastics, have reported that the claim of Anglicans to Apostolic succession is proved, and that the present Anglican ceremony of ordination is real and valid. The picture of the Church of free England being backed up by that of despotic Russia is a very pretty one.

The *Glasgow Weekly Citizen* points out that this will hardly tend to Christian Reunion. It remarks: "The Greco-Anglican alliance can hardly avoid becoming, in no small measure, an anti-Roman combination; and as this combination will strengthen the hands of both non-Papist bodies, the struggles of Rome to regain its lost supremacy in Europe will become fiercer as they become more desperate."

It goes on to say: "The Greek Church is not a proselytizing one." This is hardly correct in face of the attempts to stamp out Catholicism in Poland and Lutheranism in Finland. But, the *Citizen* continues, "the Greek Church is not a proselytizing one, but it can hardly fail to become in time affected by the missionary spirit of the allied Anglicans. This will increase the intensity of the sectarian struggle. The contemplated union is not, therefore, likely to sweeten the bitterness of religious controversy, or to make the attitude of Rome any less uncompromising or aggressive. Taking these considerations into account, the proposed union cannot be regarded as an unmixed blessing."

The Catholic world is agitated by the announcement that in Nazareth itself, the very home of the Lord, over a hundred persons have seceded from the Latin to the Greek Church. Russian influence is said to be so extending in Palestine that the Romans must preach, if not a new crusade, at least a new plea for colonizing settlements.

At St. Ethelburga's, where the Protestants are bent on disturbing the Ritualistic practices, there was something very like a free fight last Sunday. Blows were freely struck, and three men were given into custody. A force of between twenty and thirty constables was summoned.

The *Methodist Times* has been giving statistics to show that Catholicism is not progressing in the United Kingdom. As much can be said of Methodism, and the *Tablet* challenges the *Methodist Times* to urge that at the next decennial period there shall be a religious census. The *M. T.* says: "Tens of thousands of godless creatures, who never darken a church door with their shadow, would unscrupulously enter themselves as members of the Established Church." Legal luminaries, in fact, have laid it down that every member of the commonwealth is *ipse facto* a member of the Church of England.

The Rev. Dr. Hamilton has written a special hymn for use by English Protestants. Here is a specimen verse:—

For priests with brazen faces,
And lies in their right hand,
Who tread the sacred places
Of our beloved land;
Who desecrate thy table
With Pagan rights abhorred,
And preach the old mass fable—
Have mercy on us, Lord.

We notice that an address is to be given by a curate of a church at Dalston to-day, to men only, on the subject, "Why

is God Silent?" We offer a title for the rev. gentleman's next discourse: "Why do the Clergy Avoid Discussion?"

A petition, signed by over three hundred thousand women, has been presented to the Queen, praying that there shall be Government inspection of the 800 convents, exempt from any control save that of Rome, wherein some 20,000 women are immured as prisoners for life. It is pointed out that convents in Roman Catholic countries are subject to Government inspection.

Trinity Church, Brisbane, decided a week ago to reduce its pastor's stipend to £200 per annum until the *amount due to him had been liquidated*. Just fancy making the parson pay what the congregation owes him! The humor of the thing—the sheep shearing the shepherd!—*Bulletin*.

The Rev. Mr. Sayce has made one or two little slips in his discoveries, so that his account of having found the tomb, or a fragment of the tomb, of Menes, the first king of the first Egyptian dynasty, a gentleman who is supposed to have lived some four hundred years or more before Adam, may be received with caution, more especially as Menes is said to have been, not buried, but cremated in the Babylonian fashion. That Mr. Sayce has got some fragment with the name of Menes is very likely; but he will have to produce evidence of its age and authenticity.

Many have set down Menes as mythical; so, if the discovery is correct, it will be a feather in the cap of Mr. Grant Allen. A yet more notable, and, if true, "providential," discovery is reported in the finding of the tomb of the Egyptian God, Osiris, the great judge of the dead. Plutarch said that his tomb was shown at Abydos and Phile, as the tomb of Zeus was shown at Crete. Mr. Allen contends that Osiris originally was a local chief at Abydos, and he points to his representations as a mummy, with the crown of Upper Egypt and a crook and scourge, as a proof of this. Most Egyptologists, however, have regarded Osiris as an emblematical figure, symbolizing the sun as ruler of the underworld after going down in the west. The majestic Sphinx seems to have been dedicated to Ra-Horus, and to symbolize the sun emerging from its nightly death. But Mr. Allen thinks that Horus also was once an actual earthly chieftain.

A solemn church court was held in the chapter-house at Melbourne Anglican Cathedral the other day, and Bishop Goe sat heavily in judgment on an afflicted brother—said brother being a suburban parson accused of taking whisky for his stomach's sake, to the great detriment of his head. The reverend was found guilty of being afflicted with alcoholic silliness in the pulpit, and saying "hic!" all through the service, and dotting the prayers with the same verbal, short, sharp shock. The Bishop read the arid parson a dry, gritty desert of a sermon on the fearful sin of thirstiness, and the unspeakable iniquity of yielding to it—a sermon calculated to drive Job himself out on the ancient burst—and then sentenced the fallen reverend to three months' suspension. The Bishop also recommended prayer. Has the efficacy of prayer ever been tested against a raging whisky thirst?—*Bulletin*.

Sabbatarianism is still strong in Scotland, but it is not what it was. The late Dr. Donald Fraser, of Marylebone Presbyterian Church, used to tell a story of a Scotch minister who fell into disfavor with his people on the ground of not being "very soond on the Sawbath question." He was seen at his manse window, "dandling his bit bairn up and doon in his arms, and making the maist deevilish faces at it, and him a meenister, and it the Sawbath Day."

Professor Blass, of Halle, contends that the original version of the Lord's Prayer, as it stood in Luke xi., contained, after the words, "Father, hallowed be thy name," "Let Thy Holy Spirit come upon us and cleanse us." Can the clause have been removed by those early Christians who, we are told in Acts xix. 2, had "not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost"? A cursive MS., the Gospel of Marcion, and the express statement of Gregory of Nyssa are said to confirm this reading.

In connection with the death of C. L. Dodgson ("Lewis Carroll"), the *Speaker* tells a good story of a bishop who complained to Mr. Gladstone that the Snark was not clearly defined. "But the Snark, you know, was a Boojum," said Mr. Gladstone. "Yes," replied the bishop, "but what is a Boojum?" Mr. Gladstone is said to have hinted that a prelate who confessed ignorance of a Boojum was unworthy of ecclesiastical preferment, and doubtless the Father-in-God was as ready afterwards to define a Boojum as the Athanasian Creed to define the Trinity.

The *Nottingham Daily Express* has incensed the Roman Catholic bishop of Nottingham by calling him a dissenter. It urges that any and every man who dissents from the religion of the State is necessarily a dissenter. But Bishop

Bagshaw claims that he represents the ancient religion from which the Anglican Church dissented, and that it is Anglicans who are the true dissenters. It is a very pretty quarrel, and we are well content to leave it as it is.

