

The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XVIII.—No. 50.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1898.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE CZAR'S PEACE MESSAGE.

(Concluded from page 770.)

CERTAINLY the Czar would afford us better evidence of his *bona fides* if he treated his own subjects to some of the delicacies in the bill of fare which he has arranged for the rest of Europe. Still, we do not wish to press this point too strongly; for, after all, he may be filled with the best intentions, and may not feel able to effect any great change in the government of Russia. Let us, therefore, assume that he means well, that his proposal is a sincere one, and that the Conference will meet to discuss the policy of gradual, proportional, or some other form of disarmament; and let us see, if we can, what is likely to happen.

First of all, there is the Alsace-Lorraine question. France is always looking eastward to her lost provinces. She means to recover them if she can. One of her distinguished sons has declared that the Frenchman who said aloud that she was yearning to get them back deserved to be shot, and that the Frenchman who did not think so deserved to be hung. Germany, on the other hand, means to keep possession of them while there is a German sword left to fight with, or a drop of German blood left to be shed. To propose disarmament while that open sore is left running is, on the face of it, a wild absurdity. Moreover, there is a smaller Alsace-Lorraine question, so to speak, between most of the other nations. We have not space to particularise, and every well-informed reader can easily fill in the details for himself.

Suppose, for the sake of argument, that all these territorial questions could be laid dormant. How then could a reduction of armaments be decided? No two countries are alike, no two are in the same circumstances; each at the finish would regard itself as the best judge of its necessary strength of army and navy. But suppose the great military powers—Russia, Austria, Germany, France, and perhaps Italy—could miraculously agree to some common ratio of disarmament; what is to prevent them from spending all the money they thus saved on battleships? And how would that serve the turn of Great Britain? Suppose the other powers called upon England to make a reduction in *her* military forces; would she not reply that her army is a kind of imperial police, scattered all over the world, that she could not possibly collect it all together for purposes of offence, and that, if she could do so, it is not large enough for aggression against any European power which raises soldiers by the hundred thousand through the conscription? Suppose the military powers then told her that she, as the great naval power, should reduce the number of her warships; would she not reply that a navy is more a defensive than an offensive weapon, and that *her* navy is required to defend her vast empire scattered all over the globe, and to protect the mighty commerce upon which her very existence depends? And if Russia, for instance, were to say that this answer would not do, might not England turn upon her and say: "Well, if it comes to that, what do you want any battleships at all for? What colonies or dependencies have you to reach by sea? Is not every single ironclad you buy or build quite superfluous from any peaceful point of view? Is it not really a menace, and nothing but a menace, to other nations?" And what answer could Russia make to that?

It appears to us that the Czar approaches this problem from the wrong side—the impracticable side. No man is

able to conceive how partial disarmament could be brought about in the present state of international politics. Nor would a reduction in the strength of armies and navies prevent nations from fighting if they wanted to; on the contrary, there is a certain measure of safety in armies and navies being as large as possible, and in war being as destructive as possible, for the more costly and deadly war becomes the less likelihood there is of its breaking out, as every government is more and more afraid to begin.

Let us take an illustration. Two men, who hate or mistrust each other, live in neighboring houses. One keeps six revolvers, the other five. Presently a third man comes along and proposes a conference on disarmament. Finally an agreement is arrived at. The man who kept six revolvers will henceforth keep four, and the man who kept five revolvers will henceforth keep three. "See what they save in revolvers!" you exclaim. Yes, but they can still shoot each other if they feel disposed. Would it not be better if you could get the two men to associate a little and try to understand each other a bit? Better still if they could be got to trade with each other and profit by each other? Better even than that if one's son got married to the other's daughter? In the course of time friendship would take the place of hostility, and the revolver question would settle itself.

In our judgment the right side to approach the problem which the Czar places before Europe is not that of disarmament, but that of arbitration. This is practicable; it is also consonant with what we know of social evolution.

Look at the back of a frock coat, and you will see two buttons at the bottom of the waist. They are no particular ornament, only we are accustomed to having them there. Nor are they of any particular use. They are relics of an older fashion. Those buttons helped to support a gentleman's belt and keep it in place. From the belt hung a sword. Every gentleman wore one. And his sword-arm had always to be kept free. That is why he took a lady on his left arm. It was not because she was a little nearer his heart in that position. The reason was not poetic or fantastic, but severely practical.

Gentlemen do not wear swords now. They are not necessary. Wrongs that were redressed, and insults that were avenged, by the sword are now carried before tribunals of justice. Regular fighting between individuals has ceased. Duels, at least in England, are penalised. To kill a man in one would be murder. The law covers all citizens with its protection; and, on the other hand, it forbids them to resort to violence against each other.

Why should not the disputes of nations be adjudicated upon in the same way? Why should there not be an international tribunal as well as national tribunals? Why should nations fight any more than citizens? Why should not evidence and argument be presented at the seat of justice? Why should right and wrong continue to be decided by bloodshed and mutual slaughter? A nation's honor is not wounded by the decisions of an acknowledged tribunal; but every victory in war leaves behind it a rankling hatred in the heart of the vanquished.

An international tribunal cannot, of course, be established at once. But every civilised nation may work towards it, under the inspiration of its sanest judgment and noblest desires. And the road to it is arbitration. Whenever a quarrel between two states is settled in this way, a certain step is taken on the path to ultimate peace. Naturally the smaller disputes will have to be arbitrated upon first; but each case is a wholesome precedent, and the larger

disputes would take their turn in time. And with the gradual progress of arbitration there would be an inevitable, because really possible, reduction in the fighting strength of all nations; until at last there would be but one army and navy, at the service of the one supreme court of the world, acting as a kind of international police.

With regard to arbitration, England has a better record than that of Russia. She has really been the pioneer in this direction. Much virulent nonsense has been written about the famous *Alabama* case. But the compensation money was paid by England, and she could afford to forget it. On the whole it was a remarkably good investment. A grave dispute between two great nations was settled by the payment of what, after all, was a comparatively trifling sum by the one who was adjudged to be in the wrong. Surely that was infinitely better than spending a hundred times as much on war, which would have involved great slaughter and destruction, and must have left a legacy of bitter ill-will, however it ended.

We hope this side of the problem will not be ignored by the Conference which is to assemble at the Czar's invitation. There is no allusion to it in his manifesto, but that may not prevent its discussion. In any case, we are glad that the Conference will meet. Its deliberations will certainly set the people of Europe thinking. The problem of peace will be pressed upon their attention. And this is a clear gain. It is a great advantage to any question to be put prominently before the public mind. It becomes the subject of unlimited talk, newspaper articles and reports are devoted to it, and books are written round it; and amongst all the mass of words some grains of reason will appear to enrich the world. Nor is this all. The Czar's manifesto is a striking admission that something must be done to arrest the march of Europe towards general bankruptcy. It is also a hint that, if governments do nothing, the people may be goaded into flinging off their burdens unceremoniously.

G. W. FOOTE.

NATURAL LAW: ITS MEANINGS.

At one of my recent lectures in Sheffield a young, intelligent Unitarian Christian was very anxious that the term "Natural Law" should be properly understood. In his opinion, no law could exist without a lawgiver; therefore, the fact of there being natural laws was evidence to him of the existence of God. After the lecture several friends asked me to write an article upon the subject for the *Freethinker*, and to include in it the principal points of my reply to my Unitarian opponent; therefore, I now proceed to explain what I understand to be the meaning of the phrase, "Natural Law." Here let me say that, according to my view, all that is natural. The term "supernatural" conveys to my mind no idea whatever. I regard all phenomena as belonging to the one known existence, and therefore all our knowledge is purely phenomenal. Of course, with the progress of science and other sources of information, we may learn more of phenomena than we know at present. Still, it will be phenomena; I don't pretend to have any knowledge of "something" behind, or separate from, that which my senses cognise. Granted that in the future the human race may receive new revelations; they will be natural, and made known through natural channels, and consequently such revelations will only be an extension of human knowledge of the phenomena of nature, and not the presentation of any outside elements. In other words, it will be an extended view of Nature herself, and a further experience of her forces and capabilities.

The popular error among theologians as to natural law is, that it is something superimposed upon things from without, instead of which it is but a condition of their existence. These persons seem to suppose that the laws of the universe are a species of natural legislation, like the Acts of Parliament upon our statute-books; that, as there are laws, these must have been originated by some special power, and that they have to be continually enforced. This, in my opinion, is not so. The laws of the universe are not made—in fact, they are not entities at all; they have no actual existence, but are simply the conditions under which things have their being. They

are part and parcel with the things themselves, and often the object is known only through the operation of the law. Most of the laws of nature are, to people in general, simply as orders of antecedence or sequence. By the impartial student of science it is observed that definite results always follow particular causes, and hence a certainty that such will invariably happen becomes a fixed idea in the human mind. In truth, paradoxical as it may seem, there is a tendency in this direction to increase the number of fixed laws, and discover a *nexus* between events that have no necessary connection. This only tends to prove that in loose thinking, or in non-thinking, the human mind is likely to fly to errors at either pole, or at the two opposite poles at the same time. For instance, a man will believe, as the Bible states, that an iron axe could swim, that a human being could exist for three days in the alimentary canal of a whale, and that a thick wall came down at the sound of a trumpet, despite the natural laws which must in these cases have been violated or abrogated; and yet the same mind will trace a cause and effect in a hundred little events in life, and thus fancy that he reaches a law where none exists.

A law may be known, whilst its cause—that is, that form of force upon which it depends—is unknown. In this case, the business of science is to pursue investigation, so as, if possible, to bring to light the hidden spring which gives rise to the law. We call an observed order of antecedence and sequence a law, and we conclude it is to be fixed after it has been seen in operation thousands of times, with never-varying regularity, even though we may be quite ignorant of the force to which it owes its existence. And we never expect that any other result than the one with which we are perfectly familiar will arise. In fact, did any other sequence follow, we should at once conclude that a new factor had been introduced. Suppose we saw a heavy weight suspended in mid-air in a room, apparently in defiance of the laws of gravity, it would never occur to any rational being that gravitation had ceased to operate, or that the particular object had been removed from its influence; but the conclusion at once arrived at by a sudden impulse, without any reflection whatever, would be that some new force—it might be unseen by the bystanders—was playing a part. Hence the human mind reaches the idea of the fixity of the law in all matters of which we have every day experience, as no suspension or diminution of the powers of these laws can be imagined possible.

The business of science is to trace, not simply the order of events, but the cause of such order; to learn what is the exact nature of the force on which the law depends, which thus manifests itself in the antecedence and sequence. The discovery of Kepler's three laws was a most important fact in the history of astronomy; but it was by no means so valuable as the theory of gravitation, brought to light by Newton, for the reason that the latter furnished the key wherewith to unlock the former. The fact involved in the celebrated laws was made known by Kepler; the cause of it was left to Newton to discover. So with regard to many other phenomena in nature. Modern science has not simply demonstrated the existence of the law, but it has discovered, in many instances, the force upon which the law depends. We are thus indebted to the Secular Providence for our knowledge of the potency and grandeur of Nature, and also for the manifold advantages she is ever bestowing upon those who study her resources and follow her beneficent promptings. "Nature never did deceive the heart that loved her."

Natural law also pertains to the actions of men, although in the field of human conduct the forces in operation are somewhat complex; but that does not alter the fact of the universality of law. From what we know of the relationship of cause and effect, we can fairly estimate the results of certain actions. If a man during his youth leads "a fast life," he will be sure to pay the penalty in after years. Drunkenness, dishonesty, lying, and neglect of home will surely be followed by injurious consequences, which no belief in Christ can avert. Virtue and vice are not mere accidents of the time, but are as much the result of natural law as the falling of a stone or the growth of a flower. Of course it is not here meant that the same law applies to moral actions which controls the movement of the stone or the development of the flower. But in each case it is law, nevertheless. Hence, as Secularists, we do not look for a supernatural cure for vice. When a man feels the pangs

of some physical malady, he might be sure that there is some derangement in the organ in which it occurs, and if he is wise, in addition to applying a remedy, he will endeavor to discover the cause of the complaint, so as to avoid, as far as possible, the malady in the future. Now the same course should be taken with moral diseases, which almost invariably arise from a morbid condition of the brain, or a defective environment. The physical and moral qualities are more closely connected than is generally supposed, and the influence of the one upon the other is, beyond all doubt, very great. Man's mental and moral natures both depend upon material organs, and are therefore influenced by physical forces; and it is not at all unusual for the same causes that generate disease to produce crime. The Secularist recognises these important facts, and, expecting no supernatural help, he goes earnestly to work, and by material means alone he strives to remedy whatever drawbacks they are from which he is suffering. Believing that whatever happens occurs in accordance with some natural law, he deems it his business to try to ascertain what that law is, that he may use his knowledge for some practical and useful purpose. Remind the devout orthodox Christian that people die of starvation and cold; that infants are destroyed by hundreds; that frequently suicide is preferred to the pangs of poverty; that vice often rides in gorgeous carriages; that virtue pines neglected and uncared for; that the innocent suffer and the guilty escape. He will reply:—There is another world, where all this will be set right. But, to the Secularist, these misfortunes are terrible evils, to be remedied as much as possible in this world. I gladly acknowledge that, after centuries of apathy and reliance upon some supposed supernatural power, some of the more intelligent of professed Christians see the force of the Secularists' position, and are adopting natural means to secure the moral and social regeneration of society. Hence, within the Church, reliance upon natural law has taken the place of dependence upon a supernatural power.

