

THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XIX.—No. 8.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1899.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

Our Brother Christ.

WE have already written one article on the new Free Churches' Catechism, pointing out that the Devil is entirely dropped out of that up-to-date document, which taxed the intellectual and theological resources of twenty-two eminent Nonconformist clergymen (on and off) for the space of two years. There is plenty of material left, however, for several more articles. In the present one we purpose dealing with what the Catechism specially teaches about Jesus Christ. It calls him the Son of God, not God the Son; in fact, the doctrine of the Trinity is much slurred over by these Catechisers. We are told that God, in his great love, sent him into the world to be "our Savior from sin," which is rather more parliamentary than saying that it was to save us from hell. That place of torment is not so much as mentioned in the whole Catechism. The nearest approach to it is the phrase "eternal death," which may, of course, mean simply annihilation. Well, this Son of God, thus sent into the world, came down from heaven—wherever that is, and of course the Catechisers don't know—and "was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary." A very pretty thing to teach children! They must either take it as they take medicine, in simple blind trust, or ask for explanations. In the latter case, we pity the teachers who have to enlighten their juvenile minds on such a mystery. Further, it is said that he was crucified "for us," that he was buried, that he rose again the third day, that he ascended into heaven, and that he sits now on the right hand of his father—nothing being said about his coming again to judge the quick and the dead. This little fairy tale is introductory to the statement of the benefits we receive from his incarnation. First, he is "a Mediator between God and men." But only a little before the Catechism teaches that God is *our* father. Why, then, does he require a mediator between himself and his own children? Why does he want his first Son (with a capital S) to suffer before he relaxes his grim frown on all the rest of the family? Is this the way that just and sensible human parents are expected to act? But even after his suffering we derive no advantage unless we repent and believe—faith being just as necessary as good conduct. And how are we enabled to repent and believe? Only by "the secret power of the Holy Spirit." If any one of us gets lost, therefore, it is entirely owing to the negligence or indolence of that same Holy Spirit. Everything depends upon that personage. When the Father and the Son have done their utmost, it is really the blessed Ghost who determines which of us shall go to heaven and which of us to hell. And according to orthodoxy the most of us go downwards. Yet this blessed Ghost is called "the Comforter."

Jesus Christ is not only the mediator between us naughty children and our heavenly father, but he "reveals to us what God is," and "as perfect Man represents our race before God"—which we take to be a rare argument in a circle. Moreover it is stated that "We have in Him a brother man who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, as well as a perfect example of what we ought to be."

Now we regard this as a pack of nonsense. To begin with, a perfect example cannot well exist, and if it did we could hardly know whether it was perfect or not, for all our knowledge is relative. A perfect man has never been found. Whenever he is found he will probably be a perfect nuisance. Moreover, a perfect example, if it

did exist, would be too cold and remote. How could we imitate one who had absolutely no failings? A great character, lofty in spite of its defects, stimulates and inspires us; but we should turn with despair, and perhaps some secret ill-temper, from the incarnation of impeccable virtue. Some such feeling as this prompted the saying of a certain statesman about a great rival, that he was without a single redeeming vice, and taught in a Sunday-school. Some such feeling, too, or the apprehension of it, suggested the modifying statement that Jesus Christ is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." It is a sort of graceful concession. But it does not amount to much, after all; for, if he could not possibly sin, he was really not liable to temptation as we are. A temptation which *cannot* succeed is a temptation only in name. Temptation is generally looked upon as purely external. But this is a mistake. It is always subjective as well as objective. The external appeal must find an internal tendency. A glass of whisky is no temptation to one who abhors intoxicants. A beef-steak is no temptation to a confirmed vegetarian. A half-crown is no temptation to a millionaire. An open razor is no temptation to suicide, unless the beholder is depressed or desperate. Consequently, to say that any person was tempted, but was without sin, and, in fact, *could* not sin, is to say that he was *not* tempted, for it implies that there was not even an incipient vicious inclination within him to respond to the outside stimulus.

This Catechism only follows the cant of declining orthodoxy in talking of Jesus as a "perfect man" and a "perfect example." This laudation of Jesus is like the laudation of the Bible—a sign of the decadence of positive faith. As I have remarked in my *Book of God*—"Anyone who sincerely believed in the deity of Jesus would shrink from praising his human virtues. To such a person it would savor strongly of impertinence. Nor would anyone who really believed the Bible to be the Word of God make it the subject of meaner panegyrics. It seems ridiculous to argue that God wrote with unusual power and sublimity, and is actually the very first of known authors."

Even if Jesus was a perfect man, intrinsically, he was certainly not a perfect example. No one is an example to another except in the same circumstances. Now it is indisputable, if there be any truth in the Gospels, that Jesus had not to confront most of our difficulties. He does not appear to have ever supported anyone but himself, and he was able to work miracles whenever he pleased, as when he sent Peter fishing for money to pay the tax-collector. Christian divines say he lived and died a virgin; at any rate, he was not a husband, and we suppose it may be assumed he was not a father. That is to say, he evaded, or did not assume, those very relationships which involve the most constant, and often the most onerous, duties of the vast majority of men. He was therefore no example to us at all in the main business of our lives.

From another point of view, the "brother man" nonsense becomes conspicuous. Take away the miracles—that is, the superhuman elements—from the biography of Jesus, and there is not enough left to furnish forth a common newspaper obituary. What he was, what he said, and what he did, *as a mere man*, is entirely concealed by the evangelists. Perhaps we ought not to say that they *concealed* it. They may have been more ignorant than designing. They produced an ideal portrait from legend and tradition. Jesus Christ is an ideal creation. He belongs rather to fiction than to history. To call him a "brother man" is sentimental absurdity.

G. W. FOOTE.

A Plea for Theism.

A REPLY.

AFTER carefully reading through Dr. Keeling's reply to my review of his book, my only rejoinder must be to restate the position laid down in my articles of December 4 and 11, to clear up a few misunderstandings, and to emphasize certain considerations that, to my mind, have been overlooked by my courteous opponent.

First, as to misunderstandings. Dr. Keeling and myself are clearly not at one as to the essential nature of Theism. From my point of view, the essence of Theism is the belief in mind as an animating or controlling force in nature apart from the modifying power of the human intelligence. Whether this intelligence is figured as a man or an elephant, given one head or three, colored black or white, is a matter of local circumstances, and therefore, in reviewing *Quæro*, I went to the root of the matter by calling it "A Fresh Plea for Theism." Dr. Keeling, on the other hand, seems to consider the *form* given to the initial belief of mind in nature as constituting the essence of Theism; and, that being the case, I can only reply to the charge of having before me "some obsolete conventional view of Theism" by the retort that my critic has confused the essence of Theism with its local accidents.

Again, as to the "Reality" underlying phenomena. Dr. Keeling argues that beyond the world of sensations or of experience there exists a supreme "Reality" which stands as the cause of all phenomena. My remarks upon this head were that, if it existed, as man cannot transcend his own consciousness, we can know nothing whatever about it. We cannot speak of it as the *cause* of phenomena, because cause and effect are both phenomenal terms; they both belong to the world of experience, and to apply them to that which lies beyond experience is like picturing a bird flying without wings in a region where there is no atmosphere. It was Dr. Keeling's invoking of noumena in the name of science that I pronounced illegitimate. It is admitted that I am right in saying that "science is concerned with a classification of causal relations among phenomena"; but it is urged that science is not concerned only with phenomena—it seeks to discover their real causes. Well, upon this point I can only reply with a flat contradiction, and challenge the Doctor to produce any modern treatise on scientific method that will support his contention. I assert that Science is concerned *exclusively* with phenomena; its work is their classification, and, when "she" has shown the relations in time and space existing between phenomena, it has carried out its work and established the only kind of "causal relations" science has any cognisance of. "Law" with science means invariable sequence, and "cause" likewise means the sum of the conditions that precede or constitute an effect. If Dr. Keeling knows any other meaning for cause, I shall be pleased to hear it. The search for "final causes" is no longer regarded as being part of the work of a scientific inquirer.

Finally, I did not say that the word "noumena" was obsolete; I wish it were. What I did say was, that "it belongs properly to metaphysics (not science), and its existence in modern thought is more or less a survival of that scholasticism which has been so generally discarded." Nor did I say that "causal reality" was a "non-causal, non-phenomenal being that really equals nothing at all, and is absolutely valueless as an explanation of anything." This sentence referred, as anyone will see who consults my article, to the "unknowable reality" upon which Dr. Keeling builds his case. The only "causal reality" I know of is the relations existing between events in the world of experience, and I have never met anyone who knew of any other, although I have met a great many who talked about it.

Dr. Keeling's illustration of the motor-car shows a curious misunderstanding of my argument. On pp. 18, 34-5 of *Quæro* it is argued, by implication and by direct utterance, that the production of the same effects from the same causes points to the existence of mind as the governing factor in the universe. To that position I replied that, if we once grant existence, it is impossible to think of any alteration in the order of its manifestations unless we also picture some external cause

modifying its action. It is a principle of scientific reasoning—the much-talked-of principle of inertia—that a body will continue in the same position unless acted upon by some foreign force; and the principle, if true, of a particle of matter must be true of the universe as a whole. As I then put it: "If matter and energy be all in all, then any alteration in a fixed and definite order is unthinkable.....Only on the supposition of there existing some power, external to matter and energy, capable of modifying or suspending their normal method 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 governing intelligence must always make that order a matter of more or less uncertainty."

Now, for the life of me, I cannot see where the motor-car illustration touches that argument. The motor-car, running by itself, suddenly ends in a smash. Well and good; but Dr. Keeling will see on reflection that if the motor-car were the only object in existence—thus taking the place of the universe in my argument—it would run on for ever, and never smash up. The only reason why the machine ends in a wreck is because external forces lead to that result. So far as the illustration goes, it bears out my contention, not that of my opponent. And the illustration is still more unfortunate from another point of view. The machine is smashed because there is no controlling intelligence. Well, let Dr. Keeling ask himself how many animal and cosmical machines are smashed in the presence (as he believes) of a governing and all-pervading mind. Our earth is full of the wrecks and ruins of animal life, and the cosmic spaces, if astronomers are to be believed, are equally full of the flying fragments of bodies that might have become life-bearing planets. If Dr. Keeling would expect in a non-intelligent universe a host of unwelcome accidents, then he need not look far to find them.

There are several other misconceptions of my position; but, as they are comparatively unimportant, I come at once to deal with the plea for mind as an original factor in the evolution of the universe. I will only ask readers to thoughtfully compare my articles with Dr. Keeling's reply, and I am content to abide the result. "Science," says Dr. Keeling, "reduces all causes to three—viz., matter, energy, and intelligence. The third is as necessary as the other two, if we are to account reasonably for the marvellous intricacy and harmony of the phenomena of matter and force. And it is an original co-operating, producing factor—something entirely distinct from, and superior to, that *protoplasmic* intelligence which appears very late, is limited (so far as we know) to the animal life of our little planet, only observes and learns, never *causes* except in the way of handing down its inherited self."

I am completely at a loss to see the grounds upon which this statement is made, and I am still more bewildered to find it coming from the pen of a scientific man. I can only deny in the strongest and most emphatic manner that science reduces "all causes to three—matter, energy, and intelligence." Putting on one side biology, I deny that any of the physical or mathematical sciences regards intelligence as being either immediately or remotely connected with the causes of the phenomena that come under their survey. Biology alone deals with mind, and even then not as "an original, co-operative, and productive" factor, but as being essentially dependent upon animal structure for its existence. It is distinctly not true that science regards intelligence as an original factor in the universe. Some *scientific men* (Dr. Keeling, for example) may, but that is a very different thing. And what is meant by speaking of "protoplasmic mind" and "mind" as though they were two distinct things? Does Dr. Keeling know of any other mind than protoplasmic mind? Does anyone know of any other? Clearly not; the only mind we know of is that connected with animal organisation, and there is no more reason for believing in mind apart from organisation than there is for believing in heat apart from motion. This may be "Materialism of a certain type," but I believe it to be sound science, and shall continue to hold it until I have something stronger against it than has yet been produced. And Dr. Keeling himself, as a physician, and an eminent one

to boot, in common with all other medical men, is compelled to deal with mind and organisation as being related in terms of structure and function.