Father Wyndham is still carrying on his controversy with the Freemasons. He claims that the Grand Lodge of England, recognising, as it does, the Grand Lodges of Berlin, Hamburg, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Portugal, Hungary, and Greece, must be suspected of having the same religious faith; and, says he, "The religion of Masonry is a 'natural religion.' But Christianity claims to be a 'supernatural religion,' and therefore it is incompatible with Masonry."

The *Morning Leader* reports an attempt at the formation of a new Holy Alliance. Father Ignatius, having written Mr. John Kensit, the Protestant gladiator, suggesting they should unite their swords in war on the common enemy, infidelity, Mr. Kensit laid it down as a primary condition that Father Ignatius should abandon his monkery. Owing to the hardness of his terms, it seems likely that "infidelity" may manage to survive a short while longer.

In a recent article we remarked that the Jews had always been hated and persecuted by the Christian Church. We are not surprised, therefore, at seeing that the *Osservatore Romano*, the recognised organ of the Vatican, takes advantage of the Anti-Semitic agitation in France, particularly in connection with the Dreyfus case, to launch the sinister declaration that the emancipation of the Jews was a grave blunder. This religious crusade against the Jews, for such it is, is a terrible disgrace to the end of the nineteenth century. Freethinkers who fancy the time has come to "respect" religion so far as to let it die quietly—which it never will do—may easily see in this renewal of the Jew-Hunt what an enemy religion is to freedom, toleration, and human brotherhood. The only way to mend it is to end it.

Huysmans, the French novelist, who once called himself a Freethinker, got his nerves terribly disordered, and turned mystic. Taking a fortnight's retreat in the Abbey of Solesmes, he became a convert to Catholicism. Now he will spend the rest of his life in that Abbey, having entered Holy Orders and developed into a full-blown monk. Whether his conversion is permanent remains to be seen. The Catholics made a great fuss over Leo Taxil, for which they are now very sorry. It may be that another reaction will take place in Huysmans, and that he will yet fling off the monk's habit and rush back to the world—which, by the way, he is reported to have much abused.

DEAR "BULLETIN,"—Extract from "Annual Report of the New Hebrides Mission of the Presbyterian Church of Maoriland." Dated 1897. Publisher, Weeks, Christchurch: "Two cheering features of the year.....One is.....The chief men have requested us to buy all, or nearly all, their lands, so as to give us power to protect them from the aggressiveness of the French priests." I like this kind of missionary. There was a missionary in Maoriland some fifty years ago called Williams. I don't know whether he wrote similar reports, but I do know his descendants are alive still, and, from published returns, they have 200,000 sheep in Hawkes Bay alone, and I presume they own the land they run on. I am going to the New Hebrides as a missionary.—IGNOTUS.

P.S.—The following words are worth quoting, as they show the Presbyterians have somehow got a monopoly from God Almighty. They are on page 1 of the report: "Everything needed for the progress and development of God's work among the heathen will be forthcoming; but, in supplying that need, God does it, and can only do it, through us; and in this way puts His honour into our keeping." He "can only do it through us." In other words, He is quite helpless without Us. You see they have got "Him" on a string properly, so I am sure there is money in it.—*I. Bulletin.*

The hymns of the colored Methodists of the Southern States take the cake for rollicking interpretation of the Bible. Here is one worth reprinting:—

A very old man was Methusalem;
For a few days, for a few days.
And he lived two thousand years by gum,
And I see a gwine home.
Just 'fore he died he said to his wife,
For a few days, for a few days.
Oh! it's hard to die in the prime of life,
And I see a gwine home.

The following is given in the *American Art Journal* from a genuine camp-meeting melody:—

In de days ob de great tribulashun,
On a big desert island de Philistines put John,
But de ravens dey feed him till de dawn come roun',
Den he gib a big jump and flew up from de groun',
O come down, come down, John.

It should be added that the John referred to is not the crack-brain of Patmos, but Johnny the Ducker, otherwise St. John the Baptist.

We wonder with what feelings shareholders in the Liberator will hear that the pious Jabez Balfour expects, when his term of imprisonment is up, to come out ahead with estimated assets of about £31,000. Impious rogues on a small scale may yet look up to Jabez with envy.

The Rev. Frederick Hamilton Lovibond, rector of Howcuple and Sollershope, near Ross, has been committed for trial on charges of clerical offence. Bail to the amount of £4,000 was tendered, but refused.

At Harper, Kansas, on January 9, the Rev. Thomas E. Moore fell dead while delivering a sermon in the Baptist Church.

The trouble between Chancellor Day and the Rev. Mr. Rockwell over the late Bishop Peck's bequest to the Methodist University at Syracuse has got into the courts. Rockwell charges Day with libel, and sues for \$20,000 damages. The ministers have been abusing each other through the press for several weeks, and have hurled charges of libel and general dishonesty back and forth.—*Truthseeker.*

An oak-tree has been discovered during excavations for the construction of sewage works at Stockport, which Professor Boyd Dawkins says is certainly ten thousand years old, or long antecedent to the Bible date of the creation.

In the *Daily Chronicle* of January 31 there is a telegram from Rome relating to a *graffito* of the crucifixion found at Rome, with the names of the soldiers written underneath. Of course there is nothing remarkable in this, whatever the *D. C.* may think, and there appears nothing to show that Jesus Christ has anything to do with it. A soldier might draw a crucifixion on the wall, just as people of the same class might draw a gallows execution now-a-days. Crucifixions were common enough then. It does not even appear to be a *proskeunemata*, such as the other well-known drawing of the crucified one with an ass's (or jackal's) head. It is curious how these new evidences turn up when required. The crucifixion *graffito* on the heels of the Pontius Pilate letter is quite a providence.

At a meeting of the Worcester (Mass.) Antiquarian Society Senator Hoar said, when he was a boy in Worcester, a catechism was in use of which the following is a sample: "Where is hell?" "Under the earth—a place of darkness." "Who live in hell?" "The Devil, his angels, and bad men." "What do they do in hell?" "They curse God and sin continually." "Do you deserve to go to hell?" "I do."

From some of the out-of-the-way American papers we occasionally get such items as "a petrified blasphemous." From a place called Tweed, Ontario, comes the report of the appearance of the Devil at a Hornerite meeting held in a house "seven miles north of Madoc." While the preacher was discoursing upon the personality of the Devil, suddenly a terrible voice was heard proclaiming: "I'm the Devil; I'll have you, ha ha!" The proclamation was wholly superfluous, for a being appeared with two horns, a cloven foot, and two flaming eyes, while fire issued from his mouth and nostrils. The report says the people fled in all directions, leaving his Satanic Majesty in possession of their meeting-house, which they have since been afraid to revisit.

One may suspect that this devil was a practical joker, or perhaps one in league with the sky-pilot to whose fraternity the devil has ever been of the greatest assistance. They had not the common sense of Cuvier, who is said to have had a vision of Old Nick, and to have remarked on his cloven feet: "Grammivorous, I'm safe!"

Referring to a religious magazine which is to be amalgamated with another, the *Bazaar* says it is the oldest living periodical, having lasted more than 130 years, and that "nothing that was not intrinsically good could last a fiftieth part of the time." Indeed! How about the Devil?

