

The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XVIII.—No. 49.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1898.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE CZAR'S PEACE MESSAGE.

(Continued from page 754.)

LET us ask whether the Czar is absolutely sincere in making this proposal to Europe. No doubt this is an unpleasant inquiry, but it cannot very well be avoided. As the world goes, and especially in matters of international politics, it is not wise to be too generous. A certain amount of caution is necessary, or we may be led into a trap; and when we are fooled and cheated it is no great consolation to reflect that we are the victims of our own unsuspecting innocence.

Mr. Stead, who has been perambulating Europe with a view to collecting influential opinions on the Czar's rescript, assures us that Nicholas II. is a splendid young man, full of the noblest humanitarian sentiments, and inspired by the highest Christian ideals. This is all very gratifying in its way, but unfortunately Mr. Stead is not infallible. He is apparently much influenced by his friend, Madame Novikoff, who frequently amuses the Western world with her clever, if cynical, apologies for Russian autocracy. His personal pride was also flattered by the reception he once met with at the court of St. Petersburg. There is no need to look for more sinister reasons, although some of Mr. Stead's critics insinuate that his laudation of the Czar and his government may not be entirely disinterested.

What are the facts of the case with regard to Russia? Despite the rigorous press censorship, and the publication of false reassurances, it is beyond doubt that Russia has very serious internal troubles. Education and the silent spread of Western ideas are slowly but surely undermining the Czar's despotism; and if there were more large centres of population it would be difficult to postpone constitutional reforms for another ten or fifteen years. Moreover, there are a multitude of Jews in Russia, and although they are persecuted and oppressed, and deprived as far as possible of educational advantages as well as other rights or privileges of citizenship, they are in their way by no means ineffective missionaries of liberalism. The various heterodox sects are also a grave embarrassment to the authorities. They have the stolid tenacity of their race, and thousands of them rejoice in martyrdom. The more they are persecuted the more they flourish. Their sufferings excite sympathy, and sympathy often leads to conversion. Moreover, the financial condition of Russia is anything but satisfactory. Loans are more and more difficult to raise in the European money-markets. Even the thrifty French peasant is tired of emptying his stocking for the benefit of the "dear ally." Frenchmen are beginning to see that the alliance is one in which Russia stands to gain everything and France nothing. Finally, there is no denying the truth that Russia has plenty of hard work and harder problems before her in the far East. She has extended herself at the expense of China, and has raised the anger, or at least the suspicion, of more than one powerful rival. To use the expressive if

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coarse language of the man in the street, she has bitten off more than she can chew; and when a man's mouth is full he does not welcome a slap in the face. Russia requires time to swallow and digest what she has obtained. She needs peace above all things for the next few years. Were she to get embroiled with England, her Pacific squadron would soon be annihilated; she would be shut up in the Baltic and the Black Sea, and forced into the position of a land-locked power. Those who talk of her descent upon India hardly know the facts of that military problem. Even if she found allies, England might find allies too. America is entering the sphere of international politics, and Japan would be more or less than human if she did not long to avenge the humiliation inflicted upon her by Russia after the termination of her war with China.

We do not say it is a positive fact, but we say it is quite conceivable, that the astute gentlemen who conduct Russia's diplomacy have deliberately humored the Czar in relation to his peace manifesto, and that in their opinion it will serve an excellent purpose if it only succeeds in gaining time.

We have now to face a far more painful consideration. The Czar's manifesto is full of fine humanitarian sentiments, and we may be pardoned for asking why he does not keep some of them for domestic consumption. Reformation, if not charity, should begin at home. The majority of the inhabitants of the civilised world would be delighted to see the Czar make a beginning in his own dominions, and amongst his eighty millions of subjects. Let him order his government to cease persecuting and robbing the Jews. Let him stop the blackening of the highways to Siberia with melancholy processions of chained exiles, guilty of no crime but loving liberty. Let him put an end to the brutal flogging of men, and the disgusting ill-treatment of women, in Russian prisons. Let him arrest the horrible harrying of the Stundists, and other heterodox sects, whose honesty, industry, and peacefulness are unimpeachable. Above all, when he invites delegates to a Peace Conference, with a view to the future abolition of war, let him no longer imprison and torture simple men who love peace so well that they refuse to bear arms, or do anything that might lead to the killing of their fellow men. The way in which these people are treated is simply infamous. We have before us a pathetic and tragic little book entitled *Christian Martyrdom in Russia*, issued by the Brotherhood Publishing Co., London, and edited by the exile Vladimir Tchertkoff, with a concluding chapter and letter by Count Leo Tolstoy. It deals mainly with the persecution and sufferings of the Spirit-Wrestlers, who have many points of affinity with the Quakers. Here is an account of how some of these Spirit-Wrestlers were treated, for refusing to perform military service, in the district of Gory:—

"We visited Lebedeff and comrades who are in the Ekaterinograd penal battalion; besides these there are eleven other men who have been enlisted recently. We saw them by permission of the colonel, who asked us: 'Where are you from, and what did you come here for?' We answered: 'We came from the province of Tiflis to visit our brethren.' He said: 'Only relatives are allowed to see the prisoners, and that only for a short

time, not more than an hour.' And the meeting was under restraint, but still, thank God, we were able to know about their cruel and unmerciful punishments. Their persecutors cut thorny rods, five or six in one bundle. The men were laid down, and on each side of them were placed drunken men, who began to flay them like ferocious wild beasts which tear asunder meek, gentle sheep. Each received thirty strokes. After this they were placed in a solitary and cold cell for a day, and the next day they were taken out and guns were given to them, and they were led out for drill. They said, like Christians: 'We cannot fulfil what is against God's commandment.' But, in spite of their answer, they were again beaten and abused. After this drilling came dinner-time for all the prisoners; other prisoners were fed well, but our brethren did not receive even sufficient bread, and yet they were asked: 'Are you satisfied, or do you wish more?' They, in their innocence, said: 'Give us more bread.' But they received instead—blows, such blows that they could hardly stand on their feet."

Cossacks were quartered amongst these inoffensive people in the village of Gorelese, and while the men were beaten, flogged, and maimed, many of the women were tortured and violated. Here is the relation of one woman in her own words:—

"Four of us—women—were going from Spaski to Bogdanovka. On the road we were overtaken by a hundred Cossacks, who brought us into Bogdanovka. They there placed us in a coach-house, and then led us out one by one into the yard. Then they stripped us in the yard (throwing our skirts over our shoulders), and flogged our bare bodies. In the yard stood some Cossacks and many other people. There were only a few of our own people. They flogged us so, you could not count the strokes; two of them held us and four flogged! Three of us stood through it, but one they dragged about so that she could not stand. We received many insults."

But why prolong this horrid recital? Count Tolstoy answers for the truth of it all, and declares that everything has been rejected which, although true, might seem an exaggeration.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be continued.)

A FRESH PLEA FOR THEISM.

If there existed a common and well-understood agreement concerning the precise meaning of the language we use, controversy, particularly of the religious order, would undergo a rapid and serious diminution. But while we are compelled to use language which has had its associations formed by preceding generations to express the more accurate knowledge of the present, our disputes must very largely turn upon just what is meant, or ought to be meant, by the words in use, and our duty to take care the old ideas are not read into the new knowledge in virtue of our being compelled to use many of the old terms.

I have been strongly reminded of this "quality of polarisation," to use Wendell Holmes's phrase, possessed by language after reading a book recently written by Dr. Keeling,* late Professor of Gynecology in the University College of Sheffield. Substantially, the book is a new plea for Theism, and while claiming, as the object of the work, "to find out, if possible, simply what science and reason have to say," Dr. Keeling does really go beyond the region of science for the object of his investigation, and I hope to show that the voice of reason is not by any means as favorable to his argument as the author imagines.

Dr. Keeling's position, as laid down in this book, may be briefly summarised in the following two propositions:—Accepting the doctrine of the relativity of knowledge, that all we know, or can know, is the relations between phenomena as represented in the human consciousness, it is, nevertheless, held that there is outside the region of sense perception an unknown and unknowable Reality of which the existing universe is an expression. Second, as the known universe is but the expression of an underlying reality, and as science cannot say by what combination of matter and energy life and mind may be produced, we are bound to assume that "the Reality on which it (the universe) depends must at least equal it," in the sense of

* *Quero: Some Questions in Matter, Intelligence, Energy, and Evolution.* (Printed for private circulation.)

being an "adequate and controlling intelligence," which leads to the conclusion that "we have, in the orderly harmony and endless adaptations of *inorganic* matter, abundant evidence of the operation of intelligence, and that the protoplasmic mind itself is but the exquisite and crowning proof of such operation."

I do not think it necessary here to follow the author's exposition of "A Supreme Noumenon," or his interesting and instructive chapter on "The Kinetics and Metakinetics of a Brain-cell." The doctrine therein laid down is not strikingly unlike Spencer's "Transfigured Realism," and does not materially affect the main point at issue between a Theistic and Atheistic conception of evolution. Theists and Atheists may both agree on something existing outside self as the equivalent of changes in consciousness, and yet disagree entirely when an attempt is made to define its nature.

Nor do I see how the bare belief in an unknown and unknowable Reality can help the Theistic case to any appreciable extent. To be of any help whatever, this assumed Reality must stand in some kind of causal relation to the universe as we know it, and that, by the very terms of the hypothesis, is impossible. Dr. Keeling himself admits (p. 119) that this Reality cannot *logically* stand as the cause of the universe; so that we, first of all, have to assume that something exists of which we know nothing, and then assume that it is the cause of existing phenomena; and, by imposing the relation implied by the term "cause," entirely destroy its character as being independent of all relations. Dr. Keeling tells us (p. 33) that the human mind will not rest until it has attached the network of fact and circumstance to something which stands "ultimately in the relation of origin or cause of all phenomena." But, as a matter of fact, we can predicate nothing of the kind of any existence that is assumed outside the region of phenomena. The term "cause" has validity only within the range of experience, actual or possible; it is a conception purely phenomenal in its origin and application; it exists only in connection with, and relation to, a series, and the author is acting in anything but a logical manner—although he is misbehaving in good company—in applying the term to a region which can never by any possibility be brought within the limits of thought. And, at best, Dr. Keeling's position is a suicidal one. For, if it be true that the mind craves for the establishment of causal relations at each stage of its growth, the conception of a first cause—admitting for a moment the validity of the phrase—does not fulfil the conditions it is created to satisfy. If the mind rests content with that, a craving for causal relations is not one of its essential characteristics, if otherwise the same unsatisfied craving still continues, and all that has been done is to add one more link to the chain of causation.

Dr. Keeling says: "Science does not admit phenomena without noumena to account for them"; to which I reply that the question of noumena is not a scientific question at all. It belongs properly to metaphysics, and its presence in modern thought is more or less a survival of that scholasticism which has been so generally discarded. Science is concerned with a classification of causal relations among phenomena, not with the hypothetical existence of a non-causal, non-phenomenal being that really equals nothing at all, and is absolutely valueless as an explanation of anything. The essence of a scientific hypothesis is an identification of two terms—first, "The fact to be explained, and a fact by which it is explained; second, that the latter fact must be known to experience."* The author's Reality comes under neither head. It does nothing, and explains nothing. It removes no difficulty, it solves no problem. No man finds he has a clearer knowledge of the world by believing in it, or loses anything by giving it up. It is there to bolster up opinions held in spite of scientific study, not those suggested from its pursuit.

