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PRICE TWOPENCE.

Blazes.

Now that the summer is upon us, and the thermometer sometimes registers eighty odd degrees in the shade, it is time we gave a thought to the warmer weather in the world to come. An English summer is only a mild apprenticeship to the sweltering heat in Hades. Over in America, though, they get a stronger foretaste of what the Lord has in store for the vast majority of his children, when they shuffle off their mortal coils and go to the place which was prepared for them before the foundation of the world. New Yorkers have had a heat-wave that—to use the language of Shakespeare in *Hamlet*—may be regarded as a blast from hell. We wonder the clergy over there have not had the gump-tion to make it the theme of many rousing sermons. It could easily be shown to be a warning to the unrepentant, the worldlings, the infidels, and all who will not support churches and men of God, of what the Almighty has in store for them if they do not turn from their evil ways, and believe what they are taught, and do what they are told, and shell out for the glory of the Lord and the maintenance of his ministers. In New Yorkers are lolling out their tongues, sweating, panting, and swearing, haunting the quaysides for air, brooding the slothful breezes in Central Park, and dropping dead in the streets when they can no longer appreciate what the late Mr. Gladstone called the fatherly way in which God has fitted up the world for man's habitation. What a chance for a new Jonah! What an opportunity for a new Jesus Christ! America is the land of Messiahs, and if one doesn't turn up now it will show a sad lack of business instinct on the part of the species. Meanwhile, we suggest that Prophet Baxter might visit the land of the Stars and Stripes with his end-of-the-world entertainment. It ought to catch on there, and it is getting a bit slow here. Baxter could rake in the dollars by demonstrating that the universal flare-up is approaching, and may be expected this summer. When his prophecy is disproved he can bring the entertainment back again to England, where the fool-crop for such things is perennial; for, although Baxter has been a false prophet all his life, having been clearly wrong every time, he has still as many dupes as ever, and his wonderful *Christian Herald* continues as gloriously as of yore to prove the accuracy of Carlyle's statement that England—and he might have included Scotland—contains thirty millions of people, mostly fools. There are some things that should not be shirked, and Hell is one of them. Christians themselves talk but little about it nowadays. It is not mentioned in the new Free Churches' Catechism. But it exists now as much as it ever did. The fire of the Lord's loving kindness cannot have lost its glowing heat. Over the infernal kitchen-range still stand the pots and pans and gridirons, in and on which the damned are perpetually cooked and never done. Glory be to

his holy name! there is and ever will be fun for the little devils who handle the spits and covers, and see that Socrates and Bruno, and Voltaire and Bradlaugh, are well boiled, stewed, fried, and roasted. Every man of common sense and common honesty must feel, with the good old Puritan preachers, that if God abolished that sublime spectacle it would be an infamous act of injustice to all the fiends and saints—especially the saints—who are entitled to behold it for ever and ever.

Thank God, then, for blazes! Yes, let the worst come to the worst, and we shall feel—as the dying pauper was told he *ought* to feel—thankful we have a hell to go to. It is better than nothing, and the smallest mercies should be gratefully received.

for who would lose,  
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,  
These thoughts that wander through eternity,  
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost  
In the wide womb of uncreated night?

Thus says Belial in *Paradise Lost*, and his view was shared by the late Mr. W. E. Forster, the gentleman who passed the Education Act of 1870. He once told Harriet Martineau that he would sooner be damned than be annihilated. The lady, however, thought differently; she even ventured to believe that *he* would change his mind after he had been five minutes in hell.

Curiously the blazes of hell are not illuminating. At least the clergy have always said so. John Milton says so too—and he is the great authority on the subject after the Bible, in Protestant countries, just as Dante is the great authority in Catholic countries. "Behold," the women said of Dante as he walked by, austere and wrapt in thought—"Behold the man who has been in hell and come out again!" And the same might have been said of Milton, for his descriptions of hell are magnificent, throwing his descriptions of heaven utterly into the shade.

A dungeon horrible on all sides round  
As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames  
No light; but rather darkness visible  
Served only to discover sights of woe.

Darkness visible! What a splendid paradox! How it impresses the imagination! The poet triumphs in his superb power of expression. Change the diction, and you have a comical Hibernicism—namely, that of the Irishman who said of a moonless, starry night that there was just light enough to see it was dark.

Of course the darkness of hell, in spite of its flames, is a circumstance of horror which was invented by the ingenuity of priests. These gentlemen have devoted immense patience to the task of making God's prison infinitely terrible; and they have succeeded so well that there is nothing left to be done. Hell cannot be made hotter or blacker, or more insufferable.

We must not conclude this brief article without remarking that Old Blazes is one of the Devil's nick-names. "Go like blazes" is accounted a slang expression, but it was used by such a master of prose as De Quincey. We therefore offer no apology for our own title.

G. W. FOOTE.

### Naturalism and Ethics.

(Continued from page 371.)

IN last week's *Freethinker* I pointed out at some length that all rules of ethics were in the nature of conclusions, drawn from accepted beliefs in God or man, or both combined. Given a belief in God, and a man feels obliged to act in such and such a manner; given a belief in the organic and evolutionary nature of society, and one is equally compelled to conform his conduct to his belief. In each case the imperative character of ethical precepts exists for all who accept the data upon which they are based, and for either to accuse the other's system of lacking this characteristic is sheer stupidity. Authoritativeness is not a quality that belongs to any one system of ethics, but is common to all; and in each case only equals the admission that the conclusions put forth in the shape of moral precepts are reasonable deductions from the beliefs on which they are based. From this was drawn the further conclusion that, far from it being impossible to effect a harmonious combination between reason and ethics, such a possibility was involved in the very nature of the subject. As there can be no intelligible meaning to the term "morality" save conformity to such conditions as lead life in a desired direction, all rules of morals must ultimately be conformable to reason, since it is reason alone that can indicate what such conditions are.