It is often asked, How did natural laws originate? And, Are the laws of the universe eternal? The correct answer appears to me to be this: The origin of the laws of nature is really the origin of nature herself, and upon that science is silent. Personally, I have no idea of any origination in the matter. It is impossible for me to think of a time when there was no time, and a place where there was no place. If, however, our orthodox opponents can fix a period to their own satisfaction when they imagine the universe originated, they can put down the origin of some of nature's laws to that date. I say "some," not all, inasmuch as the things in which the laws inhere had a beginning. But the origin of parts of what now constitute the universe must not be confounded with the universe itself. Then it is asked, Who made the laws? This question is based upon the error already noticed, that laws are things superimposed upon other things; which they are not. The question, therefore, Who made them? is resolved into the query, Who made the things themselves? A reply has been given to this, and it only remains to be said that the method, not the cause, of the universe is the business of all scientific discovery and investigation.

CHARLES WATTS.

A FRESH PLEA FOR THEISM.

(Concluded from page 771.)

IN putting in a plea for mind as the cause of universal evolution Dr. Keeling not only advances a proposition on behalf of which no evidence has been offered, but he advances a thesis entirely at variance with the whole testimony of science. In the first place, mind as a metaphysical entity is unknown; it is always found in connection with a specialised structure, its efficiency can be shown to vary with the condition of that structure, and it remains for those who believe it to be independent of these conditions to advance positive and definite proof of their contention. And not only is mind always and only found in connection with a specialised nerve structure, but it appears as a comparatively late product in the history of evolution; and it is simply foreign to the evolutionary philosophy to imagine a highly-specialised intelligence such as man possesses to be at the base of evolution instead

of the apex. Evolution shows the simplest forces giving rise to complex results, these in turn giving rise to more complex results, and so on in a series continually increasing in complexity.

Secondly, far from mind acting as a "true cause," in the sense defined by the author—*i.e.*, "independent of, and prior to, its effect," it is one of the most dependent of phenomena. To quote Dr. Maudsley: "Instead of mind being, as assumed, a wondrous spiritual entity, the independent source of all power and self-sufficient cause of all causes, an honest observation proves incontestably that it is the most dependent of all the natural forces. It is the highest development of force, and to its existence all the lower natural forces are indispensably requisite.....To deal with mind as a force in nature apart from the consideration of the matter through the changes of which it is manifested is truly no less vain and absurd than it would confessedly be to attempt to handle electricity and gravitation as forces apart from the changes in matter by which alone we know them."*

And, finally, to accept the position laid down by Dr. Keeling is not to explain the phenomena of mind, but to surrender all possibility of explanation. If intelligence is to be explained, it must be done in terms of that which is not intelligence, for one cannot explain a thing in terms of itself; and if it be an ultimate force, any such merging of it in a wider conception is obviously impossible. So that once more the author is on the horns of a dilemma. If it is impossible to accept an Atheistic view of evolution because it does not explain the phenomena of intelligence, Dr. Keeling's position is equally unsatisfactory, since, mind being an ultimate, it is impossible to merge it in something else; while if, on the contrary, his theory is accepted, the objection urged against Materialism loses all its force. Personally, I think that not only does Materialism, on the lines indicated in my previous article, afford the most satisfactory explanation of the phenomena of mind, but it is the only one that can lay claim to being a genuine explanation in the scientific sense of the term, the Theistic explanation (so-called) being merely a phrase used as a cloak for absence of knowledge rather than a symbol representing its possession.

I have dwelt at considerable length on these points, because, to my mind, they contain the essence of Dr. Keeling's position. The remainder of the objections I have to urge come under the head of verbal fallacies, rather than aught else, although some of them are extremely important in their way. I will specify briefly the most important.

In criticising a conception of evolution that excludes a controlling intelligence, Dr. Keeling drops into a very characteristic Theistic error. Chance and law are everywhere used as antithetical terms, as in the following passages: "The unceasing play of energy and matter leads to results which cannot be attributed to chance.....From the first we ruled out chance; order and law are everywhere." Common as this antithesis is, even with some of our greatest writers, it is an utterly indefensible one. Chance is not a thing or a process to be ruled out as one might dismiss natural selection, or the transmission of acquired characters. It is a negative, not a positive term. To say that a thing occurs by chance is merely a popular way of saying that we are ignorant of the causes that produced it. It connotes the absence of knowledge, not the perception of a process. Chance is not the opposite of law, but simply a statement that we do not know the law.

Indeed, in strict accuracy, there is no antithesis whatever to the scientific conception of law. A scientific law is merely a summary of the observed sequence of phenomena, and even if we conceive that order to be different to what it is, the order of its occurrence would still be the law of its existence, and consequently it is a case of either knowing the law or not knowing it; but there is no such thing as the antithesis set up by Dr. Keeling. The confusion is clearly due to the importation into the region of science of the social sense of law as a regulative power. In this case there is an antithesis in the shape of anarchy. In science, however, while the same word is retained, it is used in an entirely different sense.

A similar fallacy is indulged in by the use made of the term automatic (p. 17). "If they (the results of the ceaseless action of material forces) were automatic," says

* *The Physiology of Mind*, pp. 125-6.

the writer, "I must ask you for the author of the mechanism." Here there is clearly a play upon a word. The very meaning of the term automatic applied by the evolutionist to the universe is to exclude the element of consciousness, and, therefore, to assume that, because the word "automatic" applied to a piece of machinery implies an intelligent origin, it must carry the same implication when applied to the universe is to convert a weakness of language into a necessity of existence.

But Dr. Keeling would argue (pp. 18-34-35) that the case for an intelligent origin of the universe is based not merely upon the perception of a sequence, but upon the further perception that there is a unity running through all, the same causes always producing the same effects when a different condition of things might have existed. To which the reply may be made that if existence be granted—and whatever the name given to it matters little—the persistence of the same properties under identical conditions follows as a logical necessity. If matter and energy be all-in-all, then any alteration of their method of manifestation is unthinkable. The only changes conceivable are due to different combinations. Only on the supposition of there existing some power external to matter and energy, capable of modifying or suspending their normal manner of operation, is any alteration in a fixed and definite order possible; so that one may reverse the argument and say that an unconscious universe must be an orderly universe—in the sense of the same causes always producing the same effects, while the introduction of a creative and governing intelligence must always make that order a matter of more or less uncertainty. Once we admit the probability of an external controlling intelligence, and the most certain scientific generalisation must always have attached to it the saving clause: "If the controlling intelligence does not see fit to prevent natural forces producing their normal result."

There are several other verbal fallacies that I had marked down for criticism, but want of space prevents my dealing with them at any length. I may, however, point out one or two, such as "Evolution cannot evolve the forces upon which the universe depends," as though the universe were one thing and the forces another. The universe includes all forces, and therefore cannot depend upon any. Again, to make the Materialist assert that evolution is "a form of physical energy" is to put words into his mouth which no thoughtful Materialist would dream of using. The same idea is carried further in the sentence, "Evolution is itself a thing to be accounted for, and needs a cause." To a right conception of nature evolution is not a thing, but the name given to a process; it needs no accounting for, in the sense of showing how it began, since a beginning of evolution is inconceivable. If evolution be true, it is true of all existence and through all time. To ask for a beginning to evolution is to ask for a beginning of existence, and I do not think Dr. Keeling would go so far as that. All that is necessary to prove the validity of the law of evolution is to show that it holds good of natural processes in the same sense that the law of gravitation holds good of matter in the mass, or the conservation of energy holds good of the transformation of forces.

There is just one more point I have to raise before closing this criticism. Dr. Keeling sees clearly enough that man's religious beliefs are selected for him rather than by him. They are determined far more by domestic and social influences than by deliberate choice. He says:—

"One's respect for creeds and beliefs is diminished when one comes to think how, for the most part, they are determined. What a man believes depends far more on the country and race to which he belongs, on the times in which he lives, on parentage, training, temperament, and individual experience of life, than on any process of reasoning. He is a Christian, Mohammedan, Buddhist, or worshipper of sticks and stones, because he belongs to this or that country and people.....They hold their creed.....just as they put on the same clothes, live in the same house, or adopt the same pursuits and habits as their neighbors."

All this is true enough, and well enough said; but it has a far wider application than the writer imagines; for not only is this generalisation true of those who accept without reservation the creed of their "forebears," it is also true of those who reject portions, and still hold certain beliefs which have really no better warranty for their existence. There seems to me little doubt that the assumption that there is a

divine intelligence is just a survival of the belief which clothed that intelligence with hands and feet and all the organs of a human being. And the later view is no more reasonable than the earlier one. It is just as reasonable to assume that God Almighty possesses all the physical organs of a man as it is to assume that he resembles man only in the possession of intelligence. Intelligence is as peculiar to the animal world as organisation; and the retention of the first, while rejecting the second, is merely a halting step in the process of giving up both.

It is to me indisputable that no scientific man, educated apart from the religious beliefs around him, would find an intelligent author of the universe as the result of his scientific studies. Theism is not a conception derived from the study of nature as pursued in our scientific workshops, but an idea imported from without; and the fact that scientists, in spite of early training and social environment, have given up so many of their religious beliefs is really a strong argument in favor of the logical surrender of the whole. Dr. Keeling himself has surrendered much, and his book shows a strong sympathy with such as have rejected more, as well as a really sincere desire to discover how far his opinions at present are logically sound, and to give up still more if necessary. The conditions under which his book is printed and circulated are ample evidence of this. Still, I cannot view his Theistic ideas as being anything else than the remnants of a belief the grosser forms of which he has long outgrown. We are all of us children of our parents, and none give up their beliefs in a body. Man's religions neither burst like bubbles, nor depart like conquered soldiers vacating an enemy's country. Rather do they melt like heavy vapors before a gentle breeze, or recede before advancing knowledge as imperceptibly as darkness gives way to dawn. It is sometimes even the mark of a gentle and lovable nature that the past be not broken with too hastily or too rudely. But all who think think to surrender as well as to accept. Man has, in the course of his religious development, often at the cost of much pain and tribulation, given up much. Modern Theism, strong only because of its vagueness, is the last refuge. Here religion makes its last stand; and even here it is only a question of time for this belief to travel the same path and share the same fate that has already overtaken the beliefs surrendered by man on his march towards a truer conception of things. C. COHEN.

CIVILISING THE SOUDANESE.

THE British public is always open to appeals. The more remote the object, the greater the response. National charity is chiefly of the carrier-pigeon variety. Let loose at the Mansion-House or Exeter Hall, it has little liking for home. Its most congenial flights are those which it makes far a-field. When occasionally it becomes, in the language of Columbarians, a "homer," it is nearly fagged out. It returns droopingly to its native isle, and awaits with anxiety the first excuse for another and, if possible, a wider and wilder flight.

The recent appeal to John Bull by one of his military employees is worthy of note only for one or two accidental features. In this case, as in others, the object of the appeal being far away, and in its details sufficiently indefinite, John Bull has made the usual handsome response. He understands that a memorial college, or something of the sort, is proposed to be founded where Gordon went, and where the Sirdar has followed. That is enough for him. In an indistinct way he understands that the memorial is to be of an educational character. He has now an overpowering veneration for anything educational, after having allowed himself to fall far in the rear of other countries in actual educational achievements.

A greater consideration, however, than the precise object of the college is the fact that it is to be dedicated to the memory of Gordon. And a still more effective motive power to subscribing is the Sirdar-mania, which, somehow or other, has taken possession of John Bull and caused a temporary aberration of intellect.

It would puzzle him—even under mild cross-examination—to say why he has made so much fuss over Kitchener, and the military expedition which did *not* happen to fail. Was it, after all, really such an extraordinary thing that

the savage, though brave, Dervishes were wiped out with slight loss to the assailants? Considering all the preparations made, and the irresistible forces of modern warfare brought to bear, could any other result have been anticipated? John pays dearly enough for the military-services he requires. Why so much delighted surprise when, upon a trifling test, this highly-priced service turns out to be fairly efficient?

We must not, of course, fail to recognise the "religious" sentiment underlying a considerable part of the response to the appeal. Christian Gordon has been avenged, and Christian Gordon's memory must be tangibly perpetuated. Gordon had many great and good points. Yet it is not to be doubted that much of the extravagant eulogy bestowed upon him is due solely to his excessive, almost painful, piety, and to that proselytising spirit which Exeter Hall so much admires. How he reconciled the duties of his military office with the teachings of the so-called "Gospel of Peace" is a problem not easily solved. It must be one of special interest and of anxious thought to the Christian sect who call themselves the Society of Friends.

Lord Kitchener is evidently much more of the soldier than the gossamer, and seems not to have laid sufficient stress on the purely Christian aspect of the Memorial to satisfy all the subscribers. This note of dissatisfaction from the ultra-pious, who would label everything with the name of "Christian," no matter what secular purpose it was intended to serve, has drawn from the *Times* a very remarkable comment. That staid and orthodox sheet says: "There is no doubt that Gordon had abundance of simple faith, but he also had abundance of saving common sense, and swift practical decision. Simple faith in one's own religion does not require one to dream of Utopia, or to be always forcing a mechanical acceptance of the formulas of one's creed upon others." The Sirdar's proposal has served a useful end, if only in being the means of inducing the *Times* to deliver itself of so liberal and rational a sentiment.

The Church Missionary Society, one is thankful to note, sees its way to derive benefit from the £100,000 outlay. It is a peculiarity of Christian organisations that, when there is any money about, they do their best to find means of drawing some of it into their own coffers. At present the Church Missionary Society contents itself with discovering in the establishment of the Memorial "a great possibility of new missionary enterprise." The Society hopes to carry amongst the population of the Soudan the "blessings of English medical skill, and thereby open a door for a beginning in the great work of spreading among them the benefits of the Christian religion."

The Soudanese would probably prefer to have whatever benefits may be derived from English medical skill, and leave the blessings of the Christian religion alone. The Church Missionary Society, however, can be trusted to know how to gild the pious pill, and later on we may expect to have glowing accounts of the multitude of converts who have been won over to the faith.

