

The Free Thinker

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MR. GLADSTONE'S RELIGION.

MR. GLADSTONE'S death was a happy release. Grief over it is more or less an affectation. He had enjoyed what the man in the street calls a good innings. His life had been very long, very full, and very happy. It was only towards the very end of it that he experienced much suffering. Even then he had the advantage of all that the highest medical skill could do, he was surrounded by adoring love and devoted friendship, he was conscious of the sympathy of millions of his fellow-men in all countries and in all ranks of life, and he was further sustained (we are told) by the wonderful consolations of a profound faith in his blessed Savior. Surely this is not a death that calls for an extravagant display of compassion. When, indeed, we recollect his great age and its natural infirmities, and the very painful local disease which latterly afflicted him, we cannot but feel it is well that he is gone to his rest.

Death is a tragedy when a fond mother loses her darling child, when a husband is robbed of his dear wife and left with his motherless children, when the wife loses the breadwinner of the family and is left to face the world with her helpless little ones, or when the sword falls between two lovers and turns the world black to the survivor. But death is no tragedy when the aged sink down to their last repose. It comes with a soothing hand and a soft whisper of peace.

I am unable to share the real or artificial sorrow of the newspapers, the platform, and the pulpit at Mr. Gladstone's death. I am also unable to participate in the general orgie of panegyric. I admit that Mr. Gladstone carried a high seriousness into the public life of our nation; I recognise his personal magnetism, which was, to some extent, the radiation of his superb physical health; I allow the immense power of his peculiar eloquence. I even concede that he was a great man, in the sense that he carried a great assemblage of common powers to the highest degree of intensity and effectiveness. But I do not see that he was a great man in any other sense. One might almost say that the very breadth of public appreciation proves his lack of originality. He was certainly not a thinker in any proper meaning of the word. He was rarely five minutes in advance of the average man on any great question. The truth seems to be that he was a great party leader, with all the qualities—good, bad, and indifferent—that go to constitute such a character.

I will give an illustration or two presently. And meanwhile I wish to say that I do not write like a common newspaper hack of the Liberal or Radical persuasion. I have taken the trouble to read—long ago, and not for the purposes of this article—most of Mr. Gladstone's writings; and as they are not precisely exhilarating, I may at least advance a claim to conscientiousness. I do not write out of a plentiful lack of ignorance, but from a fulness of knowledge. Whatever else my opinion may be, it is not baseless. And I have this to add. It was a capital saying, "Speak, that I may know you," but it is a better saying still, "Write, that I may know." Acting is easier with the voice than with the pen. A musical voice and a rhetorical style may make a Cloon pass for a wiser man than Socrates. When a man writes, he reveals himself in his own despite. He shows his real wealth or poverty. You may have to hear a speaker many times to estimate him approximately; but a single page, a single paragraph,

a single line of a writer will often exhibit his true quality. How simple the words, "We are such stuff as dreams are made of," yet no other poet than Shakespeare could ever have written them. Well, if I am maintaining a right contention, and if Mr. Gladstone may be judged by his writings, I say deliberately that he was lacking in profundity of thought, lacking in imagination, lacking in logic, and even lacking in style.

And now for the illustrations I promised of Mr. Gladstone's not being a thinker, and of his want of originality.

First, let us take the Irish question. For fifty years Mr. Gladstone had it before him, but he never understood it until he was forced into doing so by the splendid strategy of Parnell. Mill understood it, Bradlaugh understood it, thousands of tailors and shoemakers understood it, but Mr. Gladstone did not. He was always trying to do something for Ireland, but he did not see that nothing availed for the simple reason that Ireland wanted the only remedy an Englishman could devise—the power to manage her own affairs. He was unable to perceive that she spoiled our broth because we did her cooking. He learnt the truth at last, but he only learnt it—as was usual with him—under the pressure of necessity.

He made a glaring blunder, for a Liberal, over the great struggle in America, not understanding that the cause of the South was a bad one, and that its resources were inadequate to a successful war with the North. Here again it was not sagacity, but the force of events, that set him finally in the right direction. His conversion to the Ballot was brought about in the same way. When he was converted he always threw tremendous energy into what may be called his reformation, and that is greatly to his credit; but I am concerned now with his intellect rather than his character.

Now let us turn from politics to morals. Mr. Gladstone wrote an article in his old age on the Sunday question, and it contains the veriest commonplaces of orthodoxy. His mind was only teachable under compulsion. On this particular subject he was as backward as any country parson. Mr. Gladstone also wrote on the question of Divorce. He was married happily himself, he did not want a divorce, and he did not see why anybody else should. And he went on quoting Matthew on the matter—a thing he would never have attempted if Divorce had come within the region of practical politics in the shape of a parliamentary Bill. If you once got him away from the practical necessities of political life, his mind was intensely conservative and essentially irrational. And this is shown with tenfold force when we examine his religious opinions, and the grounds on which he held them.

Mr. Gladstone began his political life as "the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories"—to use Macaulay's expression of fifty-nine years ago. He ended it as the idol of the Liberals and Radicals. The singularity of his public career was that he was always advancing with the times. He did not retrograde as so many men do after sixty. He did not ossify with old age. He kept his broad outlook on the world, and his vivid interest in all sorts of human activities, unimpaired to the very last. His mind was wide, if not philosophical, and as the indisputable leader of English Liberalism he was never without his strong, encouraging word for those who were battling for freedom and independence in other lands—providing, of course, that they were not, like Arabi Pasha and his Egyptians, standing in the way of British interests. But all the time his enthusiasm was less governed by sovereign

principles than by the generosity of his nature and the necessities of his position. To keep his place he had to go forward, and to be in touch with the Liberal movement of the whole civilised world; and as a strong man—for he was never lacking in strength—he ever displayed a notable magnanimity. All this is true, and it would be churlish to minimise it; but it is also true that when he was left to himself, so to speak—when he was not under the influence of a strong external stimulant—he displayed the prejudices and unreason of the average Englishman. And this appears most conspicuously (I repeat) in his religious attitude and opinions, and in the apologies he frequently made for them.

Mr. Gladstone was profoundly religious. His faith was sincere, his piety astonishing. This won him the respect of Churchmen, who did not trust him, and the veneration of Nonconformists, who constituted the great body of his followers. He always spoke with great impressiveness of the Deity. Yet he also treated God with a curious familiarity, introducing him into political perorations, and always suggesting that, in all changes, he was on Mr. Gladstone's side. It was this which led a witty Radical to say that "No doubt Mr. Gladstone has the ace of trumps up his sleeve, but he need not say that God Almighty put it there."

Mr. Gladstone's first book, published in 1839, was entitled *The State in its Relations with the Church*. Few living people have read it. The memory of it is preserved in Macaulay's famous review. The young Tory statesman, who would have been a clergyman if his father had not so strongly desired him to enter Parliament, had, as Macaulay remarked, a most dangerous gift—namely, a "vast command of a kind of language, grave and majestic, but of vague and uncertain import"—a "fatal facility" of multiplying "expressions stately and sonorous, but of indeterminate meaning." This rhetorical power, and weakness, never deserted him throughout his career.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be continued.)

THE SECULAR PARTY.

IT has been my privilege to be associated with the Secular party in England, Canada, and the United States for over forty years, and as time rolls on the more firm my conviction becomes that, if ever the secular salvation of the world is to be achieved, it must be through the adoption of the principles and the carrying out of the objects of the Secular party. Its philosophy appears to me to contain all that is necessary to enable a man to carve out for himself a useful and successful life, and to perform that conduct which is conducive to the welfare of others. In a conflict between two contending armies the victory upon either side does not always depend upon the numerical strength of the combatants. Skill, discrimination, foresight, and persistency are indispensable to secure a triumph over opposing forces. So it is with all movements. In order to make them successful the members of every organisation must carefully study, not only what to do, but also how it is to be done. It is imperative that they should exercise prudence, self-reliance, and persistent energy. Although the working classes (who principally constitute the popular movements) of this country have not all the advantages they desire, and, we may add, that they deserve, still they possess sufficient power, if wisely used, to enable them to secure for themselves a better position than they have hitherto occupied. To speak plainly, it is evident that too many of the general masses act as if they were indifferent to their own interests; while others are intellectually and socially apathetic. Moreover, among them there is a lack of discrimination, and too often they manifest a foolish jealousy of each other which mars their progress. I would suggest to all Secularists and Freethinkers that they should strive to acquire a knowledge of their duties and responsibilities, and then resolve to perform the one and to fulfil the other, with dignity and consideration for the good of all; for by so acting individuals will find that they can do much for themselves that their predecessors have expected others to do for them.

I have been induced to write thus through reading the excellent address by Mr. George Anderson, "To the

members of the National Secular Society," which appeared in this journal dated May 15. No one is better qualified to speak upon the duties of Freethinkers than Mr. Anderson, for not only has he been for half a century a practical Secularist, aiding our movement with his valuable advice, and with his purse, but his own career is a striking illustration of the beneficial results of finding the "path of duty," and of walking steadfastly therein. The keynote to Mr. Anderson's address is that Secularists, while fighting with the "most spurious superstition" of theology, should direct their attention and energies to the social questions of the day; that they should be more united in the work upon which they are engaged; that each member should take his share of responsibility in the financial requirements of the Society, and that those who have to "bear the burden and heat of the day" should not be handicapped with the weight of poverty. These four points should be well studied by all who have the success of the Secular party at heart. Perhaps their importance will appear more evident if they are each noticed separately.

The study of social questions is undoubtedly necessary, inasmuch as our happiness and well-being in this, the only world of which we have any knowledge, depend upon the social status of society. The National Secular Society recognises this, hence in its official "Immediate Practical Objects" it submits a series of social as well as theological questions to be studied by members of the Association. It is a great mistake for Freethinkers to confine their propaganda to attacking the Bible, and exposing the errors and evils of the Christian superstition. Such work, of course, is useful in its place, but the success already made in these directions leaves room for us to deal with the education of the masses in reference to those social questions which affect our position in daily life. Mr. Anderson's observations upon this point are most valuable, and they should be carefully read and well thought out. My idea of the duty of Secularists towards the social problems that confront us is this: To try to discover the best possible solutions, and, when these solutions are found, to apply them with all the moral force at our command. This useful work must be carried on by each of us in our capacity of social reformers, work which will be inspired by the genius of Secularism, for no consistent Secularist can remain idle while evils abound that mar the happiness of the human family. The special duty of a member of the Secular organisation consists in demanding that freedom which will enable every reformer to carry on his good work without intimidation or persecution of any kind, and also in doing his utmost to remove such impediments to progress as have been caused by priestly invention, and by the false conceptions of human duty which have been engendered by theological teachings. Here the Secularist will have ample scope for his reforming aspirations. He can commence at the root of the evil, which is the theological errors with regard to the nature and destiny of man, and the persistent opposition of the Church to mental freedom and social independence. But he must not stop here. Technical and general education, the relation of capital to labor, sanitary improvements, a reformed mode of punishing criminals, the substitution of arbitration for war in the settlement of international disputes, the legal protection of animals against cruelty, and the necessity of personal discipline and self-reliance should demand the constant study and resolute practice of every Freethinker. Briefly, the social problems that should engage our attention are the existing excessive poverty, unjust class distinction, monopoly of the land, unfair accumulation of wealth, the degradation of labor, the predominating rule of the aristocracy, and the absence of genuine secular education among the masses.