Dr. Keeling quotes Lionel Beale to the effect that the difference between "every form of living matter and every form of non-living matter is absolute." But how does Dr. Beale know this any more than the man in the street? How is it possible for him to tell that future discoveries may not break down the boundaries between living and non-living, as Darwin broke down the boundaries between species? Such statements as this must always express man's lack of knowledge, not his possession of it. "Physical forces," says Dr. Keeling, "do not produce even life, let alone mind." And how does my opponent know that any more than Professor Beale? All that can be made out of such a statement is: they cannot produce life, because I am ignorant as to how they produce it. Of course, if we were convinced that Professor Beale and Dr. Keeling knew all the combinations that physical forces can fall into, and, after an elaborate survey of the field, decided against Materialism, then Materialism would be doomed; but, as neither of these two gentlemen have yet reached that stage of mental development, I must be excused for putting all such statements on one side as absolutely worthless. Any man is entitled to say that he does not know; but no man, be he ever so wise, is warranted in saying what it is impossible for future generations to know.

Dr. Keeling has also gone wide of the mark in dealing with my remarks on analysis and synthesis. We are assured that "the merest tyro in chemistry" knows that "products can contain nothing which was not previously contained in that from which they are produced." Well, I again repeat that there is a sense in which you can never get the product out of its factors. The appearance and behavior of a chemical compound is essentially due to the combination of the factors, not to their qualities added together; just as wetness, which is not a property of either oxygen or hydrogen, is a property of the combination of the two. Dr. Keeling does not meet my argument by replying that sweetness is not a quality of sugar of lead without the co-operation of a perceiving and sensitive nerve area. This is no more true of sugar of lead than it is of the whole universe. The world itself would be non-existent to us did we not experience certain sensations when brought into relation with it. At any rate, my position was that, if the Materialist was correct in saying that life was due to a special combination of forces that are to be found working in nature under other forms, then it is absurd to take a man to pieces, and ask in which of the elements does life reside. The reply would be that life resides in none, but is due to the amalgamation of all. It is equally fruitless dismissing Materialism as unsound because science cannot show in what manner this combination is effected. There are many compounds that chemistry can pull to pieces without being able to reconstruct; but no one dreams of dragging in a number of "original co-operating" factors because of that. We are content to wait for more light on the subject. Meanwhile the fact that we can disintegrate the human body into inorganic elements is something; the fact that mind is always found associated with animal organisation, rising or falling with its complexity or simplicity of structure, is something further; and the fact that no one knows, or can have any conception of, any other form of mind than that associated with animal life, is quite enough to discredit the theory that Dr. Keeling so courteously and ably, but so unsuccessfully, champions.

C. COHEN.

American Notes.

THE American continent is indeed a vast field for propagandist enterprise. The ordinary Englishman who has not crossed the Atlantic cannot form an adequate idea of its magnitude. It takes a long time to accomplish any perceptible Freethought work in this country on account of the large cities being so far apart. This necessitates long and expensive railway journeys. As a set-off, however, to this, the unrivalled beauty of the scenery "all along the line" must not be overlooked. In almost every district the traveller beholds Nature

dressed in her fairest and most picturesque robes. The scenery, with its extended plains and forests, varied only by the frozen waters, presents a magnificent spectacle of beauty and of grandeur.

There is one feature in America that has struck me very forcibly, which is this: its people are real workers, and they are not ashamed of honest and fair labor. With them there is a dignity associated with reasonable toil. A working man in the United States is not thought, and he does not think himself, less a man in consequence of his position. Provided his actions and general conduct are honorable, his social position does not exclude him from any society, or debar him from the rights and privileges that should be at the command of all. In America there is no false aristocracy among the honest and truly respectable portion of society. This pertains more to the United States than to Canada. Throughout the principal cities of the Dominion the people are more "English you know." They profess great loyalty to the Queen, and they can do so cheaply, as they contribute nothing to the expense of the royal family. There is one thing that is prominent in all parts of the continent, and that is worshipping the Almighty Dollar. Even among the most ardent professors of religion money is their God, and the dollars are their Savior. In fact, the great drawback here is an extensive moneyocracy. It wields a most unfortunate influence upon the general community.

The American success in the late war with Spain was not an unqualified triumph; bankrupt Spain having no money to settle the costs, the American people have to pay a "war tax" to meet the expenses of the conflict. This mars what they are proud to term their "glorious victory." There is no doubt that the war has left a depressing effect; and, so far as I can judge, the end has not yet come. There are still troubles ahead, and, as I am not a prophet, I venture no opinion upon what the result will be. One thing is certain, and that is the growth of the cordial and sincere feeling between the English and American people. This I believe to be honest, and I have no doubt that it will be enduring, for in all sections of the community the increased manifestation of unity is acknowledged, and warmly approved. This to me is gratifying, as it is an evidence that the interests of humanity are beginning to be regarded as more valuable than the pride of nationality.

Since my arrival on this side of the Atlantic my work has been much crippled through the prevalence of *La Grippe*. Many of my important engagements have had to be postponed in consequence of this epidemic. In Chicago and other Western States hundreds of deaths have occurred daily, and in Toronto nearly all my personal friends have felt its effects. Up to the present it has not touched me, and I am glad to say that my general health has been, and still is, all I could desire. It is unfortunate for me that *La Grippe* should rage just now, for it will detain me on this side longer than I at first intended. I have over forty engagements to fill as soon as the epidemic will permit. The first week in March I go to Ohio for four nights' debate and several lectures. I then visit Pennsylvania, Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, Massachusetts, and New York States. My present intention is to return home in May.

I am spending a few weeks in Toronto, Canada, where I lecture every Sunday evening to crowded audiences. Last Sunday over fifteen hundred persons were present. Financially the results are poor, as admission is by "silver collection," and the expense of hall and music is over ten pounds each night. I had a most enthusiastic reception. *Secular Thought* gave a long report of my first lecture, and was good enough to say: "Mr. Watts, it was at once seen, was in his best form. In every way he seemed as young and vigorous as when he came to Toronto fourteen or fifteen years ago." The *Toronto World* also gave a flattering report, and stated that "great interest was taken in the lecturer's remarks."

Toronto is noted for being "a city of churches," and cant and hypocrisy abound on every hand. The Churches are united only in one particular, and that is in the endeavor to deprive the people of their liberty. They are, however, I am happy to say, being defeated in their religious bigotry. After years of persistent fighting the public have secured the service of Sunday cars. This is a boon which is evidently appreciated,

for a profitable business is kept up on the "Lord's Day." And the very people who fought hard against this advantage now avail themselves regularly of the benefit which secular effort has won for the city. The Toronto *Sunday World*, in referring to a recent meeting of the members of the "Lord's Day Alliance," says: "One thing we missed. Little was said about the iniquity of Sunday cars, and the reason is not far to seek. Some of the leaders of the Alliance in the anti-Sunday car campaign themselves now ride in the cars, and the others plead guilty to riding bicycles and hiring hacks on Sunday." The same journal mentions the fact that "the force of public opinion is swinging in favor of abolishing church exemptions. The Methodists escape payment on property in Toronto valued at above one million dollars, and the Anglicans do not fall far short. The other denominations bring up the total to nearly five million dollars. The Ontario Legislature is to be asked to compel these bodies to pay their share of city taxes."

The recent attempt of the Church party to prohibit the manufacture and sale of all alcoholic drinks in Canada met with the failure it deserved. True temperance is not to be promoted by prohibition. I am a lover of freedom, and am, therefore, opposed to all legislative enactments as to what people should eat or drink. Besides, without giving any opinion as to the value or otherwise of the use of intoxicating liquors, my experience is that in the States, where prohibition is in force, drunkenness is as prevalent as where the law does not exist. And, what is equally as bad, the drinks sold are of an inferior kind, and the evil of hypocrisy is encouraged; while the habit of secrecy, which is necessary, does not improve the people in moral honesty.

The one great drawback to the Freethought movement in the United States and in Canada is the lack of organisation. Freethinkers are numerous, but they do not unite as they should. It is as true now as ever it was that people cannot be induced to do active work unless the impulse be given them. More especially is this the case with Secularists, whose views are regarded by so many with pious horror and sanctimonious bigotry. An isolated Freethinker is almost certain, if he run counter to the prejudices of his neighbors, to incur their dislike, and to suffer loss and detriment. As in England, so upon this side of the Atlantic, professed Christians are petty persecutors, and business loss and social ostracism are too often the penalties for the honest avowal of heresy. Still, indications are not wanting that the power of the Churches is broken, and that liberal views are permeating the minds of all classes of the American and Canadian people.

Despite the gross hypocrisy of the Churches and the pernicious influence of the priests, I have faith in the future of that continent which was not only the home of the Pilgrim Fathers, but which was also the land of Jefferson, Franklyn, and Washington, and the scene of many heroic and useful labors of Thomas Paine. America, with her geographical vastness, her climatic advantages, and her liberal aspirations, will, in my opinion, become one of the leading nations of the world, and her star-spangled banner will be regarded as emblematic of social and intellectual freedom.

CHARLES WATTS.

Christians and War.

In these days of war and rumors of war, and of a so-called "war against war," it may well be inquired what is the consistent Christian's attitude in regard to this greatest of international questions, which threatens every day to become, not only the chief problem, but the most dreadful peril of modern times. It might be supposed that Christians themselves were best able to define the position imposed upon them by the principles they profess. And so they might be left to that definition if they displayed, in regard to other questions, a clear perception of the tendency of their own doctrines, or any disposition to carry their accepted teachings into practice. That, however, is exactly what they never have done, nor are ever likely to do. Modern Christianity is a compromise involving inconsistencies so numerous and so glaring that future ages, in looking

back, will either be staggered with amazement, or impelled to derisive laughter by the side of which even the Homeric and Rabelaisian will be a poor kind of type. Never in the history of the world has a creed been so outgrown, in all its essential elements, by the effect of education upon its nominal adherents, and never has it been possible to point to a wider divergence between principle and practice than that which is presented by the Christians of to-day. A great German sceptic once spoke of "the gigantic joke of the Cosmos." The gigantic joke of our planet is Christianity—professed and belauded to the skies in empty words—incontinently discarded and abrogated in actions.

What practical effect has the "Sermon on the Mount" on Christian individuals and Christian nations? None whatever. It is read devoutly in churches and chapels, sermons are preached on it, extravagant panegyrics have been written about it. The words have become so familiar that they have ceased to have any meaning. No one is moved by them in one direction or deterred in another. For all practical purposes they are a dead letter. Take this question of war. How can a consistent Christian become a combatant, offensive or defensive? The thing is impossible. He may be kicked and buffeted off the face of the earth by other professing Christians, but he must patiently bear it, and resignedly and unresentfully pass out of existence. It is his Cross, to be carried by him uncomplainingly in the footsteps of his Master. Chaos may follow upon his non-resistance, may be actually invited by it, but his duty is clear.

Christians with some element of "saving commonsense" in their compositions have tried in various ways to evade the obligations placed upon them. The measure of their success has been regulated by the extent of their sacrifice of principle, and the slur that they have been willing to cast upon their Lord and Master, who, if they had lived in the day when he is said to have lived and worked and preached, would inevitably have regarded them with sovereign pity, if not with disdain. He denounced the Pharisees of his time in sufficiently strong terms. All his epithets are equally applicable to the military and military-supporting Pharisees of the present time. The attitude of self-excusing Christians never received a better exemplification than in that memorable conversation between Dr. Johnson and his biographer, Boswell. The devout doctor, in his oracular way, said: "I do not see, sir, that fighting is absolutely forbidden in Scripture. I see revenge forbidden, but not self-defence." To which Boswell replied: "The Quakers say it is. Unto him that smiteth thee on one cheek offer him also the other." Then down came the great doctor with all his weight on his humble interrogating satellite: "But stay, sir, the text is meant only to have the effect of moderating passion; it is plain that we are not to take it in a literal sense. We see this from the context, where there are other recommendations which I warrant you the Quaker will not take literally—as, for instance, 'From him that would borrow of thee turn not away.' Let a man whose credit is bad come to the Quaker and say, 'Well, sir, lend me a hundred pounds,' he will find him as unwilling as any other man. No, sir, a man may shoot the man who invades his character, as he may shoot him who attempts to break into his house."

The doctor's law, as set forth in the concluding sentence, could hardly be sustained in the present day. His interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount is equally defective, though it is exactly the same as that which is offered in modern Christian apologetics. If words mean anything, the whole tenor of the Sermon on the Mount is distinctly opposed to fighting of any kind, or for any purpose. Passive endurance is inculcated by a variety of illustrations. To suffer wrong is made a virtue, and the inducement to the practice of that newly-made virtue is contained in the promise, "for great is your reward in heaven." Revenge is necessarily forbidden when no kind of opposition to injustice is permitted. Self-defence is prohibited by the injunction to "Resist not evil." It is not a question of taking all these teachings in a literal sense; the spirit with which they are pervaded is clear, and is altogether opposed to the taking up of arms either for aggression or defence.

