

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

UP WITH THE CHURCH!

ALL the various sections of the happy family of the Church of England held preliminary meetings on Monday at Bradford, where the Church Congress opened on Tuesday. Lord Halifax presided over a meeting of the English Church Union, which is a collection of Ritualists; and in the course of his address he spoke as follows:—

“The Society did not intend to see the worship of the Church of England degraded, and themselves and their children deprived of what they knew to be for their souls' health. While they submitted to the authority of the Queen and Parliament and the Courts in all civil and temporal matters, they repudiated the authority of the Privy Council and the Courts in all spiritual matters; and they denied the right of Parliament to determine the doctrine, discipline, and ceremonial of the Church.”

Now we have no desire to see Lord Halifax, or any of his High Church friends, or any of his Low Church enemies, deprived of what they “know to be for their souls' health.” We want to see England a perfectly free country to all its citizens. Let them buy and use whatever medicine they please, whether physical or spiritual. Let them attend in their own way to the health of their bodies and souls. What we object to is one man trying to make another take *his* physic, or trying by arbitrary means to induce a taste for it in other men's children. Nor do we desire to see “the worship of the Church of England degraded,” although that is being fast accomplished by the heated, squabbling sections of the Church itself. So far from entertaining such a wish, we rather desire to see the Church of England absolutely abolished. There would be no possibility then of its degradation—or its elevation.

We do desire, however, to criticise the impudent declaration of Lord Halifax, that the Church of England owes no allegiance to the State. If it were merely the declaration of Lord Halifax, it would scarcely be worth a moment's notice; but his lordship speaks as the head of the English Church Union, and his views upon this matter may be taken as representing those of the High Church party in general.

His lordship is good enough to say that the Church submits to the State “in all civil and temporal matters.” We suppose this means that if a clergyman commits a crime he may be punished like any other subject; and, further, that the Church agrees to let the State find the parsons, and secure to them, their livings from tithes and other public revenues. This is a kind of submission which the Church has always yielded with the greatest cheerfulness. But when it comes to “spiritual matters” the Church, or at least the High Church section, is anxious to repudiate every law but that of its own sweet will. It claims the right to teach anything it pleases—even that the moon is made of green cheese; and to do anything it pleases in the way of ceremonial—even worshipping the cross and celebrating Mass, although such practices were denounced by the “spiritual” founders of the Church, and are stigmatised as idolatrous in its very Articles.

No. 897.

These claims are seen to be preposterous in the light of history. The Church of England is the creature of the State. The sovereign takes an oath to maintain it “as by law established.” Everything pertaining to it came from the Crown and Parliament. It is really a branch of the Public Service. Every clergyman is as much a public official as a policeman. He is, indeed, a spiritual policeman, paid by the State to inculcate obedience to the authorities. Theoretically he teaches the way to heaven; practically he teaches the multitude to keep their hands from picking and stealing, to remain content in their various stations in life, and to order themselves lowly and reverently to all their betters.

The High Church party tell us that there always was a Church of England ever since the days of Saint Augustine. But this is nonsense. What existed in the country prior to the Reformation was the English Branch of the Roman Catholic Church. It was not a separate house of business, but a branch of the great firm whose head office was at Rome. That head office regulated its doctrine and ritual, appointed or sanctioned the appointment of its directors, and even controlled its revenues. A complete change, however, took place at the Reformation. The old English Branch of the Roman Catholic Church was really abolished, and the modern Church of England established in its stead. It makes no difference that a good deal of the old material was used in the new structure. The bricks or stones of an old house may be used in building a new one, but that does not make the two identical.

Henry the Eighth—the man of six wives—broke up the old English Branch of the Roman Catholic Church. He and his greedy gang of aristocratic abettors took away the property of the small monasteries in 1535, and of the large monasteries in 1539. The plunder was immense. Half the peerage owe their estates to that spoliation. Yet most of the plunderers were Catholics. It was just the same in Scotland. The people were fooled with religious fanaticism, while the aristocracy laughed in their sleeves and appropriated the Church lands and revenues.

The people, however, were ignorant and superstitious. They were used to religion, and could not do without it. There would have been a general rebellion if ministers had not been provided to officiate in the churches. The clergy who would not acknowledge the King's supremacy in spiritual as well as in temporal matters were weeded out, and provision was made for those who remained. Under Edward the Sixth, Henry's successor, it was found necessary to draw up an official collection of prayers, rites, and ceremonies. This was done, and the result is known as the Prayer Book. The men who drew it up were appointed by the king, and their work was approved and accepted by Parliament. It was alleged to conduce to the “great comfort and quietness of mind” of the king, who was then *eleven years of age*. It was also alleged that it was done “by the aid of the Holy Ghost.” Not long afterwards, for Edward was but a boy when he died, the very

men who said this helped Queen Mary to kick the Prayer Book out, and declared that the Holy Ghost had nothing to do with it. But soon afterwards, when Mary was succeeded by Elizabeth, they helped her to bring the Prayer Book back; the old lie about the assistance of the Holy Ghost was repeated, and that lie and the Prayer Book have gone hand-in-hand ever since.

This Prayer Book, which is the source of all the doctrine and ceremonial, and most of the discipline, of the Church of England—matters in which Lord Halifax repudiates the authority of the State—was forced into the Church and upon the people by king and Parliament. The Act which did it was “for the Uniformity of Service and Administration of Sacraments throughout the Realm.” It provided that if any rector, vicar, perpetual curate, or other priest, with benefice, did not use the Prayer Book, he should forfeit to the King one year’s revenue of his benefice, and be imprisoned for six months. If he repeated the offence, he was to be deprived of his benefice altogether, and imprisoned for one whole year. If the clergyman had no benefice, he was to be imprisoned for six months for the first offence; and, in the case of a second offence, he was to be imprisoned for his natural life. Penalties were also proclaimed against the laity. Anyone who said anything “in derogation, depraving, or despising the said Book of Common Prayer” was to be visited with fine and imprisonment; the final penalty being the forfeiture of his property, and imprisonment for life.

That is how the Prayer Book was forced upon the clergy and the people. It was all done by the King and the Parliament. The revenues of the Church were secured by law, and by law its doctrines, prayers, rites, and ceremonies were established. Yet in the face of all this the High Church party deny the spiritual authority of the State. Was there ever greater impudence? And can it be cured by anything short of disestablishment and disendowment?

G. W. FOOTE.

PAGANISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

It is a general opinion among orthodox believers that previous to the advent of Christianity the world was sunk in the depths of vice and general immorality, that intellectual darkness prevailed, and that genuine virtue had but few exemplars. These reckless denounciators of Paganism delude themselves that, with the dawn of Christianity, an entire transformation of the ethical condition of the people took place, and that the religion of Christ removed the blots that for a period stained the history of Rome. In refutation of such perversion of facts as these, we may refer to the noble characters of the Roman Emperors Domitian, Trajan, Adrian, Antoninus, and Aurelius, whose political honesty and moral force were never surpassed by any Christian rulers. We may also mention, in the language of J. S. Smith, “that few have had their names recorded in the book of history whose lives and characters can afford, in the perusal, more deep gratification to the benevolent and virtuous inquirer; few more worthy of our admiration and our imitation” than those of Socrates, Plato, Euclid of Megara, Epictetus, and many others whose moral teachings will survive and influence human conduct when orthodoxy shall be known only as an evil of the past. Those who seek to depreciate the moral teaching of Paganism should study the first volume of Lecky’s *History of European Morals*, where the beauty of its ethical precepts, the sublimity of the motives to which they appealed, and their freedom from superstitious elements are pointed out. It is there frankly stated that “the love of truth in many forms was exhibited among the Pagan philosophers to a degree which has never been surpassed.” Even the present Archbishop of Canterbury admits: “It is in the history of Rome, rather than in the Bible, that we find our models of precepts of political duty, and especially of the duty of patriotism.....To the Greeks we owe the corrective which conscience needs to borrow from nature.”

The comparison which many professed Christians draw between Paganism and Christianity is exceedingly unfair. They take the worst periods of Roman history, and compare the morals of the people then with the ethical condition of Christendom to-day. It has been aptly remarked:

“It is easy to make a catalogue of the glaring vices of antiquity, and to contrast them with the pure morality of Christian writings; but if we desire to form a just estimate of the realised improvement, we must compare the classical and ecclesiastical civilisations as wholes, and must observe in each case, not only the vices that were repressed, but also the degree and variety of positive excellence attained.” Now let us test Paganism and Christianity by this equitable rule. We have already stated that in Pagan times the highest morality was both taught and practised. That Rome had her vices no one can deny. Every nation has had its drawbacks, and Christian countries are no exception to the general rule. Before the sixteenth century the Church was the hotbed of the most demoralising vices. “In the time of St. Cyprian, before the outbreak of the Decian persecution, it had been common to find clergy professing celibacy, but keeping, under various pretences, their mistresses in their houses; and, after Constantine, the complaints on this subject became loud and general. Virgins and monks often lived together in the same house, and with a curious audacity of hypocrisy, which is very frequently noticed, they professed to have so overcome the passions of their nature that they shared in chastity the same bed.....The writers of the Middle Ages are full of accounts of nunneries that were like brothels, of the vast multitude of infanticides within their walls, and of that inveterate prevalence of incest among the clergy which rendered it necessary again and again to issue the most stringent enactments that priests should not be permitted to live with their mothers or sisters” (Lecky’s *History of European Morals*, vol. ii., pp. 159–60, 351). Granted that immorality stained the history of ancient Rome, so it did that of those countries where the Christian religion was supreme. Under the very shadow of the Cross cruelties of the deepest dye have been practised; bull-fights, bear and badger hunting, cock-fighting, pigeon-shooting, have all been (and some still are) indulged in with the authority of Christian governments. Even in England, during the reigns of Henry VIII., Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, and George IV., the state of morals was a disgrace to any civilised country. We are told that “the Christianity of the reign of George III. was a bloody farce and an abomination.....The state of the Church of England was one of the most surprising deadness and corruption” (Cassell’s *History of England*, vol. vi., pp. 572–574). The fact is, Greece and Rome, with all their immorality, will bear comparison with the early ages of Christianity.

Of course it is only reasonable to suppose that, as the centuries have flown on, improvement would take place. This is in accordance with the general law of progress. But to what are we indebted for the improvement that has been made? Certainly not to Christianity, inasmuch as for fifteen hundred years, when the Church had absolute authority, and when Christianity was adhered to more than at any other period, comparatively no physical, intellectual, and moral advance was perceptible. It was reserved for secular agencies to produce the reformation of modern times. It would never have been brought about by the faith accepted by the poverty-stricken people who lived along the shores of Galilee and the banks of the river Jordan. They paid no regard to industrial pursuits, and entirely ignored the classic literature of Greece and Rome. They quietly submitted to authority, and accepted slavery as a Christian institution. Their principal object was to gain a heavenly crown rather than to secure a happy home on earth. Lecky, in the second volume of his *History of European Morals* (pp. 17, 18), gives a list of secular agencies to which we owe our present civilisation. Let the reader study what is there written, and he will see that our modern ideas as to man’s social condition, woman’s proper position, the curse of slavery, the duty of resisting tyrants, the reliance upon human effort and natural law, and the proper use of wealth are based, not upon Christianity, but upon human experience and the other secular agencies to which the historian refers.