The tale, "Arahuta's Baptism," which we extract from the Christmas number of the *Bulletin*, of Sydney, shows a side of Christian missions little dilated upon by the missionaries. The question of how to deal with polygamous converts has often exercised the Christian Church, and cannot always be disposed of as easily as by the chief who, told he must have only one wife, ate up all the rest. Dr. Selwyn, the Bishop of Melanesia, always insisted on all wives but one being put away before baptism. This, in the case of a person with four wives, possibly meant two souls saved and three lost. But then the polygamists were usually chiefs who drew others into the fold.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, February 6, Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, London, W.; 7.30, "Mr. W. T. Stead, His Ghosts, and His Julia." February 20, Glasgow.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—February 6, Sheffield; 13, Camberwell. May 1, Glasgow.—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.
- J. JOHNSON.—You will find what you require in Messrs. Foote and Wheeler's *Crimes of Christianity*. The work is carefully written, and the historical references are precise as well as very numerous. No Christian has answered this book, and probably none ever will.
- G. S.—The doctrine of eternal torment is founded on the words of the Bible (Matt. xviii. 18; Mark ix. 43; John iii. 36, xxv. 41-46; Rev. xiv. 20, xix. 21), and that was affirmed by the fifth and seventh (Ecumenical Councils, and is supported by the Athanasian Creed and the tradition of the Church, both Catholic and Protestant. See *The Christian Doctrine of Hell*, by J. M. Wheeler.
- N. S. S. TREASURER'S SCHEME.—Mr. R. Forder acknowledges:—C. Girtanner, £2 10s.; Peter Weston, £1; G. Harlow, 10s.; W. H. S., 5s.; J. Barry, 5s.; T. Bradshaw, 2s. 6d.
- N. S. S. BENEVOLENT FUND.—Loss Purse Reward, 2s.
- "V." fears that Freethinkers have been somewhat hasty in deriving satisfaction from the fact that a layman has been appointed Head Master of the Charterhouse. He understands it was a condition that Mr. Rendell should take holy orders as soon as convenient. "When ordained," this correspondent says, "he too will be a member of that body which has always lived on the ignorance and credulity of the people, and which teaches dogmas revolting to the dictates of reason, humanity, and civilization."
- O. B. J.—You have ideas, but no command of versification. Every art has its *technique*, which must be acquired before decent work is possible. Writing good verse no more comes by mere nature than making boots.
- J. NORTHCOTT.—Thanks. See paragraph.
- W. WILSON.—Isaac Selby has not been "connected with the N. S. S. for ten years," nor for any other period. He reports himself, we understand, as having been a Freethinker in Australia, though we do not remember any references to him in the antipodean Freethought journals. Perhaps it would be better if the gentleman were more precise.
- R. COLEMAN.—For reasons that should be obvious, we always refrain from expressing any opinion as to the merits of other English Freethought journals. Still less have we any inclination to indulge in oblique allusions to them or their contributors. A taste for such pastime is a mark of a very small mind.
- J. G. BARTRAM.—Glad to hear the Newcastle friends were so pleased with Mr. Ward's lectures and his able treatment of opponents in discussion.
- E. D. H. DALY.—Thanks for cutting. See "Acid Drops." The other enclosure shall be attended to.
- A. E. DAVIS.—We are rather full of copy just at present, but we hope to find room for yours shortly.
- S. DAWSON.—Mrs. Mona Caird's new book on *The Morality of Marriage* is published at six shillings net. Mr. Foote will review it at some length in the *Freethinker*, as soon as he has done with Mr. Henley's Essay on Burns, the first part of his criticism of which will appear in our next issue.
- W. W. HARDWICKE.—Shall appear.
- EX-RITUALIST.—Always pleased to hear from you.
- A. HURCUM.—We quite agree with you. The more Theism is investigated the more fallacious it appears. Not one of its arguments stands upon two legs. Why then, it may be asked, are so many apparently intelligent people deceived? The answer is not far to seek. No one ever believed in Theism on grounds of argument. The real reason in every case is early religious training. Theistic arguments satisfy only those who already believe. They are not reasons for embracing faith, but excuses for retaining it.
- PAPERS RECEIVED.—Isle of Man Times—Hull Daily Express—Eastern Morning News—University Magazine—Lucifer—Truth-seeker—Motherwell Times—Liberty—Free Society—Crescent—Secular Thought—Boston Investigator—Progressive Thinker—Two Worlds—Newcastle Daily Leader—Free Lance—Zoophilist—Freethought Magazine—Humanity—Ethical World.
- 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 is due.
- THE National Secular Society's office is at No. 377 Strand, London, where all letters should be addressed to Miss Vance.
- 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 Stone-cutter-street, 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.

SUNDAY last was the seventh anniversary of Charles Bradlaugh's death, and Mr. Foote delivered a Memorial Address in the evening at the Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road. Mr. Robert Forder occupied the chair, and Mr. William Heaford a seat on the platform. There was a large gathering of more or less representative Freethinkers from all parts of London, and Mr. Foote's address, which lasted an hour and an half, was listened to with the profoundest attention. The fine audience seemed delighted to have the salient points of Bradlaugh's career and character once more illustrated.

A very different subject will be dealt with at the Athenæum Hall this evening (February 6). Mr. Foote again occupies the platform, and will lecture on "Mr. W. T. Stead, His Ghosts, and His Julia." This is in reference to Mr. Stead's two recent volumes—*Real Ghost Stories* and *Letters from Julia*. Mr. Stead's own hand wrote the letters from Julia, who has gone to the spirit world; but he claims that she used his hand, and that he was an unconscious agent in the process. Any of Mr. Stead's "Borderland" friends are welcome to break a lance in his defence.

Mr. Charles Watts again lectured, morning and evening, in Birmingham last Sunday. The audiences were even larger than on the previous Sunday, for in the evening many persons were unable to gain admission. There was a good sale of literature, and, although an extra supply of *Freethinkers* was on hand, they all were sold before the evening lecture commenced. We are pleased to be informed that twelve new members joined the local Branch of the N. S. S. during Mr. Watts's visit, among them being five ladies. Other Branches would do well to emulate our Birmingham friends in their present propagandist activity.

During the past week Mr. Watts has given four special lectures in Derby, under the auspices of the local Branch of the N. S. S. In our next issue Mr. Watts will give a further account of his fortnight's work in the Midland districts.

To-day, Sunday, February 6, Mr. Watts gives three lectures in the Science Hall, Sheffield. All his subjects are new, and we hope to hear that, as usual, he has had large audiences.

The N. S. S. Executive has decided to organize a Children's Party again this year. It will probably take place next month. Last year, for the first time, there was some difficulty in raising the requisite funds. We hope there will be no difficulty this year. About £25 should be forthcoming in order to do justice to the party. Hundreds of children have to be fed and lemonaded, etc., besides being amused in all sorts of ways; and, in addition to the prizes, it is customary to give every child some kind of present to take home as a memento of the occasion. Surely the grown-up folk will not withhold the small sum which is requisite. Subscriptions can be sent to Miss Vance, secretary, N. S. S. office, 376-7 Strand, London, W.C., or to Mr. Hartmann, treasurer.