My experience tells me that Secularists are united upon their essential principles, but they differ upon plans of organisation. Personally, I do not see why even this difference should obtain to the extent it does. Professed Christians have always had the same difficulty to contend with, and they have found it a powerful drawback to the consolidation of their efforts. So much so is this the case that the one cry of the churches now is: "Let us be united." With Christians, complete union is almost impossible, for they differ widely upon fundamentals; but it is not so with Secularists, for they are all in agreement upon general principles. This makes it the more regrettable that any lack of union in our organisation should exist. It may probably be accounted for to some extent

by the fact that in our ranks there are many Freethinkers who have yet to feel the genuine inspiration of Secular philosophy. The prevailing idea of such persons is to serve their own purpose, and if they cannot succeed in doing this they leave the Secular Society, and, as Mr. Anderson says, go "on their own hook." I am not without faith that in time this misfortune will be remedied. Meanwhile, let the real workers continue to do their best to enhance the usefulness of that cause to which many of us have devoted our lives. Difference of opinion upon minor methods of policy will never prevent me from co-operating with my co-workers in carrying on Secular propaganda. With me it is "principles, not men." The desire to gratify personal ambition should be subordinate to our readiness to render service to what we regard as truth.

I commend Mr. Anderson's advice, that all Secularists should take their share of the financial responsibility of conducting our movement, and that they should give their hearty support to those they appoint to superintend the business of the Society. Experience has taught me that it is no easy task for those who are entrusted with the management of the Secular movement to carry out their duties, which require far more labor and attention than many suppose. But when in addition they have to cope with the lack of financial support, a problem is presented which it is difficult to solve. It is happily true that in the Freethought hive there are many active bees, but there are also too many drones, who do little or nothing for the welfare of the general cause. To the latter, I presume, Mr. Anderson appealed, and I sincerely hope that the appeal will not be in vain.

CHARLES WATTS.

SUNDAY IN ANCIENT EGYPT.

OVER forty persons assembled last Sunday to go through the Egyptian Galleries of the British Museum with Mr. Chilperic Edwards and Mr. F. W. Read. The galleries are so arranged in chronological order that the visitor commences with the sculptures of the latest period, instead of the earliest. This, however, is compensated by the fact that the Rosetta Stone, one of the most important Egyptian monuments, thus assumes a position of prominence at the head of the gallery. Mr. Read commenced with a short sketch of Egyptian history, the beginning of which is usually placed about 4400 B.C. It might be some five or six centuries earlier, however, as there is no absolute certainty about this early chronology. The Rosetta Stone, discovered by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798, just a century ago, afforded the long-desired key to the Egyptian hieroglyphics. It was first satisfactorily deciphered by Champollion, the real founder of the science of Egyptology. Basing their studies upon the Rosetta inscription, scholars had gradually proceeded to decipher the whole system of Egyptian hieroglyphics, with the result that Egyptian now offers us no greater difficulties than any other dead language.

The stele of Canopus, which was next visited, was discovered too late to be of any use in the unravelling of Egyptian; but it confirmed the conclusions which Egyptologists had already arrived at, for it presented a complete and legible bi-lingual Greek and Egyptian text. After describing several of the most noteworthy sarcophagi, Mr. Read pointed out the fine series of granite slabs from Bubastis containing the names of kings ranging from Khufu, who built the Great Pyramid 3733 B.C., to Nekt-Heru-heb 378 B.C., and also the first tablet of Abydos, which gives a list of the kings of Egypt from the earliest times to Rameses II. B.C. 1333.

In the middle of the Central Gallery stands the cast of a sphinx, labelled as of the Hyksos period. The Hyksos have been the subject of a great deal of speculation. The only thing that is really known about them is the extract from Manetho, preserved in the treatise of Josephus against Apion (bk. i. 14); all else is unfounded hypothesis. When this particular sphinx was discovered with several others less perfect, it differed so widely from other known remains of Egyptian art that it was at once ascribed to the Hyksos. Later discoveries, however, have shown that it really belonged to the Twelfth Dynasty, and was already old at the time of the Hyksos invasion.

Attention was next directed to the series of most admirable wall-paintings from tombs at Thebes, giving us beautiful scenes from Egyptian life portrayed in the highest style of pictorial art. The cat, which is only remarkable now-a-days for catching mice, and making night hideous in back gardens, was employed by the Egyptian sportsman as a retriever; and one of these frescoes shows us the departed nobleman throwing his boomerang among the flocks of birds, and his faithful cat securing the game as it is brought down. It must, indeed, have been a wonderful animal, for it has caught one bird with its fore feet, another with its hind feet, and arrests another by gripping the bird's wing with its teeth.

In the northern vestibule are a series of casts of specimens of the earliest Egyptian art, chiefly of the pyramid period, the most remarkable of which is the wooden figure of the official commonly called the Sheikh el Beled. These sculptures illustrate the remarkable fact that the earliest Egyptian art is also the best. About 3500 B.C. Egyptian art was at its best, and it did nothing but decline afterwards.

The mummies on the first floor of the Museum have been largely augmented and completely rearranged by Mr. E. A. W. Budge, the energetic keeper of Egyptian antiquities. Several articles of great interest have been added, one of the chief being a very fine mummy-cloth of the Coptic period, in an excellent state of preservation, the colors of the Cupids, birds, animals, and flowers embroidered upon it being as bright as when it was first executed. Mr. Budge is now engaged upon a new handbook to the collection.

Mr. Read first directed attention to the great wall-painting, copied from the papyrus of Ani, representing the Last Judgment of the soul of Osiris, and read the accompanying hieroglyphic text. Turning to the mummies, Mr. Read remarked that he had been requested to explain *why* the Egyptians mummied their dead, but that was a question impossible to answer at present. The Greek writers, who had the advantage of being able to converse with the ancient Egyptians, stated that it was believed that the soul, after a great many migrations, would return after 24,000 years, and again inhabit the same body; so that it was necessary to preserve the body for the future use of the soul. Although this idea had not yet been found in the papyri and inscriptions, it no doubt represented the later Egyptian belief. Ancestor worship impelled many primitive races to preserve the bodies of their chiefs and relations, but in no case had this custom been pursued to such an extent as is found in Egypt. The oldest mummy in the Museum is Men-kau-Ra, who built the third pyramid about 3633 B.C.; but the coffin in which his skeleton was found is shown by the style of the writing upon it to be considerably later in date, and was no doubt the offering of some pious successor.

The Museum possesses a very large collection of "Ushabti" figures, which, as the inscriptions upon them show, were intended to perform the agricultural labors imposed upon the deceased in the realms of Osiris. There is also an exhaustive collection of figures of the gods of Egypt. As Mr. Read pointed out, Egyptian religion is a very difficult problem. The country was divided into 42 nomes, or districts, each of which possessed its own circle of deities, whose worship developed in entire independence of the other 41 nomes. To add to the difficulty, the great national gods, Osiris and Amen, always tended to take to themselves the attributes of the local gods, wherever they were worshipped. The god Amen was the patron deity of Thebes, and when Thebes rose to importance at an early period, and became the home of the royal dynasties, the king's god was naturally honored throughout the country, so that Amen practically attained the status of a national deity.

Many of the gods were honored in the persons of living animals, the particular animal varying in the different nomes. The sacred animals were embalmed at their death, and several mummies are exhibited of the ibis, the hawk, the crocodile, and the "harmless necessary cat." The public embalmers were not above deceiving their customers to save themselves trouble, for many mummy cases are found to contain nothing but rags, instead of the sacred animal whose body the devotees sought to honor.

The table cases contain many specimens of Egyptian furniture, weapons, tools, toilet requisites, and jewellery. Many of the smaller articles, however, are imitated by

forgers, with greater or less success. The Arabs at first confined themselves to imitations in limestone, and similar easily worked material; but the Jews of Cairo applied themselves to the business by far greater talent and success, and, by means of lapidaries' lathes, they can turn out small work in the hardest material, which is undistinguishable from the genuine ancient Egyptian. The only thing they fail in is the inscriptions, as they have not sufficient knowledge of the language. A small collection showing their skill is exhibited in one of the cases contributed by Mr. Walter Myers, the most noteworthy object being a carnelian scarab engraved to his order with the name "Myers" in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. A great number of the scarabs contain the names of ancient kings, but Mr. Read warned his hearers against supposing that they necessarily belonged to the age of those kings, because the names of favorite monarchs were repeated down to a very late period. There were one or two scarabs bearing the name of Mena or Menes, but that did not prove the existence of that monarch, for he was quite persuaded that Menes was a mythical personage. The Egyptian name of Memphis was *Men-nefer*, "the good place," and it was evident that "Menes" was derived from *Men-nefer*, as the eponymous first king of Memphis.

The last thing to be noticed was the collection of photographs of the royal mummies discovered at Deir el Bahari in 1891. We have some papyri containing the reports of the trial of certain robbers who had broken into the ancient royal tombs in the time of the twenty-first dynasty; and it is probable that the royal mummies found at Deir el Bahari were placed there for safety about that period in consequence of the discovery of these thefts. A few months ago another great find of the mummied kings of Egypt rewarded the explorers, including the much-abused Menephtah, or, more correctly, Mer-en-Ptah. Menephtah had been pitched upon by the defenders of the Bible of the Kinns' type as the "Pharaoh of the Exodus," who was drowned in the Red Sea. His empty tomb was already known, and that was claimed as a proof that he never was laid in it, owing to his submersion in the Red Sea. But a couple of years ago Professor Petrie discovered his tombstone, which described the Israelites as already in Palestine during his reign, so that he could not have presided over the Exodus; and, as his body has now been found, we shall probably hear no more of his being drowned in the Red Sea.

The party accorded a unanimous vote of thanks to Mr. F. W. Read for his entertaining, exhaustive, and luminous description of the contents of the national collection; and several members expressed their hope that they might again have the pleasure of being conducted through the galleries under his able guidance.

THE SEARCH FOR A LIVING GOD.

THE notion of a double religion, one for the enlightened few and the other for the multitude, or a purified philosophy without religion for the few, and of mythological doctrines for the many, has been the prevailing one, and is still perhaps the accepted view amongst those who have not opened their eyes to the great change that has come to pass within the last few decades. This change is of decisive significance. It may be summed up in the statement that a considerable section of those who are called the common people no longer entertain the slightest belief in religious mythology; that not only amongst the wealthy or the well-to-do classes, but amongst the working class, especially in the cities, the foundations of religious belief have to a large extent been sapped.

The things which philosophers declare to be fit for the people the people now reject. On the other hand, the speculations that have replaced religion for the philosophers are hardly within the comprehension of the average man of to-day. If, then, idealism is not wholly to perish, if the conviction that there is something higher to strive for in life than merely our daily bread or the creature comforts or the satisfaction of petty ambition is to be maintained, there must be discovered to satisfy the needs of the average man a source of idealism different from the myth or the metaphysical system. Now, what manner of proof has been supplied by religions in the past? The proof may be called "mythological proof." A myth

results whenever we represent what is impersonal as if it were personal, or what is not human as if it were human. There arose the conception of a Being like man, the product of men's imaginations, who possesses in the highest degree all the mental and moral qualities that man would like to possess. It was the belief in the existence of such a Being that gave to the followers of the old faith the certainty that the right would ultimately prevail.

But, one may ask, what proof is there, from the standpoint of the old religions, that such a Being actually exists? There is but one sufficient proof from that standpoint, and that is revelation. One day the heavens opened, and He was seen; or, if not seen, at least His voice was heard. But what proof is there, one may go on to ask, that God spake? It is so recorded in the Bible. And it is also recorded there that the men with whom He communicated performed miracles. But how, finally, do we know that what the Bible says is true? We must believe that it is true. And here we come upon the fundamental fact that underlies the traditional theory of religion. The moment we abandon the belief in the plenary inspiration of the Bible, the moment we no longer accept every word of it as true, that moment we lose the foundation not only of the orthodox doctrines, but of the belief in what is called a personal God.