It is the boast of a certain class of Christian exponents that the decline of Paganism was the result of the dawn of Christianity, and that the better parts of the Pagan faith were corrupt notions of Bible conceptions. This last allegation Max Müller has shown to be utterly false. He says: “The opinion that the Pagan religions were mere corruptions of the religion of the Old Testament, once supported by men of high authority and great learning, is now as completely surrendered as the attempts of explaining

Greek and Latin as corruptions of Hebrew" (*Lectures on the Science of Religion*, p. 24). As to the assertion that the decay of Paganism was due to the influence of Christianity, it has no foundation in fact. The decline of the Pagan faiths had commenced long before Christianity appeared. Lewes, in his *History of Philosophy*, writes: "The progress of Polytheism to Monotheism was a continuous development." It was, he intimates, "Greek philosophy that opened men's eyes to human duty." Cotter Morison, in his *Service of Man*, remarks: "It is often assumed that this proud heathenism and pagan glory were overthrown by the meek and unlearned disciples of the Galilean prophet of God. Nothing can be less true than this assumption" (p. 174). Even the Rev. Dr. Caird admits: "There had been a time when the Pagan mythologies were the expression of a real belief, instinct with the warmth and vitality of genuine, though mistaken, convictions. But the mind of man had outgrown them.... Even amongst the uneducated mass the worship of the old gods had dried up into a superstitious form from which the life had departed" (Introduction to *The Philosophy of Religion*, p. 337). As a matter of fact, Paganism was never thoroughly destroyed, as many of its symbols, ceremonies, and doctrines were incorporated with Christianity, and still hold a prominent place in the Christian system.

Among the general causes of the decline of Paganism the following may be mentioned:—The people had grown weary of their gods; intellect and philosophy had become active forces; the masses were indifferent, and theology had lost its vitality. The fall of the Roman Empire, observes the Rev. Freeman Clarke in his *Ten Great Religions*, was caused by the curse of Cæsarism and the increase of philosophy. "So," he adds, "ended the Roman religion; in superstition among the ignorant, and in unbelief among the wise."

CHARLES WATTS.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNBELIEF.

"On religion in particular, the time appears to me to have come when it is the duty of all who, being qualified in point of knowledge, have, on mature consideration, satisfied themselves that the current opinions are not only false, but hurtful, to make their dissent known."—JOHN STUART MILL.

ALTHOUGH fully a quarter of a century has elapsed since Mill penned the above sentence, yet, despite the gradual decay of religious ideas that has been going on since his time, it is a deeply regrettable circumstance that his advice has by no means been adopted to the extent that it ought to have been. True, the incursions into the Freethought ranks have been by no means inconsiderable; while in literature, and the world at large, the growing strength of Freethought is obvious to all but those who clap their blind eye to the telescope and then complain that they can see nothing. Nevertheless, there must exist, and does exist, a very large number of people who, while holding heretical opinions, are content to float with the stream, sometimes openly professing a belief in orthodox religious views, at other times taking no public part on either one side or the other, but, like Brer Rabbit, content to "lay low and say nuffin."

Now this condition of affairs I hold to be bad for several reasons. First, I take it that few men play the hypocrite because they like the part. In almost every case there will be more or less conscious self-stultification and self-mortification attendant upon such a position. And yet it is very evident that by their conduct they are simply perpetuating the conditions that oppress them. In an age like ours bigotry is only strong when intellectual men are quiescent. It is their reticence which gives to intolerance a strength not rightly its own, and places at the mercy of bigots the few who have the courage to speak out. It is easy to boycott one, it is much more difficult to boycott a thousand, and it becomes almost impossible to boycott opinions as widespread as ours, if only those holding them publicly avowed their possession. Let all who hold opinions antagonistic to the current religion say so, and, just as numbers make treason respectable, so the numbers of those who have shaken off Christianity would command at least the respectful silence of those who condemn Freethought without understanding it, and are frequently destitute of the qualities that would enable them to do so.

Secondly, the attitude taken up by so many inflicts an injustice upon those who are doing their best to win for Freethought principles the respect they deserve. Rationalism has a sufficiently arduous task before it, fighting the forces of inherited prejudice, immense wealth, and enormous power, without having to fight in addition the apathy of its own followers. The task of the Freethought advocate is by no means an easy one; his couch is anything but a bed of roses; but the thorns that line his bed have frequently their sharpest sting given them by the consciousness that many who should be bearing their share of the work are standing quietly by, passive spectators instead of active helpers. Let each one realise that his abstention means a fresh force on the wrong side; that whatever his strength may be, little or much, so long as it is not exerted on behalf of those who are championing his opinions, it is so much force thrown upon the side of the common enemy. In this matter there is no such thing as remaining neutral. As a matter of sober fact, the man who is not with us is against us.

I know it will be said that frequently an expression of opinion invites persecution, and that the average man is not cut out for a martyr, and will not become one. Be it so. It is a weakness of human nature that we may regret, but one that we have to reckon with. It is true, also, that the blame for hesitancy in this matter lies principally at the doors of those who make truth-speaking and general honesty such expensive luxuries to those who indulge in them. Habits of mental industry and straightforwardness are not so deeply engrained in the average man that he will brave all kinds of discomfort to express them. Undoubtedly the responsibility for a large part of the hypocrisy around rests with that religious world which rates a hypocritical conformity far higher than a frank avowal of unbelief. Yet, making all allowances, surely more might be done than is being done, even by the ordinary Freethinker, for the advancement of his principles. Certainly there are thousands of little compromises made where none need be made, and compromises which reflect little credit upon either party.

Nor does the evil of hiding one's real opinions end here. It destroys all confidence between man and man, and strikes at the very foundations of national security. How can I be certain that any man believes what he says, or that any profession of faith is sincere, so long as I feel that each is acting upon the principle of hiding his real opinions until it is safe to express them? The whole sense of public honesty is destroyed, the whole tone of public life is lowered, and that sense of mutual helpfulness and comradeship essential to a true democracy gradually annihilated.

It is not by methods such as these that the triumphs of civilisation have been secured. On the contrary, a weak-kneed, temporising frame of mind has always been the greatest obstacle in the way of healthy development, and the deadliest enemy of the few who saw the truth and strove to express it. Civilisation has been sown in blood and harvested in tears, as a result of the mental indolence of one class and the savage bigotry of another; and the very consciousness of the evil done by irrational opinions in the past should prove our strongest incentive for straightforward speech in the present.

To Freethinkers there is committed the solemn and, if the word is admissible, sacred duty of defending with all their power, of intensifying with all their might, and disseminating with all their strength, the truths that previous generations have fought and died for, and of which we to-day are the custodians. Too often this enormous responsibility is evaded by the plea—"I respect the opinions of others, and therefore let them alone," as though a Freethinker's duty was solely concerned with the opinions of other people. Do we owe no duty to our own convictions? And how are we carrying out that duty when we allow what we believe to be idle and evil tales to be promulgated without any effort on our part to counteract their influence? I do not believe in respecting the opinions of others. The phrase is a ridiculous one. I no more respect the opinion that a man's salvation is dependent upon swallowing a wafer, or having prayers mumbled over him in a tub of water, than I respect the opinions of an African savage, or of an Inquisitor about to sentence a heretic to the stake. All that I respect is the right of each man and woman to hold opinions differing from mine, and to express them by tongue or pen. It is because I respect their right that I assert my own. I do not believe that it

is my duty as a Freethinker to remain silent while a man is flaunting his religious opinions in my face, as though there were some special virtue in believing a lie or cherishing an absurdity, if only it has a respectable antiquity behind it. To me the right of expression carries with it the right of denial; and the possession of truth the duty of enunciating it. I believe, therefore, that a Freethinker performs his duty but poorly who refrains from attacking erroneous opinions, no matter how cherished by their possessor, with every legitimate weapon that reason has in its armory.

Yet again, the "responsibilities of unbelief" are evaded by the question: "Why should I disturb the opinions in which others, even the members of my own family, find peace and consolation?" Although this plea appeals with peculiar force to many, I do not believe it is any more defensible than the one I have been criticising. In my opinion, the man who grasps a truth where others cherish error has thrown upon him a responsibility not to be evaded by the plea that people hug their delusions as some slaves do their chains. The truth that has been slowly and painfully elaborated by preceding generations is no man's private property, to be used solely in his own interest and on his own behalf. He who has it holds it in trust for others; he is responsible, so far as his powers and opportunities extend, for its right use and cultivation, and the heaviest responsibility of all is that of not assuming the responsibilities that are rightly ours. Who is there who can count the enormous responsibility of holding back truth upon such a feeble plea as this? "Do you believe," asks a writer in one of the reviews, "that a single individual has a right to hide from others that which he believes to be the truth? Do you seriously consider that a man is doing right in destroying, for the sake of the supposed happiness of his children, the spark of truth which happens to be in his power, and which belongs neither to him nor his children, but to the whole world? Can you assert that it is honest on your part, in order to save your children the pain of knowing that they will not meet you, or their mother, or their dead friends again in heaven, to refuse to give them that truth for which your ancestors have paid with their blood and their liberty, and which your children are bound to hand on to their children in order that this little spark of truth may grow into a fire which shall warm and light the whole world?"

Decidedly we have not that right. To suppress the truth is but one of many methods of suggesting error, or of telling a lie. It is a crime against ourselves, our fellows, and against generations yet unborn. In our day, when instincts for good are wildly groping for expression, when beliefs and make-beliefs are jostling each other all round, it is not easy to over-estimate the value of clear thinking and accurate expression. Upon the cultivation of these qualities largely depends the ultimate solution of most of the problems that beset us; and I for one fail to see how these qualities are to be developed so long as people are content to hide their real opinions in order to gain some fancied advantage, or fail to express their beliefs for fear they may disturb the intellectual serenity of those around them.

I do not mean that every Freethinker is morally bound to go round shouting out his convictions at all times and at all places, or inviting believers to take part in an intellectual Donnybrook by treading on the tail of his coat. I mean simply that it is our duty to stand honestly and manfully by our beliefs, to express them reasonably and clearly when the occasion demands, and at no time to suppress them on behalf of a feeble and dishonorable concession to bigotry, prejudice, or absurd social custom. I want each one to realise that the duty he owes to the truth he sees is far greater than any feeling of respect he may entertain for the errors that other men cherish; that each should "realise the fact that opinion is the agency through which character adapts external arrangements to itself—that his opinion rightly forms part of this agency—is a unit of force, constituting with other such units the general power which works out social changes; and he will perceive that he may properly give full utterance to his innermost conviction, leaving it to produce what effect it may.....He, with all his capacities and aspirations and beliefs, is not an accident, but a product of the time. He must remember that, while he is a descendant of the past, he is a parent of the future, and that his thoughts are as children born to him, which he may not carelessly let die.....The highest

truth he sees he will fearlessly utter, knowing that, let what may come of it, he is thus playing his right part in the world—knowing that if he effect the change he aims at—well, if not—well also; though not so well.*

C. COHEN.

LOCKE'S "LETTERS ON TOLERATION."

(Concluded from page 614.)

LOCKE notices that the greatest zealots for persecution are quiet enough when the magistrate is not on their side. "Where they have not the power to carry on persecution," he says, "there they desire to live upon fair terms, and preach up Toleration." This is the attitude of all sects, and yet how absurd as well as wicked!

"In private domestic affairs, in the management of estates, in the conservation of bodily health, every man may consider what suits his own conveniency, and follow what course he likes best. No man complains of the ill-management of his neighbors' affairs. No man is angry with another for an error committed in sowing his land, or in marrying his daughter. Nobody corrects a spendthrift for consuming his substance in taverns. Let any man pull down, or build, or make whatsoever expenses he pleases, nobody controls him; he has his liberty. But if any man do not frequent the church, if he do not there conform his behavior exactly to the accustomed ceremonies, or if he brings not his children to be initiated in the sacred mysteries of this or that other congregation; this immediately causes an uproar, and the neighborhood is filled with noise and clamor. Every one is ready to be the avenger of so great a crime. And the zealots hardly have patience to refrain from violence and rapine, so long till the cause be heard, and the poor man be, according to form, condemned to the loss of liberty, goods, or life."