As to the proposal of the Sirdar generally, there is probably a great deal of force in the observation that "those who have conquered are called upon to civilise." But is there not a great deal of civilising needed very much nearer home?

FRANCIS NEALE.

3,170,193.

THE figures make me melancholy. I look vacantly round the room, but the only thing which meets my eye with any appropriateness is a picture of mad Ophelia, weaving fantastic garlands of "crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples." I gaze from the window, but no knight-errant appears, and no Messiah comes in sight. I rove in imagination over all England, and wonder how many people feel any concern about the whole thing.

Of course, I am talking in riddles, and it is time to explain. This number—consider it well—3,170,193 represents the attendance of children at the Nonconformist Sunday-schools. The Church of England and the Roman Catholics have other hosts of little recruits, but it will be enough to study the 3,170,193. I fear there is little doubt as to the general correctness of the statistics. Last week a demonstration, organised by the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches, was held at the City Temple,

London. Dr. Clifford occupied the chair. He rolled out the figures triumphantly, like a herald who proclaims the style and title of a victor-king. The Free Churches (Wesleyans, Congregationalists, Baptists, etc.) included 1,841,767 members; the worshippers in their chapels made an army of 7,000,000; their property was worth £50,000,000; and they were training 3,170,193 children and young people in their Sunday-schools. Members, buildings, children—these are the strong supports of any faith, religious or secular. So far as material power goes, the Christians sit in the seats of the mighty.

Now, I do not envy the Christians their possessions, nor shall I, like Satan, "grin horribly a ghastly smile" as I regard their happy chapels and their ecstatic tea-meetings. In a certain sense, I admire it all; for all this success means perseverance, pluck, and grit. At any rate, the pluck and the grit were in the fathers of Nonconformity, who neither trembled at bishops nor bowed to kings, nor quailed at the rattle of manacles. There must be still a certain amount of spirit and energy in the midst of the Dissenting bodies, or else 7,000,000 people would not even pretend to listen to chapel-sermons on Sundays. And as to the £50,000,000, the Christians are welcome to their own property. Their gospel is intended to encourage the accumulation of property; property is its inspiration, and property is its ideal. Jesus did not say that, but then Jesus was only the Founder, and every orthodoxy smiles at founders. And besides, we have always to deal with the paradox—Ideals attract property, and then property kills the ideals. A man preaches, and suffers for an idea; people crowd about his tomb, and set up a cult in his memory, and endow the cult with all sorts of wealth, and then that very wealth stands as the enemy of the idea. Supposing the Nonconformists of England wanted to change over to a better creed, they must first climb the barrier of the £50,000,000. The chapels and schools form a terrible vested interest, with trust-deeds lurking in every recess, and forbidding the entrance of a newer wisdom.

Nevertheless, in some way or other, it has all got to be done. The £50,000,000 must be dedicated to a nobler purpose, and the trust-deeds must be left to the book-worms, literal and figurative. But how is the change to be brought about? Even the twentieth century cannot work miracles when it comes. The sons and daughters of Freethought must go on writing and speaking and demonstrating; and, little by little, the heavy car will be pushed forward. But I keep turning, as if magnetised, to the 3,170,193. Every Sunday most of these 3,170,193 young people troop to the chambers of obscurantism and receive spiritual food from the priests. Priests! The Dissenters abominate the word! They are always crying out against Ritualism and the High Church! Why speak of priests? Ah, I will not be put off with innocent-looking words. You say the children are taught by "laymen" and by "deacons" and by "ministers." But the priest is there in essence. These men take a book, and they tell out of it to children stories that are not true. They tell to English children a story about the creation of the world in six days, and the story is not true. They tell about Adam and Eve, and the story is not true. They tell about the Fall of Man, and the story is not true. They tell about the Flood, and the story is not true. They tell about the Brazen Serpent, and the story is not true. They tell about Jonah in the fish's alimentary canal, and the story is not true. They tell about the Resurrection of Christ, and the story is not true. I call this priesthood, this taking of a holy book, and investing its statements with an undeserved sanctity and authority. You can call it what you like—education, morality, philanthropy. I call it priestism. It is the essence of priestism to assume a superiority which is not founded on reason. It is the essence of priestism to make assertions that are not founded on living, historical fact. These 3,170,193 children are sitting there every week under a priestly hypnotism. They are made to believe, poor souls, that the waters of the Red Sea stood up like masonry. And, after learning such chaotic doctrine as that, they grow into free and independent electors and ballot-box rulers of the British Empire.

This spectacle of the 3,170,193 children afflicts me.

In the midst of writing this article, I dropped my pen, and took up a small, geographical globe, and called my seven-year old son to me, and told him where primitive man probably first appeared, in Western Asia or Eastern Africa. Then I described the rise of man from brutism,

how our ape-like ancestors chose the more refined mates, and had more refined children; and how they made flint weapons; and how some clever fellow rubbed dry sticks, and made fire; and how the fable of Prometheus, the good giver of fire to mankind, was made by the simple fancy of the early world. All this I said to him in easy words, and with the aid of the map and of pictures. His eyes sparkled with interest, and his cheek flushed; and I know that, should he live to be ninety, he will never believe the Genesis story now that I have once implanted the more rational thought in his mind. On that subject, as on others, he will be a Freethinker. Take note that I have also told him the other story—the romantic history of the rib. Why should not all these other children—these 3,170,193—learn the true history of man, and man's works and genius and development and aspiration? They cannot, because they go to the Free Churches. Free Churches! What a name! Let us call Iago a saint, and the jail a lady's bower, and Popery the health of the human soul!

F. J. GOULD.

ACID DROPS.

THE case against Miss Lyon was withdrawn, and the Croydon magistrates dismissed the case against Mrs. Mills. It is difficult to see what else they could do. This is a Christian country with a State Church, and Parliament opens every day with prayer by the chaplain. How on earth then is it possible to punish people as criminals for practising what is called Christian Science, which simply consists in seeking unto the Lord instead of unto the physicians? The House of Commons pays its praying-machine a regular salary, and is a private praying-machine any worse than a public one? All the clergy of every denomination are really in the same line of business as Mrs. Mills. Of course they won't admit it, but that doesn't alter the fact.

Some pious inhabitants of Birmingham have been complaining in the columns of the *Daily Gazette* of the National Secular Society's announcements outside the Bristol-street Board-schools. "A Native," whose mind is like an oyster's—if an oyster has any mind—expresses horror at the title of a lecture on "Who Made God?" He begs the authorities to stop the display of such "indecent" on the walls of public buildings. He does not explain, however, where the indecency comes in. There are three words in the title he objects to; and we beg to ask him which of them is indecent? It cannot be "who" or "made." Are we to conclude it is "God"?

According to the *Daily Mail*, a certain Spiritualist, named J. F. Hunt, of Biggleswade, has received hundreds of communications from William Shakespeare. He says they will astonish everybody—which is probably true; but he cannot get a publisher to bring them out in print, and his own finances don't warrant such a large expenditure. The *Mail* doesn't seem to attach great importance to these communications. Perhaps it thinks Mr. Hunt has a good cheek to fly at such high game as Shakespeare. Well, the gentlemen who wrote the Bible flew at higher game still. They published communications from God Almighty.

The London *Star* falls foul of the Rev. Robert Linklater, whom it calls a "fossil," although his bigotry is too lively for that cold description. This clergyman objects to the waste of public money on national education, he complains that well-to-do people's children actually attend Board schools, and darkly hints that these schools don't "provide domestic servants." Parson Linklater should go to the heathen as a missionary. He would get plenty of domestic servants then dirt cheap. He would also be free from Board-schools.

The *Tailor and Cutter*, a journal devoted to the sartorial business, advises the practice of prayer. "The cutter," it says, "who prays over his cutting will produce a better coat than he who does not." The Bible is also recommended as "the oldest tailoring book in existence." But what does this mean? We wish the writer would explain. Is it a sly allusion to Jehovah's making a suit of clothes each for Adam and Eve? By the way, that suit was a leather one. Few Bible-readers would like to wear such a rig-out nowadays. Certainly the modern daughters of Eve would put it on the dustbin. Great improvements have been made in the art of tailoring since Jehovah started it near the Garden of Eden.

Father Darmody, discoursing on "The Church and the Serf" at St. Patrick's Church, Wolverhampton had the

effrontery to assert that the Church abolished slavery. As a matter of fact, the Church held slaves itself all through the Middle Ages, and ecclesiastical bodies held serfs in what was practical slavery in France in the days of Voltaire. Clericals run a history of their own, and, like the Bible, it abounds in falsehood and falsification.

The Sirdar's scheme, whatever its merits may be as a civilising project, fails to satisfy the demands of many pious people. They think it should be more distinctly stamped with the cross-mark of Christianity. The Sirdar has put his foot down, and says that the College is to be conducted on purely secular lines, and will have absolutely nothing to do with religious training or religious propaganda. It remains to be seen how far that determination will be carried out. If it can be evaded, it will.

A writer to the *Times* thinks there is something "quite incongruous" about a proposal to found a Gordon Memorial upon a purely secular basis. It ignores the great efficient principle of the man's life, and seems thereby to reflect upon it. Probably so; and hence the correspondent's suggestion that the College should be associated with the Church Missionary Society's work, handing over—though he does not quite say so—some of the funds.

Amongst other letter-writers to the *Times* who are seized with a feverish anxiety to divert the Memorial to religious ends is Mr. B. Baring-Gould. He gives some more or less apocryphal account of an interview on the general question of education with a "most intelligent Hindu judge." The Hindu, it will be noticed, is always "most intelligent" when represented as making some statement which is traitorous to his own faith. This intelligent Hindu judge, being asked whether he would desire the Bible to be employed as a textbook in the schools, "cordially assented, saying that he regarded the Bible as containing the highest code of morals in the world." That native judge is on the right road for promotion.

Another letter-writer, signing himself "A British Officer," observes that charity begins at home. He does not apply the remark to the whole scheme, but to a proposal to collect pennies for the Sirdar's fund from little breakfastless children attending London Board-schools.

The last time Mr. Gladstone saw Dr. Pusey alive was in 1881 at Oxford. "When he went away," Pusey said, "he kissed my hand and knelt down and asked my blessing." Gladstone was then Prime Minister, but Pusey, being a clergyman, belonged to a higher order of beings. He had received the Holy Ghost.

"General" Booth's Central International Trade Department in Fortress-street, Kentish Town, has subsided. We don't mean that it has gone under commercially. The building has sunk eighteen inches, and is still sinking. It has been shored up by order of the County Council. We don't suppose that all the prayers of the whole Salvation Army will lift it half an inch.

Mr. John Price has disappeared from Swadlincote. Heavy defalcations are alleged, and a warrant is out for his arrest. He was closely connected with the local Wesleyan body.

God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. So the poet says, and we cordially agree with him. The bubonic plague is not confined to India. It has broken out in Madagascar, and goodness knows where it will break out next.

Speaking of Madagascar, it is just as well to note how profitable the possession of that island is to France. She sends out plenty of soldiers, but very few colonists; and the poor devils of conscripts who go out there perish like flies. It is reported that 7,000 of them have died for want of quinine. But what does that matter? There is Déroulède, the patriotic poet, at home to cry: "Vive la France! Vive la Gloire!"

Mr. Mallock contributes to the *Nineteenth Century* an article entitled "Does the Church of England Teach Anything?" He adopts some lines of Swinburne applied to the French Republic, and, while observing that they would hardly apply to the land of Dreyfus, says that they might, "when scientific criticism and the mass of scepticism engendered by it has reduced the religions of the Protestant world to chaos some day or other, be not inapplicable to Rome." Mr. Swinburne's poetic interrogation is:—

Who is this that rises red with wounds so splendid,
All her brow and breast made beautiful with scars,
In her eyes a light and fire as of long pain ended,
In her mouth a song of morning stars?

It is, perhaps, a fairly safe prediction that the Church of Rome will survive the mushroom sects by which she is

surrounded. But is it not equally safe to predict that the Church of Rome herself is doomed?

Obituary notices of some dozen clergymen appear in the *Guardian*, and attention has been directed to the longevity disclosed. The list includes rev. gentlemen who died at the ages of 97, 89, 84, 81, 80, 80, and 78. There are, without doubt, some dear, nice old gentlemen in the Church, and one is glad to know that they live so long—if they prefer a lengthened sojourn here below to a speedy flight to the realms of glory. In the instances cited the venerable clerics seem mostly to have lived in pleasant rural places, where it is easy to spend a placid and prolonged existence—especially if deaf and blind to the intellectual agitations and social struggles of the times.

Canon Barnett, parochial clergyman in the East-end, and a warden of Toynbee Hall, proposes to reform cathedrals by making them really national monuments, and he suggests that there should be submitted to the Privy Council proposals "for the better use of the cathedrals." The *St. James's Gazette* observes, in its superior way: "Really, these absurdities cannot be seriously discussed."

As showing that Bishop Warburton was right when he said man "is not a reasoning animal," we commend our readers to the last verse in St. John's Gospel, which says: "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they could be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." This miracle, it will be seen, overshadows all the rest; it is arrant nonsense, and the wonder is that anyone should say he believes it. This silly statement can be tested by a simple arithmetical sum. A rapid speaker utters about 150 words a minute. Jesus is said to have expired on the Cross when about thirty-three years of age; if he had talked and worked night and day, and someone had recorded his history at that rate, how many words should have been written? Some years ago we worked out this sum, and we found that all the words, printed on paper as thin, and type like that of which some Testaments are made, the books could be conveniently packed in a joiner's tool-box.—*Two Worlds*.

The great Louis de Rougemont has turned up in a new avatar. He has just figured on a Spiritualist platform. Being a man of great energy, enterprise, and imagination, he ought to do well in this fresh direction. Hardly any of the professional Spiritualists—mediums or otherwise—could hold a candle to the hero of those marvellous Antipodean adventures.