The vast and ever-increasing armaments of Christian

Europe are a distinct violation of the most solemn injunctions of Christ. They are absolutely irreconcilable with New Testament doctrine, and it is an astounding fact that only the Society of Friends and a few minor Christian sects have the intelligence to perceive, or the honesty to act upon, what is an essential part of their profession of faith. That the Quakers do not give to every man that asketh is another matter. Their inconsistency in that respect has no bearing upon the point under consideration. It may be an evidence of their worldly wisdom, and another example of the kind of compromise Christians are in these days forced to make. But as the Peculiar People stand fast by one special doctrine of Christianity, so the Society of Friends stand fast by another, and both sects constitute a standing reproach to the vast arrays of modern Christians who are Christians only in name, and who, according to their own "Holy Book," are self-condemned.

"Evidential missionaries"—I believe that is the name now adopted by those who used to call themselves "infidel-slayers"—urge that one text or series of texts should be taken in conjunction with others. Very well; it is quite possible to find in the heterogeneous contents of the Scriptures some passages that may be set off against others. It does not seem quite clear what is to be gained on the Christian side by disclosing contradictions in the Divine Revelation. We may, however, consider the doctrine of non-resistance preached by Christ, and to some extent by St. Paul, in the light of other portions of the New Testament. Thereby we arrive at an explanation of the basis and motive of the teaching. We find that Christ and his apostles were in expectation of an early end of the world. The then order of things was, in their judgment, approaching a speedy termination. Hence they held themselves apart from all worldly concerns as matters of transitory importance in which they had no permanent interest. In the short period which, as they supposed, would be left to them, they quite expected to be persecuted; and, being assured that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, they had no inclination and no time to resent any temporary injustice on earth. We know now how hopelessly wrong were their calculations. Their teachings founded upon that mistake remain, but are necessarily out of date and impracticable at a time when people are happily undisturbed by any prospect of an immediate dissolution of the world and all its multifarious concerns. The doctrine of non-resistance should take its place in the tomb of exploded delusions, along with the doctrine of the speedy end of the world out of which it originated. At present one of the most striking commentaries on the so-called "success" of Christianity is the fact that Christian nations are armed to the teeth, an ominously bellicose spirit is abroad, and, in spite of rescripts and appeals, the apprehension prevails that sooner or later a light will be set to all this inflammable material, and a combustion and conflagration ensue such as the world has never yet seen.

FRANCIS NEALE.

Originality.

DICKENS somewhere writes that there is nothing like seeing the originals; it eases one's mind so much. What patient labor has been expended to find the origin of famous rivers, and the vast literature that has floated down the stream of time. The answer to who can show us any new thing depends on what we know and have seen. Almost every discovery and patent has had rival claimants. New books may be but the republication of what someone else thought in earlier times. Original styles of writing there may be, but few new thoughts; and how can they be identified? In our time even the great faiths of the world, once thought to be of exclusively divine origin, are found to have striking family likeness. The languages of the world betray the secret that they are derived. Man himself is now traced back centuries before his once alleged original appearance in Eden, and what he originally was has yet to be determined. Recent discoveries in Egypt of remains of an earlier people in that country go beyond the generations of the earliest member of the Adam family.

Moral maxims adopted by various nations defy us to fix their origin or date.

Fires are common to every household, and they have some varying history; but who originated fire? Animals below man do not even keep one alight. If I light my candle from yours, you say mine is a borrowed light; but did you not get your light from somewhere? Most origins are hidden or lost in the obscurity of antiquity.

Those who write sober history do not make the facts or events they describe. Even the eloquence of lawyers has to use evidence, as brickmakers do clay. The poets use the moon and stars for the basis of their songs. The music of the spheres was produced by imaginary friction in the movements of the starry heavens. Most intellectual power, like the power of the miller's wheel, depends on a common stream. True, we speak of *self-acting machines*; but are there any? Is there anything which is not moved by something not itself? Every plant and animal feeds and grows by means, external or internal, not themselves. Prophets, poets, painters, and sculptors—are they not all inspired by the gods? Even Moses may have borrowed his stories from others. The brilliant Goethe owned that his mind had been fed by a thousand pens.

Originality refers to the first; but who uttered the first thought, or first reported it? We do not call all literature quotation; but it clearly depends largely on what preceded it. It is undoubtedly indebted to what went before. An original writer might be defined as one competent to use materials at hand, to describe accurately what is known, and do all this in the best form of words. Of whatever origin, those thoughts are best which express some truth, whether in prose, poetry, painting, or sculpture. Those thoughts are of greater value than the names of the first writer, painter, or sculptor.

Some minds have the original peculiarity of being able to produce what is required at the right time. The man of the hour attributed his success to believing he knew all, while his listeners knew nothing. It was thought novel for Luther to anathematise the Pope, but the Pope was first. Most of the sayings of wits and statesmen did duty in similar society long ago. Children's stories, once belonging to modern Europe, were discovered ages before, and where the ancient lands got them from no one can tell.

Quite a number of eminent persons were once claimed as the original Junius. The opponents of Shakespeare pay him the compliment that only men of the highest capacity of his age could have been the author—Bacon being one. Apart from such assumptions, Shakespeare used and borrowed from numerous extant plays. A Catholic tells me all is in the Holy Fathers, and a Jew that all is in the Talmud. Landor truly remarked that Shakespeare was more original than his originals.

Munchausen hung his bugle by the kitchen fire to thaw out the tune; but the words of Plato, long ages before, frozen in winter, were melted by the summer in the ears of the multitude.

After all, whether thought travels in succession or in cycles, the true, useful, and beautiful is not mine nor thine, but one universal ours; the value of a thing is in its use.

CHARLES CATTELL.

Profane Parables.

XLIX.—APPRECIATION.

A BENEVOLENT Rationalist essayed to rescue a Salvationist from the slums of superstition.

"Come, my friend," said he; "we will enjoy a feast of reason. We will partake of choice viands at the table of mental luxury. We will sup with the epicures of intellect."

"Yes!" cried the Salvationist with enthusiasm. "I will purchase me a peim'orth of good whelks!"

L.—APPLICATION.

A certain preacher had in his congregation an unprincipled usurer. So he selected a text wherein the evils of avarice were set forth; and he preached at the usurer with much eloquence

But, behold, the usurer listened calmly to the discourse, nor did he seem angry thereat. And, when it was finished, he shook the preacher warmly by the hand.

"Thy sermon was excellent and timely," quoth the usurer; "for, mark me well, there are some have need of it!"

LI.—ALTERNATIVES.

"Flee from the wrath to come," yelled the evangelist.

"How?" said the inquirer.

"There is only one way," cried the evangelist.

And he exhorted the inquirer to exercise his faith, and believe that someone took a personal interest in him about two thousand years before he was born.

"My conscience!" exclaimed the inquirer.

LII.—CONTRIBUTIONS.

A mad architect constructed a lofty tower of flimsy materials. And he showed it to the people, saying:

"Behold, this tower is upheld by divine agency. It can never perish or decay."

And the people were awe-stricken at his words. And they poured out their gold with lavish hands—to keep the tower from falling about their ears.

LIII.—INFERENCE.

The Devil was despondent because he had gotten his discharge.

"Even the ignorant have rejected me!" he cried.

"Ha! ha!" laughed the Ghost; "they've found you out, you see!"

"Laugh not!" said the Devil. "'Twill be thy turn anon!"

And the Ghost became suddenly grave.

LIV.—GODLINESS.

There was once a good man who loved to help the poor. And, having helped them with his wealth, he pointed them to the infinity of blankness overhead, and told them to thank that. Only he gave a high-sounding name to the blankness.

He was a good man—a good fool. E. R. W.

The Missing "Sign"; or, Hypocrisy Unmasked.

"These signs shall follow them that believe:—If they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them."—Jesus.

(The newspapers recently recorded that a clergyman poisoned himself through a mistake.)

THE other day a parson drank
A "deadly thing" unwittingly;
It "hurt him" much, so Christ, of course,
Dispatched him hellward, fittingly.

When Christ had lived for thirty years—
A life that's quite unknown to us—
He preached a while, then died a while,
As story-books have shown to us.
He made a queer *post-mortem* speech,
And said, with gravest suavity,
That unbelievers would be damned—
Then fairly lost his *gravity*.
He said that ne'er a deadly drink
In all the world, till frying-time,
Should hurt believers, no, not one,
Nor expedite their dying-time.

The parson's ending proved that he
Had passed his life deceivingly;
Had lived and preached and prayed and lied,
And perished unbelievingly.

'Tis sad! but we are forced to think—
Not spitefully, but ruthfully—
That such as he are surely damned,
If Mary's boy spoke truthfully.

G. L. MACKENZIE.

How to Help Us.

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

Acid Drops.

WHEN Mrs. Besant first became a disciple of Madame Blavatsky we thought it our duty to point out as clearly and forcibly as we could that she had ceased to be a Secularist, and that it was her moral duty to leave the Secular platform. A good many Secularists did not like our attitude, but we understood Theosophy and they did not, and we knew the direction in which that lady was walking. Subsequent events have fully justified our position. Mrs. Besant is now as rank a superstitionist as the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Pope of Rome. She is eloquent still, but so are they; and what is eloquence when it only decorates folly and reaction? There lies before us as we write an appeal signed by Mrs. Besant on behalf of a Central Hindu College at Benares, where education is to go hand in hand with the old Hindu religion. She implores the natives to reject the secular education which slays faith and insidiously pierces ethics. India must preserve the "jewels of her religious heritage," and with Mrs. Besant's aid she is to become "the spiritual teacher of the world." How are the mighty fallen!

The dear old Pope is quite jubilant. He fancies the Ritualistic movement in England is a sign of the return of this country to the bosom of the Holy Catholic Church. But the old gentleman is mistaken. A considerable number of Christians may go Romewards, for Christianity is dying intellectually, and many parsons see that they must push business on the emotional and histrionic side. But the people of England are no more favorable to the Papacy than ever. They have too much independence, and even self-assertion, to knuckle under to a foreign potentate, who claims to rule them in the name of God.

The Americans have had to give the Filipinos a severe lesson, and the Madrid *Imparcial* remarks that "the justice of God is beginning to be manifested." If this is a true remark, the justice of God must be a very peculiar article. The Filipinos are used by the deity to worry the Americans, and for every American killed a hundred Filipinos are sent to Kingdom-come. It doesn't seem economical anyhow.

Miss Peterson, the rector's daughter who is charged with the murder of Mr. Whibley at Biddenden, went to work in an extremely pious fashion. She got him to look at a picture of "The Good Shepherd" on the wall, and then shot him in the back of the head.

The hysterical creature who is running the Peace Crusade in England, and dragging not only men of God but labor leaders at his tail, recently addressed a meeting in the Victoria Music Hall. Before the meeting he and the sublime Mr. Reader Harris, of the Pentecostal League, held "a half-hour's preliminary prayer-meeting behind the curtain on the stage." Perhaps the prayer-meeting was all right, but it was held in the wrong place. It ought to have been held in the prison-cell where Thomas George Senior is doing four months' hard labor for believing that prayer is answered.

Mr. Reader Harris's paper is called *Tongues of Fire*, and is about the silliest one we ever saw, not even excepting the *Christian Herald*. In a recent number we noticed the following passage:—"The Christian, the infidel, the heathen writer of bygone ages, the scientist of to-day, all agree in proclaiming universal inherited depravity." Speaking for the "infidel," we emphatically deny it. Bad tendencies may be inherited, but so may good tendencies. This has nothing whatever to do with the doctrine of original sin. Moreover, "depravity" is a moral term which can only apply to persons of a certain age. It is nonsense to talk about the "depravity" of a baby, for instance; but any good Christian will tell you it is full of original sin, and will be damned for it unless Jesus Christ saves it from the flames of hell.

Rev. John Wood, an anti-Ritualist, has been mobbed at Peterborough, and the police had to keep the peace, which was seriously threatened by rival religionists. How they love one another!

The Actors' Church Union aims at Christianising the dramatic profession. It is managed by prominent ecclesiastics. We suggest that actors should get up a Union to civilise the clergy. It is much wanted.

The Bishop of Bristol proposes to substitute "Thy everlasting kingdom" for "Thine everlasting kingdom." He says the latter gets pronounced too often as "Thy never-lasting kingdom."

Here is a sample of the results of confession. The Bishop of Carlisle stated at the Convocation of York that he knew a bright and happy girl of sixteen who was asked to confess by a well-known London clergyman. She laughed at the idea and said she had nothing to confess, but she was told it was for her soul's health, and at last she yielded. That bright

and happy girl soon became changed, and three times within the last few months she has tried to commit suicide.