True, says Locke, a man may neglect the care of his soul; but so he may neglect his health or his estate; and how is either any business of mine?

Without explicitly saying so, Locke evidently saw, with Milton and Taylor, that the assumption of infallibility lies at the bottom of all persecution. If the magistrate coerce me on his own account, or on behalf of the Church, he is, in either case, imposing his own judgment on me; for "What difference is there, whether he lead me himself, or deliver me over to be led by others?" And why is his judgment better than mine on a matter in which I am deeply concerned, and he not at all? Judging from history, princes have turned religion this way and that as it suited them. Even in England "how easily and smoothly the clergy changed their decrees" under Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth. Now, if the prince, says Locke, orders me to follow any particular avocation, I will do so, for if I fail he can compensate me. But how can he compensate me in the life to come? If I take the wrong course thither, and I am once undone, "it is not in the magistrate's power to repair my loss, to ease my suffering, or to restore me in any measure, much less entirely, to a good estate. What security can be given for the kingdom of heaven?" Even if he happens to be right in the particular instance, his coercion will not save me. "I may grow rich by an art that I take not delight in; I may be cured of some disease by remedies that I have not faith in; but I cannot be saved by a religion that I distrust, and by a worship that I abhor."

With respect to public worship, Locke is ahead of Cromwell, who would not tolerate the Mass; and even ahead of Milton, who appears to have shared the Lord Protector's sentiment. Locke's rule is simple and incontrovertible. What is lawful outside a church is lawful inside, and what is unlawful inside is unlawful outside. He goes so far as to say: "If any people, congregated upon account of religion, should be desirous to sacrifice a calf, I deny that they ought to be prohibited by a law. Molibœus, whose calf it is, may lawfully kill his calf at home, and burn any part of it that he thinks fit. For no injury is thereby done to any one, no prejudice to another man's goods. And for the same reason he may kill his calf also at a religious meeting." But if it became necessary to stop the slaughter of beasts for some time, such sacrifices would have to cease, not on religious, but on political grounds.

If the religious worship of any church be idolatrous, the

* H. Spencer: *First Principles*.

magistrate has still no right to interfere, for idolatry is a matter only of opinion among men, and whatsoever sin is in it is for God alone to judge. With his usual practical good sense, Locke takes an extreme illustration, so as to "trace this matter to the bottom."

"An inconsiderable and weak number of Christians, destitute of everything, arrive in a pagan country; these foreigners beseech the inhabitants, by the bowels of humanity, that they would succor them with the necessaries of life; those necessaries are given them, habitations are granted, and they all join together, and grow up into one body of people. The Christian religion by this means takes root in that country, and spreads itself; but does not suddenly grow the strongest. While things are in this condition, peace, friendship, faith, and equal justice are preserved amongst them. At length the magistrate becomes a Christian, and by that means their party becomes the most powerful. Then immediately all compacts are to be broken, all civil rights to be violated, that idolatry may be extirpated, and unless these innocent pagans, strict observers of the rule of equity and the law of nature, and no ways offending against the laws of the society, I say unless they will forsake their ancient religion, and embrace a new and strange one, they are to be turned out of the lands and possessions of their forefathers, and perhaps deprived of life itself. Then at last it appears what zeal for the Church, joined with the desire of dominion, is capable to produce; and how easily the pretence of religion, and the care of souls, serves for a cloak to covetousness, rapine, and ambition."

As to the tenets that may be publicly taught, Locke urges a wide tolerance. He expressly mentions Roman Catholics, who were under legal disabilities, and Jews, who had not long been permitted to reside in England after centuries of banishment.

"The magistrate ought not to forbid the preaching or professing of any speculative opinions in any church, because they have no manner of relation to the civil rights of the subjects. If a Roman Catholic believe that to be really the body of Christ which another man calls bread, he does no injury thereby to his neighbor. If a Jew does not believe the New Testament to be the Word of God, he does not thereby alter anything in men's civil rights. If a heathen doubt of both Testaments, he is not therefore to be punished as a pernicious citizen. The power of the magistrate, and the estates of the people, may be equally secure, whether any man believe these things or no."

Nothing could be plainer. "The temporal good and outward prosperity of society" is the only object of law, and "no man whatsoever ought to be deprived of his terrestrial enjoyments upon account of his religion." But, unfortunately, Locke did not realise the full extent of the great principle which sounds like a refrain through his Letter. If the magistrate has no concern with religion, he has no concern with irreligion. It is not this or that *opinion*, but the *subject* itself, which is withdrawn from its jurisdiction. This is Locke's argument throughout, yet strangely enough he fails to see it himself when he comes to an ultimate test. His intolerance of the Romish Church, which, by acknowledging the supremacy of the Pope, is really under the dominion of a foreign prince, was arguable on political grounds; but his intolerance of Atheism is nothing but sheer bigotry. Let us take his own words:—

"Those are not to be tolerated who deny the being of a God. Promises, covenants, and oaths, which are the bonds of human society, can have no hold upon an atheist. The taking away of God, though but even in thought, dissolves all. Besides also, those that by their atheism undermine and destroy all religion can have no pretence of religion whereupon to challenge the privilege of a Toleration."

Like Cardinal Newman, we have "a high respect both for the character and the ability of Locke, for his manly simplicity of mind and his outspoken candor." We cannot, therefore, believe that he deliberately made a concession to the bigots for the sake of a hearing, or that he threw them the atheists to glut their hunger in order to keep them from preying on each other. We assume that Locke meant what he said. In that case it must be allowed that he fell a victim to prejudice in the very midst of his letter on Toleration. He had the testimony of history, and the weighty authority of Bacon, against the statement that Atheism was a source of disorder; and whatever he may have conjectured as to the veracity of Atheists, he must surely have seen sufficient proof of the mendacity of believers. But that is by the way. The real point is that

he stultifies himself by giving up his own argument. After contending that religion and the commonwealth are entirely distinct, and that the magistrate has nothing to do with men's opinions, but only with their actions as these affect the public peace, he puts Atheists outside the pale of toleration on the ground that they have no religion at all; which is exactly as though he had argued that the government had nothing to do with men's head-gear, and then called on it to punish these who wore no hats.

Locke did not see—he could not see, for it has only dawned on us since his time—that this very notion, so carefully instilled by the priests, that morality depends on belief in the supernatural, is the mental justification of all bigotry. For if morality depends on belief, it must, of course, depend on the *right* belief, and the right belief is, of course, the possession of every church. Each sect, therefore, when it gets the upper hand, can conscientiously persecute all other sects in the interest of civil society. Nor, on the other hand, did Locke see that Toleration is essentially irreligious. No such idea arose in Christendom until scepticism began to spread. The Reformers never harbored the idea of a truce with heresy. Luther and Calvin persecuted as heartily as the Pope. Toleration springs from doubt and indifference, and religion without bigotry is almost a contradiction in terms. G. W. FOOTE.

YOM KIPPUR.

At the moment of writing the Jews are engaged in observing their *Day of Atonement*—at least in these latitudes. Being kept from sunset to sunset, as are their feasts and Sabbath, there is good reason for considering it a moon ceremony. It falls within a period of twenty-one days, and is kept on the tenth day of the seventh month, or of the first month of the civil year. On this day the orthodox Jew neither eats, drinks, nor performs any of the varied duties of life, believing that by thus acting all his sins of the past year are expiated. For the origin of this superstition the Jew finds authority in the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus. Some of our friends think that the superstitions and follies of the Jewish scriptures are obsolete; yet here we have to-day millions of men, women, and children subjecting themselves to the hardships and follies of a fetish that has been exploded, so far as its alleged origin is concerned, by Jew and Gentile alike. It is curious to note that the Douay version heads the chapter "The Feast of Expiation." Strange feast, to abstain from food and drink for twenty-four hours! The eighth verse of the chapter is: "And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats, one for the Lord [Yahveh], and the other lot for Azazel." For the latter word the Douay has "emissary goat." Samuel Sharpe, in his version, renders the word "scapegoat." This word "Azazel" is enough in itself to determine the late origin of the legend. These two unfortunate goats should command our sympathy—one being killed by Aaron for Yahveh; the other, with all the sins of the Jews upon its head, being taken to (and deserted) in the desert. A bullock also is slaughtered with Yahveh's goat; the blood of the two animals is daubed on the walls of the sanctuary, and the flesh, skin, and dung taken out and burned.

Smith (*Bible Dictionary*) tells us that the old commentators tried to identify Azazel with the goat; but, as the writer says, this "involves the Hebrew text into insuperable difficulties. If one expression is to be rendered for *Jehovah*, it would seem that the other must be for *Azazel*, with the preposition in the same sense." Kalisch says "there can be no doubt whatever that Azazel is a *personal*, a *superhuman*, and an *evil being*—in fact, a wicked demon." The Jews knew nothing of this being until after the Babylonian captivity; hence the fact is indubitable that the *Yom Kippur* is a post-exilic legend. In the apocryphal books, and in the writings of the Jewish rabbis (to again quote Kalisch), "the character, life, and fate of the demon Azazel, or Azael—for both names seem identical—are more fully unfolded. He was originally a good angel; and one of the chiefs of the two hundred who went down to the earth stayed longer than the lawful period of seven days, and held carnal intercourse with mortal women, upon which they were converted into evil spirits." Colenso makes it still more clear that the legend is an invention

of the Jewish priests: "This mention of the evil spirit Azazel, whether identical with Satan or not, is another sign of the later origin of the L.L. (Later Leviticus), since the Jews appear to have first adopted the notion of the existence of evil spirits from the Persian religions during the captivity."* Gesenius is quoted by Mr. Bradlaugh† as saying: "By this name I suppose to be understood some idol, to be appeased by sacrifices, as Saturn and Mars. Afterwards, I suppose, from the names of idols being often applied to demons, this name was used for that of an evil demon inhabiting the wilderness, who had to be appeased by sacrifices by this very ancient and Gentile rite." Thus a similar superstition was rife in the non-Jewish world and anterior to this late, very late legend in Leviticus.

That it is a late legend, and unknown to the earlier writers of the Old Testament, suffice it to say that in Deuteronomy, Joshua, Kings, and Prophets no inkling appears of this extraordinary ceremonial and fast. Many references occur in the older writings; but, like the Passover, *Yom Kippur* could not have been celebrated, or a notice of it would appear.

Yet the chapter opens with these words: "And Yahveh spoke to Moses." Then follow all the ridiculous and cruel rites with which the narrative abounds. Kalisch, the learned Jewish Hebraist, shatters the whole story so far as its pretended origin is concerned. He conclusively proves that it was derived from a heathen—that is, a Gentile—source, and that it "was instituted considerably more than a thousand years after the death of Moses and Aaron";‡ and, further, he says and proves that it is of later origin than B.C. 440.

How sad it is to remember that priestcraft, both Jewish and Christian, still persistently labors to prop up these delusions as being revelations from God, contending that these ceremonies have been performed continuously from the time they were first instituted in an age when they were really—and for more than a thousand years after—totally unknown. This legend and others serve the purpose of the priests by keeping a poor and servile people in their power; for, though some Jews are wealthy, the great mass of them, in Europe especially, are probably worse off than the Irish peasantry. Of late, however, Freethought has reached the more intelligent of them, and on *Yom Kippur* they make holiday, feast instead of fast, dance and sing rather than moan and cry, and hold meetings to discuss their condition and prospects, greatly to the horror of their ignorant and superstitious brethren.

ROBERT FORDER.

MILITARISM IN GERMANY.

HOW ARISTOCRATIC OFFICERS KILL COMMON SOLDIERS.