After the Liverpool Branch lecture this evening (Feb. 6) an important committee meeting will be held, the principal business being to arrange for the delivery of some free lectures in the neighborhood by Mr. Cohen during his forthcoming visit under the N. S. S. Treasurer's Scheme. Members and sympathizers from Birkenhead, Bootle, and even Southport, are earnestly invited to attend. Something ought to be done in this populous district, and the sooner it is attempted the better. We beg all friends of the Freethought movement there to give the Liverpool Branch committee the utmost support in this enterprise.

Our Camberwell friends are noted for their enjoyable entertainments, one of which is given this evening, Feb. 6. The relaxation is designed to help the work.

The Moral Instruction League is now formally constituted. Its Object and Rules were passed at a members' and delegates' meeting at St. Martin's Town Hall on Wednesday evening, January 26. An executive committee of twenty was elected, with power to co-opt ten other members. Miss Zona Vallance, who is a very capable lady, was elected secretary *pro tem.*, and no doubt she will be regularly appointed by the executive committee. Four members of the N. S. S. Executive are on this committee:—Messrs. Foote, Watts, Cohen, and Hartmann. Messrs. Stanton Coit and F. J. Gould are the two most prominent Ethicists. Mr. Dobson and Mr. Paul Campbell are the most prominent Socialists. We hope this committee will work well together in promoting the great object of the League, which is to substitute systematic non-theological moral instruction for the present religious teaching in all State schools.

The *Eastern Morning News* has inserted letters in a controversy on "Science and the Bible," between the Rev. Frank Ballard and Mr. Seth Ackroyd, who maintains the Freethought position.

Mr. G. J. Holyoake has an interesting article on the late Professor F. W. Newman in the January number of the *Freethought Magazine* (Chicago). He is severe on the Unitarians who did their best (or worst) to boycott Newman because he would not join them in their adulation of Jesus Christ. "Unitarians," says Mr. Holyoake, "hold that Jesus was not God, yet ascribe to him a perfection only possible to a God, and speak of him with a fulsome which must be repulsive to any God of taste."

Mr. J. E. Remsburg, the new president of the American Secular Union, has been lecturing in Texas. At Clifton he held a two days' discussion with a Campbellite minister. According to the *Independent Pulpit*, the Liberals there speak very highly of his ability.

Mr. Christie Murray, lecturing last Sunday evening at the Egyptian Hall on the Dreyfus case, paid a warm tribute to the courage of Zola. The following extract is from the *Daily News* report of the lecture: "No one would imagine that Mr. Murray was an artistic partisan of M. Zola's. He would fight to the last gasp against the French writer's literary methods, but he had come to see that M. Zola was a pessimist saddened by hopeless sympathy with suffering and distorted humanity. Through terrible poverty, privation, and obloquy he had achieved fame and riches, which must be doubly dear to him. Yet how did he stand now? Facing the mad, murderous malice of the Paris mob. He braved the gaol, and ten to one he would go there. He confronted poverty. He voluntarily called upon himself the execration of a whole people, who half made a deity of him only a few months ago; and he did all this out of pure pity and love of justice. (Hear, hear.) They might ask, into what obscure hiding-place had the long-applauded chivalry of old France withdrawn when that nation, splendidly famous during centuries for lofty enthusiasm and a passionate love of justice, had no answer but a howl of shame and blame for self-sacrifice like Zola's? Quixotism it might be. Let lovers of liberty and justice and humanity the wide world over thank God from the bottom of their souls when here and there in this sordid, dirty, darkened, money-grubbing world such a Quixote could be found. (Cheers.)"

"Thank God" is conventional language. No doubt Mr. Christie Murray did not mean it to be a religious expression. But all the same it is very much out of place in connection with Zola, who is well known to be a most pronounced Freethinker.

On Saturday, February 12, John Morley will preside at the formal opening of the Passmore Edwards Settlement, Tavistock-street, W.C. Although not quite completed, the buildings are already in use for classes, lectures, concerts, etc.

Mr. Herbert Spencer has practically completed his life-work, and it is a colossal achievement. It is well to remember this in face of the news that he has removed to Brighton, and will probably never return to London, as he is in exceedingly feeble health, suffering from an affection of the heart. Considering his delicate constitution, and the work he has performed, it is surprising that Mr. Spencer should have attained to the age of seventy-seven.

Mrs. Moncure D. Conway, who died on Christmas Day at New York, after a long illness, has left £40 towards the South-place Mortgage Redemption Fund, with her "best wishes for the prosperity of South-place Ethical Society." Mr. Moncure D. Conway, as most of our readers know, was for many years minister of South-place Chapel.

Professor Beesley, in the February number of the *Positivist Review*, contributes a sympathetic paragraph on the death of the late Mrs. Edward Truelove. "Mrs. Truelove," he writes, "was a woman of high courage and ardent public spirit, as the wife of such a man as Edward Truelove needed to be." Referring to Mr. Truelove, who is now in his eighty-ninth year, Professor Beesley says: "His many Positivist friends, though disapproving of some of his opinions, will always retain a deep respect and regard for him, as they did for his devoted wife."

Under the heading of "Agnosticism in Newcastle," the local *Daily Leader* gives a very fair report of a recent lecture in the Northumberland Hall by Mr. H. Percy Ward. Of Mr. Ward himself the reporter says: "He is quite a young man; but a good and confident speaker, lucid, and forcible."

The *Truthseeker* gives a portrait of J. P. Richardson, whose vigorous contributions to the *Independent Pulpit* we have brought before our readers. We wish Judge Richardson long life and health to pursue his labors.

THE PLAN OF SALVATION.

"SAVING faith" is a "gift of God," and he purposely withholds it from certain men. Could anything more unjust be conceived than that he should then damn those men? If it is God's plan to inspire faith in the minds of all who are to be saved, is he not then responsible for the scepticism and consequent punishment of all disbelievers? Some Christians hold that faith may be obtained by prayer. To ask a confirmed Atheist to pray for faith is about as rational as to advise a drowning man to swim to the shore for a boat. There are thousands of noble men and women who have not faith enough even to begin to pray, and if orthodoxy is true they must suffer eternally, or else it is not orthodox doctrine that belief in Christianity is essential to salvation.

There is no possibility here of evading a dilemma. If belief is an absolute requisite to salvation, then the millions of sincere disbelievers must suffer the most heinous injustice conceivable. Or, if no such condition is absolutely necessary, then the story of atonement becomes a fable, and the plan of salvation a farce. What was the need that Christ should die to save the believing sinners if the disbelievers can be entitled to the same salvation? And if honest Infidels cannot be saved the same as believers, then God is measurelessly unjust and cruel.

