

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE ASCENT OF FRANCE.

FRANCE was in the depths of dishonor when Zola issued his famous manifesto in the form of an open letter to the President of the Republic. The refrain of that letter was "J'accuse." Zola aimed his shafts at all the leading men who were implicated in the Dreyfus outrage. He spared nobody from President Faure and Premier Brisson down to Paty du Clam and Esterhazy. No doubt his language was bold and startling; some would call it more than impolite. But it was not a time for the niceties of etiquette. Zola's letter was precisely what it was meant to be—an open slap in the face. Something was necessary to compel attention, something absolutely beyond the possibility of being ignored, something that would make a reply inevitable. And the reply came. Zola was prosecuted, not indeed upon the main substance of his letter, but upon a small picked passage which was treated as an "insult to the Army." This was a cowardly method of dealing with him; nevertheless, it was a beginning. From that moment the Dreyfus affair took a fresh turn. It began to emerge from the crypts of secrecy into the honest daylight. And the truth is that France began to ascend with it.

It would be a great mistake to regard the Dreyfus affair as merely a personal one. More was involved than the fate of one man. Zola pointed out clearly enough, in his subsequent open letters to France, and to the Youth of France, that behind the outrage on Dreyfus was a fever of religious bigotry, and behind the insolence of the Army chiefs the cunning of Jesuitism. France was in the hands of reactionists in politics and religion, and the very life of the Republic was endangered. The clank of the sabre and the chaunts of the priests were like a death-knell. It was time for all who loved liberty and justice to rally to the defence of the national honor. Zola's was indeed a noble appeal, and it was not made in vain. The conscience of France was touched. Men of light and leading—mostly Freethinkers, by the way—gathered around the flag of defiance thus gallantly planted in the sight of the world.

"Justice marches!" exclaimed Zola as he left Paris, partly to rest from unaccustomed labour and excitement, and partly to avoid a malignant form of imprisonment, or the still more sinister danger of assassination. Yes, justice was marching, and it has marched to some purpose. The Dreyfus affair was at last extricated from the hands of the Army chiefs, who had befouled it with low intrigue, unscrupulous forgery, and apparently with murder. It was even removed from the grasp of politicians, who had grown so timid in presence of Church and Army that they dared not call their souls their own. It was placed where it should be, in the hands of judges who could defy every hostility to justice but downright brute force, which no one dared to use against them, seeing that the whole civilised world was watching the spectacle.

No. 904.

Swashbucklers like Deroulède and De Cassagnac, and demagogues like Rochefort, have called upon the government to override the Court of Cassation, the highest tribunal in France. But these scribes are no longer taken seriously. To follow their advice would be to hand France over to anarchy, which would soon require the sharp treatment of a new Savior of Society.

The judges' decision to revise the Dreyfus case in secret is perhaps a wise one from their point of view. But for general reasons it is to be regretted. It is really too late for compromises. The whole truth should now be known. France is entitled to be made aware of all the infamies that have been perpetrated in her name. Moreover, the wretches who have lied and cheated and forged, and apparently murdered, should receive condign punishment. At least, they should be made marks for the finger of scorn. Short of this, however, it is a matter of congratulation that the judges are obviously determined to sift the case to the bottom, and to rectify whatever wrong has been committed. They have just decided that Dreyfus shall be informed by telegram that his trial is now the subject of revision. What the Government dared not do for fear of the Army and the Church the judges have done. This act of humanity will reassure many honest people who dreaded that justice might arrive too late and find a corpse instead of a man.

The Revision of the Dreyfus case, and the release of the martyr, which seems inevitable, will be a terrible blow to reaction in France. The Napoleons of the boulevards, the Alexanders of the autumn manœuvres, who give themselves such tremendous airs without having won a battle, will have to walk a little more humbly. At any rate they will be less ready to martyrise a soldier because he is a Jew and presumably has no friends; less ready to bully a poor woman for the crime of devotion to her husband's honor. And the Jesuits will sneak back for a while to their old burrows. They have gone too far, and played their game too extravagantly. The eyes of France are now open. She recognises the tricks of these treacherous vermin. Failing in their attack upon the public schools, they have intrigued, with great cunning and patience, to gain the mastery of the Army. Jews, Protestants, and Freethinkers have been weeded out from the higher military posts. Colonel Picquart, the hero, a soldier of whom France should, and will, be proud, a Bayard without fear or reproach—is reported to be a Freethinker; the books he obtained to read in his prison cell being the works of Mill, Darwin, and Spencer. The Catholic generals on the Staff have tried to get him out of the way more than once. Their consciences are easy, however, for the Church is always behind them, promising immunity on earth and felicity in heaven to her faithful sons, whatever sins they commit in furthering her interests. But, happily, this Jesuit plot is spoiled by exposure. France is getting wide-eyed and angry; in other words, she is recovering her reason, and with it her honour and dignity.

G. W. FOOTE.

CHRIST AND SOCIAL REFORM.

LAST week we pointed out some of the evils of our present social conditions as admitted by the clergy and ministers who took part in the services held at the various churches on the recent "Citizens' Sunday." It was further shown that Christianity had failed to successfully grapple with these evils. We will now examine the defective remedies which the Churches are putting forward to remove the consequences of their past neglect. That the evils of which we complain, and which it is so desirable should be eradicated, are not merely imaginary is proved by the statement of the Rev. W. J. Hocking, vicar of All Saints, Tufnell-park, London. He says: "The great problem that is demanding attention is the tremendous inequalities that exist; the awful line of distinction between the dweller in the palace and the dweller in the slum; between the owner of millions and the owner of nothing but rags and dirt; between Belgravia and Wapping; between Piccadilly and Petticoat-lane. I know that the differences are appalling, the inequalities heartrending. No words can express the sorrows, the pains, the woes, the heart-breaking disappointments that abound in the homes and haunts of the poor. Then there are the terrible evils that have been unearthed in the sweater's den, where men and women work under inhuman conditions, and for starvation wages; where mothers are compelled to forget their motherhood, and become the wage-earner for the whole family; where English labor is crowded out by the indigent misery of foreign competitors. Add to these the terrible fact that poverty cannot get itself decently housed in London; that the class who earn low wages are driven into one-roomed dwellings, where decency is impossible; that men and women of all ages herd together in rooms called 'lodgings,' without even the semblance of shame; that children are born into the world in these haunts of filth, fed from infancy with gin, taught to thieve, to lie, to cheat; the witnesses of every conceivable abomination; the victims of the grossest inhumanity. Remember, too, that these classes are not the few, the exception; that you have not to search for them in isolated cases, but that they abound, that they exist in teeming thousands, that every part of London is crowded with them. What can be done? How can we change this terrible condition of things? That it ought to be changed is certain" (*Church Gazette*, Oct. 29, 1898).

Of course such disgraceful, unnecessary, and deplorable injustice and cruelty ought to be changed, but how is it to be done? That is the problem to be solved. The Church has not evinced its capability in the past to transform society from what it is to what it *should be*; and, judging from the recent utterances of the clergy upon the subject, there is no hope that it will be more successful in the future. For instance, the Rev. W. J. Hocking puts it that the "change" can only be produced "by making men disciples of Jesus." "Support your Church more," says he; "she is the mightiest fulcrum on earth for uplifting human lives.....help her in her mission work, help her in her schools, and thus you will become true reformers." This is but the repetition of the theological nonsense which has been preached for ages, and that has wrecked social life and made it what it is. The Church, with her schools, her mission, and her so-called reformers, has been at work long enough to show that such agencies have been powerless either to prevent or to remove the social calamities under which society groans. The Church has had more than sufficient time to prove if it possessed either preventive or remedial qualities for social wrongs, and the verdict of time is that it is destitute of both. No, we must leave the Church to its alleged spiritual functions, and seek more practical means if social improvement be our object. Equally futile is the remedy prescribed by Dr. Clifford, and many other leading "lights" of the different Churches, which is, "To follow Christ," who, the Doctor says, if he (Christ) were a citizen of London, would strive to get the social rottenness of things altered.

Now what do all these Church "remedies" amount to? Simply an endeavor to emulate Christ and to obey his teachings. But who will try the experiment? Not those who give the advice, for their conduct is the very opposite to that ascribed to Christ. Would not men be deemed insane who would attempt to emulate Jesus in his conduct to his mother; in his driving the merchants out of the

temple with "a scourge of small cords"; in his riding into Jerusalem upon an ass and a colt which had been unjustly taken from their owner; in his cursing the fig-tree because it did not bear fruit out of season; in his extracting devils from mental cripples, and permitting the said devils to enter into "about two thousand" swine, which caused them to be "choked in the sea" (Mark v. 13); or in his refusing help to the woman of Canaan before she confessed her faith in him, telling her: "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs"? Here Christ granted to the profession of belief what he denied to the wants of humanity. Let professed Christians attempt to imitate their Master in the instances here given, and they would be looked upon as suitable inmates for a lunatic asylum. Surely it will not be claimed that in performing such actions as these Christ rendered any aid to social reform.

Then take his teachings. What social improvement could be derived from obeying the following: "Resist not evil"; if you are smitten once, invite a second blow; the command to practise self-mutilation; "let the dead bury the dead"; "render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, but unto God the things that are God's"; to hate one's own flesh and blood; to "lend, hoping for nothing again"; to "give to every man that asketh of thee"; to regard this world as of secondary importance; to forgive your brother seventy-times-seven; to "labor not for the meat which perisheth"; to break up the peace and harmony of the domestic circle; to "shake off the dust of your feet" at those who did not accept the one particular faith, for whom it is said in the day of judgment it shall be less tolerable than for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, where, we are told, the people were hopelessly corrupt; to "lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth," but "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things [food, clothes, etc.] shall be added unto you"; and finally, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor"? Where, we ask, are the factors of social reform to be found in such teachings as these? Nowhere; and the followers of Christ know it; therefore they never attempt to put them into practice. Yet, with reprehensible hypocrisy, the clergy delude their victims by urging that Christ was a great social reformer.

Poverty and idleness were essential to Christ's idea of a social state. No wealthy man could possibly carry out the notions which Jesus had of social duties, and if the poor adopted his advice not to labor for meat, they would get less of it even than they do at present. An American writer has well said: "The greatest question of our age is that of poverty. Yet, according to Jesus Christ, the things of this world are of little importance when compared to the glories of that which is to come. While Christ lived and preached, someone must have fed him. That food must have been the product of energy. Thus, while teaching the doctrine of idleness, he was nourished by the toilers; and, while God looked after the 'fowls of the air,' the 'Son of Man' depended upon the brethren 'in the flesh' for his existence. Had his advice been promptly followed by all men, he would have died of starvation instead of crucifixion. No need to provide against sickness; no need to consider that a day might come when work is scarce and children are hungry. If the doctrine of Christ were put in practice, the world would be made up wholly of beggars and solicitors for alms. It should be remembered that somebody must accumulate, somebody must lay something aside, and that the unfortunate must be fed. If all should distribute their property, and take no thought for the morrow, famine and pestilence would depopulate the earth."

We have thus endeavored to show that neither Christ nor the Church can supply the true remedy for the social evils by which we are surrounded. In fact, in our opinion, it is the influence of the teachings of both that have caused things to be as they are. What is now really required is a thorough intellectual revolution—a departure from mere matter of form—belief in a religion that has no practical hold upon the human mind. Our social perplexities originated, and have been perpetuated, by human causes, and the remedy to readjust the relations between man and man must also be human. Social redemption has been left to the priests of all denominations too long, and now what those "false guides" have not done must be accomplished by the united efforts of men unfettered by the machinations of the Church and the retarding influence of its

teachings. Men need to rely upon themselves; all monopolies have to be swept away; an equitable relationship between all classes of society must be instituted; wealth should be fairly distributed; excessive labor ought not to be imposed upon one section of the community whilst others live in idleness; and, above all, poverty should not be allowed to blight the existence of so many of our race while others live in extreme luxury. These are some of the factors that will serve as a means of ridding society of the social inequalities of which we experience the most appalling consequences in a so-called "Christian country."