THE following particulars are given by the *Vorwärts* of the sensational death of Sergeant Scheinhardt. It was the duty of the sergeant to superintend the preparation of the food in a self-acting cooking apparatus. During the night preceding the sad occurrence Scheinhardt was, however, sent away for forage. During his absence the soldiers attending to the cooking forgot to fasten the indiarubber ring which hermetically closes the apparatus. The consequence was that the food was sour. When Sergeant Scheinhardt returned it had already been distributed to the men. Captain Count zu Stolberg-Wenigerode called Scheinhardt to account for the spoilt rations, and the sergeant excused himself by pointing out that during its preparation he had been absent. Later the captain, notwithstanding, renewed his reproaches, declaring that Scheinhardt was the "greatest scamp" and the "lowest hound" in the regiment. Scheinhardt was naturally greatly excited by this, and answered that he did not think he deserved such names. Upon this the Count gave him such a heavy blow on the ear that he was thrown against a wagon. Scheinhardt said to some of his comrades who had witnessed the scene: "You saw that I was struck." Count Stolberg thereupon drew his sword, struck the man first on the leg, and then stabbed him on the left side of the head. Scheinhardt pulled out his handkerchief to wipe away the blood, drew himself up once more in a soldierly attitude, and then dropped down unconscious. He was taken at once to the hospital at Hagenau, but died the next evening without having regained consciousness.

* New Bible Com., Levit., p. 30. † Bible: What it is, p. 319.
‡ Levit., p. 266.

ACID DROPS.

THE battle between the Army and the Civil Government continues in France. By a clever but unscrupulous stroke on the part of General Zurlinden, the Army has got possession of the person of Colonel Picquart, who is the principal witness against the liars, forgers, and plotters of the General Staff. But it will not be easy to *burke* him in the military prison. Colonel Picquart threw down a terrible bombshell in open court. "Well," he said, "I shall sleep probably this evening at the Cherche Midi prison. But before I go there I wish to declare that I shall never make use of the cord of Lemercier Picard, or of the razor of Colonel Henry. If they find me dead, it will be because I was assassinated." Splendid! They can't kill him now. To do that would raise an irresistible storm of public wrath. France has been misled; she is not rotten enough to connive at open infamy.

There could be no stronger proof of the innocence of Dreyfus than the extraordinary and unspeakable means taken to hide the real facts. There is little room for doubt that he was picked out as a scapegoat because he was a Jew. The Anti-Semite feeling was strong enough to prevent any Jew accused of such a crime from finding friends or obtaining justice; and it is generally believed that the chief plotter against Dreyfus was a Catholic nobleman, a devoted son of Holy Mother Church. For our part, we are for justice anyhow, but we feel an especial disgust when injustice is perpetrated in the interest of religious bigotry.

During the first trial of Zola a lady witness stepped into the box, and a strange hush fell upon the crowded and excited court. It was Madame Dreyfus. Her husband's enemies were touched in spite of themselves. The sanctity of her sorrow awed the most brutal of them. Nay, not the most brutal, for one wretch dared to hiss the wife who believed in her husband's innocence, the mother who guarded the honor of his children. That wretch was viler than any criminal in the prisons of France.

When there is so much selfishness and frivolity in the world it is good to know that it also contains a woman like Madame Dreyfus. Through four years of incessant torture she has hoped and striven for her husband's vindication. Every woman with a heart must feel for her, and all true women must be proud of her. It is not in endless seeking of new rights of pleasure that woman realises her highest possibilities. It is when she stands for love in honor and honor in love, when she puts aside cheap delights for the sake of holy duties, when she rises sublimely to the lofty guardianship of the threatened altar fire of her home. Then she is a priestess more sacred than the vestal virgins of old; reverence and worship attend her footsteps, and man bows before her and adores. Compared with the sentiment she then evokes, what is usually called love is but froth on the ocean of life.

We have more than once referred to M. Casimir-Perier, ex-President of the French Republic, as a man of great ability and high character. We have said that he resigned because he would not countenance dishonorable proceedings that were being carried on by eminent personages. The whole truth has apparently now been given to the world. An evidently well-informed writer in the *Daily News* tells the whole inner story of M. Casimir-Perier's resignation. The German Ambassador's dispatch to the Emperor was broken open and photographed, and its contents communicated to the French Government. The French President was informed of this by the Ambassador. He was ignorant of it before. He was very indignant, and promised that he would exert his influence to prevent a repetition of it. Count Münster sent another despatch to the Emperor, and that was broken open in the same way. Count Münster then told the President that the Emperor would mobilise his army if satisfaction were not given immediately. M. Casimir-Perier thereupon said: "Tell your Emperor that this satisfaction shall be given to him by myself, the President, repudiating publicly such outrages committed against a power at peace with France. I do not want to sacrifice my country; I will leave the Presidency. Pray his Majesty to be satisfied." Two days afterwards M. Casimir-Perier resigned. "Perhaps," he said, in his striking public letter, "in resigning my functions I have pointed out their duty to those holding the power, whose care should be the good renown and the maintenance of France's dignity in the face of the world." Then he retired like an honorable man into private life.

It is a most extraordinary story, and it does not look like an invention. Anyhow it is now public property, and those concerned may deny it if they can. The chiefs of the Army and the War Ministers have been doing their best or worst to drag France in the mire. It is high time that a strong stand was made against them, and every friend of the Republic must be glad that the Government has at last

handed over the Dreyfus case to the Court of Appeal for revision. This is restoring the reign of justice and legality, and perhaps it saves the Republic from destruction.

Admiral Cervera, whose fleet was annihilated off Santiago, has returned to Spain, where, of course, he did not meet with a very enthusiastic reception. Speaking to an interviewer, he said: "Spain has been living in an imaginary world, and it is necessary that she should now learn the realities of life." Wise words and brave! Spain has really been living in a fool's paradise, with the Catholic Church as her bamboozler and plunderer. What she has got to do is to break loose from priestcraft, and think and act for herself. She may then take her place in the march of civilisation. Her people have many good qualities if these were only allowed fair play.

Mr. Charles Williams, the *Daily Chronicle* war correspondent, praises General Kitchener's project of a Gordon Memorial College at Khartoum, to be unsectarian, and devoted to training the most promising young natives in the arts and sciences of civilisation. Mr. Williams says that "the scheme opens up a vista of light and leading for East Central Africa generally, and the Nile Valley in particular, which is entrancing." "But if," he adds, "according to some of our folk at home, an institution of this sort is to be identified with Christianity in any shape, then failure, hopeless failure, may be predicted for it."

The following advertisement appeared recently in a religious journal:—

"BETHESDA, —.—Beautiful country home, near the sea. Christian fellowship. 3s. per day. Sickly persons desiring to trust the Lord will be considered financially.—Apply —.—Stamped envelope."

What an unctuous mixture of religion and business! Note the hint of reduced terms for those who desire to trust the Lord—that is, to get rest and fresh air at a cheap rate. Nothing but piety is equal to these things.

James Bosley is resting from his labors at his country's expense. His holiday will last for three months. The physician who ordered it sits on a raised seat in the Woolwich Police-court. James Bosley has spent seven years in that way altogether. His latest achievement was begging in the streets. He saluted the passers-by with well-chosen Bible texts, such as "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver," "Whoso giveth unto the poor lendeth unto the Lord." During his retreat he will have a Bible, and no other book, day and night. This should enable him to resume business with a fresh supply of texts.

The Queen has sent £100 to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. She had better have sent the money to some society for the promotion of knowledge amongst Christians. Lots of them want it badly.

People wonder that murderous Anarchists are bred in Italy, but the Government breeds them there. It is a miserable thing to assassinate a woman, whether an empress or a stair-washer, but is it any better to take a refined gentleman like the editor of the *Milan Secolo*, who is guilty of no crime according to English standards, and subjecting him to the torture of solitary confinement for four years, accompanied by semi-starvation? Why are the crimes of incensed subjects worse than the crimes of brutal governments? Will someone kindly explain?

While so much money is spent on converting the heathen in different parts of the world, it is well to reflect on the destitution and misery which exist at home. The following is from our Radical contemporary, the *New Age*:—

"From time to time the curtain is lifted on the tragedies that are taking place every day in the great cities of the nation; and, to the eyes of all who can see, terrible pictures are revealed. Here are the facts that were made plain last week in the coroner's court at Shoreditch, at an inquest on a little child, aged nine weeks. Four people—the father, a boot-finisher, the wife, a slipper-maker, and two children—occupied one small room, 'scantily furnished, but fairly clean,' for which a rent of 2s. a week was paid. The father had been out of work for five weeks, and the family had depended upon the earnings of the mother, who, for working all the week, received 4s.—1½d. a pair was the price paid for slippers. After the rent was paid 2s. remained for the family to live upon. And the youngest child, an infant of nine weeks, was the first to succumb. Dr. Berdoe declared that all the organs of the child were healthy, that its death was entirely due to want of sufficient food and nourishment. The weight of this poor child, starved to death in the richest city in the world, was 4lb. 7oz. The coroner asked the mother why parish relief had not been applied for, and the woman's answer is remarkable: 'When my husband was ill I applied to them, and they refused to help me, so I thought it would be useless to apply again.' What answer can wealthy

Christian England give to these facts; what answer to the cries of this little child, slowly tortured by hunger till Death, the merciful deliverer, came? A few inches in the daily paper, a passing observation, the whole matter judged of fleeting interest. But the facts, the damning facts, remain. No one is punished for the death of this infant, whom a few more pence more a day would have kept alive. What of the parents and child who remain? The horror of it all is too appalling for words."

A Vegetarian Church is being started at Bayswater. The leading spirit is a lady. We wish she would explain why the Lord accepted Abel's roast mutton, and turned up his nose at Cain's peas and asparagus.

The Free Churches in the Llantysilio district emphatically protest against the "desecration of the Lord's Day under the cloak of Christian worship and religion." This is a hit at the vicar, who, instead of preaching against Sunday cycling, invites cyclists to visit his gospel-shop. How they love one another!

When Mormon meets Mormon then comes the tug-of-war. Down at Tunbridge Wells a Mormon preacher of the "re-organised Church" denounces the polygamous gospel of two other Mormon preachers of the Brigham Young school as "animalistic." Religionists tell the truth about each other sometimes.

Christianity is always boasting—and a lying boast it is—of how it abolished slavery. Well, slavery is abolished in the United States, for instance; but how do the white Christians treat their black "brethren"? Not a single Young Men's Christian Association will allow a colored youth to become a member. Down in South Carolina the "Jim Crow" or negro car on the trains is now imperative. No matter how wealthy or intelligent the negro may be, he must not travel with the whites. They are all going to the same heaven, of course, but they won't mix till they get there.

The dear old *Rock* deprecates the formation of new Protestant societies, which is only "giving the enemy further occasion to blaspheme." Does the "enemy" mean Free-thinkers or Roman Catholics?

Everybody knows that the Ritualist party in the Church of England is introducing private confession. But this party is not allowed to have its own way unchecked. The Bishop of Gibraltar, who is addressing congregations in England, says that confession is alien to the nature of the English people, who will "never again submit to a system which requires themselves, their wives, and daughters to tell into the ears of man their most secret sins, and the most sacred confidences of their personal and their domestic lives." Dr. Sandford predicts that "they will never again bow their necks beneath a yoke which their forefathers found intolerable."

Even the grave and reverent *Times* speaks out strongly against the High Church conspiracy. There can be no question, it says, that if this section of the clergy are not arrested in their present course they will have to "abandon their positions in the Church of England," or else "the nation will determine that, if the Church sanctions such teaching and practices, it must be as an independent religious body, not speaking in the name of the English people." This is a plain warning that disestablishment and disendowment are looming in the future.

Mr. Labouchere, in last week's *Truth*, wrote a tremendous attack upon Mr. John Kensit, the Protestant champion. It is of such a nature that, as the *Chronicle* observes, a libel action on Mr. Kensit's part should bring him "damages ample enough to secure him a modest fortune." Mr. Kensit, however, is not taking any.