It is sometimes admitted that if a man should live a pure life—that is, exhibit the sinlessness of a Christian, without faith, there might be some hope of his salvation. But if it is conceded that simple morality, or honest devotion to the Religion of Humanity, can entitle a man to salvation, is not this a positive contradiction of every fundamental teaching of the Christian religion as distinguished from Atheistic or Humanitarian philosophy? If the sceptic can fare as well as the believer, of what value are Christ's words to Nicodemus: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"? Why should a man be converted, or "born again," if he can be endowed with the elements of holiness at his natural birth? And that this is possible can no longer be denied. It is vain to say that lofty-minded Infidels are indebted to careful training in childhood, or Christian parentage, for their moral excellence. It is now conceded by the most eminent theologians that all the moral principles of Christianity were taught and practised by heathen philosophers who never heard of Christ or the Christian Bible. Hence, there can be no reason why men to-day cannot attain the same development independently of Christian dogmas. But, granting, for the sake of argument, that the word "belief" as used in the Bible does not necessarily mean belief at all, and that, to avoid any reflection upon the justice of God, it may be interpreted to mean "good works," or purity of character; the question still remains, Would there be any justice in consigning even a wicked man to everlasting pain, when the very cause of his depravity was an organization and an environment which emanated solely from God himself? If a man is inherently vile, and disposed only to evil, is he not an object of pity, rather than revenge? There are idiots in morality as well as idiots in intellect; and, although society is justified in forcibly restraining such unfortunate persons, in self-defence, why should an omnipotent God, whom they cannot harm, after creating them, inflict upon them a kind of punishment which, in cutting off the possibility of reformation, could serve only to gratify the malignity of a demon?

Second, if faith is not an especial gift of God, and if it is proper that we should be guided by reason in the selection of a creed, ought we, then, to be cast into a "lake of eternal fire" for choosing a belief or disbelief which is in strict accordance with our reason? If the Roman Catholic Church should indeed be the "Alleinseligmachende," and our reason tells us it is but a corruption of the true fold of Christ, and that Protestantism expresses the true will of God, ought we to be punished for being Protestant? But suppose our reason assures us that neither Romanism nor Protestantism, nor any other form of supernaturalism, is worthy of credence; ought we, then, to be held guilty because we remain true to our conviction? Surely but one logical answer can be given to this question.

Third, if we do not receive our "saving faith" as an especial divine gift, and dare not trust the voice of reason,

there can be but one other way left—viz., by accident. That any soul could merit endless torment for not being aware of certain conditions which only accident or chance could make known, is an idea which, of course, needs no discussion. We are thus compelled to admit that no deity could justly require human beings to observe any conditions whatsoever as necessary to salvation, since the possibility of our observing the conditions would rest with him alone, and he would therefore himself be responsible for every case of non-acceptance.

With regard to these obvious defects in the scheme of Redemption, orthodoxy has given, and can give, but one reply—viz., "There is no sincere Infidelity." And it is worthy of note that in the New Testament no special provision is ever mentioned for honest unbelief on the part of any who have heard the Gospel. However, nothing is easier demonstrated than the existence of millions who conscientiously reject the supernaturalism of the Bible, in the face of every argument that can be presented in its defence. And, linked with this fact, the conviction must come to every candid and reflective mind, that the plan of salvation is consistent with neither the constitution of human nature, nor any logical conception of a just or merciful God.

E. C. BEALL.

THE FATAL SUPPER; OR, DRINK AND DISASTER.

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright."—PROV. xxiii. 30.
"Wine which cheereth God and man."—JUDGES ix. 13.

IN the first-floor front of a famous inn—
Of a famed, but unknown "pub"—
We are told by famous but unknown scribes
That an unknown group had "grub"
With an unknown Jew who is famed to-day
As the Unknown's unknown "sub."

'Twas a simple supper of bread and wine;
But, from all they did and said,
They partook, not wisely, but far too well,
Of the whole—except the bread;
Of the wine "when moving itself aright";
Of the winecup "when 'twas red."

In the good, bad, rigid, elastic book,
Where the good, bad, mad folk find
The conflicting "facts" of their faiths and frauds,
You will see that Christ was blind
To the force of facts, for he armed his friends,
And on warfare fixed his mind.

When they shambled down from the festal loft
To oppose Rome's might with swords—
Scarce a "baker's dozen" of godly gowks,
As the droll old book records—
We are forced to think that the scarecrow crew
Were insane, or "drunk as lords."

The militia stopped them, so pot-brave Pete
Used his Christ-commended blade;
But the prospect sobered his hare-brained chief,
Who surrendered, quite dismayed,
And who doubtless thought, when he tried to think,
What a mad mistake he made.

MORAL.

If you wish to fight with "the pow'rs that be,"
And desire to win the day,
You must shun strong drink, or the chances are
You will give yourself away.

G. L. MACKENZIE.

What was Simon?

The subject of the lesson was the "Miraculous draught of fishes." "Simon said: 'We have toiled all night and caught nothing,'" quoted the teacher; "then they let down the net, and enclosed a great multitude of fishes; now, then, Simon was a—?" "Disciple," replied one lad. "Apostle," another suggested; but these answers were waived aside. The quotation was given again, and this time the apparently pertinent answer "Fisherman" was offered, but not accepted. The class was now quite at a loss to see what particular aspect of Simon was in the teacher's mind. One more trial he made, emphasizing the contrast between "catching nothing" and "enclosing a great multitude of fishes." One boy saw the contrast clearly now, and drew a startling conclusion. "Now, then," the teacher repeated, "Simon was a—?" "Lear," replied the boy, and for the sake of euphony we leave the answer in the boy's own dialect.

ARAHUTA'S BAPTISM.

ARAHUTA was a *punarua*, one of two wives. Maurea was her co-wife, and Tamahue was their husband. Maurea was the wife of Tamahue's youth, but she was childless; so he had married Arahuta also, which was an arrangement quite *tiki* and correct.

Maurea had received Arahuta as her fellow-*punarua* with every mark of affection. The three lived peacefully together. There was no suspicion of jealousy between the two wives of Tamahue. Maori women are, for the most part, large-minded in matrimonial matters.

Tamahue's wives used to plant his *kumeras*, and dig them up when ripe, and cook them; they weaved flax garments for him, and ministered to his comfort. And in return Tama' abstained largely from those fierce ebullitions of temper so frequent in Maori chiefs, and was generally contented, and loved his wives very much. And they were as happy as bell-birds that sing in "bush."

When Arahuta had borne three children, the new *karakia* came to Papatea. *Karakia* is the native word for religion. Of course the Maori *tohungas*, or priests, said it was a poor sort of *karakia* compared with theirs; but as theirs was excessively vague and indefinite, and in many respects a nuisance, the people said they would give the white man's *karakia* a trial. The Maori mind deeply loves a new sensation. And the pakeha's *karakia* can be made a really interesting thing to the savage, if the exponent does but know how to use the startling incidents of the Old Testament.

As for Tamahue, the *kaunohau*, or stories, told by the white *tohunga*, fairly "fetched" him. He took Kitione (Gideon) and Rawiri (David) for his patron saints, and was fully convinced that the *atua* of such heroes must be worth worshipping. And he worshipped.