It may be Utopian to expect such a radical change in our time, but that need not cause us to despair, or prevent us from doing our best to work for its achievement. "Rome was not built in a day," and the evils engendered during centuries of misrule will not readily be eradicated. Our duty is to be true to ourselves, to act justly to others, to persistently study what is the right thing to do, and to do it with all our might; and, finally, to cultivate the intellect of the rising generation, so that they may be enabled to usefully carry on the work of amelioration.

CHARLES WATTS.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

For some time past the daily and weekly press has furnished numerous instances of members of the "Peculiar People" and "Christian Science" sects who have been charged with causing the deaths of children and adults under their care. The culminating point in these cases has been reached in the recent death of that brilliant novelist, Mr. Harold Frederic, and the commitment of two of his attendants on a charge of manslaughter. That such a condition of things should exist nowadays is bad enough, but that these people should be denounced by Christian believers, and that these denunciations should be supported by Christian writers in the public press, only adds the factor of hypocrisy to the matter.

What is "Christian Science"? Essentially it is the fashionable form of the unfashionable doctrine of the Peculiar People. One preaches to the indigent east, the other to the fashionable west. One finds its clients among the uneducated poor, the other among that portion of the well-to-do who are always in search of some new form of mental dissipation. One calls in the elder of the Church and prays over the sick, the other "realises" Jesus into the patient's mind, and realises a comfortable income out of his pocket. At bottom they are identical. Both make use of the same jargon, both appeal to the same element—faith.

This west-end recrudescence of primitive Christian superstition appears to be an importation from America. There it claims to have two hundred thousand followers and between two and three hundred places of worship. In England it is in its infancy, but hopes for big results in the future; and doubtless the police-court proceedings will not injure it to any appreciable extent. The class of people to whom it appeals will probably regard Mrs. Mills as a martyr to truth, and persecution may convert a passive belief into an active propaganda. At present, however, its devotees are principally women, who introduce patients to the Lord—in more senses than one—for a more or less modest remuneration.

From a perusal of its confession of faith, combined with the evidence given before the coroner, there is one distinct advantage about the new "science." Any fool can practise it. All that is required is plenty of confidence in yourself and the healing power of Jesus, a copy of *Science and Health*, the Bible of the sect, a knowledge of a few biblical texts, and all else is simple. All that has to be done is to secure a patient, assure him that "God is mind and mind is the only reality.....All disease is imaginary.....Consumption is an error.....Belief alone can cure," etc., etc., turn the doctor out of doors, let the patient eat what he likes, act as he likes, and leave the rest to Providence—and the undertakers. If the patient recovers—and some people's constitution will survive anything—you add one more case to your list of cures; if he does not, there is a ready explanation at hand—he failed to "realise" Christ with sufficient intensity. Heads I win, tails you lose.

All this is, as I have said, only a more refined form of

the doctrine of the Peculiar People; and, of the two, my sympathies are with the latter. Their training, or want of it, their illiterate habits and childlike faith in the Bible, are more deserving of pity than condemnation. What is to be condemned in their case, and that in the strongest possible manner, is the hypocritical religious system which holds up the Bible as a revelation from God to man, and then threatens with imprisonment such as follow out its clearest teaching.

Look at the position of the Bible in Great Britain. It has been declared on high legal authority that it is part and parcel of the English constitution. Not to believe in it, and say so, is an offence society will hardly tolerate. It figures in our State schools, in law-courts, and in Parliament. Protestants of the type of Dr. Horton assure us that it is because we possess the Bible that we are where we are in the ranks of nations. To champion its claims thousands of men are withdrawn from productive pursuits, and millions of pounds wrung annually from labor for their support. And yet, when there are found a few people honest enough and foolish enough to carry out its teachings, the clergy and Christian laity look on in cowardly silence or hypocritical approval. Of all the thorough-paced hypocrisies that the world has ever known, commend me to modern Christianity. I say hypocrisy deliberately; for, however much we may account for the conduct of the Christian world as being due to carelessness, stupidity, or mental blindness, there is no shirking the conclusion that among the thousands of educated Christian men and women there must be a very large number who cannot fail to recognise that the "Peculiar People" and "Christian Scientists" are only carrying out in practice what they profess to believe in. It is this widespread hypocrisy, this trailing of the mind in the mire of barbaric superstitions, that is a far more distressing sight than even the loss to the community of a man like Mr. Harold Frederic.

The coroner who committed Mrs. Mills for trial was very emphatic in his condemnation of faith-healing. "No words of mine," he said, in his summing-up, "can adequately convey to Mrs. Mills my utter abhorrence of her so-called treatment. It is difficult to realise that in the enlightened nineteenth century sensible and intelligent people should lend themselves to such an absurd course of procedure"—a declaration that did far more credit to his common sense than to his Christianity. It says something for the growth of Freethought that a public official should denounce, amid cheers, the conduct of those who believe God Almighty to be more powerful than a blue pill, or Jesus Christ greater than a local doctor. And yet, I doubt not, the coroner would call himself a Christian without in the least realising the absurdity of his so doing. It is, indeed, a surprising fact that people should pin their faith to such absurd beliefs in these days of widespread education; but it is certainly not less surprising that the very people who condemn the "Faith-healers" should profess belief in a book which is simply full of advice advocating "such an absurd method of procedure."

For, when all is said and done, Mrs. Mills and George Senior are occupying, in the main, an essentially Christian position, and they are well advised in hurling scriptural texts at their judges, and thus driving them either to condemn the law they are paid to administer, or to denounce the religion they profess to believe in. There is, too, something pathetic and unanswerable, from the Christian point of view, in their plea that "drugs and hygiene are not necessary for human use, else would Jesus have recommended them in his healing. We never read that Jesus made a diagnosis of a disease in order to discover some method of healing. He never asked if it were acute or chronic. He never recommended attention to the laws of health, never gave drugs, never prayed to know if God was willing a man should die." They may quite safely defy Christians to point out where Jesus did any of the things they themselves are punished for not doing.

From Genesis to Revelation the Bible treats disease as being supernaturally induced, and that it is to be removed by supernatural methods. "God gives and God takes away" may well serve as the Biblical theory of disease. Jesus is called by his disciples "The Great Physician." Well, how did he deal with disease? The New Testament assures us that he went about "healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness." How? To the woman who suffered from an issue of blood of twelve years' standing he said: "Thy faith hath made thee whole." The two lepers were

cured with exactly the same formula. To the blind he said: "Receive thy sight; thy faith hath saved thee." If this is not "Christian Science," as practised by Jesus Christ himself, what is it? His first instruction to his disciple was to "heal all manner of diseases and all manner of sickness." And by what method? "In my name"! By precisely the method that Mrs. Mills and George Senior stand charged with manslaughter for adopting. He gave his disciples a medicine-chest filled with one ingredient—faith; and Mrs. Mills is the last step of a series in which Jesus Christ stands as the first. "In my name," says Jesus, "ye shall heal all manner of diseases"; try it on, say his modern followers, and we will give you six months' imprisonment. To such a pass has Christianity come that the only people who try to practise its teachings are denounced on all sides as rogues or lunatics.

And what, after all, is the offence these faith-healers are charged with committing? Practically it is with preferring Christian beliefs to secular science, revelation to experience, Jesus Christ to the College of Surgeons. This is the head and front of their offence. It is for this they are being denounced as fools or threatened with imprisonment as rogues. It is a strange reversal of the time when medical science was branded as sorcery, its votaries imprisoned or slain, and its teachings suppressed. It is a far cry from Vesalius, driven to his death by the Church for his study of anatomy, to the police-court at Kenley, where a public official, nominally a Christian, professes publicly his "utter abhorrence" of the methods of healing laid down by Jesus Christ and practised by Mrs. Mills. And yet in that step there is contained an epitome of the world's past struggle for truth and enlightenment. Then it was newborn knowledge struggling against a superstition strong to blight and destroy. Now it is a superstition in its dotage charged before the tribunal of reason with obstructing the progress of the race. The priest has been replaced by the physician, prayer by physic, and the world is the gainer by the change. And if these "Christian Scientists" were being charged by non-Christians, there would be nothing strange about the matter. But they are not. Their accusers are professing believers in the same religion, in the same book. That is the satire of the situation. It is the Christian cranks who possess the logic, the sensible Christians who are acting in an unreasonable manner. One daily paper complains that by their conduct these people are making Christian beliefs a byword and a jest. Quite so; and when to carry out teachings honestly brings them to that condition, the sooner they are laughed out of existence the better. What they are really doing is laying bare to the world what a hollow and artificial thing Christianity actually is. They may go to prison for doing this; but as the prison doors close behind them they will have demonstrated that professing Christians no more believe in "the lie of religion" than do I, or any other member of the Secular Society. Honor, then, to the poor Peculiar! For while they exist we shall never lack evidence of what Christianity once was, and what a poor, pitiful thing it has now become: living still, but lacking both the courage of acknowledging its real beliefs and the honesty of carrying out its professions.

C. COHEN.

POPE JOAN.

(BY THE LATE J. M. WHEELER.)

(Concluded from page 726.)

THE first author to reject the tradition was Aventinus (1534), though Platina, librarian at the Vatican, who relates it in his *Lives of the Popes*, published in 1479 by order of Pope Sixtus IV., seems to have had some little doubt; and Aeneas Sylvius, afterwards Pius II. (1464-71), when challenged with it, while not venturing to deny the tale, declared it uncertain. It was a Protestant, David Blondel (he who exposed the Sybilline forgeries), who, early in the seventeenth century, first gave good reasons for doubting the existence of Pope Joan; and his co-religionists, to their shame be it said, were so annoyed at a favorite weapon being pronounced untrustworthy by one of their own faith that it was made the occasion of the basest insinuations against him. The philosopher Bayle followed on the same side, while the younger Spanheim defended the story, and his arguments and authorities

were ably put into French by Jas. Lenfant. In the last century, when the story was generally discredited, chiefly through the efforts of Blondel and Bayle, the careful Church historian, Mosheim, declared: "Something must necessarily have taken place at Rome to give rise to this most uniform report of so many ages; but even yet it is not clear what that something was."^{*}

In the present century the learned Professor, C. A. Hase, in his *History of the Christian Church*, after mentioning that the story has been generally abandoned, reserves the statement: "It is, however, possible that the Church, which has often made realities out of what never existed, may also possess magic enough to annihilate what has really taken place, whenever the knowledge of it may seem injurious to the papacy."[†]

Others have expressed themselves with less reserve. At Leyden Professor Kist follows his great predecessor, Spanheim, in considering the main point of the story sufficiently established. In Germany two works advocating its truth have been published within the last thirty years.[‡] In America Dr. J. H. Hopkins, the Protestant bishop of Vermont, in a work entitled *The End of Controversy Controverted*, employs a chapter to prove the existence of Pope Joan, and concludes: "I am very confident that any candid mind accustomed to the weighing of evidence will concur in the result, and consider the proof amply sufficient to establish any fact in history."[§] Professor Ippolito, of Turin, circulates the tale in his *Storia Popolare dei Papi*, and *La Papessa Jeanne* finds her place between Popes Leo IV. and Benedict III. in the popular *Histoire des Papes* by Maurice La Chatre, published at Paris in 1883. Still more, La Rousse's *Grand Dictionnaire Universelle du XIXe Siècle*, a work to be compared with our own *Encyclopædia Britannica*, evidently leans to the belief in the story, and concludes with the words: "*Si Jeanne n'as pas existé, sa legende est un fait, nous ne dirons pas inexplicable, mais au moins inexplicable.*"[¶] (If Joan did not exist, the legend is a fact which, if not inexplicable, is at least unexplained.)