I did not then say in what manner this reconciliation was to be brought about, for two reasons. First, because all that the Naturalist is committed to is the belief that such a reconciliation is theoretically possible, and, second, because the answer to the next objection will, I believe, supply the desired solution. This second objection, that there exists a fundamental and "inherently irreconcilable" antagonism between individual and social welfare, arises from a dual confusion as to the proper sphere of ethics and the mutual relations of the individual and society. To take an individual, as an individual, and ask, "Why should he act so as to promote the general welfare?" is to imply that ethical rules may have authority over him quite apart from any relation to his fellows. This, however, is so far from being the case that, provided we raise ethics above the level of mere physiological rules, I believe it may be shown that all morality is essentially a social product. Place a person on a desert island, and moral rules, for him, cease to exist. Truth, sincerity, justice, benevolence, honesty, are all meaningless terms, apart from the existence of groups of individuals. All rules of ethics not only apply to man as a member of society, but likewise imply that his true development cannot be obtained apart from the society of his fellows. Consequently, to leave out of sight this aspect of the matter is to act as a physiologist might who, while discussing the function of the lungs, completely ignored the existence of the atmosphere.

If, then, instead of treating the individual and society as two distinct things, either of which may profit at the expense of the other, we treat them as two sides of the same thing, each equally an abstraction when considered alone, the problem is considerably simplified, and the solution becomes proportionately easy. For the plain truth of the matter is—and it is a truth that is constantly ignored by writers on ethics—that just as society disappears when we have abstracted all the individuals of which it is the sum, so the individual, as we know him, also disappears when we take from him all that society gives him in the shape of institutions, language, education, and general social environment. Every individual is what he is to-day as the result of the centuries of social life that have preceded him, and of the social structure that surrounds him. Every one of the characteristically human qualities, as well as a great many that man shares with the larger animal world, have been produced in response to the requirement of a social medium, as surely as the wing of a bird and the fin of a fish have unmistakable reference to the conditions under which their life is spent. It is in virtue only of this consideration that morality can have any imperative character whatever; for if man is part of a social structure, "cell in the social tissue," to use Mr. Stephen's phrase, receiving hurt as the body politic is injured, and profiting as it is benefited, then the refusal of a man to act

so as to promote the general welfare can, given intelligence, be shown to be unreasonable and profitable even to the doer himself. So long as we members of a social structure, connected with it by bonds that we cannot completely break even if we are so inclined, whatever impairs the force of our ability must have a social as well as an individual aspect, while as individuals we in turn each suffer by the weakening of the social fabric of which we are an integral portion. Consequently, the antithesis that is assumed to exist between the interests of the individual and the interests of the community is superficial and temporary, and is to be reconciled by a deeper study of the subject.

Of course it may be granted that "a large proportion of the existing individuals at any time" have no personal interest in "the progress of the race, or in the social development we are undergoing"; but who has contended that all people were consciously alive to the nature or meaning of the principles of which their ordinary actions are the expression? The ordinary man or woman would doubtless be surprised to discover the relations existing between, say, the principle of gravitation and the circulation of the blood, or between the principle of natural selection and social evolution; yet it would be absurd to argue that, because "a large proportion of the existing individuals" at any time have no conscious interest in these relations, therefore they do not exist, and should not influence our future reasoning. Molière's character who had been talking all his life without knowing it is only a type of the majority of people who every day of their lives are acting in accordance with principles of which they are ignorant, and which, moreover, many repudiate when they are explained to them. From one point of view the object of a scientific morality is to awaken a recognition of the causes that determine conduct, and by this means create the conditions of permanent improvement. All education, indeed, is little more than the application of this simple principle. We must make explicit in language what has hitherto been implicit in action, and in so doing tend to put on one side the disturbing or retarding influences in human civilization, and consecrate attention and effort upon the essential factors.

The objection, therefore, brought in various forms against a scientific system of ethics by Dr. Martineau (*Types of Ethical Theory*), by Mr. Leonard Courtonne (*Constructive Ethics*), by Mr. Balfour (*Foundations of Belief*), by Messrs. Kidd and Sorley, and by numerous others, that there is a constant and inevitable opposition between the logical dictates of individual reason and the requirements of social well-being, is one that breaks down upon a truer and deeper view of the subject. The sense of opposition exists now in a large number of cases is only too true; but it is, at least, one of the plainest results of a study of contemporary life that the sense of discord decreases rapidly. The last two generations have been no more remarkable for the growth of a scientific system of ethics than they have for the development of a sense of corporate responsibility. And it is also worthy of note that, in the history of ethical speculation during the last century and a half, none has shown a keener sense of their social obligations than men like Bentham, Mill, Spencer, and Bain, who have all been among the foremost enemies of the supernatural or the transcendental in morals; while, on the other hand, those who have talked loudest of the superiority of human nature have been most emphatic in the assertion that human nature by itself fails to furnish any adequate reason for observing the ordinary decencies of life. It is indeed, a curious thing that, while the supernaturalist has constantly reproached the naturalist with the tendency to destroy the sweetness and dignity of human life, he has just as constantly asserted that the only foundation for a code of morals is to be found in the extra human region. One would imagine that there could be no more dignity in a human nature that sinks upon a reason in its own constitution for not kept upon a bestiality than in a monarch who is only kept upon a throne through the terrorism of foreign bayonets. Wrong the naturalist may be; but, in my opinion, he admits of little doubt that he entertains the more dignified view of life and its possibilities.

This fundamental agreement which I believe to exist between individual and general welfare is seen

went to sleep again. At noon he dined on numerous courses (I will return presently to the savory topic of dinners). Another meal followed the vesper devotions. Supper consisted of some such delicacy as anchovies. The Emperor's drinks were large and deep. He loved iced beer the first thing in the morning, and drank five times more Rhenish wine than any of his table companions. The physicians protested, and the gout supported their arguments with emphatic twinges; but Charles proceeded with his endless feasts, and stuck as zealously to his bottle as to his creed. When the gout subsided, he celebrated the respite with a big omelette of sardines. The doctors looked on aghast. His passion for fish was as unique as his orthodoxy.