The man who brought the new *karakia* to Papatea was a German named Gottlieb Riemenschneider. And, when he got back, this is how he spoke of the matter to the head of his mission: "Dere is moch seed for der gadding at Papatea. Tamahue, der chief dere, is brebaring for bapbism. Bot it is bery deeficult mit Tamahue, for he haf two wives. Dees wives he married in der heathen days, in goot faith, and quite in keeping mit der customs of ze peoples; and he don't like putting one of zem away, because he lofs both dose wives bery moch, and dey are beautiful wimmins. So I bromise to stay two dree veek mit him somedime when I next go dere, und we will talk it ofer, and I dink Tamahue he come along all right und put away one of dose wives of his, und den I bapbize him. Und I dink Tamahue get crate plessing ven I get him bapbized and done."

Arahuta was sitting on the sea-beach crying. The white, frothy little waves of the blue land-locked bay almost laved her feet; white sea-birds flew screaming past her; the chubby infant that she nursed divided his attention between his mother and the encroaching sea. But Arahuta paid little heed either to child, sea-birds, or sea. Her tear-blurred eyes constantly gazed at the concourse of people in the village, some three hundred yards from where she sat upon the beach.

One of the chiefs was addressing the people. Arahuta could hear his voice lifted high upon the still air; she could see him walking up and down in front of the crowd, and gesticulating wildly in emphasis of his speech. Arahuta knew the speaker to be Tama', father of the child she nursed.

Tamahue's speech was a long one, and when at length it was ended, there was a great shouting in acclamation of what had been said, and the whole audience, at the direction of the speaker, trooped down to the beach, where they clustered under a great *pohutukawa* tree whose branches of crimson flowers threw a cool shade upon the yellow sand. The people grouped themselves round a large font, decorated with rich red flowers from the tree above.

Then from the village there came down a man dressed in white, and with him were the chiefs of the village, and Tamahue. This man in white was the *pakeha* priest, who had brought the new *karakia* to Papatea. And the new *karakia* had become the fashion, and everyone wanted to join it—except Arahuta.

Riemenschneider came solemnly down with the deeply serious air common to all *tohungas*, brown or white, of whatever creed. For awhile he stood wrapped in silence beneath the flowering tree, the sleeve of his surplice covering his face. Then he made oration—which, too, is a practice common to all *tohungas*. And, after he had finished speaking, there was much commotion among the people, and they seemed to be arranging themselves in a semblance of order around the font. Then Riemenschneider once more covered his face with his sleeve, and spoke to his *atua*, and all the people stood still and silent, with bent heads. Then he called his converts up before him by families, and

sprinkled their heads with water from the font, and said an incantation over them, and gave them their new names.

Arahuta watched from afar this *iriiringa* of the people. The last to step before the white *tohunga* was Tamahue, and with him Maurea, his wife, and Arahuta's two children. Arahuta watched their baptism, breathless, and clutched her babe the tighter to her breast. And the *tohunga* gave Tama the name of Abraham, and the woman he called Sarah. He must have had a grim sense of humor, that *tohunga*.

When the ceremony was ended, the people trooped back to the village to feast. Only the *pakeha* remained behind. He had taken off his white garment, and stood regarding Arahuta as she crouched, weeping, on the yellow sand.

By-and-bye he walked towards her till she could hear his voice. In deep guttural tones, he said: "My child, why do you stand alone outside der fold! Der new *karakia*—"

But Arahuta fled from him along the beach. Night had closed down on Papatea. The feasters had sung their last hymn; the cooking fires had died out; everybody was fast asleep. The village was as quiet as death—the only sound the breaking of the waves upon the shore.

The moon shone upon the dark waters, and the streak of sand along their margin looked in the grey light like a white path.

On this white band of sand there was a dark, moving speck. It was Arahuta with her child, coming back towards the village. She paused beneath the great pohutukawa tree, whose redness was now become black, and laved her hands in the holy water which still lay at the bottom of the font.

Presently she sprinkled with a few drops her sleeping child, and made marks crosswise on its forehead. Then for awhile she called on the unknown *atua* to curse the white *tohunga* and all his tribe. The mournful tones of her voice reached the village, and a wakeful cur barked at her. At length her incantation was ended, and she walked down the beach into the sea. With her babe upon her back she swam far out into the moonlit waters, till she appeared only a little blot upon the sheet of silver. Suddenly the blot vanished.

The Rev. Gottlieb Riemenschneider, at the next annual meeting of the Auckland Branch of his Society, addressed his audience thus: "We haf had crate plessings at Papatea, for which I gif tanks to Gott. Dere was seventy-six gandidates for babtizm at Papatea, und mit dem Tamahue, der chief. Der bolygamy question crop up dere, und almost make a deeficulty. Tama, he had two wifes—nice, good-mannered, young wimmins, und he lof dem very moch. One of dese vas der wife of his youth, but she haf no schildrens; der odder she was a most lofly young womans, which Tamahue he took furder on, und she haf dree schildrens, which make him a very broud man. Und dey all lif happy togedder, midout quarrelling und strife. So it seemed a crate pity to disturb such peace und harmony, but der rules of der Society are strict; like der Persian laws, dey cannot be schanged. No one can be babtized mit more zan one wife, so Tamahue he haf to put one of dose wifes of his away. Und I wondered mit myself which he would keep. So he tinks und tinks a good lot, und den he says he will keep der first wife; und der udder, like Hagar, he send adrift on der world. She took mit her her leetle Ishmael at der breast, but her two odder schildrens Tama he keeps for himself. Und so der crate deeficulty was ofer gome, und Tamahue, der Chief of Papatea, was babtized, for which I gif efery day praise und tankgiving to Gott."

But the baptism of Arahuta the Reverend Gottlieb Riemenschneider said never a word.

—*Sydney Bulletin*.

ALFRED A. GRACE.

Materialism.

Materialism characterizes the present civilization, but it is the refined materialism of Greece. It is the materialism that navigates the ocean with steamships fitted out with palatial splendor, and it thus exchanges the products of distant countries and fosters commercial intercourse. It is the materialism that drives the locomotive over the iron rail, and thus binds nations in closer bonds of union, and increases social enjoyments and pleasures. It is the materialism that spins, weaves, and prints books by steam, writes by means of electricity, speaks by the aid of the telephone to a distance of hundreds of miles, sows by lever power, that turns the wheel, cuts the harvest, thrashes the grain and mows the hay by time-and-labor-saving machinery; materialism that has accomplished more for the well-being and happiness of mankind than any other philosophy, if really any other has ever been invented deserving to be considered philosophical in the true sense of that word.—*A Featherman, "Thoughts and Reflections on Modern Society," p. 164.*

PRESENTATION TO MR. JAMES PARTRIDGE.

ON Tuesday week about 120 members and friends of the Birmingham Branch of the N. S. S. assembled at the Victoria Hotel, John Bright-street, Birmingham, to do honor to their indefatigable honorary secretary, Mr. J. Partridge. Mr. R. Taylor presided, and C. H. Cattell read letters from G. W. Foote, C. Cohen, A. B. Moss, and C. Cattell, who had sent subscriptions to the testimonial, but who were unable to be present. The reading of Mr. Foote's kindly greeting evoked loud cheers. Songs and recitations followed, interspersed with a few toasts.