And, in truth, the explanations have been very various. Recognising that the world in general considers that where there is much smoke there must have been some fire, even the Catholics have been at some trouble to clear up the matter. Cardinal Baronius considered it a satire on the effeminacy of Pope John VIII. in the matter of Photius. The Jesuit Secchi declares it to have been an invention of the schismatic Greeks, and particularly of that vile heretic Photius!—although a great argument against its truth is the fact that it is not mentioned by Photius, nor by the schismatic Greeks until at least the fourteenth century. Others have called it a calumny of the Waldenses, while the fact is it was first put forward by their adversaries, the Dominican friars. Leibnitz thought the tale might have arisen from some female bishop having given birth to a child in a procession; Blocas, that Joan of England was the forger of the false Isidore decretals; and Gfrörer that it was a satire on these decretals, a theory endorsed by the *Christian Examiner*, although the story was current before the decretals were doubted. S. Baring-Gould links the story with the fable of Antichrist, and considers it connected with the whore of Babylon. Dr. Dollinger, with more judgment, says:—

"Four circumstances have contributed to the production and elaboration of the fable: 1. The use of a pierced seat at the institution of a newly-elected pope. 2. A stone with an inscription on it, which people supposed to be a tombstone. 3. A statue found on the same spot in long robes, which were supposed to be those of a woman. 4. The custom of making a circuit in processions whereby a street which was directly in the way was avoided."

The pierced seat is explained as having been originally taken from a Roman bath, but Dr. Dollinger's remark, that "it was therefore a mere matter of accident that those stone seats were pierced," will hardly satisfy anyone who has read the ceremony of installation as given in *Notes and Queries*, March 9, 1861. The explanation which is given in Wetzzer's great dictionary of Catholic theology—"It was a

^{*} *Ecclesiastical History*, cont. ix., chap. ii., sec. 4.

[†] Section 174.

[‡] *Die Papstin Johanna Keine Fabel*, von George Kleine, Embeck, 1855. *Ein Weib auf dem Stuhle Petri*, von O. Andreae, Gutersloh, 1866.

[§] Vol. ii., p. 22; New York, 1854.

[¶] Section 174.

symbolic ceremony recalling words of Ps. cxii. 7—*'Suscitans a terra inopem et de stercore erigens pauperam'*" (Raising up the needy from the earth, and lifting up the poor out of the dunghill—Douay version), is also rather far-fetched. The true explanation of the *sellu stercorearia* is probably connected with the fact that the canons excluded eunuchs from the papal throne, and the seat was contrived to prove that the person elected fulfilled the requirements of the canons. The seat is known to have existed in the time of Pascal II., A.D. 1099, and it lasted till the sixteenth century. The statue and inscription, Dr. Dollinger thinks, may have been that of a priest of Mithras, "and probably the name of the priest of Mithras was Papirius." Surely a strained conjecture. For the custom of making a circuit in procession, Dr. Dollinger alleges, "the reason was the narrowness of the street." But at least one of the old chroniclers challenges this by saying that, instead of going down the street, they went down bye-lanes and streets.*

Without altogether dismissing Dr. Dollinger's explanations of the rise of the story, for there is no doubt that myths will cluster round unexplained objects, we think Gibbon's also plausible. There was a time when a female virtually ruled over the papal chair. Gibbon says, alluding to the beginning of the tenth century:—

"The influence of two sister prostitutes, Marozia and Theodora, was founded on their wealth and beauty, their political and amorous intrigues; the most strenuous of their lovers were rewarded with the Roman mitre, and their reign may have suggested to the darker ages the fable of a female pope."

For the story is a fable, despite all the authorities in its favor; and herein lies its instructiveness. That it is mythical is proved by the way in which it grew, even more than by the testimonies which have been brought to show that the reigns of Leo IV. and Benedict III. cannot be sundered. These are so *apropos* that an hypercritic may be tempted to think they were made to fit.†

Its falsity will scarcely be questioned by any who read the analysis of the evidence in Bianchi Giovanni, Philomnesto (P. G. Brunet), and Dr. Dollinger. The story as first found in unimpeached testimony, towards the middle of the thirteenth century, is not the story as we have it now. Neither names nor dates are given, and it has all the appearance of a traditional scandal without what a modern world would consider evidence or authority. The evidence for it in later authors is weak where it should be strong, and strong only to show its weakness. What avail the ponderous authorities of Lenfant from the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, or Alexander Cooke, with his thousand references, against the simple footnote of Gibbon:—

"They bear testimony against themselves and the legend, by multiplying the proof that so curious a story must have been repeated by writers of every description to whom it was known. On those of the ninth and tenth centuries the recent event would have flashed with a double force. Would Photius have spared such a reproach? Could Liutprand have missed such scandal?"

In Rome there were several writers at the time—for instance, the four succeeding popes, all of whom must have concurred in suppressing the story, although the Church was unable to suppress it later on.

At the present day the investigation into such an ancient scandal would not repay the time spent in consulting the necessary authorities, were there not some instruction outside the story itself. And what is its lesson? Surely the extreme caution with which historic traditions must be received, and the care with which each item of evidence must be weighed. For here is a tradition which was apparently put forth and was for ages credited by persons whose prejudices, interests, and feelings would lead them to wish to suppress it, and which is supported by a variety of circumstances apparently tending to establish its truth, although those very circumstances probably gave shape to the story; and yet that universally accepted story has passed from general belief into general discredit. Those

* See *History of Pope Joan*, by H. Shuttleworth, vicar of Preston, p. 12; 1785.

† For instance, Hincmar of Rheims says that a deputation sent to Leo IV. were received by Benedict III., Leo having died while they were on the journey. Against this it has been contended that a deputation might be kept waiting even for years at Rome before being received at the papal court.

who remember that documents once ascribed to Moses are now referred to a period of from eight hundred to a thousand years after his time, and that the Jews have quite a different version of the time and history of the founder of Christianity from that given in the gospels, may perceive that the fable of Pope Joan is not without its moral in regard to the historic evidences of established orthodoxy.

GIORDANO BRUNO.

(Continued from page 722.)

BEFORE leaving England, he held a public deputation with the doctors at Oxford, greatly to the fluttering of the theological doves. Returning to Paris with the ambassador, he held another disputation at the Sorbonne. Thence he travelled through Germany, teaching, writing, lecturing, and disputing; sometimes entertained, sometimes repelled, and once openly excommunicated by Boethius. At Frankfurt he applied for permission to live in the house of Wechel the printer. This was peremptorily refused. "His request shall be refused," said the Burgomaster, "and he required to go and earn his bread elsewhere." The Carmelite convent, however, gave him a refuge, and he spent about seven months in Wechel's service.

Bruno was lured from Frankfurt by Zuane Mocenigo, a patrician of Venice. With a weak taste for the marvellous, this nobleman appears to have thought that Bruno could reveal him the secrets of the Black Art. Finding himself deceived, his malicious nature turned against the philosopher who was staying in his house. Acting on his confessor's advice, Mocenigo denounced Bruno to the Inquisition. The denunciations are dated May 23, 25, and 29, 1592. Among this worthy's charges are some which show that Bruno had been very unguarded in his conversation. Mocenigo represents himself as having heard the heretic declare that

"to say bread is made flesh is a great reproach to Catholics; that he is the enemy of the Mass; that no religion pleases him; that Christ was a wicked man; that since he worked evil to lead away the people, he might very well foretell that he would be hanged..... that Christ worked miracles in appearance, and that he was a magician and the Apostles also, and that he (Bruno) could do as much and more; that Christ was unwilling to die, and fled from death as long as he could..... He said that the Virgin could not have borne a child, and that our Catholic faith is full of blasphemy against God; that the friars should not be permitted to dispute, nor to enjoy their revenues because they defile the face of the earth; that they are all asses, and that our opinions are the doctrines of asses; that we have no proof that our faith is approved by God; and that not to do to others that which we desire them not to do to us sullies for good living; and that he laughs to scorn all other sins."

Bruno was arrested in Mocenigo's house, to the eternal infamy of the wretch who thus violated the laws of hospitality. The philosopher was lodged in the prison of the Holy Office, and his trial begun forthwith. On May 29, 1592, Bruno appeared in person before the dreaded Tribunal.

Before the tribunal of the Venice Inquisition Bruno was first sworn on the Scriptures to speak the truth. "I will speak the truth," he exclaimed; "many times have I been threatened with this Holy Office, and I have always taken the threat for a jest, for I am one ready to give account of myself." Being interrogated by the judges, he repeats the story of his life. Asked whether he has, publicly or privately, taught anything contrary to the Catholic faith, he replies: "I have taught nothing directly against the Christian Catholic religion, although I have done so indirectly." Bruno's contention was that philosophy and theology were distinct studies, each with its own rules and prerogatives; and what a man said as a philosopher was no prejudice to his orthodoxy as a theologian. The plea was characteristic of his subtle mind, but it availed him nothing. His judges were no philosophers, but theologians, and they were resolved to tolerate no license of thought outside the limit of their dogmas.

Bruno was several times interrogated. The last occasion was on July 30, 1592. What he then said to his judges has been called a recantation, but it seems to us an honest

man's plea for life. He did not withdraw any specific teaching; he merely promised that if he had given scandal he would atone for it. It was a pardonable concession to the authority of the tribunal. Bruno was in the full vigor of manhood, life was dear, and the future had many charms. Why should he fling everything away when a judicious flexibility, that involved no recantation, might save him? That he did anything more than this is absolutely irreconcilable with the proceedings of his subsequent trial at Rome.

On September 17, 1592, application was made by Cardinal di San Severina, in the name of the supreme tribunal of the Holy Office at Rome, for the delivery of Giordano Bruno to the Governor of Ancona. Venice declined at first, but afterwards, wishing to be friendly with Rome, it consented. Ferigo Contarini, a procurator, was invited to give a legal view of the matter, and, on his finding, Bruno was delivered up by the Doge's decree, dated January 7, 1593. The Pope returned his hearty thanks for this dutiful act, and on February 27, 1593, Bruno entered the prison of the Inquisition at Rome.

Ferigo Contarini, the procurator, said of Bruno: "His errors in heresy are very grave, though for the rest he possesses a most excellent rare mind, with exquisite learning and wisdom." Alas, that excellent rare mind, with its exquisite learning and wisdom, was doomed to earthly perdition, if not to heavenly, for the crime of heresy, which meant no more then, and has never at any time meant more, than happening to differ from the customary opinion. The noble life of the man, his chivalry, his poetry, and his wit were to be quenched by the bloody Inquisition. Such qualities were not necessary in a world dominated by the Church, which recognised no other grace than passive submission to its dicta.

Every trace of information fails from the beginning of 1593 to the beginning of 1599. All we know is that Bruno spent those six weary years in prison, deprived of all society, and probably of all companionship of books. Torture was systematically practised in the Inquisition prisons. Even the venerable and illustrious Galileo did not escape this "discipline." Campanella, who was imprisoned for thirty-eight years, wrote thus in his *Atheismus Triumphatus*: "I have been shut in fifty prisons; seven times I was examined under the most cruel torture. Forty hours I lay lately under torment. I was bound with cords which cut to my bones, and, with my hands tied to my back, I hung upon the sharp edge of a log, which stripped me of a pound and a half of flesh, while the earth swallowed ten pounds of my blood." That Bruno was subjected to similar treatment is not proved, but there is no reason for supposing that he was exempted from the usual mercies of the Inquisition, and we may conclude that his life from 1593 to 1599 was a worse hell than the fiery anguish of the stake.

