

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

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THE ZOLA TRAGI-COMEDY.

THE change of Ministry in France has produced no change in the attitude of the authorities towards Zola and the Dreyfus case. Behind the Government is the Army, and the Army is to-day the master of the Republic. It is the one institution which Frenchmen acclaim. "*Vive l'Armée!*" is the accepted shibboleth of patriotism, while "*Vive la République!*" has become almost a cry of sedition. The chiefs of the Army, who have won no victories, give themselves the sublimest airs. To doubt their perfect honor, absolute judgment, and official infallibility has become a crime against the nation. Nor is this all. A military tyranny has been extended over civilians. Owing to the conscription every Frenchman becomes a soldier, and is therefore made liable to be tried by court-martial for any comments he passes upon the Army. M. Reinach has been dealt with in this way for his authorship of newspaper articles, and such a monstrous perversion of constitutional government is enough to alarm every true friend of France and every sincere lover of political liberty.

It was an open secret that the Civil authorities were willing, and almost anxious, to leave Zola alone. His trial had been conducted in a fashion which astonished the civilised world. Moreover, it had been so badly conceived and initiated by the infallible Army chiefs that the Court of Appeal quashed the sentence by declaring the whole trial to have been irregular. Further, it was clearly established that Dreyfus had also been tried and condemned irregularly. There is no longer any doubt—in fact, it is fairly confessed—that incriminating documents were placed in the hands of his military judges and never shown to him or his counsel. To call this a trial at all is an outrage on justice and common-sense. But the Army chiefs care nothing for justice or common-sense. They care only for their own "honor"—that is to say, their own infallibility. Although they blundered so egregiously over Zola's first trial, they still declare it is an insult to say they can possibly be mistaken. Zola, therefore, is indicted again. He must be crushed at any cost. That impudent mouth of his, which insists on telling the truth, must be stopped, even if French freedom is rolled in the gutter and trampled in the mire.

The scenes of the first trial in Paris were so disgraceful that the second trial was arranged to take place at Versailles. Zola appeared on Monday in the Assize Court. He was represented as before by Maître Labori, who raised several legal objections which were all overruled. He then demanded that the case should be heard in full, and that witnesses' mouths should not be closed. His client was not afraid of the consequences if this were agreed to, and he hoped the Court would not follow the example of the Paris Courts, where every question that might elicit a reply adverse to the general

staff, or to the Army, was ruled out of order. The decision of the Court, however, was that it would only accept discussion on matters concerning a few words from Zola's letters, picked out by the plaintiffs, who are the officers that were at the Esterhazy court-martial. Maître Labori then applied for the right of appeal before a higher court, and, this being granted, he said that he would now accept judgment by default. Thereupon he packed up his papers, walked out of court with Zola and all his friends, and left the officers and the judge to transact the rest of the business as they pleased. It was a splendid stroke, turning the projected tragedy into a howling farce. Decidedly that Maître Labori has a head on his good pair of shoulders.

Zola's attitude is this. "I will accept the challenge of my enemies," he says, "if I am allowed a fair fight, but I will not enter the arena under fettering conditions. Give me a fair trial, and I will defend myself. Deny me this, and I will not defend myself at all. You shall do as you please, and accept the responsibility in face of the world."

Well, in the absence of the defendant and his counsel, the Public Prosecutor entered upon his task. He delivered the long speech he had prepared for the occasion. It was tedious enough, but one of its points was tremendously amusing. Zola was accused of getting up all this excitement to supply himself with materials and characters for his next romance! Even his enemies in court could not help laughing at this brilliant absurdity.

After the Public Prosecutor came the Judge, who sentenced Zola to one year's imprisonment and a fine of three thousand francs, besides the costs of judgment. But the appeal must be heard before this sentence takes effect, and it cannot be heard before October. Meanwhile the "insulter of the Army" is off for a holiday, like a sensible man, and the Paris papers are recording his "flight." Duels are being fought right and left, the atmosphere of Paris is once more electric, and nobody knows how soon a storm may break forth.

Zola is fighting this battle magnificently. It is an inspiration to see one man making such a stand against the madness of a nation. We hope he will never have to go to prison, but if he does he will doubtless bear it with fortitude and dignity. It will not be the first time in history that the criminals have locked up an honest man. For our part, we derive an extra pleasure from the reflection that Zola is a Freethinker. He is mortally hated by the Church as well as by every corrupt circle in France. On the other hand, he is supported by many men of light and leading in France, and indirectly by a host of such men throughout the whole of Europe. It is all very well to talk about Zola's love of notoriety—as though that were an adequate motive for his striking action! Zola was not an obscurity, but a foremost French writer. No, he is not actuated by a love of notoriety, but by a love of justice, fair play, truth, and freedom, upon which France has for the moment (let us hope *only* for the moment) turned her back.

G. W. FOOTE.

MOSES AND THE PROPHETS.

IN our article last week we dealt with the views of the editor of the *New Age* upon the function of imagination as a factor in the development of Christianity. We now propose to notice his claims upon behalf of Moses and the prophets. It is to be regretted that professed Christians, who allege that they have thrown aside the extravagances of orthodoxy, should indulge in such exaggerated demands as the editor does in the following words. He says: "We believe it possible to govern in accordance with the principles laid down by Moses and the prophets, and by Jesus and his Apostles.....All that is great, either in kingship, or leadership, or citizenship, has owed its greatness to its being in harmony with these eternal truths, to which the best expression has been given in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. All true politics, like all true art, must have a spiritual, not a materialistic, basis." Here we have the utterances of the enthusiastic theologian, not the calm statement of the discriminating reasoner. That some of the teachings ascribed to Moses and Christ are commendable, and that at the time in which they were written they were possibly useful, we admit; but to assert that to-day society could be wisely governed by the general principles propounded by either is simply a theological fiction. Our best laws, our most humane customs, and our highest ethical code are based upon principles the very opposite to those found in the Old and New Testaments.

Let us here submit a few questions bearing upon the editor's allegations, to which we respectfully invite his attention. Did not Moses teach absolute trust in the God of the Jews; the duty of punishing, even unto death, those who followed other gods; the most inhuman treatment of women; a horrid, cruel, and demoralising mode of warfare; the practice of revenge, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"; the revolting system of slavery, accompanied with the worst kind of torture and brutal punishment; and, finally, that it was permissible to sacrifice the honor of virgins to the passions of men? Would it be right or possible to govern any civilised country upon such principles as these? Could the "greatness" of the kingship of David, Saul, or Jehu, be emulated to-day even in "Christian England"? Where is the "spiritual basis" in this country of "true politics"? It would be interesting to read the editor's reply to these questions. It is really saddening to see how men of more than ordinary intelligence prostrate their ability in the vain endeavor to harmonise the Bible with modern requirements, which cannot be done, for the teachings of the Old Testament are not "up to date." The book, of course, has its value in its proper place, but that place is not in the governing powers of the nineteenth century.

As to Jesus and his Apostles. Will the editor mention one progressive democratic government whose legislation is regulated by the principles of the New Testament? We know of none, and, in our opinion, not one exists except in the imagination of certain professed Christians. The late Archbishop Magee was quite right when he stated, in his address at the Diocesan Conference at Leicester, in October, 1889, that the State does not, and *could not*, exist on Christian principles. The belief that Jesus ever intended to improve the government of this world by secular means is utterly groundless. His negligence in this particular cannot be explained away by saying that society was not ripe for reform, and that Jesus lacked the power to revolutionise the institutions of his time. There may be some truth in the latter allegation, for the power of Christ for all practical work seems to have been very limited indeed. But he did not attempt any political reform, as other men in all ages have done; he did not make honest endeavors to inaugurate improvements which, under happier circumstances, might have been carried out. There is no evidence that Christ ever concerned himself with such reforms as civil and religious liberty, the freedom of the slaves, the equality of human rights, the emancipation of women, the spread of science and of education, the proper use of the land, and the fostering of the fundamental elements of human progress. So little did Christ understand the philosophy of secular reform that when he condemned covetousness (which was very laudable upon his part) it was because he thought it interfered with the preparation for inhabiting "mansions in the skies," rather than in consequence of its effects upon homes on earth. He entirely overlooked the

agencies that promote human comfort. The means that have been employed to produce and to advance civilisation received from him no matured consideration. If every word attributed to him had been left unuttered, there is no reason to believe that one feature of modern progress would be missing to-day. Let anyone carefully read, with an unbiassed mind, the four Gospels, and then ask himself the questions:—What philosophic truth did Jesus propound? What scientific fact did he explain? What social problem did he solve? What political scheme did he unfold? Until these questions are satisfactorily answered we are compelled to regard the oft-repeated boast about Jesus being a secular reformer as mere "sound and fury, signifying nothing."

We will now deal more fully with the editor's bold statement, that "it is possible to govern in accordance with the principles laid down by Moses." We have already referred to the leading principles which governed the conduct of Moses. They were the very reverse of those which the English race would accept to-day. De Beauvoir Prieulx, in his *Question Mosaïque*, estimates the Jewish leader as a counsellor, leader, and legislator thus: "Invested with this high authority, he announced to the Jews their future religion, and announced it to them as a State religion, and as framed for a particular State, and that State only. He gave this religion, moreover, a creed so narrow and negative—he limited it to objects so purely temporal, he crowded it with observances so entirely ceremonial or national—that we find it difficult to determine whether Moses merely established this religion in order that by a community of worship he might induce in the tribe-divided Israelites that community of sentiment which would constitute them a nation; or whether he only roused them to a sense of their national dignity, in the hope that they might then more faithfully perform the duties of priests and servants of Jehovah. In other words, we hesitate to decide whether in the mind of Moses the State was subservient to the purposes of religion, or religion to the purposes of State" (p. 420).

The character of Moses appears to us to have been cruel, crafty, and sanctimonious. He commenced his career by committing a cowardly murder, and his life was characterised by deceit and stained by the wholesale shedding of human blood. Let any one read Exodus xxxii. and Numbers xvi., and he will find upon the authority of "God's word" that Moses was guilty of the most despicable and heartless crimes of which it is possible to conceive. Here we have recorded against God's Prime Minister instances of hypocrisy, anger, and of an utter disregard for human life, which brand him as remorseless and brutal. No man actuated by principles worthy of emulation could possibly have acted as he did. We are told that he was "meek above all men," but where his meekness came in can only be visible to Christian imagination. Surely it was not in his conduct as narrated in Numbers xxxi., where we are told how the conquered Midianites were treated. The children of Israel "slew every male," burnt the towns and camps, and "took captive the women of Midian and their little ones," and took for a prey all their cattle and all their flocks. When Moses learned this, he "was wroth with the officers" for sparing the women, and said unto them, "Have you saved all the women alive?" He then commanded in the name of the Lord: "Now, therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman" who has known man; but all the girls and marriageable young women "keep alive for yourselves." It is said "there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses." Let us hope for the sake of humanity that this is true.