In February, 1557, the bells of the convent of Yuste sounded across the wooded hills, and greeted the ears of the Christian Emperor as he was borne in a litter towards this asylum for meditative souls. The monks marched to meet him, bearing lighted tapers, and preceded by a crucifix. The imperial attendants flung down their weapons. Their master had passed into a new world, where carnal swords were no more needed. Charles knelt in prayer before the High Altar. His thoughts were directed to things celestial, and his life was now shaped to Christian ends.

Charles's library consisted of thirty-one books, which he seldom opened. He preferred the glittering attractions of his plate, the whole amount of which was set down at more than twelve thousand ounces. Of silver was his table-service; silver also his toilet-pots, pitchers, and basins. Even more prized were his amulets. The Emperor possessed gold rings which checked the flow of blood, rings which acted as specifics against cramp, a blue stone which cured (or did not cure) the gout, and four bezoar stones (chalky nodules found in the intestines of animals) which remedied the plague. When the gout permitted, his Christian Majesty delighted in making pocket-watches, with the assistance of Torriano—that same celebrated Torriano who constructed the hydraulic works of Toledo. Charles's watches would not keep time together. The story runs that he reflected thus: "If I cannot make timepieces agree, how absurd it is of me to expect people to adopt a uniform system of religious belief."

The story is good. Unfortunately, it is an invention. Charles had neither the wit nor the sense to make so just an observation.

He loved spectacles. His inventory included thirty-six pairs, so that he had more spectacles than books. Also he loved puppets. He and Torriano made dancing dolls, soldiers, girls with tambourines, and wooden birds. It is very natural for a monarch to appreciate puppets.

Also he liked music, especially sacred music; so much so that, when a lay-clerk sang out of tune, the emperor swore at him.

Eating was his chief religious exercise. But he also experienced pleasure in rehearsing his own funeral. He had taken part in memorial services conducted in honor of his deceased wife. The ceremonies had lasted three days, and the Emperor followed each step in the procedure with great attention. At the close of the lengthy ritual Charles turned to his confessor. "Would it not," he asked, "be well for me to perform my own obsequies, so that I may see with my own eyes what must soon befall me in the course of nature?"

The priest was amazed, burst into tears, and tried to dissuade Charles from so morbid an enterprise. But the monarch urged that it would be a beneficial exercise in piety, and the confessor gave way. The convent chapel was hung with black. Hundreds of wax lights made the gloom seem thicker. Monks and imperial servants gathered in the sacred building, all clad in the garb of those that mourn. A large catafalque, draped in black, stood in the midst, as if it contained the remains of the late Emperor, Charles V. And meanwhile Charles himself, clothed in a black mantle, and holding a twinkling taper in his hand, looked on solemnly at the crowd who were assisting at his own mock funeral.

Such were the holy occupations of the Emperor Charles. In no sphere did his lofty character display itself to such advantage as in what may be called the kitchen department of his Christian life. Now and then he found time to write to his princely relations, advising them to

clearly when we examine what the process of moral evolution has been. Then it is seen that progress in morals has consisted neither in creating new faculties, in crushing out old ones, nor in the struggle of two independent principles of good and evil, so much as in the better application, in the light of wider experience, of principles that are inherent in the very constitution of our

Psychologically, it is indisputable that every action consciously performed proceeds from desire of some kind, and therefore, as action is only the method adopted for its satisfaction, ethical development cannot take the form of its eradication or emasculation, but must perforce assume that of its cultivation and direction. Whether one's desires prompt them to act in a socially desirable or undesirable manner will be due to a combination of temperament and education; from the point of view of the psychologist, all conscious action is the expression of desire, and must consequently yield some amount of self-satisfaction to the doer. From this position I can see no logical escape. It is useless deceiving ourselves with loud-sounding phrases; to act consciously implies some reason for acting. This reason is bound to take the form of a desire which the action is intended to satisfy, and consequently the true task of the ethical teacher is not to rail against the tendency of men to promote their interests, but to show in what direction their true interests lie. For my own part, it seems not only true that both in ethics and economics people act in the direction that promises to yield them the greatest satisfaction, but that they cannot well help doing so.

In a final article I hope to make this position clear to those who have followed me thus far.

C. COHEN.

(To be concluded.)

### A Most Christian Emperor.

On the slope of a mountain in the Spanish province of Estramadura, and surrounded by forests of oak and chestnut, there stood in the sixteenth century a monastery of the order of St. Jerome. At one time an inscription, carved in the cornerstone of the building, ran to the following effect: "In this holy house of Spain, most Christian, most invincible, passed the close of a life which he had devoted to the defence of the faith and the maintenance of justice." From this record one might conclude that Charles was a person distinguished for the most saintly qualities. What manner of man he was may be partly gathered from some particulars that have come down to us concerning his life in the monastery of Yuste.

Charles the Fifth had spent many years in wars in various parts of Western Europe. But, in spite of his Christian virtues, and his more or less "invincible" exploits as a campaigner, he was unable to defend himself from the gout. People also say he was much depressed by the death of his beautiful wife, Isabella of Portugal. It may have been so, but I surmise that he loved many things more than he loved his wife. One of the historians states that Charles retired to Yuste for the purpose of "sober thought and serious recollection"; but, if that was really the case, the phrase "sober thought" must be deemed a very elastic one. The Emperor had employed two expert architects to erect a residence attached to the convent. It contained eight rooms for himself and his attendants, and was fronted by terraces which were adorned with flowers, fountains, and fish-ponds. A garden was laid out in these of orange, citron, and mulberry-trees. While the arrangements were being completed, Charles quartered himself in the house of a nobleman at the neighboring village of Jarandilla. Here he prepared himself for Yuste—and for heaven—by cultivating his spiritual faculties are based on material conditions. The most Christian Emperor, therefore, paid devout heed to his physique. Potted chicken, made tasty before he left his bed each morning. His Majesty then

suppress the Lutheran heresy. But a more frequent subject of correspondence was the supply of his larder, and his secretaries of state were ceaselessly writing epistles to the purveyors of provisions. The trout of Yuste were too small; a courier was ordered to bring the fat specimens which abounded in the river at Valladolid. The Emperor doted on eels, frogs, oysters, and anchovies. From Seville and Portugal were dispatched liberal allowances of soles, lampreys, and flounders. Pork and mutton were largely patronised. Partridges enjoyed the imperial favor. The secretaries were diligent in their endeavors to get enough pickled olives to keep his Majesty in good temper. Pork sausages formed a darling dish. Noblemen sent game and vegetables, and duchesses provided sweatmeats.