Religion is much the same everywhere. Here are a few items from the last number to hand of our valued exchange, the New York *Truthseeker*. Rev. Benjamin Barth, of Pattison, New Jersey, has absconded. Rev. W. Moore, of Benton, Kentucky, is in trouble for free kissing. Methodists and Baptists in Izard county, Arkansas, have warned the Latter-Day Saints to leave the place or be killed. Rev. Robert Stamm, an Evangelist, has gone clean mad. He has been firing off his revolver, and the people who don't like being shot have had him arrested.

The following advertisement is from a recent number of the *Lady*: "9091.—Wanted, Bible; exchange club cards, used twice." We suppose the lady who wants the Bible is anxious to get saved, and is willing to let anybody else use the cards and risk damnation. How make *our own* salvation sure, as the hymn says, is the duty of every good Christian.

A boy in the Christian Brothers' Schools at Lille, in France, has been brutally outraged and murdered. One of the Christian Brothers has been arrested. A violent anti-clerical demonstration has taken place. A crowd of 3,000 persons mobbed the schools of the Christian Brothers, and stoned the windows, shouting, "Down with the monks! Death to them!"

Violent anti-clerical demonstrations have taken place at Lille since the murder of that poor boy. One evening a great crowd of workmen attacked the schools and churches, and two gendarmes and several civilians were wounded. The workmen demand that priests avowed to celibacy shall not be allowed to take any part in the education of children.

A raffle for souls is the interesting ceremony which took place a little time ago in a Catholic Church at Puebla. It was called a *Gran Rifa de Animas*, and was so announced in an issue of the *El Amigo de la Verdad*, published at Puebla. The Bishop, Dr. Perfectus himself, signed the announcement designating the raffle as a *Lotteria pro Animabus Purgatori* ("Lottery for Spirits in Purgatory").

The Sisters, it seems, go about in October among Catholic families where deaths have occurred during the year. They ask for a peseta (a shilling), and the name of the dead friend is written on a slip of paper and given to the Sisters. These are kept till the first Monday in November, when the bishop goes into one of the churches, draws slips, and those whose names are drawn are delivered from purgatory that morning!

Walking leisurely along one of the principal thoroughfares of Birmingham, and probably meditating on his next Sunday's sermon, the Rev. Dr. Butler, Vicar of Olton, felt something fall on his head. It proved to be an elderly man named Churches, whom the Lord had let drop from the front of a high building where the man was engaged in cleaning windows. Churches sustained a fractured thigh, and the Vicar, though stunned, was able to go home and reflect upon the fact that, if Providence had intentionally or inadvertently dropped a man on his head, it had also blessed him with a pretty thick skull.

The boys of the village of Wotton, Surrey, have been competing for sums of £2, as has been the custom for 180 years past. The candidates appear in the churchyard, and, laying their hands upon the benefactor's tombstone, repeat the Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, Ten Commandments, read aloud Cor. xv., and write in a legible hand two verses from the same chapter. Seven passed the test, and walked off with £2 each. This seems for juveniles an easier way of winning a prize than entering into the competitions of *Comic Cuts*, the *Wonder*, or the *Boy Friend's Own Journal*, though it is doubtful whether some staid old gentlemen, who are churchwardens, could go through it without careful preparation.

The *Christian Herald* publishes a story with the heading, "A Hare's Foot in an Infidel's Pocket." The "Infidel," according to that veracious print, carried the hare's foot for luck in card-playing. Of course, no "infidel" ever did anything of the kind; but we have heard of Christians carrying about with them the toe-nails of saints and dirty little pieces of sacred rag and bone.

The Rev. T. T. Lucius Morgan, vicar of Thorpe, feeling compelled to go through the Athanasian Creed, with all its damnatory clauses, has compromised matters by turning on the organ during its recital.

The defendant in a recent breach of promise action broke off the engagement because "God talked to him about this matter," and he found "he must do what God wanted him to do, and that God wanted him to do his work alone." The plaintiff retorted: "I am afraid you are thinking more about the other young lady than about God." "Edna," he replied,

"you are right." She could not, however, forgive him, "unless he had an answer from God in prayer."

Then they prayed on their knees for a quarter of an hour, at the end of which time the defendant declared that "God had joined them together even more strongly than at first." The end of all the praying and palaver is, that the defendant is mulcted in £200 damages.

A writer in the *Catholic Times* complains that the Committee of the Bethnal Green Free Library have refused to accept that journal any more, although all other papers are acceptable. Certainly such refusal is a piece of stupid bigotry. So is this writer's gratuitous reference to the *Freethinker* as "blasphemous literature."

The Pope apparently recognises that some reward is necessary to induce people to read the Scriptures even for a quarter of an hour a day. His Holiness has made it known that he will grant to all the faithful who shall have devoutly read the Scriptures for at least a quarter of an hour an indulgence of 300 days, provided that the edition of the Gospel has been approved by legitimate authority. This is one way of gilding the pill.

"When will men," asks the Rev. W. A. Jephson, member of the London School Board, "learn that progress is only possible where there is freedom, and that to defer to authority, venerable and hoary though it be, is to clog the wheels of civilisation and stop progress."

The Clacton-on-Sea Urban District Council have very sensibly decided to dispense with the consecration of their new cemetery. They have, however, determined to have a dedication service, which, of course, with great hauteur, the local clergy have declined to attend. Their absence will be a great blow, which the Council must do their best to survive.

A new "church" chaplain is to be chosen for Portsea workhouse, and an animated debate took place at a recent meeting of the Guardians on a proposal to place the matter in the hands of the Bishop of Winchester. Eventually the Guardians determined to do without the Bishop's aid.

Twelve sermons on Ritualism by C. H. Spurgeon have been published. In one of them he deals with transubstantiation, observing that "if Christ's body be really received into your mouth, broken with your teeth, and made to enter into your stomach, then, in the first place, you are guilty of a gross act of cannibalism, and nothing better, inasmuch as you eat human flesh.....Does grace operate through the stomach, and save us through our bowels?"

Here is a warning to Bible kissers. A girl, as a witness in a law court in New York, kissed the Bible. Thereby she caught a leprous disease from which she died a few days afterwards, as certified by the physicians who attended her. The magistrate now forbids people to kiss the book.

The Moravian Missions in Jamaica have suffered terribly by the hurricane. Instead of appealing to the Lord, who did the mischief, the Colonial Missionary Society have written to Joseph Chamberlain, who knows nothing about the matter, and apparently cares less. They want some money, which it would be easy enough to pray for, but they think a more tangible result would accrue if they could persuade J. C. at the Colonial Office, rather than J. C. in heaven, to give them some of the West Indian Imperial grant. But Joseph declines, and so the Missionary Society must repair the ravages of Providence in the best way they can.

The Rev. B. Ashton, Baptist, of Union City, Michigan, U.S., has, it is stated, lately refused to marry a couple because they did not profess Christianity. Serve 'em right for going to him—if they ever did. He said it was a matter of conscience with him, and as long as his conscience was clear he was willing to lose the fees. What sublime self-abnegation! If he can afford to lose the fees, unbelieving couples are probably quite as willing to dispense with his services. There is some doubt if they were ever thus sought.

A minister, on going to preach at a mission hall on Sunday morning in Edinburgh, discovered the beadle's body hanging to a bracket in a lobby. If a minister could not bring his own beadle into a better state of mind, what good can he be to his congregation?

While a church in Birmingham was being demolished the roof fell, killing one man and seriously injuring several others. From the recent anxiety of the local School Board, one would have thought that they anticipated a similar catastrophe at the Bristol-street Board schools when used by the Secularists. But there is one thing about Providence that you may always depend upon, and that is—you cannot depend upon him at all.

A story of Bishop Wilberforce told by Dr. Newman Hall at a temperance meeting. After examining a Sunday school he

said: "Now, children, I have been asking you a lot of questions. Just ask me one." A lad promptly took the divine at his word and put the following poser: "P-p-p-please sir, w-w-what use was Jacob's l-l-ladder to the angels if they had w-w-wings?"

The Kaiser, standing on Mount Olivet, recognised it as the place where the "most stupendous combat that was ever fought on earth, the fight for the salvation of mankind, was fought by the One." He seems not to have been able to go One better—or at least his modesty prevented him from expressing any determination to do so—but he took a military oath to weld his people in unity. They are already united in one thing—their distaste for his intolerable egotism.

The Poplar Guardians proposed to purchase an organ for use in the workhouse chapel at a cost of nearly £300. Not one-twentieth of the inmates attend the service. However, it is all for the "praise and glory of God," though a few inexpensive extra comforts for the inmates at Christmas are regarded as a sinful extravagance. It is gratifying to know that the proposal of the pious Bumbles was strenuously opposed and ultimately rejected.

"All things to all men." A most obliging cleric is the Rev. A. M. Mitchell, vicar of Burtonwood. He states that, with a view to recognising both High and Low Church doctrine, it is his intention from Sunday next to hold services for each section of his parishioners. The vicar of Bray changed his coat often enough to suit the times, but there were decent intervals between his transformations.

We cull the following from the *Westminster Gazette*:—A Sunday-school teacher asked: "What are good men called who leave their homes and go to foreign lands to teach the heathen?" The boys answered: "Prodigal sons." Another class of boys was asked: "What were the ten plagues?" Their ungallant answer was: "The ten virgins, sir."

In a leader on the Birmingham affair the *Yorkshire Post* remarks that "Free thinking and free love have somehow been run in double harness for a good many years." This is a most absurd falsehood. We challenge our contemporary to indicate one Freethought journal or one Freethought lecturer that advocates "free love." If this challenge is not accepted, every sensible man will know what to think of the *Yorkshire Post's* veracity.

Africa has nearly seven hundred different languages, and this fact "presents great difficulties to missionary effort." So says a religious weekly. Pity the Lord never thought of this, and other possibilities, when he projected his Divine Revelation.

The watchful care of Providence over all his works receives confirmation every day. St. Paul's Cathedral, Montreal, Canada, has been destroyed by fire. It was an exact replica of St. Paul's, London, on a small scale, and was one of the favorite sites of Canada.

The bigotry occasionally exhibited in the Established Church of Scotland is very regrettable, and one is glad to find that it is not always successful. The Rev. Alexander Robinson, of Kilmum, published a book called *The Savior in the Newer Light*, and this led to his expulsion from the ministry. But he has now been elected pastor of a church at Crieff, which does not seem to have such an illiberal, straight-laced antipathy to modern knowledge and ideas.

Dr. Donald Macleod, one of Her Majesty's chaplains, has resigned his position in the Glasgow Christian Institute because objection was taken to his identifying himself with the revival of classical drama in Glasgow. What is the next thing to be taken objection to by the "unco' guid"?

"Tis an ill-wind that blows nobody any good." So we are glad to learn from the *Church Times* that Sir William Harcourt and his followers have "brought Disestablishment from within, as well as from without, into the range of practical politics."

The way in which poor little Kensit has been unceremoniously shunted shows the base ingratitude and snobbishness of which the Protestant section are capable. But for his church "brawling," things would never have been brought to the present head. As soon, however, as the agitation is in full swing, Lord Kinnaid and other Church snobs elbow him off the big scene, and leave him to go ranting about in the bye-ways and the slums.

Blinkers—"Why are all these Theosophists rushing into the hall?" Winkers—"A lecturer from the Orient has promised to tell them what Theosophy is."

The New York *Discoverer* is discussing the question, How far should the pulpit be literary? The Rev. Dr. Henry Van Dyke, of the Brick Church, New York, says he doesn't believe the pulpit should be literary at all. Well, it is in no immediate danger of becoming so, either in his country or ours.

Bill—"What is all this talk about the 'Reservation of the Sacrament'?" Jim—"If it's anythin' to eat or drink, you can bet it'll be reserved from us."

In an article in the *National Review* Mr. F. C. Conybeare suggests a "Clerical Crusade." He quotes a letter of a Catholic published in the *Siecle* which says "the clergy of France, from the archbishops and bishops down to the smallest curé, are, with very few exceptions, gravely, sadly responsible for the blind obstinacy with which almost a preponderating portion of the French people has upheld for nearly a year injustice, falsity, and atrocious barbarism."

An accusation by Dr. Horton that the *Echo* in the past has been influenced by Roman Catholic members of its staff is replied to in the *Free Church Chronicle* by Mr. Howard Evans, formerly editor of the *Echo*, who explains that the Roman Catholic form of worship gives scope to the descriptive reporter and to the artist in black and white. Further, "Cardinal Vaughan understands the use of advertising."