I do not say for a moment that, with the overthrow of the inspirational theory, religion is overthrown. A larger, broader, finer, more spiritual religion is possible, inclusive of the Bible, but also extending beyond and above it. A profound change, however, comes over our view of life when we no longer think of the Godhead as an individual.

Such is the orthodox solution of the problem. And what, then, is the solution of the professors of liberal religions? I confess their solution seems to me no solution at all. Often they fall back upon the metaphysical arguments to prove the existence of God, or they seek to press a confession of faith from the physical sciences, which are capable of yielding no such subtle an elixir. Or the liberal religious thinkers take great pains to prove to us that ideals exist in the human breast; that these ideals are beautiful, lovable, excellent; that we desire an assurance of their reality; that we are happier if we have that assurance than if we must do without it. All of which is entirely true, but also entirely beside the mark, for the fact that we desire a thing to be real does not prove that it is real; and what religion must convince us of, if it is to be of any use to us, is not that ideals exist in the guise of aspirations, but that there is a power in things that is friendly to these aspirations, and will crown them with fulfilment.

The main question is, How are you going to prove that there is such a thing as a spiritual reality apart from the matter? How are you going to bridge the chasm between the ideal and the real? What link can you supply between the two? The teachers of liberal religions supply no link. The belief in revelation and miracles they have lost; the metaphysical, the pseudo-scientific arguments are inadequate, and the emotional outpourings in which they indulge prove, indeed, that the ideal is precious and excellent, but do not prove what we wish to know—that it is shot through and through with reality.

In my opinion, the sense of obligation is the link that connects the ideal with the real, is the medium through which the ideal reveals itself to us as real. Attempts have, indeed, been made to explain away the sense of obligation, to show that it is the product of self-interest, or that it reduces when analyzed down to the sentiment of pity, or that it is due to the obsession of the private consciousness by the social consciousness. But all these attempts, to my mind, are failures, futilities, and fall far short of explaining what they set out to explain, and disappear like chaff when the breath of moral spirit blows upon them. If, indeed, these explanations were true, then there would be no more ground anywhere in the world on which to rest the belief in a Divine power, and what we call the spiritual truths would be as unreal as the materialists believe them to be.

And now let us consider what change of attitude an ethical religion leads to as its outcome. Religious worship in the old days—and it has remained essentially the same in all the theistic churches—was the commerce of the human soul with its King, its Father, and its Maker, and expressed itself in acts of adoration, in words of praise and

petition. The ethical religion expresses itself hardly at all in speech. It is inward, and remains chiefly inward. It does not see the Divine power as a person outside itself. Its attitude is watchful, observant. It turns the eye inward to note what transpires within. And as to the possessions with which it dowers a man, these are some of them.

First, self-possession; the sense that we are not drifting, but steering through life; that we are controlling our course, that we are masters of ourselves. In the next place, we win from the ethical religion a certain moral good breeding, a sense of the absence of sordidness in life, even in its sordid surroundings, which is due to the constant presence in the soul of the thought of great issues, of a great destiny. Next, flashes of keen bliss in those rare moments when we are aware that a duty has been perfectly done; that our relations to others are for the time being perfectly harmonised.

But, above all, the sense of striving is characteristic of ethical religion, constant striving for things which we recognise as far above and beyond us—a striving in the course of which we are often humiliated by our own backslidings and by the baffling effect of what seem insurmountable obstacles, and which, yet, is accompanied by a deep, underlying sense of peace, due to the conviction that our face is set in the right direction, and that the end we strive for is incapable of defeat.

—*Secular Thought.*

PROF. FELIX ADLER.

THE DOOM OF CHRISTIAN SPAIN.

III.—THE SPANISH CURSE IN AMERICA.

(Concluded from page 322.)

FROM the West Indies we now turn to Mexico and Peru. The former was conquered by the pious and cruel Cortes, the latter by the still more pious and cruel Pizarro. Millions of human beings were slaughtered, and two great civilisations destroyed, in a comparatively few years. By ruining the cities, and exterminating the classes who possessed knowledge or exercised power, the Spaniards reduced the miserable remnant of two great nations to the condition of wandering savages who had almost entirely forgotten the superiority of their ancestors.

Keats has immortalised the "eagle eye" of Cortes. But the eagle eye was accompanied by eagle talons and beak. On his way to the city of Mexico he fell upon the Cholulans. "We slew many of them," wrote Bernal Diaz, "and others were burnt alive; so little did the promises of their false gods avail them." The Spaniards worshipped the true god, but it did not prevent them from burning their defenceless enemies alive. And it was really not the gods of the Spaniards who overwhelmed the gods of these poor aborigines of America. The Spaniards had horses, which the natives had never seen; they had muskets that could kill at a distance; they had artillery that could sweep away whole ranks of men and lay protecting walls in ruins. "The nobler but weaker nature," as Froude says, "was crushed under a malignant force which was stronger and yet meaner than itself."

Mexico was a splendid city, immensely larger and finer, and considerably more populous, than Madrid. "Well might the rude Spanish soldier," says Helps, "find no parallel but in the imaginations of his favorite Romance. Like Granada, encircled, but not frowned upon, by mountains; fondled and adorned by water like Venice; as grand in its buildings as Babylon of old; and rich with gardens, like Damascus;—the great city of Mexico was at that time the fairest in the world." The population amounted to at least three hundred thousand. Helps conceives it to have been much larger. All the European eye-witnesses agree in praising the size and beauty of this great capital, and the number and civility of its inhabitants.

Cortes made a prisoner of Montezuma in his own palace, but he was soon glad to leave the city, in order to collect his forces for a successful attack upon it. Ravaging the provinces, he slaughtered wholesale and made a multitude of prisoners; not men, for it was too troublesome to guard them, but boys, girls, and young women. These were all branded with the letter "G" and divided up amongst the soldiers. But the rank and file complained that by the

time that Cortes and the officers were satisfied only the old and feeble women were left for them.

Mexico was besieged for seventy-five days, and was captured on August 13, 1521. The streets and houses were full of dead bodies. "I have read of the destruction of Jerusalem," wrote an eye-witness, "but whether there was such a mortality in that I do not know." During the siege the ground had been ploughed up to get at the roots of the herbage, the bark had been eaten off the trees, and every drop of fresh water was consumed. A vast number of the inhabitants perished by wounds or famine. Those who remained were "a grief to behold."

The conquerors held a thanksgiving service, and then began to search for gold. Not finding as much as they expected, they took the son of Montezuma, who had fought so bravely, and put him to the torture in order to make him confess where he had concealed the treasures. His feet were soaked in oil and scorched with fire. His cousin, who was tortured with him, looked beseechingly to his lord to give him leave to speak, but the gallant young King replied with contempt: "Am I on a bed of roses?" But why dwell any longer on these barbarities? It is enough to say that Cortes and his Spaniards, by the aid of warlike discipline and destructive weapons, to which the Mexicans could offer no effectual resistance, destroyed a civilisation superior to that of Spain herself, and reduced the remnant of its people to a state of ignominious and miserable slavery.

Pizarro acted even more wantonly and wickedly in Peru. A very curious civilisation existed in that country, which it is beyond our purpose to describe. The monarch was called the *Inca*, and Pizarro sought a friendly interview with him, with the perfidious intention of seizing his person. The Inca approached with a large retinue, and the plain behind him was covered with thirty thousand of his soldiers. A rascally priest, Father Vincent Valverde, undertook to explain the Christian religion. This was done through an interpreter, who made a terrible mess of it. The Inca was informed that he had already got one god, but the Spaniards had three; so, if he accepted them, that would make four. Then he was told all about the life and death of Jesus Christ. He listened incredulously, and at length answered: "Your God, you say, was put to death by the very men he created; but my God still lives in the heaven, and looks down on his children." He was then shown the priest's breviary. Turning over its leaves, and lifting it, perhaps contemptuously, to his ear, he said: "This is silent; it tells me nothing." The book was thrown with disdain to the ground. Whereupon the priest lost patience. He had spent too much time already in trying to convert this infidel. "Set on at once, I absolve you," he cried to Pizarro, who was only awaiting the word. Martial music struck up, cannon and muskets began to fire, and the Spanish horsemen rode in amongst the astonished Peruvians. Not a single Spaniard fell, and four thousand Peruvians were slaughtered. "The Spaniards," says Robertson, "pursued them towards every quarter, and with deliberate and unrelenting barbarity continued to slaughter wretched fugitives, who never once offered to resist. The carnage did not cease until the close of day."

The Inca was a captive, and his kingdom was ransacked for gold. It was divided up on the festival of St. James, the patron saint of Spain. "Though assembled," as Robertson says, "to divide the spoils of an innocent people, procured by deceit, extortion, and cruelty, the transaction began with a solemn invocation of the name of God." More than eight thousand pounds fell to the lot of each horseman, and half as much to each foot soldier. Pizarro's own share must have amounted to a large fortune.

These infamous wretches capped the rest of their crimes by their treatment of the captive Inca. They resolved to try him in a Spanish criminal court, Pizarro being one of the judges. Never was there such a tragical farce, or such a farcical tragedy. Amongst other charges against the Inca were these: he had incited his subjects to resist the Spaniards, and had wasted treasure which belonged to the conquerors! For these wonderful offences he was condemned to be burnt alive. Such was the sentence of the court presided over by the base and bloody Pizarro, and Father Valverde warranted it to be just. The poor monarch, tried and sentenced by foreigners in his own country, pleaded with tears to be sent to Spain, but the unfeeling Pizarro ordered him to immediate execution. Father Valverde, however, made an effort to convert him.

He was promised a mitigation of his punishment if he would embrace the Christian religion. The offer was accepted, the poor Inca was baptised, and then strangled at the stake instead of being burnt to death.

Pizarro with his Spaniards went through Peru, slaughtering and robbing to his heart's content. Happily he paid the penalty of his crimes at last, being beheaded for rebellion against his own sovereign. The fact is, the Spaniards quarrelled amongst themselves over the spoils of Peru, which were richer than those of Mexico. They killed each other like greedy devils, but the natives were the worst sufferers. The civilisation of the country was absolutely destroyed. A hundred years afterwards its scanty inhabitants looked with ignorant astonishment on the mysterious ruins of its recent greatness.

It is beyond doubt that Cortes, Pizarro, and nearly all the other Spaniards engaged in the conquest of America were devoted sons of the Church, and felt that they were not violating any religious principle in their treatment of the natives, who were infidels for certain, and probably descended from some other progenitor than Adam. Both on the mainland and in the West Indies they showed, at least, the elevating effect which Christianity had produced upon their characters. "Gold hunting and lust," says Froude, "were the two passions for which the Spaniards cared; and the fate of the Indian women was only more dreadful than that of the men." Wherever they went they made a hell. And they went far. Take this story of a deed of theirs in the beautiful land of Florida, once their possession, but now a part of the United States. After the massacre of St. Bartholomew a powerful Spanish fleet bore down upon a Huguenot settlement there. The settlers had lived there for years, cultivating the soil, building villages, and dwelling on good terms with the natives. Every one of them was seized, to the number of nearly a thousand; they were all flayed alive, and hung out upon trees, with the inscription over them, "Not as Frenchmen, but as heretics." Then the Spaniards settled there themselves. But two years afterwards a French Huguenot armed and equipped a vessel at Rochelle, sailed across the Atlantic, collected a strong party of Indians, and fell suddenly upon the Spaniards, slaying every man of them he could find, and hanging their bodies up on the same trees that had borne their victims, with this inscription over them, "Not as Spaniards, but as murderers."