Dr. Keeling's position is, as I have indicated, at bottom a simple one. It is that any scheme of evolution, to be adequate, must include intelligence as the primal factor in the origination of the cosmic process. Now what reason is there for assuming that intelligence lies at the root of evolution, so to speak, instead of being a product of the evolutionary process? To my mind there is only one reason, and Dr. Keeling gives but one—namely, the inability of science to explain, at present, the precise

* *Concepts of Modern Physics*, by J. B. Stallo, p. 106.

manner in which life and mind have originated. We are told "science has decided that life always proceeds from previous life." But science has decided nothing of the kind. All that has been decided is that, so far as experiment has gone, living organisms have never been produced from non-living material. Short of that qualification, the statement is decidedly misleading. Again, the author asks the Materialist: "Can physical energy in any form originate life? You have advanced no proof of it.....Take physical energy in any form.....in none of these, and in no combination of them, has it hitherto been proved capable of transforming non-living matter into living." And what then? Are we to assume that science has said its last word on this matter, and that what it is unable to demonstrate under existing conditions of knowledge may never be demonstrated, no matter how widely the boundaries of science are extended? And even if that were the case, even if we put on one side the great advance of biology and chemistry, and the fact that a large number of products, hitherto regarded as purely organic, are now manufactured by the chemist, would even that give logical strength to the author's theory? Surely Dr. Keeling must see on reflection that it is illogical to build the knowledge of A upon the ignorance of B. All that the ignorance of B proves is the ignorance of B. It can never demonstrate the knowledge of his adversary. Yet this is substantially the kind of evidence upon which nine-tenths of the case for Theism rests—either the impossibility of disproving statements concerning a matter which admits of neither proof nor disproof, or the inability of science to explain every step of the cosmic process from atom to man. The very people who are ready to credit the most unprovable theories, when advanced in the name of religion, demand the most rigorous demonstration of everything advanced in the name of science. One may truthfully say that Theism is only certain of an existence so long as there is an asylum of ignorance for it to seek refuge in. It is the unknown or unexplored portions of nature upon which the Theist builds his case, the ignorance of man concerning natural operations to which it appeals for support. It is, therefore, in sheer self-defence that writers on behalf of Theism dwell so largely upon the limitations of scientific knowledge, rather than devote the space at their disposal to an exposition of the knowledge already acquired.

The following passage well illustrates a far from uncommon confusion existing as to the nature of life, and one from which not even, as in the present instance, scientific men are altogether free. "Hydrogen," we are told, "preserves its identity, whether blazing in the sun or buried in a coal seam, or when just caught in the test-tubes of a chemist. Much the same is true of all the elements. Does the experimenter trace in his crucible or retort any spark of intelligence in any of them?" Whatever strength there is in this argument would certainly make against its author, as not being able to find intelligence in analysis would seem to point to the view that its presence is due to synthesis. Did anyone ever imagine that you could discover life as a chemist disentangles an element from a complex product? If Dr. Keeling's view is correct that intelligence or life is an elemental force, then one might hope to discover its presence by careful analysis; but if, on the other hand, life and intelligence are not entities, but results of a complex combination of forces, to look for the result apart from the conditions upon which it depends is to mistake the materialistic view in the first place, and to beg the whole question at issue in the second. The most that the Materialist contends is that life is due to a combination or synthesis of organs and functions working together in a definite and coherent manner; that there is no more reason for assuming a thinking principle for mind than there is to assume a vital principle for life, a muscular principle to account for muscular contraction, or any of the other "principles," "affinities," or "spirits," that the progress of science has already destroyed. As Lewes said, the vital force manifested by an organism may be likened to the mechanical force manifested by a machine; and, although there is the distinction to be drawn that in the machine there is a simple juxtaposition of parts, while in the organism the parts are evolved, still one may say that the life or intelligence of man is as much the sum of all the energies of the organism as the driving force of an engine is the sum of the mechanical force generated by its structure; and, therefore, to separate the body into its elements and ask, Where is the life it manifested? is

equal to asking in what part of an engine its driving power resides. Obviously no amount of analysis can discover that which is due alone to combination. True, we may not be able to show the precise manner in which this combination is effected; but the mere fact that the body can be reduced to inorganic elements is, as far as it goes, evidence in favor of the Materialist's position, and he may reasonably hope that the fuller knowledge will come in time.

But, Dr. Keeling urges, "you will never get anything psychic out of the motions of matter." Well, I suppose there is a sense in which you can never get a product out of its factors. It is impossible to get the taste of sugar of lead out of its component parts, acetic acid and oxide of lead; but no one doubts that all the properties of sugar of lead are the result of its two factors, and not of the introduction of some mysterious principle. A product is only the appearance assumed by a number of agents in combination, and to deny the properties of the combination because they cannot be traced in the factors, either separately or by simple addition, is to lose sight of the meaning of causation, in both its scientific and philosophic aspects.

There is, too, this additional presumption in favor of the position of scientific Materialism. From gaseous nebulae to crystal there is one long unbroken line of mechanical causation. From protoplasm to man there is also a line of natural causation that is being expressed more and more in terms of matter and motion. Is it not, therefore, far more reasonable to suppose that the passage from the inorganic to the organic was achieved by purely mechanical methods; that, as Huxley puts it, "If it were given me to look beyond the abyss of geologically recorded time to the still more remote period when the earth was passing through physical and chemical conditions which it can no more see again than a man can recall his infancy, I should expect to be a witness of the evolution of living protoplasm from non-living matter," than to say that just then there was superimposed upon a nature a mysterious force, the existence of which is absolutely unprovable? In support of the former view there is the fact that, just in proportion as science has developed, its instruments perfected, and the range of its investigations extended, the reduction of cosmical phenomena to problems of atomo-mechanics has taken place; and in support of the latter view nothing but the present limitations of science can be urged—limitations which decrease in extent with the passing of each generation.

C. COHEN.

(To be concluded.)

PONTO THE PIOUS.

BARRY PAIN says he once wrote to the *Guardian* about a dog of his which never barked during hours of divine service. The letter was not inserted, and the dog is dead. Mr. Pain does not say so, but I happen to know. Also I understand the editor would have liked to give publicity to this remarkable instance of reverential feeling, but had some misgivings as to the absolute truth of the story.

The dumb creation, he knew, might be spiritually influenced—as, for example, Balaam's ass, an illustration that readily occurred to him. But there was a tinge of flippancy about Mr. Pain's communication that robbed it of *raisemblance*. Consequently this earliest effort of budding genius was but coldly received. As I have said, it never saw the light.

The editor, however, was not in possession of all the facts. The dog, I understand, was a legacy from a maiden aunt. It was left to Mr. Pain for his strict veracity at school. That reputation for truthfulness Mr. Pain retained until induced to embark in literary pursuits. The maiden aunt trained the dog. It is necessary to say this, because it would be idle to pretend that Mr. Pain himself could have brought it up to such a pitch of reverential perfection.

Curiously enough, it died at the hands of a Ritualistic curate. The fact that Ponto never barked during divine service immensely impressed that dawning light of High Church. He said that he had never met with such a well-behaved dog before, and really so intelligent too. He said it was a credit to its species. And when, in addition, he received the grave assurance of its owner that it positively refrained from barking during early celebration on weekdays as well as on Sundays, his ecstasy knew no bounds.

He immediately fed it with a hot cross-bun—and the poor dog died.

It is pleasant to be able to supply all this additional information about Ponto the Pious, because there was an impression abroad that the reason he did not bark during these special periods was that he was stuffed and in a glass case, and, of course, never barked at any time.

I am the further pleased to be able to supplement Mr. Pain's asseveration with all these details, because of his graceful though distant allusion in *The Octave of Claudius* to Freethought literature emanating "from somewhere off Fetter-lane." Mr. Pain's humor is bright, but his topography uncertain.

Naturally, Ponto the Pious commended himself to clerical affection. For does not the dogmatist of the pulpit invariably insist: "When I ope my mouth, let no dog bark"? That is why the cleric objects to Sunday concerts. And that is why he would, if he could, stop Freethought discourses either indoors or in open public spaces. He is our spiritual pastor and master—the Sir Oracle of the gospel of humility and peace and goodwill. As such he must have a clear field and undisputed sway. Failing which, he becomes either hopelessly unhappy—and then he is an imbecile; or arrogantly aggressive—and then he is a fanatic.

He will feed, with any number of hot cross-buns, all who will let him rule the roost. Others may live or die on husks. He will find thumping counsel's-fees for any association that will help him to shut up a rival shop. The sweetest music of a classical concert is but hideous discord to him, compared with the sound of his own sweet voice. For other Sunday performances, of whatever sort, the clerical Bottom, with his "fair, long ears," has no taste—not the least inclination for anything but his own pulpit performances with hymns, chants, anthems, doxologies, and dirges.

Titania:—What, wilt thou have some music, my sweet love?

Bottom:—I have a reasonable good ear in music; let us have the tongs and bones.

Yes, let us give up Sunday to clerical tongues and the bones of theology.

Mr. Pain's tyke—like other pious animals we know—was a fearful thief on weekdays. But he had the one redeeming, absolving virtue that wiped away all sorts of delinquencies—he never barked during the hours of divine service. He once broke loose and bit an apple-woman, who afterwards died of hydrophobia. But a better behaved dog on a Sunday you never saw. He was always robbing the family cat of its meat, but then—he never barked during the hours of divine service.

There are many sad human dogs who might improve their worldly position by taking a lesson from pious Ponto. As it is, they will bow-wow while the parson brays—an offence that will never be forgiven them on earth or in heaven. The men of God will brook no rivalry or opposition. They must have it all their own way. Nobody must be heard but them—it used to be on pain of death; it is now on pain of other action.

It is not recorded of Ponto that he had any good point but that of respect for Divine services. He was otherwise a vicious mongrel. Like Launce's Crab, he was one of the "sourest-natured dogs that lived," "a cruel-hearted cur."

Nevertheless, his untimely decease was deeply deplored. It was felt that dogs that allowed themselves to be led off rattling on Sundays could have been better spared. The President of the Lord's Day Observance Society dropped a gentle tear on his grave. Barry Pain now regrets the many kicks he gave him. His muzzle—alas, no longer needed—is in the possession of the London County Council. There it remains—a much-prized relic of a truly remarkable dog.

FRANCIS NEALE.

THE INCENTIVE TO GOODNESS.

SINCE writing my article last week upon "The Welfare of Others," I have read a sermon preached by the Rev. Chancellor Lias, M.A., at Cambridge University, his subject being "Egoism or Altruism." Taking the two phrases in their popular meaning, there is much upon which the rev. gentleman and myself agree. There is also very much in his sermon upon which we widely differ. For instance,

when he refers to the Christian teaching of love, and to the incentive furnished by the religion of the New Testament, the difference between us is indeed great.

There is much that is true in the following, which is from the rev. gentleman's sermon. He says: "We can only attain happiness by making others happy, and they can only find their happiness in ours. Hence the altruistic formula, 'Love thy neighbor, not thyself,' is a moral impossibility. We cannot love our neighbors *without* loving ourselves. In loving our neighbors we love ourselves, and in truly loving ourselves we love our neighbors.....Even the Egoist finds that he cannot secure his own comfort without giving *some* thought, at least, to that of his neighbor. And the strongest Altruists do not act upon their own principles. They possess private property, they enjoy a fair share of the comforts of life; but by their own principles they are bound to surrender these to those who have them not. 'Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor' is the only principle a consistent Altruist can act on. And therefore it is no wonder if the attempt to carry out Christian morality involves difficulties in practice." It is here that the inconsistency of Christians comes in. They preach "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"; "Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor"; "Give to every man that asketh of thee"; "Lend, hoping for nothing again"; "Do good to them that hate you." This was Christ's idea of Altruism, and anything more absurd and impracticable was never taught by rational mind. That Christianity is not, as its adherents boast, the unique incentive to goodness is proved by the fact that not one of the precepts just cited is ever obeyed by professed Christians. And yet we are told by the rev. gentleman: "It was by the Altruistic element in its creed, moreover, that Christianity chiefly won its way. This was more effective than argument, more convincing than evidence, more persuasive than even the witness of martyrdom itself. Had Christ never lived, the Altruists might have preached and practised in vain. The tendency of a selfish world to appropriate the results of their labor, and then to mock at them, had always been too strong for them until then. If they are more successful now, it is because Christianity has smoothed the way for them. And the superiority of moral force Christianity possesses is due to this, that Christianity has found the way to reconcile Egoism and Altruism. In the person and life of Jesus Christ did the world first learn how the truest Egoism and the truest Altruism are the same thing—how a man cannot do any good to himself without considering his neighbor, nor devote himself to his neighbor's true interest without securing his own."