But it is contended that the Ten Commandments contain the highest moral code that the human race possesses. This is not true, and, if it were, they did not originate with Moses or any other Bible writer. There is no doubt that they were copies of those related of Bacchus and Zoroaster. Max Müller says "what applies to the religion of Moses applies to that of Zoroaster." From a practical standpoint the Ten Commandments of Buddha are much superior to those of the Bible. There are two versions of the Decalogue given in the Old Testament, varying in certain not unimportant particulars. It is divided into two parts—that which relates to man's duty to God, and that which relates to the mutual duties of man to man. The defects of the Decalogue are threefold. First, much more is said about our behavior to the Jewish God than with reference

to our conduct to our fellow man; secondly, there is too much negation, saying, "Thou shalt not," instead of informing us what to do, and how to do it; and, thirdly, the best reasons for acting rightly are not given. For instance, the advice that we should not "bow down to graven images" is very good in its way. But *why* are we not to do so? Because "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." This is a sordid appeal to fear. Fancy an Almighty God being jealous of the estranged affection of an unfortunate Jew. Then take the command, "Honor your parents." This is excellent advice, but why are we to do so? "That thy days shall be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." This reason is both selfish and unreliable. The best of sons have frequently died in the morning of life, while some of the worst have had a prolonged existence, causing grief to their parents and disgrace to themselves. The one further objection to the Ten Commandments is that throughout there is an absence of any noble, inspiring principle of conduct. They teach no real love, nor supply any solid and dignified incentive to a virtuous life; they supply a penal code, not a practical rule of conduct.

CHARLES WATTS.

RELIGION AND MAN.

MAN, we are often told, is a religious animal, and so long as the meaning of the phrase is carefully indicated its general accuracy need not be questioned. It is certain that mankind in the mass has been, and still is, preponderantly religious; and even in the case of the lower races, where no clearly defined dogmas or ritual exist, there is yet present a vague, indefinite fear of supernatural agencies. From crude material the higher religions are afterwards elaborated.

If, then, by the above statement it is meant that religious beliefs are pregnant and potent facts in human history, and that even to-day the majority of people *instinctively* lean towards a religious view of the world, I do not know that it can be successfully challenged. But if more than that is implied, if it is meant that man is essentially religious in the sense that religion is an inexpugnable part of his nature, or that it is necessary to his complete development as a man, then there are few statements that could be more safely challenged or more decisively disproved.

Such a position might have been taken up with some confidence at a time when heresy and immorality, and unbelief and imbecility, were, to the general mind, interchangeable terms. But nowadays, when thousands of men and women, whose characters are beyond reproach, and whose intellectual abilities admit of no question, are realising, as Justice Stephen put it, that life may be made very pleasant and enjoyable without any religion at all, such an opinion smacks far more of the religious advocate aiming to establish his case at any cost rather than that of the impartial searcher after truth.

Moreover, wherever there has existed a wide diffusion of knowledge, religion has always represented a vanishing force in the tide of human affairs. This is so apparent that even the clergy are compelled to acknowledge as much; only they describe it as purifying religion of the grosser elements by which it has been contaminated; although a process of purification that ousts religion from one department after another, and finally leaves it nothing that is known or knowable to rule over, comes dangerously near a process of destruction.

For the impartial student the broad fact remains that on the whole the influence of religion has declined in exact proportion to the development of man's knowledge of the universe.

The whole frame of mind upon which religion lives is rapidly becoming a thing of the past. It is no longer possible to speak of the world as God's world, or to see his guiding hand in its processes, as was possible even in the days of our grandparents. The intellectual atmosphere has undergone such a change that the grotesque nature of what were once called fundamental religious ideas is clear even to the professed believer. The conception of mechanical forces operating over incalculable periods of time has superseded that of an anthropomorphic deity creating and sustaining the world for the benefit of his worshippers. Evolution has ousted creation from the field;

natural law has annihilated miracles; revelation and prophecy, the entire paraphernalia of old-time religion, is rapidly disappearing; while not one religionist in a thousand dreams of making the scriptures he professes to believe in, or the church he subscribes to, his authority for dealing with the problems of every-day existence.

That primitive man should have been superstitious was both natural and inevitable. His religious beliefs were born to him as the result of an attempt to deal with the phenomena of nature around him and within him, unaided by such information as could alone bring the task to a successful issue. Unacquainted with that conception of mechanical causation which, wherever it has penetrated, has had the effect of diminishing the intensity of religious feeling, the whole universe was interpreted in terms of self. Personal intelligences, in the main hostile to man, were pictured everywhere as directing natural operations, and it was to appease those mythical existences that religious practices came slowly into existence.

Primitive man was thus necessarily superstitious. His religion represented the only explanation of the world possible at the time, and expressed in terms of the only forces then known those connected with self. In brief, to paraphrase Bacon's famous dictum concerning Atheism, a little reasoning brought the gods into the world, but a little further reasoning carries them out again.

Nor is the leaning towards religion, manifested by people at the present time, at all surprising when one bears in mind the course of human development. We are the heirs of the ages, and inherit its infirmities along with its virtues. For countless generations the belief in the supernatural has been so impressed upon human nature, the religiously-inclined have been so carefully fostered, the non-religious temperament has been so pitilessly weeded out, as to render it a matter of extreme difficulty to eradicate a frame of mind that has been so sedulously cultivated, and at such a tremendous cost to the race.

It may be admitted, then, that mankind is in the main instinctively religious, because all our instincts are matters of education, of training, and heredity. Human instincts are far more indications of historic processes than unimpeachable witnesses of their own truthfulness and worth; and, therefore, to endorse without qualification every instinct that man possesses is to repeat the errors and crudities of our ancestors, and thus lose the lesson we might learn from their experience. Indeed, the process of civilisation consists very largely in a transformation of instincts; and there are certainly good grounds for assuming that the religious feelings of the past, and still more of the present, represent a huge fund of wasted mental and moral energy that sadly needs diverting into more serviceable channels.

It is probably this aspect of religion that is most depressing to the social reformer. When one reflects upon the time and energy at present spent upon religion, the army of parsons and parasites maintained by religious organisations, and whose maintenance represents such an enormous drain upon the resources of a country—upon the millions of pounds annually spent on religious observances that might as profitably be addressed to the rushing wind or vanishing cloud, and then add to all these the permanent evil inflicted upon the race by the cultivation of a frame of mind that is in itself a far greater obstacle to progress than any specific action that religion is responsible for, one feels that, beside any good religion might have achieved, there stands a vast monument of recorded wrong that can never be wiped out or atoned for.

The plain fact of the matter is, that religion has all along been in the position of a bogus company floated on a fictitious capital. It maintains its hold over many worthy people for the reason that, even after the ignorance that gave it birth was dispelled, it still continued associated with, and controlling, a number of forces that were in no sense religious. The moral maxims and feelings that were born of the common exigencies of life, and the social teachings born of the gregarious instincts of the race, have always been more or less mixed up with religion, and the latter has been the great gainer by the connection. The mere habit of association counts for a great deal. As Mill puts it: "Since almost all who are taught any morality whatever have it taught them as religion, and inculcated on them through life principally in that character, the effect which the teaching produces as teaching it is supposed to produce as religious teaching, and religion receives the

credit of all the influence in human affairs which belongs to any generally accepted system of rules for the guidance and government of human life."

I remember reading somewhere a story of a wonderful white stone that, placed in hot water, made excellent soup—with the addition of a little beef, pepper, salt, and vegetables. It is somewhat the same with religion. It does excellently well—with the addition of a little common sense, humanitarian feeling, education, and all the various factors of a progressive civilisation. Only one is impelled to question whether the civilising tendencies that so many attribute to religion may not, after all, be really connected with the non-religious secular forces with which it has been connected. Has not religion been to civilisation what the stone was to the soup? Or worse still; the stone at least left the other ingredients pure, while religion has rather represented a dissolving mass that has frequently contaminated all around it.

The whole course of human history gives support to this view of the matter. There is not a single force that man has subdued to his service that was not at one time as intimately connected with religion as the conduct of life is believed to be now. The stars once sang aloud the glories of God; they now bear inevitable testimony to the law of gravitation and the greatness of Galileo and Newton. Electricity was once the messenger of the deity; it has now doffed his livery, and works humbly in the service of man. The organic world was once the great storehouse of facts from which the theologian drew indubitable proof of the creator's wisdom; it now furnishes far stronger evidence of the mechanical principle of evolution and the insensibility of natural processes to human needs and desires. Human nature is the last refuge left; and religion is here simply because the forces in operation are of a more subtle and complex character. The strongest defence of religion has always been the ignorance of its votaries. But as this ignorance is gradually dissipated, and as people learn to dissociate from it all rests for its recommendation upon purely human grounds, religion stands stripped of all its borrowed plumes, self-condemned as a form of thought that was born of the combined ignorance, fear, and wonder of primitive man, that has been perpetuated largely by the operation of class interests, and has owed all it ever had to recommend it to the human nature it has done so much to retard in its development towards a higher condition of existence.

C. COHEN.

SAMARITANS AND PENTATEUCHS.

READERS of Mr. Gladstone's *Impregnable Rock* will be aware of the exceedingly flimsy grounds on which he endeavors to establish the indefinitely pre-exilic antiquity of the Samaritan Pentateuch. They will also recall his cavalier treatment of those critical experts who were unwilling to allow to this version a greater antiquity than the time of Sanballat—about 400 B.C. He doesn't even deign to notice the arguments adduced by them in support of their contention. Of course, it may have been that Mr. Gladstone was not sufficiently familiar with these arguments to appreciate their significance, but in any case, seeing that they had been accepted as final by so many of the ripest critics, he ought, in justice to them and also to his readers, to have dealt with them on their merits. It is surely a very uncritical proceeding to ignore all the special facts bearing on a problem, and to attempt to solve it on *à priori* considerations alone, and without any guarantee, too, that these considerations are not the outcome of a false historical perspective. "How is it possible," said Mr. Gladstone, "that the Samaritan Pentateuch should have held the supreme place in the regard of the Samaritans if about or near the year 500 B.C. or still later, if at the time of Manasseh the seceder it had, as a matter of fact, been a recent compilation of their enemies, the Jews?" But here Mr. Gladstone's historical vision is blurred. Undoubtedly, at the time of Manasseh the seceder, there was sufficient regard for the Pentateuch at any rate to induce them to make some sort of a systematic effort to obey its injunctions. But, using Mr. Gladstone's words against himself, how is it possible to conceive that the Pentateuch should have had the supreme place in the regard of the Samaritans if, during the whole of the period following the division of

the kingdom, they made absolutely no attempt to shape their conduct in accordance therewith? Nay more, are we not entitled to look for some evidence of a zealous discharge of Pentateuchal obligations among the northern tribes, between the time of the establishment of the kingdom and its rending asunder through the diplomatic incompetence of Rehoboam? Did it not occur to Mr. Gladstone to ask why this sudden display of anxiety to obey the Pentateuchal law at the time of Sanballat, when the whole history of the Samaritans anterior thereto was a record of complete neglect and violation of its commands? According to the Pentateuch, Yahveh was to be worshipped at one only sanctuary; their own practice was to worship him on as many high places as they could erect altars upon. This ought to have put Mr. Gladstone on the track. On the track, yes, of the solution of the problem; but its acceptance would have left a gaping breach in his general argument for the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Indeed, it is difficult to see how this "supreme regard" for the Pentateuch could have arisen on the assumption that the Israelitish inhabitants of Samaria had been expatriated by Shalmaneser, who supplied their places with "men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and Ava, and Hamath," etc. It was not possible for these non-Israelitish people to have any reverence for the Pentateuch, for they were admittedly so ignorant of how Jehovah should be worshipped that the King of Assyria, at their own request, had to send them a priest of Israel to teach them the "manner of the God of the land." Mr. Gladstone's "supreme regard," then, could not possibly have existed at the time. But did their subsequent proceedings interest them any more in the consistent carrying out of the requirements of this reverentially, regarded Pentateuch! It may be calculated on the basis of a very shrewd guess that between the time when they were absolutely ignorant of how to worship Yahveh, and the compilation of the Book of Kings some two or three hundred years later, they had no more reverence for the Torah than they would have had if they had never been transported from their native homes in Babylonia. And the evidence of this is supplied by certain verses in the latter part of chap. xvii. of the second book of Kings. "Unto this day they do after their former manners; they fear not the Lord, they serve their own gods and graven images, they are altogether a bad lot." "If these books," says Mr. Gladstone, "grew up by gradual accretion, still that must have been an accretion gathering round a single channel. A double process could not have been carried on in harmony." This in reference to an independent origin for the Samaritan Pentateuch, for the assumption of which there is not the slightest reason. This argument is a complete begging of the question. Mr. Gladstone should have proved that there was even a *single accretion* in the shape of a Pentateuch in the southern kingdom at the time he is contemplating—the separation of the ten tribes from the two—before deciding on the likelihood or otherwise of a "second accretion" on the same lines in Samaria. Mr. Gladstone is simply fixing up a man of straw which collapses with the first breath of criticism. *There was no Pentateuch in existence at the time of Rehoboam.* Or, if Mr. Gladstone was satisfied that there was, he had no right, in the face of the strong contrary opinion, to assume that the fact was established beyond all dispute, and from such unwarranted assumption to derive the premises for a conclusion in reference to another matter equally the subject of disputation.