Spain has lost the greater part of her empire. She has only a few possessions left in America, and the principal of these is Cuba. The island is 41,655 square miles in extent—larger than Ireland, but not as large as England. Only about a tenth of it is fairly well cultivated, and some parts of the interior are almost unexplored, although the Spaniards have been there for four hundred years! The total population (according to the last figures we have) is only a little over a million and a half, consisting as follows:—

Spaniards ...	977,992
Foreign Whites ...	10,632
Chinese ...	43,811
Negroes ...	489,249

Cuba was always a home of slavery. Dr. R. R. Madden, who spoke from personal knowledge, declared in 1840 that "slavery in Cuba was more destructive to human life, more pernicious to society, degrading to the slave and debasing to the master, more fatal to health and happiness, than in any other slave-holding country on the face of the habitable globe." Cairnes, the historian of the Slave Trade, writing in 1862, said: "It is in Cuba at this day that we see in the servile class the coarsest fare, the most exhausting and unremitting toil, and even the absolute destruction of a portion of its numbers every year by the slow torture of overwork and insufficient rest and sleep." Slavery increased, instead of diminishing, there during the present century. The slave population of the island was estimated in 1792 at 84,000; in 1817 at 179,000; in 1827 at 286,000; and in 1843 at 436,000 (Ingram's *History of Slavery and Serfdom*, p. 203). There were 500,000 slaves in 1873. But the Moret law of gradual emancipation began to operate in 1870; in 1885 slavery was "rapidly dying," and it was finally abolished by the Spanish government in 1886.

Only a few years ago, therefore, quite a third of the inhabitants of Cuba were slaves to the Spaniards. Since then the natives have been constantly struggling for freedom and self-government. Their efforts have

been met with the regular devices of Spanish cruelty, and at length the infamous General Weyler hit upon the policy of deliberately starving the rural population, in order to prevent their "assisting the rebels." It is calculated that a quarter of a million men, women, and children have been slowly done to death in this way during the last five years. The suffering of these innocent and helpless people has been unspeakable.

Now the island of Cuba is less than a hundred miles from the coast of the United States. Is it any wonder, then, that the American people are shocked beyond endurance at the story of this poor people's sufferings? Spain has had warning after warning, but she has lied, evaded, and procrastinated. The Cuban question has now come to a crisis, and Spain has no longer to shuffle diplomatic messages, but to face the armed and embattled indignation of the great American Republic. To this struggle there can be but one issue, unless Spain is able to obtain the assistance of Europe, and that is impossible while England bars the way. Cuba, therefore, will be freed from the curse of Spain. Beautiful and fertile, and splendidly situated, this noble island will doubtless become the home of self-governing millions. It may join the United States, or remain under the great Republic's protection; in any case, America will never be foolish enough to let it pass under the control or influence of any European power.

G. W. FOOTE.

SCIENCE, THE GODDESS OF BATTLES.

God's worries are something enormous;
His Lordship is sent nearly cranky
With prayers—as papers inform us—
From many a Spaniard and Yankee.

For bloody success they are praying
On both sides, with lung-pow'r terrific;
While some to Jehovah are saying:
"O make the Atlantic pacific!"

They're praying against one another,
They're each of them jabbering "Credo
In God and the Jewess, his mother!"—
When backed by a gun or torpedo.

To heaven they howl a Hosanna,
But trust in an earthly flotilla
To save or to capture Havana;
To shield or to pepper Manila.

A bishop, whose lies are bought dearly,
Says:—Fight for the Pearl of Antilles!
And you'll be all damage-proof—nearly—
Like Homer's old hero, Achilles.

Says God: "If my son had been prudent
When posing as son of a Jewess,
Perhaps at this moment I wouldn't
Be pestered by Spain and the U. S.

'He promised in language explicit,
Instead of the language of piety,
I'd do what believers solicit,
At all times, despite contrariety.

"You'll see in my pamphlet called 'Judges'
That 'chariots of iron' could 'settle'
Yours truly; so, therefore, it fudge is
To pit me 'gainst cruisers of metal.

"Fools pray, till the thoughtful are sick of it;
And fighters who pray, to begin with,
All show, when they're right in the thick of it,
That science is what they must win with.

"I cannot perform contradictories,
Nor up-to-date weapons contend with;
For science, the mother of victories,
Is what ev'ry battle must end with!"

G. L. MACKENZIE.

Obituary.

I HAVE to report the death of Mrs. Ann Walton, of Farsley, on Friday, May 6. She was interred in the Baptist Burial Ground. She and her husband, who died long ago, were both Secularists, Radicals, and teetotallers. She was a courageous woman, true to her principles, and much respected by a large circle of friends. Deceased was seventy-seven.—H. SMITH.

AN ANGLO-AMERICAN ALLIANCE.

THERE was once an English-American alliance that never got embalmed in our annals, so far as I know. The parties to the alliance were Charles Bradlaugh and an unknown Yankee, whom he met on a steamboat at Civita Vecchia, a Mediterranean port on the Italian coast, in 1861. Bradlaugh's friend, Garibaldi, was at that time engaged in the benevolent labor of freeing Italy from the Pope. Bradlaugh had just come from Naples with some dispatches a messenger of the liberator's had placed in his hands for delivery in England. The information that he carried these papers got to Civita Vecchia ahead of the steamer, and a boat-load of the Pope's policemen came aboard looking for the Englishman.

When found, Mr. Bradlaugh was told that the British Consul on shore would be pleased to interview him. Mr. Bradlaugh felt that the invitation was a device of the policemen to get him ashore on the Pope's territory, and expressed his regret at being unable to leave the boat just at that time. He had the papers in his valise, as was suspected by the officers, who asked permission to examine the contents. Assent being firmly withheld, they intimated their intention of breaking open the grip. Bradlaugh was a large man, and he carried as armament a naval revolver of a size proportioned to his tonnage. This he elicited from a convenient pocket, and promised with warmth that the first man who attempted to overhaul his luggage should be shot, and that equally painful accidents were liable to overtake the next five who should follow the example of the deceased. At this the emissaries of the Pope edged away, but while Bradlaugh bluffed those in front of him, others threatened his rear, and there would have been a capitulation on the part of the Britisher if the alliance spoken of had not been entered into.

An American was watching the developments with rising admiration for the Englishman's sand, and when he detected the flank movement of the superior force he observed that this was a time when intervention could be regarded as justifiable. Arming himself, therefore, with a steamer chair, he cleared a semicircle on the deck behind Bradlaugh, against whom he backed up, flourishing the chair with tremendous energy. Bradlaugh glanced around to see what was taking place, and the man said: "You look after the fellows in front of you, pardner, and I'll attend to the ones that come this way."

The papal gendarmes hauled off for consultation, with the result that they went ashore for further instructions and reinforcements. Meanwhile Bradlaugh hunted up the captain of the steamer, and, by convincing him that if the pope's pirates came back they would probably seize the ship, persuaded him to ring his jingle bell, and steam out to sea at full speed.

The name of the American, I regret, has not been preserved.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

—*Truthseeker.*

ACID DROPS.

THE clergy of all denominations were "improving the occasion" last Sunday. Mr. Gladstone's death provided them with an easy theme for their sermons. Of course they made the most of his having lived and died a devout Christian. One preacher, a Londoner, had the hardihood to say that it was love of God, and that only, which made him love his fellow men; forgetting that Garibaldi—that simple, beautiful character—was an Atheist. One turns from all this to Hawarden Church, where Mrs. Gladstone bowed her aged head and wept bitter tears at her great loss. Heaven is all very well in its way, but the heaven a loving woman really wants is the society of her beloved husband.

Mr. Gladstone died on Ascension Day, and the fact is so stated on his coffin. Some pious people regard this as very significant, but of course it is a mere coincidence. A couple of thousand persons, more or less, died the same day in England. We haven't heard that the death rate was affected.

The Hawarden people pity poor Mr. Gladstone because he isn't allowed to sleep amongst his own in the quiet country churchyard, and we have a certain sympathy with them. We never could understand why dead bodies should be laid under the floor of a church in the heart of London. It is unsanitary to begin with, and where is the sense in it? A man's dead body is really not *him*. Freethinkers, who are so often called grovelling materialists, know that very well. It is the Christians, the believers in soul and a future life, who are so sensitive about corpses. A memorial in Westminster Abbey is right enough, for although the place is a church, it has been developed into a sort of museum.

Dean Stanley had a perfect craze for burying celebrities in the Abbey. Carlyle called him "the body-snatcher." *He* wouldn't be buried there, but took good care to have his body stowed safely away at Ecclefechan.

By the way, there is a book buried in Westminster Abbey. It is a copy of Shakespeare that was placed in Tennyson's coffin. Our mightiest poet was a "profane" author, but that copy of his works hasn't done any damage to the "sacred" structure—at least up to the time of our going to press.

Sir W. B. Richmond, the devout Christian artist, went to Hawarden to make a crayon study of the dead Mr. Gladstone. "One is reminded," he writes, "faintly at times of his brilliant smile in life, but it chiefly partakes of a divine serenity. It bears no evidence that the spirit has departed. It appears rather to have found rest." That is to say, there is no trace on the countenance of a glimpse of futurity at the last moment. In this case, as in most others, the message of nature on the face of the dead is one of absolute rest and peace.

The special correspondent of the *Westminster Gazette*, writing from Hawarden, said that "the absence of any flowers round the deathbed is in strict accordance with Mr. Gladstone's idea that death is a punishment for sin. Hence, he argued, it is not right to beautify death." Death a punishment of sin! Why death was in the world myriads of ages before man appeared. Death is as natural as birth. It is only superstition that darkens the end of life with an artificial gloom.

When the great Mirabeau had to die after terrible sufferings, he had his couch wheeled for the window in the air and sunlight. "He longs to live," wrote Carlyle, "yet acquiesces in death, argues not with the inexorable." Gazing at the spring sun, he said: "If that is not God, it is at least his cousin german." "Sleep" was all he implored. But then he was an Atheist.

"Mr. Gladstone's ardent desire as a young man," says his son-in-law, the Rev. Harry Drew, "was to take Holy Orders. There is existing—the time will come when, doubtless, the world will know it—a most remarkable letter written to his father when he was just leaving the university, in which he set forth fully his earnest desire to become a clergyman; but his father was bent upon his entering parliament, and in obedience to his wish the cherished hope was abandoned."

What an Archbishop the Church thus lost in the Grand Old Man! Curiously enough, even to the last, there was something prelatial in his style.

By the way, Charles Darwin was born in 1809, the same year as Mr. Gladstone. His father wished him to become a clergyman, and he would have become so only he had grown rather sceptical of the doctrines he would have had to preach. Gladstone was lost to the Church, and he became the greatest statesman of his age and country. Darwin was lost to the Church, and he became the greatest biologist of his age and country. Both were great men, but science is a mightier power than politics, and while Gladstone exercised a vast influence over his own generation, the quieter Darwin wrought a revolution in human thought which is having, and will long continue to have, a tremendous effect on the sociology, morals, and religion of the whole civilised world.

Mr. Gladstone loved music, but of the simple sort; old songs and ballads—and hymns. He had no taste at all for music like Wagner's. He was also fond of the drama, but his taste in this direction could hardly have been very distinguished when he "immensely admired" Mr. Wilson Barrett's *Sign of the Cross*, which is a trumpery melodrama, besides being a vile outrage on the truth of history. But anything "Christian" caught Mr. Gladstone. The "parson" side of his nature caught at anything that tended to "edification."