The dead bodies of the Americans drowned in the *Mohegan* disaster were conveyed across the Atlantic on board the steamship *Marquette*. They were carefully disguised as "machinery," for sailors have a superstitious dread of sailing with a corpse, which they believe is sure to bring some disaster to the ship.

The United States government will have all its work cut out to deal with the Catholic Church and its possessions and privileges in the Philippines. Four great monastic Orders have been the feudal lords, ever since 1565, of lands out there equal in size to the whole of Italy. These Orders have successfully obstructed every effort of the Spanish rulers to ameliorate the wretched condition of the inhabitants. No political officer who made himself distasteful to them could remain long at his post.

We are glad to see the *Daily News* admitting what we have declared all along—namely, that the Dreyfus outrage is a result of clerical intrigues against the French Republic. "In France," our contemporary says, "the shameless persecution of Dreyfus, and the still more infamous persecution of Picquart, are notoriously the result of clerical manœuvres. The origin of the plot is clearly shown by the language of the clerical and military press, which openly demands the revival of the Inquisition for getting rid of Protestants and Jews. It is in the Jesuit colleges that the officers of the general staff are trained, and the miserable Boisdeffre is the creature of Father Dulac."

Here are some significant extracts from Lord E. Fitzmaurice's recent speech to a Liberal meeting at Montrose:—"He had said that the Public Prosecutor in the Stokes trial at Brussels was applauded by the Clerical mob. The unjust verdict of the court was also received with frantic delight by the whole Clerical press of Belgium and foreign countries. And that brought him to what was the most disturbing feature of the European situation, taken as a whole—he meant the activity and the power for harm of the Clerical party in foreign countries generally at the present time. In Belgium they had destroyed the Liberal party, and, in the opinion of well-informed observers, were steadily but surely driving the country to the edge of a revolution. In France the disgraceful proceedings connected with the Dreyfus trial, and the

episodes connected with it, it was notorious were the work of the Clerical party. They used to be told that the Clerical party had learned wisdom by experience, and only desired liberty for others. But they saw, on the contrary, that the ideas of the Middle Ages were being renewed, and the prosecution of Jews and Protestants was being openly advocated in language of shameless violence and scurrility, and already in those circles where the Clerical party was supreme—the upper ranks of the French army—promotion was becoming impossible for anybody not educated in one of the Jesuit colleges. In Austria and Hungary it was the same. The object of the Clerical party there had for years been to make a government, except their own, impossible; to ally themselves with every discontented faction; and to upset one ministry after another, in the hope that, in the resulting confusion, they might themselves obtain the upper hand. And, unfortunately, those efforts had only been too successful. In Austria the Liberal *regime*, which was established in 1868, and under which the country had made such remarkable progress, had fallen; and in Hungary the situation was becoming daily more dangerous, and owing to the same cause. In Italy the Clericals were ready to unite with any party which would work with them against a common enemy, against the free institutions established after the fall of Rome in 1870, and the abolition of the temporal power of the Pope. Their weapons were the same; a spirit of universal distrust, and to inflame every wound in the political system until the Government was discredited and finally upset."

There is trouble at Colchester. The Rev. C. C. Naters, rector of St. James's, has given the School Committee three months' notice to quit the school buildings, which he claims as vested in himself and his churchwardens. He also notifies that he will no longer require the services of the present staff of teachers. They are most efficient, and obtain the highest possible Government grant. But it appears that they have expressed a wish for a little rest on Sundays, and the parson wants them to go on teaching in his Sunday-school. Hence these tears.

Alderman Collings, J.P., senior deacon of Kingston Congregational Church, admits that it suffers under a serious disadvantage. One of the objectionable things in the Church, he says, is bad varnish, which often proves very irritating. When there is an air of drowsiness about the church, and the preacher gets a little prosy, the people drop off to sleep, and on waking find themselves stuck to the pews in most awkward positions, not to mention the spoilt clothes. However, the church is to be renovated, and it is hoped that this defect will be so remedied that the congregation may sleep in peace.

Trained parrots, according to an American paper, are used on German railways to call out the names of stations while the trains stop there. Ecclesiastical opportunities may open out in the future for highly-trained birds. Who knows?

"Heavenly love" was the kind of affection that an Ilchester co-respondent said he had for a married lady. An earthly jury have assessed damages against him.

The coroner at Shoreditch has been asked by a juror if there would be a pub. in the Land of Promise. Apparently Paradise would hold out no promise to that juror in the absence of such an establishment. The coroner declined to express an opinion, Heaven being outside his jurisdiction. The point arose in consequence of a witness stating that the Shoreditch Workhouse was ironically called the "Land of Promise," whereupon the coroner inquired whether there was a public house in the locality of that name.

As to the juror's question, Christ's rather superfluous miracle at Cana of turning water into wine seems to suggest that thirsty angels will be suitably accommodated, whatever happens to folks in the other place.

The following advertisement appears in a Hampshire paper:—

Wanted, in a Church of England family of eight.—A Kitchen Maid, £6 a year (with substantial yearly rise if found honest and hard working). Must be an early riser. Everything found except drink and washing. No fringe. A good Churchwoman. Apply, as soon as possible, as applications may be numerous. Mrs. Davies, the Rectory, Turnbalyrn, S. Wales.

The applications to enter the service of this recklessly liberal Church of England family ought to be, indeed, as the advertisement anticipates, "numerous." It may be hoped, for the sake of the family of eight, that the Rector's stipend is on a more generous scale. His Bishop's income is sure to be.

The biggest Bible in the world in regard to dimensions and measurement is, it is said, over two hundred years old, and belongs to a lady residing in Manchester. It would

take a much bigger volume to satisfactorily explain what the smallest printed Bible really intends to teach.

Archdeacon Sinclair laments that "the times are out of joint, and evils are multiplied all round about us to a degree that is without precedent or parallel. The Sceptic laughs at the Christian belief, and cries out to us that we ought to be content with nothing less than knowledge. But Christ is enough for us." Yes, Christ is better than any amount of knowledge. Choose between them: the two do not go very well together.

The Bishop of Lahore, who was seized with paralysis on Sunday, November 27, during a service in the Cathedral, died on the following Friday. Of course there is no moral. The moral would only arise if a Secular lecturer were stricken down on a Secular platform.

The Czar has shown just a little mercy to the Spirit Wrestlers, who are so opposed to all war that they refuse to perform military service. Instead of being harried at home, they have now permission to leave Russia. Some thousands of them are to be personally conducted to Canada by Count Serge Tolstoi, son of the great writer, and at the expense of the Society of Friends. They will find any part of the British Empire much better to live in than Holy Russia, in spite of the fine humanitarian sentiments of the Czar's peace message to Europe.

The Church Missionary Society's expenditure is estimated at £322,000 for the year ending March 31 next. And all this for converting the heathen—and finding berths for an army of clerics.

The Rev. Alfred Gurney, vicar of St. Barnabas, Pimlico, has recently died. He was the author of *Our Catholic Inheritance in the Larger Hope*. His inheritance on earth was pretty comfortable, for the *Manchester Guardian* says he died "a master of great wealth." His "larger hope" must have embraced a specially-fine mansion in the skies. As a rich man, he seems to have faced the difficulty of getting into heaven with comparative composure.

An official statement as to the finances of the Vatican describes as an exaggeration the rumor that the Holy See holds in deposit with the chief continental banks from £4,000,000 to £5,000,000. Only an exaggeration! Lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, because you never know when you may need them.

The Rev. B. Senior is one of the white-chokered gentry who interest themselves in temperance work, and do more harm than good. He has been visiting thirty-two public-houses in Bradford. He is careful to say that he did not go as a spy. He simply desired to see the landlords and landladies "to have a quiet conversation with them on spiritual matters." As regards things "spiritual," he certainly went to the right shops. He went as "the representative of the Master," and talked about the Bible, which happens not to be on the teetotal side at all.

This clerical busybody says that he had previously induced three publicans to give up their business owing to the religious convictions he had implanted. We don't dispute his word that these publicans gave up their business. What we want to know is, had they "made their pile," and how much did they receive from the incoming tenants?

Sir James Carmichael, who was for some years private secretary to Mr. Gladstone, has been delivering an interesting lecture on the contents of the Premier's post-bag. One correspondent was a clergyman who signed himself "A Chosen Minister of Christ," and warned Mr. Gladstone to flee from the wrath to come if it was not too late, and stating that he was the instrument of Beelzebub to lead the people astray into Socialistic ways. An old Welsh woman, with much better feeling, sent Mr. Gladstone a ridiculous present. It was a roll of flannel, which she said had been soaked with medicine, and had given great relief to her husband, who was now dead—and she thought Mr. Gladstone might also derive benefit from its use. She added that the flannel had not been washed since her husband used it, for fear of losing the virtue of the medicine.

The *Record*, like some other dense and doddering Christian journals, seems to be quite too old to learn anything. Without the slightest reference to recent remarks in the *Freethinker*, it once more lifts up its head and wails at the absence of Sunday services on board British merchant vessels. This time it talks about work on Sundays. Well, of course, the winds and waves know nothing about Sundays. And the crews can be trusted to see that they are not put to any unnecessary labor either on Sundays or weekdays.

This plea of the *Record* about work is mere pretence,

being simply of a piece with the artfulness of land-lubbing sky-pilots, who now talk of the "Day of Rest" when all the time they mean the "divinely-ordered" Sabbath, and the religious services in which they desire to force everybody to take part. What the *Record* really wishes is not cessation from work, but something by the side of which most crews would consider work a perfect godsend.

The *Record* shows what it is aiming at when it says: "The cross in the British flag is a Christian emblem, and, of whatever creed the crew may be, the shareholders and masters profess themselves to be Christians, and the souls of the half dozen or more officers, engineers, and petty officers are precious in the Master's sight." Then let the Master look after them. The ship's master is either too busy or quite disinclined.

The suggestion of the *Record*, that the shareholders should be invoked to interfere, is only on a par with the mean and roundabout methods by which Sabbatarians have egged on the London County Council to make themselves laughing-stocks of all sensible people.

The Puritans, whatever we may think of their methods, manage pretty frequently to score. They have successfully opposed at Birmingham the license of a handsome and well-appointed theatre proposed to be erected at a cost of £70,000. The Corporation, who are the ground landlords, and would benefit to the extent of £1,000 a year, cordially supported the application, and no fault could be found with the plans. Nevertheless, the application was opposed by "various ministers of religion," and ultimately refused.

"Putting improper questions to a girl in the Confessional" is the charge against the Rev. H. F. Hinde, Vicar of the Church of the Annunciation, Brighton. The Rev. Seymour Terry is responsible for the accusation, and the Bishop of Colchester has appointed a Commission to inquire.

"The credit of a prophet was not overthrown by the failure of his predictions." This is quite true as far as Bible prophets are concerned, but we did not expect to read it in a paper like the *Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette*. It occurs in the report of an address by the Rev. B. Moffett, of Carrickmacross.

"Providence" has been pretty active of late, and the celestial weather bureau has been kept very busy. Gales and shipwrecks are the order of the day on the English coasts. Over in America it is still worse. Fifty vessels were wrecked in one storm at Long Island, and the New England coast is strewn with the ruins of other craft.

Rev. Dr. Clifford, president of the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches, speaking at a recent meeting in Dr. Parker's Temple, declared that "they had no fear as to their leader, for he was the Son of God." Yes; but the same Son of God is the leader of the Church of England, also of the Church of Rome, likewise of the Salvation Army. All the Churches claim him as their boss.

"We voice," Dr. Clifford said, "the convictions of 1,841,767 members." This was greeted with applause. But just fancy all that number of people in any one country having "convictions"! All that most of them have is opinions. "We are training," Dr. Clifford continued, "3,170,193 children in Sunday-schools." More applause. But is it not a fact that about ninety-five per cent. of all the prisoners in our gaols have been Sunday-school scholars? "We own," Dr. Clifford added, "£50,000,000 worth of property." Well now, that is something. Stick to the property, Dr. Clifford. It is vastly more important than all your doctrines, or even your "convictions."

According to the *Ohio State Journal*, a great hubbub has been raised in the staid old village of Baltic, below Canal Dover, over the announcement that the most estimable dames and damsels of the town propose to give what they term "a hugging social" in the town church. The objection made to it, of course, comes from the husbands and sweet-hearts of the ladies who are behind the project; but the latter have refused to compromise, and say they will carry out the program as it has been planned. The "hugging social" is likely to be followed by a coolness in many Baltic homes, and estrangements without number; but that it will be a success there is no doubt. The proceeds of the affair are to go towards paying off church debts. The *State Journal* says this is "a novelty" in the way of raising church funds; but it is not. It is a custom older than Christianity for women to offer themselves for pay, and to devote the proceeds to pious uses. Only the practice has not always been restricted to the distribution of innocent favors.—*New York "Truth-seeker."*

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, December 11, Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, London: 7.30, "Souls, Spirits, and Ghosts."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—December 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.

T. HOPKINS.—Thanks for the subscription, which is duly acknowledged elsewhere; also for your humorous letter. What you thought of sending to 23 Stonecutter-street would have reached us all right. We do not print our private address in the *Freethinker*, because if we did we should never have a minute to call our own. We like to see friends, but work has got to be done, and quiet must be had somewhere.

H. EARLY (Brighton) warns South of England Freethinkers against a man about fifty years of age, who calls on Secularists, whose addresses he obtains somehow, and endeavors to obtain money on pretences that are fraudulent. It is always best to make enquiries before assisting perfect strangers.

WHEELER MEMORIAL FUND.—James Neate, 10s.; Mrs. Neate, 10s.; W. Clogg, 1s.

A. V. KOHN.—Mr. Foote will consider your suggestion of delivering another memorial lecture on Charles Bradlaugh at the Athenæum Hall at the end of January.