With a great deal of absurd gush the *Church Weekly* discourses on the "portraits of our Lord from the catacombs" as if they were authentic representations of Jesus miraculously preserved, instead of mere ideal pictures solely dependent upon the individual imaginations of the artists. Suppose, instead of talking about portraits, the *Church Weekly* were to devote itself to proving that such a man-God as the Christ of the Gospels ever existed.

The way the legal oath is administered in Norway has a remarkable resemblance to a now somewhat old-fashioned gesture of ridicule which consisted in placing the thumb against the nose with the fingers outspread. In Norway the witness raises his thumb, his forefinger, and his middle finger. This signifies the Trinity, while the larger of the up-lifted fingers is supposed to represent the soul of the witness, and the smaller to indicate his body.

The oath administered to Jews has been the occasion of exceptional anxiety to his Honor Judge Bacon of the White-chapel County Court. An interpreter recently imported there seems to have been detected in substituting for the word "Jehovah" the Yiddish equivalent of "So help you God." Judge Bacon said the word "Jehovah" must be pronounced. Mr. Rehfish, the interpreter, replied that it was against the Jewish law and custom to pronounce that name. Judge Bacon, who is an authority on many things, including the fit of ladies' dresses, was not to be put down by a mere interpreter talking about his own religion, so he quoted the Psalms of David against Mr. Rehfish, and apparently shut him up.

During the recent earthquake in Mexico city the people in hundreds fell down on their knees and prayed, thinking that the day of judgment had come. The shrieking of the women was quite appalling. Such are the consolations of religion.

"Providence" has been supplying the weather very badly of late. Even out in Australia—as we read in our friend Joseph Symes' *Liberator*—it has been changeable and trying enough to make him suggest that perhaps "Providence" has gone crazy. Here in England we have had a mild temperature principally, varied with occasional cold snaps, and blustering winds and heavy rains. Much land is badly flooded, and many people in towns have had free water in their basements. Wrecks are reported all round our coast. And out in the Atlantic it has been terrible. Seamen say they have never seen such weather before. Over in America it has been freezing right down to Florida. People and horses have died of the cold in the streets of New York and other cities. On the whole, it is about time we had Home Rule on this planet.

"Shall gravitation cease as you go by?" asks the poet Pope. Well, why not? We are told that God can do anything. He could therefore suspend gravitation at one point and let it operate elsewhere. This does not happen, however, and the logical inference is either that there is no God, or that he regulates the universe without reference to us. Only last week a terrible storm swept over Ireland, and at Gartsharie the lightning struck the house of a man named Hanley. He, his wife, and his dog were all three sitting before the kitchen fire, and they were killed instantaneously. This sort of thing used to be called "the act of God," but Christians are now rather squeamish at using that expression.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, February 19, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road, London: 7.30, "Byron as Poet, Wit, and Freethinker."

To Correspondents.

DURING Mr. Charles Watts's absence from England his address will be, c/o Truthseeker office, 28 Lafayette-place, New York City, U.S.A.

H. LEES SUMNER.—Received with thanks. You are apparently under a wrong impression with regard to Mr. Foote's new volume, *The Book of God*, of which you speak so favorably. It is not a mere reproduction of the articles on Dean Farrar's book which appeared in the *Freethinker* two years ago. Chapters nine, ten, eleven, and twelve are entirely new; and the other chapters have been revised and considerably amplified.

T. J. THURLOW.—In our next. Too late for this week.

J. TULLIN.—Will try to use it.

T. MACLEISH.—We quite agree with you that our people should give a wide berth to such traffickers in low personalities. It is foolish to advertise them into general notice.

G. W. BLYTHE.—You did not quite catch our meaning.

ZENO.—It is absurd for the Theist to allege that the Atheist does not know matter, and then to make this the cover for his own allegation of knowledge of spirit. Thanks for copy of the reverend gentleman's letter. It is all very well for him to call our Peculiar People pamphlet "a piece of caricature." Let him answer it if he can. We will afford him space for the attempt. Glad to hear that you are delighted with the pamphlet, and have distributed some copies. If you want more, please write direct to Miss Vance, 377 Strand, W.C.

A. HURCUM.—Thanks for letter and enclosure. We are neither friendly nor unfriendly with the gentleman you refer to. Our work lies in a different direction, and we keep to it straitly.

W. COX.—Pleased to hear that the Liverpool Branch has such an excellent program for the immediate future. Are we to take it that a large hall cannot possibly be obtained now for lectures by Mr. Foote?

E. WILLIAMS.—We will look into the matter and write you.

J. M. HEADLEY.—Thanks for the Portrait Album of the School Board candidates at Yarmouth. Pleased to have your own counterfeit presentment. We hope you will supplant one of the clericals on the School Board.

JUST as we are going to press we find, on opening the *Banffshire Journal*, a report of the death of Dr. Alexander Walker, of Newton Heath, Manchester, at the age of forty-nine, from acute pneumonia. Dr. Walker was an ardent Freethinker and a man of most benevolent disposition. He will be missed by a large circle of friends.

ADONIAN.—The old law compelling people to go to church has never been repealed, but it is obsolete, and could not now be enforced. The text you want is Luke xiv. 26.

J. GREEVES FISHER.—Will see whether it will give material for a paragraph in our next.

THE "FREETHINKER" CIRCULATION FUND.—Turnbull Family (Glasgow), 6s.; Collection at Glasgow on Sunday evening, £1 2s.

W. ALBERY.—Sorry we cannot locate the extract for you. Spencer's works are voluminous, and, as he is not exactly a great stylist, special passages do not stick in the memory.

A. J. HOOPER.—No room this week. Will try to find room for it, perhaps a little abbreviated, in our next.

T. W. DUKE.—We are unable to oblige you with Mr. Wallace Nelson's present address. Probably a letter would find him at the office of the *People's Newspaper*, Rockhampton, Queensland.

W. LEDGER.—The theme invites more ambitious treatment. There are fine poems already on the subject of Bruno's martyrdom, notably by Swinburne. What is wanted now is a longer and adequate performance.

RECEIVED.—Liberator—People's Newspaper—Secular Thought—Boston Investigator—Petit Parisien—Reynolds—Ethical World—Sydney Bulletin—Brann's Iconoclast—Isle of Man Times—New York Truthseeker—Lucifer—English Mechanic—Queer Tales—Wishaw Press—Bolton Evening News—Two Worlds—Banffshire Journal—Progressive Thinker—Public Opinion—Yarmouth Independent.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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

Sugar Plums.

MR. FOOTE returns to-day (Feb. 19) to the Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, where he will lecture for three or four Sundays before another visit to the provinces. His subject this evening will be "Byron as Poet, Wit, and Freethinker," with some reference to his newly-published letters. A lecture of this kind should be an agreeable change, and will probably attract a large audience.

Mr. Foote had good meetings on Sunday morning and afternoon at Glasgow. The evening meeting was a very crowded one—the largest that has assembled there for years. Many persons had to be turned away at the doors. Mr. Foote was apparently in good form, the laughter and applause of the audience being frequent and pronounced. Mr. Baxter, who presides at the bookstall, informs us that there was a record sale of literature. Mr. Turnbull was the chairman for the day.

We are glad to hear that the Glasgow Branch is more than holding its own; it is, in fact, making slow but sure progress. It has a first-rate secretary in Mr. T. Robertson, and the Committee is both energetic and harmonious. The Branch would like to see the South-West district better worked on the week-nights, as it was when Mr. Foote was running his Lecture Scheme.

The *West Ham Critic* censures the "totally unnecessary debate with regard to the advisability of persecuting the *Freethinker* by excluding it from the tables of the Free Library," and says it is really an attempt to rouse religious prejudice against the Labor party. Our contemporary asks Councillor Boardman how he would define "inoffensive blasphemy," since he so objects to *offensive* blasphemy. The writer, should, however, be more strictly on his guard against the misrepresentations of the orthodox bigots. He says he has never read a copy of the *Freethinker* himself, but he also says "it seems generally admitted to be hardly entitled to be termed cultured or refined in tone." When it comes to "culture," the editor of the *Freethinker* and most of its contributors could give the majority of their critics a lot of points and still win easily. The editor himself has probably read and digested more good books than common-garden journalists have ever handled. The late J. M. Wheeler, who sub-edited this journal from 1882 to 1898, was one of the best-read men in England. Mr. Watts, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Gould, and Mr. Chilperic Edwards are not the men to be accused of want of "culture," at any rate. As to "refinement," that is a matter of taste; and Christian bigots are not likely to allow it to any militant Freethinker.

Mr. Heaford lectured at the Athenæum Hall on Sunday evening, and his discourse was highly appreciated by a good audience.

A successful meeting took place last Sunday morning in response to the appeal made to the Battersea Secularists to revive their branch. A large audience listened to addresses from Messrs. Heaford, Pack, and Ramsey. These gatherings will now be continued at the Park gates every Sunday morning.

Mr. Percy Ward delivers three lectures at Wigan to-day (Feb. 19) in the Public Hall. We hope the local friends will rally in force and give him a hearty welcome.

One result of the starting of a Secular Society at Yarmouth is a considerable increase in the local sale of the *Freethinker*. There is also a great demand for general Freethought literature.

Members of the Birmingham Branch are invited to attend a special members' meeting on Monday evening (February 20) at eight o'clock, at the High-street Coffee House. The business is (1) to nominate a town for the approaching N. S. S. Conference, (2) to receive a report on the Committee's endeavors to obtain a hall for Sunday meetings, and (3) to decide upon future course of action. Every member should attend if possible.

The Book of God in the Light of the Higher Criticism, with Special Reference to Dean Farrar's New Apology, by G. W. Foote, published by R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, price 1s., is a volume we strongly recommend to all who know how Biblical controversy at present stands as between the

most eminent men. The ordinary clergy are generally too ignorant to be able to explain these matters to their congregations, or else they think that the people ought not to be told the truth when they have grown up and are capable of appreciating the true force of facts and arguments. Most clergymen, we suspect, are actuated by both motives. All the more reason, therefore, why a book written by an expert on the subject, and published at a very moderate price, ought to be in the hands of every earnest and sincere inquirer after knowledge.—*Reynolds' Newspaper.*

Freethought has wakened up a bit in Dundee during the last six months, and Mr. Cohen lectured there three times on Sunday to capital meetings, the audience in the evening being particularly large and enthusiastic. There was no real discussion, the opposition offered being of the poorest description. One individual, who represents the filthy libeller of the Hall of Science, opposed at the evening meeting, and his remarks were of the usual mendacious and insinuating character. When Mr. Cohen began to reply, the fellow was cute enough to see that he was in for a severe castigation, and speedily fled from the hall. Mr. Bowman did good business at the bookstall, and disposed of a large quantity of literature. Dundee Freethinkers ought to keep away from the meetings of the handful of poltroons who run the propaganda on behalf of the above-named slanderer. This is the most effective way of dealing with their abominable tactics. If this plan is adopted, their parasitical propaganda will soon cease to attract attention.

Mr. Cohen concluded his series of lectures at Motherwell with one on Christianity and the Jews. There was a large and representative audience, including a number of ladies. The chairman had opposed Mr. Cohen some months ago, but he had since become a Secularist, partly by the help of the lecturer and partly by the use of his own reasoning faculties. Mr. Cohen's missionary work at Motherwell has added several new members to the local Branch.

Paisley Freethinkers are reminded that Mr. Cohen lectures to-day (Feb. 19) in the Tannahill Hall, both afternoon and evening. It is a long time since Freethought lectures were delivered in Paisley on a Sunday.

Jesuitism in France.

No one has anything but respect for the venerable Leo XIII., the "White Pope," as he is called, the wise, humane, gracious Holy Father of the Vatican. But *his* wishes, *his* purposes, and *his* judgments are thrust aside by the "Black Pope," as it is called, the secret, unscrupulous, intriguing spirit of *Jesuitism*—which inside every government and nation is fighting for ends that have nothing to do with religion, morality, or civilisation—which fight simply for the maintenance of the clerical institution—the object in which Jesuitism began and ends.

To keep up the Clerical Institution with all its privileges, property, immunities, and monopolies, is the sole aim of this Jesuitism—in defence of which cause falsehood becomes truth, crime becomes godliness, and bloodshed and anarchy become the spirit of Jesus. In pursuit of this object—to use its own jargon, this truly Satanic object—we see this Jesuitism conspiring in France with the vilest military ruffians, hounding on an infamous persecution of the Jews, hiring the dregs of journalism, insulting and defaming all men of honesty and honor, leaguings with murderers, forgers, perjurers, and traitors, and organising a revolution of army adventurers. In Spain this Jesuitism is planning civil war, in Italy it is planning anarchy, and in Austria it is instigating a war of races. Everywhere in Europe it is doing its best to drag down the Catholic nations to an abyss of confusion and strife, in the pious hope that in the *melée* the "Institution" may recover some of its lost privilege and ascendancy. Truly, it is a spectacle to make every decent Catholic tingle with shame, if evil done to the honor and glory of God were ever regarded in any theology as ground for shame in a human sense.