It is surprising that Mr. Gladstone should have allowed himself to perpetrate such a logical fallacy. Now this we do know, that a "double process" did proceed collaterally in the two kingdoms in relation to their *worship*. They both harmoniously worshipped on the "high places," and in other respects transgressed the explicitly given directions of the Torah of Moses. This is the way they showed (priests, prophets, and people) their "supreme regard and reverence" for their divinely-given Pentateuch. Judging from their practice, the rational supposition would be, not "that they had possessed at the time of Rehoboam a code corresponding in substance" with the Pentateuch, but rather that they had not the slightest idea that there was any such code in existence which rendered it obligatory upon them to worship at one shrine exclusively, and that at Jerusalem. It is usual to say that Shalmaneser did not take all the Israelites of Samaria captive; there were little batches of them who did not come out until after dark, when they knew that Shalma-

neser's warriors would be afraid to tackle them. This would have been mean of them. But this supposition seems to conflict both with the letter and the spirit of the statements in Kings, that the Lord delivered them *all* into the hands of the Assyrians, and that the imported Assyrians had to request the King of Assyria to send a priest to instruct them how to worship Yahveh; which they would not have required to do had there been any considerable number of Israelites left—sufficient, that is to say, to have, by assimilation, given birth to a fresh Semitic type. But it is legitimate to ask why should the Samaritans have concerned themselves at all with the Pentateuch if it had originated quite recently with their "enemies the Jews"? The answer is partly that Samaritanism, in the shape of racial antipathy and religious antagonism, had no existence until a combination of special circumstances called it forth some time subsequent to the exile. What, then, were these special circumstances that gave birth both to Samaritanism and the Samaritan Pentateuch? They were these. In the year 538 B.C. some 200,000 Jews returned to Jerusalem from Babylon and commenced to rebuild the Temple. The inhabitants of Samaria, being, as they said, under the protection of the national god, desired to take part in the work. But of this proffered assistance the Jews disdainfully refused to avail themselves. They were then, of course, as they have been since, passionately in love with manual labor, and they wanted to be able to say, as they mopped the sweat from their manly brows: "We did every little bit of that ourselves." Of course, it was very reprehensible on the part of the Samaritans to want to use up some of their own perspiration on the job, but from the point of view of the lotus-eater it is impossible to withhold some meed of admiration for their love of work for its own sweet sake. But could they not have managed to bustle about in some way just as the building was nearing completion, and then have bamboozled the Jews into the belief that they had done the lion's share of the work? But, assuming that there was a real desire to be of service in this offer, what contemptibly silly and childish people the Jews must have been to have declined it on the ground that the Samaritans had not sufficient of elect blood in their veins to be the objects of God's favoritism like themselves. However, be that as it may, it was owing to this episode that "that long feud began between Judea and Samaria, which was only ended by the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans" (Professor Sayce's Introduction to the Books of Nehemiah, Ezra, and Esther). But we have still to account for the establishment of a rival worship and the production of a Pentateuch in the Samaritan letters. Nothing is easier. *A woman was at the bottom of the whole mischief.* Though the returned Jews turned up their capacious noses at the idea of being assisted by the Samaritans in the building of the Temple, they showed a surprising complaisance in accepting the good offices of the foreign women in the matter of begetting children. "Priests, Levites, and laity all took unto themselves foreign wives." One of the chief offenders was Manasseh, grandson of the high priest Eliashib, who laid successful siege to the fluttering heart of the daughter of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria. There is no doubt the old man was himself a party to the deed. But this was a flabbergaster to poor old egregious Nehemiah. Choking with rage, he commanded the young man to "put her away" on pain of excommunication and expulsion. But Manasseh failed to see the fun of this. He really loved the girl, and gave Nehemiah to understand that he would see him in Sheol before he forsook the mother of his children. For these personalities, as well as for being wicked in the main respect, Nehemiah "chased him from his presence." At least, Nehemiah says he did. However, Manasseh was driven from the priesthood and from Jerusalem; but, taking refuge in Samaria, he presented himself to his father-in-law, Sanballat, who smoothed his ruffled feathers and promised to obtain leave from Darius, the Persian King, to build for him a nice new temple on Mount Gerizzim, like that at Jerusalem, and to make him the chief priest there. Darius complied with the request, and the temple was built on Mount Gerizzim, overlooking the city of Shechem. But a temple similar to that on Mount Moriah would have been useless without a ritual service also like that at Jerusalem. This service was a very complicated affair, but it was all codified in the Pentateuch, which was the basis of the Jerusalem worship. All that was necessary, therefore, was to make a transcript of this Pentateuch in the

Samaritan character, and the foundation of a rival worship was laid. There would have been no difficulty in the mechanical part of this transcript, for Manasseh would have had the assistance of his father-in-law, and as many of the Samaritans as the latter chose to employ for the purpose. But there is still another link wanting if every difficulty is to be removed. We have got our temple and our Samaritan Pentateuch, but we are not so sure of our worshippers to fill the temple and to obey the behests of the priestly interpreters of the book. That link is supplied by Josephus, who tells us that Manasseh was accompanied to Samaria by other priests and Levites who had married into Gentile families, and Nehemiah himself speaks in the plural of the priests and Levites who had "defiled the priesthood by marrying foreign wives." "Samaria was the natural place of refuge for fugitives from Judea," says Professor Sayce in the work quoted above, so that there is not a single factor necessary to the solution of the problem on post-exilic lines missing. The Samaritan desire to do homage to Yahveh finding vent in the building of a temple at Shechem, the necessity of a ritual service thereat, supplied by the Jerusalem Pentateuch, the existence of a field for the operations of the Samaritan priesthood when once established, all combine to form a chain of evidence, complete in every link, to demonstrate that the Samaritan version of the Pentateuch did not see the light of day until (at most) 400 B.C.

We may safely say that had not Manasseh married the daughter of Sanballat, the Samaritan Governor, there would have been no temple on Mount Gerizzim, and no Samaritan Pentateuch. There is another aspect of this question which hardly concerns, in the light of the above data, the antiquity of this version. If Deuteronomy xxvii. 4 and Joshua viii. 30 be accurately given in the Hebrew Bible, then it undoubtedly follows that the Samaritans were violating the command of Moses in building a temple on Mount Gerizzim. On the other hand, the same stigma would attach to the Jerusalem priesthood if the Samaritan reading were correct. The book of Deuteronomy states that there was only one place for the legitimate worship of Yahveh, which place we must regard as Jerusalem. But the Samaritans, while agreeing that there was only one shrine, contended that its proper location was not Jerusalem, but at Shechem, in Samaria. This claim is, of course, as Robertson Smith shows, "glaringly unhistorical." That the Samaritans perceived the difficulty of reconciling such a claim with the practice of the Israelites down to the captivity is shown by their ignoring even those prophetic writings which originated in their own part of Palestine. But, basing their claim on the Pentateuch alone, and ignoring the subsequent practice, there seems to be some show of reason for it. Indeed, they may be said to have decidedly the best of the argument. When the Samaritan temple was built, the Jews accused the Samaritans of disobeying the law of Moses as given in Deuteronomy xxvii. 4, and in Joshua viii. 30, to the effect that it was Mount Ebal, and not Mount Gerizzim, which was to be the site of Joshua's altar. But the Samaritans quoted these identical verses as proof that the altar was to be built on Mount Gerizzim! In his *History of the Hebrew Nation and Literature* (pp. 202-4) Samuel Sharpe says that one or the other of the two nations must have falsified their Bible, and that the Jews themselves seem to be convicted out of their own Bible of having altered the disputed passages. Deuteronomy xi. 29, xxvii. 12, in the Hebrew copies, as in the Samaritan, both place the blessings of the law on Mount Gerizzim and the curses on Mount Ebal, "which passages seem to support the Samaritans, and to prove that the Jews had altered their Hebrew Bible on purpose to throw blame on the Samaritans." It is hardly likely that the cursings would have been uttered on the very spot where stood the altar of Yahveh. Yet, on which ever mount the altar was erected, the historical books show that it was not the spot which was intended to be the permanent site of the worship. But the Samaritans never troubled to transcribe any other books of the Old Testament than the Pentateuch, which was all that was necessary for their immediate purposes. You see they were quite willing to assist in building the temple at Jerusalem, although they subsequently asserted that Mount Moriah was the wrong spot; which all goes to show that the Samaritans, like the Jews, had elastic consciences, and were not a bit better than the rest of us—I mean than they should have been. Had they been allowed to assist in the

temple operations at Jerusalem, we should have heard nothing of the right spot for it being on Mount Gerizzim, which again shows how "supremely they venerated the Torah of Moses." However, there was falsification on one side or the other; but when we know that the whole Pentateuch was a forgery, it need not surprise us that, when the occasion arose, Pelion was piled upon Ossa.

Enough has been said to show that Mr. Gladstone's over-confidence in the antiquity of the Samaritan Pentateuch was the result of an understudy of the data on the subject. In his notions of Samaritan reverence for the Pentateuch he is diffusing the Gladstonian consciousness over a period of five hundred years, during which the habitual practice was of such a character that, if Ezekiel is to be believed, a worse fate ought to have overtaken the Israelites of both divisions of the kingdom than that which befel the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Mr. Gladstone is projecting his own subjectivity into a time when Gladstonism would have been as much out of place as mothers' milk in a vivisectionist's laboratory.

B. STEVENS.

DEATH OF MRS. LYNN LINTON.

MRS. LYNN LINTON, who died last week in London, was a fluent and occasionally powerful writer. She was born at Keswick on February 10, 1822. Her father was vicar of Crosthwaite, her mother was the daughter of Bishop Goodenough of Carlisle. In those days the clergy were not remarkably religious. "My father's fellow-parsons," she once wrote, "were a very queer lot. Some drank and fought in public-houses, others were little better than honest day laborers, and it was not uncommon to hear the officiating clergyman exclaim, when his Sunday's ministrations were over, 'Gosh! that job's jobbed!'" Mrs. Linton's education and experience did not incline her to orthodoxy. She thought for herself and became very advanced. In 1872 she made her name by the publication of *The True History of Joshua Davidson*, in which she traced the supposed career of an English workman, who lived on the principles and in the spirit of the founder of Christianity, and of course came to grief. *Under Which Lord?* was a more important novel. It depicted the relations of a Christian wife and an Agnostic husband, between whom came a High Church clergyman, setting them at variance and estrangement. Mrs. Linton was old-fashioned enough to dislike the "new woman" movement. She wasted much eloquence on "the shrieking sisterhood." But she was in favor of the best education of her sex; and perhaps, after all, if we see to the education, good old mother nature will see to all the rest. Mrs. Linton was a Freethinker when Freethought was more *tabu* amongst women than it is even now, and she merited esteem for the courage with which she avowed and maintained her opinions.