Bruno's name is first on a list of twenty prisoners for trial, made on Monday, April 5, 1599. He was more than once brought before the tribunal, but he appears to have been stiff-necked throughout. No "persuasion," which probably meant torture, could induce him to abjure his heresies. A last effort to subdue him was made on Sept. 21, 1599, but with unbroken spirit he answered "that he ought not to recant, and he will not recant; that he had nothing to recant, nor any reason to recant, or knew what he should recant."

On February 8 Bruno was condemned and sentenced as an obstinate heretic, being forced on his knees to hear the tedious document. After setting forth that he had been frequently admonished without effect, and that he had been allowed ample time for reflection, it proceeded:—

"We.....by this conclusive sentence which we issue in this writ, *Pronounce, adjudge, determine, and declare* that you have been a heretic, one who confided in heretics, and who was their abettor and entertainer severally, and that you have consequently become amenable to the decisions, censures, and penalties, legal and ecclesiastical, imposed upon such-like offenders by the sacred canons, laws, and ordinances, general as well as special. And having regard to obstinate resistance to the acknowledgment of the truth, and the obduracy manifested by you in numerous instances, and your established continuance in errors, and intercourse with heretics, and your hopeless depravity, you have not improved nor reformed; and persuaded that for these reasons the Holy Office can place no further confidence in you, nor have any assurance that you have really and

unfeignedly repented, nor expect the slightest amendment in you. On this account we accordingly declare and adjudge that you are an impenitent heretic, a dissembling convert, and debased; and that by the very law you are deprived (and, so far as it is necessary, we deprive you anew) of every rank, privilege, and eminent position, and of your preferments, emoluments, and occupations, spiritual and secular, whatever they may be, and howsoever designated; and that they have ceased to be enjoyed by you from the date of your heresies, and that thenceforward you were incapable of obtaining them. And we condemn you to the forfeiture of all your property, personal and real, and of all consequent rights and claims agreeable to the appointment of the sacred canons, to be applied, as we do apply it, to the purpose to which it should be justly assigned. And, as one irreclaimable, without remorse, we in like manner pronounce and ordain that you ought to be degraded, as we direct that you be actually degraded from the orders to which you have attained. And as a person so henceforward, as well as from the previous time, we expel you as an unprofitable branch from our ecclesiastical court, and from the safeguard of our Holy Church; and we surrender and deliver you up to the secular court, that is, to your lordship the Governor of Rome, that you may take him under your jurisdiction, and that he may be subject to your decision, so as to be punished with due chastisement; beseeching you, however, as we do earnestly beseech you, so to mitigate the severity of your sentence with respect to his body that there may be no danger either of death or of shedding of blood. So we Cardinals, Inquisitors General, whose names are written beneath, decree."

Considering that Bruno was never possessed of more than the probably threadbare suit he stood in, and perhaps half a dozen books, the forfeiture of all his "property, personal and real," would have been a capital joke if it had not served as an introduction to the infamous sentence of death, veiled under the hypocritical formula "without shedding of blood." Bruno heard his death-warrant without trembling. Long imprisonment and suffering may have weakened his body, but his lofty spirit never flamed more gloriously than in that supreme moment. Rising and facing his judges, he said, "with a menacing aspect," rather like the victor than the vanquished: "It may be you fear more to deliver judgment upon me than I fear judgment." How proudly the words ring across the chasm of centuries! They were an appeal and a prophecy; an appeal to posterity, and a prophecy that it would vindicate him. The one has been answered, and the other realised. His judges are swept into the wreckage of the past, and covered with the dust of oblivion; the Church they represented wields no weapons but harmless anathemas, and sees its own doom written on the walls of destiny; while Bruno has ascended as a fixed star in the firmament of fame.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

RELIGIOUS APES.

MORE than one traveller has stated that apes show something like a religious sensibility. A very curious corroboration of this appears in the volume just published, called *Wild Animals in Captivity*, and written by the late A. D. Bartlett, who was for many years the superintendent of the Zoological Gardens. The following story refers to the famous chimpanzee "Sally," whose intelligence and docility were so remarkable: "The female, Sarah, had resided in the gardens many months, and in all probability had not seen one of her species for a very long time. A male having been purchased, it was thought desirable to introduce him at once to Sarah. Upon seeing each other they both uttered short sounds, and, protruding their thin lips as far as possible, until they formed a pointed appearance, they leaned forward towards each other until their lips touched, as if gently kissing; this occurred while the male was outside the wire-work. The door of the large cage in which was the female was then opened, and the two animals rushed into each other's arms, and, squatting on the floor of the den, hugged each other in the most affectionate embrace, at the same time uttering sounds of gratification and satisfaction. In a few seconds they rose up on their legs, and, standing as erect as their forms would allow, with their arms raised above their heads, they grasped each other's front paws and gave vent to loud yells and howling, screaming barks, at the same time looking upwards as if returning thanks to some invisible friend."

ACID DROPS.

EMPEROR WILLIAM poses as guardian of the Holy Places in Palestine, and France is annoyed at his impudence, for she has long regarded herself as the guardian of those hallowed spots. Even the ground Jesus Christ trod upon is a subject of discord amongst his followers. They can't agree about anything.

Emperor William has manifested one bit of humility in Palestine by recognising the personal superiority of Jesus Christ. But then Jesus Christ is dead.

Satirical stories are floating about in England at the expense of pious Emperor William. According to one of them, Prince Henry, before sailing for the East, being banqueted at Hamburg, made an after-dinner speech, in which he observed: "As the Divine William (Shakespeare) has said, 'There's a divinity doth shape our ends, rough hew them as we will.'" Upon which the Emperor leaned forward and said, "Did I really say that, Henry?"

Another story is somewhat more profane. It is said that the Emperor went out for a walk on the Lake of Galilee and got wet—and that's why he's coming home so soon.

A number of religionists, including the Bishop of St. Albans and the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, have opposed the granting of a license to the new Euston Theatre of Varieties, although some place of public entertainment is much wanted in the neighborhood. These sour and melancholy Puritans, who look upon all recreation but church and chapel-going as sinful, should really take a turn at minding their own business. Probably it will take them all their time to save their own souls alive-o.

We should like to know how many working-men members there are in the Working Men's Lord's Day Rest Association, which has been opposing the Queen's Hall license on account of the Sunday League's concerts. Meanwhile we note with pleasure that the opposition was unsuccessful.

The Sabbatarians are getting subtle. The Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, for instance, holding forth at St. James's Hall last "Lord's Day" on the Sunday Concert question, took the new ground that the Sunday League's concerts might be tolerated because they were not carried on for a profit, while Mr. Newman's concerts were quite intolerable because he pocketed any surplus of receipts over expenditure. This fine distinction is of course insincere. The Sabbatarians see that the old game of open obstruction is played out; they therefore change their tactics, and frown upon some Sunday recreations, while pretending to smile upon others. But this is too thin. Anyone with the smallest common sense can easily see through it.

Perhaps the Wesleyan President will tell us what is the difference in the matter of "private gain" between the manager of the Alhambra letting his hall to the Sunday League for £40, and making £40 by running a concert himself. It seems to us that the difference is entirely one of machinery—not at all of principle, or even of practical result.

Mr. Hughes wound up his discourse with the regulation reference to "the Continental Sunday" and its "disgraceful consequences." This appeal was good enough at one time, when insular Englishmen looked upon everything "Continental" as devilish. But it is not good enough nowadays. Too many Englishmen have been abroad on business or pleasure, and have learnt that the "Continental Sunday" is a paradise in comparison with the deadly dulness of our good old "Puritan Sunday."

The *New Age*, which was started by Mr. Fletcher, formerly editor of the *Daily Chronicle*, has passed into other hands, but its piety has rather increased than diminished. Its last week's "Art Notes" contained the statement that "Scepticism cannot produce fine art." Well, it all depends on what is meant. If it means that sceptics cannot be great artists, we say it is utter nonsense. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, for instance, was a Freethinker; and what was Turner's religion, and what was Haydon's? Shelley and Keats were both Freethinkers; so were Beethoven and Wagner. We advise our contemporary to drop this cant. Art is art, and religion is religion. The two may be associated, but they have no necessary connection.

It is well to note, in this connection, that the Queen provides military music on the East Terrace at Windsor Castle on Sunday afternoon, and allows access to the public. What do the Puritans say to this? They really ought to memorialise the Queen against this gratuitous desecration of the blessed Sabbath.

Luccheni, who assassinated the Empress of Austria, has been sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for life. His crime was a terrible one, and so is his punishment. The scaffold is a kind of glorification, but there is no romance about daily suffering in the obscurity of a prison cell. It remains to be seen, however, if this new method of treatment will deter the most violent and reckless Anarchists from what they call "propaganda by deed." For our part, we have never been able to see that legal penalties have very much deterrent effect. Given a certain unsoundness of head or heart, or of both, and there must be a certain expression of it in folly and wickedness. The only real remedy is to develop true education, and to deal with the most pressing social problems. Nothing else will avail; certainly not preaching and denunciation.

The Italian government appears to have been impressed by the representations made, not only at home but also abroad, as to the treatment of the political prisoners who were "implicated" in the Milan riots last May. They are treated as common criminals, and even worse. This is a scandal to Italy. It was for something quite different that Mazzini wrote and Garibaldi fought. And the worst of it is that a brutal government naturally breeds a brutal anarchism.

What an infinitely pathetic letter was that last one of Captain Dreyfus to his wife—a letter which she was not permitted to read herself, but which she had, as usual, read out to her at the Colonial Office. The poor prisoner is in absolute despair. "My strength," he says, "is exhausted. I am dying. I leave to the generosity of France the care of rehabilitating my memory." Madame Dreyfus asked that a telegram might be sent to him, informing him that his trial was being revised, but she was met with a refusal. M. Dupuy, the Premier, was approached, but his reply was the same as that of the Minister of the Colonies. As M. Reinach put it, a man is dying of thirst, and they will not give him a cup of water. Oh, it is infamous! This is what Jesuitical intrigues in the interest of the Catholic Church have brought France to—France the proud, the chivalrous. Statesmen cower and tremble when they should smite Jesuitism in the face.

More freedom in "king-deluded Germany." Dr. Adolphus Braun, sub-editor of the Social Democratic *Vorwärts*, has been expelled by the police as a "nuisance"—which is probably the vaguest crime that ever was alleged against anybody. Dr. Braun is technically a foreigner, as he is an Austrian. He is a brother-in-law of Dr. Victor Adler, the famous Socialist leader at Vienna. Of course his expulsion from Germany will have no effect upon the *Vorwärts*, and the police are therefore acting like jackasses.

"I have written so much," Mr. Ruskin has said, "that I can't quite make out what I am myself, nor what it all comes to." Jesus Christ, on the other hand, wrote nothing, and the world has been wondering what he meant ever since. So easy is it to be unintelligible. Nevertheless it may be asserted that no man was ever unintelligible who understood himself.

"Materialism stifles the soul," says G. Stoffers in the *Daily Chronicle*. This is *apropos* of the shrine of the Holy Virgin at Kevelaer, where German pilgrims kneel and pray to be cured of their diseases, and sometimes feel a little benefit—while the enthusiasm lasts. Even if this is all unscientific and nonsensical, the German gentleman who occupies a column and a half of the *Chronicle* asks why those poor kneeling men and women should be robbed of their faith. Let them kneel and pray! Yes, and let the priests stand up and prey upon them.