In the beginning of September, 1558, Charles was so ill that his stomach would no longer retain his favorite beer. On the 20th of that month he took the sacrament, and said: "Lord God of truth, our Redeemer, into thy hands I commit my spirit." On the morning of the 21st he called on the name of Jesus, and then expired.

Such were the closing scenes in the career of Charles, father of the persecutor, Philip the Second of Spain, and I suppose one could scarcely have a more convincing illustration of the fact that the purest orthodoxy is consistent with the most contemptible moral character.

F. J. GOULD.

## Bible Biography.

(Concluded from page 372.)

ANOTHER condemnatory act upon the part of Moses was his conduct in reference to the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, as recorded in Numbers xvi. It seems that these, with others, charged Moses with having deceived them, which made him "very wrath," and he invited his accusers to appear before the Lord and have the matter settled; he, however, "said unto the Lord, respect not thou their offspring." This was a crafty piece of business, which resulted in the earth opening, and his accusers "and all that appertained to them" going "down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them, and they perished from among the congregation." On the morrow certain of the "children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying: Ye have killed the people of the Lord." For this the Lord sent a plague. "Now they that died of the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, besides them that died about the matter of Korah." Moses and his God seem to have been a congenial pair in perpetrating wholesale slaughter. Moses died at the age of a hundred and twenty years, and we are told "there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face" (Deuteronomy xxxiv. 10). Let us hope this is true, for even one Moses is more than we could tolerate in these days.

The principal character whose biography is given in the Bible, which should be of value to professed Christians, is that of David, inasmuch as he is described as being a "man after God's own heart" (1 Samuel xiii. 14; Acts xiii. 22). It is further stated that he was one "who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes" (1 Kings xiv. 8). It is, therefore, a legitimate inference that David's conduct was approved by the Christian's God. As to what that conduct was, we need not go to the writings of Sceptics, for it is fairly summarised from the Bible by the Rev. Dr. David Thomas, who, in his book on the Psalms, vol. iii., pp. 339-343, writes thus: "In studying David as given in the Scriptures, I read how, in cold blood, he slew two hundred Philistines in order that he might obtain Michal, Saul's daughter, for his wife (1 Samuel xviii. 20, 27). I read how, in order to gratify Saul, a miserable tyrant, he fought with the Philistines and slew them with a *grand slaughter* (1 Samuel xix. 5). I read how he allowed Michal to practise a cowardly imposture on Saul, her father, in order to preserve his life; and how, having escaped the danger himself, he left her to face the anger of her royal sire (1 Samuel xix. 11-17). I read how, when he fled to Nob in search of Ahimelech, the priest, he deceived the priest by an egregious falsehood, and, by deceiving the priest, he

brought destruction on no less than eighty-five of them, as well as on a number of men, women, and children (1 Samuel xxi. 1 and 2; also, xxii. 17, 30). I read how he gathered his people together and fought against Rabbah, and took the king's crown off his head, and brought forth the spoils of the city, and put the people therein under saws and under harrows of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln; and he did this in all the cities of the children of Ammon (2 Samuel xii. 27-31). I read how that, after having sworn to Saul, just before his death, that he would not destroy any of his children, he delivered seven of Saul's sons into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they were hanged (1 Samuel xxiv. 21, 22; 2 Samuel xxi. 1-9). I read how, as 'a very old man, stricken in years,' with a young virgin in his bosom, he, with the spirit of revenge strong in him, commanded Solomon to inflict death upon two men. In reference to one he says: 'Let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.' Concerning the other, this man of God exclaims: 'His hoar head bring down to the grave with blood' (1 Kings i. 2, 4; ii. 5-9)."

The rev. gentleman adds: "These are but a few of the crimes of David." Then he asks: "But are there no good deeds in this Biblical record that should be stated as a set-off against all these revolting enormities?" Here is his answer: "Such deeds are sadly wanting in the record of David's life. In walking through the biography—a path stained with blood, and foul with moral pollutions—I have looked on every hand for some fruit of goodness, on every spot for some flower of virtue, but I have been sadly disappointed."

Here we have from a Christian source a frank admission of the debased character of the "man after God's own heart," whose heart, the Bible tells us, was "perfect" (1 Kings xi. 4). In fact, his own confession, as given in the Thirty-eighth Psalm, reveals the licentiousness of a life to be known only to be despised. There David states "there is no soundness in my flesh. My wounds stink, and are corrupt. For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease." And this is the man who "Surely God's special friends were a queer lot. They might have been god-like, but their actions were repulsive from a moral standpoint."

Of Joshua little need be said, inasmuch as he committed very little crime upon his own account. God was with him rendering practical assistance in all his cruel and extirpating wars. The biography of Samson also shows that the "spirit of the Lord" is evil indeed. Left alone, Samson was not a bad man; but whenever the "spirit of the Lord" came upon him he was a terror to all with whom he came in contact.

The principal lesson to be learnt from Bible biography is that, if we were to emulate the character of the Christians' God and his chief friends, criminality would mark our career. Just as we may judge of a man by the company he keeps, so we may estimate a religion by its biographical ideal it sets up. The biography of the Bible is cruel, and in many respects inhuman, and its religion has too often proved to be of the same character.

CHARLES WARREN

## Ingersoll's Paine Oration.

[Delivered at the Academy of Music, New York, on Sunday, May 14, 1899.]

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: To rescue from the labor of lies the reputation of a great and noble man of labor of gratitude and love. Through many of the dead years, the mind of man has been beleaguered by the hosts of superstition. Hated of deliverance advanced slowly, and the ones that wished to deliver were its greatest enemies. Hated those they wished to succor and despised by those who were willing to die to save, for the good of mankind they have accepted isolation, slander, poverty, imprisonment, torture, death. And if it had not been for the men, for a few great men and a few women, we would all be savages to-night; and one of the bravest souls in this great army of deliverance was Thomas Paine. I feel indebted to him for the liberty I enjoy to-day.