ACID DROPS.

ONE of the highest of High Churchmen is the Rev. the Hon. James Granville Adderley, who officiates (some people would say *performs*) at Berkeley Chapel. This gentleman dresses in semi-monkish costume, and holds forth on Sunday afternoons in Hyde Park. What he says is of no particular importance, but he hopes to "catch on" by the histrionic adjuncts. Last Sunday morning he preached at his chapel, having announced that he would "answer the difficulties and doubts of the upper classes." In the course of his sermon, according to the *Daily News* report, he referred to the "two great doctrines" of Apostolical Succession and the Sacraments, and declared that "When men realised that they were realities and not shams they felt that clergymen were not ordinary human beings or moral police, but were armed with power and authority by God himself." Well, we quite agree with one part of this. The clergy are *not* ordinary men; to say that they are is to libel the average citizen. As for the rest of "Father" Adderley's declaration, we have to say that it is doubtless very flattering to his pride and vanity. But what he has to do to make it good is to produce his certificate from headquarters. Short of that, let him work a miracle, which Jesus Christ said should be easy to his apostles.

"Father" Adderley did some rare hocus-pocus at the altar. He elevated the wafer and chalice—the body and blood of Christ—high above his head, and prostrated himself

so that his lips nearly touched the "holy table." Then he awaited communicants, but not a single one came. Nobody appeared to believe in the preacher's "power and authority" from God. It was a Sunday morning entertainment—nothing more.

Madrid had a fine holiday while Santiago was falling. Bull fights and religious processions were the order of the day. St. Iago was a bit under a cloud for the way in which he served Cervera, but plenty of other saints were available. Relics and images were carried through the city, attended by pilgrims dressed in the fashion of the middle ages. When an image passed all the people fell upon their knees. Such are the people who expected to take the cheek out of the Yankees.

Admiral Dewey annihilated the Spanish fleet at Manila on a Sunday; whereupon, it is said, the Presbyterians begged President McKinley to give orders that the United States' admirals and generals should not fight any more battles on the Lord's Day. Curiously, however, it was also on a Sunday that the second Spanish fleet was annihilated off the coast of Cuba. More curiously still, it was on a Sunday that the American flag was hoisted at Santiago.

War, war, glorious war! Reuter's correspondent at Santiago telegraphed that the city presented a dismal sight. Most of the houses had been sacked, nothing eatable could be had for love or money, Spanish soldiers looked like living skeletons, and the docks were crowded with starving refugees. Twenty thousand refugees were quartered at El Cavey, five thousand at Firniega, and five thousand at Cuabita Selboniate. No less than five hundred persons were crowded in one small building that looked like a pig-stye, and gave out a horrible stench. The poor wretches—men, women, and children—had been using the river water, on which all manner of filth floated. War, war, glorious war!

We don't rejoice at hearing anything to the discredit of other countries; at the same time, we like to hear things to the credit of our own. According to Mr. R. H. Davis, the *New York Herald* war correspondent, there is only one foreign Military Attaché who has been right to the front with the Americans at Santiago. The French Attaché never got within seven miles of the front, and the others were at General Shafter's headquarters three miles in the rear. Captain Arthur Lee, the Britisher, advanced with the firing line. He went up the hill with the 12th when they charged at El Caney, and, while maintaining his position as a non-combatant, rendered timely aid to the wounded under an incessant fire.

The men of the Worcestershire Regiment, stationed at Mountain Ash, in South Wales, are actually playing football and quoits on Sunday. Moreover, they seem to enjoy it—which is worse. So a number of residents have complained to the Urban District Council, which has ordered its clerk to write to the commanding officer protesting against "this conduct." We hope the officer will light his cigar with it.

The Russian Government is exporting the "Spirit Wrestlers," many of whom are coming to England, and will form a colony in Essex. Our own "Peculiar People" are not far off. Devastated Essex bids fair to become the home of "fancy religions."

It is pleasant now and then to come across a clergyman with a little common sense. Dean Hole, of Rochester, for instance, is opposed to Sunday Closing, which so many of his clerical brethren look upon as a sort of eleventh commandment. He is not even in favor of teetotalism. "I believe," he said to a *Church Gazette* interviewer, "that total abstinence is a fine thing for a drunkard, but I don't believe in it for anyone else. I hold with temperance, which means self-control. Teetotalism is a now-fangled doctrine. Every creature of God is good for use; I can't help it if people abuse some of them." The truth is, as Mr. Foote proves in his *Bible and Beer* pamphlet, that Christian teetotalism is utter humbug. Jesus Christ was no teetotaller himself, and it is a bit of impudence for a Christian to set up as better than his Savior.

There is a man in Glasgow who is so fond of the Bible that he is writing it all out, giving an artistic initial letter to each chapter, and a pictorial heading illustrative of the context. By using the leisure of four years—the man is a compositor—he has reached the middle of the Psalms. It is reported that he is a native of Dumfries. We suppose the nearest museum is at Glasgow. Probably they will find a place for him there when he joins the majority.

Be ye fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. That is what God says. But the Convocation of Canterbury is of a different opinion. It has just condemned clergymen

who rush into marriage "without an adequate income." Trust in God must be tempered with worldly prudence.

Muscular Christianity is coming to the front again. It appears that a Kensit meeting was held at Islington the other evening, and when it was over about two hundred persons created great disorder in Almeida-street. When Police-constable Dormer, 159N, appeared upon the scene he found many of them fighting. A regular pitched battle was going on between John Driscoll and Frank Wydell, and as they would not desist he was obliged to run them in. Both were bound over to keep the peace for three months. During that time it will be dangerous for them to attend another Kensit meeting.

More muscular Christianity! At a meeting of the English Church Union at Frampton Cotterell, Gloucestershire, a strong resolution was passed against "the cowardly untruths recently propagated in the House of Commons against the clergy by Sir William V. Harcourt," and the Rev. T. W. Belcher, D.D., said that if Sir William Harcourt would come into that room and repeat those slanders, he would knock him down. This Church militant remark was greeted with loud cheers. Everybody was ready to deliver a dig into the paunch of the fat Knight of Malwood.

Now what did Jesus Christ say? Turn to the eleventh verse of the fifth chapter of Matthew and read: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." That is what Jesus Christ said. Parson Belcher, however, is above all that nonsense. He believes in knocking his enemy down. But of course he is a very good Christian all the same. Christianity never did mean following Jesus Christ. Only lunatics and paupers do that.

Mr. George Wise, the Christian Evidence and Protestant lecturer at Liverpool, seems bent on getting his share of the notoriety gained by Mr. Kensit. On Sunday last he went to St. Thomas's Church, Liverpool, and towards the close of the service he jumped upon a chair and shouted: "Now that this service is over I will read this protest —" Then his voice was drowned in the general uproar. Chairs were thrown down, Prayer-books were littered about, women screamed, and the male portion of the worshippers gathered about their minister in readiness to fight Mr. George Wise and his Orange lambs. Happily the police arrived on the scene before there was any bloodshed, even from damaged noses. The mob of intruders retired, and the ladies who had fainted in the confusion were able to recover. Mr. George Wise's lambs sang "Onward Christian soldiers"—onward, that is, against their fellow Christians. But then it was always a happy family.

What puzzles us is this. What business had Mr. George Wise in that church? Is he a member of it? Is he even a member of the Church of England at all? We should like a little light thrown on the problem.

"Peculiar People" are prosecuted and found guilty of manslaughter in London, but the "Christian Scientists" are going to build a church in New York. Three persons, whose names will not be divulged, have subscribed a large sum of money for its erection, one of them as much as fifty thousand dollars. This gentleman is said to have been "healed in an almost miraculous manner." "Almost" is distinctly good.

The boys at one of our public schools, it is said, once got the great cricket champion, Dr. Grace, out for a very small score. The hymn for the evening chapel contained the well-known line, "The scanty triumphs Grace has won," and when the boys came to that line they nearly raised the roof off.

Hugh Price Hughes's latest yarn is as follows: A man came to the evening service at St. James's Hall and stayed to the prayer meeting. The "Power of God" took hold of him, and to escape it he rushed out of the hall, went to Euston, and took a ticket for Liverpool. That was not far enough out of the way of this mysterious Power, so he shipped to America. The "Power" followed him to America, and made him so uncomfortable there that he was compelled to come all the way back to St. James's Hall, London, and get "converted," which he did, afterwards telling this story as a tribute to the "wonderful power of God."

Why the "Power" could not convert him on the first occasion, and save him the expense of a journey to America, was not stated by Mr. Hughes, who told this story in a Wesleyan church not twenty miles from London.

The Lambeth Board of Guardians has been discussing the church-going of the inmates of Renfrew-road Workhouse. Mr. Hopkins reported that he had "spent an hour and a quarter's misery" in the Workhouse chapel on the previous

Sunday morning. Mr. Cochran thought the chapel should be shut up during the chaplain's holidays, at any rate; that would be a great relief to some of the people. Miss Grey piously exclaimed, "That would be a shame"; but Mrs. Despard said she did not see why poor people should be kept in compulsory misery. Mr. Briant declared that when he visited the chapel some of the paupers looked happy, but he added that "they were asleep." Finally the matter dropped, with the understanding, we presume, that the workhouse people may "sleep" if they please—at least, during the sermon.

A man, presumably Scotch, called at a North London shop last week and asked the assistant if he would buy a Bible. "How much?" asked the young man. "Eighteen-pence," said the Scripture hawker. "Why, I can buy them four a penny in the Cattle Market," rejoined the shopman. "Then, damn you, go and buy them," exclaimed the pedlar, walking out.

Belfast celebrated the Battle of the Boyne as usual. Of course there were conflicts between the people and the police, and the military had to take part in preserving order. There is nothing like religion for promoting peace and brotherhood.

Donegal was practically in a state of siege all day. The police formed cordons in the streets, and dragoons were drawn up in the square. Nationalists, armed with sticks, poured into the town to defy the hated Orangemen. A good many people were injured, but that is expected on such an occasion.

By the way, the Orangemen at the Donegal meeting denied responsibility for the placard to which we drew attention. We print their denial as an act of justice. But who posted the placards?

Samuel Frederick Hence is landlord of the "Bricklayer's Arms," Parker's-row, Bermondsey. He is also a churchwarden of the local Christ Church. One day he met a cat, and thereby hangs a tale. The cat was a stray one; it had the impudence to enter his premises, and he called his fox terrier to worry it. The cat ran into his private apartment, where he struck it with a form and held it down while his dog killed it. This pretty bit of sport was witnessed by two policemen, and the sportsman got sentenced to a month's hard labor. Against this, however, he appealed, with the result that he pays a fine of £5, gives £20 to the S. P. C. A., and settles the bill of costs amounting to over £60. Worrying cats is an expensive luxury even to a landlord and a churchwarden.

Mrs. Chant and Mr. Stead were in evidence together at the annual meeting of the National Vigilance Association. The chair was occupied by Mr. J. C. Rickett, M.P., who said that "the question for them to consider was whether to adopt the gospel of naturalism in preference to the religious view of life which taught a man to restrain his animal instincts." Mr. Stead heard that nonsense and did not correct it, though he knows very well that it is not the Freethinkers who are responsible for the debauching of young girls which goes on in London.