"One notable speech on the Oaths question," the *Daily News* says, "has been held by many judges to be Mr. Gladstone's finest parliamentary effort." The Grand Old Man, as our contemporary remarks, put on his hat and clutched his stick after it, leaving Sir Stafford Northcote to do the leadership business, which that gentleman didn't at all like, as it involved some "ugly struggles" with Bradlaugh, who was an "extremely able combatant."

The Nonconformists have been holding a Conference at St. Martin's Town Hall with a view to forming a Nonconformist Parliamentary Council for England and Wales. The circular convening this Conference was signed by C. F. Aked, John Clifford, R. F. Horton, Alfred Illingworth, and other leading Dissenters. They complain bitterly of the new grant to the Church of England and Catholic schools, and remark that "Nonconformists are practically

excluded from the teaching profession in many towns and villages." Yes, but Freethinkers are practically excluded *everywhere*, and Nonconformists help to exclude them. Once admit you are a Freethinker, and you are shut out on the ground that you cannot fulfil all the duties of a teacher—that is to say, you cannot give religious instruction. Be as clever, as accomplished, as zealous as you will, it avails nothing. You are the victim of Christian bigotry. We could cite a long list of cases in point. Only recently a young lady, the daughter of a new Brompton Secularist, was passed over in this way, although it was universally admitted that she was far ahead of all the other candidates. Then there is the case of Mr. F. J. Gould, who had to abandon the teaching profession altogether. They wouldn't turn him out, but they took care he should never get promotion. Freethinkers suffer all over the country in this way, and while they do so we cannot get up any pity for the Nonconformists.

Surely it can't be true. Some wag must have invented it. We can hardly believe, as the newspapers report, that the Presbyterian General Assembly has forwarded a resolution from Indianapolis to President McKinley, asking him "that no battles be fought on Sundays, and urging that if Admiral Sampson should meet Admiral Cervera on a Sunday he should request the Spanish commander to wait until Monday before fighting." This resolution ought to have added that the two Admirals should dine together and hold a common prayer-meeting afterwards.

In a review of Captain Shadwell's book on *Lockhart's Advance Through Tirah* the *Daily News* relates how the Afridis of Tirah came by their first shrine. They went to the Mullah, or Mohammedan priest, and suggested that he should die, so that their land might have a saint and a holy tomb. Naturally he didn't see eye to eye with them on the subject, so they argued the matter warmly, pointing out to him that he was sure to go to Paradise, and would be ever so much more useful as a ghost. Still he didn't see it. But they were not to be balked. They slew him, buried him comfortably with great reverence, and started their shrine.

This furnishes a good hint for Christian countries that worship saints and keep shrines to which the faithful make pilgrimages. Every locality might have a saint and a shrine of its own by settling the hash of its holiest priest. He mightn't care to go to heaven too soon—Christians seldom do, but the greatest good of the greatest number would prevail; and surely, if Jesus Christ died to save the world, any one of his priests ought to be glad to die to save the parish.

Father Porro, priest of a small village near Milan, has been arrested for inciting the peasants to strike work. It seems beyond doubt that the Church largely, though for the most part surreptitiously, aided the recent work of disorder in Italy, in the hope of fishing for itself in the troubled waters.

Cardinal Minghetti, who was the Italian Premier in 1874, hated Gladstone for helping to found the Italian Kingdom. "He opened the floodgates of the revolution," the Cardinal said, "which has robbed the Pope of his patrimony and temporal power." Of course the Pope has as much freedom as ever to save souls, but what he hankers after is the old temporal power. He wants to rule a certain bit of territory, no matter how small, and keep a little army, and fuss about like other monarchs—even if he only rivalled the Prince of Monaco.

The Rev. W. Carlile, founder and boss of the Church Army, which is rivalling Booth's, is up to date and "ily." He invites cyclists to attend his church on Sunday mornings, offers to store their machines for them during service, and even to provide them with a plain breakfast at three-pence a head. On the top of all these mercies comes the crowning mercy of "a five minutes' sermon."

The Archbishop of Manila calls upon all the local Christians to defend their faith against the American heretics. If the latter win, the people of Manila may reckon it is all over with their chances of salvation. They would be enslaved, crosses would be abolished in the cemetery, and baptism and matrimony would cease altogether. Probably most of the good Christians there are ignorant enough to believe this rubbish.

Spurgeon's Tabernacle is to be rebuilt, and apparently the same old gospel will be preached in it. "We believe," said Pastor Thomas Spurgeon in a recent sermon at Exeter Hall, "that the story of Jonah is veritable history, and not a poetical allegory at all." It takes science and criticism a long time to reach a Spurgeon congregation, and while they believe in Jonah the well-paid pastor will go on swearing it's as true as all the rest of Scripture—which perhaps it is.

John McNeill is revivaling in London at a cost of thousands of pounds. We once heard him, and thought he talked like a clever bagman. According to the general Christian verdict he is wise, witty, and eloquent. Here is a sample of his wonderful speech, taken from the *Christian World*: "If you come to God," he said, "talking big and haughty about your reason and saying you must have everything explained to you, you'll never find him, and you'll be damned and lost, and you'll deserve it." This is so like all the gospel-grinders. You're sure to be damned if you want an explanation!

"Shake off your false Science and proud Philosophy!" exclaimed the worthy McNeill. Well, he hasn't got much science or philosophy to shake off himself, so the advice comes easy. When other people have shaken of *their* allotment they will be in a good position to admire *him*.

The Chapel party, in London as well as in the provinces, are not overburdened with modesty. Generally they appear to think that they *are* the Liberal party. Only a few days ago a certain Liberal Association in North London had a draped portrait of Mr. Gladstone in its office window, and the only other articles in the window were two flaming posters, flanking the portrait, and announcing an amateur "Memorial Service" at a neighboring gospel shop. It was a very good advertisement for the gospel shop in question, but is this the use to which the members of that Liberal Association intended their office to be put?

A gentleman at Reading writes to our friend and colleague, Mr. Charles Watts, asking whether it is true that a sturdy miner at Sheffield so upset him by putting an unanswerable question that he left the town without delivering the other two lectures he was billed for. Of course there is not a word of truth in the story. It is a very old chesnut, having been told of nearly every prominent Freethought lecturer for the last fifty years. Its vitality would be wonderful if we did not understand the simplicity (*mental* we mean, not *moral*) of average Christians.

"Money and Missions" is the title of a severe article in the *Critic*. With regard to the London Missionary Society we extract the following: "It is found necessary to insert records of small donations of 3s. 1d., yet to give a proper balance-sheet of the Central African mission is apparently beyond the capacity of the Society's staff. The time has gone by when missionary societies could smugly seek refuge behind the unquestioned sanctity of their calling."

It has been rumored that Sir Henry Hawkins has joined the Roman Catholic Church; but the *Westminster* is "unable to obtain any confirmation of the truth of the report." After all, what does it matter? One Roman Catholic more or less makes very little difference, even if he happens to be a judge.

The *Spectator* is printing a fresh supply of Irish bulls. One of them is quite in the *Freethinker* line. A parson concluded a sermon on Grace by remarking: "And, my brethren, if there remains one spark of grace, water it, water it."

A Catch.

We know what is, but what will be
 We know not, no one ever knew;
 The gods themselves cannot foresee
 (If gods there be) what men may do.
 Prophecies are arrows shot in the dark
 At an unseen mark.
 If they miss it, we let them go;
 If they hit it, as sometimes they will
 When the night winds thither blow,
 We magnify the skill
 Of the hand that held the bow.
 The only thing we know
 Is that we live and die,
 Not the inscrutable why!
 Poor puppets of crumbling clay,
 The world goes round and round,
 And we go with it—here to-day,
 To-morrow underground.

—Richard Henry Stoddard.

The Straight Tip.

A friend of ours was apprenticed to a very pious draper in the West Country. Prayers were offered up every morning by the Principal, and the following petition always occurred: "And, good Lord, we ask your merciful forgiveness in advance for the lies which our young men will be telling to-day in the way of business." This "practical Christian" certainly know how to give a hint.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Whit-Sunday, May 29, N. S. S. Conference, Manchester.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—May 29, N. S. S. Conference, Manchester.—All communications for Mr. Watts should be sent to him (if a reply is required, a stamped and addressed envelope must be enclosed) at 81 Effra-road, Brixton.

A. E. E.—Such timely letters in the local press do much good.

CRITIC.—Thanks for the cuttings.

W. CODY.—The whole of the lecture would be too much for insertion in the *Freethinker*. Its chief points are presented more briefly in this week's article. It has always been our habit to do our own thinking, and to express our conclusions in an honest, straightforward way; and we decline to be overawed either by the popular voice or by the authority of popular names.

E. BATER.—It was omitted by accident. We ought to have included the Finsbury Branch amongst the senders of wreaths at Mr. Wheeler's funeral. You may imagine we have plenty to do just now, and it is so easy to overlook something in the rush.

G. J. HOLYOAKE writes that he could not attend Mr. Wheeler's funeral, as he wished to do, in consequence of having to attend a newspaper Board meeting at Manchester that day. Mr. Holyoake's tribute to Mr. Wheeler appeared in our last issue.

STUDENT.—By all means read Gibbon, and read him through. It is almost an education in itself. Nearly all great historians have been Freethinkers.

J. KENNEDY.—Acknowledged elsewhere. You are right in saying of Mr. Wheeler that the cause will miss him much, but we shall miss him more.

SOCIALIST (Manchester).—The *Freethinker* is, and always has been, printed by a Trade Union house; but we don't see there is any necessity to print the fact every week at the end of the paper. Some things ought to be taken for granted in this world.

WHITMORE LEDGER.—Thirty-nine stamps were enclosed. We mention it because the sum is an odd one. Of course we should share your wish—if wishes were any good—that your purses were heavier, for Mrs. Wheeler's sake.

C. NEWELL.—Glad to have the "great respect" of so old a Freethinker.

J. AND F. GARVEN.—Received with thanks.

S. H. MUNNS, subscribing to the Wheeler Memorial Fund, says: "I hope your effort will be successful."

S. HOLMES.—Thanks for letter and enclosure. We reciprocate your good wishes.

A. RUSHTON writes: "I have long esteemed J. M. Wheeler as a scholar and a saint, and greatly regret his premature and sudden death."

R. TURNBULL.—Pray convey our thanks to them.

A. N. STAIGER.—Glad to hear from one converted to Freethought from Catholicism through our advocacy, and one who has also learnt much from Mr. Wheeler's articles. The other matter is handed over to Miss Vance.

J. S.—Hope to use it in an early issue.

SOUTH SHIELDS FRIEND.—We note your hope that enough will be raised to buy Mrs. Wheeler an annuity. There are grave obstacles to the other part of your suggestion, though it shall be kept in view. Your promise of a guinea, if something permanent can be done for the widow, is also noted.

N. M. X.—Acknowledged under these initials, as we infer you desire. If we are mistaken, please inform us.

C. J. PHACOCK.—Such an advertisement as you suggest will of course appear if the matter takes that turn. Subscription acknowledged elsewhere.

F. W. SWAIN.—The vote of condolence from Derby is duly handed over. Glad to hear the local friends will do something. Shall be pleased to meet you and Mr. Whitney at the Conference. The matter you refer to, with the hope that it will be settled there, is not one that we can move in.

F. WEEKS.—Mr. Wheeler's books are being carefully sorted by kind friends at his house, and some of them at any rate will be offered for purchase to the readers of the *Freethinker*.

J. WADMORE.—Pleased to have the sympathy of an old reader of this journal. Thanks for the letter enclosed.

H. PERCY WARD.—List cancelled as desired. Pleased to hear that, although you have secured a situation at Birmingham, you will "go on preaching the gospel of Freethought in the provinces."