FREDERIC HARRISON.

—*Positivist Review.*

Obituary.

WE regret to learn of the death of Mr. John Holding, artist, of Greenheys, Manchester, a well-known Secularist and Freethinker, at the age of 84. In the early and rougher days of Secularism in Manchester, Mr. Holding took an active part in conjunction with our late friends Tarr and Ridgway, and rallied with them and others round the platform of Mr. Bradlaugh when lecturing under the name of "Iconoclast." Mr. Holding was also well known to Mrs. Harriet Law, Mrs. Besant, Robert Cooper, and other pioneers. As a Manchester Chartist he was present at "Peterloo," having walked from Hyde, where he was then working, to take part in that demonstration. The fine marble bust of Mr. Bradlaugh now in the rooms of the Manchester Society is by his son George.

Purim.

ON February 24 (the fourteenth day of the month Adar) the Jews will celebrate the Feast of Purim, and we are again confronted with the question of the origin of this festival. The sole reason for the feast is the Book of Esther, which professes to relate an episode in the life of King Ahasuerus, better known as Xerxes. This book was evidently written at a time when the Persian kings were but memories of the past, for the author has to explain many things. He has to define the monarch as being the "Ahasuerus, who reigned from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces"; and he has to explain certain things as Persian customs, which would have been perfectly familiar to his readers if they were then subjects of the Persian Empire, and *if* they were really Persian customs at all, instead of being circumstances deliberately invented by the writer for the purposes of his story.

The Book of Esther professes to relate how a Jewess became *queen* of Persia. It styles her "Esther the queen"; and the whole story assumes her regal position, so that it is useless for reconcilers to attempt to wrestle the plain sense of the text. But Herodotus completely refutes all this. The Greek "Father of History" was born two years after Xerxes came to the throne, and was, therefore, a contemporary. He tells us that Xerxes was married to his cousin Amestris; and from incidental notices it appears that Amestris was alive, and queen regnant, during the whole time supposed to be covered by the story of Esther. Herodotus further shows that a king of Persia could not marry any woman who was not a member of one of the seven noble families of Persia; so that the laws of the Medes and Persians totally precluded the idea that a Jewess could become a Persian queen.

Theologians remarked with surprise that the book did not once mention the name of the God of Israel. They knew not that it really contained the names of a Babylonian god and a Babylonian goddess. For Mordecai is the god "Merodach," and Esther is "Istar."* If the work had been entitled the *Book of Venus*, and related how Jupiter had become an important member of the Persian court, and that Venus had married King Xerxes, even purblind theologians would have recognised the mythical character of the whole story; but the strange names of Merodach and Istar were passed without suspicion.

Mordecai is said (Esther ii. 6) to have been carried away captive with Jehoiachin of Judah in 588 B.C. If he were then an infant, he would have been 102 years old on the accession of Xerxes. Esther was his cousin, and, therefore, her age—but this is a delicate subject, over which we will discreetly draw the veil.

The story of Esther, then, is merely a production of Jewish vanity, which delighted in representing Jews and Jewesses as occupying the thrones of the Gentiles, interpreting dreams of heathen kings, out-conjuring heathen magicians, and confounding Gentile sages by their superior wisdom. Esther, like other wonderful personages, was totally unknown to the remaining Old Testament writers. Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, which cover the field of Jewish history down to the time of Alexander the Great (Neh. xii. 22 mentions Jaddua), know nothing of any Persian queen of Jewish race, or of any projected St. Bartholomew. At what period, then, did the Book of Esther come into being, and when was the feast of Purim first celebrated? Josephus, who lived between 37 and 95 A.D., inserted the story in his history, and asserted that, in his time, the feast was celebrated by all the Hebrew communities. It appears, however, from his treatise against Apion, that the Book of Esther was not then reckoned among the canonical books. Philo of Alexandria, who wrote about A.D. 40, never alludes to "Esther," and does not seem to be aware of its existence; and, according to Jewish tradition, eighty-five elders made mock of it when the feast was first introduced at Jerusalem.

* The reader must not suppose that this is a mere "infidel" suggestion. It is admitted by all Assyriologists. It is expressly stated by that pillar of the faith, Professor Sayce, on page 169 of his *Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

The earliest known allusion to the feast of Esther is contained in 2 Maccabees xv. 36, where we are told that, on the death of the Syrian General, Nicanor, "they ordained all with a common decree in no case to let that day pass without solemnity, but to celebrate the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which in the Syrian tongue is called Adar, the day before Mardocheus' day." No critic places the second book of the Maccabees before the Christian Era. We are therefore justified in saying that the Book of Esther was unknown to the Jews before the present era. The synagogue of Alexandria did not dare to rate it too highly, or give it too early a date. The colophon to the Septuagint version runs: "In the fourth year of the reign of Ptolemy and Cleopatra, Dositheus, who said he was a priest and a Levite, and Ptolemy, his son, brought in the published letter of Phruræ, which they said existed, and which Lysimachus, the son of Ptolemy, who was in Jerusalem, had interpreted."

This very guarded statement has a most ambiguous date. We are told of the fourth year of Ptolemy and Cleopatra; but, as thirteen Ptolemies reigned in Egypt, and eight of them married Cleopatras, we are left totally in the dark as to who was meant. If the reference be to the last and most famous Cleopatra, then the date was probably meant to be 47 B.C. Most scholars, however, prefer Ptolemy Philometor. But it is difficult to tell which was his fourth year, as he popped on and off the throne several times. We cannot reckon from his first accession in 181 B.C., because he was not married to Cleopatra till at least thirteen years after. If his last accession be meant, then the date intended would be 164 or 165 B.C. But these were the years of the Maccabean revolts, and we really cannot believe that people had any opportunity for antiquarian research during these wars, massacres, and civil convulsions.

According to Esther ix. 26, the feast was called "Purim" on account of Haman casting "*Pur*—that is, the lot." In no known language, however, is there any word for a lot resembling *pur*. Etymologists have strained every legitimate and illegitimate point in order to obtain such a word, and they have all failed.

Many ingenious attempts have been made to find some heathen feast to correspond with Purim, on the assumption that the latter was really a Gentile celebration which was taken over by the Jews. Professor Lagarde suggested that the origin of Purim was the Persian *Furdigan*; Dr. Zimmern suggested the Babylonian New Year's Festival; Professor Sayce the Assyrian *Buru* period. Dr. Jastrow objects to the lot of them, and proposes a local solar festival celebrated at Sippara on the 14th of Adar. The only evidence the learned Talmudist has for this, however, is an inscription by an early Babylonian king, Nabu-baladan, to the effect that he presented certain vestments to the Sun Temple at Sippara, to be worn on the 14th Adar and five other dates. None of these scholars give any reason why orthodox Jews should deliberately observe a heathen festival, and this forms the greatest objection to their theories.

The true Hebrew word *pur* means to "frustrate" or "break in pieces," and it is used in this sense in Ezekiel, Zechariah, and the Psalms. The Maccabean insurrection frustrated and broke in pieces the Greek attempts to modify the laws and customs of Israel. This insurrection was practically decided by the defeat and death of the Greek general Nicanor on the 13th Adar, when Judas not only triumphed over the Greeks, but also overthrew the partisans of the rival high priest Alcimus. "And they ordained to keep this day year by year—to wit, the 13th day of Adar. And the land of Judah had rest a little while" (1 Macc. vii. 49-50). Naturally, however, such a celebration would be viewed with jealous eyes by the Greek authorities. They could not look on with equanimity and see the defeat of a Greek king and the death of a noble Greek commemorated with feasting and gladness. It may, therefore, be suggested that the partisans of the Maccabees who did not live under the protecting arm of the Jewish princes attempted to allay the suspicions of the Greeks by pretending that they were not celebrating the death of Nicanor, but an earlier deliverance of Israel; and that this Book of Esther was composed to further this excuse. Esther has been the medium of other veiled attacks upon circumstances which the Jews resented. In the Greek

version Haman is called a "Macedonian," in allusion to the conflicts of the Alexandrian Jews with the descendants of the soldiers of Alexander, who styled themselves "Macedonians." In later times Purim was made into an attack on Christianity. An effigy of Haman was suspended on a cross, and subjected to every kind of indignity; and, in consequence, the Emperor Theodosius II. prohibited the celebration of the feast.

The suggestion outlined above is at least as good as any others that have been made. It is obvious that Judas Maccabeus knew nothing of any feast of Purim, or he would not have instituted a rival festival; and the writer of 1 Maccabees would hardly have left Purim unmentioned had he known of it. The story of Esther is, therefore, subsequent to the death of Nicanor; it professes to tell of a victory gained by the Jews on the 13th Adar (ix. 1, 17), and we must, therefore, assume that it has a connection with the battle of Beth-horon, in which Nicanor fell, unless some very good reason can be given to the contrary.

CHILPERIC.

The Jebusites of Ancient Jerusalem.

ANOTHER example of the fictitious character of the Biblical account of the conquest of Canaan by Joshua* is that of the taking of Jerusalem from the Jebusites. We are told that Adoni-zedek, the king of Jerusalem, and four other Canaanitish kings, joined their forces together to fight against Joshua and his allies, the Gibeonites. "And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hands.And the Lord discomfited them before Israel, and he slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon.And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel.that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them.they were more which died with the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword" (Josh. x. 1-11).

It was upon this memorable occasion that Joshua commanded the sun to "stand still" to enable the Israelites to continue the pursuit of their enemies. "And the sun stayed in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it."

The latter statement we may take as certainly true. But the wonder is, why "the Lord," when he "cast down great stones from heaven" upon the Canaanites, did not kill them all and be done with it. There would then have been no necessity to arrest the diurnal motion of the earth in order to assist Joshua.

After this great victory Joshua marched to the cities belonging to the beaten foe, and took them, and "utterly destroyed" all the inhabitants found within them. Detailed accounts of the capture of three of the cities (Lachish, Eglon, and Hebron) are given (x. 31-37); after which is stated in more general terms the conquest of all the southern portion of Palestine, including that in which the other two, Jerusalem and Jarmuth, were situated (x. 40-42). It is thus to be inferred that the two last-named cities had also been captured, more especially since, later on, when the conquered land was divided among the Hebrew tribes, we find in the list of cities allotted to Benjamin, "Zelah, Eleph, and *Jebusi*, which is *Jerusalem*" (xviii. 28).

According to the Old Testament account, the ancient name of the great stronghold of the Jebusites was *Jebus* or *Jebusi*—that is, *Yebus* or *Yebusi*. Yet, though this city was given to the Benjaminites as an inheritance, we learn from the first chapter of Judges that it was still in the hands of the Jebusites, and had first to be taken. This feat, if we believe the sacred narrative, was accomplished shortly after the death of Joshua by the tribe of Judah.

"And the children of Judah fought against Jerusalem, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire" (i. 8).

The city having now been captured and its inhabitants put to the sword, we should expect from this time forth to find it in the occupation and possession of the Israelites. Were we dealing with history, such would, no doubt,

* See the "Anakim of Hebron," *Freethinker*, Dec. 25, 1898.

be the case; but having to do with what is called an "inspired narrative," we have to carefully examine every statement before expressing an opinion.

Nearly two generations after the time of Joshua we hear of a certain Levite who was journeying with his servant and concubine from Bethlehem to the hill country of Ephraim. Of this good man it is thus recorded:—

"He rose up and departed, and came over against *Jebus* (the same is *Jerusalem*).....When they were by *Jebus*, the day was far spent; and the servant said unto his master, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn aside into this *city of the Jebusites*, and lodge in it. And his master said unto him, We will not turn aside into *the city of a stranger where there are none of the children of Israel*; but we will pass over to Gibeah.....So they passed on and went their way" (Judg. xix. 10-14).

From this passage we see that Jerusalem or *Jebus* was still in the possession of the *Jebusites*, and had evidently never been taken by the Israelites at all. As in the case of the Anakim of Hebron, the account of the capture of the city and the extermination of its inhabitants by the tribe of Judah turns out to be pure fiction.

That the city had never been taken either by Joshua or the tribe of Judah becomes further evident when we find the *Jebusites* still in possession in the time of David. In 1 Chron. xi. 4-8 we read:—

"And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem (the same is *Jebus*); and the *Jebusites*, the inhabitants of the land, were there. And the inhabitants of *Jebus* said to David, Thou shalt not come in hither. Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion; the same is the city of David.And David dwelt in the stronghold; therefore they called it the city of David."