The St. Swithin superstition is dying of being found out. Protracted observations at Greenwich Observatory show that the weather is not at all affected by what happens on St. Swithin's Day. As a matter of fact, though, there happens to be rather less rainfall in the forty days after a wet St. Swithin than after a dry one. If anything, therefore, the superstition needs to be reversed.

The poor old Pope is reported to be suffering from extreme prostration, caused partly by the heat and partly by the shock of the Spanish disaster. The truth is the Vatican holds a tremendous lot of Spanish securities, which the success of the Yankees has rendered worthless. What poor old Pecci is really suffering from is an acute attack of "No Dividends."

A friend of ours, whose wits sometimes go wool-gathering, believes that he visits all sorts of foreign places while he is in that condition. The other night he visited Heaven and Hell—at least he says so; and he tells us that in Heaven they were singing

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
while in Hell they were singing
Praise him all creatures here below.

The Rector of Bow has been devoting himself to the splendid task of apologising for the firm of Bryant and May. The poisoned workers and their sympathisers will be ready to consign the reverend gentleman to a locality where sulphur is even cheaper than at the manufactory he thinks it Christlike to defend on behalf of the poor shareholders.

What a sublime piece of humbug is the Holy Christian Church! The Carpenter of Nazareth lived on the high road and died on the gallows, and the Cashier of his little Salvation Army ratted for thirty shillings. Some say it was thirty half-crowns. Very well, let it be so. At that rate the entire stock-in-trade, cash at the bank, book debts, and goodwill of the business was estimated at less than £3 15s. But that was nearly two thousand years ago, and things have altered very much for the better during the interval. Only the other day we noticed a newspaper paragraph, announcing that the Bishop of London had just held a swell garden-party, which was attended by the *élite* of fashionable society. His lordship has a fine palace, and £10,000 a year—twice as much as the Prime Minister of the British Empire! Upon this salary he preaches "Woe unto you rich!" and "Blessed be ye poor!" Really it is the greatest farce on earth.

Sabbatarianism is dying in Scotland, but it dies hard. "At Dunoon recently," says the *Daily News*, "under the shadow of Highland Mary's statue, pious mobs refused to allow tourists to land on Sunday. Shooting tenants have been 'rabbed' in the North for taking boat to get their letters on Sunday." It is still next to impossible to hire a horse on Sunday north of the Ness. It is in the Celtic districts that the old Sabbatarianism lingers.

One of the American speakers at the World's Convention of Sunday-schools, recently held in London, was Bishop Charles H. Fowler, D.D., of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This gentleman, according to the *Daily Chronicle* report, spent "twenty-five minutes in belauding the Bible as far exceeding all other books in wisdom, poetry, history, oratory, logic. If the English-speaking races will only plant the Bible wherever they go, they will 'fix' this world in twenty-five years."

How like an American that is! Everything is going to be done in a jiffy. Cuba was to be taken from the Spaniard in a week or two, and all this time has been required to capture Santiago. Now it is to take only twenty-five years to "fix" the whole world by "planting" the Bible everywhere. We don't exactly know what "fixing" the world means, but we presume it is as big as the equator anyhow. Nor do we exactly know what "planting" the Bible means, though we do know that the Bible is "a plant."

Two thousand three hundred delegates attended this Sunday School Convention from all parts of the world. Four delegates from the United States were missing. In spite of their pious object, the Lord did not warn them of the danger ahead, and they were drowned in the wreck of the *Bourgogne*.

A large number of the Sunday-school Convention delegates came over on the *Catalonia*, which caught on fire on the voyage. However, the crew worked hard and saved the ship. Perhaps the delegates helped by praying. Anyhow, they got safely across the Atlantic.

Reference was made at one of the Convention meetings to the delegates who went down in the *Bourgogne*. One of the speakers—it was the Hon. S. H. Blake, of Toronto—said that "God opened the sea-gate of his heaven and gave them glad entrance." We guess, though, that the other American delegates were precious glad they came over on another ship.

Whoso taking the sword shall perish by the sword, said Jesus Christ. The *Methodist Recorder* is "gratified" to find that "the Methodists of the North and South have been in the forefront of this battle" at Santiago.

"Father" Ignatius gives a curious puff to Guy's Tonic. He ordered a bottle for a "Brother" at Llanthony Abbey, who was sadly troubled with flatulence, and the patient derived much advantage from the medicine. So far so good. But the "Father" goes on to say that the Tonic was "much blessed by God to the Brother for whom it was ordered"—which entirely destroys the value of the testimonial, for when God blesses the medicine it cannot possibly matter whether the bottle contains Guy's Tonic or common ditch-water.

The New York Presbytery, by twenty-six votes to twenty-five, has rejected a certain candidate for the ministry whose character and scholarship were all right, but whose faith was not up to the requisite standard. He believed in the general inspiration of the Bible, but he thought that it might in detail be incorrect. Presbyterian ministers have no freedom to pick and choose. Mother Eve's talking serpent, Balaam's ass, and Jonah's whale must all be swallowed, and the consumers must not fail to look agreeable.

The Bishops have issued a "report" on the vexed question

of the re-marriage of divorced persons. They declare that the Christian ideal is that of indissoluble marriage; but, as the wretched secular law allows divorce, the clergy must not exactly put themselves in opposition to the State—for it might be unpleasant to themselves. What they should do in the case of a divorced person who wants to re-marry is this: They should persuade him (or her) to get married at a registrar's office. Well, it would be a good thing if everybody got married there, for more than half the good fortune of the clergy is due to their officiating at baptisms, marriages, and burials.

The spiritual lords almost invariably vote against useful measures. They voted against the Bill to abolish capital punishment for stealing from shops property of the value of five shillings. They fiercely opposed the Reform Bills. The Roman Catholic Disabilities Bill and the Jewish Disabilities Repeal Bill both met with their determined opposition. The right reverend fathers-in-God resisted the motion for the Admission of Dissenters to Universities, and also the Bill to permit in churchyards funeral services other than that of the Church of England. They have, in fighting the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, displayed the intelligence and the noble firmness of mules.

Mr. Dillon moved the omission of a sub-section of Clause 67 of the Irish Local Government Bill, which provides that any person in holy orders, or being a regular minister of any religious denomination, shall not be eligible as a county or district councillor. Captain Donelan, an Irish Protestant, supported Mr. Dillon; but he was opposed by Colonel Saunderson, a Protestant, and Mr. Hayden, a Catholic. Opinion, therefore, is pretty evenly divided, even amongst Irishmen themselves; and it was only natural that the government clause should be retained in the Bill, as it was, by a majority of 165 to 74. Mr. Gerald Balfour, speaking for the government, said that "There could be no doubt that it had been the practice for Catholic priests in Ireland to carry into the domain of politics the arms of spiritual warfare. If priests were permitted to sit on those bodies, every engine would be brought to bear, spiritual and otherwise, to secure their election." Still, it would not do to exclude Catholic priests and admit Protestant ministers; so the whole tribe of sky-pilots are debarred from sitting on the new Councils.

On the whole, it seems to us that this is a wise provision. History and experience show that the men of God are only safe when they are confined to their spiritual functions. Besides, it will never do to give them the full rights of citizenship without compelling them to fulfil all its duties. They enjoy certain privileges—exemption from serving on juries, for instance—and they cannot expect to enjoy all the sweets and escape all the sour. It was Sydney Smith—himself a minister of religion—who said there were three sexes—men, women, and clergymen. The men of God should be treated as neuters.

Mr. A. E. Fletcher is himself a Christian Socialist. We are rather surprised, therefore, to find his paper, the *New Age*, so cheerfully accepting the defeat of the Christian Socialists at the recent German elections. "It is quite hopeless for them," our contemporary admits, "to compete at elections in big towns and industrial centres with the Social Democrats, who have the men, the experience, and the determination for the political warfare." The leaders of the Social Democrats are nearly all Freethinkers, and most of them Atheists.

There was a very curious prayer meeting the other day at Tooting. Inspector Hobson, of the City Police, arrested a young man named Pickernell on a charge of fraud. The prisoner got into the bathroom, fastened the door, and then cut his throat. After a time he opened the door and admitted the inspector. Pickernell knew he was dying, and coolly asked the inspector to pray with him. The two went on their knees together and "asked for divine mercy," as the reports say. Evidently the duties of a policeman are extremely mixed. He runs in stray dogs, escorts perambulators across busy streets, chases burglars, eats cold mutton with the cook, and on the top of it all is liable to be called upon to kneel down and pray with his prisoners. Yes, a policeman needs to be an all-round man nowadays.

WHEELER MEMORIAL FUND.

Mr. and Mrs. Pegg, £1; A. G. W., 10s.; A. F., 2s. 6d.; W. F., 1s.; R. F., 1s. 6d.; W. W., 1s. 6d.; L. A., 2s. 6d.; A. B., 1s. Per *Miss Vance*:—E. Bater, 1s.; Mrs. Bater, 1s.; Miss Bater, 1s.

Per *R. Forder*:—H. G. Dowie, £1; Tommy, 2s.; E. Self, 1s.; J. E. Stapleton, 2s. 6d.; A. S. Vickers, 2s.; W. Pike, 1s.; E. G. W., 5s.; J. Preston, 2s. 6d.; H. J. Dungey, 2s. 6d.; Mr. Selwood, 2s. 6d.; J. May, 15s. 6d.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ALL communications for Mr. Charles Watts should be sent to him at 24 Carminia-road, Balham, S.W. If a reply is required, a stamped and addressed envelope must be enclosed.

A. E. DAVIS.—Thanks; see paragraph.

F. COTRELL.—See paragraph. Miss Vance is looking after the arrangements for the Sunday Freethought Demonstrations. Please write to her, if she has not already written to you.

W. W. LEAVIS.—Received.

C. COHEN notified to friends and Branch secretaries his new address—17 Osborne-road, High-road, Leyton.

EX-RITUALIST.—It is entirely subject to your own decision.

A. FINCKEN, becoming a member of the Secular Society, Limited, says: "I have gone through the Charter, as published in the *Freethinker*, and consider it redounds very greatly to your credit. To all your critics, amongst whom I class myself, let me say after (a long way after) Shakespeare: 'Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious by this summer scheme of yours!'"

JAMES MCGLASHAN sends £1 for himself and his brother John, for membership in the Secular Society, Limited. "All my prayers (old memories!) for a great success," he exclaims.

J. J. KIMBERLEY.—Received. You and your friend, F. Symonds, will be duly nominated for membership in the Secular Society, Limited, at the next meeting of the Board.

J. TITHERINGTON, sending 10s. for membership in the Secular Society, Limited, says: "I think the day is dawning for Freethought."

D. BLACK (Glasgow) is joining the Secular Society, Limited. He thinks it deserves success.

JOHN WHITE.—The lad's verse is creditable, but hardly up to the mark for publication. It is not enough to have ideas and sentiments; he must learn the *technique* of versification.

J. N. (Leeds).—A good story; but few of our readers, we imagine, would understand the Stock Exchange jargon.

CHARLES PEGG (Manchester) and Mrs. M. E. Pegg send their subscription for membership in the Secular Society, Limited. Mr. Pegg thinks it the best thing that has been done in the history of the party.

JOHN ROSS (Liverpool) writes that he has got twelve names, and hopes to get more, of intending members of the Secular Society, Limited. The full list is to be forwarded to us shortly.

A. J. MARRIOTT.—Glad you are joining the Incorporated Society; also that you have been doing a little work lately in Hyde Park.