If he had not lived, I could not have spoken my thought; and maybe I would not have the thought which I now have.

Thomas Paine was not of royal blood; he was born among the poor in a country where children were burdens, where liberty was unknown, and where the privileges of class were guarded with infinite jealousy, and where the rights of the individual were trampled beneath the feet of priests and titled robbers; he was born where intellectual liberty was infidelity, blasphemy, and it is wonderful that the idea of liberty ever crept into his brain. Poverty was his mother, and, as a matter of fact, nearly all the children of Genius have been nursed at the sad and loving breast of Poverty. Necessity was his master. He had more brains than books, more sense than education, more courage than politeness, more strength than polish; but he had no veneration for old mistakes, and he never took off his hat to an ancient lie. He loved the truth for the sake of man. He saw injustice everywhere, hypocrisy in the pulpit, venality on the bench, tyranny on the throne; but he had the courage to espouse the cause of the weak against the strong, of the enslaved and unorganised many against the organised and titled few.

In England he was nobody, he was nothing; he belonged to the lower classes. No avenue was open to him. The people were satisfied generally, but those that were dissatisfied had no power, and the Government was ready to crush any man who said one word in favor of human advancement. So Thomas Paine, at the age of thirty-seven, left England—a very wise move. He sailed for America, and he brought with him a letter of introduction signed by a very great Infidel, by the name of Benjamin Franklin. He arrived at Philadelphia with this letter of introduction. That was his ticket-in-trade, that was his capital. By means of that letter he was employed to write for the *Philadelphia Magazine*, and we know that he wrote five articles. The first was against human slavery. He disagreed with Jehovah about that institution. He wanted it done voluntarily, and he prophesied that, if it was not done voluntarily, it would be done in the smoke and flame of civil war.

The next article he wrote was against duelling. Because the man in the right was as apt to be killed as the man in the wrong, and because the duel did not change the facts, the matter remained the same afterwards as before.

The next article he wrote was on the treatment of criminals, and he took the ground that they ought to be reformed instead of degraded.

The next article was on the rights of woman. He thought that they should have the right to what they earned, to the property that was given them, and that they should have some voice in shaping their own destinies.

And the next article he wrote was in favor of the formation of societies to prevent cruelty to children and animals.

In these five articles he marked out every reformation of the last hundred years. At that time he found the colonies clamoring for justice, whining about their grievances, upon their knees at the foot of the throne, imploring that mixture of idiocy and insanity, George the Third, by the grace of God, for a restoration of their ancient privileges. They were not trying to become their master. That was all. The people of the colonies were trying, I say, to soften the heart of King George. They were perfectly willing to make brick if they were furnished the straw. The colonies wished to be reconciled. Paine gave to the world a pamphlet called *Common Sense*, and he had so much common sense that he was the most uncommon man of his time. It was the first argument for separation, the first assault upon the British form of government, the first blow for a Republic; and it roused our people to perceive the destiny of the new world, and he was the first to write these words: "The United States

are no other pamphlet ever accomplished such wonderful results. It was filled with argument, reason, persuasion, and logic. It opened a new world, filled the

present with hope and the future with honor. Everywhere the people responded, and in a few months the Continental Congress declared the colonies were, and of right ought to be, free and independent States. In consequence of that pamphlet a new nation was born, and it is only justice to say that Paine did more to cause the Declaration of Independence than any other man. When Washington himself was on his way to take his seat in that Continental Congress, he said he hoped that no one thought that he was insane enough to be in favor of independence. So I want you to know what this man Paine did. Neither must you forget that his attacks upon Great Britain were also attacks upon monarchy; and, while he convinced the people that the colonists ought to separate, he proved to them that a free government is the best that can be instituted among men.

In my judgment, Thomas Paine was the best political writer of his day, and, I may say, who ever lived. "What he wrote was pure nature, and his soul and his pen ever went together." Ceremony, pageantry, and all the paraphernalia of power had no effect upon him. He examined into the why and wherefore; he was radical, and nothing short of the bedrock satisfied him, and his enthusiasm for what he believed to be right knew no bounds. During all the dark scenes of the Revolution never for one moment did he despair. Year after year his brave words were ringing through the land, and by the bivouac fires the weary soldiers read the inspiring words of *Common Sense*, filled with ideas sharper than their swords, and consecrated themselves anew to the cause of Freedom.

Paine was not content with having aroused the spirit of independence, but he gave every energy of his soul to keep that spirit alive. He was with the army, he shared its defeats, its dangers, and its glories; and when the situation became desperate, when gloom settled upon all, he gave them the *Crisis*, and that *Crisis* was a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, leading the way to freedom, glory, and honor. He shouted to them: "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he who stands it now deserves the love and thanks of men and women." And to those who wished to put the war off to some future day with a touching spirit of self-sacrifice he said: "Every generous parent should say, 'If there must be war, let it be in my day, that my children may have peace.'" To the cry that Americans were rebels, he answered: "He that rebels against reason is a real rebel; but he that, in defence of reason, rebels against tyranny has a better title to 'Defender of the Faith' than George the Third."

Some said it was not to the interest of the colonies to be free. Paine answered this by saying: "To know whether it be to the interest of the continent to be independent we need ask only this easy question: 'Is it to the interest of a man to always be a boy?'"

He found many who would not listen, men who would listen to nothing, and to them he said—and there is not a finer argument in our language: "To argue with a man who has renounced his reason is like giving medicine to the dead." There is not a better generalisation in the literature of the world. And, do you know, that ought to adorn the walls of every orthodox church in Christendom. It ought to be in letters of gold over the high altar: "To argue with a man who has renounced his reason is like giving medicine to the dead."

There is a world of political wisdom in this: "England lost her liberty in a long chain of right reasoning from wrong principles." So he says: "The Greeks and Romans were possessed of the spirit of liberty, but not its principles, because, while they wished to be free themselves, they enslaved others."