CASTOR.—Thanks. See paragraph.

JAMES NEATE.—Yes, better late than never. Some are late and never.

E. W. QUAY.—Mr. Foote could not very well report his own words at the grave of Mrs. Forder. We printed an obituary notice of the deceased lady, and it is not customary to do more except in the case of public personages. Perhaps you overlooked the reference in the "Correspondents" column.

W. B. THOMPSON.—Mr. Foote will take one of the dates, and will shortly write you which. The Chatham friends must not be too hard upon him. He has so much to do, and so many places to visit.

C. H. CATTELL.—Thanks for cuttings.

J. C. MORGAN.—Under consideration.

SAMUEL HALE.—Arrangements for debates must be left with the local committees; we cannot undertake them. Thanks for your cordial letter, all the same.

C. E. BRAMMER.—Pleased to hear you "much admire the scheme of the Secular Society, Limited." You will be proposed as a member at the next Board meeting. Yes, the Mr. Holyoake you met all those years ago is the same Mr. Holyoake you hear of now. He is very old, but in fairly good health, and lives at Brighton.

E. J. JAMES.—Thanks. See paragraph.

C. K. DAVIES.—We are obliged. See paragraph.

W. J. WINSOR.—See answer to another correspondent on the same subject. You must have overlooked the obituary notice in the previous week's issue.

JAMES TULLIN.—See paragraph.

J. G. BARTRAM.—We are very sorry to hear of Peter Weston's trouble. See "Sugar Plums." Thanks for the trouble you are taking in the other matter. Mr. Foote would be very happy to have another debate with the Rev. Dr. A. J. Harrison. He retains pleasant recollections of the previous one at Newcastle in 1877.

PROTESTER.—See paragraph.

"FREETHINKER" CIRCULATION FUND.—T. Hopkins, £1; W. K., 5s.; S. A. Bendit, 2s. 6d.; R. S. N. (per R. Forder), 5s.; C. E. Brammer, 11s.

JAMES W. LEADER (Cambridge) applies for membership in the Secular Society, Limited, and pays £1 to cover the first three years' subscription. This correspondent is an ex-Catholic, having started as a Jesuit. He got disgusted with the humbug, and became an Evangelist, but found that a farce too, and is now an out-and-out Freethinker. He is at present occupied in the commercial world, but hopes some day to stand upon the Freethought platform.

ROBERT FORDER writes: "Kindly spare me space for a few lines to sincerely thank the large number of friends in all parts of the kingdom for their sympathy and good wishes in my recent sad bereavement. It would ill-become me if I did not specially thank Mr. Foote for the beautiful and feeling address at the graveside on that inclement afternoon, and to those good friends who braved the elements to show respect for my good wife."

S. A. BENDIT.—Thanks for the fresh reference. The matter will be dealt with at convenience. Subscription acknowledged elsewhere.

W. McDONALD.—See "Acid Drops." Thanks for your good wishes. No doubt Freethought lectures are much wanted at Aberdeen. The local friends ought to bestir themselves and secure a visit from lecturers when they are in Scotland. Glad to hear you so enjoy reading this journal.

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.

RECEIVED.—Progressive Thinker—Isle of Man Times—Two Worlds—Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette—Public Opinion—Burton Mail—Sydney Bulletin—Liverpool Echo—New York Truthseeker—Liberator—Free Society—People's Newspaper—Natal Mercury—Freedenker—Leeds Daily News—Boston Investigator—Adult—Glasgow Weekly Citizen—Huddersfield Examiner—Zoophilist—Ethical World—Humanity.

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.

ANOTHER large audience assembled at the Athenæum Hall on Sunday evening, when Mr. Foote lectured on Sunday Music and Sabbatarian Tyranny, with special reference to the County Council vote of Mr. John Burns and the utterances of the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes. Mr. Victor Roger, who occupied the chair, said that the topic was one of burning interest, and they would all be glad to hear what the President of the N. S. S. had to say about it. Mr. Foote's lecture, which was a pretty long one, was listened to throughout with the closest attention. His humorous sallies provoked much laughter, which now and then necessitated a pause for the audience to recover; and there was an extraordinary outburst of enthusiastic applause at the end of his peroration, in which he referred to the day of reckoning that would come for the Progressives on the London County Council who had betrayed the highest interests of the people by their recent vote in relation to the Queen's Hall concerts.

Mr. Foote occupies the Athenæum Hall platform again this evening (Dec. 11). His subject will be "Souls, Spirits, and Ghosts." On December 18 the chair will be taken by Mr. Charles Watts, who will say a few words of farewell on the eve of his departure for America.

Last Sunday Mr. Charles Watts lectured three times in Glasgow. A heavy gale and incessant rain prevailed the whole day. Consequently the attendance in the morning and afternoon was limited, but in the evening the hall was filled. The audiences were very enthusiastic, and Mr. Watts reports that the Glasgow branch of the N. S. S. is doing good work. Its members are earnest workers, who appear never to "grow weary in well-doing." At the close of the evening lecture a unanimous wish was expressed that Mr. Watts may have a safe journey to America, and that he would speedily return and bring Colonel Ingersoll with him.

To-day (Sunday, December 11) Mr. Watts lectures three times in the Alexandra Hall, Islington-square, Liverpool, when he hopes to meet all the local friends to say "Good-bye" on the eve of his departure for another visit to the American continent.

Mr. Cohen delivers three lectures to-day (December 11) in the Borough Hall, Stockton. We hope all Freethinkers in the locality will give him their hearty support.

The new volume of Byron's works, edited by Mr. Rowland Prothero, contains a freshly-printed letter by the poet addressed to Ensign Long, and dated April 16, 1807. The following passage will interest our readers: "Of religion I know nothing, at least in its favor. We have fools in all sects, and impostors in most; why should I believe mysteries no one understands, because written by men who chose to mistake madness for inspiration, and style themselves Evangelicals? However, enough on this subject. Your piety will be aghast, and I wish for no proselytes. This much I will venture to affirm, that all the virtues and pious deeds performed on earth can never entitle a man to everlasting happiness in a future state; nor, on the other hand,

can such a scene as a seat of eternal punishment exist; it is incompatible with the benign attributes of a Deity to say so. I am surrounded here by parsons and methodists; but, as you will see, not infected with the mania. I have lived a Deist, what I shall die I know not; however, come what may, *ridens moriar*."

The *Natal Mercury* for November 5 has been sent us. It contains a good letter signed "Query" in favor of Free-thought and against superstition. We are glad to read such a letter in a leading South African newspaper.

After years of persistent pegging away, Mr. J. T. Embleton has obtained permission to supply a copy of the *Freethinker* to the Reading Room of the Liberal Club, Epsom. Freethinkers belonging to similar Clubs should go and do likewise.

We are always glad to receive papers containing articles, paragraphs, or reports upon which we can base an "Acid Drop" or something. But it is useless to send us papers without marking the special item meant for our attention. Will our friends kindly note this?

Colonel Ingersoll has just been lecturing near home, at New York and Jersey City. His new lecture on "Superstition" is evidently attracting big audiences. The Colonel is lecturing at Washington to-day (December 11).

The new Board of Directors of the Secular Society, Limited, will hold their next meeting on Friday, December 16. All communications intended to reach them should be addressed to Miss Vance (the secretary) at 377 Strand, W.C.

§ Tickets for the London Freethinkers' Annual Dinner are now in the hands of all London secretaries, and are also to be obtained from Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C., Mr. C. A. Watts, 17 Johnson's-court, E.C., and from Miss Vance at the N. S. S. office, 376-7 Strand, W.C. Mr. Foote will preside at the dinner as usual. Mr. Watts will be in America, but Mr. Cohen will be on the list of speakers on this occasion.

The *Liverpool Echo* prints a capital letter by J. Roberts, of the local N. S. S. Branch, exposing the police tactics in regard to the Freethought lectures at Alexandra Hall. The police have been round the city warning all lessees and proprietors of halls that a charge for admission on Sunday is illegal. But they know it is not so, or they would have fought the battle to which they were challenged on the occasion of Mr. Foote's last visit to Liverpool.

Tyneside Freethinkers should drop in at Peter Weston's shop, 77 Newgate-street, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and buy some of his stock of books and pamphlets, which he is prepared to sell at what the drapers call "a ruinous reduction." He has to clear out of the shop very shortly, as it has to be pulled down, and he cannot obtain another shop in the neighborhood, so he will probably have to throw up the business altogether and find another way of getting a living. He deserves all the help that can be given him at this juncture. Peter Weston has always been a stalwart of Free-thought, and has often taxed himself for the cause to an extent that might well make some wealthier Freethinkers blush. We hope he will be able to clear off all his stock in the way indicated, and have a few pounds to fall back upon in the hour of need.

East London friends will remember that the local N. S. S. Branch has a tea and concert this evening (December 11) at the King's Hall, 83 Commercial-road; tea at 5.30, concert at 7. Those who are not already provided with tickets (1s.) can obtain them at the door. Mr. Foote has promised to run down after his Athenæum Hall lecture and give a reading.

The Freethought open-air meeting at Limehouse on Sunday was a great success, the speakers being Messrs. Pack, Davis, Heaford, Edwards, and Ramsey, and the musical opposition being reduced to one belated cornet. Another meeting will be held this morning (December 11), with the same list of speakers.

The Deptford Broadway meeting on Sunday was addressed by Messrs. Edwards and James. All went well until a Christian called Seach appeared with a band. He occupied the time allowed for discussion, and his abusive speech incited his co-religionists to violence. The Secular platform was broken, and some of the Secularists were kicked and had their clothes torn. Some of the Christians, however, protested against this outrage, and promised to help the Secularists in getting fair play. Another meeting will be held to-day (Dec. 11), and we hope the local Freethinkers will rally around the Secular platform.

Mr. Foote has been heavily overworked for some months, and feels that he must ease off a little. Amongst other things he has decided to postpone, at least for another week, his promised article on the future of the Secular Society, Limited, which article will include a definite appeal for financial support to the new Board of Directors. Mr. Foote will take the opportunity of replying to the curious remarks upon the Society that have appeared in the *Critic*. These remarks are not of very great importance, as the Secular Society, Limited, is not a commercial enterprise, and does not seek or expect aid from the readers of such a journal; nevertheless, a brief reply to Mr. Hess's criticism may do good, if only by showing that the very features of the Society which he regards as faults are precisely the merits which should recommend it to the Freethought party.

CHURCH AND CHAPEL.

WITHIN the limits of the Christian communion are to be found two rough divisions. There is a section which adheres to conformity; there is another which has a distinct leaning towards nonconformity. In common parlance these parties are known respectively as church-goers and chapel-goers.

The more theologically disposed have a definite religious reason for their adhesion to one side or the other. The churchman's attitude is one of stand-offishness. In effect he says to the chapelman: "I am holier than thou." In his prayers he devoutly thanks God that he is not as other men are—dissenters, heretics, schismatics, and the like. He boldly declares that those whose brows are unbaptised with the holy water of the church are not amongst the elect of God; that those who receive not the sacramental elements from divinely ordained priests shall be shut out of the kingdom of heaven; that, in a word, outside the pale of the Church there can be no salvation. The chapelman, on the other hand, bitterly resents the claim of the churchman to superiority. He contends that the doctrine of the Apostolical succession is a man-made figment; that the true successors of the apostles cannot be episcopally created; that the grace of God can trickle from the end of no man's fingers. The chapelman therefore says that the authority of his ministers is in no sense inferior to that of the priests of the church; that his administration of religious rites is valid enough for all practical purposes; that a man, indeed, most effectively proves his claim to be a successor of the apostles by his manifest ability to faithfully expound the Word of God. The chapelman is oblivious to the peril which the churchman esteems him to be in. He has no fear but what his calling and election will be just as sure as that of the churchman. And so the breach continues. In the meantime those who work and wrestle and pray for the unity of Christendom strain their eyes in vain for the herald of the coming day.

But the great majority of both church-goers and chapel-goers are not theologically minded. To them the line of demarcation represents no such distinction as is here described. If you can only bottom the average churchman's motive in attending church preferably to chapel, you will find it is because he esteems it more respectable to do so. On the other hand, the fundamental principle which dominates the mind of the ordinary chapelman is one of contempt for the churchman's affectation of superior respectability. In nine cases out of ten the position of the believer in the Christian camp is decided by his attitude towards this fetish of respectability.

The question for us to consider is whether there is any counterpart for this church-and-chapel distinction within the domain of Freethought. My personal opinion is that we shall not have far to seek for a corresponding line of severance.

I do not hesitate to assert that Ethicism and Secularism represent simply a church and chapel aspect of one platform. That Ethicism and Secularism are in essence one seems to me indisputable. I have been a reader of the *Ethical World* from its inception—and let me here say that I am an appreciative student of that journal—but I have not yet seen any definition of Ethicism which does not apply with equal force to Secularism.

For instance, it has been declared on editorial authority, in an article on "The Ethical Movement Defined," that "the bond of religious union should be solely devotion to the good in the world." I do not suppose there is one amongst

the many readers of the *Freethinker* who would take exception to such as a definition of Secularism. The difference which exists between Ethicism and Secularism is entirely one of emphasis, not of essence.

Notwithstanding the fundamental unity which underlies both positions, I find myself unable to resist the impression that there is a tendency, perhaps on both sides, to mark a plain line of distinction between the two movements. The worshipper in the stately Ethical church looks down upon the frequenter of the more humble Secularist chapel. On the other hand, the Secularist chapelman feels a withering contempt for the Ethical churchman's claim to superiority.