Here is a good sample of the Irish bull from the lips of a "holy father." "The very children," said the priest of Ballymalocbeg, "who are not old enough to speak or walk, are running about the streets cursing and blaspheming like fiends."

"Why," asks Dean Pigou, "are Ritualists the most irritating of human beings?" "Because they are always crossing themselves and incensing others."

Notwithstanding the battle of Omdurman, and the glorious reception at home of the Sirdar, all is not for the best in the best of all possible worlds. After the big ninth of November feast at the Guildhall the cold viands that remained were carved up and distributed to the poor. One hundred and forty-four families got a fag-end taste of something really eatable. A long line of others waited for hours in the hope of getting something, and they were disappointed. They were hungry all the time, and they went away hungry. Very likely most of them are hungry now. And this is civilisation! Well, let us hope for a better ordering of such matters in the days to come.

O wretched state of things (exclaimed an old divine) when one half the world lacks appetite and the other half lacks meat! He didn't stop to exclaim, O the wretched failure of Providence in the government of the world!

"He died suddenly, by a fall from a platform in the City, while listening to a religious service." That was the neat way in which a prisoner told Chaplain Horsley that his father had been hung at Newgate.

The supply of curates is decreasing. According to figures published in the *Mail*, on the authority of the Rev. Paul Petit, secretary of the Additional Curates' Society, there were 814 of these budding men of God ordained in 1886, and the number decreased annually until it fell to 652 in 1897. Mr. Petit attributes this decrease to the fall in tithe. In other words, the loaves and fishes have become smaller, and the "call from the Lord" is not heard so clearly as it used to be. This supports our contention that, for the most part, the clergy work in the Church, as doctors visit patients and lawyers practise in courts, for a living.

"Professor" G. H. Foul is the high priest of the latest American religion. His speciality is the receipt of written messages "direct from Heaven," some of which are in English, while others are in a "mysterious character." This gentleman goes one better than the Theosophists. Letters from Heaven eclipse letters from Tibet. What we should like to see is the celestial postmark on the envelope.

One page of the *Christian Globe* begins with a list of eulogies on Christianity—by Christians. The rest of the page is mostly occupied with what are usually called "quack" advertisements. The juxtaposition of paragraphs and advertisements is suggestive. Perhaps it resulted from unconscious cerebration or instinct on the part of the printer.

Sarah Stokes, a gipsy, has been sentenced to six months' hard labor at Taunton Assizes. She obtained cash from two flats, Phoebe Maria and William George Needs, on the pretence of being able to give them a chance of getting money out of Chancery. She had a globe which worked on parchment and left a name or letter, which guided her. No doubt she is a swindler, but she is really no worse than thousands of black-coated impostors called men of God, who live entirely on false promises and flash prophecies.

It is amusing to read the press comments on this Christian Science business. Some newspapers call for the severe punishment of Mrs. Mills, who took a pound a week from Mr. Harold Frederic and prayed for him in return for the money. But if Mrs. Mills is to be punished for this, what about the Catholic priests who take money for praying souls out of purgatory? With regard to Mrs. Mills taking money, it is clear that she must live somehow. She cannot go on praying for nothing, unless the Lord feeds, clothes, and houses her by a perpetual miracle. "Jesus Christ had to live," the lady says, "and so have we." She might even have told the smart legal gentleman who cross-examined her that Jesus Christ did *not* do his miracles for nothing. Rich women ministered unto him of their substance, and he kept a cashier called Judas.

The only real question at issue is this: Is prayer beneficial or is it not? If it is beneficial, then the Christian Scientist gives value for the fee. If it is *not* beneficial, then all the "divine service" in Christian churches and chapels is humbug and hypocrisy.

Apropos of this Christian Science case, the *Daily News* tells the story of "the excellent Bishop who always got into the middle compartment of the middle carriage in a train, and left the rest to Providence." Our contemporary well asks why those whose pious resignation to the divine will begins a little sooner are to be regarded as felons?

Even the Peculiar People's case has taken a new turn. Under the direction of Mr. Justice Hawkins, an Essex jury has returned a verdict of "Not guilty" on the indictment of two Peculiar parents for manslaughter in not calling in medical assistance to their dying child. Mr. Justice Hawkins laid it down that there was no criminal negligence in the case; the parents did all that they could for the child's recovery, and any omission on their part was due to ignorance or error, for which they could not be punished. This seems to us a common-sense view of the matter. But what a farce "justice" is when a certain course is felony in one county and no crime at all in another, or felony under one judge and perfect innocence under another! Such is the mess we get into when we ignore principles.

The Rev. Samuel Walton Kay, vicar of Butlers Marston, who was arrested on the charge of forging a promissory note for £500, has been committed for trial at the Warwick Assizes.

There has been a regular war between whites and blacks at Wilmington. The office of the *Record*, edited by a negro named Manly, has been burnt to the ground. According to a Reuter telegram, ministers of religion took part in the attack upon the *Record* office.

According to Christian theory, Atheists ought all to commit suicide. But they don't. About 99,999 out of every 100,000 suicides are Christians. The latest instance is that of Emily Westley, who drowned herself in Virginia Water, leaving a letter for her grandmother, in which she said, "God will forgive me."

"The three great agents of British expansion nowadays," the *Daily News* observes, "are the Missionary, the Maxim, and the Merchant." Note the order of this arrangement. The Missionary comes first as an advance agent; he gets up a row in order to introduce the Maxim, which makes way in turn for the Merchant, who makes virtual slaves of the surviving natives. Let us pray.

More "Providence" in China. The Yellow River has left its bed near Tsi-Nan-Fu, and two thousand square miles are flooded. Crops are ruined, hundreds of villages are destroyed, and a million people are thrown into destitution.

There has been trouble at Wellington, in Shropshire. A man named Glissan had to appear at the police-court, where he was summoned by Mary Ann Freeman, the mother of four of his children. Some years ago he went through an illegal form of marriage with her, but they had quarrelled, and hence these proceedings. Glissan was ordered to pay the lady five shillings a week for each child. As he left the court she shouted, "May God forgive you, but I never shall." Probably she meant the second half of the exclamation, and the first was only a fashion of speech. When a Christian leaves you to God, the meaning is a hope that you may be damned—and perhaps Glissan deserves it.

Dr. Clifford, the eminent Congregational preacher, has published a volume of addresses on *Typical Christian Leaders*. He includes Carlyle, who disbelieved all the miracles of the New Testament; and Browning, who occupied very much the same position. What is worse, he includes Darwin, who has left on record that he ceased to be a Christian before he was forty—Darwin, who had no belief in a future life or a personal God. Such is clerical honesty at the close of the nineteenth century! Early in the next century, perhaps, Bradlaugh himself will figure in the list of typical Christian leaders. You never know your luck!

Catholic Bishop Lyster has been preaching at Leith on the evils of purely secular knowledge. The Holy Catholic Church, he said, claims the right to "fashion and form, and bend and mould, the minds and hearts of the little ones." Precisely so. That is how every Church lives. Not a single Church on earth can afford to take its chance with unprejudiced adults. Children must be dosed with its physic until they are so used to it that they can never do without it. Habit becomes second nature, and artificial tastes are always the most tyrannical when they are once acquired.

General Bryant, of Madison, tells a story of a sailor on board an American ironclad, who prayed as follows on the eve of a battle:—"O Lord, shield us from the shells and other projectiles of the enemy, but if shells and solid shot do come to our vessel, I pray thee that they may be distributed as prize money is distributed, mostly among the officers."

"Some of the saddest visits I have ever paid," says a writer in the pious policeman's paper, *On and Off Duty*, "have been to the death-beds of Christians who have never come into the promised land. Not a ray of triumph, not a note of victory."

How man is at the mercy of the paltriest accidents in this queerly-regulated world! Two women quarrelled at Dawson City, and one flung a lighted lamp at the other. The result was the destruction of four blocks, comprising forty buildings, one of which was the post-office.

According to the *Outlook*, there is a man at Horncastle who possesses a snuff-box, which he says belonged to Robert Burns, and for which he also says he has refused an offer of £200. But how far this gentleman really appreciates Robert Burns may be inferred from the fact that he treasures quite as much an autograph of Marie Corelli. By the way, what an epigram Robert Burns might write on Marie Corelli! But perhaps it would be unprintable except for private circulation.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, November 20, Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road : 7.30, "The Meaning of Death."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—November 20, Hall of Science, Sheffield; 27, Birmingham. December 4, Glasgow; 11, Liverpool.—All communications for Mr. Charles Watts should be sent to him at 24 Carminia-road, Balham, S.W. If a reply is required, a stamped and addressed envelope must be enclosed.
- SYDNEY A. GIMSON.—We could not possibly improve what you wrote, so we have let it stand as the obituary notice of Mrs. Slater. We are glad that we had a last opportunity of shaking hands with her a few weeks ago at Leicester. On the whole, we imagine, her death was a release; but these separations are felt all the same by the survivors.
- R. LAWSON.—See "Acid Drops." Thanks.
- T. J. CONWAY.—Inserted according to fresh copy.
- HARRY ORGAN.—Apply to Miss Vance direct for the Tracts, and you will doubtless get them. A postcard will suffice. We note that Mr. Green, newsagent, St. Ebbe's, Oxford, supplies the *Freethinker*. Thanks for the kind expressions in your letter.
- LOUIS LEVINE.—Pleased to hear from you. Mr. Foote keeps well, but the strain is very heavy, and must tell before long, if there is no alteration. Thanks for the references.
- C. GRIGGS.—Received. See insertion.
- T. SHORE.—Will go through it as soon as possible. We are obliged.
- W. COX.—Address noted. The Liverpool Branch will find that collections do not realise as much as a charge for admission. The matter requires very serious consideration before deciding.
- VINCENT C. MARTIN.—We will look it up.
- W. P. BALL.—Your batches of cuttings are always very welcome.
- W. W. (Newcastle)—We are obliged; no doubt they will prove useful.
- A. J. MARRIOTT.—In our next. No room this week.
- G. PROUT.—It is an aspect of the matter which cannot be discussed in our columns.
- J. H. S.—Thanks. See acknowledgments.
- R. MELLOR.—We believe the Goisha was not necessarily a prostitute, but she was perhaps generally so in pre-revolutionary Japan—where, by the way, men and women used to bathe together in public without any sense of impropriety.
- W. RICHARDSON.—See paragraph.
- C. H. CATTELL.—See paragraph. Mr. Foote has not forgotten the matter of another date for Birmingham. Pleased to hear you are "doing grandly this season."
- W. D. ROLLEY.—Good enough to show that you might do better.
- R. CHAPMAN.—Thanks for your letter. We hope the difficulty of the South Shields Branch in the matter of halls will disappear when Thornton's is rebuilt.
- A. E. ELDERKIN.—Thanks for the references and cuttings.
- F. NEWTON.—Read the *Sociology* of Herbert Spencer, Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, Lubbock's *Origin of Civilisation*, Grant Allen's *Evolution of the Idea of God*, and the great second chapter in Darwin's *Descent of Man*. We refer you to the best works, which are expensive; but most of them should be found in your Free Library.
- J. M. (Manchester).—We are unable to advise you. It is a matter which everyone must decide for himself. The only way to determine whether anyone could earn enough on the Freethought platform is to make the experiment. Not that we recommend you to do so. The road to even moderate success is hard and thorny.
- A. W. MARKS.—We could not enclose such a slip in the *Freethinker*, as it would involve a good deal of expense; but we might print the application form where it could be cut out.
- G. W. BLYTHE.—Thanks for the cutting from *Light*. We note that Mr. Mahony, while wishing for a discussion, does not court an investigation.
- R. EDWARDS.—We cannot insert letters that reach our office on Tuesday afternoon. You must therefore wait until next week.
- OLD N. S. S. MEMBER.—Of course we agree with you that it is the duty of everyone who can afford it to purchase a copy of the *Secular Almanack*. The editor and the contributors give their services gratuitously, and any profit from the sale accrues to the National Secular Society. And it is by no means a dear threepennyworth.
- T. JOHNSON.—We have not heard from Colonel Ingersoll lately, but we have no doubt that he will redeem his promise to visit England next year, unless unforeseen circumstances should compel his remaining in America. Colonel Ingersoll wishes to visit England, and his family are looking forward to the trip. They know very well that a royal welcome awaits them.
- W. RENNIE.—Mr. Foote has a great deal of the matter ready for the second volume of *Crimes of Christianity*, and hopes to bring it out in the new year.