Here we have the very quintessence of Christian fallacy and misrepresentation. Did the advent of Christ promote the practice of Altruism? Let the miserable and poverty-stricken condition of Christendom for centuries after the inception of Christianity answer the question. And even to-day countries that are the most Christian are also the most wretched, morally, socially, physically, and intellectually. Overwhelming evidence can be adduced to prove that, long before the introduction of Christianity into the world, the desire to do good, not merely to oneself, but to the human family in general, existed; and, what was of greater importance, successful efforts were made to enhance the happiness and to promote the well-being of one and all. J. A. Farrer, referring, in his work on *Paganism and Christianity*, to the effect of Pagan philosophy upon the Greek and Roman character, writes: "So effectually, indeed, had philosophy advocated the claims of the great principles of humanity that in Paganism, before there was any Church at all, there was a party audible in its outspoken opposition to slavery, to cruelty to criminals and to animals, to the gladiatorial games, and to war.....Under Nerva and Trajan the monthly distributions of food became extended to the children of poor families all over Italy, a portion of the interest of the money lent by the State to landlords on mortgage serving to defray the expense. Alexander Severus founded free schools for indigent children. Nerva and Trajan made laws in favor of orphans. Every quarter of Rome had its 'archiater,' or paid medical officer, whose function it was to attend on the sick; and a law compelled everyone who gave a feast to make some provision first for the poor of his district" (p. 184). "In the best days of Athens none of her citizens were in want for the necessaries of life; for the rich, according to Isocrates, regarding the poverty of their fellow-citizens as a disgrace to themselves and the city, helped all who were in need,

sending some abroad as traders, letting lands to others to cultivate at fair rents, and enabling others to engage in different occupations" (p. 183). Here we see that true Altruism existed before Christianity was known.

It seems to me to be a serious reflection upon the conduct of any God to ascribe to him the withholding of the highest incentive to goodness until about two thousand years ago. Happily for the human race, the idea that the loftiest inducement to a moral life originated with Christ is purely imaginative. It has been shown above that the highest deeds of benevolence were performed by so-called Pagans, and no sublimer teachings ever came from Christ than those found in the writings of Marcus Aurelius, Seneca, Cicero, Socrates, and a score of other ethical teachers who preceded Jesus. Take as an illustration the following as bearing upon the principle of true Altruism. Cicero said: "Nature ordains that a man should wish the good of every man, whoever he may be, and for this very reason, that he is a man." Seneca said: "We ought to devote our soul to no particular place.....I was not born for one corner; my country is this whole world." "Virtue consists in conferring benefits, not as destined to return, but benefits the fruit of which the good man reaps at the very moment of conferring them." Even long before the time when Moses is said to have been born, moralists taught the ancient Egyptian to live so that he could plead before Osiris at the Judgment Day thus: "I have told no lies, committed no frauds, been good to widows, not overtaken servants, not lazy or negligent, done nothing hateful to the gods, been kind to slaves, promoted no strife, caused no one to weep, committed no murder, stolen no offerings to the dead, made no fraudulent gains, seized no lands wrongfully, not tampered with weights and measures, not taken the milk from sucklings, not molested sacred beasts or birds, not cut off or monopolised water-courses, have sown joy and not sorrow, have given food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, and clothed the naked." What moral teaching did Christ give the world that can surpass the love, charity, and compassion taught by Buddha? Of him Dr. Schwartz writes that he was "the man who gave up all that the world holds dear and precious, and, for the sake of suffering humanity, became a poor, wandering outcast; and the importance which attaches to the life, rather than to the teaching, of the initiators of great religious and moral movements, one delights to contemplate that gentle figure, so human, kindly, compassionate, and charitable." Max Müller, in his lecture on "Buddhist Nihilism," writes: "One hardly trusts one's own eye on seeing Catholic and Protestant missionaries vie with each other in their praises of the Buddha; and even the attention of those who are indifferent to all that concerns religion must be arrested for a moment when they learn from statistical accounts that no religion, not even the Christian, has exercised so powerful an influence on the diminution of crime as the old simple doctrines of Rupilavastu" (p. 132).

The Rev. Chancellor Lias then deals with the incentives to goodness as follows. He says: "Christianity does put before us rewards and punishments as incitements to good and warning against evil, and, constituted as man is, she does right in doing so." But supposing these incitements were efficacious, which as a rule they are not, they are purely selfish, and have none of the Altruistic principle in them. Then we are told that Christianity "preaches the true Altruism when she says, 'If any man come after me, and hate not his own life, he cannot be my disciple.'" Why and hate not his own life, he cannot be my disciple." Why was not the whole verse quoted? It includes hatred of father, mother, wife, children, brethren, and sisters (see Luke xiv. 26). Is this a good incentive to promote goodness among mankind? Christ might have said "Yes," but humanity and experience say "No." Martyrdom is urged as an incentive to moral conduct. Now, whether or not to lay down our lives for others be an inducement to goodness depends upon circumstances. One thing, however, is certain, such martyrdom is not seen among Christians to-day. Finally—and this is the rev. gentleman's principal incentive—to love as Christ loved would not, in my opinion, inspire mutual goodness. His love was confined to those who accepted his narrow faith. His opponents he deemed "fools," "hypocrites," "serpents," "generation of vipers." To such, it is said, he will say at the "last judgment": "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Surely love like this is not worthy of emulation. We quite agree with the rev. gentleman that "the Gospel, like the world, is full of

paradoxes. There is no single rule of conduct which can be laid down which does not require to be limited in practice by some other rule, which at first sight appears to be contrary to it" (*Church Gazette*, October 22, 1898).

I believe in the secular motive of goodness, which is to acquire the highest possible conditions of physical, moral, and intellectual excellence. To me Christianity—which mainly urges each one to look after the salvation of his own soul, since it will not profit him if he gains the whole world and loses this—is far inferior to Secularism in this respect, the more so as it engenders hatred and cruelty for difference of belief, while Secularism has no barren creeds into which it would make all alike compress themselves. It simply says, in a purely practical tone: Come and let us work together for the good and happiness of us all, whatever our speculations may be.

CHARLES WATTS.

WHOSE REPUTATION SUFFERS?

THIS Sir James W. Dawson is positively incorrigible. In a short communication, big with flatulent generalities, which appears in the *Expositor* for October, he again allows himself grave liberties with the name and fame of one compared to whom he (Dawson) stands in about the same relationship as minnow to Triton. Sometime ago I exposed his unholy misrepresentation of Darwin's views on the subject of Creation; now it is necessary to rebut a statement which, as it stands, involves a reflection both upon his intelligence and knowledge of the most easily accessible facts of Biblical narrative. "Even Darwin," says Sir James, "in speculating on the first introduction of life, was obliged to quote the words in this old document, though less correctly than if he had been more familiar with its scope and contents." The italics are mine. The banal folly and grotesque impertinence of these italicised utterances almost justify a desire to scratch Sir James William Dawson's poll. In the first place, let it be noted that this note of Dawson's has reference to a declaration in a previous number of the *Expositor*, on the part of certain well-known higher critics, that the rock upon which all attempts at reconciling the first chapter of Genesis with science were wrecked was the extreme and incredible violence done to the text. Now, the only phrase used by Charles Darwin which could lend the slightest colour to the suggestion that he regarded anything in Genesis as worthy of credit was that which occurred in the famous passage (and in one just preceding) as to the Creator breathing the breath of life into a few forms, etc. Nothing approaching these words appears in the first chapter of Genesis. It is in the second chapter that the breathing process is described. Therefore, Sir James W. Dawson, in his own dispute, is quite off the track. It is the scientific accuracy of the first chapter of Genesis which is impeached by his opponents, and, by way of fortifying his own position, he adduces the fact that Darwin used certain words occurring in the second chapter! Well, really, isn't it enough to—well, there! Would you believe that this implied unfamiliarity and incorrect quotation of Genesis on the part of Darwin is entirely based on the fact that where Genesis speaks only of one act of breathing the breath of life—namely, that into man—Darwin suggests the Creator's breathing into a few organisms or into one. And it is upon this, and this alone, that Sir J. W. Dawson insinuates that Darwin was not sufficiently acquainted with the two first chapters of Genesis. What a tremendous absurdity! We are asked to believe that Charles Darwin, the great mountaineer of facts, allowed himself to remain unfamiliar with a few simple passages in Genesis, which less than five minutes would have mastered. No, thank you, Sir James; your logic may do for young curates and old ladies in their cups at four-o'clock tea, but something more virile is required for students of Darwin.

This unknighly knight says that Darwin was obliged to quote Genesis. This is a most disingenuous way of putting it. Because Darwin chose to use a Biblical phrase, it does not follow that he was obliged to do so. Nor was he speculating on the origin of life, but rather on the probable starting-point of the manifold ramifications of life as expressed in organisms. The drawing of these subtle distinctions should have been easy to Sir James. But Genesis aside, I think we may say that we have got to the

genesis of this Genesiac reference. If we turn over a few pages previous to that on which Darwin uses the expression, we shall find him quoting from a "celebrated author and divine" as thus: "He (the divine) had gradually learned to see that it is just as noble a conception of the deity to believe that he created a few original forms capable of self-development into other and needful forms, as to believe that he required a fresh act of creation to supply the voids caused by the action of his laws." We are justified in concluding that, had not this "celebrated divine" written to him in such terms, Charles Darwin would have concluded his great work differently from what he did, and without the faintest echo of anything in Genesis, although he might still have offered a plum to the senile gums of doddering theologians.

Sir J. W. Dawson is a bit of a puzzle to me. If he is honest in his views of Darwin in this matter, then he is most culpably ignorant of what almost everybody interested in Darwin knows full well—namely, that he repudiated what he had said about creation. Further, had not Darwin done so, the passage in question need not have been taken as necessarily committing him to a belief in the notions expressed. But I think all doubt of what he had in his mind when he used the passage may be set at rest by reference to the episode of the "celebrated divine." It was of this gentleman's phrases he was thinking, thus disposing of the notion that he was *obliged* to fall back upon Genesis. Sir J. W. Dawson speaks of the "simple majesty" of the first of Genesis. We will not say that he is so dazzled by this "majesty" that he is unable to recognise the plebeian virtues of honesty; but it is difficult to resist the impression that he is bent upon lowering the crest of Charles Darwin, if not by hook, then by crook. That is a sufficiently painful reflection to us and upon him.

B. STEVENS.

THEOLOGY AMONG THE YAKUTES.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Daily News*, who is accompanying the Swedish expedition in search of Andree, gives the following account of his religious experiences and inquiries amongst the Yakutes, away in the far North, in the seventy-second degree of latitude:—

"One day we had a magnificent thunderstorm, which, of course, occurred on the day of the Holy Elias, the fire-prophet, who, through some mythological amalgamation or metamorphosis in the conception of the masses in Russia, plays the part of 'Jupiter Plugets.' On the 'Djen Ilija' (the Day of Elijah) there is 'prasnjik' (holyday) over all the Russian Empire. The day of the great 'prasnjik' dawned clear and warm, and I remarked to one of the Russian fishermen that we were going to have a very fine day. He shook his head, and assured me that we were to have a thunderstorm before night, 'because it is the day of Ilija.' Admiring his strong faith, I started on an excursion out on the tundra. After my return in the evening I was drinking tea, when the door suddenly opened, and in came the Russian fisherman, exclaiming in a triumphant tone, 'The thunderstorm is coming.' For the next moment a distant rumbling was heard. Looking out through the window, I saw a black wall southwards, moving towards us with great speed, the lightning crossing it in all directions. In five minutes we were swept in a violent thunderstorm. My doubts were brought to shame, and the Orthodox Russian's faith triumphed.