There is too manifest a disposition on the part of the high priests of the Ethical Church to preach an exclusive doctrine—that is, to anathematise those who are outside the pale of the one true Ethical fold. The unconventional folk, however, who go to the Secularist chapel fail to see what advantage would be brought about by the "visible unity" for which the Ethical churchman is so anxious. And so it comes to pass that men, whose aims in life are identical, are yet hindered from working together in unison. Oh the pity of it!

Can it be that the Ethical churchman is, like the Christian churchman, jealous of his imagined superiority? Is it true that the Secularist chapelman is, after the manner of the Christian chapelman, positively proud of his unconventionality? Is it just possible that the main difference between Ethicism and Secularism is not in any sense doctrinal, but is solely a question of the man's attitude towards the fetish of respectability?

G. DAWSON BAKER.

KITCHENER OR CHRIST? OR, THE RIVAL MAXIMS.

(Lord Kitchener says: "To raise the down-trodden people of the Soudan is doing God's service, and laying the foundations of religion.")

LORD K. of Khartoum has started to boom
The name of Lord J. of Judee,
In aid of a plan to boss the Soudan
Through lucre and faith in J. C.

Christ's maxims he reads; but those that he heeds
Are maxims that never are wrong:
The maxims of steel that make the foe feel
That God is the God of the strong.

The maxims of J., though good in their way,
Are useless, say folk that are frank;
The maxims that K. believes in to-day
Are maxims of Maxim the "Yank."

The maxims of J. drive maxims of K.
And maxims of steel from the field;
For those that are "meek," and "turn the left cheek,"
"Resist not," but constantly yield.

The slaves of Soudan are part of God's plan,
If God be the boss of the show;
But yet, says Lord K., we're serving Lord J.
In raising them out of their woe.

Whom J. has enslaved, K.'s maxims have saved,
By blowing ten thousand to hell.
A fact we detest, yet "all's for the best,"
For J. designs ev'rything well.

God blasts the Soudan, to benefit man;
Man saves it, to benefit God;
The weak are oppressed, that rogues might be blessed
For helping them—surely it's odd!

Lord J. of Judee shows clearly that we
May justify means by the end;
Since "All's for the best," all actions are blest,
And nothing we do can offend.

Red rivers of blood have fattened the mud
Of Egypt, for many a day;
A good job for us, because we can fuss,
And rob, while we help—let us pray!

And thus, says Lord K., in Egypt we lay
Foundations of purest religion,
Yet folk there adore one God, and no more;
Lord K. worships two, and a pigeon!

The maxims of J. implicitly say
That K. of Khartoum will be damned.
In hell he will fry, if J. didn't lie,
For K.'s Christianity's shammed!

G. L. MACKENZIE.

THOUGHTS UPON CALVINISM.

PRESBYTERIANISM is one of the few infamies that don't belong to Catholicism. Catholicism is responsible for Presbyterianism; Presbyterianism for Atheism. I was a Presbyterian. I'm not one. I was a good many things I'm glad I'm not. I'm not a good many things I wish I was.

When a man turns Presbyterian, he adds the Devil to the Trinity and hurrahs for Presbyterian enterprise. This Church's discipline is regulated by the pocket of the disciplined. When a poor Presbyterian gets drunk, he's tried for drunkenness and turns Methodist. When a rich Presbyterian gets drunk, he's tried for heresy and turns Episcopalian. I never saw a Presbyterian who didn't thank God he wasn't anybody else—nor anybody else who didn't thank God he wasn't a Presbyterian. When a Presbyterian dies, the live Presbyterians say: "He has his reward." When anybody else dies: "I hope he's better off." I expected to be a Presbyterian preacher. But I became interested in the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and consistency did the rest. Think of a Presbyterian preacher's arresting a nigger for beating a sick mule; of an orphan asylum under the care of the Presbyterian God.

THE DENOMINATION OF JEHOVAH.

When I was a Presbyterian, I wondered where I'd go if I died. I was the only one in the congregation who had any doubts on the subject. I was scared to the verge of insanity. I should have gone crazy, but I thought God might not let a crazy Presbyterian go to heaven. If I were God, I wouldn't let a Presbyterian go to heaven who wasn't crazy. Think of a sane man turning Presbyterian; of his keeping his sanity after he turned.

In Sunday-school we studied the Shorter Catechism. It was longer than any other shorter thing I ever saw. Within that nursery of hypocrisy, that laboratory of infantile nightmare, my mind began to prepare for Atheism. I used to wonder which I'd rather be—a nigger owned by a North Carolina gentleman, or a gentleman's son owned by the North Carolina Jehovah. To this day I can't scratch a lucifer match without recalling "the chief end of man."

The sermons were death-warrants of hope; the prayers, sulphuretted suggestions; the hymns, hell-fire and damnation set to long metre. The congregation were herded about 10 a.m. The service lasted till the pastor's stomach suggested the Benediction. From what I hear of Jehovah's character, I've no doubt of his denomination. But if I be mistaken, he'd better change before all the Presbyterians get to heaven. Think of calling Jehovah "father." The man who does is hard up for a daddy. So long as I can trace my pedigree to a monkey hanging by his tail, I'll never disgrace my family by calling the Presbyterian God "pa." Think of a heaven bossed by Jehovah, and populated with Catholics and Presbyterians.

A PATRICIAN CREED.

When a Presbyterian reforms, he either dies or turns Atheist. He doesn't turn Episcopalian—it's too much like Catholicism; nor Catholic—it's too much like Presbyterianism. No Presbyterian gentleman, for obvious reasons, would turn either Methodist or Baptist. My family never objected to our field hands turning either Methodists or Baptists. But we drew the line at our house niggers. A gentleman's social standing largely depends on the quality of his house niggers and dogs. One of my grandfather's house niggers stole a hog from an adjoining Baptist. The old gentleman didn't so much blame the nigger for stealing the hog as he did a Presbyterian for stealing from a Baptist. In the transports of his consistency, "Ole Marster" opened his batteries: "You damned black rascal! You'd better turn Baptist and finish the job." My grandfather hated Democrats, Secessionists, Abolitionists, Methodists, Baptists, and poor white folks. I wonder what he'd say if he saw his grandson, his wandering boy, to-night. The old gentleman never could make up his mind whether the Devil was a Secessionist or an Abolitionist—the only matter upon which I ever knew my grandfather to be in doubt. I liked to hear "Ole Marster" pray in church. If the Lord didn't hear, everybody else in the township did. And if Jehovah didn't obey "Ole Marster's" orders, Jehovah was the one exception. The old gentleman was a retired sea captain. He hailed his Maker as if

all hands were called to "shorten sail," and Jehovah was on the topsail yard. When "Ole Marster" told us to do anything, we kept right on doing it over and over till orders came from the quarter-deck to "vast heaving." The last job he put me at lasted for only two hours, but I've been for thirty-five years trying to recuperate. My chief objection to dying is meeting "Ole Marster" and trying to excuse my apostasy.

As a child I declared that, as a man, I'd never go to church—the only good resolution I ever kept. A friend's mother-in-law died. He invited me to the funeral. He said the clergyman who was to preach the funeral sermon had been his pastor. "And," added my friend, "he will do one mother-in-law justice." As I wanted to hear a man who could do that, I started for church; but conscience whispered: "Remember your childhood's vow." So they towed the old lady up to her last anchorage and moored her bow and stern without my assistance.

JOYOUS HYMNS.

When I was in the gall of Presbyterianism and the bonds of Calvinism, our hymns bespoke our sentiments. I remember "Plunged in a Gulf of Dark Despair," "Mistaken Souls that Dream of Bliss" (referring to those who slept during the sermon), "'Twas on that Dark, that Doleful Night," "Mid Raging Flames their Late Conviction Comes," etc. I sat and wondered at the "false system" that places God in heaven and Satan in hell.

The character of Calvin exhausts the tongue of virtuous invective. Take Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost out of the Trinity, substituting Calvin and the Pope, and Calvinists and Catholics could unite. Popery is the only thing that Calvinism tells the truth about. The only way to compliment either is to lie about it. Calvinism may have improved since I left it. The rest of the congregation seemed to confound my departure with the approach of better things. Calvinism can't be much worse without being Catholicism. It could be a great deal better without being fit to live. Calvinists have decided that unbaptised infants can be saved. Could anybody but a Presbyterian or a Catholic have ever thought otherwise? Think of Jehovah's shovelling babies into hell-fire; think of his doing anything else. Sometimes I think Jehovah might improve if we could keep him from associating with Presbyterians. For three hundred years he's been a member of that church. Think of a man reforming with three hundred years of Calvinism to his credit!

As to old Nick, we shall have no millennium till we get him out of the Presbyterian church. I would suggest bribing him into apostasy by offering him the next vacant Methodist bishopric. Calvinism could no more run without Old Nick than a steamboat could navigate without a fireman. Old Nick is the stoker of the old ship of Zion. You may call Jehovah captain, but without our colored friend in the fire-room the old craft couldn't keep steerage way on her. Think of loving Jehovah! If anybody ever loved him, 'twas an acquired taste. Think of being infatuated with the Pope. Old Nick shows to what associating with Presbyterians will bring a man. I feel sorry for him—grateful to him. I never received a pleasant suggestion that didn't come from him. If there be anything I do despise, it is ingratitude. Good-bye, old friend. Peace to your ashes.

PECULIARITIES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN.

Calvinism is the stanchest of all religious creeds, the most dignified and disciplined lie on earth. You can't shout in this church. Even when a Presbyterian goes crazy on religion he doesn't forget that he's a Presbyterian. If he did, he might be cured. When an Episcopalian goes crazy, he's afflicted with an excess of Episcopalianism—sort of a superabundance of nothing—and is said by his congregation to be "suffering from intense application to parochial duties." When a Methodist goes crazy he improves somewhat on Methodism, but his hallucinations betoken the same Methodist trend. He calls himself "Jesus," "Gabriel," "Satan," or "John Wesley." Sometimes he combines the quartet into a syndicate. When a Baptist goes crazy he suffers from religious hydrophobia. He doubts the efficacy of water. He is a pious clam ready to shut up at flood tide. But when one of my former faith goes crazy, he just "makes his bed in hell," and pulls the bedclothes over his head. He doesn't claim to be anybody unusual. He is only a thermometer for Christ's sake. So you see where I got my modesty. I never saw a crazy Presbyterian who

didn't think he was going to hell, nor a sane Presbyterian who didn't think everybody else was going there. Properly speaking, Episcopalians and Presbyterians lose their reason, Methodists and Baptists go crazy.

Only those that go through a Presbyterian tuition, escaping with their reason, appreciate the unspeakable horrors of that apprenticeship. Think of living near the crater of an erupting Vesuvius and with every breath thanking God you're there. Think of working in a match factory as a matter of conscience. One who escapes from Calvinism, as I have, is a burnt child dreading the fire of every creed.

M. GRIER KIDDER.

—New York "Truthseeker."

BIBLE-KISSING AS A BURLESQUE.

THE ancient town of Warwick has been holding its almost equally ancient Court Leet. Amongst the civic functionaries present were some of curious nomenclature and jurisdiction. They comprised ale-tasters, bread and butter weighers, fish and flesh tasters, herd and pinners, etc. All these solemnly took the oath of office. Collectively and severally they were called upon to "Swelp their God" and "Kiss the Book" that they would well and truly discharge their respective duties. It does not, of course, seem quite decent or dignified to mix up the Deity with ale tasting, the search for bad fish and questionable butter, or the impounding of strayed oxen and asses. At the same time, we must admit that Christians ought to know what is agreeable to their God.

Whilst they are considering whether these oaths of office are reverential or the reverse, I venture to offer the following rythmical version of the solemn pledges given to the burgesses by the aforesaid ale-tasters and others. The latter we may imagine ranged in line across the stage, and singing as a chorus of rustics:—

We'll well and truly try,
And a true verdict give
Upon the ale you buy
And the food on which you live,
So help us God!

We'll taste your flesh and fish,
And tell you in a trice
If they are fit for dish,
And if your butter's nice;
So help us God!

We'll investigate each herd,
And say if it be sound;
We swear upon the Word
Stray donkeys to impound;
So help us God!

And while we kiss the Book,
We'll think of sacred things,
And for Bible-types we'll look
As we hope for angels' wings,
So help us God!

We'll think of water turned to wine,
Of the man inside a fish,
Of the moke that spoke
And the unholy bloke
Who says to all this—"Pish!"
So help us God!

The versification is weak. I apologise for it. On the other hand, my feeling as to the legal farce of Bible-kissing is strong.

F. N.

Some more about the Blood and Blazes Brotherhood. The social annual appeal pans-out an average of £25,000 to £30,000. A progressive provincial town and district is expected to return about £100. All officers are expected to canvass district within a radius of 50 miles. No travelling exes allowed. Meantime, captain and "sub" get their "screw" best way they can out of the ordinary five-times-a-Sunday collections. When the "social appeal" is on no "screw" is forthcoming. Lucky if they pay rent. Every penny collected in the district is at once sent to the C. W. O. in Sydney. There may be scores of Magdalens where that money was collected, but not a penny is used to attempt to raise them from the mire, or anybody else there. Centralisation up to the hilt! Then, on top of the S. A. appeal, come self-denial collections, and the province commanding officer fixes financial targets for the officers, who in turn fix them for Brother Bang-the-Drum and Sister Tambourine. And the thing goes on again, so the town loses another "monkey" or so. And the officers revel in the luxury of bread and dripping, or say liver. Wretched indeed is the condition of most country captains, while the "big guns" live in clover, travel all over the shop, and, on an average, support a family of six. For head officers are invariably champion—well, multipliers!—*Sydney Bulletin*.

THE CONVERSION OF GEHAZI BROWN.

QUITE tall he was, and dark and staid, he hardly ever joked,
And when he did 'twas but a simple, saintly little wheeze ;
He did not swear, he did not drink, he prayed for those who
smoked,
And had a tiny cough, and drooped a trifle at the knees.