So in his letter to the British people he tried to convince them that it was not to their interest to war upon us. He says: "War can never be to the interest of a trading nation, any more than quarrelling can be profitable to a man in business; but to make war with those who trade with us is like setting a bulldog on a customer at the shop door."

The writings of Paine glitter with simple, compact, logical statements that carry conviction to the dullest. He had the happiest possible way of putting the case, of asking questions in such a way that they answered themselves. Day and night that man labored for America;

month after month, year after year, he gave himself unreservedly to the great cause. He wanted to see the continent redeemed, consecrated to the happiness of mankind; and I say to-night that at the close of the Revolution no one stood higher than Thomas Paine. The best, the wisest, and the greatest were his friends, his admirers, and had he been thinking only of his own good, of his own ease, he might have rested from his toils and spent the remainder of his life in comfort. He would have been what the world calls "respectable." At his death he would have been surrounded by clergymen, warriors, and statesmen; there would have been an imposing funeral, miles of carriages and civic societies, salvos of artillery, a nation in mourning, and above all a splendid monument covered with lies.

He chose rather to benefit mankind. He was not through with his work. At that time the seed sown by the great infidels was beginning to bear fruit in Europe. People were beginning to think. The eighteenth century was crowning its gray hairs with the wreath of progress. On every hand science was bearing testimony then, as now, against the Church. Voltaire had filled Europe with light. D'Holbach was giving the *elite* of Paris the principles contained in his *System of Nature*. The encyclopædists had attacked superstition with information for the masses. The foundation of things began to be examined. A few had the courage to keep their shoes on and let the bush burn. Miracles began to get scarce; people began to inquire; the market for charms fell off. At that time America had set a great example to the world; the word "liberty" was in the mouths of men, and they began to brush the dust from their knees.

Thomas Paine went to France, and into the new movement he threw his energies. His fame had gone before him. He was welcomed as a friend of the human race. While on his way he wrote a book called *The Rights of Man*. He wrote it for the benefit of his English friends, and for forcible illustration, apt comparison, accuracy and clearness of statement, and absolute thoroughness, that book has never been excelled. The fears of the administration in England were aroused. Paine was prosecuted for libel. He was served with no summons, he was grasped by no officer; but he was tried in his absence, and he was found guilty. Yet there is not a sentiment in the entire work that will not challenge the admiration of every civilised human being—not one. It is a magazine of political wisdom, an arsenal of ideas, and an honor not only to Thomas Paine, but to human nature itself. It could have been written only by the man who had the generosity, the exalted goodness to say: "The world is my country, and to do good my religion." We find in all the utterances of the world no sublimer sentiment. No creed can be compared with it, and it should be wrought in gold, adorned with jewels, and impressed on every human heart: "The world is my country, and to do good my religion."

In 1792 Paine was elected by the department of Calais as their representative in the National Assembly, and so great was his popularity in France that at the same time he was elected by four departments. On taking his place in the French Assembly, he was appointed as one of a committee to draft a constitution for France. Had the French people taken the advice of Paine, there would have been no reign of terror, the streets of Paris would not have been filled with blood, and the French Revolution would have been one of the grandest successes of the world. But Paine was too conservative to suit the leaders of the French Revolution. They were carried away by a desire for revenge, by hatred; they had suffered so long, they had borne so much, they had been so trampled beneath the feet of kings and priests, that they thirsted for the blood of their oppressors. Besides all this, the French people had been so degraded by the Church that they were not fit material with which to construct a Republic. It took the Catholic Church one thousand years to produce the French Revolution. Many of the leaders longed to establish a just government, but the people wanted revenge.

(To be continued.)

Few men think, but all will have opinions.—Berkeley.

### Acid Drops.

MR. G. R. SIMS is not what he was. He has got on in the world, and has shaken hands with the Prince of Wales, and the other founders of the *Referee* broke away from another journal because they would be Radicals. What is Mr. Sims's radicalism now?

In last week's *Referee* the great "Dagonet" descended low as to apologise, in the technical sense of the word, the desecration of the Mahdi's tomb, and the indignity that were perpetrated upon the Mahdi's corpse. Mr. Sims began by saying that some of the members of parliament who voted against Lord Kitchener's grant did so "because of their sympathy with England's Enemies"—the two words being displayed in capitals. If this is meant for John Morley, it is nothing but impudence. In any case, it is a gratuitous insult. Mr. Sims is surely old enough to know that Englishmen may differ from him and yet love England as much as he does.

"Dagonet" admits that "a certain number undoubtedly represented a thoroughly honest section of the community. They saw in the desecration of a dead body an un-Christian act"—though it does not seem to us so very un-Christian after all, however barbarous and inhuman. These people did not bear in mind "the danger to Christianity which would have arisen had the Mahdi's tomb been regarded as sacred by the conquerors of the Soudan."

Danger to Christianity, indeed! We thought that Christianity depended upon the empty tomb of Jesus Christ, and upon the empty tomb of the Mahdi. But we live and learn when Mr. Sims turns Christian—with or without his eyes in his cheek.

Mr. Sims goes on to say that no harm was done to the Mahdi by ridding his tomb. "He certainly didn't feel any indignity himself." Certainly not. Who says he did? Nor did Oliver Cromwell feel the indignity when the royalists dug up his dead body and exposed it to public contempt. It did not hurt him that those who dared not face him trampled upon his corpse. They did not dishonor themselves.

Going from bad to worse, Mr. Sims has the fatuity to say that cutting up a Christian corpse at a hospital, in the interests of science, is on the same moral level as "cutting up a Mohammedan in the interest of civilisation." Beyond plausible phraseology there is no analogy whatever between the two cases. No real dishonor is done to the Christian corpse, for none is intended. The object of the dissection is purely scientific and humane—namely, the acquisition of knowledge, with a view to curing disease and alleviating suffering. In the case of the Mahdi's body, dishonor is intended; indeed, it was the sole object of the desecration. And to say it was in the interest of civilisation is simply beg the very question at issue.