"I tried to find out the conception of the thunder and lightning which the natives (Yakutes and Tunguses) entertain. According to the Yakute mythology, there is a mighty being called 'Ai-Tojou' (the mighty Lord), a personification of the inexorable laws of nature. 'Ai-Tojou,' strictly speaking, is neither good nor evil. From his high throne in 'the seventh heaven' he looks down on the world, caring very little about what happens down on earth. Thunder and lightning are 'his words and speech'; the eagle slumbers on his foot, and his image is the sun. The conception of 'Ai-Tojou,' however, has of late undergone certain modifications through the influence of the orthodox God, to whom people burn wax candles in churches. This God of the Orthodoxy the Yakutes often call 'Nikola,' sometimes 'the holy old man,' but usually 'Tangara.' 'Ai-Tojou,' as the god of thunder and lightning, has also of late undergone some change, and is very much, in the conception of the natives, mixed up with 'the holy Ilija-Bagatyr,' the thunder god of the orthodox masses; and the 'heavenly fires' are, therefore, now generally regarded as the work of 'the fiery prophet,' both by Yakutes and Tunguses."

ACID DROPS.

THOMAS GEORGE SENIOR, one of the Peculiar People, has been tried a second time at the Old Bailey on the charge of manslaughtering his infant child by allowing it to die without medical assistance under the prayer-and-oil treatment. On the first occasion the judge read the prisoner a dreadful lesson, and then bound him over to come up for judgment if called upon, telling him that if he came up for trial again he would certainly be sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. Well, he *has* come up again, and once more the jury have found him guilty of manslaughter. But he is not imprisoned. Oh dear no! Judges dare not send these people to gaol. It would be too decisive a proclamation that the Bible is not God's Word, and that Christianity is utterly played out. Mr. Justice Wells escaped the difficulty by taking a point of law for the decision of the Court of Crown Cases Reserved.

Mr. Justice Wills made the mistake of arguing with one of Senior's female witnesses. He asked her if she knew the text that those who are whole need no physician, but they that are sick; and she replied at once, "That means sick in sin." "What does the physician mean?" the judge asked. "I believe," she replied, "it is the Lord himself who is the physician. He is the only one who can heal." Just so. Emily Reed was quite right. The context proves it conclusively. Jesus said in the very next breath: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." Clearly he was referring to spiritual, and not to bodily, disease.

Mr. Avory, who conducted the Treasury prosecution of Mrs. Mills, the Christian scientist, read out a curious extract from the book of this sect. One sentence came in for much ridicule. It was this: "No matter in mind; no mind in matter." Perhaps this is, as Mr. Avory called it, a mere jargon of unmeaning phrases. Nevertheless it is the metaphysic of nearly all Christians. It is taught in colleges, preached from pulpits, and defended on platforms. All that the Christian Scientists do is to put it more pointedly than is common. To laugh at them for this epigram is really to side with the Materialists. But is that what Mr. Avory meant to do?

One of the hypocritical objections to Mr. Newman's Sunday Concerts at Queen's Hall is, that he works his employees seven days a week. Mr. Newman gives this a public denial. "All the staff who work on Sunday," he says, "receive a day off during the week." As for the "greed of gain" of which he is accused, Mr. Newman points out that the Sunday League, with all its gratuitous machinery, only made a very slender profit, and was for some time unable to pay him his full rent for the hall. The small charges for the seats could not possibly yield a large surplus after the payment of expenses. Even if it did, there is no legitimate reason why Mr. Newman, or any other person, should not make money on a Sunday, which is the very day on which the men of God are doing the most work for their livings.

According to Mr. Mark H. Judge, honorary secretary of the Sunday Society, the National Sunday League, as late as October 21, registered itself as a religious denomination "who object to be designated," and also registered the Alhambra Theatre as a "place of religious worship" for the concerts intended to be given there by them. "I doubt very much," Mr. Judge says, "whether the general public who attend them would care to have their attendance construed into a taking part in public worship."

The London County Council has refused a license to the new Varieties Theatre which is building in the Holloway-road. Some large place of public entertainment is very much wanted in North London, and one wonders why it is not to be permitted. Can it be, as we are told, that the real reason is the existence of a Young Women's Christian Association in the Holloway-road, within sight of the projected new theatre? If so, it is simply scandalous; and the "Progressives" who allow bigotry to triumph over the rights of citizens ought to be thoroughly ashamed of themselves.

Our readers will recollect that Terah Hooley's gold Communion plate, presented to St. Paul's Cathedral, has been ransomed (so to speak) by anonymous Churchmen, who have paid over £1,500 to the Official Receiver in Bankruptcy. The plate, however, is irrecoverably Hooleyised. Each of the eight pieces bears the following elegant advertisement:—

PRESENTED TO
ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL,
On the 60th Anniversary of the Reign of
Queen Victoria,
By ERNEST TERAH HOOLEY,
Risley Hall, Dorby.

"Bible" is an unfortunate name for anybody. We never heard of it as a surname until a few days ago, when we saw that Thomas Tilton Bible was co-respondent in a divorce case, being accused of committing adultery with Mrs. Ada Caroline Partington. The judge granted Mr. Partington a decree nisi with costs, and Mr. Bible disappears with the lady, who has considerable means.

The Victoria Park Branch of the Christian Evidence Society spent its time last Sunday afternoon in presenting the public with palpable evidence of the unity and concord produced by the Christian religion. This evidence took the form of an edifying quarrel among the members of the Society. When a Christian Evidence lecturer attacks his colleagues and makes public accusations of underhanded and tyrannical proceedings, and of intrigue going on in the Society for years, one is inclined to believe that the truth may occasionally be heard even from a Christian Evidence platform. Probably both parties were speaking the truth of each other. The immediate cause of the quarrel appears to have been the election of a new treasurer. One *clique* claims that its nominee was elected to this office by a majority of votes. The other *clique*, being in power, keeps its own man in office, and overrides all protests.

Theatrical companies have long been allowed to travel on the railways at reduced rates. It is now reported that the Railway Companies have decided to extend the same concession to religious bodies travelling to and from their annual conferences and congresses. We are glad to see the various caterers to public amusement falling into line. Over in America, we believe, the sky-pilots have the best of it; being allowed, when on duty, to travel as deadheads, perhaps on the idea that their full fares with good interest will be paid up in kingdom-come.

There is a story in *Foreign Courts and Foreign Homes* by A. M. F., just published, of the old King of Hanover. The writer's father went to the royal door with some despatches, and knocked several times without an answer. At last the door was opened, and the King could be heard inside using oath on oath, winding up by asking: "What the devil do you want?" A page came out and said: "His Majesty was not to be disturbed, as he was saying his prayers."

This writer tells another story, which the *Daily News* amazingly calls "exquisite." It seems to us the deepest tragedy. A French girl, a Catholic, fell in love with an officer, a Protestant. Her father would not allow them to marry, but granted them a final interview. They parted, and the young lady remained single till death. The young officer had a long illness, which left him with the mind of a little child. He played with dolls, imagining them to be bride and bridegroom; and his lost love sent him dolls dressed in wedding garments. She died first, and he lived on to ninety. Her last words were a desire that he should be kept supplied with dolls, for he would miss them so.

Could there be a more terrible tale of life blighted by the curse of religion? "Ah! I loved him more than my God!" the poor lady exclaimed. But she submitted to her father's will and the custom of her noble family. We are reminded of James Thomson's *Two Lovers*, a poem dealing with a similar theme:—

Poor human hearts, that yearn beyond the tomb,
Wherein you all must moulder into dust,
What has the blank immitigable gloom
Of light or fervor to reward your trust?
Live out your whole free life while yet on earth;
Seize the quick Present, prize your one sure boon;
Though brief, each day a golden sun has birth;
Though dim, the night is gemmed with stars and moon.
Love out your cordial love, hate out your hate;
Be strong to grasp a foe, to clasp a friend;
Your wants true laws are; thirst and hunger sate;
Feel you have been yourselves when comes the end.

William Booth is like Alexander the Great, always sighing for new worlds to conquer. He has already taken advantage of the American occupation of Manila, and secured a large hall there for Salvation Army performances, which would probably take better in the more remote and savage parts of the Philippines. Of course a few "captains" might be turned into sandwiches at first, but they would doubtless be quite ready to go to heaven through native stomachs. Everybody knows the depth of their self-sacrifice.

"There must be popular adaptation, or people won't read them at all." So says Dr. S. G. Green, of the Religious Tract Society, who adds that "there is still abundant scope for putting the truths of Christianity in a lively, readable, acceptable form." What a fall is here! How different from the simple old style of believe and be saved, or disbelieve and be damned. Christianity has got to compete with a hundred attractions, and has to be "lively" and make itself "acceptable."

"To attempt a defence of Christianity," says the *Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette*, "is to incur at all times a very grave responsibility, and in the present day to encounter a task of enormous difficulty." We quite agree with our contemporary. But it used to be different in the old days, when sceptics argued with a rope round their necks. Christian apologists could then say pretty well anything and be believed. Nowadays they find their work more arduous. They have to face facts and answer arguments squarely. Hence the "difficulty."

Our heterodox contemporary, the *Crescent*, makes a mistake in quoting from the story of the woman taken in adultery as "the teaching of Christ." A glance at the Revised Version will show that this story is really an interpolation. Dean Farrar admits its "doubtful genuineness"—that is to say, its undoubted unauthenticity.

A Consistory Court held at Worcester has deposed the Rev. William Rawlings Woods from holy orders and declared him incapable of holding preferment. His offence was seducing and cohabiting with a young lady while he was curate in charge at Willey, Warwickshire. He was a married man living apart from his wife, and his paramour was also engaged to another gentleman. Altogether it was a badly mixed affair.

"The Religion of Materialism" was the subject of a recent lecture by the Rev. Hugh Black, of Edinburgh. After declaring that the Agnostic impeachment of religious knowledge would make real knowledge of any kind impossible, which is the veriest absurdity, the rev. gentleman went on as follows: "The practical effect of the Agnostic faith on life was despair. To be without God was to be without hope, without a proper foundation either for the intellect or for ethics."

So the practical effect of unbelief is despair. The Rev. Hugh Black says it, and he ought to know. But it doesn't seem to fit in with the facts. Take Darwin, for instance, or Spencer, or Huxley, or Bradlaugh, or Ingersoll. Not one of these great unbelievers is particularly remarkable for pessimism or melancholy. For energetic cheerfulness the whole five might be backed against a similar number of Christians—even if the latter were fresh from the exciting influence of a tea-meeting. As for intellect, well you couldn't easily find five Christians to match them; and in the matter of ethics they would probably stand well in a competition with five well-selected, extra-special Christian saints.

Perhaps the truth is, after all, that the Rev. Hugh Black is in a certain line of business, and feels bound to cry down rival firms. It is an old trick of advertising, which deceives nobody but simpletons. Salvation is always sold at *this* house, and damnation at the house *opposite*.

Old Nick seems to have strong Protestant tastes. His hatred of holy water is proverbial, and we have clerical authority for saying that he detests incense. According to the Rev. H. E. Copinger, of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Abbeyhill, Edinburgh, "The reason why Satan hated incense in the present day was because he was not willing to acknowledge that Jesus was God." The wise men from the East brought incense when Christ was born. Zechariah, too, was offering incense when the angel appeared to him; and, as the preacher remarked, if God did not like incense he would not have sent the angel. Anybody can see that this argument is irrefutable. Let us therefore have plenty of good, thick, stupefying incense smoke, as Browning called it. Happily enough of it will smother the Devil. But on second thoughts that won't do at all; for if the Devil were killed, or even seriously laid up, the parson's occupation would be gone.