Gehazi oiled his ebon hair, and brushed it very flat ;
His suit was black, his cheeks were lank, he smiled as if in
pain ;
He'd turned his eyes to heaven with such constant ardor
that
They took an upward squint, and never came in line
again.

He'd missions to the fallen, burning brands he loved to
seize.
Slim spinsters called him handsome, and they spoke of
him as pure.
He managed all their Temperance Tents and good societies,
The Purists' Band, the Ladies' Guild, the Mothers of the
Poor.

And when a mission, aiming to regenerate the dears
In curls of gilt who serve behind the wicked city bars,
Was started, he was chosen to invade their vicious spheres,
And point them to a higher place beyond the twinkling
stars.

He went where men most congregate, and there, with
manners meek,
Besought the barmaids all to leave the haunts where
sinners herd.
Then whispered horrid tales at members' meetings once a
week—
The women called it shocking, and they never missed a
word !

Gehazi said his mission was progressing very well,
But rumors reached the ladies—it was whispered far and
wide
At Brighton in a dog-cart he'd be cutting quite the swell
With a peroxidized female flaunting boldly by his side.

The hopes of frosty spinters to the point of zero sank ;
They looked well into matters and emerged with faces
glum.
The funds of five societies were missing at the bank,
And cash in hand consisted of a single battered "thrum."

They called upon Gehazi some sufficient cause to show,
But none of them could find him, though they sought him
near and far—

He'd wandered to a better land, where good levanters go,
With Flossy Jones, a frisky girl who served behind a bar.

—*Sydney Bulletin.*

SILAS SNELL.

BOOK CHAT.

THE Rev. Hensley Henson, B.D., Rural Dean of South Barking, has written some *Notes and Inferences on Apostolic Christianity* (Methuen). The reason he gives for publishing them in book form is naive and perfectly intelligible. He says that "laymen will neither listen to sermons nor read them." Quite true ; why should they ? The distaste for theological pabulum may even extend to sermons published in the insidious guise of "Notes and Inferences."

"Scarcely anybody," he says, "reads the New Testament." That also is true, and perhaps it is as well for the Church that it is so. The current notions about the Gospel and the apostolic age are, he says, largely based on the productions of Marie Corelli, Hall Caine, and writers of that type. Very likely ; but does not the statement rather smack of professional jealousy ?

Sixteen sermons addressed to University audiences by Hastings Rashdall, D.C.L., M.A., are published by Methuen. The *Educational Times*, in reviewing them, draws attention to the fact of an Oxford don declaring from the pulpit of St. Mary's that "the re-statement—let us say frankly, the reconstruction—of Christian doctrine is the great intellectual task upon which the Church of our day is just entering, and with which it must go on boldly if Christianity is to retain its hold on the intellect as well as the sentiments and the social activities of our time."

Following Abelard and Maurice, Dr. Rashdall promptly disposes of the idea of substitution in the Atonement, and speaks of the testimony of the apostles to the resurrection

as the report of a "vision." He further says : "We go on teaching children things which we do not believe ourselves, or we do not teach them anything definite."

Still, the *Educational Times*, which, by the way, is the journal of the College of Preceptors, is not satisfied with Dr. Rashdall. It says he "does well to speak out, but he may rest assured that, if he is to show the masses the truth in such form as to compel its intellectual acceptance, he will have to dig deeper than he has done."

A novel is in the press, written by a well-known journalist, in which some comments that will be well worth reading are made on Christian journals by the author, who entitles his story *All Sorts and Conditions of Women*.

Turkish Baths is the title of an excellent sixpenny pamphlet by "Lennox," published by the author at 3b Blenheim-mansions, Stafford-street, London, N.W. It deals with the relation of these baths to health and the senses. It is written with knowledge, vigor, and literary capacity, and cannot but do good. We wish it a wide circulation.

That embodiment of amiable imbecility, the simpering, genteel curate, has been satirised in Mr. H. G. Wells's romance, *The War of the Worlds*. The Rev. Richard Free, of Milwall, is indignant thereat. He says that Mr. Wells has "made the curate the most contemptible character in the book !"

Mr. Wells may be trusted to know what he is about. His types of character are usually recognisable in life. One wonders why he should have taken the trouble to explain "that it does not follow that he regards all curates with ridicule and contempt because it has served his purpose to caricature an ignoble type."

The *Adult* for December contains much matter on the Bedborough fiasco, including a curious communication from George Bedborough himself. "I am a coward," he says, "and I reverence more than ever the Bradlaughs and the Footes who have conquered where I have succumbed." Such a frank confession seems to imply some saving virtue after all. This magazine contains good articles by Henry Seymour and William Platt.

ENGLAND'S GREATNESS !

(At the Grave of Charles Darwin.)

ENGLAND'S greatness ! not the sword avenging,
Not the nations bowed beneath her heel,
Not the cross of blood that to her kingdoms
Sets its seal.

These are ghosts of old barbaric splendors,
Rotting where Imperial Rome lies low,
Things that thrill the heart like tales of slaughters
Long ago.

Far beyond them is her glory shining,
Brighter than the sword within the sun ;
It shall last when these superb oppressions
All are done.

Other armies has she as victorious,
Slayers these whose hands are clean of blood,
Soldiers whose sublime and steadfast phalanx
Wrong withstood.

England's greatness ! this abides unchanging,
Won by arms that sound no loud refrains ;
When all wars and warriors shall have perished,
Truth remains.

—*The Outlook.*

ELLEN GLASGOW.

PROFANE JOKES.

WHAT is the difference between a Catholic priest and a Baptist parson ? One uses wax candles, and the other dips.

Sunday-school Teacher—"Why did they put Joseph in the pit ?" Small Boy (who had been to theatre the previous night)—"Because there was no room in the dress circle."

Blackwoods, the publishers, were issuing the *Agricultural Journal* at the time the potato disease broke out, and they invited experts in agriculture to send their opinions as to the cause of it. One famous Scotch farmer replied : "I thoct at first it was a dispensation of Almighty God, but now I think it is an insect."

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, "Souls, Spirits, and Ghosts."
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 8.30, A Concert.
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, O. James, "Christ and Democracy."
EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Bow Vestry Hall, Bow-road, E.): 7, Miss Z. Vallance, "Ethical Grace."
SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road, S.E.): 11.15, Discussion on "Vivisection"; 7, J. M. Robertson, "The Fallacy of Theism."
WEST LONDON SECULAR CLUB (15 Edgware-road): Every evening 7-10.50.
WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall): 11, Miss Margaret McMillan, "The New Education."
WEST LONDON BRANCH (15 Edgware-road): December 15, at 8.15, H. O. Stuart, "Evolution."
WESTMINSTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Grosvenor Arms, Page-street): 7.30, E. Calvert, "History of the Shakespearean Drama."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, Addresses by Messrs. Smith, Stuart, Parsons, Rosenthal, and Faulkner.
DEPTFORD (Broadway): 6.30, R. P. Edwards and E. Pack.

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH (Bristol-street Board-school): For lecturer and subjects see Saturday's Mail.
BRADFORD (Oddfellows' Hall): 7, Malfew Seklew, "Why I am an Anarchist."
CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school; 7, A lecture.
DERBY (Central Hotel, Market-place): 7, E. Daniel, "The Antiquity of Man."
GLASGOW (Lecture Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12, Discussion Class; 6.30, Social meeting.
LEICESTER SECULAR HALL (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, J. McCabe, "Authority in Religion."
LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): Charles Watts—11, "Religion: Is it a Curse or a Blessing?"; 8, "Christian Glad Tidings"; 7, "The Doom of the Churches."
MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 7, W. Stanley (Manchester Microscopical Society), "An Evening with the Microscope." Illustrated by microscope and lantern views.
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, Lecture by a local gentleman.
SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, Market-place): 7, A Reading on "Philosophy."
STOCKTON (Borough Hall, Dining Room): C. Cohen—11, "Is There a Life Beyond the Grave?" 2.30, "Christianity and the Jews"; 6.30, "The Search for God."

Lecturers' Engagements,

O COHEN, 17 Osborne-road, High-road, Leyton—December 11, Stockton-on Tees; 18, Camberwell. January 1 and 8, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road; 15, Camberwell; 22, Sheffield; 29, Bradford Labour Church. February 5, Glasgow.

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

POSITIVISM.

"Reorganization, without god or king, by the systematic worship of Humanity."

Information and publications on the Religion of Humanity may be obtained free from Mr. Malcolm Quin, Church of Humanity, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

THE BEST BOOK

ON NEO-MALTHUSIANISM IS, I BELIEVE,
TRUE MORALITY, OR THE THEORY AND PRACTICE
OF NEO-MALTHUSIANISM.

By J. R. HOLMES, M.M.L., M.V.S., M.N.S.S.

160 pages, with portrait and autograph, bound in cloth, gilt lettered.
Price 1s., post free.

** In order to bring the information within the reach of the poor, the most important parts of the book are issued in a pamphlet of 112 pages at ONE PENNY, post free 2d. Copies of the pamphlet for distribution 1s. a dozen post free.

The *National Reformer* of 4th September, 1892, says: "Mr. Holmes' pamphlet . . . is an almost unexceptionable statement of the Neo-Malthusian theory and practice . . . and throughout appeals to moral feeling. . . . The special value of Mr. Holmes' service to the Neo-Malthusian cause and to human well-being generally is just his combination in his pamphlet of a plain statement of the physical and moral need for family limitation with a plain account of the means by which it can be secured, and an offer to all concerned of the requisites at the lowest possible prices."

The Council of the Malthusian League, Dr. Drysdale, Dr. Allbutt, and others, have also spoken of it in very high terms.

The Trade supplied by R. FORDER, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C. Other orders should be sent to the author.

J. R. HOLMES, CHANNEY, WANTAGE, BERKS.

WORKS BY CHARLES WATTS.

THE CLAIMS OF CHRISTIANITY EXAMINED, FROM A RATIONALIST STANDPOINT. 64 pp., 6d., by post 7d.
THE TEACHINGS OF SECULARISM COMPARED WITH ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY. 1s., by post 1s. 2d.
CHRISTIANITY: ITS ORIGIN, NATURE, AND INFLUENCE. 4d., by post 5d.
SECULARISM: DESTRUCTIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE. 3d., by post 4d.
AGNOSTICISM AND CHRISTIAN THEISM: WHICH IS THE MORE REASONABLE? 3d., by post 4d.
A REPLY TO FATHER LAMBERT'S "TACTICS OF INFIDELS." 6d., by post 7d.
THEOLOGICAL PRESUMPTION. An Open Letter to the Rev. Dr. R. F. Burns, of Halifax, N.S. 2d., by post 2½d.
THE NATURAL AND THE SUPERNATURAL; OR, BELIEF AND KNOWLEDGE. 3d., by post 4d.
EVOLUTION AND SPECIAL CREATION. 3d., by post 4d.
HAPPINESS IN HELL AND MISERY IN HEAVEN. 3d., by post 4d.
SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE. 4d., by post 5d.
BIBLE MORALITY: Its Teachings Shown to be Contradictory and Defective as an Ethical Guide. 3d., by post 3½d.
SECULARISM: ITS RELATION TO THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF THE DAY. 2d., by post 2½d.
SECULARISM: IS IT FOUNDED ON REASON, AND IS IT SUFFICIENT TO MEET THE WANTS OF MANKIND? Debate between the Editor of the *Evening Mail* (Halifax, N.S.) and Charles Watts. With Prefatory Letters by G. J. Holyoake and Colonel R. G. Ingersoll, and an Introduction by Helen H. Gardener. 1s., by post 1s. 2d.
IS THERE A LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE? Reply to Dr. R. B. Westbrook. 3d., by post 4d.
SAINTS AND SINNERS: WHICH? 3d., by post 4d.
WHY DO RIGHT? A Secularist's Answer. 3d., by post 4d.
EDUCATION: TRUE AND FALSE. 2d., by post 2½d.
THE SUPERSTITION OF THE CHRISTIAN SUNDAY. A Plea for Liberty and Justice. 3d., by post 4d.
THE EXISTENCE OF GOD; OR, QUESTIONS FOR THEISTS. 2d., by post 2½d.
CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILIZATION. 3d., by post 4d.
London: Charles Watts, 17 Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, E.C.

The Devil's Pulpit. By the REV. ROBERT TAYLOR. 2 vols. Published at 8s. 4s. net.

Force and Matter. By PROFESSOR LUDWIG BÜCHNER. Published at 8s. 2s. 6d. net.

Six Lectures on the French Revolution. By ANNIE BESANT. 2s.

London: R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

W. J. Rendell's "Wife's Friend"

Recommended by Mrs. Besant in *Law of Population*, p. 32, and Dr. Allbutt in *Wife's Handbook*, p. 51. Made ONLY at No. 15 Chadwell-street, Clerkenwell; 2s per doz., post free (reduction in larger quantities). For particulars send stamped envelope.

Important Caution.

BEWARE of useless imitations substituted by some dealers and chemists, the words "Rendell & Co." and "J. W. Rendell," etc., being speciously and plausibly introduced to deceive the public.

LOOK FOR AUTOGRAPH REGISTERED TRADE MARK

W. J. Rendell
No. 182,688.

IN Red INK ON EACH BOX, WITHOUT WHICH NONE ARE GENUINE.
Higginson's Syringe, with Vertical and Reverse Current, 8s 6d., 4s. 6d., and 5s. 6d. Dr. Palfrey's Powder, 1s. 2d. Quinine Compound, 1s. 2d. Dr. Allbutt's Quinine Powders, 3s. per doz. All prices post free.

W. J. RENDELL, 15 Chadwell-st., Clerkenwell, E.C.

HERB PILLS MADE FROM

Podophyllum, Cascara Sagrada, Dandelion, Rhubarb, Burdock, etc.