But even at this late date the *Jebusites* retained possession of the city. Jerusalem was built upon four hills. David appears to have captured only one of them—Mount Zion. This view is confirmed by the fact that when, some years later, that king desired to build an altar in a certain part of the city he had to purchase the land and oxen from the owner "Araunah the *Jebusite*," who, from the marginal reading, appears to have been king of the *Jebusite* inhabitants of Jerusalem.

As regards this purchase we have two conflicting statements, viz. :—

"So David bought the threshing floor for *fifty shekels of silver*" (2 Sam. xxiv. 24).

"So David gave to Ornan for the place *six hundred shekels of gold by weight*" (1 Chron. xxi. 25).

A shekel of silver was worth about 2s. 3d., a shekel of gold was worth £1 16s. 6d.; consequently David paid Araunah £1,095, or he paid him only £5 12s. 6d.

Leaving this slight discrepancy to the ingenuity of professional Bible reconcilers, we come to the latest Biblical statements respecting the *Jebusites* of Jerusalem. These are the following:—

"And as for the *Jebusites*, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah *could not drive them out*; but the *Jebusites* dwelt with the children of Judah at Jerusalem *unto this day*" (Josh. xv. 63).

"And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the *Jebusites* that inhabited Jerusalem; but the *Jebusites* dwelt with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem *unto this day*" (Judg. i. 21).

The expression "unto this day" refers to a time after the Exile when all the historical books of the Old Testament were revised and put into something like their present form. The following are further examples:—

"So Israel was carried away out of their own land to Assyria *unto this day*." "As did their fathers, so do they *unto this day*" (2 Kings xvii. 23, 41).

The compiler also distinguishes between the period of the Exile and his own time—"unto this day." Thus he says of a certain Levite "of the family of *Judah*":—

"He and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites *until the day of the captivity of the land*" (Judg. xviii. 30).

It would thus appear that the *Jebusites* were never conquered at all; even by David.

We will now apply a final and decisive test to determine the truth or falseness of the whole narrative. As we have seen, it is stated again and again that Jerusalem was anciently called *Jebus* or *Jebusi*, and that the city was known by the latter name as late as the time of David (B.C. 1050). Now, in the year 1887 there were discovered at Tell-el-Amarna about 300 clay tablets bearing

cuneiform inscriptions. These, when examined, were found to be letters, reports, and dispatches addressed to the Egyptian kings, Amunoph III. and Amunoph IV. (B.C. 1500-1450), who at that time held dominion over Syria and Palestine. Among these letters is one from the king of Jerusalem asserting his loyalty, and informing the king of Egypt of the evil doings of his neighbors, the kings of Gezer, Gath, Keilah, and Rabbah. In this document we have the name by which Jerusalem was known about 1450 B.C. That name we find to be "The city of the mountain of *Urusalim*." There is no *Jebus* or *Jebusi*. The latter name, as well as the narrative in which it occurs, is an inspired Biblical fiction. The city was called *Urusalim* four centuries before the time of David; it was called *Urusalim* (or *Urusalim-mu*) three centuries after the time of David, for it is named in some of the inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser and Sennacherib (B.C. 739 and 701).

From this fictitious Bible narrative we obtain evidence of two indisputable facts—first, that the Biblical accounts of the conquest and occupation of Canaan were not penned by contemporary writers; and, secondly, that the real history of the Hebrew tribes does not commence until some considerable time after the reign of the probably mythical king David. In this respect the early history of the Israelites in no wise differs from that of any other people; the stories of the beginnings of all nations are almost wholly legendary.

ABRACADABRA.

Book Chat.

THE RIGHT HON. JOHN MORLEY, M.P., a well-known Free-thinker, has been entrusted with the biography of Mr. Gladstone, a Christian. This is an unconscious compliment to all Rationalists. We wonder how many professing Christians could be safely trusted with the biography of an Atheist.

* * *

Shelley literature grows apace. The latest addition is Mr. William Graham's *Last Links with Byron, Shelley, and Keats* (published by Leonard Smithers). In this volume we find republished, with alterations, some sensational articles contributed to the magazines a few years since. Mr. Graham, in this volume, gives the substance of interviews with "Claire," or Jane Clermont, then an old lady of eighty, relating to the amors of her youth. The revelations form a sufficiently scandalous chronicle. Despite the inaccuracy of some of the details, there is no reason for scepticism in the case of Miss Clermont's general recollections of Byron and Shelley. The book is interesting reading, although the writer is guilty of a style which compares unfavorably with Marie Corelli at her worst.

* * *

The Co-operative Wholesale Societies', Limited, Annual for 1890 is a bulky volume of over 600 pages. In fact, this publication bids fair to rival Kelly's Post Office Directory in size before many years. The excessive number of architectural illustrations make the book somewhat resemble an auctioneer's catalogue of desirable properties for sale; and the list of contributors is very imposing, including John Burns, J. A. Hobson, and Mr. A. E. Fletcher, the late editor of the *Daily Chronicle*, who occupies several pages in criticising George Jacob Holyoake's estimate of the significance of the economic principles laid down by our old friend Jesus Christ, who is on this occasion facetiously called "The Carpenter of Nazareth." That this attack on the veteran leader of Secularism is not entirely without significance is shown by the fact that in the calendar at the end of the volume the editor has forgotten how to spell Thomas Paine's name, and has committed a similar blunder with regard to the world-renowned name of Ernest Renan. Are we to understand from all this that co-operators are becoming ignorant—or respectable?

* * *

Harper's Monthly contains a weird and curious story entitled "Ghosts in Jerusalem." Singularly enough, the author makes no mention of our very old acquaintance, the Holy Ghost. We don't envy this scribe when he comes to die.

* * *

A friend of ours was looking over some cheap books outside a shop the other day, when he noticed a bulky volume on *Biblical Criticism*, with a label inside the cover to the effect that the book was given to "S. J. Celestine Edwards for his successful attempts to stem the tide of Atheism at Victoria Park and elsewhere." The colored gent referred to met his Savior in the skies some years since, yet we believe there are still one or two Atheists left on hand. Massa Edwards received his pay before he finished his little job.

Mr. Russell, M.P., in his volume of *Collections and Recollections*, has many good stories to tell. The following is one of the best: "Dr. Liddon told me of a Presbyterian minister who was called on at short notice to officiate at the parish church of Crathie in the presence of the Queen, and, transported by this tremendous experience, burst forth in rhetorical supplication: 'Grant that as she grows to be an old woman she may be made a new man, and that in all righteous causes she may go forth before her people like a he-goat on the mountains.'" The minister's confusion is inexplicable, unless we are to assume that he was thinking of the Prince of Timbuctoo when he made the touching reference to the he-goat.

Mr. G. L. Mackenzie will shortly issue, through Mr. Robert Forder, a selection of his contributions to the *Freethinker* under the title of *Brimstone Ballads*. We hope the volume will have a large sale.

The *Literary Guide* for February opens with an article by L. Hadow Jenkins on "The Basis of Agnosticism," which is becoming almost as controverted a matter as Christianity itself. The writer is wrong, we think, in quoting Mrs. Huxley's lines as at all characteristic of the great Darwinian sceptic. Mr. Gould contributes a very interesting "Chat" with Mr. Alexander Sutherland, author of *The Origin and Growth of the Moral Instinct*, who is on a visit to England from Australia. Mr. Sutherland laughs at the statistical myth that was made current here by Bishop Moorhouse—namely, that secular education had led to an increase of crime in Victoria. "The Government statist," he says, "wrote repeated letters refuting the fallacy, and proving that, on the average, crime was diminishing; but the erroneous statement was too useful to the theological party to be allowed to drop so easily." There are many other excellent items in this well-conducted monthly.

One of the most fascinating volumes of recent autobiography is the *Reminiscences*, by Miss M. Betham-Edwards, published by George Redway. Unlike so many writers of this class of book, Miss Betham-Edwards appears to have associated with people well worth knowing. Anecdotes and recollections of George Eliot and George Henry Lewes occupy many pages of delightful reading. We meet, too, in this volume John Stuart Mill, who is a great favorite with the author; Karl Marx and "The International"; Robert Browning; and last, but certainly not least, Charles Bradlaugh, whom she calls "unconquerable," and says she "felt glad to have seen." Miss Betham-Edwards fairly rises to eloquence in speaking of our great leader, who was, to quote her own words, "in his own person embodiment of all that has made England's greatness, the passion for spiritual as well as political freedom."

We heartily wish we had sufficient space to quote more from these interesting reminiscences. We have read such numberless hogus accounts of Bradlaugh being vanquished in debate with opponents that we cannot but refer readers to Miss Betham-Edwards's account of a victory for the great Atheist. She says she was present when "a discussion took place between Mr. Bradlaugh and a Dissenting minister upon the origin and author of the Christian religion. The two disputants were unequally matched, the sceptic being in the prime of bodily and mental faculties, whilst the believer was an old, white-haired man, full of conviction, and having the Scriptures at his fingers' ends, no doubt, but unable to combat the other's bitter sarcasms and unanswerable logic. At last a painful scene occurred. The worsted adversary put his hand to his head, and staggered as one suddenly stricken with paralysis. 'I—I—cannot answer you,' he stammered, evidently abashed, horror-stricken at finding himself so poor an upholder of the faith that was in him."

It is, indeed, pleasant to find an author of repute like Miss Betham-Edwards having the courage to write like this. Another time we may quote some more anecdotes from this volume of hers. We feel certain that our readers will thank us for drawing their attention to a book full of recollections of men and women well worth knowing.

We do not wish to be considered, like Iago, "nothing if not critical"; but, in our opinion, Mr. Redway should not have issued such a volume without an index. An ordinary reader would probably forget half the good things in the book, simply because he would never find sufficient leisure to search through it page by page until he alighted on the passages wanted. A good index should invariably accompany a volume like the present, which is simply crowded with interesting matter from cover to cover. Should any future edition be issued, we hope the publisher will remedy this serious defect.

Our readers will be delighted to hear that Messrs. Gibbings, Bury-street, Bloomsbury, W.C., now publish a cheap edition of 3s. 6d. of Mr. Geoffrey Mortimer's well-known book, *Tales of the Western Moors*. This is unquestionably one of the happiest efforts of Mr. Mortimer's pen, and not unworthy of

Thomas Hardy himself. This new edition of a charming book at a modest price should widen considerably the deserved reputation Mr. Geoffrey Mortimer already enjoys as a writer of rare ability.

Mr. Heinemann is to be congratulated on the fine translations of well-known books by the leading continental writers he has given us. He has almost succeeded in removing the popular impression that a translation is necessarily a travesty. The latest example is a translation of a novel by Gabriele d'Annunzio, the brilliant writer of *The Triumph of Death*. The new volume, which was originally written in Italian ten years ago under the title of *Il Piacere*, is here called the *Child of Pleasure*, and has an introduction by Mr. Arthur Symonds, whose rendering of the interspersed lyrics and sonnets deserves high praise. The book bears signs of Maupassant's and Zola's influence throughout, and is very dramatic. We do well to mention that the translation is by Miss Georgina Harding, who has admirably succeeded where she might have so easily failed.

Correspondence.

SECULAR ADVOCACY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—The question raised by Mr. Gimson, and dealt with by yourself in the last issue of the *Freethinker*, is important enough to be looked at from another standpoint. Is not the Freethought party as a whole more responsible than the individual lecturer for those "rough remarks" of which complaint is made? It has the power to exclude such transgressors from its platform, and if they are not so excluded the responsibility is its own. But the question arises of why lecturers lay themselves open to comments of this character. Again the fault appears to belong to the Freethought party. Our young lecturers are compelled to lecture without any serious training for such important work. As a rule, they are too poor to purchase the expensive books which are an indispensable condition of platform efficiency, and the remuneration for their work scarcely serves to buy their boots. Moreover, a Freethought audience is a difficult one to satisfy. It is a case of "Behold a man gluttonous and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners," or that "he came neither eating nor drinking," and is therefore too dry for anything. The Freethought party does not sufficiently realise the feelings which influence over-worked, over-criticised, and underpaid men who are doing their level best under adverse conditions. A season's out-of-door lecturing, in face of the campaign of lies and calumnies which are the chief items in the repertoire of the Christian Evidencer, would fill the mouth of criticism with expressions of consideration for those who have to meet them with gentleness and good temper. There is no doubt much ground for the complaint Mr. Gimson makes, but the way to remedy the grievance is for societies to rigidly exclude from their platform lecturers whose methods are opposed to the best interests of the movement. Or they might even follow the example set by Mr. Gimson's own Society—pay a good price for their lectures, and then insist that they are of a recognised intellectual and moral standard.