"FREETHINKER" CIRCULATION FUND.—E. Jones, 2s. 6d.; Cayford, 1s.; S. Newson, 2s. 6d.; W. C., 1s.; W. Snooke, £1 1s.; Harry Organ, 2s.; E. W., 1s.; T. S., 1s.; A. R., 1s.; R. P., 1s.; J. H. S., 1s.

RECEIVED.—New Time—Sydney Bulletin—Isle of Man Times—People's Newspaper—New Age—Public Opinion—New York Truthseeker—Liberator—Catholic News—Malthusian—Crescent—Progressive Thinker—Open Court—Torch of Reason—Brann's Iconoclast—Globe—Two Worlds—Boston Investigator—Ethical World—On and Off Duty—Glasgow Weekly Citizen.

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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.

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE lectures this evening (Nov. 20) at the Secular Hall, New Church-road, Camberwell-road, London, on "The Meaning of Death." This is a new lecture, which has attracted large meetings wherever it has been delivered. Prior to the lecture, or after it, Mr. Foote will have something to say about the infamous and persistent attack upon the Secularists' right of free speech in South London, with special reference to the *Mail*, its editor, and its most pious contributors.

Chester is an old cathedral town, and its inhabitants are very religious, at least by profession, and very bigoted. Naturally the Secularists there have a very uphill battle to fight. They are only a few, and most of them are poor. Still, they fight on with energy, enthusiasm, and harmony; and their members' list is slowly but surely lengthening. The N. S. S. Branch at Chester deserves the warmest sympathy of the whole Freethought party in England.

Mr. Foote visited Chester last Sunday and delivered three lectures for the Branch in the Corn Exchange. The room is long and rather barn-like, but it is the only one available, and poor heterodox beggars cannot very well be choosers. Of course the audiences were not as large as Mr. Foote is in the habit of addressing in most other places, but they might be called good in the circumstances. Certainly they were most appreciative and even enthusiastic; and, according to the committee, the latter characteristic is something novel in Chester. The Branch expresses itself as highly pleased with Mr. Foote's visit, which has already led to the enrolment of some new members.

Last Sunday evening Mr. Charles Watts lectured in the Secular Hall, Camberwell, to a large and very enthusiastic audience. The applause was frequent and hearty throughout the lecture, and at the close it was repeated again and again. Mr. Victor Roger made an excellent chairman. Mr. A. B. Moss occupied a seat on the platform.

Mr. Watts lectures three times to-day, Sunday (Nov. 20), in Science Hall, Rockingham-street, Sheffield. His subjects are new and attractive, and should command large audiences.

Mr. A. B. Moss occupies the Athenæum Hall platform this evening (Nov. 20), taking for his subject "The Creed of a Rationalist." Secularists have seldom an opportunity of hearing Mr. Moss indoors in West London, and we dare say they will take advantage of this occasion.

The Glasgow *Weekly Citizen* devotes nearly three columns to a fairly appreciative notice of James Thomson ("B. V.") with reference to the new and cheaper edition of the poet's *Life* by Mr. H. S. Salt. The writer appears to think that Thomson is not destined to literary immortality. For our part, we do not believe he will ever be forgotten by the real students of English literature.

Watson Heston's last cartoon in the *New York Truthseeker* is called the "The Old Pirate in Dangerous Waters." The ship of faith, with Christ on the cross for figurehead, and the skull and cross-bones on its flag, is sailing in a narrow passage between the cliffs of Evolution and Geology, with the big rock of Rationalism right in the way. The inference is that the ship is doomed, and that her black pirate crew will all be drowned.

"Our friends in England," Joseph Symes says in the *Liberator*, "meet with much more rowdy opposition at their open-air meetings than they formerly did, which is a good sign as well as a bad one. It shows that the Secularist propaganda is making itself felt, that bigots are roused to wrath and fury, and that, like the Devil in Revelation, they are all the more infuriated because their 'time is short.'"

Mr. M. Loafer reports that the Secular open-air meeting last Sunday at Limehouse was a success in spite of the religionists, who brought out a choir in a van to drown the speakers. A collection of £1 was taken for the Sandwich Men's Christmas Dinner Fund. To-day (Nov. 20) the collection will be for the Freethinkers' Benevolent Fund.

Three attempts were made by the Holy Hooligans to break up the Secular meeting on Peckham Rye last Sunday, but the Secularists held their ground to the finish. A large crowd of bigots followed the party of twenty or so Secularists who went to a refreshment house for tea, and blows were struck, but no particular damage was done. The *Mail's* lambs can't possibly win; they can only make a row.

Mark Twain (it is not generally known that he is a Freethinker), writing to Mr. Allen Simpson, of Adelaide, said this: "The war has brought England and America closer together, and, to my mind, that is the biggest dividend that any war in this world has ever paid. If this feeling is ever to grow cold again, I do not wish to live to see it."

The Free Press Defence Committee has issued an important manifesto on the Bedborough trial, copies of which can be obtained on application to the honorary secretary, Mr. Henry Seymour, 51 Arundel-square, Islington, N.

Mr. S. Hartmann, one of the N. S. S. vice-presidents and its treasurer, appears in a new rôle to-day (Nov. 20). He is to open a discussion at 11.15 in the Brixton Discussion Forum, at the Progressive Club, 8 Mayall-road, S.W., on the subject of "Paganism and Christianity Contrasted." No doubt some of the local Freethinkers will drop in and support him, if necessary, in the debate.

Mr. C. H. Cattell writes to us from Birmingham: "Mr. J. McCabe's visit was eminently successful in every way. The members of the Branch and the public seemed deeply impressed by the scholarly manner in which his addresses had been prepared and were delivered. At his lecture on the subject of his journey from Rome to Rationalism, some discussion ensued, which enabled him to show the audience that he is smart in debate and well able to defend his position. Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner also had large audiences. The morning meeting was presided over by a lady member, Miss Goyne; the lecture on 'Parliament as it Was, Is, and should Be' proving a good, useful address, thoroughly enjoyed by all present. There was a large quantity of literature sold at all the meetings, an extra supply of the *Freethinker* being cleared right out."

Obituary.

I AM very sorry to have to record the death of Mrs. Slater, widow of the late Mr. Thomas Slater, who was a vice-president of the N. S. S. She died last Thursday (November 10), at the age of seventy-five, and was buried on Monday at Bury, where she and her husband spent the greater part of their married life, and where his ashes are buried. Mr. Joseph McCabe represented our Society, and conducted a Secular funeral service. I need say little of her fine characteristics. She was a singularly upright, shrewd, and honorable woman, with the sturdy, downright, but kindly character which we associate with the best of our north-country people. She was a devoted believer in the principles that our societies exist to inculcate, and throughout her life had, with her husband, made many and great sacrifices for Secularism and Freethought. She came with her husband to Leicester about fourteen years ago, and since then has lived at our Secular Hall, regularly attending all our lectures whenever her health would allow. We all mourn a friend lost, but rejoice to think that she had fairly completed her life's work, and has left the memory of an honest, true woman as an example to all who knew her.—SYDNEY A. GILSON.

SUPERSTITION.

EXTRACTS FROM COLONEL INGERSOLL'S NEW LECTURE.

(Continued from page 731.)

To deny the existence of these evil spirits, to deny the existence of the Devil, is to deny the truth of the New Testament. To deny the existence of these imps of darkness is to contradict the words of Jesus Christ. If these devils do not exist, if they do not cause disease, if they do not tempt and mislead their victims, then Christ was an ignorant, superstitious man, insane, an impostor, or the New Testament is not a true record of what he said and what he pretended to do. If we give up the belief in devils, we must give up the inspiration of the Old and New Testament. We must give up the divinity of Christ. To deny the existence of evil spirits is to utterly destroy the foundation of Christianity. There is no half-way ground. Compromise is impossible. If all the accounts in the New Testament of casting out devils are false, what part of the blessed book is true?

As a matter of fact, the success of the Devil in the Garden of Eden made the coming of Christ a necessity, laid the foundation for the atonement, crucified the savior, and gave us the trinity.

If the Devil does not exist, the Christian creeds all crumble, and the superstructure known as "Christianity," built by the fathers, by popes, by priests, and theologians—built with mistakes and falsehoods, with miracles and wonders, with blood and flame, with lies and legends borrowed from the savage world, becomes a shapeless ruin.

JEHOVAH, JOHN WESLEY, AND WITCHES.

If we give up the belief in devils and evil spirits, we are compelled to say that a witch never lived. No sensible human being now believes in witchcraft. We know that it was a delusion. We now know that thousands and thousands of innocent men, women, and children were tortured and burned for having been found guilty of an impossible crime, and we also know, if our minds have not been deformed by faith, that all the books in which the existence of witches is taught were written by ignorant and superstitious men. We also know that the Old Testament asserted the existence of witches. According to that holy book, Jehovah was a believer in witchcraft, and said to his chosen people: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."

This one commandment, this simple line, demonstrates that Jehovah was not only not God, but that he was a poor, ignorant, superstitious savage. This one line proves beyond all possible doubt that the Old Testament was written by men, by barbarians.

John Wesley was right when he said that to give up a belief in witchcraft was to give up the Bible.

Give up the Devil, and what can you do with the Book of Job? How will you account for the lying spirits that Jehovah sent to mislead Ahab?

Ministers, who admit that witchcraft is a superstition, will read the story of the witch of Endor—will read it in a solemn, reverential voice, with a theological voice—and will have the impudence to say that they believe it.

THE ADMISSION OF HONEST MEN.

The smallest seed that, wrapped in soil, has dreams of April rains and days of June, withholds its secrets from the wisest men. The wisdom of the world cannot explain one blade of grass, the faintest motion of the smallest leaf. And yet theologians, popes, priests, parsons, who, speechless, stand before the wonder of the smallest thing that is, know all about the origin of worlds, know when the beginning was, when the end will be, know all about the God who with a wish created all, know what his plan and purpose was, the means he uses, and the end he seeks. To them all mysteries have been revealed, except the mystery of things that touch the senses of a living man.

But honest men do not pretend to know; they are candid and sincere; they love the truth, they admit their ignorance, and they say, "We do not know."

After all, why should we worship our ignorance, why should we kneel to the unknown, why should we prostrate ourselves before a guess?

If God exists, how do we know that he is good, that he cares for us? The Christians say that their God has existed from eternity, that he forever has been, and forever will be,

infinite, wise, and good. Could this God have avoided being God? Could he have avoided being good? Was he wise and good without his wish or will?

Being from eternity, he was not produced. He was back of all cause. What he is he was and will be, unchanged, unchangeable. He had nothing to do with the making or developing of his character. Nothing to do with the development of his mind. What he was he is. He has made no progress. What he is he will be; there can be no change. Why, then, I ask, should we praise him? He could not have been different from what he was and is. Why should we pray to him? He cannot change.

And yet Christians implore their God not to do wrong.