W. W. HARDWICKE.—Thanks. You did not enclose the 10s. in your former letter. The Society is not in the embryonic stage, as you thought; it is legally incorporated, and we have the Registrar's certificate.

H. DAWSON.—In our next.

R. DAVISON.—Copy of Memorandum and Articles of Association forwarded. We hope you will be able to induce "a few good men in your neighborhood" to join you in entering the Society. Thanks. Certificate will be forwarded in due course.

R. FORDER has received applications from the following for membership in the Secular Society, Limited:—R. Gibbon, J. Wortley, C. J. Pottage, J. W. De Caux.

J. J. BARTRAM.—Mr. Foote will write you shortly.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Boston Investigator—Brann's Iconoclast—Progressive Thinker—Ile of Man Times—Middlesborough Telegraph—Crescent—Glasgow Weekly Citizen—Public Opinion—Fashion—Fishing Gazette—Truthseeker.

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

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.

It being contrary to Post-Office regulations to announce on the wrapper when the subscription is due, subscribers will receive the number in a colored wrapper when their subscription is due.

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

LECTURE NOTICES must reach 28 Stonocutter-street by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

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

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

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

How to Help Us.

- (1) Got your newsagent to take a few copies of the *Freethinker* and try to sell them, guaranteeing to take the copies that remain unsold.
- (2) Take an extra copy (or more), and circulate it among your acquaintances.
- (3) Leave a copy of the *Freethinker* now and then in the train, the car, or the omnibus.
- (4) Display, or get displayed, one of our contents-shoots, which are of a convenient size for the purpose. Mr. Forder will send them on application.

SPECIAL.

IN the *Freethinker* of May 15 I stated that I should have to open a Fund for the regular judicious advertising of the *Freethinker*, for promoting its circulation in other ways, and to aid in its competent maintenance until these agencies produced the desired effect. That appeal, however, was brushed aside for the time, because I wanted to give a fair opportunity to the appeal on behalf of the widow of my dead friend and colleague, Joseph Mazzini Wheeler. It is now necessary to bring my appeal to the front again. This can be done without injury to the Wheeler Fund, which I propose to keep open until (say) the end of August. By that time everybody who means to subscribe to it may fairly be presumed to have done so.

Since my sub-editor's death I have been working like a galley-slave. I was not in a position to engage a new sub-editor, and another Wheeler will not turn up in a hurry. For the first month I paid his weekly salary in full to his widow; since then I have paid her one-half that amount regularly, as her affairs were not settled. The amount left for myself from the paper is the veriest trifle, and I am making arrangements for some paid assistance, as it is impossible to go on working at this rate much longer; in fact, nature is giving me plain warnings, which I dare not disregard.

I invite those who can spare a subscription, without injury to any other object, to send it to the "*Freethinker* Circulation Fund," and all I receive shall be duly acknowledged in these columns.

G. W. FOOTE.

SUGAR PLUMS.

APPLICATIONS for membership in the new Secular Society, Limited, are coming in steadily, if not rapidly. No doubt they will increase in volume after the holidays. In another part of the *Freethinker*, acting on Mr. Neale's suggestion, we reprint the Memorandum of Association, containing the statement of the Society's objects. It will be kept standing for some weeks.

Members have no sort of liability except the very unlikely one of being called upon to pay up to £1, not more, in case the Society should ever be wound up and there is a deficiency of assets as against liabilities. There are no shares, as in most companies. Members pay an entrance fee of ten shillings for the first year, and five shillings a year afterwards. This gives them the right to elect the Board of Directors, and to vote on all the Society's business at General Meetings.

The first meeting of the present (preliminary) Board of Directors was held on Thursday, July 14. Mr. Foote consented to become Chairman until the General Meeting of Members in September, when he hopes that an influential "layman" will be found to occupy the post. Mr. Forder agreed to act as Secretary until the same meeting. It was decided that the Memorandum and Articles of Association should be printed in a small, neat form for general use. It was also resolved that the Board should defray Mr. Foote's out-of-pocket expenses in the formation of the Society—namely, the registration fee, the printing of Memorandum and Articles, and counsel's fee. Mr. Foote presents no bill for his time and trouble and various expenses incurred during the two years that his project was being developed. We may add that the first batch of twenty-five members (not including the Directors) were admitted at this Board meeting.

A few critics, who talk from a plentiful lack of knowledge, are good enough to question the "legality" of this Incorporation. The same persons would question anything that happened to be pioneered by the President of the National Secular Society. Now, as a matter of fact, supposing a man left the Society a bequest, his Executors would have no alternative but to pay it over. Their opinion as to the Society's objects would count for absolutely nothing. The registration is a perfect protection against any hostility on their part. As a matter of fact, too, the Society's objects, as set forth in the Memorandum, are entirely legal, according to the judgment of the late Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, which settled the Common Law of Blasphemy for future application. This point has been carefully discussed with a thoroughly competent solicitor and counsel of the highest standing. We repeat, therefore, that the Society gives absolute security to subscribers, donors, and legators.

Owing to the tropical weather, Mr. Foote has deemed it advisable to close the Athenæum Hall, Tottenham-court-road, for a few weeks. During that time a number of Free-thought demonstrations will be arranged in Hyde Park, Regent's Park, Finsbury Park, Victoria Park, Peckham Rye, and on Clerkenwell-green. Miss Vance, the N. S. S. secretary, is organising these demonstrations, and Mr. Wilson has kindly promised to give the use of his horses and brakes. Mr. Foote will try to speak at each gathering, and will be assisted by Mr. Charles Watts, Mr. C. Cohen, and perhaps other lecturers.

The Newcastle Branch sends us its annual balance-sheet, which is a healthy document, showing a fair balance on the right side. The members and friends have subscribed well, and the work has been carried on bravely in the face of difficulties. Thirty-nine lectures have been delivered during the year under the Branch's auspices, and ten new members have been enrolled, most of them being young men full of enthusiasm for Freethought.

Arrangements are being made for the Stanley, South Shields, and Newcastle Branches to have an excursion by brake to Durham on Sunday, August 21. The cost will be as moderate as possible, and all who wish to avail themselves of a cheap day's outing and mingle with the gathered saints should acquaint the secretaries of one of the above branches as early as possible to avoid disappointment, as only those will be provided for who give notice or procure tickets beforehand.

Instead of the "No Lecture" in Finsbury Park to-day (July 24), we are informed that Mr. Harry Snell will lecture on "What Freethought Teaches." No doubt he will have a large audience.

Mr. C. Cohen lectured twice on Peckham Rye last Sunday to very large audiences. A good deal of interruption was caused by Teapot Taylor's gang, who kept shouting and pushing towards the platform; but the people were bent on hearing the lecturer, and the disturbers were thrust outside the meeting, where they had to be quiet. It is to be hoped that the local Freethinkers will continue to rally round the Peckham Rye platform until the Christian Evidence rowdies are convinced of the futility of their tactics.

Readers of the *Freethinker* are reminded that Mr. Forder (28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.) is arranging to publish a collection of the best poems of Mr. G. L. Mackenzie, whom our late sub-editor called the Poet Laureate of Freethought. The contemplated price of the volume is half-a-crown. Mr. Forder has received the names of several subscribers, but more are wanted before he can venture on publication. We hope the requisite number will be made up speedily.

A pastor of long experience, according to the *Christian World*, states that the great majority of German working men stand quite aloof from Christian worship, and from every form of church life. The typical working man is absorbed by class questions and party conflicts. He has no real interest in religion.

The undaunted Zola has addressed another stinging public letter—this time to M. Brisson, the new Premier of France. "No Ministry can live," he says, "as long as this affair is not settled. There is something rotten in France, and normal life will only be established when the Dreyfus trial has been revised." Zola concludes by remarking that all politicians are ambitious, and expressing surprise that not one of them is sagacious and bold enough to play a winning game. "Not one of you," he says, "appears to suspect that the man who in three years' time will enter the Elysée will be the man who has restored the worship of truth and justice in France by revising the Dreyfus trial."

Mrs. Lynn Linton was not in love with missions to the heathen; in fact, she denounced "the modern craze for missionary work in unlikely and unsympathetic countries, where the lives of the missionaries are in danger, where the converts they make are for the most part unredeemed scoundrels, and where the civilisation of the people is older and more compact than our own."

Civil List Pensions are no doubt open to question on general grounds. While they are given, however, we are glad to see one or two of them fall to the lot of the unorthodox. In the list of pensions granted by the Government during the past year we find the name of Dr. W. C. Coupland, who receives £50 a year "in consideration of his labors as a writer upon philosophical subjects." Another name is that of Mr. W. E. Henley, who receives £225 a year "in consideration of his literary merits and inadequate means of support." Dr. Beattie Crozier receives £50 in addition to the £50 granted to him in 1894.

HELPS TO HAPPINESS.

A Lecture delivered before the Paine Hall Society, Boston, March 13, 1898.

No man can be happy when all the time thinking that he is a miserable sinner; when through his mind runs the thought that "this world is all a fleeting show"; when he is convinced that earth is a "vale of tears"; when he dwells upon the words of the Bible-preacher, that "all is vanity," and when he constantly repeats to himself that verse from the old New England Primer:—

Our days begin with trouble here;
Our life is but a span,
And cruel death is always near;
So frail a thing is man.

The precepts of orthodoxy are not a very good prescription for happiness. Life may be a battle between a smile and a tear, but I believe in most cases that the smile conquers, that the smile carries the flag of victory.

Now, I do not believe that all religion is either true or good, that it is fit for men and women whose duty it is to make life wholesome and healthy. I contradict nearly all the teachings of the Christian religion; I deny that libel of the Book of Common Prayer, that we are "miserable sinners"; I repudiate that false statement of the poet Moore, that "this world is all a fleeting show"; I reject the Old Testament whine, that "all is vanity"; and I renounce the doctrine contained in those dismal lines from the New England Primer, which make human life, "like Niobe, all tears."

The gloomy sentiments of piety, of which I have quoted a few familiar samples, remind me of a speech made by a murderer on the scaffold. He said: "I'd orter been hung thirty year ago." All these dark, sombre, cruel, false views of life, put forth by Christian preachers, ought to have been killed years ago. There is one fact connected with the Bible which condemns it, in my mind, more than anything else. It is this: There is not a smile in it. You cannot find a bright, cheerful, laughing verse in the entire book. There is not a bud of mirth, not a blossom of joy, in the whole volume. Life, fashioned after the teachings of the Bible, would have no sweetness in it. The person who accepts this book for his guide and teacher puts his mind in a convent. You cannot find a text in the Bible for a sermon on real human happiness. In fact, I believe that the word "happiness" is not to be found anywhere in the volume. One cannot find any helps to happiness in a book which says nothing about happiness.

What men and women need far more than religious incentives are those encouragements which fill the heart with cheer, the mind with light, and life with gladness. There is a constant mental pilgrimage towards that Mecca of the human heart—happiness. The whole world looks to the enjoyment of certain circumstances, or to the attainment of a certain state of being, as the realisation of its earthly ambition. Everybody wants to be happy, and thinks, strives, wishes, and lives to that end. Mankind desire those objects and conditions which bring enjoyment here.