Under the heading of "Brotherly Love in the Town Hall," the *Birmingham Daily Mail* makes some remarks on the recent Kensit meeting. "One half of the meeting," it says, "looked as though it would like to slaughter the other half. The fires of Smithfield seemed rekindled in the flashing eyes of some of the fanatics who shook their fists and flourished their sticks."

All the Christian Evidence and Anti-Infidel scum in London are having an innings in the *South London Mail*, but Freethinkers can afford to smile at the illiterate malignity of this ragged regiment of defenders of the faith. What is noticeable is that the public subscription for prosecuting Freethinkers languishes. Perhaps the editor of the *Mail* and his pious friends are unable to find a sufficient and suitable treasurer. Why not accept our suggestion of Mr. Teapot Taylor?

Undoubtedly the craze for sport and athletics is becoming

a dangerous nuisance in this country. But we shall hope in vain for an improvement if the only remedy is prayer, as we are told by the Rev. Thomas Phillips, of Kettering, who has recently been preaching at Watford. The reverend gentleman was also good enough to attribute the passion for football amongst young men to what he called the materialism of the age. This must be one of his little jokes. Many papers with great orthodox pretensions, sworn friends of Christianity in all its forms, give unlimited sporting news, but none ever appears in the *Freethinker*.

A Salvation Army man named Edward Watkinson, at New Normanton, stole a vegetable marrow from the garden of Henry Lemon, and gave it to the Army harvest festival. His explanations in court were decidedly amusing. He said that the marrow had dropped off, and he thought he had better take it, as the owner wouldn't be coming along for some time. He also said that he meant to pay the owner for it the first time he saw him, and would have sent on the money, but he didn't know where he lived. He was fined five shillings and costs, or seven days.

George Fair, a boy, had to give evidence at a Westminster inquest. Asked if he knew the nature of an oath, he did not reply, though we dare say he could have given an illustration. Asked if he knew what book he had kissed, he answered No, neither did he know what the New Testament was. Yet he had been taught at St. Mary's School, Stockton! Upon this the *Star*, which must be joking, says it shudders to think how these Church schools turn out boys and girls to "begin the battle of life without even knowing what the New Testament is, to say nothing of its teaching, its doctrine, and its morality."

The Rev. William Clark, an evangelist who makes Hoboken his headquarters, has been found guilty of grand larceny and sent to the penitentiary. Clark has a record for forgery, blackmail, horse theft, intimidation, bigamy, assault, obtaining money under false pretences, and robbery of a child. His matrimonial adventures are numerous and discreditable.—*New York "Truthseeker."*

The Bishops of London and Rochester have issued a joint letter to the clergy and laity of the Church of England in the metropolitan district on the subject of religious education in London Board schools. Their lordships point out with professional acumen that the great thing is to "attach a child to some church or chapel." Accordingly they urge that religious teaching should be given on denominational basis, and that every child should receive instruction in the religious beliefs of the denomination to which its parents belong. Well, we have no objection to this, provided it is done at the parents' expense in some other place than the public school. Their lordships, however, want this religious instruction given as far as possible by the school teachers—that is to say, the teachers should wield denominational branding-irons upon the children, marking them Anglican, Catholic, Wesleyan, Baptist, Congregationalist, etc. But this will never do; at least, the teachers will never do it.

What a poor restraint Christianity is upon human passions may be seen from what Dr. Busch relates of Bismarck near Sedan. Dr. Busch went into the Chancellor's room one morning and found he had just risen and gone out. Lying on the floor, as though just used, was a volume of *Daily Watchwords and Texts*, and on the toilette-table another volume of *Daily Spiritual Refreshment for Believing Christians*. Years afterwards Bismarck confessed that but for him three great wars would not have taken place, and "eighty thousand men would not have been killed, and would not now be mourned by parents, brothers, sisters, and widows." This reflection was enough to depress any man of the least sensibility, but Bismarck recovered himself, saying: "I have settled that with God, however." Yes, there are always accommodations with heaven, as Molière said.

We have often referred to pious advertisements in the newspapers, and we are pleased now to notice an advertisement of an opposite description. The following appeared in a recent number of the *Daily Chronicle* :—

"Will someone kindly explain the following to Advertiser without employing texts from Scripture?—

"1. Does the Church of England preach that none who do not believe that doctrine can be saved?

"2. Is belief optional? Can a man believe just what he considers advisable?

"3. Is not one's religious belief almost always an accident (as it is what language one speaks) owing to one's surroundings?

"4. Do not religions change, like languages and everything else?

"5. Does not the Church of England now admit that a great deal of what its Bishops taught a few hundred years ago was erroneous and wicked?

"6. Does it not appear probable that a few hundred years hence its teaching of to-day will be much modified, as the observance of Sunday has been during the last twenty or thirty years?

"Explanations will be esteemed by 'Doubt,' care of Street and Co., 164 Piccadilly."

The Rev. A. M. Mitchell, vicar of Barton Wood, near Liverpool, has been much criticised lately regarding his reply to the Bishop's letter, and his refusal to obey the rubric as to the necessity of at least three communicants. Like the ritualist of whom Sydney Smith wrote some fifty years since, this reverend gent "is only for the Bishop when the Bishop is for him."

The Bible tells us that one cannot serve "Gawd" and Mammon. The Very Rev. Canon Knox-Little of Worcester, acting on this advice, writes novels in his leisure time. So far nothing very startling has proceeded from this sky-pilot's pen, but perhaps the "clotted bosh" signed by the Canon is to be taken as an evidence of the Divine displeasure.

A number of synods of the Wesleyan Methodist Church have been held recently, when the question of the twentieth-century scheme came up for discussion. "Angels and ministers of grace defend us!" do they think their foolish "ism" is going to last for ever?

London is suffering from want of rain, Spain is suffering from floods. There is enough water in the world, but it is badly distributed. The sky-pilots ought to make strong representations to the "Providence" they talk so much about.

Among the buildings destroyed by the hurricane at Kingston, Jamaica, were the Anglican and Catholic churches. Christians used to believe that the Devil brewed all the storms, and there is a good deal to be said for that view, for it is difficult to understand why God, if *he* is responsible for the storms, does not discriminate in favor of his own houses.

On Sunday last the unusual sight of his Lordship the Bishop of Stepney standing up to preach in the Pavilion Theatre, Whitechapel, was witnessed by some East-enders. If his lordship will only invoke the assistance of the *corps-de-ballet*, he might have the pleasure of putting up the pleasing notice of "House Full."

The Lord, we are told, counts the hairs of our heads, and watches the fall of the sparrows. If he had left those pleasing occupations alone for a short time, and paid some attention to a worm of the dust named Alice Keble, late of Walthamstow, the newspapers would not now be recording another case of starvation.

The Bishop of Winchester left Farnham Castle on Saturday, September 24, for an extended tour on the Continent, and does not expect to return until November. Times have changed since the fishing-nets of the Apostles were sold to the rag-and-bone dealers. Blessed be ye poor!

"God has joined hands with the Christian Endeavor across the sea." This free-and-easy way of speaking of the Almighty was indulged in by the Rev. J. T. Maxwell at Exeter. Commend us to a true believer when good strong blasphemy is wanted.

James Hickman committed suicide at his residence in Stanstead-road, Forest-hill. In the two letters he left for his wife and father he used the word *God* six times. He confessed to having gone wrong with a certain lady, but he said "there is One above who will forgive." Evidently this suicide was not an Atheist, Mr. Talmage.

Thomas Livingstone, a Boothite, appeared at the Lambeth Police-court to answer a summons complaining that he, a street singer, did unlawfully sing in a public place after being required by a householder to depart from the neighborhood. Mr. George Vickery, a newsagent, of Newington-butts, was the principal complainant. He said that the defendant preached and sang within about ten paces from his shop door and interfered with his business. He had asked him to shift, but he refused to "on principle." Mr. Colan, who appeared for the defendant, argued that the Act was never intended to apply to religious meetings; but the magistrate asked him whether he seriously thought that "in the present state of street noises in London any judge would hold that the Salvation Army are not street musicians?" The case was adjourned in order that the "Army" might give an undertaking not to annoy the plaintiff in future. Magistrate Hopkins appears to mean business.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, October 2, Glasgow: Lecture Hall, Brunswick-street, at 11.30, 2.30, and 6.30.
 October 9, Leicester; 16 and 23, Athenæum Hall.
 November 6, Manchester.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—October 2, New Brompton; 9, Athenæum Hall, London. November 20, Sheffield; 27, Birmingham. December 4, Glasgow; 11, Liverpool.—All communications for Mr. Charles Watts should be sent to him at 42 Carminia-road, Balham, S.W. If a reply is required, a stamped and addressed envelope must be enclosed.
- ROBERT LAWSON.—Your application for membership in the Secular Society, Limited, is duly received.
- C. E. S.—The "general," as you say, returns the salute with all cordiality and good wishes.
- FREDERICK ROGERS.—Thanks for your letter. There is no reason whatever why many working men, like yourself, should not join the Secular Incorporation. Ten shillings might be spared for the first year; it is only twopence farthing a week; and the yearly subscription afterwards is only five shillings, a trifle over one penny.
- J. W. IRVING.—Thanks. Cuttings are always welcome.
- A. LEDGER.—You will find what you are seeking in the last chapter of Mark. No Christian has those "signs," not even Mr. Reader Harris.
- GEORGE LANG.—We have acted on your suggestion. See acknowledgment elsewhere. We note your regret that our appeals are not responded to more warmly.
- W. COX.—Please let us know as early as possible of any fresh developments at Liverpool. We note your promise of the two missing addresses. Mr. Foote will offer you another date very shortly.
- H. C. LONG.—It is a subject that requires fuller and more careful treatment.
- G. BERRY.—See paragraph. We hope Mr. Snoll will have good meetings at Stockton.
- JAMES BARN.—You will see Mr. Foote's Glasgow lectures fully announced at the top of this column. You are contemplating a long journey to hear him.
- P. LEE.—In our next. Pressure of other matter this week.
- "FREETHINKER" CIRCULATION FUND.—L. D. Hewitt, 2s. 6d.; W. H. Hartap, 1s.; Broxbourne Well Wisher, 2s. 6d.; Frederick Rogers, 5s.; J. W. Irving, 2s.; George Lang, 8s.; John, 1s.; J. C. B., 5s.; D. Mitchell, 5s.; W. Robinson, 2s. 6d.
- W. KIRK.—St. Augustine's "Confessions" is to many a fascinating book. We have read it more than once with, we hope, some profit. The writer was a man of real genius, perhaps the first that the Christian Church could boast of. Before him there were Fathers of ridiculous "learning" and more or less rhetorical power. The best edition of the "Confessions" is Pusey's. The cheap reprint in the Scott Library lacks the valuable notes of the original. Pusey illustrated the "Confessions" with elaborate extracts from Augustine's other writings, which were very voluminous.
- W. ROBINSON hopes our "Shilling Week" will be well supported. We hope so too. Hundreds of Freethinkers could easily help us, if they would, at this particular juncture.
- L. A. GOYNE.—Thanks for the enclosures and for your bright and welcome letter.
- A. S. V.—Will try to find room.
- J. N. LEEDS.—Not so useful as your previous cuttings, or perhaps we had not time to extract the moral.
- T. LANGFORD.—Have handed your order to Mr. Forder, who attends to publishing matters.
- D. MITCHELL.—Thanks for your good wishes. Pleased to know you are joining the Secular Society, Limited. See acknowledgments under the various heads.
- THE SECULAR SOCIETY, LIMITED.—The following applications for membership have been received:—Frederick Rogers, W. Varley, W. Cox, E. Radcliffe, J. Phillips, H. Hall, L. Small, J. Birch, D. Mitchell, S. Borry.
- PAPERS RECEIVED.—Reading Observer—Ethical World—Birmingham Daily Mail—Freidenkor—Westminster Gazette—Torch of Reason—New Century—Blue Grass Blade—Secular Thought—Colton's Magazine—Two Worlds—Glasgow Weekly Citizen—Progressive Thinker—New York Herald—South London Mail—Record (Herts.)—Derby Daily Telegraph—Sydney Bulletin—People's Newspaper—Isle of Man Times—Referee—Free Society—New York Truthseeker—Lucifer—Public Opinion—Liberator.
- 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.
- LETTERS for the Editor of the *Freethinker* should be addressed to 28 Stonecutter-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.
- ORDERS for literature should be sent to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.
- LECTURE NOTICES must reach 28 Stonecutter-street by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

THE National Secular Society's office is at No. 377 Strand, London, where all letters should be addressed to Miss Vance. FRIENDS who send us newspapers would enhance the favor by marking the passages to which they wish to call our attention. 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.