The meanest thing charged against the Devil is that he leads the children of men into temptation, and yet in the Lord's Prayer God is insultingly asked not to imitate the king of fiends.

"Lead us not into temptation."

Why should God demand praise? He is as he was. He has never learned anything; has never practised any self-denial; was never tempted, never touched by fear or hope, and never had a want. Why should he demand our praise?

THANKING GOD FOR GOOD AND EVIL.

Does anyone know that this God exists; that he ever heard or answered any prayer? Is it known that he governs the world; that he interferes in the affairs of men; that he protects the good or punishes the wicked? Can evidence of this be found in the history of mankind? If God governs the world, why should we credit him for the good and not charge him with the evil? To justify this God we must say that good is good, and that evil is also good. If all is done by this God, we should make no distinction between his actions, between the actions of the infinitely wise, powerful, and good. If we thank him for sunshine and harvest, we should also thank him for plague and famine. If we thank him for liberty, the slave should raise his chained hands in worship and thank God that he toils unpaid, with the lash upon his naked back. If we thank him for victory, we should thank him for defeat.

Only a few days ago our president, by proclamation, thanked God for giving us the victory at Santiago. He did not thank him for sending the yellow fever. To be consistent, the president should have thanked him equally for both.

The truth is that good and evil spirits, gods and devils, are beyond the realm of experience, beyond the horizon of our senses, beyond the limits of our thoughts, beyond imagination's utmost flight.

Man should think, he should use all his senses, he should examine, he should reason. The man who cannot think is less than man; the man who will not think is traitor to himself; the man who fears to think is superstition's slave.

Superstition is, always has been, and forever will be, the enemy of liberty.

WHAT SUPERSTITION HAS DONE.

Superstition created all the gods and angels, all the devils and ghosts, all the witches, demons, and goblins, gave us all the augurs, soothsayers, and prophets, filled the heavens with signs and wonders, broke the chain of cause and effect, and wrote the history of man in miracles and lies. Superstition made all the popes, cardinals, bishops, and priests, all the monks and nuns, the begging friars and filthy saints, all the preachers and exhorters, all the "called" and "set apart." Superstition made men fall upon their knees before beasts and stones, caused them to worship snakes and trees and insane phantoms of the air, boguiled them of their gold and toil, and made them shed their children's blood and give their babes to flames. Superstition built the cathedrals and temples, all the altars, mosques, and churches, filled the world with amulets and charms, with images and idols, with sacred bones and holy hairs, with martyrs' blood and rags, with bits of wood that frighten devils from the breasts of men. Superstition invented and used the instruments of torture, flayed men and women alive, loaded millions with chains, and destroyed hundreds of thousands with fire. Superstition mistook insanity for inspiration, and the ravings of maniacs for prophecy, for the wisdom of God. Superstition imprisoned the virtuous, tortured the thoughtful, killed the heroic, put chains on the body, manacles on the brain, and utterly destroyed the liberty of speech. Superstition gave us all

the prayers and ceremonies, taught all the kneelings, genuflections, and prostrations; taught men to hate themselves, to despise pleasure, to scar their flesh, to grovel in the dust to desert their wives and children, to shun their fellow-men, and to spend their lives in useless pain and prayer. Superstition taught that human love is degrading, low, and vile; taught that monks are purer than fathers, that nuns are holier than mothers, that faith is superior to fact, that credulity leads to heaven, that doubt is the road to hell, that belief is better than knowledge, and that to ask for evidence is to insult God. Superstition is, always has been, and forever will be, the foe of progress, the enemy of education, and the assassin of freedom. It sacrifices the known to the unknown, the present to the future, this actual world to the shadowy next. It has given us a selfish heaven and a hell of infinite revenge; it has filled the world with hatred, war, and crime, with the malice of meekness and the arrogance of humility. Superstition is the only enemy of science in all the world.

WHAT FAITH DID FOR ITALY.

Nations, races, have been destroyed by this monster. For nearly two thousand years the infallible agent of God has lived in Italy. That country has been covered with nunneries, monasteries, cathedrals, and temples—filled with all varieties of priests and holy men. For centuries Italy was enriched with the gold of the faithful. All roads led to Rome, and these roads were filled with pilgrims bearing gifts; and yet Italy, in spite of all the prayers, steadily pursued the downward path, died, and was buried, and would at this moment be in her grave had it not been for Cavour, Mazzini, and Garibaldi. For her poverty, her misery, she is indebted to the holy Catholic Church, to the infallible agents of God. For the life she has she is indebted to the enemies of superstition. A few years ago Italy was great enough to build a monument to Giordano Bruno—Bruno, the victim of the "Triumphant Beast"—Bruno, the sublimest of her sons.

SPAIN'S DEBT TO PRIEST AND CREED.

Spain was at one time owner of half the earth, and held within her greedy hands the gold and silver of the world. At that time all nations were in the darkness of superstition. At that time the world was governed by priests. Spain clung to her creed. Some nations began to think, but Spain continued to believe. In some countries priests lost power, but not in Spain. The power behind her throne was the cowled monk. In some countries men began to interest themselves in science, but never in Spain. Spain told her beads and continued to pray to the Virgin. Spain was busy saving her soul. In her zeal she destroyed herself. She relied on the supernatural; not on knowledge, but superstition. Her prayers were never answered. The saints were dead. They could not help, and the Blessed Virgin did not hear. Some countries were in the dawn of a new day, but Spain gladly remained in the night. With fire and sword she exterminated the men who thought. Her greatest festival was the *Auto da fe*. Other nations grew great, while Spain grew small. Day by day her power waned, but her faith increased. One by one her colonies were lost, but she kept her creed. She gave her gold to superstition, her brain to priests, but she faithfully counted her beads. Only a few days ago, relying on her God and his priests, on charms and amulets, on holy water and pieces of the true cross, she waged war against the great Republic. Bishops blessed her armies and sprinkled holy water on her ships, and yet her armies were defeated and captured, her ships battered, beached, and burned, and in her helplessness she sued for peace. But she has her creed; her superstition is not lost. Poor Spain, wrecked by faith, the victim of religion!

Portugal, slowly dying, growing poorer every day, still clings to her faith. Her prayers are never answered, but she makes them still. Austria is nearly gone, a victim of superstition. Germany is travelling towards the night. God placed her Kaiser on the throne. The people must obey. Philosophers and scientists fall upon their knees and become the puppets of the divinely crowned.

(To be concluded.)

PREHISTORIC PEEPS.

VI.—WHY NOAH BROKE THE PLEDGE.

"Beer, glorious beer."—POPULAR HYMN OF NINETEENTH CENTURY.

"A man may have no vices, and have worse."—MAROUS TWAINUS.

CLERICAL cuttle-fish have invariably insisted that Noah owed his salvation to the clemency of Admiral J. Hovah. This is unjust to our prehistoric navigator, for Captain Noah fully *earned* his salvation. At six hundred years, an age when most of us are living on our great-grandchildren, he constructed a vessel beside which the *Great Eastern* was as a child's paper-boat to an ironclad. In addition, this ancient naturalist collected all the known specimens of birds, beasts, reptiles, insects, and animalculæ. He fed these creatures for a considerable time, and he also navigated Admiral J. Hovah's "Black Maria" in the dampiest and stormiest weather ever experienced by mortal man. Furthermore he kept the ark clean—that is, he disposed of the filth. Try to imagine poor, dear, old Noah, with a clothes-peg on his nose, working sixteen hours daily at this contract. Ugh! Enough to make a man sweat tallow candles at the bare idea. Noah must have worked single-handed. There were only seven other human beings on the Ark, four of whom were ladies. We may be sure that Mrs. Noah insisted on his looking after the sewage department himself. His three boys, Shem, Ham, and Japhet, were but babies of one hundred years. Talk about sweating! The Chosen People have always been famed for their habits of working their employees long hours with precious little pay, but this divine example fairly takes the biscuit.

On February 17, 2349 B.C. ("the Bible tells me so"), the fountains of the Great Deep Water Co. busted, and the windows of heaven were opened. All this dampness was owing to the fact that Our Heavenly Father allowed Christ's brothers to have latchkeys, which permitted them to leave the heavenly mansions to make love to the barmaids in the Euphrates Valley. If Admiral J. Hovah had kept the doors of heaven shut earlier, there would have been no necessity for the windows of heaven to have been open on this occasion. But God's ways are not as our ways, for which let us be devoutly thankful.

The people before the Flood seem to have been a shocking lot of bounders. Maybe they were not dieted properly. From all accounts we learn that they were vegetarians and teetotallers. There is not enough nourishment in a carrot and a glass of water to make a man or woman moral. Noah tried to improve on this generous diet, and has the honor of being the first gentleman who got drunk and had roast meat for dinner. Noah deserves our pity. It would require the genius of a Sterne to do justice to such a subject. But the present scribe has no tears in his pen. If working like a galley-slave, and being subjected to some hundred thousand stenches, don't justify drunkenness, please ask me another! To be a plastic saint under such circumstances would have been a difficult task for even the Pope of Rome or the Archhumbog of Canterbury.

Noah was the first man who "saw cats"; he was also the first who had any need to. The poor navigator must have passed many sleepless nights. Dead tired as he must have been, he could never have slept through such a racket as there was every night on Admiral J. Hovah's three-decker. Thousands of sleeping creatures snored with universal nose, and ever and anon some gong-throated jackass executed a serenade to his lady-love. Outside the sea was lashed to lather, and every few moments was heard the grumbling of the lowering thunder. It was not nice, and no wonder he felt fatigued at it, and pined for some brandy-and-water. Of course, it may have been Gilbey's champagne at one-and-threepence a bottle, Kop's ale, or even "Special Scotch." I do not venture to dogmatise. A man with an experience like that of Noah's must have been *capable de tout*—even Kaola or "Communion port."

Noah's attempt, after his disembarkation, to keep his spirits up by pouring spirits down led to one unfortunate result. He became drowsy whilst dressing one Sunday, and succumbed before he had time to put on his unmentionables. Master Ham, just going to Sunday-school, came in for a clean collar, and burst—into smiles. He went and told his brothers. They, not wishing to become acquainted with papa's slipper, tried to repair the mischief. Taking the old man's best frock coat off its customary peg, they

walked backwards into the room intending to cover him up. One of the boys, unfortunately, trod on the old man, and he woke with a start. Shem and Japhet hiding behind him, he saw only the round, smiling face of Master Ham in the doorway. Then he arose in his wrath and profaned, as angry male parents are wont to do when their Sunday rest is disturbed.

Noah, in his last years, was a wine-merchant; but, although he was some 350 years in this line of business, his biographer, Mr. Moses, does not tell us what else he did. We never hear of him again. He finally turned up his toes at the good old age of 950 years, thus beating Mr. Adam by a short neck. No monument was raised to mark the last resting-place of this prehistoric Columbus, one of the very few survivors of the Great Cold Water Cure. There's only a very tiny moral to this yarn of a very ancient mariner. It has been happily expressed by Mr. G. L. Mackenzie, the Laureate of Secularism, in the following lines:—

Ne'er try to please God, lest you make Him your friend;
Remember old Job's vivisection;
He "chastens" his loved ones, and oft likes to send
Some bloodthirsty proof of affection.

MIMNERMUS.

MORAL WEEDS; OR, THE CHRISTIAN EXCRESCENCE.

(The more thoughtless and ignorant specimens of Christians are constantly saying to Secularists, "What will you put in place of Christianity?")

WHAT will we put in place of Christianity?
We'll put what people put in place of fleas;
In place of dirt, and weeds, and inhumanity;
In place of toothache, locusts, and disease.