"CIVIS," who will subscribe according to circumstances, writes: "I consider that the aim of the Freethought party should be to have a sum supplied sufficient to buy a life annuity for Mrs. Wheeler of, say, £50 a year; if it could be raised to £70 or £100, so much the better. Perhaps I am extravagant in mentioning the latter sum."

G. BRADY, sending subscription, writes: "I read with pleasure your eloquent address at the graveside of your departed friend, and could not but compare, or rather contrast, it with the meaningless jargon which I lately heard drawled out by an Auld Kirk minister over the body of a friend of mine."

H. D.—It is good of you to wish you could send ten times as much, but one can only give what one can—and all don't do that.

W. H. MORRISH, sending subscription, says: "I read your admirable speech at the grave with much interest, and consider it a noble and deserved tribute to the dead man."

J. W. GOTT writes: I knew and admired Mr. Wheeler so much. I hope your effort to make the widow's life a little easier will meet with the success it deserves."

G. W. BLYTHE. Not at all annoyed. You are mistaken. Our answers in this column have to be brief.

EX-RITUALIST writes: "Though, unfortunately, not personally acquainted with Mr. Wheeler, the catholicity and benevolence, the intense aspiration for the happy future of humanity, the sympathy and toleration expressed in his *Freethinker* articles, no less than his immense literary labor, his wide knowledge and research, and his touching affection for you, have always compelled my warmest admiration and respect."

EX-CHRISTADELPHIAN.—The fulfilled prophecies in the Bible were written after the events. The book of Daniel, for instance, is now admitted by the best critics (inside the Church as well as outside) to have been written less than two centuries before Christ. See in particular the *Introduction* of Canon Driver.

POLICEMAN.—Your mite is appreciated, also your generous letter. Mr. Foote will have the *Bible Romances* bound up as a volume shortly.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Isle of Man Times—Liberator—People's Newspaper—Progressive Thinker—Boston Investigator—Truth-seeker—Sydney Bulletin—Freethought Magazine—Free Society—Oxford Times—Record—Adult—Sex Problems and Social Freedom (Lillian Harman)—Metaphysical Magazine—Home Links—Awakener of India—Western Daily Press—Printing and Trade Gazette—Glasgow Weekly Citizen—Torch of Reason—Crescent—Newcastle Daily Leader.

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 *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.

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

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

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

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

WHEELER MEMORIAL FUND.

THE appeal I made, or rather commenced, last week on behalf of the widow of my dead friend and colleague, Joseph Mazzini Wheeler, has elicited some donations, which I must regard as the precursors of many more. Mr. S. Hartmann, the N. S. S. treasurer, will act as treasurer to this Fund. I shall hand over to him what I receive and acknowledge week by week, taking a formal receipt, so that, if anything should happen to him, the Fund will be all right. Mr. Hartmann will not mind my referring to this. He is a sensible man, and knows we are all liable to accidents. He also knows that I want him to live a long time for the good of our movement.

In order to avoid disputes hereafter, I think it best to say now that, although I prefer that Mr. Hartmann should hold the money, I wish it to be distinctly understood that the final disposition of it will be decided by me, of course after consultation with Mrs. Wheeler.

My own appeal to the readers of the *Freethinker*, written before Mr. Wheeler's death, is put aside for the present, in order that the fullest justice may be done to my dead friend's memory, and to the claims of his widow upon the active sympathy of the party to whose cause he gave his life.

I also venture to refer, in passing, to another matter. I have been told that some who are not very friendly to the National Secular Society mean to do something for Mrs. Wheeler. By all means let them do so. I should be sorry to divert a single penny from her pocket, although I think a common effort on such an occasion is in every way desirable. But in order that I may not be misunderstood—and it seems so easy to misunderstand me—I deem it advisable to say that Mrs. Wheeler is not in immediate want of anything. I have paid her Mr. Wheeler's salary in full since he was taken ill, besides defraying other (not large) expenses; and although I cannot go on at this rate

—and indeed it will not be necessary—I shall continue to provide her with a sufficiency until her affairs are settled. It is not very pleasant to mention these things, but one has sometimes to choose the lesser of two evils.

What one could wish is that enough might be raised to be of permanent benefit to Mrs. Wheeler, either in the form of an annuity or in the form of some other investment. If the amount is insufficient for this purpose—and of course I have not the gift of prophecy—one would have to see what was the best thing to be done in those circumstances. Meanwhile the great thing is for Freethinkers to put their hands in their pockets and give. I am putting my hand in *my* pocket, so I can ask *them* to do so with a good grace. Even the shillings of the poorer members of our party would be very welcome. A London paper is inviting shillings to rebuild a burnt-down house of superstition. I invite Freethinkers to give their shillings to the stricken widow of a dead soldier of progress.

Mr. Wheeler's books are being sorted by kind friends at his house. A great many of them are of little value commercially. The rest are being separated into two classes. The general literature of especial value may be catalogued. The Freethought portion will probably be offered to the readers of this journal, through the medium of a list in its advertisement columns, which will save the expense of separate printing. In that case the distribution to purchasers would probably be done by Mr. Forder from his shop at 28 Stonecutter-street. It was his wish that I should take the first pick myself, but I only propose to take (at a valuation) a few things that ought not to be dissipated after the trouble he took to collect them.

All I have now to say is this. I hope the Freethought party will make a prompt and generous response to my appeal.

G. W. FOOTE,

28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.

Donations Received:—

George Anderson (per R. Forder), £5; T. B. and Friend, 2s.; A. J. Marriott, 5s.; J. Kennedy, 10s.; Socialist, 6d.; C. Newell, 2s. 6d.; S. H. Munns, £1 1s.; G. Brady, 10s.; R. Lears, 1s.; H. D., 1s.; F. Weeks, 10s. 6d.; P. Smith (per R. Forder), 3s.; A. Rushton, £1; Mr. and Mrs. Jones, 5s.; W. P. Ball, £1; N. M. X., £2; C. J. Peacock, £1 1s.; L. Hudson, 5s.; G. R., £2; J. C. Banks, 5s.; W. H. Morrish, £1; J. W. Gott, 2s. 6d.; W. and Mrs. Platt, £5; T. S. Barrett, £1 1s.; Policeman, 2s.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THERE was another crowded audience at the Athenæum Hall on Sunday evening, when Mr. Foote lectured on "William Ewart Gladstone: Statesman, Moralist, and Theologian." Mr. George Brown, of the Finsbury Branch, made a good chairman. The lecture, which was necessarily lengthy, was listened to throughout with close attention, and apparently much appreciated. Two gentlemen asked questions, but there was no discussion. This evening (May 29, Whit-Sunday) the Athenæum Hall will be closed in consequence of the holiday and of the N. S. S. Conference at Manchester, which will draw away most of the lecturers and workers.

It is too late now to make more than a general reference to the National Secular Society's Annual Conference which will be held to-day (Whit-Sunday) in the Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, Manchester. Members of the N. S. S., who are not delegates, should bring their membership cards with them, as it cannot be expected that the officers can know them all personally. Freethinkers who are not members of the Society may obtain admission to seats at the back of the hall by applying to the secretary, Miss Vance. Mr. Foote, as President, will knock his hammer on the table punctually at half-past ten.

The Secular Hall, Manchester, is in Rusholme-road. Visitors arriving at any Manchester station, and wanting to go direct to the hall, should make for All Saints' Church, which is a conspicuous and well-known building. Arriving there, they will be able to learn from almost anybody the

way to Rusholme-road, which is only a minute's walk from the church. The Committee of the Manchester Branch will be at the hall to welcome visitors and direct them to suitable lodgings if required. Miss E. M. Vance will also be in attendance as general secretary of the N. S. S. The delegates' luncheon takes place at the Clarence Hotel, Piccadilly, after the Sunday morning session. Tickets, if not secured beforehand, may be obtained from Mr. Forder at the Conference.

Manchester friends should note that there will be a free public meeting in the evening, at which addresses will be delivered by G. W. Foote, Charles Watts, C. Cohen, R. Forder, and other speakers. It is only once a year that so many platform advocates can be heard together, and the local Freethinkers should bring some of their Christian friends along to the meeting.

Mr. Charles Watts had three good audiences at Sheffield last Sunday. Judging from the frequent and hearty applause, the lectures were highly appreciated. An interesting debate followed each lecture. The one in the evening was particularly good, when two Christian gentlemen made excellent speeches. The audience thoroughly enjoyed the discussion. We are glad to hear that Mr. Watts was in excellent form.

The Huddersfield Branch sends us a copy of its annual report and balance-sheet. It is a healthy document, for it shows a fair balance in hand, which is unusual in the case of advanced bodies. The Branch has been active during the past winter, and, "having now secured a room for Sunday lectures at a moderate cost," is hopeful for the future.

Zola's second trial came on last Monday at Versailles. M. Labori, his counsel, raised a legal protest at the outset, and the point will have to be decided by the Supreme Court before the trial can proceed. Whether it will ever come off at all is open to question. The Government is reported as anxious to have the matter dropped, though the Army is still thirsting for revenge.

There is to be Sunday afternoon music on the Ramparts at Berwick. Opposition was offered to the proposal on the ground that it would interfere with the "Christian work" carried on in the town—as though the Christians were the only people to be considered. It was sensibly remarked by the Mayor, however, that the people who went to church were catered for already, and that something should be done for those who preferred to go elsewhere. Certainly the music would do them no harm, and it might do them some good. "Hear, hear, Mr. Mayor; hear, hear!"

The last number of Joseph Symes's *Liberator* to hand is dated April 16. He notices a "kindly reference" to himself in the *Freethinker*, and hopes he "may" visit England again, but does not "know yet." A pathetic feature (to us) of this number is a reproduction of Mr. Wheeler's article on "Pagan Morality."

The *Boston Investigator* for April 30 reproduces Mr. Watts's article on "The Marriage Question" from the *Freethinker*. We hope our valued contemporary is now going to reach us regularly, even if a bit behind date.

The New York *Truthseeker* quotes paragraphs from the *Freethinker* on Uncle Sam's determination to put an end to Spanish atrocities in Cuba, and hopes they "voice the sentiment of the English Freethought party." We guess they do.

We are always glad to receive the *Freethought Magazine* (Chicago), edited by H. L. Green. The May number contains a good article by Miles M. Dawson on "The Evolution of Sexual Morality." The frontispiece this month is a capital portrait of A. B. Bradford, an octogenarian American Freethinker.

"The Christianity of the General Assembly: A Study in Pomp and Vanity" is the title of a rattling article in the *Glasgow Weekly Citizen*. Another good article is that on Public Education by "A. G. W." The *Citizen* is always interesting, often liberal, and sometimes quite advanced.

True Courage.

I honor the man who is willing to sink
Half his present repute for the freedom to think;
And when he has thought, be his cause strong or weak,
Will sink t'other half for the freedom to speak;
Not caring what vengeance the mob has in store,
Be that mob the upper ten thousand or lower.

—Lowell.

CHRISTIAN LOGIC.

WHEN an Atheist falls down and dies
 An unexpected death,
 The Christian heavenward rolls his eyes
 And says with bated breath :
 " For unbelief he's snatched to hell " ;
 But when to kingdom come
 A Christian's hurried off, pell-mell,
 The moral is—er—hum !

If an Atheist (occurrence rare)
 Resorts to suicide,
 " His gospel drove him to despair,"
 Thunder the sanctified ;
 But when (as happens every day)
 The happy souls who cling
 To Jesus put themselves away—
 Oh, that's another thing.