SPECIAL.**ANOTHER SHILLING WEEK.**

READERS of the *Freethinker* during the last seven or eight years will probably recollect that I have made several special appeals for various objects in connection with the work of the National Secular Society. A certain week has been fixed upon as "Shilling Week." During that time my readers have been invited to send me a subscription of one shilling or any number of shillings. Well, I am now going to make an appeal of this kind on behalf of the *Freethinker* itself. Friends are sending me some contributions every week towards the Circulation Fund, but the pace is very slow, and dribblets during a long period will not serve the purpose as well as a reasonable sum at once. Consequently I have decided to make another "Shilling Week" of the first week in October. During that week I invite my readers to get a postal order for one shilling, or for several shillings if they can afford it, and to forward the same to me before October 8. Of course I have no objection to cheques. But I am anxious that the mass of the party should do something. If they all act together on this occasion, they will never miss what they give, and they will enable me to push the circulation of this journal, which is the right arm of all my work for Secularism, and, I venture to think, of very considerable importance to the whole party.

G. W. FOOTE.

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE lectures to-day (Oct. 2) at Glasgow. For the information of visitors from other towns we may state that the hall in which the lectures are to be delivered is in Brunswick-street, near the municipal law courts, between Ingram-street and Argyle-street, not far from the Candle-riggs, and about ten minutes' walk from St. Enoch and Central Stations.

The fine weather, and the presence of the Channel Squadron in the Mersey, were rather unfavorable to indoor meetings on Sunday at Liverpool. Nevertheless there were fair audiences at Mr. Foote's morning and afternoon lectures in the Alexandra Hall, and the room was full in the evening, the audience on that occasion being not only large, but very enthusiastic. Messrs. Ross, Hammond, and Small were the three chairmen for the day. Each made a good appeal on behalf of the new Secular Incorporation, and seven applications for membership were taken in addition to the five previously acknowledged. Further promises will probably bring the number up to twenty. Liverpool expects great things from the Secular Society, Limited, and we hope its expectations will be more than realised.

There was very nearly a rumpus at Liverpool. The police got anxious about the growth of Secularism in general, and about Mr. Foote's lectures in particular. The locality in which the Alexandra Hall is situated stinks of piety, and the advent of Secularism as a disinfectant was resented. It may be that the local sky-pilots were alarmed, or that the susceptibilities of some high-placed member of the police force were wounded. Anyhow, the good old dodge was tried of intimidating the lessee of the hall. On the Saturday afternoon he was informed that his dancing licence might be in danger if he allowed the Secularists to hold their meetings and charge (as advertised) for admission. The lessee, a decent sort of man, but with a tremendous irrational belief in the wisdom and power of the police, told Mr. Foote and the Committee in the morning that they could not have money taken at the door. They decided, however, that they would go on their own way. An attempt was made to close the street door, but this was resisted, and members of the Committee remained in possession between the meetings. Policemen dropped in

looking very important, and were offered a seat, which they felt obliged to decline. Of course it is very unlikely that any action will be taken against the Secularists. The police were really hunting after the poor lessee. He was the man they wanted. They felt that their only chance was to frighten him. But he couldn't help himself on that occasion, whatever he may do in future.

It is very unpleasant to see an innocent man, who works hard to get an honest livelihood, persecuted in this way, and if the police try to ruin him on licensing day the Secularists will do their best to assist him. But it was not possible to give way out of mere compassion. There was a principle at stake. Besides, if the police were allowed to win in that easy fashion, by striking at a harmless third party, there would soon be an end to Secular propaganda altogether in half the towns in England. The Liverpool Branch is to be congratulated on the manner in which it acted on Sunday, and the committee can rely upon Mr. Foote's being with them whenever his presence may be required.

Last Sunday evening Mr. Charles Watts had an excellent audience at the Athenæum Hall, London, when he lectured upon "The New Bible." He was warmly applauded, and the many points which he forcibly put were evidently appreciated by all present. There was no discussion, although it was repeatedly invited. Mr. Thurlow presided, and made an earnest appeal on behalf of the *Freethinker* Fund.

Mr. Charles Watts lectures to-day, Sunday, October 2, morning and evening, in the Secular Hall, New Brompton. They will be the opening meetings of the winter session, and we shall be pleased to hear of large gatherings.

The Chatham and New Brompton friends have worked hard at their hall, which has been re-decorated and somewhat altered. Some structural changes have enlarged the stage, and even left more room for the public. The members have given their labor voluntarily, besides subscribing heavily out of rather poor pockets for the inevitable expenses.

Mr. William Heaford occupies the Athenæum Hall platform this evening (Oct. 2). His subject is "The World, the Flesh, and the Devil." There must be something in it for most people. We hope he will have a good audience, as he deserves.

The Stockton Branch is having a course of lectures to-day (Oct. 2) by Mr. Harry Snell, and another course next Sunday. The lectures will be given in the Borough Hall Dining Room at 2.30 and 6.30. The subjects are attractive, and local Freethinkers should make the meetings widely known.

The Camberwell Branch reopens the Secular Hall, New Church-road, to-day (Oct. 2). Mr. E. Pack is the lecturer.

Mr. A. B. Moss, as a member of the Camberwell Vestry moved that another local paper should receive the Vestry advertisements instead of the *South London Mail*, as that journal had incited the Christian public to violence against the Freethinkers on Peckham Rye. Mr. Moss made a strong speech in support of his motion, which was seconded by Mr. Taylor. Most of the "Progressives" voted in favor of it, but it was defeated by the large number of "Moderates" present. However, the report of Mr. Moss's speech in the local journals, including the *Mail*, is sure to do good.

Mr. G. R. Sims, in last week's *Referee*, makes fun of the earthquakes, storms, and other surprising phenomena that have attended the deaths of distinguished persons like Cesar, Cromwell, Napoleon, and Bismarck. We quite agree with Mr. Sims on this point. All he has to do now is to say what he thinks of the wonderful earthquake and still more wonderful eclipse of the sun that happened at the death of Jesus Christ. We hope Mr. Sims will devote a few of his bright paragraphs to this interesting topic.

Miss E. M. Vance, secretary of the National Secular Society, informs us that there is still a deficit of £2 on the Children's Excursion which passed off so happily. Someone ought to send her that amount at once. Address, 377 Strand, London, W.C.

A copy of *Colton's Magazine* reaches us from New Orleans. It contains an outspoken criticism of Marie Corelli's "Electric Creed" by Stephen H. Alison. We presume this is the gentleman who some time ago lectured on Freethought platforms in England.

Colonel Ingersoll wrote a brief funeral address for the funeral of Dr. Thomas Seton Robertson, of New York, which is reported in the *Herald*. There was no religious ceremony. Dr. Robertson left the bulk of his property to Vermont

University. His valuable collection of jewels is to be divided between three friends, of whom Colonel Ingersoll is one.

"The Executive and both Houses," the Duke of Argyll says, "have been completely secularised. The House of Commons is full of men of all beliefs and of none; and even in the House of Lords I have noticed for many years that the Bishops themselves never employ theological argument on any subject without making some apology for doing so."

Editor Moore's *Blue Grass Blade* (Lexington, Kentucky) has taken a new lease of life. We thought it had dropped through for ever, but Editor Moore is irrepressible. He is like Jesus Christ in one thing—he rises from the dead, and apparently this is the prelude to his ascension, for we read that he has a new office and new printing machinery. We wish him all success, anyhow. He crusades against religion and whisky, and it is a good thing to make people sensible and sober. Where we part company with him is at the sign-post "To Prohibition." Too many reformers imagine that the way to improve the world is to stop somebody else from doing something. We believe, for our part, in personal liberty for all, even if it leads a man to drink a glass of beer instead of sharing Editor Moore's holy water.

The following is from the President's address delivered at the Annual Convention of the Canadian Secular Union: "The incorporation of the Secular Society in England is an event that bears testimony to the indefatigable energy of Mr. G. W. Foote, the President of the National Secular Society of England. Under this new organisation, the Secularists of Great Britain will be placed in possession of a nucleus which will enable Freethinkers who desire to forward their principles by substantial bequests to leave money and property in charge of a legally-constituted and permanent body. It is a distinct gain for Freethought in Britain."

SILENCED HIS BATTERIES.

COLONEL ROBERT INGERSOLL, the American Agnostic, was invited to attend a banquet at the irresistible Clover Club of New York. "It is impossible to accept," he said. "I know your custom too well. I shall be called on for a speech, and shall be unmercifully gayed. I never could stand it. I refuse to put myself in such a position."

The club decided to waive its constitutional prerogative in his case, and he was informed of the fact. "Then I gladly accept the invitation," he said, "and will surely be on hand." He was.

No sooner was the gallant iconoclast on his feet than a man down at the end of the room began to interrupt. He was the only one in the club to say a word, but he was very annoying, and the Colonel remarked:

"I came here as a guest, with the understanding that I was not to be interrupted. There was an agreement to that effect."

"I never heard of any such agreement," returned the other.

The Colonel said: "My friend, you remind me of a story. There was a day set apart by the beasts of the field, the reptiles, and the birds of the air for a general peace. Animals in the habit of preying on each other agreed to meet together in one grand accord. A fox passing a chicken-roost on the way to the meeting invited a hen to accompany him, and, when she politely declined, informed her of the peace agreement. 'Well, Mr. Fox, I will go on those conditions,' she said, and they trotted along side by side through the field. Presently the baying of a pack of hounds was heard, and Mr. Fox started to run. 'Why do you run, Mr. Fox?' said Mrs. Hen; 'remember the peace agreement.' Restraining himself, Mr. Fox trotted on, but the pack drew nearer and nearer, until he could stand it no longer. 'Mr. Fox,' urged Mrs. Hen, 'don't be afraid. Remember what you told me about the peace agreement. No hound would hurt you to-day. Trot along with me, and don't be in the least alarmed.' He could almost feel the breath of the hounds. 'Mrs. Hen,' he whispered, prepared to spring away, 'I do well remember the peace agreement, but there may be some fool hound in that pack that hasn't heard of it. Good-bye.'

When the Colonel had finished his story there was silence, and he concluded his speech without further interruption. The "fool-hound" at the further end of the room didn't say another word.

—*Cassell's Saturday Journal*.

Little Elmer—"Pa, what does 'Selah' mean?" Professor Broadhead—"It is a good deal like the term 'senatorial courtesy,' my son. It sounds well, and nobody knows what it means."—*Puck*.

THE CHURCH AND LITERATURE.

(BY THE LATE J. M. WHEELER.)

MUCH has been written of the services of Christianity to literature. The monks, we are told, were the preservers of ancient learning, and to their devotion must be ascribed our knowledge of the classics of Greece and Rome. How comes it, then, that so large a portion of those classics are lost? What became of the vast libraries collected by the Romans? Is it but a casual coincidence that the decline of learning and the triumph of Christianity went side by side?