Mr. Charles Watts proposed "Success to the Birmingham Branch" in a happy speech, in which he congratulated the Committee on the good work they were doing, and paid a high tribute to the excellent qualities of the guest of the evening. He expressed his regret that the genial face of his old friend, Daniel Baker, was no longer to be seen among the workers. He also wished that Mr. Baker had lived long enough to see the progress made by the Branch. Mr. Armfield suitably responded.

Mr. A. Scrimshire gave a recital of a scene from *Othello* in a masterly dramatic style.

Mr. Ridgway made the presentation, which took the form of a gold watch and chain, and alluded to the fact that Mr. Partridge had acted as hon. sec. for fifteen years, and said that the progress of the movement in Birmingham was largely due to his perseverance and unselfish devotion to that office.

Mr. Partridge replied in a modest and excellent speech, and said that he had always regarded his share in the work of the Society as a labor of love, and heartily thanked his colleagues and friends for their handsome present.

Mr. H. Lees Sumner, in proposing the toast of "The Ladies," was gratified to see so many present, and urged women to take more interest in the work of the Secular party. Mr. E. J. Sale responded in a humorous speech.

Messrs. Bullows, Skett, Simco, Harris, Miss Skett, and Miss Willeen contributed very much to the success of the evening by their glees and songs. Mr. A. Koller gave a violin solo in a very finished style. Messrs. Pitt and Meredith looked after the comfort of the visitors. The gathering was very enthusiastic throughout.

C. H. CATTELL.

THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

REPORT of monthly Executive meeting, held at the Society's office on Thursday, January 27. The President, Mr. G. W. Foote, occupied the chair. There were present: E. Bater, C. Cohen, S. Hartmann, F. Schaller, G. J. Warren, Annie Brown, J. M. Wheeler, W. Heaford, A. B. Moss, S. Sabine, W. Leat, E. W. Quay, the Secretary, and H. Brown, auditor.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed. The cash statement, which included a detailed account of receipts and expenditure in connection with the Treasurer's Scheme, was presented and adopted.

The President reported the result of the first meeting of the Moral Instruction League. Correspondence from the Manchester Branch was read, and the secretary received instructions thereon. It was moved by Mr. Heaford, and seconded by Mr. Hartmann, "That all fresh applications for membership be laid upon the table monthly." Carried.

The minutes of the Propaganda and Finance Committee were then read, discussed, and adopted.

An application for permission to form a Branch of the Society in Chester was received, and permission granted.

It was resolved that the usual Children's Party be given this year, and that donations should be sent to the N. S. S. Treasurer, Mr. S. Hartmann. Messrs. Bater, Leat, Sabine, Loafer, Brown, Schaller, Quay, and Miss Annie Brown were then elected as the Committee.

The secretary was instructed to ascertain which Branch desired to receive the Conference this year, and the meeting closed.

EDITH M. VANCE, Secretary.

N.B.—The secretary desires to draw the attention of Branch secretaries to an unwritten law of the Society—viz., that all declaration forms should be transmitted to her *within twenty-one days*, and begs that this may be observed, in order to assist in carrying out the resolution *re* new members passed at this meeting. Subscriptions may be sent at the usual time.

The next public meeting of the Legitimation League will be held on Sunday, February 6, 1898, in the French Room, St. James's Hall (Piccadilly entrance), when Mr. George Bedborough (editor of the *Adult*) will deliver a lecture entitled "How to be Happy though Married." Admission free. Discussion invited; commence at 8 p.m.

BOOK CHAT.

SEVERAL persons have alluded to the high price of Mr. Grant Allen's *Evolution of the Idea of God*. They should know that works of original research in this country do not pay even when produced by a man of reputation like Mr. Grant Allen. Herbert Spenser's works for very many years made no return, and for the outlay on his *Descriptive Sociology* he has never recouped himself. Mr. A. Featherman has eleven volumes of his great work on *The Social History of the Races of Mankind* yet unpublished, and in all England there is no wealthy person who will pay for the issue of such an important work. Even Mr. Wheeler's *Footsteps of the Past*, though described by Mr. Allen as "an admirable work," and designed expressly to bring the results of the most costly works on anthropology within the reach of the many, has given little return for the labor expended on it.

* * *

The two most important works of the present day—the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and *The Dictionary of National Biography*—both cost their publishers far more than the estimated cost, and long years must pass before Smith, Elder, and Co. see a sufficient return for the outlay on the latter production. Neither authorship nor publishing is all beer and skittles.

* * *

In an account of the Sia Indians by Mrs. M. C. Stevenson, given in the eleventh annual report of the American Bureau of Ethnology, she states (p. 59) of their Messiah, Po'shaiyanne, that he "was born at the pueblo of Pecos, New Mexico, of a virgin, who became pregnant from eating two pifion nuts." She mentions that the Jemez Indians have a similar legend. Mr. Hartland, in the first volume of his *Legend of Perseus*, has given many similar instances of belief in supernatural birth. Po'shaiyanne taught the Sia how to catch deer, wrought miracles, and after his death he reappeared to his people.

* * *

Disease, by the Sia Indians, is supposed to be produced either through the occult powers of sorcerers and witches, or through the anger of certain animals, often insects. Thus their pharmacopœia is fetichistic. When anything of a medicinal character is used by the theurgist it must be supplemented with fetish medicine and magical craft.

* * *

The celebration of Heine's centenary has called attention to his rival poet, Count Platen, whom he pursued with the utmost malignity. Heine said of him: "He called me a Jew, and so I called him —" something worse. Platen addressed a letter to Frederick William IV. of Prussia on Right Divine, which is being reprinted, as the rebuke admirably fits the present emperor. The following is a translation of the first verse:—

Boast not thy sceptred power, nor invent
A Right Divine! A diadem is lent,
All history teaches, by a people's will;
She points in scorn to many a monarch's grave
Who held his throne by arts that stamp'd him knave.
Can right that is Divine be born of ill?

* * *

Graham Wallas's book on Francis Place should serve to bring out the merits of a little-known Freethinker. Mr. Wallas naturally gives chief attention to Place's political work, but it is nonetheless a fact that Place was a Freethinker of much the same brand as Jeremy Bentham. Much of the work entitled *Not Paul, but Jesus*, put out by Bentham under the name of "Gamaliel Smith," was, we believe, the production of Francis Place, a number of whose MSS. are still in the possession of Mr. Holyoake.

* * *

Humanity (organ of the Humanitarian League) for February contains a spirited reply by Mr. H. S. Salt to an anonymous writer in *Blackwood's Magazine*, who declares that "We have let brutality die out too much." There is other interesting matter in this admirable little publication, which ought to be supported by all who hate cruelty to men or animals.

* * *

Mr. F. J. Gould writes in the February number of the *Literary Guide* on "They who March in the Van." He calls upon all advanced people to be very tolerant of each other, and to use up all their energy in fighting the common enemy of superstition. "Atheists," he says, "should not wage combat with Agnostics, nor Agnostics with Atheists. Let Ethical lecturers abstain from unsociable remarks about Secularists, and let Secularists hush the jealous tongue from wagging against Ethicals." "We that march in the van," Mr. Gould urges, "must be mindful of fraternity as well as liberty."