I wish at the outset to acknowledge my approval of this sensible ambition. I believe that the pleasures of life are consistent with the noblest pursuits and the loftiest aims; and I further hold that those comforts and delights which minister to the sweet gratification of the senses are not only legitimate, but also worthy and pure. I respect my whole nature, and believe that the cravings and wants of every part should be satisfied. The eye's wish to look upon what is beautiful should be respected. "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." No physical charm was ever yet too fascinating. We are all willing worshippers of the beautiful. So we must commend the art which adds to the attraction of face or figure. Let us confess our debt to adornment, not for what it assists in revealing altogether, but for what it aids us in concealing. It has been said that every fashion was designed to hide a deformity. If this be so, then has fashion been a mantle of charity as well as an ornament. Nature can never be too alluring, never have too fair a face, too perfect a form, too winning a voice. I would add to that power of temptation which dwells in beauty rather than subtract from it. From that romantic period back in the Middle Ages, when the hand of love pinned its color upon the sleeve of the knight ready to go forth to battle, to these duller days of toil and trade, the potent spell of beauty has inspired the arm with

strength, the heart with courage, and the soul with nobility. The world has always had, and I hope always will have, one knee for the beautiful. The music of a face is the Orpheus which draws all mankind after it. But there is a charm greater even than the magic spell of beauty; it is genius, this king whose throne is the brain of the world. The music of a thought has lifted man to realms of happiness which the eye of earth and the ear of clay have not heard nor seen.

The kingdom of the most wondrous power is the hidden kingdom of mind. The intellect commands supreme adoration. The lasting homage of mankind is poured out upon the altar of genius.

Burns says:—

The charms of the min', the langer they shine,
The mair admiration they draw, man;
While peaches and cherries and roses and lilies,
They fade and they wither awa', man.

What king of Greece sat upon a throne as lasting as Homer's? What sovereign of England has reigned so long in the hearts of his subjects as has Shakespeare? What emperor of China has swayed the destinies of empires like Confucius? What sheik of Arabia, or sultan of Turkey, has led his followers to victories like Mohammed, whose seven years of splendid military triumphs make him the Washington of his country? Socrates will live when the last glory of Athenian greatness has been forgotten. Burns will hold his sceptre over our hearts when Scotland's name is lost among the ruins of nations. The pyramids of Egypt are only the monuments of minds still higher which once towered above her mental plains. It is the grandeur of the man which makes the stone immortal that is reared above his grave.

The highest pleasures are those which satisfy the mind. The eye and the ear are avenues which lead to the purest realms. They are streets of the soul. The eye should see only what is beautiful; the ear should hear only what is pure and true. It was once thought that the five senses were five ways for the Devil to reach the heart, and that anything which pleased the eye, the ear, the nose, the palate, or the touch, was devised for man's ruin. But now the senses are looked upon as channels of communication between the world within and the world without. The beauty which fills the universe, instead of being a snare, is a beatitude. Man is educated by what he sees, hears, and touches, and is saved by the wonderful charm of nature which surrounds him.

We have progressed beyond the control of that rigid sentiment that regarded human enjoyment as a sin. Healthful pleasure is found to be a demand of our nature, and this age is concerned in promoting those conditions of life which are calculated to make living a joy, and existence a blessing.

Man's first necessity is to eat. Hunger makes the first demand upon the world. Nature's mouth is always open. To find something to eat is every man's imperative duty if he would live; and something for those to eat who are dependent upon him, if he would keep them alive. Life can be continued only by its demands being supplied. How to get this supply is the foremost problem of mankind. Everyone is born with an appetite for food and drink, if for nothing higher.

I would not cut the border of pleasure from the table, and reduce living to its lowest terms; nor blush with guilt, as Thoreau hinted that he should, for expending the vast sum of eight dollars and seventy-four cents for food during a period of eight months. We readily pardon his extravagance and forgive his economic blush for spending twenty-seven and a half cents a week for what he ate, when we find that his drink cost him nothing but a walk to the spring.

While believing fully in a generous diet for the body, I believe that a man need not be unhappy because he cannot sit down to a dinner of seven courses. Man does not need to be urged to multiply his animal pastimes. It is more necessary to tell him to hold his appetites with a rein of restraint. In eating and drinking we should emulate those chaste, temperate companions—the brutes of the field. The morality of food is a subject which will yet be discussed intelligently. We are told that "there is similarity 'twixt men and swine"; and why not, since men eat them? We are more closely related to our victuals than we imagine. What we take into the stomach influences our actions as well as what we take into the brain, and when

we consider how large a proportion of mankind provide food only for their stomachs, what wonder that we have so many bodies six feet high with intellects only a foot high. A bread-and-butter majority elects the dominant habits.

The cry for something to eat and to drink is the cry of nature; but when this demand is answered, others of equal importance, though not making so much clamor, need to be met. What we shall satisfy our appetites with has been a question which heretofore has been answered with little thought of its general consequences. Man cannot eat and drink to himself alone. Not only our complexion is a bulletin of our indulgences, but they are revealed in our politics, in our philosophy, and in our religion. It is undoubtedly true to a certain extent that he who eats beef thinks beef, and also that our thoughts are more or less colored by the beverages we drink. Coffee, that dusky wine, is said to paint muddy pictures in the brain; and tea, that spur to the nerves, to drive the system until it is a wretched wreck. The advocates of animal food for man point with satisfaction to the preference of the divine appetite for lamb over vegetables; but does it follow, because Abel's offering was more acceptable to the Lord than Cain's, that what is good for gods is good for men? The vegetarians claim divine sanction also for their bill of fare, and quote with equal pleasure that God gave man only the herb and the fruit of the seed-yielding tree for meat.

L. K. WASHBURN.

—*Boston Investigator.*

(*To be continued.*)

THE MURDERER'S HAVEN.

It happened 'tother morning,
A tick or two past eight,
There came a spook a-tapping
At Peter's golden gate.
The sleepy Peter cautiously
Slid back his little wicket,
And growled: "Pray where are *you* from,
And where's your bloomin' ticket?"

"I've come from England," said the spook,
In accents bland and soft,
"Where one named Berry has a knack
Of jerking souls aloft.
This pass the chaplain gave me,
When I had had a bath
In Jesu's blood; he said that would
Appease Jehovah's wrath."

St. Peter smiled; "Come in, my friend,
You'll find this pretty snug;
I wouldn't, perhaps, be here myself
But for a fellow's lug.
For God, you know, delights in blood
Since Abel killed that lamb;
For Cain and his ripe apricots
He didn't care a damn.

"And so you'll find throughout his Word—
Which, doubtless, you have read—
The dearer to God's heart the man,
The more blood he hath shed.
There's Dave, for instance—cut-throat chief—
He pokes about the Throne
And sings duets with good old Abe,
While I'm stuck here alone.

"Sometimes the young 'un comes around
And brews a drop of booze,
But then some straggler's sure to come
And spoil the mild carouse.
But come right in and take a harp,
And join the cut-throat throng,
And screw your pegs to concert pitch
And vamp their doleful song.

"And when you're tired of harping,
You can look down into hell;
You'll see the damned in anguish,
You'll hear your victim yell.
'Twill much enhance your happiness,
And make you sing with zest:—
Lor, can't the Devil give em socks
Lor, ain't I truly blest.

T. CLARK.

THE SECULAR SOCIETY, LIMITED.

(Company Limited by Guarantee.)

MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION.

- 1.—The name of the Company is The Secular Society, Limited.
- 2.—The registered office of the Company will be situated in England.
- 3.—The objects for which the Company is formed are :—
 - (a) To promote, in such ways as may from time to time be determined, the principle that human conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action.
 - (b) To promote the utmost freedom of inquiry and the publication of its discoveries.
 - (c) To promote the secularisation of the State, so that religious tests and observances may be banished from the Legislature, the Executive, and the Judiciary.
 - (d) To promote the abolition of all support, patronage, or favor by the State of any particular form or forms of religion.
 - (e) To promote universal Secular Education, without any religious teaching, in public schools maintained in any way by municipal rates or imperial taxation.
 - (f) To promote an alteration in the laws concerning religion, so that all forms of opinion may have the same legal rights of propaganda and endowment.
 - (g) To promote the recognition by the State of marriage as a purely civil contract, leaving its religious sanctions to the judgment and determination of individual citizens.
 - (h) To promote the recognition of Sunday by the State as a purely civil institution for the benefit of the people, and the repeal of all Sabbatarian laws devised and operating in the interest of religious sects, religious observances, or religious ideas.
 - (i) To purchase, lease, rent, or build halls or other premises for the promotion of the above objects.
 - (j) To employ lecturers, writers, organisers, or other servants for the same end.
 - (k) To publish books, pamphlets, or periodicals.
 - (l) To assist, by votes of money or otherwise, other Societies or associated persons or individuals who are specially promoting any of the above objects.
 - (m) To have, hold, receive, and retain any sums of money paid, given, devised, or bequeathed by any person, and to employ the same for any of the purposes of the Society.
 - (n) To co-operate or communicate with any kindred society in any part of the world.
 - (o) To do all such other lawful things as are conducive or incidental to the attainment of all or any of the above objects.

And so They were Married.

Minister (to a man wishing to be married)—Do you wish to marry this woman ?

Man—I do.

Minister—Do you wish to marry this man ?

Woman—I do.

Minister—Do you like the city as a place of residence ?

Man—No ; I prefer the suburbs.

Minister—Do you like the suburbs ?

Woman—No, indeed ; I prefer the city.

Minister—Are you a vegetarian in diet ?

Man—No ; I hate vegetables. I live on beef.

Woman—I can't bear meat. I am a vegetarian.

Minister—Do you like a sleeping room well ventilated ?

Man—Yes ; I want the window away down, summer and winter.

Minister—Do you like so much fresh air ?

Woman—No ; it would kill me. I want all windows closed.

Minister—Do you like a light in the room ?

Man—No ; can't sleep with a light ; want the room dark.

Minister—Are you afraid in the dark ?

Woman—Indeed, I am. I always have a bright light in the room.

Minister—Do you like many bedclothes ?

Man—All I can pile on.

Minister—Do you ?

Woman—No ; they suffocate me.

Minister—I hereby pronounce you man and wife, and may the Lord have mercy on your souls.—*New York Weekly.*

STAFFORDSHIRE CLERGYMAN AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.

A LESSON IN LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

A CORRESPONDENT writes : The controversy which has been raging for the past month or so between the Rev. G. B. Brown, the Vicar of Aston, near Stone, and the schoolmaster of the parish schools, has had a termination which will exercise a far-reaching influence over the destinies of Voluntary schools in the county. It would appear that Mr. J. Plant has been schoolmaster at Aston for upwards of forty years. He has the merit of being a self-educated man, and, moreover, he has kept abreast of the times, studying to meet the requirements of the Education Department. This he has done so successfully that he has often secured the highest reward that can be given to a schoolmaster—exemption from a Government examination. The schools of which he is in charge were, up to this week, under the control of the vicar (Mr. Brown) and his two churchwardens. Mr. Plant some time ago requested the vicar to enlarge this Committee of Management, as there was constant friction. To this the vicar replied by giving him notice of dismissal, to take effect on August 1 next. When this became known, the parishioners were very indignant. The result was that a memorial was extensively signed, asking that at least Mr. Plant should continue in office until the present Government had passed their proposed Teachers' Superannuation Bill. Under this the schoolmaster would have been entitled to a yearly pension of between £40 and £50, whereas, if he were dismissed, it would only be half that sum. The influential parishioners, headed by Mr. Harold Wright, the Potteries stipendiary, who is the son of the late Mr. J. Skirrow Wright, the well-known North Staffordshire Liberal, thought this was a reasonable request and heartily supported it, with the result that it was signed by nearly every parishioner. The memorial, however, was ignored, and then Mr. Wright and two other lay gentlemen, in addition to the vicars of the neighboring parishes of Stone and Yarlet, addressed a letter to the school managers, asking them to reconsider the notice of dismissal, pointing out that Mr. Plant deserved greater consideration at their hands. They also pointed out that, in their "opinion, such a summary dismissal is, according to our present information, unjustifiable, and must raise the very gravest questions as to the general management of Voluntary schools throughout the country." To this the managers replied that they had received the letter, and that "they had appointed a new schoolmaster." Undeterred by this rebuff, the signatories of the letter interviewed the Bishop of Lichfield, and on his recommendation deferred further proceedings for a period, the Bishop stating that they would receive in a week a communication which would put matters right. They waited for a week, and yet another, but no communication came. Then they went further into the matter, and found that there were no official trustees of the school. They approached the owner, Mr. Harry Burr, of London, with the result that he offered a lease of the schools to Mr. Harold Wright and Mr. T. M. Paterson. These gentlemen at once accepted, and this week a meeting of the parishioners was held to discuss what should be done in the future. That meeting, which was crowded, resolved unanimously to take the management of the schools in their own hands. When it came to the question of who should be the managers there was much discussion. Mr. Wright said, as five gentlemen were to be in control, the vicar should be one, offering to retire in his favor. But this the parishioners, among whom were several ladies, would not agree to. In the end, six candidates were put up, the parishioners nominating a working man, Mr. John Mitchell. When the vote was taken the vicar only received nine votes, whereas the other five candidates were unanimously approved. The result was that the vicar and the churchwardens, the late managers of the school, are now prohibited from interfering in the management. The decision caused a great deal of surprise, for it means that throughout the many parishes in the county there is trouble looming ahead, for a great number are in a similar position to that at Aston.