In the Augustan era the library was as essential to the completeness of a house in Rome as the eating or sleeping room. Such men as Julius Cæsar, Crassus, Cicero, and Lucullus were renowned for the beauty and value of their collections of books. Authors were treated with the utmost respect, and rich men vied for their patronage. Asinius Pollio is said first to have formed a public library in Rome. The great Freethinker, Julius Cæsar, had in view a large scheme of this kind, which was defeated by his assassination. Trajan, Vespasian, and Domitian founded vast libraries. Books were common in Rome, and sold at comparatively low prices, for slaves were taught to write, and it has been calculated that in a librarian's shop a hundred copies of a work could have been written off by dictation as quickly as a compositor would set one in type. The great bulk of works then famous are now lost. Histories, epics, dramas, orations, books of philosophy and education, verses almost without number, have perished. We have but slight specimens of even the best known Latin authors. Take but the historians. Of Livy's history, once containing one hundred and forty books, all but thirty-five have disappeared. Pliny's history of his own time, in thirty-one books, is entirely missing. Of the thirty books of Tacitus we have but four and a part of the fifth. Of the Greco-Roman histories, the works of Polybius, which originally comprised forty-five books, now contain but five. Dio Cassius, once in eighty books, now shows but twenty-five. Of the history of Ammianus Marcellinus the first thirteen books are missing. Similar instances might be given in other departments of literature. The allegation that all that was of value has been preserved is sufficiently refuted by the instance of Tacitus, coupled with the fact that the five books we have are from one single manuscript, whereas we know that the Emperor Tacitus (275) ordered copies of the works of his illustrious namesake to be placed in all the libraries of the empire, with a special direction that ten copies should be made each year at the public expense. It is usual to ascribe the loss of these works to the invasions of the barbarians, but it must not be forgotten that these barbarians were remarkably amenable to the authority of the Church, and it was not until Christian asceticism had sapped the patriotic virtue of the Roman empire that the irruptions took place.

When Christianity came to power it found no young and vigorous civilisation to combat it, but an effete and decaying civilisation that had run its course. The polytheistic superstition was universal, yet the tolerance of Rome had done much to destroy the exclusive claims of any particular deities. Culture and freethought were the property of the few. Such a civilisation was the only one which Christianity could have overcome, the only one it could safely assimilate with itself. This it only did after smothering the few pulsations of life and freethought which it contained. Christianity did not triumph by its superior culture. On the contrary, it was despised by philosophers as the pernicious superstition of slaves and fools. It triumphed by its organisation, which could utilise and assimilate the credulity and fanaticism of its followers. Its very intolerance was a means of success. The indifferent polytheist, admitting it might possibly be true, was led by mere prudence to embrace a faith declaring that it alone possessed salvation. From the primitive ages a dislike of Pagan learning was general among Christians. Warned by their spiritual guides to beware of philosophy and the knowledge which puffeth up, they despised the vain learning of a world soon to pass away. It is true those of the early Fathers who were converted from Paganism did not at once quit the philosophic temper of mind. Such men as Origen, Clement of Alexandria, Augustine, and Synesius brought heathen learning to combat heathenism. But the victory once achieved, the philosophic temper declined.

Claiming exclusive possession of truth, the Church saw its enemy in all external learning. Physical science especially was held in avowed contempt as inconsistent with revealed truth. The Fathers exhorted the faithful to avoid all contact with Pagan culture. St. Antony, called the founder of Monachism, refused, when a boy, to learn letters, because it would bring him into too great intercourse with other boys. Under Theophilus, primate of Alexandria, the magnificent library of the Serapion was destroyed by the monks, and at a Synod held under this bishop all the works of Origen, the greatest glory of the early Christian Church, were interdicted. The fourth General Council of Carthage went so far as to forbid the reading of all Pagan books; and, says Jortin, "the bishops soon began to relish this good advice, and not to trouble their heads with literature." Mosheim also records that in the fourth century, although the emperors tried to cherish learning, their intentions were defeated by a numerous and powerful party in the Church, who "considered all learning, and especially philosophical learning, as injurious, and even destructive to true piety and godliness." The efforts of men like Julian were in vain. As Christianity extended, the number of works produced became fewer, and their merit less, so that from the sixth to the twelfth century there is scarcely an author of even the fourth or fifth rank.

Theodosius made a law (448) that the works of Porphyry should be burnt, and that all other works the doctrine of which did not conform to that of the Nicene Council, and of the Council of Ephesus, and to the decisions of St. Cyril, should be destroyed, and the concealers of them put to death. The original works of all the early opponents of Christianity, as well as of the heretics, are lost, and we have to trust to such representations of them as are found in the works of their opponents. Jortin remarks that many bishops in the General Council of Ephesus and Chalcedon could not write their own names. The learned Jerome condemned the study of profane authors, except for pious uses. He relates how, for having been too much addicted to such study, he fell into a fever, and was taken up in the night to the tribunal of Jesus, who severely reprimanded him for being rather a Ciceronian than a Christian, and for this offence he was flagellated by an angel.

Hallam, in his *Introduction to the Literature of Europe*, says: "A prepossession against secular learning had taken hold of these ecclesiastics, who gave the tone to the rest; it was inculcated in the most extravagant degree by Gregory I., the founder, in a great measure, of the papal supremacy, and the chief authority in the Dark Ages." Saint Gregory is said by Brucker to have given orders that the collection of books formed by the Roman emperors, and kept in the temple of Apollo, adjoining the palace, should be burnt. In a letter to a teacher of grammar he severely censures him for polluting with hymns to Jupiter a tongue that ought to be employed in celebrating the praises of Christ. Gibbon is disposed to acquit Saint Gregory of the charge of burning the library, but certainly he was unfavorable to classical learning. Leo the Iconoclast is also accused of burning the library of the Basilica at Constantinople. One chronicler relates that he, not being able to gain the professors over to his views, imprisoned them in their college, and reduced them and their books to ashes. This improbable story has been doubted, if not disproved, by historians. Gibbon, however, believes that the library, which contained over thirty-six thousand volumes, was burned during the religious wars. Gregory VII. is also said to have burned a great number of ancient manuscripts. Even if these are only stories, their invention serves to throw some light on the spirit of the times.

Towards the close of the seventh century the manuscripts in the Papal library at Rome were so few that Pope Martin requested the Bishop of Maestricht to supply this defect from the remotest parts of Germany. Lupus Abbot, of Ferrieres, in a letter to the Pope (855), beseeches him to lend him copies of Cicero's *De Oratore* and Quintillian's *Institutions*, "for, although we have parts of these books, there is no complete copy of them in all France." The monks, too, became careless as to preserving their collection of books intact. They allowed their libraries to dwindle away under their eyes. They sold their books, gave them away, or allowed them to be stolen. It was asserted, at a council held in Rome in 992, that scarcely a single person was to be found in Rome itself who knew the first elements of letters. Not one priest of a thousand in Spain about the age of

Charlemagne could address a common letter of salutation to another. In England, King Alfred declared that he knew no single priest south of the Thames (the most civilised part of England) who, at the time of his accession, understood the ordinary prayers, or could translate Latin into his mother tongue.

During the period rightly known as the Dark Ages the clergy were supreme. Proclaiming that the Church had the authority of God, they claimed control over minds and estates, and they demanded that their claims should be accepted without reasoning. To deny, or even to doubt, was to be a heretic, and to be subject to excommunication, fine, imprisonment, exile, and perhaps torture and the stake.

The Church only kept up so much of classic learning as was absolutely necessary for a literary education, and to give the clergy an elevated and imposing position among the barbarians. These tactics were especially successful with the northern tribes, who had a humble veneration for the Science of the Runes. Von Hartmann says:—

"If, therefore, mediæval Christianity cultivated the study of the Greek and Latin authors, it was not from any appreciation of, or sympathy with, that culture which is to be derived from them, but solely in the pursuit of external and hierarchical interests. The old Pagan writings were looked upon as a necessary evil to which the Church submitted in order to give to the clergy a literary and theological training, but which, undoubted productions of the devil as they are, no man should take in his hands without first making the sign of the cross and trembling for his soul's salvation."

Lecky's testimony in his *History of European Morals* is that the literature of Christian asceticism "surpasses in its mendacious ferocity any that the world has seen." The Christians habitually spoke of those who deviated from the orthodox belief as demons, and exulted over the tortures which they believed were reserved for such miscreants. Lecky continues:—

"The study of the Latin classics was for the most part positively discouraged. The writers, it was believed, were burning in hell. The monks were too inflated with their imaginary knowledge to regard with any respect a Pagan writer, and periodical panics about the approaching termination of the world continually checked any desire for secular learning. It was the custom among some monks, when they were under the discipline of silence, and desired to ask for Virgil, Horace, or any other Gentile work, to indicate their wish by scratching their ears like a dog, to which animal it was thought the Pagans might reasonably be compared."

Buckle declares that the learning of the Middle Ages only ministered to ignorance. He says:—

"From the sixth to the tenth century there was not in all Europe more than three or four men who dared to think for themselves; and even they were obliged to veil their meaning in obscure and mystical language. The remaining part of society was, during these four centuries, sunk in the most degrading ignorance. Under these circumstances, the few who were able to read confined their studies to works which encouraged and strengthened their superstition, such as the legends of the saints and the homilies of the fathers. From these sources they drew those lying and impudent fables of which the theology of the time is principally composed."

Of course the supply of literature was only proportionate to the demand. The classic works of the Pagans having fallen into disrepute, their manuscripts were erased and re-written with Christian legends. Copies of Cicero, Pliny, or Homer were valueless, and the parchments used for them were prepared by washing or scraping in order to make room for the ridiculous fables of the saints. These palimpsests or *codices rescripti* form a curious commentary on the zeal of the monks. Frequently the most valuable works were covered over with others now of no account. The long-lost treatise of Cicero, *De Republica*, was discovered written over with St. Augustino's *Commentary on the Psalms*. Within the present century Niebuhr discovered the *Institutes of Gaius*, a work throwing much light on Roman Law, and which was believed to have perished in the confusion of the Dark Ages, beneath a second and even a third writing consisting of the epistles of St. Jerome. Hallam, in his *Middle Ages*, says: "So gross and supine was the ignorance of the monks, within whose walls these treasures were concealed, that it was impossible to ascertain, except by indefatigable researches, the extent of what had been saved out of the great shipwreck of antiquity."

The scarcity of books rendered their price so enormous during the palmy days of Christianity that even persons of fortune could not indulge in the luxury of reading. Private persons seldom possessed any books, and even monasteries of note had only one Missal. Persons who bequeathed a pious book to the library of a monastery were deemed thereby to obtain complete remission of sins. The Rev. Joseph Barrington, the Catholic author of the *Literary History of the Middle Ages*, admits that "in the most wealthy convents, where libraries were chiefly formed, a short catalogue was sufficient to comprise the number of their books; and the price to those who were disposed to purchase was exorbitant." Hallam tells us that contracts were made verbally for want of notaries capable of drawing up charters, and these, when written, were frequently barbarous and ungrammatical to an incredible degree.