What will we put in place of Christianity?
We'll put what sweepers put in place of mud;
What doctors put in place of cured insanity,
And shamble-scourers put in place of blood.

What will we put in place of Christianity?
Are you a parson? Learn an honest trade!
A layman? Rid yourself of pious vanity,
And ghosts, and gods which you and priests have
made!

What will we put in place of Christianity?
Perhaps what people put in place of rust;
Perhaps—O blind blasphemers of Humanity!—
We'll put what housewives put in place of dust.

What will we put in place of Christianity?
Why, NOTHING! Fools! 'Tis breathing space you
need!

We freshen drooping flow'rs of Truth and Sanity
By *weeding out* the falsehoods of your creed!

What will there be in place of Christianity?
A wholesome space, now dank with Christian weeds.
Perennial in the garden of Humanity
Are all the healthful growths for human needs!

G. L. MACKENZIE.

No humorist could possibly be a Christadelphian, and, of all pious bores who ever struck Australia, lecturer Robert Roberts, whose death is reported from 'Frisco, was the most wearisome. Roberts usually faced an audience of less than a dozen—two bearded and solemn patriarchs, three withered old ladies with corkscrew curls, and several disrespectful small boys. Most of the small boys filed out in disgust when they found the entertainment to consist solely of talk; the others would fidget and scuffle in the back seats until ordered out in a hilarious bunch by the doorkeeper. But the three withered ladies and the solemn patriarchs nightly sat for two hours and listened to a rambling discourse about the Beast, and the Bull, and the Chariot, and the Armageddon, all of which, seemingly, had some bearing upon an imminent squabble between the Bear and the Turk. The present scribe was naturally pleased to learn that the inevitable Bull would have its customary horns in Armageddon.—*Sydney Bulletin*.

A member of the House of Commons, having written to make inquiry about the health of an acquaintance, received the following answer: "In reply to your letter to hand this morning, I have to inform you of the *unpleasant* news that our brother has passed from earth to heaven."

BOOK CHAT.

MR. ST. GEORGE MIVART has just published a new book through Mr. Murray. The title is *The Groundwork of Science*, and if the author had carefully excluded all question of religion, and appealed to nothing but human reason, it would have been well. As it is, the champion of clericalism is guilty of treason to science, and a betrayal of the cause of philosophy. The book is, however, one which our readers would do well to look into. It is a standing example of how a scientific work should not be written.

* * *

The humorists who add to the gaiety of nations deserve well of the reading public. Mr. W. W. Jacobs, the youngest of the laugh-makers, has written a new book, *Sea Urchins*, which, with its delicious absurdities and unforced humor, is simply irresistible. The author has again been inspired by the sea, and has again produced a volume brimful of merriment.

* * *

The second-hand booksellers' shops are just now full of remainder copies of the writings of a certain Mr. McCosh. We wonder if these are the productions of the gentleman whom the Rev. W. T. Lee regards as a second Solomon, and is for ever quoting from in his debates.

* * *

Dr. Havelock Ellis intends that the remaining volumes of *The Psychology of Sex* shall be issued by a continental publisher.

* * *

An attempt to explain the Bible, by means of a novel, has been made by Mr. Bernard Hamilton. *The Light: A Romance* (Hurst and Blackett; 6s.) is a bulky volume of over five hundred pages of small print. The volume must have cost the author a tremendous amount of work. Mr. Hamilton displays a close knowledge of many out-of-the-way subjects. The love passages are well written, and the descriptive passages show that the author is no 'prentice to the art of literature. Emphatically it is a book worth reading.

A ROMAN HOSPITAL.

THE discovery of a "hospital" amongst the Roman ruins at Baden, in Canton Aargau, is of considerable interest, because we possess no literary document, Greek or Roman, which throws light upon the question whether the Ancients had any institutions corresponding to our hospitals. Hippocrates, indeed, speaks of his observations upon the sick persons in the Temple of Æsculapius, but it is impossible to tell from his very meagre remarks whether there was an hospital attached to the Temple. The excavations at Baden have laid bare a building containing fourteen small rooms, together with a number of articles which evidently served for the use of Roman physicians and surgeons, as pincettes, tubes, spatulas, spoons, measures, caustics, ointment-boxes, etc. The experts conclude that these "finds" indicate the building to have served as the hospital for the Fourth and Fifth Legions, which had their standing quarters on the spot.—*Daily News*

Not Going That Way.

"I'll never forget one of the funny experiences of my last voyage over the ocean," said a man to a Cincinnati *Enquirer* reporter. "There were an unusual number of passengers aboard that were making their first journey, and they furnished the old timers with a great deal of amusement. The coming of a heavy fog had caused the captain to shut down the engines. Scarcely had the liner come to a standstill when up dashed an elderly female to the head officer. 'Why, sir,' began she, 'are we stopped here?' The ruler of the sea gulped down his feelings. 'Don't you perceive, madam, that we are in a thick fog?' 'But it is clear enough up there,' persisted the lady, pointing overhead. 'So I see,' retorted the captain, 'but we are not going to heaven unless the boilers should burst.'"

How the clergy delight to gibe at one another. A Q. habbiox Methodist parson lately passed the tick-demarcation line without having greased his horse as specified by law. Was summoned and fined. Met Father O'Flynn next day, who thus accosted his spiritual comrade: "Well, Mr. —, you've been dodging the devil for the last five years to my knowledge, and yet you cannot dodge a common tick-inspector."—*Sydney Bulletin*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SABBATARIAN BIGOTRY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Amid the "encircling gloom" at Clerkenwell Licensing Sessions, on Friday, there was at least one bright spot. The Lord's Day bigots going in and out of the Court could hardly fail to observe it. It displayed itself openly and fearlessly on one side of the "Green" within a few hundred yards of the entrance to the Court. It was a contents-bill of the *Freethinker* outside a newsagent's door. Can there be any doubt as to the need of this journal, its claims to support, and the urgency of an active anti-theological propaganda, when such a result as that secured by the Lord's Day Rest Association is possible? Who says the battle is over, and the fight won, in the face of this latest achievement of Christian bigotry?

There were several white-chokered gentlemen hanging about the doors of the Court while Mr. Tindal Atkinson—with no apparent liking for the job—stated their case. As I looked at them, and the "common informer" who was called, I felt more than ever the need of a vigorous Anti-Clerical Crusade.

FRANCIS NEALE.

FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

MEN fear death as children fear to go in the dark; and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other.—*Bacon*.

Humanity alone founds charitable institutions; religion only adds a chapel and a priest—that is to say, an additional expense.—*Rivarol*.

It would not be worth while to live for seventy years if all the wisdom of this world were but folly in the sight of God.—*Goethe*.

Parsons will always keep up their character, but as it is said there are some animals the ancients knew which we do not, let us hope our posterity will miss the black badger with tri-cornered hat. Who knows but some reviewer of Buffon or Pliny may put an account of the parson in the Appendix? No one will then believe it, any more than we believe in the Phoenix. I think we may class the lawyer in the same natural history of Monsters; a green bag will hold as much as a lawn sleeve. The only difference is that one is fustian and the other flimsy.—*Keats*.

The Christian Church has left nothing untouched with its depravity; it has made a worthlessness out of every value, a lie out of every truth, a baseness of soul out of every straightforwardness. Let a person dare to speak to me of its "humanitarian" blessings. To do away with any state of distress whatsoever was counter to its profoundest expediency; it lived by states of distress, it created states of distress in order to perpetuate itself eternally.—*Nietzsche*.

How is it? Is man only a mistake of God? Or is God only a mistake of man?—*Nietzsche*.

The Jew is an old trunk which has produced two branches that have covered all the earth; I mean Mohammedanism and Christianity. Or rather, she is a mother who has brought two daughters into the world, who have overwhelmed her with a thousand wounds, because in matters of religion the nearest are the greatest enemies; but, however badly she has been treated, she cannot cease to boast of having given them birth.—*Montesquieu*.

Those who swallow their Deity, really and truly, in transubstantiation, can hardly find anything else otherwise than of easy digestion.—*Byron*.

I remember, in my plough-boy days, I could not conceive it possible that a noble lord could be a fool, or a godly man could be a knave. How ignorant are plough-boys! Nay, I have since discovered that a godly woman may be a —!—
Robert Burns.

"It was a pouring wet December Saturday night in barracks," says a writer in the *Nineteenth Century*, "and a late after-order had been issued altering the hours of divine service on the following day. The battalion orderly sergeant was reading the amendments by the light of a lantern to his shivering audience. 'District after-order,' he bellowed. 'Hours of divine service to-morrow. Denominations will parade as under: Chu'ch of England, 10.30; Kautholics, 8.15.' The rain beat down relentlessly as he turned over the page of the order book. He observed at a glance that the Presbyterians, Wesleyans, and Primitive Methodists were all to parade at the same hour, so the rest of the information he imparted in this precise form: 'Fancy religions 10 o'clock. Right Turn. Dismiss.'"

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, A. B. Moss, "The Creed of a Rationalist."
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 8.30, A Concert.
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "The Meaning of Death."
EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Bow Vestry Hall, Bow-road, E): 7, G. Spiller, "Science and Superstition."
SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road, S.E.): 11.15, Sunday-school; 7, Stanton Coit, "Can Virtue be Taught?"
WEST LONDON BRANCH (15 Edgware-road): November 24, at 8.15, H. B. Samuels, "Socialism."
WEST LONDON SECULAR CLUB (15 Edgware-road): Every evening 7-10.50.
WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall): 11, Stanton Coit, "Plato on the Love of Justice."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

CAMBERWELL (Peckham Rye): 3, Freethought Demonstration—Messrs Moss, Heaford, Ramsey, Edwards, Pack, Davies, etc.
HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, Mr. Davis.

COUNTY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH (Bristol-street Board school): 7, A Concert by members of the Bohemian Choir.
CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school; 11, C. Cohen, "Is there Life Beyond the Grave?" 7, C. Cohen, "The Jew as Christian Evidence."
DERBY (Central Hotel, Market-place): 7, R. Wellings, "Physical Culture."
GLASGOW (Lecture Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12, Discussion Class, Mr. Chalmers; 6.30, A. G. Nostik.
HUDDERSFIELD (Friendly and Trade Societies' Club, Northumberland-street): R. Law, F.G.S.—3, "Geological History of the Earth and the Rocks which Form its Crust"; 6.45, "Volcanoes and Earthquakes: Their Origin and Distribution."
HULL (Friendly Societies' Hall): 7, R. Manton, "The Land and the People."
LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, John M. Robertson, "Critical Freethought among the Hebrews, the Greeks, and the Romans."
LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, J. Roberts, "Materialism."
MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 7, R. C. Phillips, "Melody." Experimental illustrations.
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): C. Watts—11, "Christian Glad Tidings"; 8, "Atheism and Agnosticism: An Excursion and Defence"; 7, "The Doom of the Churches." Tea at 5.
STANLEY SECULAR SOCIETY (Co-operative Hall): 8, Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner, "Providence and Progress." November 21 (Board-schools): 7.30, Mrs Bradlaugh Bonner, "Parliament: As it has been, is, and ought to be."
SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, Market-place): 7, A Reading.

Lecturers' Engagements.

C COHEN, 17 Osborne-road, High-road, Leyton—November 20, Chatham; 27, Manchester; 28, Huddersfield. November 30 and December 1, Failsforth. December 4, Manchester; 5 and 6, Blackburn; 7, 8, and 9, Derby; 11, Stockton-on Tees.

A. B. MOSS, 44 Ordon-road, London, S.E.—November 20, Athenæum; 27, North Camberwell Radical Club.

H. PERCY WARD, 5, Alexandra-road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.—November 27, Liverpool. December 4, Leicester. 18, Birmingham.

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