Should Freethought premises collapse
 (It isn't every day),
 " God's hand is heavy on these chaps !"
 Triumphant Yahoos bray.
 Yet Christian joss-houses may bust,
 Or burn till all is blue ;
 Folks say a fellow's " off his crust "
 Who calls *that* " judgment " too.

If trouble or misfortune fell
 Becomes the Atheist's lot,
 Good Christians slap their thighs and yell :
 " God's given it to 'im 'ot !"
 But when such troubles are their own,
 As meek as sucking doves,
 In maudlin tears they whine and groan :
 " He chastens whom he loves."

Fall dead in church—God's taken you
 The mercifullest way !
 Die in a Freethought hall (how few
 Have ended so their day !),
 'Tis very clear that God above
 Has vengeance on you poured ;
 From Christian logic, laws, and love
 Deliver us, good Lord !

EX-RITUALIST.

NOT THE SAME ANIMAL.

THAT Christianity in its origin had some special reference to the Jewish people need not be seriously contested. But it is utterly inexplicable that it should have arisen as a natural outgrowth from orthodox Judaism, and any other Judaism is quite out of the question, in view of the fact or the claim that the Pentateuch was avowedly the basis of the national religious worship. The tenacity of the hold which the Mosaic religion has maintained over the Jewish race is strikingly illustrated in the devotion it inspires in the Jews at the present day, even after two thousand years' contact with Christian and other alien religious influences ; although, of course, their political situation has precluded the possibility of their observing the law (Torah) in detail. This very fact is a strong argument that Christianity could not have sprung from the native soil of a temperament nurtured upon the Mosaic legislation as embodied in the Pentateuch. For if the Jews, as a race to-day, refuse to affinitize with Christian doctrines and habits of thought, how much stronger would their antagonism have been at a time when the reconstruction of the Jewish state was still regarded as within the region of practical politics ? Of course it is not denied here that there may have been a section of the Jews who had revolted from the traditional creed and endeavored to supplant it with some doctrine containing the kernel—or shall we say the germ?—of a future Christianity ; but then these men would have been heretics almost, if not quite, on a par with those who should invite their fellow Jews to worship other gods than Jehovah, and who, by the divinely-given Mosaic law, were to be sternly done to death. Besides, such an explanation of its rise would not cover the Christian assumption, which is, that Christianity was the culmination, the fulfilment—not the violation—of the law.

We know that for three hundred years or more the Alexandrian Jews had sipped the sweets of Greek philosophy. The harsh, raucous severity of attitude towards races other than their own, displayed by their Palestinian forefathers, was no longer possible to them. They could

not fail to recognise the lofty character of Greek philosophic thought, and its tendency to render life humane and chaste. It was a mystery how such fine thought and ethical enthusiasm could have originated outside the limits of the chosen people ; but they endeavored to overcome the difficulty by assuming that the Greeks had borrowed their ideas from Moses ; so, starting from this as a premiss, the task they set themselves was, by a process of mystical and allegorical interpretation, to extract Platonic philosophy from the Mosaic writings. But, Hellenized as these Jews had become, their fidelity to the law of Moses was unshaken, and it was not among these that any movement of a typically Christian character could have arisen, or, given its rise, have met with any degree of success. But if the chances of its successful propagation were remote in Egypt, how much more difficult is it to suppose that it could have arisen as a normal offshoot from Judaism in Palestine ! Here the Jews were distinctly of a more rigid and austere type. It is obvious that the easy complacency with which Christians regard the terrible fulminations of the Pentateuchal Jehovah against those who should break his commands would be quite foreign to the mental habit of the Palestinian Jew. He most certainly was not of the type that would with cool insouciance propose the abrogation of the Mosaic law and ritual, and the transference of his fellows' allegiance from the founder of their faith to an alleged Messiah with whom were associated doctrines of a mystical character, the comprehension of which was quite outside their metaphysical range ; although, to a Græcized Jew like Philo, they might have been intelligible on their merits, but even to him quite inconceivable as applied to a little gentleman named Jesus, standing about five feet nine in his stockinged feet, and under the necessity of earning his bread and his bed by manipulating the jack-plane, the hand-saw, and the glue-pot. The Christian assumption is, mind, not merely that Christianity was originated by a Jew, but that it was part of the divine *schema* ; that the Pentateuchal law, including, of course, the whole economy of Jewish religious worship, should be operative only up to the day of his coming ; that, in fact, the only real significance the law had was that it envisaged the coming of Christ. That is the Christian position, and it has to be carefully discriminated from any theory which merely regards Christianity as a Jewish sect.

Now it is a psychological impossibility that any Jew who understood his Pentateuch could have entertained such an idea as this. The truth of the whole Christian theory of the relations between God and man depends upon whether Christianity can sustain its claim to have been anticipated, and its advent arranged for, in and by the religion established by Moses under the express command and guidance of Jehovah. Nothing short of the proving of this claim up to the hilt could surely warrant the root and branch supercession of the Mosaic ordinances and injunctions which the establishment of Christianity has involved. On this point it would seem reasonable to suppose that the religious leaders of the Jewish people, those most familiar with the Mosaic law and traditions, the acknowledged interpreters of its spiritual significance and practical application, would be most likely to arrive at a correct judgment. And their verdict right down through the centuries has been unanimously against the Christian claim that the cuckoo bird of Christianity was concealed from the first in the Mosaic nest.

The writings of the fathers of the second and third centuries were largely a polemic against the Jews, which, in itself, is an evidence that the Jews had, from practically the inception of Christianity, scornfully and unhesitatingly repudiated its pretensions. Whatever converts the Christians made from among the Jews must have been of the type which had never appreciated the Mosaic law ; and he who does not understand the creed of his profession, and will not take the advice of those who are better able to judge than himself, must for our purpose be regarded as a negligible quantity. Christians will allow, of course, that it was contemplated that the Mosaic religious code should be practised during some period of time. It was not surely intended to be a dead letter altogether in the centuries between Moses and Christ. The question then arises, at what time should the Israelites have set about the task of embodying the Mosaic legislation in their national history ? Obviously, immediately after they had planted their feet on Canaanitish soil. But this is precisely what they did not do. During the

period of the Judges the provisions of Mosaism were openly and flagrantly violated. Of course the position is assumed here that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, although he didn't. The Period of the Judges comprised from 300 to 400 years. During the whole of this time the Mosaic religion was put upon the shelf. But the disobedience of the Israelites during the era of the Judges would not acquit their descendants in the days of the Kings of the solemn obligation of observing the Mosaic Torah. But here again we are confronted with the fact that the observance of the religion of Moses was conspicuous by its remarkable absence. If we care to allow that in the reign of Josiah the provisions of the law were attempted to be carried out, we have, from the accession of Saul, a period of 471 years of non-observance, and, therefore, of practical non-existence of the religion of Jehovah, as given through his amanuensis Moses. Here then we have, dating from the death of Joshua to the accession of Josiah, a period of 800 years at least, during which what is called the Mosaic dispensation had failed to uprear its head. The position is then, so far as these centuries are concerned, as we were before the law was given to the Israelites in the wilderness. But if the law was necessary, then it surely was no less imperative, after 800 years' stiff-necked refusal, to obey its injunctions. Our present purpose does not require that we should show that the reformation in the national worship accomplished by Josiah fell short of the full requirements of the Levitical code. But, however desirous he may have been of obeying the law, Mosaism had a run of only fourteen years, for after Josiah had reigned thus long he was slain by Pharaoh-nechah. Twenty-two years later the temple at Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Jews carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar. Three kings filled up the interval between the death of Josiah and the destruction of the temple, and each distinguished himself by attempts to crush the head of the recently-born and lively young snake of Judaism. There is no pretence that the law was carried out during the captivity, for that was an impossibility. Here, then, is the best part of a century elapsing without any realization of the Jehovah-cum-Mosaic ethic and ritual. We will assume that from the return from the captivity to the period of the Grecian occupation the Jews had put the law into operation; we may also allow that it was observed during the 148 years that elapsed from the death of Alexander to the conquest of Jerusalem by Antiochus Epiphanes, although our history of this intervening period is a blank. But from Antiochus onwards to the birth of Jesus Christ it was impossible that the religion of Moses could have been satisfactorily observed, for Jerusalem was constantly between the devil and the deep sea of civil war and attack from the enemy without its gates. Now how stands the position? From the entry of the Israelites into Canaan to the birth of Christ a period of 1,425 years is covered. Out of these 1,425 years, only 367 were characterized by an observance of the Mosaic law! Think of it. If we are to take the orthodox position as to the Pentateuch, the law should have been rigorously observed during the whole of the 1,058 years when it was violated, on the Bible's own showing. Can we suppose that the Mosaic religion had a fair chance if for 1,058 years it was a dead letter, or no better? Is it reasonable to suppose that its divine author only contemplated its observance for a beggarly 367 years, and that at the end of that period it should be superseded altogether? If he knew that it wouldn't be obeyed because it couldn't be obeyed until after the return from the exile, would he not have left its formulation till that period? On the other hand, if it was solemnly obligatory from the period of the Judges onward, then these 1,058 years ought to be carried forward beyond the time of Christ, and while he and his disciples were assumedly undermining the law the Jews should have been straining every nerve to establish it upon an immovable basis in order to atone to Jehovah for its shamefully inadequate observance in the past. That is the logic of it. But the allowance of this would be fatal to the Christian claim. What the Christian position really involves is this, that because the Jews had been refractory for 1,100 years they should be absolved from all responsibility to observe the law of Moses, and that, if they only recognised that it was their duty to kick it unceremoniously aside, they should live happily ever afterwards. But the vagaries of the Christian mind are not likely to have been anticipated, or to have struck root in the mind of the Jew of 2,000 years

ago. He had before him the terrible threat of vengeance uttered by Jehovah against those who should disobey his commandments, given in Leviticus xxvi.: "If ye will not hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me, then I will walk contrary unto you also in *fury* , and I will chastise you seven times for your sins. And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons and the flesh of your daughters"; and a great many more fearful and uncanny experiences should be theirs. What reason had the early Christian to offer the Jew that these punishments would not be meted out to him then as well as in times past? None that was of any potency, as the sequel has shown. And no Jew who had caught the spirit of the above imprecations *could* have suggested any. Where, then, does the Christian claim come in? It simply does not come in at all. The conclusion is irresistible that Christianity has no relevance to the religion of Moses. A species of Christianity may have flourished as a green bay tree as an independent religion to Judaism, but it would not have been the Christianity of history that claims to have sprung from Mosaism, because it was already there in embryo. It would not have been the hoary old fraud that butchered the Jews in hundreds of thousands because they would not acknowledge its ridiculous, preposterous, and exploded pretensions.

B. STEVENS.

BOOK CHAT.

THE anonymous author of *The Faith of a Physician* (Watts and Co.) tells how he passed from orthodoxy to "a gospel in which knowledge shall supplant belief, in which reason shall regulate faith." He has a certain belief in the Christianity of Christ, which a deeper study of the subject may convince him is only a fanciful selection from the unhistorical four Gospels. This little volume is written with undoubted sincerity.

Responsible or Irresponsible? by Dr. Henry Smith (Watts and Co.), is the last work of a thoughtful and humane writer. He believes in *punishment* up to a point, as a deterrent against crime, though in our opinion you are bound to have a definite amount of crime, as of vice, in any given state of society, and it is quite arguable that the word "punishment" should be entirely banished from the vocabulary of a rational jurisprudence. Dr. Smith would "discriminate between disease and crime," and be "not too severe towards the defects of human nature." His little book contains some very useful statistics on drink and crime.