Many of us fail to see how civilisation can be promoted by acts of barbarity. It is all very well to assert, as Mr. Sims does, that, "Had we respected the Mahdi's body, the conclusion would have been that he was a saint and we dared not touch him." This is not by any means a necessary conclusion. The Mahdi's cause was defeated, his successor was slain, his warriors had been slaughtered, and he was sold into wild flight, and his body was flung into the Nile and his head taken to Egypt. Was that not enough? Was it really true that Lord Kitchener's victory was only half a victory until the Mahdi's body was flung into the Nile and his head taken to Egypt in an old kerosene-can? We hesitate to believe it.

We hope Mr. Sims will take a thought and mend his ways. The part of a Christian advocate is often conducted in mental stultification, and sometimes to moral stultification. We venture to think that if Mr. Sims ever reads over his own cold blood what he has written about the desecration of the Mahdi's tomb, he will conclude that at least for the rest of his life he was in precious bad company.

We have not quite done with the *Referee*. A few weeks ago we called for in regard to the new writer of its weekly "book." This gentleman is a curious successor to the *Referee*. Nisbet. He had a lot to say last week about Education, and he appears to mistrust very considerably. The worst part of it finds with it is that it leads many people towards Secularism, and "Secularism is a canker at the heart of a nation's greatness." The why and wherefore of this remarkable statement are not vouchsafed, but it is rather more than insinuation that a man becomes a Secularist because he "desires to be a man that he can live and act as he chooses, without fear of punishment." Now this is a very old pulpit wheeze, and we were surprised to encounter it in the *Referee*. All it means

bottom is this—The man who differs from me in religion, and especially the man who rejects my religion, must be a dogmatist. The argument is as old as bigotry itself. It is a display of the vilest spirit of dogmatism. And what is dogmatism? It was defined once for all by Douglas Jerrold as "bigotry grown to maturity."

Dutch Simplicity Kruger had a conversation with Mr. Marks, of Pretoria, in the course of which he remarked: "You are very dear to me, for does not the Bible bristle with incidents of the greatness of Israel? Why, we as Christians owe everything to the Jews." Yes, God and all. "By," he added, "where can you find in the Bible, in the New Testament, any reference to Englishmen?"

Evidently the old Boer President hasn't read his Bible as carefully as Mark Twain, who detected a reference to Englishmen in the Sermon on the Mount—"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

Simmons knocked out Corbett, and his wife claimed a share of the victory, because she prayed for it. Now the great prize is knocked out by Jeffries, who has a superior fighting-machine behind him—namely, his father, who is a champion in California. The clerical parent sent his fighting-son a stimulating telegram before the battle, and the result assures him that "the Lord is in it." Perhaps so. The Lord has been in most of the fights on this planet.

Lord George Hamilton, Canon Mason, and Dean Farrar have been orating at Canterbury. The occasion was the unveiling of a memorial to a number of Protestant martyrs who were burnt there some 340 years ago, during the time of the glorious Reformation. On the pedestal of this memorial is the following inscription: "In memory of forty-four English martyrs, who were burnt at the stake on this spot, A.D. 1555-1558. For themselves they earned the martyr's crown, and by their heroic fidelity they helped to secure for succeeding generations the priceless blessing of religious freedom."

Those forty-one Christians who were roasted to death by their persecutors may have earned the martyr's crown, and, emphatically deny, however, that they died for religious freedom. They never understood that principle. The Protestants of that age were just as ready as the Catholics to persecute, imprison, torture, and murder those who differed from them. This is proved by their writings and proved by their deeds. All that the historian is able to say is that religious freedom profited, though quite undesignedly, by the squabbles between Catholics and Protestants. When the quarrels fall out among themselves there is always a chance for the common enemy of both sides.

Pulpit prophets ought to feel indebted to the law for the protection it affords them against unauthorised rivals. A lady "clairvoyant" has been prosecuted before the West London Magistrate for fortune-telling. Her defence was that she "only predicted the future as every minister of the Church of England predicted the future." Her predictions seem to be just about as reliable as those of the energy. Asked if she knew what the result of the case would be, she said: "I think—I see—it will be dismissed. I cannot see anything else." But she was wrong, for a fine of forty shillings and costs was imposed.

Practical Christianity will soon become as dangerous as blasphemy used to be. An American faith-curer, Mrs. Mary Muellor, has now been sentenced to five months' imprisonment in a penitentiary because a child died under her treatment. Many of these American faith-healers are mendacious humbugs, but they are not greater humbugs than the Christian judges who imprison them for carrying out their Christian teaching.

An Emperor kneeling and praying in the street was the interesting spectacle afforded the inhabitants of Vienna the other day. The occasion was the procession of the Corpus Christi. The Emperor was bare-headed and bore a lighted candle. That, however, was but a mock-humility, for he wore a brilliant uniform, and the whole scene was a wonderful sight of color. The *Pall Mall Gazette* comments on the incongruity of this mediæval display amidst such a modern modern surroundings, and rightly describes the whole spectacle as a "solemn mummery."

It happened not to be in a Secular hall, but a Congregational chapel, that the Mayor of Rye—who was a Christian, and not a Secularist—suddenly dropped down dead whilst

speaking. Providence has, therefore, deprived the pious of a text for many awe-inspiring discourses.

A Stockport parish clerk went climbing on Conway Castle Tower after a jackdaw's nest. The Lord, of course, could not be expected to take care of one of his servants who ventured on such an undignified school-boy exploit. So he carefully let him drop about thirty feet and injure himself, just for all the world as if he were unconnected with the Church.

Whilst we hear of a clergyman walking into a lion's den, we also hear of a poor pitiful cleric who was so frightened at an owl fluttering from its nest of young ones that he must needs have it shot. The owl, says a correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, was a fine brown specimen, much rarer of its kind than the clergyman who had it murdered.

The rector of Flint has received the lie direct. Sir John Brunner accuses him of "absolute falsehood." The rector is said to have written a letter containing the fine charitable remark: "I think the will of Tom Ellis will open the eyes of the poor farmers of Merioneth who have been subscribing to his keep all these years." Sir John denies that the farmers subscribed, as suggested, to the keep of the late Parliamentary whip.