* * *

A small volume of verse published by Swan Sonnenschein & Co., Limited, is entitled *Book of Chains*. It seems

to emanate from someone who has suffered imprisonment. This is not expressly stated, but may, perhaps, be inferred from the preface, and from two of the longest poems being addressed to prison officials. The author appears to be a Theistic Anarchist. He is certainly thoughtful, sincere, and sympathetic. Three verses, entitled "A Message," are full of tender feeling. The author, whoever he may be, has some of the qualities that go to make good poetry; but the felicity of diction and perfection of workmanship required in poetry are lacking.

* * *

The *Academy* points out that in the third edition of Maspero's *Dawn of Civilization*, published by the S. P. C. K., "Les premiers peuples.....paraissent avoir appartenu à des types [très] [very] différents" is translated by "The first races seem to have belonged to three different types." Was the translator thinking of Shem, Ham, and Japhet?

RELIGION AND CHILDHOOD.

INGERSOLL has given some interesting reminiscences of his childhood's days, and told in inimitable style the depressing effect of a religious home on childhood. I have felt something of the same, and can corroborate from my own experience the proposition that religion is founded on fear. A pious grandmother at every infantile peccadillo used to warn me of a great and terrible day of judgment, when I should have to give an account of all my doings if I played in the streets instead of coming home to read the Bible. I was a rare rattlepate as a boy. My tongue went nineteen to the dozen, and I had a text hung before me solemnly announcing that for every idle word one must give an account on the day of judgment. Here was a nice prospect. I felt that that day's sitting would be wearisomely prolonged in my case. And then I was told that God, whom I conceived as some terrible unseen giant, had ever got his almighty eye upon me. The conception of this Big Eye did not alter my behavior much, but it was distinctly uncomfortable to know I was the occasion of such extreme solicitude. I don't think it did me any good, for I remember that when a boy and a Christian I was always quarrelling and fighting. After the fight I took a funk, and prayed that my sins might be wiped away. As I came to think, to doubt the efficacy of prayer, and to cease to be a Christian, my manners became much milder; and, whereas when a Christian I would fight any boy who challenged me, when I gave up Christianity I was almost ready to turn my cheek to the smiter.

It was the Sabbath taboo which chiefly disgusted me with religion. I never could understand why singing and playing were commendable on Saturday and damnable on Sunday. Compulsory going to Sabbath-school and church were obnoxious to my infantile mind, and the more I looked into the doctrines taught there the more puzzled I was. The suggestion that my doubts were temptations of the devil, and that the doom of unbelief was eternal hell-fire, kept me awhile in the narrow and gloomy path; but I gradually discovered that these bogies, like all the rest, were but the inventions of man, and I determined to read and investigate for myself. I have never regretted that determination.

UNCLE BENJAMIN.

PROFANE JOKES.

A CERTAIN bishop is so mean to his servants, and so often out of temper, that it is said of him: "It is Lent all the year round in his kitchen, and Passion Week in his study."

A correspondent wants to know whether the maxim, that cleanliness is next to godliness, comes from the Bishop of Soda and Man.

What is dogmatism?—Puppyism come to maturity.

Sheridan was staggering home one morning when the watchman who put him straight asked him who he was. "Well," said he, confidentially, "my name is Wilberforce. I'm a religious man. Don't expose." "Well," said the fellow, "if you're Wilberforce, I'm St. Paul." "Well, Paul," said Sheridan, "I've often wanted to know if you got an answer to your long epistles to the Corinthians?"

"Are you not afraid of meeting God?" was once said to an inebriate. "No, 'taint him I'm afear'd of, it's the other chap."

This reminds us of the story of the Duke of Buckingham, who, when it was proposed to send for a Catholic priest, said: "They're no good; they eat their god. If you can find anyone who eats the devil, bring him."

"Was he secretary or treasurer of the Sabbath-school?" "Well, they supposed he was only secretary until after he had gone."

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 ATHENEUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.80, G. W. Foote, "Mr. W. T. Stead, His Ghosts, and His Julia."
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 7.15, H. Maitland, "Hymns." Feb. 9, at 8.30, Concert and Ball.
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 11.30, A lecture; 7, Concert and Dance.
SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road): 11.15, Discussion, opened by H. O. Newland, "Shelley"; 7, Stanton Coit, "Shakespeare."
WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall): 11.15, Stanton Coit, "Shakespeare."
WESTMINSTER SECULAR SOCIETY ("Barley Mow," Horseferry-road): 7.30, E. Calvert, "John Howard and Prison Reform."
WOOD GREEN (Station-road Hall): 7.80, Dr. Kaines, "What is Religion?"

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

WEST LONDON BRANCH (Marble Arch): 11.30, A lecture; 3.30, A lecture.

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM (Bristol-street Board School): 11, Members' quarterly meeting; 7, W. J. Russell, "Christianity in the Light of History."
CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 7, Stanley Jones, "Is Christianity True?"
GLASGOW (110 Brunswick-street): 12, Discussion Class, Mr. McOrum; 6.30, Social Meeting in commemoration of Burns and Paine.
HULL (Obden Hall, Storey-street): H. P. Ward—2.30, "From Wesleyan Pulpit to Secular Platform"; 7, "Christianity the Faith that Failed."
LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 6.80, Alfred Milnes, M.A., "The Growth of the Liberty Ideal."
LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, H. Milton Savage, "Theosophy and the Problems of Life"; business meeting after lecture.
MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Busholme-road, All Saints): O. Cohen—11, "Evolution and its Gospel"; 3, "The Collapse of Christianity"; 6.30, "Popery, Protestantism, or Freethought?"
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Byker Social Club, corner of Raby-street and Parker-street): 7, R. Mitchell, "Secularism versus Christianity."
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): C. Watts—11, "Morality versus Superstition"; 3, "Christian Tactics Exposed"; 7, "The Decline of Paganism and the Dawn of Christianity." Tea at 6.
SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, Market-place): 7, R. Chapman, "A Bible Syllabus."

Lecturers' Engagements.

O. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, London.—February 6 Manchester; 13 and 14, Birmingham; 20 and 27, Liverpool. March 6, Liverpool.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Oredon-road, London, S.E.—February 20, King's Hall, Mile End.

H. PERCY WARD, 6 Wawne Grove, Alexandra-road, Hull—February 6 and 18, Hull; 20 to 27, Manchester. March 6 to 11, Mission at Derby; 18, Birmingham; 20, Sheffield. April 17, Glasgow.

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 2.45.

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

BATLEY.—Positivist Meeting at Mr. Joseph Walker's, Primrose Hill, Lady Anne-road, every Sunday afternoon at 2.30.

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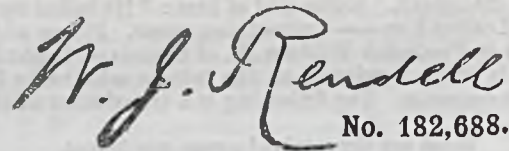
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