The New Trinity, by Auden Amyand (Watts & Co.), is a pretty booklet. Its sub-title is "The Mount called Superstition." The author opens with a reference to the Bible story of "In the beginning," and goes on to tell of a vision in which Love, Conscience, and Reason were revealed to him as the real Trinity. He ends, however, with a declaration of belief in "God the Father," which to many will be quite as much a superstition as God the Son.

Those who are interested in the Anti-Gambling League's crusade will find plenty of readable matter in its monthly organ, the *Bulletin*, published at one penny. The May number contains a list of bankrupts during the past six months who have failed through various forms of gambling. It is sad, but instructive.

The *Open Court* (Chicago) for May has some excellent articles, notably one by the editor, Dr. Paul Carus, on "Belligerency in Christianity," and another by Theodoro Stanton on "Victor Charbonnel," who bears a resemblance to the Abbé Froment of Zola's *Paris*.

Home Links, also described as "The Ideal Magazine," is a curious publication. The editor is A. Gottschling, the publisher Allen, 4 Ave Maria-lane, and the price threepence. The second number is now before us. It deals in brief with all sorts of subjects. The editor has something to say about nearly everything, and he advocates nearly every "heresy," including vegetarianism. He detests Christianity, but is a disciple of Jesus Christ, going the whole hog right up to Communism. His little magazine is a curious mixture of sense and something else which is not exactly nonsense, and there is a certain refreshing naiveté in his imperfect English.

The *Metaphysical Magazine* (New York; London, Gay and Bird) opens its May number with a good article by Dr. Alexander Wilder on "The Fallacy of Vaccination." Most of the other contents are in keeping with the magazine's

title; generally learned, but sometimes rather vague and mystic.

* * *

Mr. Morrison Davidson, an indefatigable writer on behalf of Democracy, has just published through William Reeves (Fleet-street) a new edition of his *Book of Erin*, which extends to nearly three hundred pages, and is very cheap at one-and-six. In one sense it is a history of Ireland from the earliest period; in another sense it is a history of Ireland's terrible misfortunes under English misrule. The book is extremely interesting, and cram-full of information. Mr. Davidson has at least taken the trouble to get at the facts, and at the end he gives a formidable list of authorities. Some will think him partial at times—for instance, in relation to Cromwell; but his leanings are always prompted by a generous love for a downtrodden people, and he gives chapter and verse for his allegations. This book deserves, and we hope it will have, a wide circulation.

THE SOUL'S SPRING CLEANING.

Yes, clean yer house, an' clean yer shed,
An' clean yer barn in ev'ry part;
But brush the cobwebs from yer head,
An' sweep the snowbank from yer heart;
Yes, w'en spring cleanin' comes aroun',
Bring forth the duster an' the broom,
But rake yer foggy notions down,
An' sweep yer dusty soul of gloom.

Sweep ol' ideas out with the dust,
An' dress yer soul in newer style;
Scrape from yer min' its worn-out crust,
An' dump it in the rubbish pile.
Sweep out the hates that burn an' smart,
Bring in new loves serene and pure;
Aroun' the hearthstone of the heart
Place modern styles of furniture.

Clear out yer morril cubby-holes,
Sweep out the dirt, scrape off the scum;
'Tis cleanin' time for healthy souls—
Git up an' dust! The spring hez come!
Clean out the corners of the brain,
Bear down with scrubbin'-brush an' soap,
An' dump ol' Fear into the rain,
An' dust a cosy chair for Hope.

Clean out the brain's deep rubbish hole,
Soak ev'ry cranny, great and small,
An' in the front room of the soul
Hang pootier picturs on the wall;
Scrub up the winders of the mind,
Clean up, an' let the spring begin;
Swing open wide the dusty blind,
An' let the April sunshine in.

Plant flowers in the soul's front yard,
Set out new shade an' blossom trees,
An' let the soul, once froze an' hard,
Sprout crocusses of new ideas.

Yes, clean yer house, an' clean yer shed,
An' clean yer barn in ev'ry part;
But brush the cobwebs from yer head,
An' sweep the snowbanks from yer heart.

—*Boston Investigator.* SAM WALTER FOSS.

THE BROWNE CASE.

THE readers of the *Freethinker* will remember that in August last Mr. J. M. Browne, an artist residing near Southend, in Essex, was arrested and committed for trial on a charge of sending blasphemous and indecent post-cards—such cards, it was reported at the time, containing pornographic passages from the Bible. He was entirely unknown to us up this period, but Mr. Foote desired me to make inquiries into the case and to get a copy of the depositions, and in the meantime a small fund was suggested to aid his wife and children. Browne was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, but a few days after his conviction he was certified to be insane, and removed to the Essex County Asylum. I am bound to say that, had I seen the depositions and a copy of one of the postcards, I should not have interested myself in the case; and I think this opinion is also shared by the President. However, after making the appeal, which realised £10 5s. 6d., I aided Mrs. Browne by giving her small sums amounting to £7 10s., and the travelling and solicitor's expenses amounted to £2 0s. 7½d. Mr. Browne was released from the asylum a few days ago, and I have sent him the balance of 14s. 10½d.

Thus ends, so far as we are concerned, a distressing case, and I beg to thank our friends for readily responding to the appeal, and others who I know have privately aided the family.

R. FORDER, *Hon. Sec. N. S. S.*

A CATHOLIC BREWERY.

A FORMER arch-abbott, successor to Father Boniface, seemed to have been conscience-smitten a few years ago when he quit brewing the blessed stuff for the market, only making enough to satisfy the thirst of the monks and theological students. On this pretext he thought to dodge paying the revenue tax to the Government. Soon, however, the monks were in trouble with the Government, and only escaped criminal prosecution by paying something over \$2,000 in back taxes. The venerable Right Rev. Arch-abbott Leander Schnerr, the present head of the institution, three years ago made two trips to Washington, accompanied by a lawyer, in his efforts to persuade the collector of internal revenue to permit the monks to brew their beer without paying the revenue taxes. The scheme did not work, as the Government is very touchy on the subject of money.

For nearly half a century this brewery has debauched the Catholic life of this diocese and scandalised the Church abroad. In former days services at the church were invariably followed by an adjournment to the brewery, where old Brother Englebert was kept busy raking in the nickels and dimes and pouring out the beer. Catholic picnics were the scenes of drunken fights and disgraceful carousals of all sorts. I have it on the authority of a devout Catholic, who has lived here all his life, that he has witnessed with his own eyes from 100 to 150 people drunk on "holy beer" at one time at these picnics, besides from ten to fifteen fights during the day. While the practice of adjourning from mass to the brewery has somewhat subsided, the practice of drunken carousals at church picnics is in no wise abated.

A few years ago the abbé began the construction of a magnificent \$250,000 cathedral, with an altar 150 feet long, with magnificent granite pillars imported from Scotland, with an auditorium 100 feet to the ceiling, with a magnificent crypt for abbots and priors, who spent their lifetime in saying prayers and drinking beer, and with spires and towers without number. Church picnics are now run for the purpose of making money for the construction fund, and the money is chiefly made from the sale of beer at these events. The more beer drunk, the more money is made for the "glory of God." It is scarcely necessary to add that these church picnics degenerate into drunks of mammoth proportions. The great annual drunk is now held on July 4 at Idlewild, a summer resort near by, owned by Judge Mellon, of Pittsburg. These are monstrous affairs. At last year's carouse 10,000 people were on the grounds, and 1,000 kegs of beer were consumed. This debauch is said to have netted St. Vincent's Church over \$4,000.

But this annual church debauch is not enough for many thirsty brethren hereabouts. A variety of auxiliary affairs on a smaller scale are of common occurrence. Last November a Catholic society took seventy-five kegs of beer out to Daily's grove, about a mile and a half east of here, for a church drunk. They got what they went for. They spent the day in fighting and drinking St. Vincent's beer. One man was frightfully stabbed with a knife, and fourteen of the brethren were arrested.

The saloons at this place growl loudly at this sort of thing, as the church people buy their beer at the brewery, so that all the money will go towards building the cathedral.

—*New York "Voice."*

PROFANE JOKES.

At a festive banquet representatives of the Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish clergy had been invited and were engaged in pleasant converse. The rabbi, faithful to the dietary precepts of his religion, partook of only a few of the dishes. An appetizing dish of roast pork was set on the table. The Catholic priest turned to his neighbor and asked, "When will the time come that I may have the privilege of serving you with a slice of this delicious meat?" "When I have the gratification of assisting at your reverend's wedding," the rabbi rejoined, with a courteous bow.

When you hear a country church choir singing, "There will be no more sorrow there," you conclude at once that either the aforesaid choir will not be there, or they will not be permitted to sing.

Why is a negress like a prophet? The answer is—Because she has very little on her in her own country.

We have heard of a translation of "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak," which rendered it: "The ghost is hungry, but the meat is poor."

"No, I can make you no contributor. I don't believe in sending out foreign missionaries." "But the Scriptures command us to feed the hungry." The man of wealth shrugged his shoulders. "Well, I'd feed them with something cheaper than missionaries," he rejoined, with the brusquerie that characterizes his class.

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.

BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): June 2, at 8.30, Lillian Harman, "The Regeneration of Society."
SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road, S.E.): 7, J. Clarke, M.A., "William Ewart Gladstone."
3, Peckham Bye (near band-stand), H. O. Newland.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH (Victoria Park, near the fountain): 3.15. R. P. Edwards.

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, Stanley Jones. Peckham Rye: 3.15, Stanley Jones; 6.30, E. Pack, "Our Position and Yours."

EAST LONDON BRANCH (Mile End Waste): 11.30 and 7, W. J. Ramsey. June 1, at 8, Mr. Jones.

EDMONTON (corner of Angel-road): 7, Mr. Fagan.

HAMMERSMITH (The Grove, near S. W. Railway-station): 7, Stanley Jones.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30 and 3.30, A lecture.

KILBURN (High-road, corner Victoria-road): 7, A lecture.

KINGSLAND (Kidley-road): 11.30, J. Fagan, "The Apostles' Creed."

LIMEHOUSE (The Triangle, Salmon-lane): 11.30, E. Pack, "Profane Poetry." May 31, at 8, W. J. Ramsey.

WESTMINSTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Grosvenor Embankment): 11.30, R. P. Edwards, "Christian v. Secular Morality."

WOOD GREEN: (Jolly Butchers' Hill): 11.30, E. Calvert, "Is the Bible Contradictory?"

COUNTRY.

CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 7, Sunday-school Anniversary, Cantata, "The White Garland," Part Song, "The Blue Bell Queen," and distribution of prizes.

LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): No lecture.

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Busholme-road, All Saints): N. S. S. Conference.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (lecture-room, corner of Raby and Parker-streets, Byker): 3, Monthly meeting of members; 7, G. Selkirk, "The Absence of Design in Nature."

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, Musical and other Recitals, etc.; also to decide as to excursion.

Lecturers' Engagements.

O COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road. London—May 29, N. S. S. Conference. June 5, Camberwell; 12, m., Mile End; a., Victoria Park; e., Edmonton; 19 and 26, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Oredon-road, London, S.E.—June 5, Mile End; 12, Mile End; 19, m. and a., Hyde Park; e., Hammeis-smith; 26, m. Finsbury; a., Peckham Rye. July 2, m., Mile End; 10, m., Mile End; 17, m. and a., Hyde Park; e., Kilburn; 31, m., Camberwell; a., Peckham Rye; e., Camberwell.

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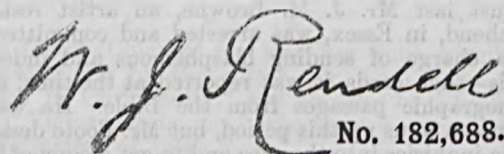
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