Mr. Edmund Gosse, the well-known writer, gives in the *North American Review* an account of his trip last summer to Bergen. In his opinion there are too many English chaplains in Norway. "Perhaps at one or two tourist centres, such as Balholm and Odds," he says, "it does no harm to have an English chaplain. In other places the thing becomes a farce." At one hotel the chaplain had not a single worshipper to attend his services. "I hope," Mr. Gosse says, "he was honest enough to let this be known at home." Sometimes the hotel servants, and even peasant children, were gathered in to "make up a shadowy congregation for the weekly report." There may be an element of piety in the thing, but Mr. Gosse has no hesitation in saying that "there is also a deliberate bid for the support of bigotry and snobbishness." But is not this a little too severe? The clerical labor market is overstocked in England, and the export of chaplains and missionaries is an aspect of the population question. The poor fellows must live somewhere.

Why on earth do the wretched Atheists refrain from suicide? According to Talmage and some other orthodox

preachers, they ought to be rushing pell-mell to self-slaughter. But they don't. Indeed, we hardly ever take up a newspaper without reading that some Christian has put an end to his or her blessed existence. The latest case we have to notice is that of Sarah Evelyn Walker, a governess, aged twenty-four, who drowned herself in a brook at Everdon. The poor young woman, in a letter to an old schoolmate at Frome, said that she had been studying her hands and found that she was born mad, with her fate-line upside down. She was afraid of committing the unpardonable sin, so she resolved to die in time. "If you study the Bible," she said, "you will find that it is so." Had she mentioned the *Freethinker* instead of the Bible, the religious journals would have had flaring articles on the matter. As it is, they will say nothing.

Every reader of George Meredith will remember the melancholy ending of *Beauchamp's Career*. Commander Beauchamp, a fine fellow, a thorough Radical, happily married, with a young wife and a newly-arrived babe, jumps into the water to save a strange mud-lark of a boy who had gone under. The boy was saved, and Commander Beauchamp was lost. And as his uncle, Lord Romfrey, and his father-in-law, Dr. Shrapnel, who both loved him, turned away from the insignificant little creature he had saved, they looked into each other's eyes, without speaking, the thought: "This is what we have in exchange for Beauchamp."

We were reminded of this tragic story by the newspaper report of an incident at Chatham Dockyard. Commander Lewis Blackburn jumped overboard from his ship in full uniform to save a pet gazelle that had fallen into the water while affectionately rubbing against him as he was going ashore. It was intensely dark, and ship's chains were about; but the Commander shouted for lights, and kept himself and his gazelle afloat until both were assisted to dry land. It is a fine story. Yet the parsons will go on droning about original sin.

Dr. Tinker, a Hyde magistrate, complimented a witness who desired to be sworn in the Scotch fashion without kissing the book. "That book," the Doctor said, "has been kissed this morning by all sorts and conditions of men—some with dirty faces, others with sores on their faces and lips—and I am delighted that one person at any rate has had the common sense to stand out for the sanitary oath." This is excellent as far as it goes, but the truth is that the Bible is as much condemned by science as promiscuous kissing of it is condemned by the laws of hygiene. Still, we can hardly expect even doctors to go all the way at once.

Sarah Bramwell has been fined 10s. and costs at Church (Lancs.) Petty Sessions for fortune-telling. She told a young woman, who gave her sixpence for the information, that three young men were after her—one dark, one fair, and one half-and-half, and that she would marry the dark one at twenty-six. We dare say the girl got a good deal of comfort out of this prophecy, and, on the common Christian argument, it is a sin to rob her of her greatest consolation. From this point of view the sixpence was an excellent investment. But in any case we don't quite see why a fortune-teller should be punished for earning sixpence, while priests are allowed to take thousands of pounds in their holy conjuring business.

Mr. A. Ballard, B.A., LL.B., contributes to the *Daily Chronicle* the following story: A negro student at one of our great missionary colleges was conducting family prayers, and in an outburst of enthusiasm prayed: "Give us all pure hearts, give us all clean hearts, give us all sweet hearts"; to which all the congregation replied "Amen."

Rev. L. H. Parsons, lecturing at Canonbury on Paul Pry, remarked that "Sceptics and Atheists threw doubt upon the Bible, but Christians should not mind inquiry into that matter. Truth had nothing to hide, error only lives in darkness, and therefore Bible criticism could do no harm." These are admirable sentiments. We hope the reverend gentleman's auditors will act upon them, and attend a few Freethought meetings.

Bishop Wilkinson, preaching at St. Godric's Roman Catholic Church, Durham, denounced the Reformation, and said it was "the silver and gold the Reformers wanted." Very likely. That is what is wanted by the priests of every persuasion. They differ about doctrine, but agree on raking in the shekels.

Ingersoll had better look out. The *Woolwich Herald* is on his track. First of all it complains that he makes people laugh at Christianity, which is a very serious thing. Next, he denies that the Old Testament teaches the doctrine of immortality, whereas it is taught by "innumerable passages." But the truth is the *Herald* doesn't know what it is writing about. Mr. Gladstone admits that the doctrine of a future life is not really to be found in the Old Testament;

and it was upon this very absence that Bishop Warburton based the whole argument of his famous *Divine Legation of Moses*. Does not the very New Testament itself assert that Jesus Christ brought immortality to light?

According to the New York *Truthseeker*, some of the religious journals are experiencing difficulties. The *Catholic Review* has had to be discontinued, and the *Weekly Witness*, a Protestant publication, is up to eyes in debt, and its affairs are in the law courts. Many poor persons were induced to invest their little savings in it, and all they have to show for the investment is a bit of useless scrip, which won't even admit them through Peter's wicket.

Here is a funny testimony from a Christian convert in Orion, Illinois: "I gave my heart to God many years ago. I called to Christ for help, and did not call in vain, for he heard my cry. Since then I have been called through sorest trouble. Have broken my right leg five times, and my left three times, and have met with other physical calamities; and, worse than all, I have been nearly lost in the slough of distrust and despondency." That unfortunate man should try back before he goes all to pieces.

Palmer W. Hill, a Christian preacher, is in gaol at Muskegon, in Michigan. He seems to have imitated some of the most approved Bible saints. Two of his wives happened to meet in a grocery store, where they had a serious misunderstanding. Other wives, not being duly advertised of the gathering, were unable to participate.

Chestnuts from the Freethought platform often pass as fresh fruit amongst Christians. We see that a correspondent of the *Evening Standard* explains that Noah was the greatest financier on record because he successfully floated a very large company when all the rest of the world was in liquidation.

A Jew named Cohen, recently summoned on a London coroner's jury, refused to visit the dead body. He belongs to the priestly tribe, as his name indicates, and on religious grounds cannot go near a corpse. Of course this is nothing new, but some of the papers are treating it as a fresh discovery. What with Christian Scientists, Peculiar People, and Cohen Jews, the law is getting awfully complicated, and the table of exceptions threatens to grow as long as a lawyer's bill.

Captain Davey, chief prison missionary of the Church Army, has the coolness to tell a *Mail* interviewer that "prisons are made a little too pleasant." This gentleman had better get arrested for blasphemy or something, like Jesus Christ, and try what the stone jug is really like. There is nothing like experience to give value to information.

There are said to be from five to six thousand unemployed clergymen in England. But why unemployed? Can't they go soul-saving without a salary? Can't they trust Jesus Christ's promise, "great is your reward in heaven"? Or is soul-saving merely a business, as we have often declared it is?

What about the heathen? Couldn't those unemployed parsons go abroad without scrip or purse, and preach to the millions who never heard of Christ? Surely the Lord would look after them, even amongst cannibals, and feed and clothe them like the lilies of the field.

The Bishop of Bangor is recovering from his paralytic seizure. We congratulate him as a man, and condole with him as a Christian. From the orthodox point of view, he has missed going home to heaven, and is condemned to a further term of existence in this miserable vale of tears.

"They Who Know Not Christ."

An eccentric old gentleman, whose enthusiasm for work in the Lord's Vineyard knew no limit, was in the habit of distributing New Testaments during his wanderings to any working men he chanced to meet, the same being wrapped up, curiously enough, in a red handkerchief. Going along a lane one day on his customary mission, he noticed some navvies working away at the bottom of a trench. Stooping down to one of them, he said in low, impressive tones: "My man, have you got Christ down there?" "Eh!" responded the navvy. The question was repeated. The workman walked along the trench a little to where the excavation was still deeper, and where some other co-workers were busy. "Bill!" he shouted. "Ho-a-a-a" was heard. "Have yer got Christ down there?" "Christ! Who's he any-way?" "Why, I dinna knaa, but here's a chap browt his dinner."

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, December 4, Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, London: 7.30, "John Burns, Price Hughes, Sunday Concerts, and Sabbatarian Tyranny."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—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.

W. R. FRASER.—There is a very pretty little volume just published that would probably suit you. It is entitled *Gleams from Goethe*, and is edited by Henry Attwell. The publisher is George Allen—Ruskin's publisher—and the price is 2s. nett. A somewhat larger selection of Criticisms, Reflections, and Maxims from Goethe, also recently published, is translated by W. B. Rönfeldt. Walter Scott is the publisher, and the price is 1s. 6d. You should obtain and read both volumes. Goethe's *Autobiography* (two vols.) and *Conversations with Eckermann and Soret* (one vol.) are included in Bohn's Library at 3s. 6d. per volume, the translator being the accomplished John Oxenford, who was for many years connected with the *Times*.

OWING to a pressure of other work, Mr. Foote is obliged to defer until next week his promised article on the future of the Secular Society, Limited.

T. WILMOT.—See paragraph.

AMERICAN EXCHANGES.—Our American exchanges are once more desired to note that our address is 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C. Some of them continue to post to an old address, which we left four years ago.

N. S. S. BENEVOLENT FUND.—Miss Vance acknowledges:—Parcel of clothing from Mrs. Mann.

HARRY BROWN.—It was an unfortunate omission. See "Sugar Plums."

W. HEAFORD.—Sorry to hear that you and other friends were too late for the funeral of the late Mrs. Forder, owing to delay on the G. N. Railway. The weather was very inclement, and Mr. Foote, who officiated at the graveside, did not keep the mourners longer than was necessary. It was good to see so many there in such circumstances.

M. LOAFER.—We hope the East London Branch will have a good gathering on December 11. Mr. Foote's visit amongst you will be a hurried one in the circumstances, but he looks forward to it with pleasure.

R. P. EDWARDS.—Will you kindly see Mr. Foote on the matter? Say, after his lecture at the Athenæum Hall this evening (Dec. 4), or elsewhere within the next few days. He will make an appointment with you if you drop him a line.

J. FISH.—Inserted as desired.

W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for your weekly batch of cuttings, always welcome and always useful.

D. KAY.—Thanks for the paper. We will notice it next week. Jokes acceptable.

A. WINDOW.—We have not time to answer such queries through the post. As you read (and enjoy) the *Freethinker*, you will see the answer here. There is no such volume as you mention among the Sacred Books of the East. Colonel Ingersoll's new lecture on Superstition will be published at our office shortly.

W. BENDIT.—Thanks for the cutting and reference. See "Acid Drops."

G. W. BLYTHE.—The subject is not one which can be discussed in our columns.

W. WHITNEY.—Tuesday morning is the latest time for receiving Lecture Notices for the *Freethinker*. Your postcard bears the Derby postmark of November 29. We wish Branch secretaries would take note of this arrangement, which cannot be altered.

L. FORMAN.—You will find all the information you seek in the *Secular Almanack*. The price is only threepence, and all profit on the sale accrues to the National Secular Society.

W. COX (Liverpool).—We meant nothing offensive. We have the highest respect for the intelligence and character of your committee. What we thought was that you made a mistake in having any consultation with the police. They are practised hands at trickery in regard to advanced movements. So far as the illegality of charging for admission to Sunday lectures is concerned, we should much like the opportunity of fighting the question to a finish. We have long had our plan of campaign ready, and we believe we should win. Perhaps the police think so too, for they won't attack us.