HARRY SNELL.

ETONIAN BRUTALITIES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—May I draw attention to the fact that the Eton College authorities have again entirely disregarded the protests that have been made in so many quarters against the encouragement given to Eton boys to indulge in the cruel sport of hare-hunting? "The Beagles," says the *Eton College Chronicle* of Feb. 2, "are undiminished in popularity, notwithstanding the increased subscription. They have already had several good runs, killing twice. The new kennels are nearly finished, and, though not likely to be a thing of beauty, are intended to be a joy for ever." We read that on Jan. 24 the hare took refuge in a drain, but was "bolted" and pulled down. Four days later an enormous hare was found, but "unfortunately she ran against some wire, and was pulled down forty yards in the next field. Some said our hare was lame, but this certainly was not the case."

Whether the hare was lame or not, I think many of your readers will agree that there is something wrong in the government of a school where brutalities of this sort are one of the recognised forms of amusement.

JOSEPH COLLINSON.

The Melbourne morgue and the detective office have been visited by nearly fifty people desirous of applying the supernatural to the solution of the Yarra body-in-a-boot-box mystery—ranging from the "balmy" parson, who prayed on the steps of the morgue for divine guidance until he was moved on, to the lady spiritist who stood beside the much-decomposed corpse in a "trance" for a solid hour on one of the hottest days.—*Sydney Bulletin*.

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, "Byron as Poet, Wit, and Freethinker."
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 8.30, Dowsett and Wilmer's Comedy Drama Co. in "On the Ran Dan."

CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, J. M. Robertson, "The Revival of Catholicism."

EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Bow Vestry Hall, Bow-road, E.): 7, H. Snell, "Morality and Life."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road, S.E.): 10.45, Discussion; 7, Public Meeting to discuss "The Right Solution of the Religious Controversy in Education."

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall): 11, J. M. Robertson, "Buckle on Progressive Morals."

WEST LONDON SECULAR CLUB (15 Edgware-road): A Parliament every Tuesday at 8.

WESTMINSTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Grosvenor Arms, Page-street): 7.30, H. Courtney, "The New Nonconformist Catechism."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, A lecture.

COUNTRY.

CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school; Touzeau Parris—11.30, "Facts About the Bible Everyone Should Know"; 7, "Sin Against God an Impossibility."

GLASGOW (Lecture Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12, Discussion Class—D. Black; 6.30, A. G. Nostik, "The Creation of the World"—with lantern illustrations.

GREAT YARMOUTH FREETHINKERS' ASSOCIATION (Freethinkers' Hall, bottom of Broad-row). Thursdays, at 8.30, Elocution Class. 7.30, E. V. Sterry, "A Freethinker's View of Christ."

HULL (Friendly Societies' Hall, No. 2 Room): W. H. Bailey, "The Future of Democracy: Social or Radical?"

LEICESTER SECULAR CLUB (Humberstone-gate): 6.30, F. J. Gould, "The Religion of the First Christians."

LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, Mr. Crompton, "Positivists' Calendar."

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 7, A lecture.

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, W. Ledger, "The Church and the Stage."

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, Market-place): 7, Business Meeting; 7.30, "Original Sin."

WIGAN (Public Hall): H. P. Ward—11, "Is the Bible a Revelation from God?" 3, "What Secularism Offers in Place of Christianity"; 7, "From Wesleyan Pulpit to Secular Platform."

Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 17 Osborne-road, High-road, Leyton.—February 26, Liverpool. March 5, Liverpool; 12, Birmingham.

H. PERCY WARD, 5 Alexandra-road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.—February 26, Wigan. March 5, Chester; 12, Chester; 26, Birmingham. April 16, Glasgow.

POSITIVISM.

"Reorganisation, 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.

Price 3d., by post 4d.,

The Secular Almanack for 1899.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

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 Superstition. By W. HEAFORD.—The Secular Society, Limited.—Information Concerning the National Secular Society.—Freethought Lecturers.

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

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

FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT

BY

G. W. Foote.

Second Series (cloth), 2s. 6d.

CONTENTS:—Luscious Piety—The Jewish Sabbath—God's Day—Professor Stokes on Immortality—Paul Bert—Converting a Corpse—Bradlaugh's Ghost—Christ and Brotherhood—The Sons of God—Melchizedek—S'w'elp me God—Infidel Homes—Are Atheists Cruel?—Are Atheists Wicked?—Rain Doctors—Pious Puerilities—"Thus saith the Lord"—Believe or be Damned—Christian Charity—Religion and Money—Clotted Bosh—Lord Bacon on Atheism—Christianity and Slavery—Christ Up to Date—Secularism and Christianity—Altar and Throne—Martin Luther—The Praise of Folly—A Lost Soul—Happy in Hell—The Act of God—Keir Hardie on Christ—Blessed be ye Poor—Converted Infidels—Mrs. Booth's Ghost—Talmage on the Bible—Mrs. Besant on Death and After—The Poets and Liberal Theology—Christianity and Labor—Duelling—An Easter Egg for Christians—Down among the Dead Men—Smirching a Hero—Kit Marlowe and Jesus Christ—Jehovah the Ripper—The Parson's Living Wage—Did Bradlaugh Backslide?—Frederic Harrison on Atheism—Save the Bible!—Forgive and Forget—The Star of Bethlehem—The Great Ghost—Atheism and the French Revolution—Piggottism—Jesus at the Derby—Atheist Murderers—A Religion for Eunuchs—Rose-Water Religion.

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

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 September 4, 1892, says: "Mr. Holmes' pamphlet.....is an almost unexceptional 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, HANNEY, WANTAGE, BERKS.

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, 3s. 6d., 4s. 6d., and 5s. 3d. 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.

UNIGRAPHIC SHORTHAND is the Briefest and most Perfect of all Systems. Parts I. to VIII. now ready. 7d. post free. P. W. BALDWIN, C.M., Ashton-on-Ribble.

Now Ready.

Ingersoll's Grand New Lecture

ON

SUPERSTITION,

Which is attracting immense audiences in America.

Forty-eight Pages.

Price Sixpence.

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 FEBRUARY NUMBER CONTAINS:—

- The Basis of Agnosticism. By L. Hadow Jenkins.
- Knowledge and Cosmos. By Charles E. Hooper.
- "I Can't Get Out." By F. J. Gould.
- The Triumph of Darwin.
- Transcendental Ethics.
- Sin, Grace, and the Means of Grace. James Thomson.
- New Gospels.
- Signs and Warnings (gleaned from the Religious Press).
- Random Jottings.
- Chats about Books and Miscellanea.—XVI. With Mr. Alexander Sutherland, M.A. By F. J. G.
- Rationalism in the Magazines.
- Short Notices, Letters to the Editor, etc.

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

Materialism versus Theism.

Mr. Cohen and Dr. Keeling.

The book "QUERO," which has given rise to the recent discussion in the *Freethinker* between the above gentlemen, can be obtained, until the end of February, by written application, containing sixpence for postage (the only charge), to the Manager, Messrs. Taylor and Francis, Red Lion-court, Fleet-street, London, E.C.

An "ANALYSIS" of the book will be sent (post free) on application to Dr. KEELING, Sheffield.

BY CHARLES CATTELL.

Gems from the Ocean of Truth. (Pub. 1s. 6d.) Second edition, 6d.

Thirteen Essays on Various Subjects. (Pub. 1s.) 6d.

Emerson and Modern Thought. 2d.

Post free on receipt of Postal Order for One Shilling, or separately at above prices, from the author, Charles Cattell, Emerson, Pokesdown, Hants.

NON-POISONOUS PAINTS.

Resist all Atmospheric Influences. Samples Free. J. Greevz Fisher, 78 Chapel Allerton, Leeds; or S. R. Thompson, 25 Chatsworth-avenue, Walton, Liverpool.

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 3d., by post 4d.,

The Secularist's Catechism.

An Exposition of Secular Principles, showing their Relation to the Political and Social Problems of the Day.

By CHARLES WATTS.

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

Thwaites' Household Doctor.

THE BEST BOOK

to have by you whenever you are not as well as you would like to be. Within its pages you will find a Treatise on most Diseases, and how to Cure them with Herbs, which are Nature's Remedies.

PRICE SIXPENCE—POST FREE.

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

List of Prices Free.

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.

NOW READY, STOUT PAPER COVERS, 1s.; CLOTH, 2s.

THE BOOK OF GOD

IN THE LIGHT OF THE HIGHER CRITICISM.

With Special Reference to Dean Farrar's New Apology.

By G. W. FOOTE.

Contents :—Introduction—The Bible Canon—The Bible and Science—Miracles and Witchcraft—The Bible and Free thought—Morals and Manners—Political and Social Progress—Inspiration—The Testimony of Jesus—The Bible and the Church of England—An Oriental Book—Fictitious Supremacy.

"A volume we strongly recommend.....Ought to be in the hands of every earnest and sincere inquirer."—*Reynolds' Newspaper*.

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

PECULIAR PEOPLE

An Open Letter to Mr. Justice Wills

On his Sentencing THOMAS GEORGE SENIOR to Four Months' Imprisonment with Hard Labor FOR OBEYING THE BIBLE.

BY G. W. FOOTE.

ISSUED BY THE SECULAR SOCIETY (LTD.), 376-7 STRAND, LONDON, W.C.

Price One Penny.

Copies can be obtained for free distribution at the rate of Two Shillings per Hundred. Gratis parcels of copies can be obtained by N. S. S. Branches, &c., by applying to Miss VANCE, Secretary, 376-7 Strand, London, W.C., or to Mr. R. FORDER, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

GREAT CLEARANCE SALE.

Every Parcel Guaranteed to Give Satisfaction, or Money Returned in Full.

- LOT A.—1 Suit Length, 1 Dress Length, 1 Gent's Umbrella, 1 Lady's Umbrella, 1 pair Curtains, 1 Table Cover.
 " B.—1 Overcoat, made to measure. Any color. State chest over vest and sleeve measurement.
 " C.—1 Ready-made Suit. Any color or any size. Worth at least 35s.
 " D.—1 Dress Length, 1 Umbrella, 1 pair Bloomers, 1 Striped Skirt, 1 pair Boots or Shoes, 1 Fur Necktie.
 " E.—2 Night Dresses, 2 Chemises, 2 pairs Knickers, 2 Skirts, 2 pairs Cashmere Hose, 1 pair High-class Boots or Shoes.
 " F.—1 Gent's Scarboro' Mackintosh and 1 Lady's Paddock Mackintosh. State Lengths.
 " G.—2 Boys' Suits or Overcoats, 2 pairs Boys' Boots or Shoes, 10 yards strong Shirting.
 " H.—50 Yards good, strong Twilled Flannelette. 5 different patterns.
 " I.—40 yards Remnants. Suitable for Children's Dresses. Mixed Colors and Lengths.
 " J.—15 Yards Remnants. Suitable for Boys' Suits.
 " K.—1 Lady's Paddock Mackintosh and 1 real Bear long Victoria-shaped Fur. Total value 50s.
 " L.—1 Very fine West of England or Worsted Suit Length. Latest Designs and Colorings.
 " M.—11 Yards finest Velveteen. Any color, and sufficient Linings for a Dress.
 " N.—2 Black Dress Lengths. First-class qualities, in Alpaca, Serge, Figure, or Habit Cloth.
 " O.—1 Lady's Paddock Mackintosh, and 1 finest Black or Colored Dress Length.
 " P.—1 Pair Gent's Boots or Shoes, 1 Scarboro' Mackintosh, or a good Suit Length.
 " Q.—4 Trousers Lengths. All different, and warranted Pure Wool.
 " R.—1 Suit Length, 1 Umbrella, 2 Under Vests, and 2 pairs Under Pants. All Wool.
 " S.—3 pairs Trousers made to measure. Give inside leg and waist measurements.
 " T.—10lbs. Free Clothing Tea. When you have had 25lbs. you get a new suit free of cost.
 " U.—About 35s. worth of Lady's Goods, including Dress Goods, Underclothing, Boots, etc.
 " V.—About 35s. worth of Blankets, Sheets, Quilts, Curtains, Rugs, Mats, etc.
 " W.—About 35s. worth of Flannel, Flannelette, Calico, Shirting, Prints, etc.
 " X.—About 35s. worth of Boy's Suits, Boots, and Shoes. State requirements.
 " Y.—About 35s. worth of anything a Customer cares to name.
 " Z.—Parcel of Odds and Ends. All new goods. Value 40s.

21s. Anyone of the above Parcels Carriage Paid 21s.

Testing Sample ($\frac{1}{2}$ lb.) of Free Clothing TEA enclosed in each Parcel.

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