These Pills have been used during the last 80 years as a Family Medicine. Nothing else required if used occasionally. Sold at 6d., 1s., and 2s. 6d. per box, with directions for use; or free by post for value in stamps or Postal Order to

G. THWAITES, 2 Church Row, Stockton-on-Tees.

Advice free on all Diseases. A Herb Recipe to cure any Disease with Herbs free.

FREETHOUGHT WORKS.

- Suicide.** By David Hume. A powerful essay, first published after the author's death, and not included in ordinary editions of his writings. 2d.
- Letters to the Clergy.** By G. W. Foote. Subjects:—Creation—The Believing Thief on the Cross—The Atonement—Old Testament Morality—Inspiration—Credentials of the Gospel—Miracles—Prayer. 128 pp.; 1s.
- Flowers of Freethought.** (First Series.) By G. W. Foote. Fifty-one essays on a variety of Freethought topics. 214 pp., cloth, 2s. 6d.
- Flowers of Freethought.** (Second Series.) By G. W. Foote. Fifty-eight Essays on a further variety of Freethought topics. 302 pp., cloth, 2s. 6d.—These two volumes of *Flowers* form together a complete Garden of Freethought. Every aspect of Reason and Faith is treated somewhere, and always in a popular style. Contains much of the author's best writing.
- John Morley as a Freethinker.** By G. W. Foote. Valuable references to Mr. Morley's writings. Good for Freethinkers to read first and then lend to their Christian friends. 2d.
- Is Socialism Sound?** Four Nights' Public Debate between G. W. Foote and Annie Besant. Verbatim, and revised by both disputants. 1s.; superior edition in cloth, 2s.
- The Sign of the Cross.** A Candid Criticism of Mr. Wilson Barrett's Play, showing its gross partiality and its ridiculous historic inaccuracies, with special reference to the (probably) forged passage in Tacitus and the alleged Neronian massacre of Christians. Handsomely printed, 6d.
- The Birth of Christ.** From the original "Life of Jesus" by the famous Strauss. With an introduction by G. W. Foote. A most thorough Analysis and Exposure of the Gospel Story by a Master Hand. 6d.
- Christianity and Secularism.** Public Debate between G. W. Foote and Rev. Dr. McCann. Verbatim Report, revised by both Disputants. 1s.; superior edition in cloth, 1s. 6d.
- Bible Heroes.** From Adam to Paul. By G. W. Foote. Instructive, interesting, amusing, and honest; in fact, the *only* honest book on the subject. 200 pp., cloth, 2s. 6d.
- The Grand Old Book.** A Reply to the Grand Old Man. By G. W. Foote. An Exhaustive Answer to Mr. Gladstone's *Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*. 1s.; cloth edition, 1s. 6d.
- Will Christ Save Us?** By G. W. Foote. An Examination of the Claims of Jesus Christ to be considered the Savior of the World. Contains much Historic Information on Slavery, the Position of Woman, General Social Progress, and the advance of Science and Freethought in opposition to Christian bigotry. 6d.
- Darwin on God.** By G. W. Foote. A full and minute account of Darwin's mental development, with a brief Memoir of his grandfather, the famous Erasmus Darwin; containing all the passages in Darwin's works, and in his *Life and Letters*, bearing directly or indirectly on the subject of religion. Every Freethinker should have and keep a copy of this important little volume. 6d.; cloth, 1s.
- Footsteps of the Past.** Valuable Essays in the Evolution of Religion and Ethics. By J. M. Wheeler. With a Preface by G. W. Foote. Cloth, 3s.
- Infidel Death-Beds.** By G. W. Foote. Second edition, revised and much enlarged. Contains authentic details of the last hours of sixty-two historic Freethinkers, and in most cases a sketch of their lives. Precise references given in every instance. 8d.; cloth, 1s. 3d.
- Comic Sermons and Other Fantasias.** By G. W. Foote. A selection of the author's best satirical writings. *Contents*:—A Sermon on Summer—A Mad Sermon—A Sermon on Sin—A Bishop in the Workhouse—A Christmas Sermon—Christmas Eve in Heaven—Bishop Trimmer's Sunday Diary—The Judge and the Devil—Satan and Michael—The First Christmas—Adam's Breaches—The Fall of Eve—Joshua and Jericho—A Baby God—Judas Iscariot. 8d.
- Defence of Freethought.** By Colonel Ingersoll. A Grand Speech, occupying four hours in delivery, made in defence of Mr. Reynolds, who was prosecuted for Blasphemy in New Jersey. 6d.
- Defence of Free Speech.** By G. W. Foote. Three hours' address to the Jury in the Court of Queen's Bench before Lord Coleridge, in answer to an Indictment for Blasphemy on account of certain issues of the *Freethinker*. Carefully revised, with an important Preface and Footnotes. 4d.
- Reminiscences of Charles Bradlaugh.** By G. W. Foote. Written directly after Bradlaugh's death, and containing personal anecdotes and characteristics not to be found elsewhere. Necessary to those who want to know the real Bradlaugh.
- The Shadow of the Sword.** A Moral and Statistical Essay on War. By G. W. Foote. Christian papers have called it "powerful" and "masterly." 2d.
- Bible Romances.** By G. W. Foote. New Edition, revised and largely re-written. (1) The Creation Story, 2d.; (2) Eve and the Apple, 1d.; (3) Cain and Abel, 1d.; (4) Noah's Flood, 2d.; (5) The Tower of Babel, 1d.; (6) Lot's Wife, 1d.; (7) The Ten Plagues, 1d.; (8) The Wandering Jews, 1d.; (9) Balaam's Ass, 1d.; (10) God in a Box, 1d.; (11) Jonah and the Whale, 1d.; (12) Bible Animals, 1d.; (13) A Virgin Mother, 2d.; (14) The Resurrection, 2d.; (15) The Crucifixion, 1d.; (16) St. John's Nightmare, 1d.
- Royal Paupers.** Showing what Royalty does for the People, and what the People do for Royalty. By G. W. Foote. 2d.
- Open Letters to Jesus Christ.** By G. W. Foote. Racy as well as Argumentative. Something Unique. 4d.
- Philosophy of Secularism.** By G. W. Foote. 3d.
- The Bible, God.** A Scathing Criticism. By G. W. Foote. 2d.
- Pagan Mythology; or, The Wisdom of the Ancients.** By Lord Bacon. 1s.
- Church of England Catechism Examined.** A Masterly Work, which narrowly escaped prosecution. By Jeremy Bentham. 1s.
- Utilitarianism.** By Jeremy Bentham. 3d.
- Free Will and Necessity.** By Anthony Collins. Reprinted from 1715 edition, with Biography of Collins by J. M. Wheeler, and Preface and Annotations by G. W. Foote. Huxley says that "Collins writes with wonderful power and clearness of reasoning." 1s.; superior edition, on superfine paper, cloth, 2s.
- The Code of Nature.** By Diderot and D'Holbach. 2d.
- The Essence of Religion.** God the Image of Man, Man's Dependence upon Nature the Last and Only Source of Religion. By Ludwig Feuerbach. "No one has demonstrated and explained the purely human origin of the idea of God better than Ludwig Feuerbach."—*Büchner*. 1s.
- Crimes of Christianity.** By G. W. Foote and J. M. Wheeler. Hundreds of exact references to Standard Authors. An unanswerable Indictment of Christianity. Vol. I., cloth gilt. 216 pp., 2s. 6d.
- The Jewish Life of Christ.** Being the *Sepher Toldoth Jeschu*, or Book of the Generation of Jesus. Edited, with an Historical Preface and Voluminous Notes, by G. W. Foote and J. M. Wheeler. 6d.; superior edition, superfine paper, cloth, 1s.
- The Mortality of the Soul.** By David Hume. Not included in ordinary editions of Hume's "Essays." 2d.
- Liberty and Necessity.** By David Hume. 4d.
- Essays in Rationalism.** By Charles Robert Newman, the Atheist brother of the late Cardinal Newman. With a Preface by G. J. Holyoake, and Biography by J. M. Wheeler. 1s. 6d.
- The Rights of Man.** By Thomas Paine. With a Political Biography by J. M. Wheeler. 1s.; cloth edition, 2s.
- Satires and Profanities.** By James Thomson (B.V.). "As clever as they are often profane."—*Christian World*. 1s.
- A Refutation of Deism.** By Shelley. Really a Defence of Atheism. 4d.
- Miscellaneous Theological Works.** By Thomas Paine. All his writings on Religion except the *Age of Reason*. 1s.
- Theism or Atheism.** Public Debate between G. W. Foote and the Rev. W. T. Lee. Verbatim Report, revised by both Disputants. Well printed and neatly bound, 1s.
- Bible and Beer.** By G. W. Foote. Showing the absurdity of basing Teetotalism on the Christian Scriptures. Careful, thorough, and accurate. Freethinkers should keep this pamphlet by them. 4d.
- The Holy Bible.** By Colonel Ingersoll. A Masterpiece of Popular Criticism; one of Ingersoll's greatest efforts. 6d.
- The Coming Civilization.** By Colonel Ingersoll. An Address delivered in the Columbia Theatre, Chicago, Sunday, April 12, 1896, to a vast meeting of Members and Friends of the "Church Militant." 3d.
- The Foundations of Faith.** By Colonel Ingersoll. *Contents*:—The Old Testament—The New Testament—Jehovah—The Trinity—The Theological Christ—The "Scheme"—Belief—Conclusion. 3d.

LONDON: R. FORDER, 28 STONECUTTER STREET, E.C.

THOMAS PAINE'S WORKS.

- The Rights of Man.** Centenary edition. With a Political Biography by J. M. Wheeler. 1s.; bound in cloth, 2s.
- Complete Theological Works.** (Including the *Age of Reason*.) Cloth, 2s. 6d.

London: R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

STANTON, the People's Dentist, 335 Strand (opposite Somerset House).—**TEETH** on VULCANITE, 2s. 6d. each; upper or lower set, £1. Best Quality, 4s. each; upper or lower, £2. Completed in four hours when required; repairing or alterations in two hours. If you pay more than the above, they are fancy charges. Teeth on platinum, 7s. 6d. each; on 18 ct. gold, 15s.; stopping, 2s. 6d.; extraction, 1s.; painless by gas, 5s.

LESSONS IN FRENCH.—Monsieur JULES BAILLY desires Pupils. Easy plan and efficiency guaranteed. Terms very moderate. Address, 32 Store-street, Bedford-square, W.C.

NOW READY. Price 3d., by post 4d.

THE SECULAR ALMANACK FOR 1899.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE,

ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

SOME OF THE CONTENTS.

Calendar for 1899.

The Future of Freethought. By G. W. FOOTE.

The Work Before Us. By CHARLES WATTS.

Outgrowing the Gods. By C. COHEN.

A Freethinker's Prophecy. By F. J. GOULD.

The Hooligans of Superstition. By A. B. MOSS.

The Unrealities of Religion. By W. HEAFORD.

The Secular Society, Limited.

Information Concerning the National Secular Society.

Freethought Lecturers.

LONDON: R. FORDER, 28 STONECUTTER-STREET, E.C.

CHRISTMAS CHEER.

A FAT GOOSE OR A BIG TURKEY

Will be sent, Carriage Paid, on the 23rd of December, to the sender of every tenth order received for our Marvellous

CHRISTMAS PARCELS.

No. 1.—1 Pair Pure Wool Blankets, 1 Heavy Cloth Dress Length, 1 Smart Lady's Umbrella, 1 Pair Lace Curtains, 1 Beautiful Cushion Square, 1 Imitation Sable Fur Necktie, 1 Fine White Apron, 1 Linen Handkerchief.

No. 2.—1 Overcoat Length, 1 Gent's Umbrella, 1 Heavy Cloth Dress Length, 1 Lady's Umbrella.

No. 3.—1 Suit Length, 1 Heavy Cloth Dress Length, 12 yards Fine Flannelette, 1 Imitation Sable Fur Necktie.

No. 4.—1 good strong well-finished Single or Double-breasted Overcoat. Give chest over ordinary coat and length from centre of back to full length of sleeve measurement; also state your height.

No. 5.—1 Long Real Bear Victoria-shaped Fur. Reduced from 40s. each.

All one Price, 21s. Carriage Paid.

Sold only as a CHRISTMAS TREAT, not for profit. These parcels cannot be supplied to Agents except at above price NETT.

A Consolation Prize—1lb. of our Famous Free Clothing Tea—to every purchaser who is not lucky enough to get a Goose or Turkey.

J. W. GOTT, 2 & 4 Union Street, Bradford.

Price Sixpence.

SHAKESPEARE,

A LECTURE BY

COLONEL INGERSOLL.

HANDSOMELY PRINTED.

"A powerful piece of literary and philosophical criticism. Ingersoll's glowing style, his forcible logic, and his acute discrimination make his panegyric of the Bard of Avon almost as interesting to read as, no doubt, his lecture was inspiring to hear."—*The Stage*.

London: R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

Price 2d., by post 2½d.; yearly subscription (including Supplements), 2s. 8d.

THE LITERARY GUIDE

AND RATIONALIST REVIEW.

THE DECEMBER NUMBER CONTAINS:—

Authority in Religion. By Charles Watts.

Knowledge and the "Unknowable." By C. E. Hooper.

Canon Eyton's Common Sense. By F. J. Gould.

Dr. Mivart and Ultimate Truths in Science.

The Conversion of a Materialist.

Philosophy on a New Footing.

The Duke of Argyll and Mr. Spencer.

Signs and Warnings (gleaned from the Religious Press).

Random Jottings.

Chats about Books and Miscellanea.—XV. With Dr.

Edward Westermarck. By F. J. G.

Notes on the Magazines, Recent Books, etc., etc.

London: Watts & Co., 17 Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, E.C.