RECEIVED.—Huddersfield Examiner—Liberator—Ethical World—Aberystwyth Observer—Glasgow Weekly Citizen—Crescent—Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette—English Mechanic—Bristol Evening News—Islington Gazette—Newcastle Daily Leader—Progressive Thinker—Rochdale Observer—New York Truthseeker—Isle of Man Times—Blue Grass Blade—Torch of Reason—Sydney Bulletin—People's Newspaper—Woolwich Herald—Two Worlds Secular Thought.

LEON DUCHESNE.—Shall be glad to receive cuttings whenever you please to send them. Kindly note on each the name of the paper it is taken from.

A. J. HOOPER.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

B. STEVENS.—Not shocked. He deserves a shaking.

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

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

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

The *Freethinker* will be forwarded, direct from the publishing office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One year, 10s. 6d.; half year, 5s. 3d.; three months, 2s. 8d.

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

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

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.

THERE was a large audience at the Athenæum Hall on Sunday evening, when Mr. Foote lectured on "Christian Science and the Peculiar People." Mr. Harry Brown occupied the chair. This evening (December 4) Mr. Foote lectures again from the same platform, taking for his subject, "John Burns, Price Hughes, Sunday Concerts, and Sabbatarian Tyranny." Many liberal-minded men and women who are not exactly Freethinkers should be interested in this subject. Will our readers make the lecture widely known?

Our friend and colleague, Mr. Charles Watts, is going to say good-bye to old England for three or four months. He is going westward to rediscover America. Friends over there have pressed him to pay them another visit, and while he is there he will lecture in many great centres, including New York, Boston, Toronto, Philadelphia, and Chicago. He sails from Liverpool on December 21, and will, of course, spend Christmas on the Atlantic. Probably he will get a piece of plum-pudding on board, and even a slice of turkey, but no kiss under the mistletoe. We dare say, however, that he will arrive at New York in good condition; and we have no doubt that he will meet with a very hearty reception there, as well as in any other place he visits.

We have asked Mr. Watts to convey our personal regard and good wishes to many friends across the Atlantic, particularly to Dr. E. B. Foote and his son "Ned," and to Eugene and George Macdonald of the *Truthseeker*. We have straightly charged him to tell Colonel Ingersoll that the Freethinkers of this country are counting on the fulfilment of his promise to come over next year. Mr. Watts says he will try to bring the Colonel back with him, but that is perhaps too soon for the Colonel's convenience. Yet it is always open for Mr. Watts to say he dare not return home without our longed-for visitor, and the Colonel may strain a point for the sake of Mrs. Watts and the rest of the family.

To-day (Sunday, December 4) Mr. Watts lectures three times at Glasgow, and probably during the week in the surrounding district. As this will be Mr. Watts's last visit to Scotland previous to his departure for America, no doubt he will have crowded audiences.

Last Sunday Mr. Charles Watts lectured at Birmingham to two crowded audiences. In the morning every seat was occupied, and in the evening the hall was packed, and the ante-room was also crowded. We are informed that Mr. Watts never spoke better, and the applause he received must have been exceedingly gratifying to him, particularly at the close of his lectures, when he received quite an ovation. Miss Baker, the daughter of the late veteran Daniel Baker, was present. There was a good sale of literature, every copy of the *Freethinker* on hand being sold.

An effort was made on Sunday evening to re-open the outdoor lecture station on Deptford Broadway. An excellent gathering was addressed by Mr. C. James and Mr. R. P. Edwards. There are many Freethinkers in the neighborhood, where it should be easy to maintain a Branch of the N. S. S. Another open-air meeting will be held at the same

spot this evening (December 4), and, as strong opposition is promised, we hope the local "saints" will rally round the platform.

We have to observe that the N. S. S. Finsbury Branch is alive and prosperous. By some accident between Miss Vance and the printer it got omitted from the list of Branches in the *Secular Almanack*. This is very regrettable, as the Finsbury Branch has had many difficulties and overcome them all in the most gallant fashion. All through the summer it has held Sunday morning meetings on Clerkenwell-green. The secretary is Mr. Harry Brown, 64 Patshull-road, N.W., and the president Mr. E. Bater.

Another open-air Freethought meeting was held on Sunday at Limehouse. The choir opposition was absent, but abuse remained. Fortunately the large gathering, addressed by Messrs. Davies, Edwards, Pack, Ramsey, and Heaford, was thoroughly sympathetic. These meetings at Limehouse have been continued beyond the usual time as a protest against Christian rowdyism, and a token that Secularists are not to be intimidated.

Mr. Percy Ward paid his first visit to Liverpool on Sunday, and delivered three lectures to good audiences in the Alexandra Hall. We are informed that he gave great satisfaction to all who heard him.

The East London Branch has a tea and concert on Sunday evening, December 11, at the King's Hall, 83-5 Commercial-road. An excellent program of vocal and instrumental music and readings has been arranged. Mr. Foote has promised to run down after his Athenæum Hall lecture and give a recitation. A guarantee for 150 to tea had to be given, so the local "saints" should apply freely for tickets, which can be obtained from G. J. Warren, 20 Rhodeswell-road, Limehouse; Mr. Haines, 212 Mile-end-road; Mr. Pitman, 7 Romford-road, Stratford; and Mr. Neate, 385 Bethnal-green-road.

A meeting of those interested in the work of the Freethought open-air station in Ridley-road, Kingsland, will be held at the Bradlaugh Club, 36 Newington-green-road, to-day (December 4) at 12 o'clock. Arrangements for next season's propaganda will be considered.

Mr. G. Dawson Baker is the writer of the tract, *Is the Bible the Inspired Word of God?* mentioned in our last issue as an excellent one for general circulation. The price is one penny, or ninepence per dozen. Watts & Co. are the publishers. The author is a converted Methodist local preacher, who lives in a small town of 1,000 inhabitants, with a gospel-shop for every 200 of them. An article from Mr. Baker's pen will appear in our next issue.

Isabella O. Ford addresses a meeting of the Humanitarian League next Tuesday evening (December 6) at St. Martin's Town Hall. Her subject will be "The Woman's Movement in Relation to Humanitarianism." Mrs. C. Mallet takes the chair at eight o'clock. Admission is free.

The Birmingham Branch had a successful and most enthusiastic social gathering at the Victoria Hotel, John Bright-street, during Mr. Watts's visit. The ex-president, Mr. R. Taylor, was presented with a silver-mounted walking stick in recognition of his long and valuable services in that capacity. Mr. Percy Ward proposed the health of Mr. Watts, which toast was received with much cheering. Messrs. Bullows and Matthews, Misses Skett and Jayes, and Mrs. Harrison contributed songs; Mr. H. Berkeley, violin solo; and Mr. J. Partridge a capital reading. At the Sunday morning meeting Mr. Ridgway proposed a vote of condolence with Mr. Forder, which was agreed to.

A Kindly Prayer.

A little girl in a Pennsylvania town, in saying her prayers the other night, was told to pray for her father and mother, who were both very ill, and for one of the servants, who had lost her husband. She faithfully did as she was told, and then, impressed with the dreary condition of things, added on her own account: "O God, take good care of yourself, for if anything should happen to you we should all go to pieces."

The Sunday School Union have what they facetiously term a "business department" at Ludgate Hill, London, E.C. There the agents of the Union sell their own and other publications. We noticed in the window recently Clodd's *Story of Primitive Man*, Shelley's *Poems*, and Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. If these are used generally as Sunday-school prizes and gifts, some of the wealthy Agnostics, who patronised Mr. "General" Booth, might send on their cheques to the Sunday School Union.

A GREAT FRENCH FREETHINKER.

EARLY in January, 1883, an autopsy was held in a meanly-furnished bed-room of a house at Ville d'Avray, near Paris. The villa, as it might have been, and probably was, called, had once belonged to the great Honoré de Balzac. Its latest owner lay dead upon a student's pallet on the first floor, and it was his body that was being dissected by the doctors. His name was Léon Gambetta.

Among the medical men present was one who had loved the great orator and statesman with the passion of a worshipper. Familiarity had not bred contempt in this case; it had only deepened respect. The more closely the great man was seen by this friend, himself no mediocrity, the more he was venerated and adored. As the autopsy progressed the cool anatomist lost his nerve, and when at length the noble head was sawn open for the extraction of the brain, he utterly broke down, and reeled, faint and pallid, to the open window. That man was Paul Bert.

Paul Bert was an eminent scientist, a man of varied culture, a leading politician, a keen debater, and an educational reformer hated by the black army of priests. These were titles to distinction. But his highest glory was being for years, and until death, a bosom friend of one of the grandest men who ever trod this earth.

Dead in his turn, Paul Bert was honored like Gambetta, though in a lesser degree. France gave him a public funeral and provided for his family. He died at the post of duty, away in pestilential Tonquin, where he occupied the post of Resident-General. It is said by hypercritics that he should not have gone there, that France had no business there either, and that he committed a species of suicide. But the observation comes with ill grace from Englishmen, whose government is entangled with weak races in every part of the world. France held her far-off possession irrespective of the wishes of Paul Bert. He went there as a wise Englishman might go to India—not as a fire-eater, but as a civiliser. "I will have none of your bristling bayonets and clinking sabres," he said to the *Figaro* interviewer before leaving on his ill-fated mission. His intention was to carry French ideas and French culture to the distant East.

He tried hard to do this, and not altogether without success. His activity was indefatigable. At first, says a writer in the *République Française* who took leave of him at Tonquin in September, 1886, he enjoyed excellent health, and his marvellous appetite contrasted strangely with the dejected features and languishing airs of his companions.

Dysentery, that fatal disorder which lies in wait for Europeans in the East, was the cause of Paul Bert's death. A fortnight before he succumbed he telegraphed to M. de Freycinet, the French Premier, desiring him to say nothing about his illness for the sake of friends and relatives. M. de Freycinet, in return, besought him to take the greatest care of his health, and to give up working. Four days later came a telegram, "Strength returns." But it was an illusion. M. de Freycinet, however, not thinking that Paul Bert's condition so serious as it was, advised him not to come home, as his leaving Tonquin might produce evil consequences. "You are right," the moribund man telegraphed, "it is better to die at my post than for me to quit Tonquin at the present moment." Subsequent dispatches came from other hands. On Thursday, November 11, 1886, a final telegram came from M. Chaillet, Paul Bert's son-in-law, announcing that the end had come. M. de Freycinet, who was profoundly affected, announced the event the same day in the Chamber in the following terms: "I announce with the deepest sorrow the death of M. Paul Bert. He died literally on the field of honor, broken down by the fatigues and hardships which he so bravely endured in trying to carry out the glorious task which he had undertaken. The Chamber loses by his death one of its most eminent members, Science one of its most illustrious votaries, France one of her most loving and faithful children, and the Government a fellow-worker of inestimable value, in whom we placed the fullest confidence. Excuse me, gentlemen, if, because my strength fails me, I am unable to proceed." M. Casimir Perier, who presided, then expressed the sentiments of sorrow felt by the Chamber, and the sitting was raised in sign of mourning. The next day urgency was demanded for two votes, one giving Paul Bert a State funeral, and the other giving a

pension to his family. The first vote was strenuously opposed by Monseigneur Freppel, Bishop of Angers, on the ground that the deceased was an inveterate enemy of religion. This ecclesiastic fought tooth and nail for the Tonquin expedition, but probably he thought the atheistic Resident-General had not been too friendly to the mission. He was ignominiously defeated however, 45 voting with him, and 379 against him. Monseigneur Freppel was an ardent warrior, but he was a very poor general; otherwise he would not have courted such a terrible rebuff for himself and his Church.

Paul Bert's personality and career are worthy of attention. His face was fine and handsome. The brow was broad and firm. The eyes were alert yet thoughtful, the nose was well shaped, and there was a kindly yet resolute expression about the lines of the mouth as well as the contour of the chin. His figure was of middle height, well built and finely balanced, with good solid shoulders. His mind was methodical, but his resources were all ready at command, and this gave him the air of a mental soldier ready for combat.