—*Daily News.*

The Infidel was on the sea—

The storm was raging high.

He said : "There is no help for me,

Save only in the sky.

Lord, if you'll bring me safe to shore,
I'll preach the gospel evermore !"

Safe to the shore his ship was brought,

But while he knelt to pray

The natives came, and him they caught,

And did prepare to slay.

They said : "On him we'll dine and sup !"

And in three hours they ate him up !

BOOK CHAT.

MR. MALCOLM QUIN, who conducts the (Positivist) Church of Humanity at Newcastle-on-Tyne, has issued a very able and well-written "Tract" of twelve pages on *The Spanish-American War*, copies of which are supplied gratuitously by Mr. J. T. Looney, 119 Rodsley-avenue, Gateshead. Mr. Quin appeals to "statesmanship," which is wise as far as it goes. But statesmanship is not everything, and sometimes it amounts to very little. Popular passion often counts for a great deal more, especially in free countries. Further, there is a kind of instinct in nations that drives them on in spite of all advice. Interest and feeling, rather than reason, have always determined the general course of human affairs. Mr. Quin seems not to make allowance for this. His argument appears too academical. He contends that "the main responsibility for the war rests with the United States." They had no business to interfere with the domestic arrangements between Spain and her colonies. Abstractly this is true enough; practically it often becomes false, because it involves an impossibility. Cuba is so near to the great Republic that its citizens could not keep cool over the infamies perpetrated there; at last they became hot, and a nation in that state is pretty sure to do something if it can. Then again, Mr. Quin argues that the European Powers should have stopped America's aggression. But here he overlooks the feelings of the English people, who would never have tolerated their navy being used to coerce America in concert with the navies of France, Germany, and Russia. Altogether, it seems to us that Mr. Quin's advice is calculated for conditions that do not exist. If the European Powers want to influence the settlement between Spain and America, they have to do it by way of suggestion, and not by way of intimidation. America is in no mood to brook their interference; and Russian, German, and French battleships could do next to nothing in American waters, because Uncle Sam and John Bull between them hold nearly all the coal in the Western hemisphere.

* * *

Mr. Quin says many excellent things eloquently in the course of his Tract. Here is one: "War has lost none of its ancient odiousness. On the contrary, modern civilisation—opposed to war as it necessarily is, by its conditions and by its aspirations—has yet invested it with new horrors, and a more terrible resource. Nevertheless, it has abandoned its frank brutality. It is no longer openly waged for its own sake. It has ceased to be an ideal. It is not now boldly and purely aggressive. It is ranked with the greatest of human calamities, and at least cannot avowedly be carried on for mere purposes of glory or conquest. It is driven to justify itself by some decent pretexts of trade, of philanthropy, or political liberation."

* * *

We referred recently to the unfairness which was shown to Freethinkers in such books as Chambers's *Encyclopædia*. We now find that Haydn's *Dictionary of Dates* sins in the same way. This book professes to give a list of blasphemy prosecutions, which must have been compiled either by a malicious or a grossly ignorant person.

* * *

Beeton's *Dictionary of Religions* has an article on "Secularism," which is evidently the work of an orthodox editor. So many cases of wilful misrepresentation and unfairness have come to our notice in well-known reference books that we are not surprised at the popular ignorance of Freethinkers and their aims.

* * *

The London *Echo* has for years been in the habit of referring to "Tom" Paine. It never makes the mistake of printing "Billy" Gladstone.

The Greatest Liar.

Among the curious experiences of the Salvation Army few are more amusing than a case reported from Magdeburg in Germany. In February last one of the newspapers published in that city contained an announcement inserted as an advertisement that, at an approaching meeting of the Salvation Army, "the greatest liar in Neustadt, a suburb of Magdeburg, would be exposed." Of course the Army meant by this the devil, the father of lies; but how were the German police to know this? An action was taken against the newspaper and against the lady who presides over the Magdeburg "corps," for using language calculated to disturb one or more burghers of Neustadt who might possibly feel themselves pointed at. There were doubtless persons in Neustadt who were the greatest liars there, and if they were caused uneasiness by this advertisement, those who inserted it deserved punishment. The Court agreed, and the editor and the "captain" were each fined twenty marks, or, in default ten days' imprisonment. They are serious people the German police.—*Christian World*.

SABBATH-BREAKING; OR, GOD'S LAW AND MAN'S AMENDMENT.

"Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death."—God (Exodus xxxi. 15).

"Absurd! and wicked! move to omit the last fifteen words."—PARSONS (everywhere).

"REMEMBER the Sabbath!" said Jahveh, said Moses,
Say clerical noodles and knaves
To those that, ignoring what Reason imposes,
Are thus, *perforce*, free to be led by their noses
With all the abasement of slaves.

Yet parsons contemn Jahveh's law for infraction—
'Tis death on the "seventh" to pick sticks,
Or journey a mile, or perform any action
Entailing more work than a specified fraction
Of what may be done on the "six."

Although they say Jahveh was wise in enacting
The law of hebdomadal rest,
His penal command they are always infracting,
Thus thinking Him foolishly over-exacting;
Thus thinking man's wisdom the best.

This brutally murderous, queer regulation
Is one of the popular "Ten,"
The "Ten" that are taught as the root and foundation
Of all that is moral or good in the nation,
By salary-sanctified men!

You're told to remember the Sabbath; but, mind you!
You're ordered to kill folk that fail—
"Observing" and "punishing" equally bind you—
So never let civilised sentiments blind you!
But slaughter them, female and male!

You cannot essential constituents sever,
Nor shuffle God's laws as you choose;
He gave them, and said *He would alter them never*;
So follow the *whole* of His statute for ever,
Or leave it entirely to Jews!

G. L. MACKENZIE.

Sky Pilots.

You have so debilitated the minds of men and women by your promises and your dreams that many a generation must come and go before Europe can throw off the yoke of your superstition. But we promise you that they shall be generations of strenuous battle. We give you all the advantages that you can get from the sincerity and pious worth of the good and simple among you. We give you all that the bad among you may get by resort to the poisoned weapons of your profession and your traditions—its bribes to mental indolence, its hypocritical affectations in the pulpit, its tyranny in the closet, its false speciousness in the world; its menace at the death-bed. With all these you may do your worst, and still humanity will escape you, still the conscience of the race will rise away from you; still the growth of brighter ideals and a nobler purpose will go on, leaving ever further and further behind them your dwarfed finality and leaden, moveless stereotype. We shall pass you by on you flank; your fiercest darts will only spend themselves on air. We will not attack you as Voltaire did; we will not exterminate you; we shall explain you. History will place your dogma in its class, above or below a hundred competing dogmas, exactly as the naturalist classifies his species. From being a conviction it will sink to a curiosity, from being the guide to millions of human lives it will dwindle down to a chapter in a book. As history explains your dogma, so science will dry it up; the conception of law will silently make the conception of the daily miracle of your altars seem impossible, the mental climate will gradually deprive your symbols of their nourishment, and men will turn their backs on your system, not because they confuted it, but because, like witchcraft or astrology, it has ceased to interest them. The great ship of your church, once so stout and fair, and well-laden with good destinies, is become a skeleton ship; it is a phantom hulk, with warped planks and sere canvas, and you who work it are no more than the ghosts of dead men, and at the hour when you seem to have reached the bay, down your ship will sink like lead or like stone, to the deepest bottom.—*Right Hon. John Morley, M.P., "Miscellanies," vol. i., pp. 80-81.*

"Boys," said a teacher in a Sunday-school, "can any of you quote a verse from scripture to prove that it is wrong for a man to have two wives?" He paused, and after a moment or two a bright boy raised his hand. "Well, Thomas," said the teacher encouragingly. Thomas stood up and said: "No man can serve two masters."—*Ram's Horn*.

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 (86 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 8.30, The Wyndham Dramatic Company in "My Lady Help" and other sketches.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH (Victoria Park, near the fountain): 8.15, C. Cohen.

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, A. B. Moss. Peckham Rye: R. P. Edwards—3.15, "The Third Commandment"; 6.30, "Christ and his Teaching."

EAST LONDON BRANCH (Mile End Waste): 11.30, R. P. Edwards; 7, T. Thurlow. July 27, C. Cohen.

EDMONTON (corner of Angel-road): 7, C. Cohen, "Foreign Missions." FINSBURY PARK (near bandstand): 3.15, H. Snell, "What Free-thought Teaches."

HAMMERSMITH (The Grove, near S. W. Railway-station): 7, A. lecture.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): Lucretius Keen—11.30, "God *vid* Christ"; 3.30, "Has Man a Free Will?"

KILBURN (High-road, corner Victoria-road): 7, Stanley Jones.

KINGSLAND (Midley-road): 11.30, W. Heaford.

LIMEHOUSE (The Triangle, Salmon-lane): 11.30, E. Pack. July 26, C. Cohen.

WESTMINSTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Grosvenor Embankment): 11.30, H. Courtney, "Christianity and Progress."

COUNTRY.

LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, W. Wilber, "Some Reasons why I am a Secularist."

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Lecture-room, corner of Raby and Parker-streets): 7, Discussion between J. Reid and A. McCormack, subject: "Individualism *v.* Socialism."

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, W. Dyson, A. lecture.

Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 17 Osborne-road, High-road, Leyton—July 24, m., Wood Green; a., Victoria Park; e., Edmonton; 26, Limehouse; 27, Mile End; 31, m., Kingsland; a., Finsbury Park; e., Victoria Park. August 7, m., Camberwell; a. and e., Peckham Rye.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, London, S.E.—July 31, m., Camberwell; a., Peckham Rye; e., Camberwell.

T. J. THURLOW, 350 Old Ford-road, London, E.—July 24, e., Mile End Waste.

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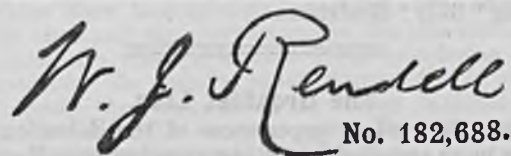
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