At this time, be it remembered, the Mohammedan caliphs were giving every encouragement to literature and science. Bagdad in the east, and Cordova in the west, were the seats of learning and culture, and the dawn of the renaissance of letters arose from the contact with Arabian civilisation. The Jews also cultivated literature, and produced many of their brightest lights during the long night of the Dark Ages. Their works were, of course, proscribed. St. Louis ordered the Talmud to be burnt. All the Jewish libraries were destroyed, and twenty-four cartloads of valuable manuscripts committed to the flames. All Jewish books, Bibles excepted, were ordered to be burnt because filled with blasphemies against Christ, and it is alleged that, at one time, twelve thousand copies of the Talmud were burnt at one holocaust in Cremona—a feat throwing into the shade the destruction of five thousand copies of the Koran by Cardinal Ximenes. All heretical works were hunted out and burnt. As early as the twelfth century Pope Innocent III. prohibited the reading of the Bible in the common tongue. The Council of Toulouse (1229) forbade the reading of the Bible in any vernacular tongue, and decreed that no layman should have in his possession any of the books of the Old or New Testament. The Council of Terragona orders that any priest or layman who possesses a translation of the Bible, and does not surrender it within eight days to be burnt, shall be deemed a heretic. The famous Council of Trent affirmed that no Bible should be held or read except by priests, and this canon remains unrepealed. The Council condemned wholesale the works of the most notorious heretics—*i.e.*, reformers. In 1557 Paul IV. published at Rome the first official *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*. His Index includes all Bibles in modern languages, enumerating forty-eight editions chiefly printed in countries still under the jurisdiction of the Church. Sixty-one printers, among whom are Stephens and Oporinus, are put under a general ban—all works, of whatever description, from their presses being forbidden.

(To be concluded.)

A FAMOUS FUNNY FELLOW.

A SCIENTIST—he must have been a Christian one—told the present writer that mankind was descended from babies. I believed him for some three months. But later I found that the Bible said that Adam was the first man, the father of the human race. I was interested at once about our earliest blood relation. In fact, he was a relation of my own—true, a distant one, but still a relation. The fountain of my far-off filial affection was stirred to its profoundest depths, and I had no rest until I had read all about the man whom Tennyson finely calls "the grand old greengrocer." Adam was the first man—if he had been a shoemaker he would have been the last man. His education was sadly neglected, for he started life as a full-grown man. It is not everyone who can throw half-hundred-weights about on their first day on the earth. But think of what he had missed. He never learned to keep fruit and sweets in his mouth without the schoolmaster noticing it. The present writer knew a small boy who could keep two small pears and a pennyworth of toffee in his mouth without choking or getting very red in the face. Neither did Adam learn how to make noises like cats, or to smoke cheap cigarettes.

Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden, and acted as

park-keeper and gardener. All the clothes he had for a long time was the close of day, while the mantle of night was his bed-clothing. It did not much matter, however, for, as yet, the County Council was not. He made the acquaintance of his staff, including the wasps. He ceased to be on speaking terms, however, when he found they had darning-needles in their tails.

Adam was the only human being employed in this situation, and at his earnest solicitation a lady was added to the show-room. She did not say where she came from, but her boxes were marked "A-rib-ia." Adam fell in love, and used to write the words "Eve" and "darling" on the fences in the intervals of business. He abjured fat bacon, and that's the reason the Chosen People do so to this day. Adam had not been in love very many years when a lot of small creatures, with rattles in their hands, began to creep about the house, and fall into pails, and drink boiling water, put soap in the teacups, and swallow tin-tacks. This accounts for the origin of the human race.

Eve was a pretty good cook, for she soon cooked up trouble for Adam about some apples, and got him the "sack," which is an ancient way of describing the loss of a situation. But they were not a happy couple, for, in the excitement of leaving his job, he forgot his marriage certificate, and as he only lived a few centuries subsequent to this sad event, he never had the heart to hunt up the registrar. Mr. and Mrs. Adam passed their later years in less style than their earlier. As I draw a veil over their fall, let me ask every reader of this respectable journal if he doesn't feel like howling when he remembers that Adam grudged that paltry seven-and-six for that marriage certificate, and that, in consequence, the whole human race is illegitimate!

MIMNERMUS.

BOOK CHAT.

SMOKERS who read, or readers who smoke—whichever way you will—should be thankful to Mr. William G. Hutchison, who has edited the latest volume of the "Canterbury Poets," entitled *Lyra Nicotiana*, or "Poems and Verses concerning Tobacco." Mr. Hutchison has made a pretty anthology of verses on pipes, cigars, cigarettes, and all sorts of tobacco—in short, on smoking generally, from the age of Elizabeth to the age of Victoria. To non-smokers the result will be shocking; to smokers it will be delightful.

We are glad to see that Mr. Hutchison acknowledges a special indebtedness to the defunct *Tobacco Plant* conducted for some years by Mr. John Fraser, of the famous Cope firm of tobacconists. This was a very entertaining publication, and much good writing appeared in its pages, including many articles by James Thomson ("B.V.").

Most philosophers have smoked since tobacco came in, and many poets. No doubt Shakespeare did, though he does not mention tobacco anywhere; but that is not surprising when we remember that he did not, like Ben Jonson, paint the humors of his age. Plenty of smoking, as well as reasonable good drinking, went on at the Mermaid Tavern, where the poets and wits of the time gathered under the ægis of rare old Ben. In our own day Tennyson, our most consummate poetical artist, if not our greatest poet, was an inveterate smoker, like his great friend Carlyle; and it didn't kill him, for he lived to a fine old age; nor assuredly did it cloud the exquisite clarity of his verse. Mr. Swinburne, however, is said to abhor smoking in every form. There is an old story, which Mr. Hutchison repeats, of Swinburne's going into the Arts Club and vainly trying to find a room not filled with smokers, and delivering himself with characteristic emphasis as follows: "James the First was a knave, a tyrant, a fool, a liar, a coward; but I love him, I worship him, because he slit the throat of that blackguard Raleigh, who invented this filthy smoking."

There is no verse from Dekker, the Elizabethan dramatist and satirist, in this anthology; but what a fine simile (in its way) of his appears in Mr. Hutchison's introduction—"that lean tawny face tobacconist, Death, that turns all into smoke." One of the best pieces in praise of the "divine herb," as Spenser called it, is by an anonymous poet of the time of James the First, the monarch who was so hot against smoking and witchcraft. These are the concluding lines:—

All goods, all pleasures it in one can link—
'Tis physic, clothing, music, meat, and drink.
Gods would have revelled at their feasts of mirth
With this pure distillation of the earth;
The marrow of the world, star of the West,

The pearl whereby this lower orb is blest;
The joy of mortals, umpire of all strife,
Delight of nature, mythridate of life;
The daintiest dish of a delicious feast,
By taking which man differs from a beast.

That last line is triumphant.

Charles Lamb's "Farewell to Tobacco" is here too, and it bears the bell. Of the many other pieces we have not room to speak. We must conclude by recommending this pretty little volume—its price is only a shilling—to all smokers who read this journal. It is a book to keep by them, and to dip into now and then, when more serious reading palls, or when the smoker watches the white wreaths from pipe or cigar, and, like Walt Whitman, loafs and invites his soul.

Some authors seem to be actuated by a passion for humanity. Ouida has written an eloquent letter to the *Daily News* denouncing the abominable treatment of the Italian political prisoners, recalling the worst features of the time of Bomba of Naples. We hope her letter will attract widespread attention.

Ouida is a Freethinker, and, like Zola, is a living proof that courage and nobility of character may be found in persons entirely destitute of religion.

Thomas Hardy issued a volume of verse at the outset of his literary career, which is now out of print, and rare. He is at present engaged in correcting the proofs of a new edition of his poetry, which will be published by Harper.

That excellent and almost indispensable publication, *The Index to the Periodicals*, issued by the *Review of Reviews*, is now in its eighth volume, just published. The new volume covers the year 1897, and the fact that it does not appear till we are far advanced in the succeeding year is due to the tremendous labor involved in its compilation. This publication is of inestimable value to the student and writer, for its classification enables one to see together in one place all the articles on any subject one wishes to get up, with cross references to kindred topics.

Dr. Paul Carus, editor of the *Open Court*, an excellent Monist monthly published at Chicago, sends us a handsomely-got-up song of his, set to music, on "The Anglo-Saxon Alliance." We don't keep a musical critic, so we do not give an opinion of the work of Dr. Carus's colleague. His own sentiments are admirable, but his verses are not. We hope he will not make further attempts in this unfortunate direction. When he writes prose he is interesting and instructive.

The *Literary Guide* for October contains some very good reading. Its leading articles are able and suggestive, and its paragraphs bright and interesting. Mr. F. J. Gould contributes an entertaining interview with himself, which is by no means the least valuable of his "Book Chats." The literary supplement is a good summary of Mr. Herbert Spencer's fourth part of the *Principles of Ethics*, done by Mr. C. T. Gorham.

Agitation.

Be this distinctly, wholly understood,
Men must be agitated for their good;
Grapes must be trodden first, and grain be ground,
Ere wine be looked for, or ere bread be found.
Though some opinions we are apt to shy at,
Opinion hurts not truth, though it run riot;
It's error always begs and prays for quiet.
And aught that men do glorious or right
They do with heart, with ardor, and with might.
—Philip James Bailey, "The Age."

Her Superiority.

"Why is it that women always lay so much more stress than men do upon the value of a pedigree?"
"They inherit it from Eve, I guess."
"From Eve? I don't see what she had to boast of in that line."
"It wasn't much, but she wasn't made out of clay, while Adam was, and I'll bet she never got through reminding him of her superior origin."—*Chicago News*.

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SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

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

LONDON.

THE ATHENÆUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30, W. Heaford, "The World, the Flesh, and the Devil."
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 8.30, The Lyric Musical Comedy Company in the musical burlesque, "The Naughty Nautical Girl."
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7, Entertainment and Dance.
EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Bow Vestry Hall, Bow-road, E): 7, Stanton Coit, "The Power that Saves."
WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall): 11, Stanton Coit, "Sir W. Crookes on Telepathy."
SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road, S.E.): 7, Dr. Washington Sullivan, "The Ethics of Marriage." Peckham Rye: 8.15, Mr. Newland.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, E. Pack, "Trisecting the Trinity." Peckham Rye: 8.15, E. Pack, "An Expurgated Bible."
EAST LONDON BRANCH (Mile End Waste): 11.30, Stanley Jones; 7, A lecture. October 5, at 8, A lecture.
LIMEHOUSE (The Triangle, Salmon-lane): 11.30, A lecture. October 4, at 8, A lecture.
WESTMINSTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Grosvenor Embankment): 11.30, Debate between Messrs. R. P. Edwards and Sandover, "The Moral Ethics of Christianity the Salvation of Humanity."

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH (Bristol-street Board-school): 7, A. Scrimshire, Recital of Shakespeare's "Henry VIII.," Musical interludes by Social Bohemian Choir.
CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): O. Watts—11, "Morality and Religion: Which?"; 7, "The Cradle, the Altar, and the Tomb."
DERBY (Central Hotel, Market-place): 7, W. G. Tunley, An Essay on "Jude the Obscure."
GLASGOW (Lecture Hall, 110 Brunswick street): G. W. Foote—11 30, 2.30, and 6.30.
LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Concert, arranged by Mr. Lowe.
LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, J. Roberts, "Materialism."
MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, Mrs. Hodgson Bayfield, "Women, Lunatics, Minors, and Paupers."
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): H. P. Ward—11, "The Law of Population"; 3, "Why Does Christianity Last?"; 7, "Why I am an Atheist." Tea at 5.
SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, Market-place): 7.30, Important business meeting.

Lecturers' Engagements.

O OCHER, 17 Osborne-road, High-road, Leyton—October 2, Motherwell; 5, Wishaw; 9, Glasgow; 16, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 23, Sheffield; 26, 27, 28, Derby; 30, Leicester. November 6 and 13, Athenæum Hall, London; 20, Chatham; 27, Manchester. November 30 and December 1, Failsworth December 4, Manchester.

H. PERCY WARD, 526 Moseley-road, Birmingham.—October 2, Sheffield; 16, Birmingham. November 27, Liverpool. December 18, Birmingham.

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