Born at Auxerre on October 19, 1833, according to Depasse, or October 17, according to Vapereau, Paul Bert came of a peasant family, who originally resided at Bouby (Nièvre). His father, who was an attorney, brought him up to detest nobles and priests, and to admire the first Napoleon. The events of 1852, however, cured the young man for ever of his Bonapartism. Henceforth he was an earnest Republican, and he had no feeling for the Second Empire but that of contempt. We shall presently see his entry into public life after the downfall of that gigantic imposture.

Paul Bert's only education was gained at an Auxerre college. Thence he passed to Sainte-Barbe, where he showed a marked inclination for science. But a romantic notion led him to study law, and he took a licentiate's degree. Soon finding, however, that the law was not his vocation, he turned his back upon it and began the study of physiology under the great anatomist Gratiolet. This atmosphere suited his mental constitution, and he made rapid progress. Gratiolet was his friend as well as his master, and, although they differed fundamentally in their conceptions of the origin and nature of life, their intercourse was always delightful to both; and when Gratiolet died, Paul Bert pronounced his eulogium in terms of delicate praise that were an honor to both.

Taking his degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1863, Paul Bert became also Doctor of Science in 1866. He taught zoology at Bordeaux, and succeeded Flourens at the Museum. Having been for some time preparator to the great anatomist Claude Bernard, with whom, as with Gratiolet, he contracted a warm friendship, he succeeded his second master at the Sorbonne in Paris, where, in 1869, he became professor of physiology. From that moment he was in full evidence; he had won a place in the front rank at the University, and he was one of the first professors in France.

Never, in the subsequent turmoil of politics, did Paul Bert forget that he was a scientist. He was an ardent experimentalist, and he turned readily from the Chamber to his laboratory. Following in the footsteps of Gratiolet and Claude Bernard, he was ever, to use Bacon's phrase, of interrogating nature. Even the Tory *Standard*, referring to Comparative Anatomy, allowed that "the value of M. Paul Bert's personal contributions to it are recognised most fully by those whose own achievements entitle them best to judge." His *Première Année d'Enseignement Scientifique*, written for the primary schools, and almost universally in use there, shows the strength and ease of a master, who makes science live to his readers because he has assimilated it completely himself. Other scientific publications of his reveal the hand of a specialist who, while making "all knowledge his province," feels that his force and skill lie chiefly in one direction, and pursues it with equable enthusiasm and an eye to useful discovery. Darwin also, to take a greater instance, writes the *Origin of Species* and the *Descent of Man*, but he publishes likewise the *Fertilisation of Orchids* and the *Variations of Animals and Plants under Domestication*, which are for specialists, and necessarily "caviare to the general."

Paul Bert's political life began in 1870. The Empire was visibly failing, and the young men who saw the dawn of a better day felt the blood leap in their veins. Standing for the Council General of the canton of Aillant, Paul

Bert was beaten by a Bonapartist, but after the Fourth of September he went to Paris and placed himself at the order of the Government of National Defence. "Remain in the provinces," said Jules Simon, "there are too many men in Paris already." Acting on this advice, Paul Bert returned to Auxerre, where, without any official title, he placed his devotion and activity at the service of his friend, M. Ribière, Prefect of the Yonne. They worked night and day at military organisation, but their open town was twice bombarded and occupied by the Germans. After the second occupation, Paul Bert went to Gambetta at Bordeaux. The "Dictator" appointed him Prefect of the Nord, where Lille was menaced with bombardment. It was a distinguished honor, and the patriotic professor proved himself worthy of it. With Gerald Faidherbe, another of Gambetta's men (what an eye he had for a man!), Paul Bert made immense preparations for defence, but the armistice suspended his labors, and they were terminated by the peace.

After the war Gambetta plainly told his countrymen, "We have been beaten through ignorance." From that moment national education, as well as military reorganisation, became a recognised supreme duty. Paul Bert splendidly seconded his great leader on both points, but chiefly on the first. The *Standard* justly said that "his interest in popular education gave him his main title to the rank and character of statesman." Having secured a firm seat in the Chamber of Deputies, he was able to give effect to his ideas. His devotion never abated. His elevated ideal is well expressed by himself in his *L'Instruction Civique à l'École*: "The most rapid possible preparation of citizens, masters of their intelligence, sound in judgment, and imbued with the knowledge of their rights and the sentiment of their duties—such should be now the principal pre-occupation of every patriot. We must learn to abandon everything for this urgent labor and supreme interest, even the delights of free research in the unknown regions of science."

Paul Bert's efforts were eminently successful. The Superior Council of Public Instruction was reformed according to his ideas in 1879. His influence prevailed also in organising the important primary education of girls. Largely through his exertions the Chamber voted free, secular, and compulsory education. When Gambetta appointed him Minister of Public Instruction and Worship in November, 1881, the clerical party roared with indignation, and it certainly was a strong piece of irony. But before that short-lived Ministry ended, Paul Bert did three excellent strokes of business. He laid the basis of military education in schools and *lycées*, he freed the pupils in State establishments from the obligation of attending religious service or receiving religious instruction, and he organised the secondary education of girls. Paul Bert retired, but his good work remained. It is not too much to say that he was the idol of schoolmasters and schoolmistresses and teachers throughout France. More than any other man he released them from the galling tyranny of the priests. The *Standard* naturally accused him of a "blind hatred" of everything clerical. The hatred may be allowed without admitting its blindness. It was clear-eyed and deliberate. Again and again, when France had risen, the priests had dragged her down. "Clericalism, there is the enemy," said Gambetta, and Paul Bert at least knew he was right. Replying to a clerical opponent in the Chamber, he said: "The conquests of education are made on the domain of religion; I am forced to meet on my road Catholic superstitions and Romish policy, or rather it is across their empire that my path seems to me naturally traced." Still more clearly, at a meeting in the *Cirque d'Hiver*, in August, 1881, Gambetta himself being in the chair, Paul Bert expressed himself on the same subject: "I know very well that the priest will cry, 'You have sent me from the school; I carry with me morality, its basis and sanction; I leave you to the abyss and the mud in which you will roll.' . . . We answer him with the map of Europe and of the world before our eyes, history in our memory, commencing with the opening of that sombre, bloody, and fanatical Middle Age, that modern societies march towards morality in proportion as they leave religion behind."

Carrying the war into the enemy's camp, Paul Bert delivered two splendid speeches in the Chamber in support of Jules Ferry's famous Seventh Article, depriving the unauthorised religious orders of the right to teach in public schools. He was interrupted almost every minute by the

clerical party, but he never lost his coolness, and he showed himself a master of repartee. With the calm precision of a surgeon he dissected the teaching of the Jesuits and similar fraternities. His references to their so-called moral teachings were declared to be shameful perversions. Indeed, said the orator, then I will read you passages from their text-books! In a few moments the clerical party cried, Enough, there are ladies and young persons in the gallery! Very well then, said the orator, I will refrain; but I desire you to note that it is a scandal for ladies to hear what these pious moralists teach to boys and girls!

To defend himself from the charge of falsification made by Bishop Freppel, Paul Bert published his *Morale des Jesuites*, twenty thousand copies of which were sold in less than a year. Taking two Latin works by the Jesuit father Gury, both of which were in general use in the religious seminaries, he went systematically through them, and showed that the moral duplicities stigmatised by Pascal, and the bestialities of Sanchez and his compeers, were still used to poison the minds of the youth of France. Paul Bert translated Gury's Latin into French, but asterisks were often necessary, and several revolting passages that it was necessary to quote had to be left in the obscurity of a dead tongue. The book was dedicated, appropriately enough, to Bishop Freppel himself in a vein of masterly irony.

From that moment Paul Bert became a sort of Antichrist to the clericals. Reply was impossible, so they resorted to slander. They called him a libertine, a shameless materialist, a man infected with all the vices and turpitudes of Paris, a disgrace to the Chamber, a debauchee, and so on, in the well-known style of religious controversialists. But the slander was harmless, for Paul Bert was notoriously a model husband and father, as well as a good citizen; and his home, presided over by an accomplished wife of Scotch descent, was a sanctuary of happiness and peace.

The *Standard* allowed that "it is impossible not to admire Paul Bert's single-hearted enthusiasm and devotion," and that "he had the keenest sympathy for the struggles and sufferings of his fellow-men." Without wasting his mental force in dreams of impossible or far-off utopias, he applied himself to elevating the lot of his countrymen; and he did this, not by appealing to their animal instincts of selfishness and pride, but by appealing to their intellects and consciences. His labor was not fruitless, and the mark of his mind is on the upward life of France. Nor was he animated by any hope of reward in this world or the next. He was not only an Atheist, but a militant Atheist; yet, in defiance of priestly croakings, he dwelt on the loftiest levels of thought and feeling, finding delight in the pursuit of truth, and a keener delight in imparting its benefactions to his fellow-citizens of the world.

G. W. FOOTE.

THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

REPORT of the Monthly Executive Meeting held at the Society's offices on Thursday, November 24; the President in the chair. There were present:—E. Bater, C. Cohen, T. Gorniot, F. Schaller, G. J. Warren, Annie Brown, W. Heaford, A. B. Moss, E. W. Quay, C. Quinton, J. Neate, M. Loafer, B. Munton, H. Brown, T. Wilmot, and the Secretary.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and confirmed. Cash statement received and adopted. Minutes of sub-committee also discussed and adopted. It was resolved, upon the recommendation of this committee, that Mr. W. H. Spivey, of Huddersfield, be appointed collector for the Treasurer's Scheme.

The President informed the Council of the death of Mrs. Forder, and it was unanimously resolved: "That this Executive desires to express its deep sympathy with the Hon. Secretary, Mr. R. Forder, in his sad bereavement."

The President reported that the *Secular Almanack* was now issued, and hoped those concerned would push the sale and thus benefit the funds of the Society. He then proceeded to call attention to the financial condition of the Society. In the course of his remarks he reported upon the business transacted at the recent General Meeting of the Secular Society, Limited, and indicated how it might be possible for the new Society to assist the N. S. S. to reduce its present expenditure without interfering with its present office arrangements, and asked for other suggestions to reach him by next meeting, when the matter would be again discussed.

The Secretary reported that all arrangements were complete for the Society's annual dinner at the Holborn Restaurant on Monday, Jan. 9, 1899.

Mr. Foote reported his attendance at the meetings called by the Free Press Defence Committee.

Other minor matters of business were considered, and the meeting adjourned until Dec. 22.

EDITH M. VANCE, *Secretary*.

FAILURE OF UTOPIA.

THE DEATH OF ICARIA.

ICARIA is dead. The oldest, and for long the most successful, attempt to found a terrestrial Utopia was brought to an end last month, when the Iowa Courts formally decreed the winding-up of the New Icarian community. The Far West has long been, and still remains, the field of many endeavors to carry out the gospel of "liberty, equality, and fraternity" in self-supporting communities; and Brook Farm, the Greeley Colony in Colorado, Riverside, the numerous Phalanx communities, and various others, all bear witness to a vain search for the ideal existence. But Icaria differed materially from any of its rivals. In the reign of Louis Philippe, Etienne Cabet, a friend of Proudhon, attempted to found a model community in France. The Government was actively opposed to the plan, and after a time Cabet resolved to emigrate with his followers to the New World. He bought the old Mormon settlement at Nauvoo, in Illinois, the State Legislature granted him every possible legal facility, and before long he was joined by about two thousand French people. The central ideas of the colony were absolute equality and community of goods. The colonists lived in little houses round the central one, where they all had their meals together. So far as possible, the colonists strove to produce all they required; but twice a year the Directors made all absolutely necessary purchases from the outside world, each member sending in a list of the things he required. The marriage bond was strictly observed, and the life of the people was regulated on a distinctively Christian basis.

For some years, notwithstanding the nominal democratic basis of the colony, Cabet had supreme authority. So long as he remained dictator, all went well. But, after a few years, considerable murmuring arose concerning his autocratic ways. The members insisted that they should have a more real share in the management, and finally Cabet, with a few of his faithful friends, withdrew altogether from the settlement. A little time before this, seeing the headway the individualistic spirit was making in Illinois, Cabet got a considerable number of the colonists to move to Southern Iowa, where they were more out of touch with civilisation. Here they established a big agricultural colony, introducing the careful methods of French culture to the West. They started grape growing, which has since become a considerable industry throughout the State. In Iowa the administration was democratic in fact as well as in name. The community owned all property, dividing it out to each family according to its requirements. All ate at one table, and the care and education of the children was recognised as the duty of the whole people. The popularly-elected officials had no power to do anything beyond what they were directed by the general assembly, and every attempt at self-assertion was carefully suppressed.

The French emigrants, full of their ideals, were more than content to give up their all for the common good; but when their children came in their places the real troubles of the community commenced. The industrious complained that all their energy was absorbed in helping on the idle and shiftless colonists. The young people saw their non-communal neighbors accumulating riches in a few years, while, work as they would, they never could say that anything was theirs. Twelve years ago they again divided, and before long the Old Icarians dissolved, sharing the property among the remaining members. The New Icarians still struggled gallantly to realise their ideal. But internal troubles and jealousies proved too strong, and three years ago all the remaining estate was placed in the hands of a Receiver. Acting under the District Court, he has now divided it, and New Icaria has been formally dissolved.

—*Daily News*.

A Greater Power.

"Now, children," said the Sunday-school teacher of the juvenile class, "our lesson to-day tells of the powers possessed by kings and queens. Can any of you name a still greater power?"

"Yes'm; I can," replied one little fellow.

"What, Willie?" asked the teacher.

"Aces," was the unexpected answer.

BOOK CHAT.

We hear that Mr. W. E. Henley is to contribute the monthly *causerie* to the pages of the *Pall Mall Magazine* during the ensuing year, and that the illustrations will be drawn by Mr. S. H. Sime, the well-known creator of the supernatural cartoons.

Messrs. Harmsworth announce what is practically an *edition-de-luxe* of Sir John Lubbock's Best Hundred Books. Sir John's list is by no means an ideal one; but it is at least useful. The *Daily Mail* advertisement informs us that Sir John's list has won the written approval of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, the Duke of Argyll, etc. "Angels and ministers of grace defend us"! if these gentlemen are the final court of appeal on literary matters.

Baron Corvo's delightfully blasphemous book, *Stories Told Me*, is exciting the bile of the orthodox reviewers. They do not at all relish the Baron poking fun at the Padre Eterno and the other *dramatis personae* of the Christian religion. Some of them even talk about the Baron hurting the feelings of the believer. Bah! "An ounce of civet, good apothecary!"

The unco' guid care a great deal about the feelings of others. We invite these delicate reviewers to glance at a few numbers of the so-called Christian Evidence periodicals, edited by evangelists and other of that ilk, and we venture to say that Baron Corvo's delicate banter will be a positive relief after the Christian garbage.

Talking about blasphemy reminds us how profane are many of the titles of popular books. Here are a few we remember offhand: *God's Gentlemen, God's Fool, If I Were God, The Wheel of God, God's Outcast, God Forsaken, In the Image of God, God and the Ant*, etc.

The principal item in the *Literary Guide* for December is Mr. Gould's interview with Dr. Edward Westermarck, author of the *History of Human Marriage*. Dr. Westermarck's opinions on many men and views are recorded, including Lecky, Buckle, Kidd, Balfour, Tylor, Adam Smith, and Paley. We are glad to note the high praise of Tylor. The other contents of this publication are replete with interest and information. The opening article is by Mr. Charles Watts.

The near approach of the merry celebration of the alleged birthday of the "Man of Sorrows" (not, by the way, our scholarly friend Mr. Satan, who has sorrows of his own) makes Mr. Foote's pamphlet on *Bible and Beer* a topical publication. Our readers might direct the attention of their friends and acquaintances to this booklet at this season of the year with advantage.

Mr. G. L. Mackenzie, the "Laureate of Secularism," deserves well at the hands of Freethinkers. He has devoted his talents to Rationalism for a number of years, without any recognition beyond the satisfaction of having done his best for the cause he loves. Arrangements are now being made for the publication of the best verses of Mr. Mackenzie in volume form. The price will be half-a-crown, and Mr. Forder will be happy to receive the names of any of our readers who wish to be added to the list of subscribers for the forthcoming book.

One result of the Bedford trial is that the pornographic publishers are issuing a number of books ostensibly on the subject of sex inversion. These dealers in garbage know perfectly well that public curiosity has been roused on this subject, and they are meeting a real demand. We put it to our readers whether it is better that the country should be flooded with these filthy works, and a genuine scientific work like that of Dr. Havelock Ellis's should be "snowed under" in the alleged interests of Sweeneyism?

Mister Anderson's subordinates, including, in all probability, Sweeney the Magnificent, are very busy visiting the booksellers' shops seeking for any books of an incriminating nature. It must be a novel experience for booksellers and their assistants to have to continually wait on gentlemen with very large feet, who ask for scientific books, and drop their h's.

A bookselling acquaintance of our own informs us that he was asked lately for Dr. Ellis's "*Pisheology*" of *Sex*. Mister Anderson had better send his boys in blue to the Evening Continuation Classes.

The Bishops and the other illustrious obscure members of the clerical profession are still publishing weekly doses of twaddle in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*. Half-a-column seems

to be the regulation dose. The editor probably thinks that is about enough of the mixture if he wishes to avoid fatal results.

Mr. Sidney Lee's *Life of William Shakespeare* is just published by Smith, Elder, & Co. We mention it hurriedly for the sake of readers who may be anxious to procure a copy of such an important work as soon as possible. It will be noticed at some length in an early number of the *Freethinker*.

SAVED BY A KORAN.

HOW A DERVISH'S HEART WAS PRESERVED FROM THE LANCE OF A LANCER.

AMONG the trophies of the battle of Omdurman now on exhibition at the United Service Institution is a small leather-bound Koran, half pierced by a jagged hole, which was, it is told, the means of saving a Dervish's life.

He carried it in the breast of his jibbeh, and the lance of a trooper of the gallant 21st was stopped by it; but the precious book stuck fast on the lance-point, and was dragged from its owner's breast; surely, the most strangely-captured trophy ever won in battle.

The following is an unauthenticated copy of the letter written by the saved Dervish to his mother. It is sent to us by a correspondent who remembers having read something of the same sort before:—

"To the honored mother of me. Greeting!

"Know ye by these presents (which I nicked them off the bodies of my less fortunate companions) that the tide of death rolled over me at Omdurman and left me scatheless, thanks to Allah and the pious mother whose parting gift to me was a copy of the Koran as bound by the S. P. M. K. for cheap distribution among the poor. Never had it left my bosom (in verity I had forgotten it was there), and when a dog of a pig-sticking infidel rode at me with a lance, and I thought to be speared like an eel of the Nile, Allah was good, and interposed the word of his prophet between me and a short, sharp death. Truly the infidel carried off my book on the point of his lance; but what is a copy of the Koran, 12mo., cloth boards, sprinkled edges, compared with sweet life. And so no more at present, my honored mother, hoping this will find you well as it leaves me at present.—Your living son (praise be to Allah!).

MUSTAPHA.

"P.S.—If you show this letter to the S. P. M. K., they will give you many shekels for it, and print it in tracts for the infidel Christian dogs.

"P.P.S.—The surviving members of my company (they are but few, but Allah is good! great was the loot of them) beg that the S. P. M. K. will send them each a copy of the Koran—one man one book. If out of stock, try small dictionaries."

—"*Star*" (London.)

SMOKED MISSIONARY.

A CORRESPONDENT sends us the following from Egremont Cheshire: "I was told of an amusing incident which occurred here a few days ago. Some wag had pasted on a wall in one of the main thoroughfares the cover of *Harmsworth's Magazine*, having on it the bust of a smiling black girl, and at the bottom of it the following: 'Pleased.—Just had good fed missionlilly for dinner. Bolly good "chop" missionlilly, only smell of brimstone.'

"Two gentlemen stopped to read it, and at the same time came up a clerk employed in a Liverpool office, the self-elected detective to a Bowling Club, of which he is a member, for the purpose of seeing whether any of the members go anywhere else to get their evening drinks instead of spending the money in the club, and is also a great advocate of 'Ritualistic candle-shows,' by which he has been dubbed some very funny names, and among them 'Tallow Jack' and 'Candle Jack.' Seeing us reading, he stopped also, and, after reading it, took out his knife, and, suiting the action to the words, 'I'm d—d if I'm going to see my religion insulted in this fashion,' cut off the (to him) objectionable description. The roars of laughter that followed this from those standing by is beyond description, and I think 'Candle Jack' felt rather ashamed he had made such an ass of himself.

"This incident, since I heard it, has set me thinking. I know nothing of anatomy, nor of any of the sciences under or by which the question can be answered. The thought which occurred to me is this: Since sky-pilots now, and have for some time, ceased to preach 'Hell-Fire and Brimstone,' is it possible, as they, as it were, bottle-up this 'brimstone' in themselves, for diners off 'missionlilly' to smell the brimstone, particularly if the cut is from that part where, in ordinary persons, the brain is usually situated? I ask for light—I am a smoker—and don't ask for the orthodox fire; 'it tastes the mouth.'"

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, G. W. Foote, "John Burns, Price Hughes, Sunday Concerts, and Sabbatarian Bigotry."

BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 8.30, A Concert.

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7, Entertainment and Dance.

WEST LONDON BRANCH (15 Edgware-road): December 8, at 8.15, Chilperic Edwards, "The Book of Jonah in the Light of the Higher Criticism."

EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Bow Vestry Hall, Bow-road, E.): 7, E. J. Gould, "The Day of Judgment."

KINGSLAND (Ridley-road): 12, Meeting at the Bradlaugh Club.

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road, S.E.): 11.15, Discussion on "Buddhism"; 7, J. Clarke, M.A., "An Ethical View of God and Christ."

WEST LONDON SECULAR CLUB (15 Edgware-road): Every evening 7-10.50.

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall): 11, J. M. Robertson, "The Ethic of the Intellectual Life."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, Mr. Marriott, "Socialism, Secularism, and the Reformation."

DEPTFORD (Broadway): 6.30, R. P. Edwards and G. James.

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH (Bristol-street Board-school): E. J. Sale—11 "A Secularist's View of the Bible"; 7, "Did God Make Man, or did Man Make God?"

BLACKBURN (Power-loom Weavers' Large Room, Clayton-street): December 5, at 7.30, C. Cohen, "Substitutes for Religion." December 6, at 7.30, C. Cohen, "Christianity and the Jews."

BRADFORD (Oddfellows' Hall): 7, H. Smith, "The Ruins in the Soudan."

CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school; 7, R. Forder, "Historical Christianity."

CHESTER (Corn Exchange): G. Standing—3, "Am I my Brother's Keeper"; 7, "Christianity and Social Progress."

GLASGOW (Lecture Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 11.30, 2.30, and 6.30, Charles Watts.

LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, H. Percy Ward, "From Wesleyan Pulpit to Secular Platform."

LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, J. Woollett, "An Italian Pessimist, Giacomo Leopardi."

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): C. Cohen—11, "Herbert Spencer: II. Ethics and Economics"; 3, "Why People do Not Attend Church: An Answer to the Bishop of Manchester"; 7, "Religion and Man."

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): E. Evans—3, "Roots, Stems, and Leaves"; 7, "Studies from Nature," with lantern illustrations. Tea at 5.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, Market-place): 7, A Reading on "Materialism."

Lecturers' Engagements.

O. COHEN, 17 Osborne-road, High-road, Leyton—December 4, Manchester; 5 and 6, Blackburn; 7, 8, and 9, Derby; 11, Stockton-on-Tees.

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

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