The temper and good taste of the rector of Flint may be judged by his statement that Mr. Ellis's life "was an illustration of one of the evils in the social life of Wales due to the influence of sectarian Calvinism—namely, the prevalence of deceit."

Bishop Hurst, the Methodist Chancellor of the American University of Washington, is in serious trouble. He was joined by God in the holy bonds of matrimony to Mammon, in the person of a Buffalo millionaire's daughter. The lady now thinks she has serious grounds of complaint against the Bishop, and is suing for a divorce.

The Rev. Owen Spencer Watkins, Wesleyan chaplain to the forces in the Soudan, is responsible for some nonsensical gush about soldier-lads out in the Soudan "serving not only their Queen and country, but their God and Savior, Jesus Christ." Suppose this chaplain were smitten on one cheek, physically or figuratively, would he be inclined to turn the other? If he would, it is more than any of his boasted soldier-lads might be relied upon to do. But it is like a parson's "cheek" to associate Christianity with warfare in the face of New Testament teaching.

Cycling church-parades have now come in for condemnation as tending to the desecration of the Sabbath and the diminution of public worship. The Newcastle-on-Tyne Presbytery have been gravely considering the subject, which is now referred to the Presbyters' Committee on Religion and Public Morals. Sunday cycling does, indeed, bid fair to endanger the claims of the Savior, especially in fine summer weather. Sad to think of, is it not?

Thus writes a correspondent of the *Nonconformist Independent* in dealing with the catholicity of the Church of England: "This week the present writer said to a priest of the National Church, 'You are nothing but a Theist,' to which he replied, 'Sometimes barely that.'" Rather a curious kind of "priest," if the story be true. It is probably his remnant of Theism that prevents him from being honest and leaving a Church where he has obviously no place.

An American visitor complains of the goings-on at Stratford-on-Avon church. "It is now," he writes, "a great plaster factory inside, full of scaffolding and lime-dust. Can't an Act of Parliament be had to stop that vicar? He is still imploring visitors, by a printed notice, to give him more for 'more restorations.' Let me beg them by all that is sacred not to give him a penny."

The valuable living of St. Magnus the Martyr, in the City of London, has fallen to the lot of the Rev. Andrew Edward Caldecott. He is a High Churchman. His predecessor, who held the living for forty years, was a Low Churchman. The flock has nothing to do with the color of its shepherd. That is decided by the gentleman who owns the right of presentation.

Dean Farrar has chosen the funny title of *True Religion* for the new book he is publishing. We did not suspect him of being such a humorist.

A new field of enterprise is opening up to the "popular preachers." The Electrophone Company is supplying receivers to some of the London Hospitals, and patients are

thus enabled to hear the eloquence of fifteen selected men of God. When a patient is too weak to hold the ordinary receiver, a special instrument, known as "the headgear receiver," is fitted over his cranium. It is well to know that the apparatus is only usable "on the authority of the medical officer," for some popular preachers—Dr. Parker, for instance—are rather exciting. If a patient heard the sudden exclamation of "God damn" somebody or other, it might throw him into a dangerous relapse.

We venture to suggest that these popular preachers should visit the hospitals and cure the patients, instead of preaching to them. The method is simple and cheap, and is plainly prescribed in the New Testament. All the men of God have to do is to lay hands on the sick, and Jesus Christ has promised that they shall recover. Faith alone is wanted for the operation to be successful, but that is what the men of God appear to lack.

*Answers* offers prizes for funny stories, but notifies that "No irreverent ones will be accepted." Jesus Christ said that his disciples were the salt of the earth, but our good (or goody-goody) contemporary doesn't want too much salt in its jokes.

"Astounded" wonders in the *Echo* "how long the so-called Secular lectures will be permitted to be delivered in Hyde Park." This gentleman appears to be smarting from personal experience, for he complains that opponents only have ten minutes each to reply to these lectures, and that the lecturer always has the last word. But what would the gentleman have? If each opponent had the same time as the lecturer, the meetings would last all day. And why should Christians expect to have the last word at their own meetings and at Secular meetings too? We fear that "Astounded" has had a bad time at the hands of one of the lecturers he calls upon the police to put down.

William Joseph Powell, alias Walton Powell, professional infidel-slayer, president of the Anti-Infidel Society, and perhaps the dirtiest-mouthed blackguard who ever stood on a Christian platform, having already served a term of fifteen months' imprisonment for procuring young girls for immoral purposes, was arrested soon after his release from prison on a charge of bigamy. His trial took place last week at Wells before Mr. Justice Phillimore, who sentenced him to twelve months' hard labor. Another year must therefore elapse before Powell can rejoin his old anti-infidel colleagues and do battle for Jesus Christ.

*Apropos* of the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes's presentation at Court, the *Phoenix* says that "efforts are now being made to secure the same privilege for the Grand Primo of the Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes."

Referring to the Sir George Stokes jubilee, the *Phoenix* remarks that he receives £650 a year as Lucasian Professor at Cambridge, for which he does "absolutely nothing." No wonder he is able to support the Christian Evidence Society.

Mrs. Besant confides to a *Daily Mail* interviewer—they didn't interview her when she was an Atheist—that "a flippant form of materialism is becoming widely prevalent in India." About as flippant, probably, as her own materialism was a dozen years ago.

New York has been suffering from a terrible heat wave. June 6 this year was the hottest June 6 ever registered by the Weather Bureau. Meetings were held in the country districts praying for rain. The supplicants have only to wait, and their prayer is sure to be answered.

If there is anything in a name, the River Lark is just suited for public baptisms. We are not at all astonished to hear that eleven females and four males were dipped in it, near the ferry at Isleham, on a recent Sunday, and that two thousand people assembled to see the show.

Poor Parson Downman, of East Maudit, near Wellingborough, bought twenty Westralian shares at £2 each, expecting to sell them soon on a rising market at £3 or £4; but the shares went down, down, down, as might have been expected, and poor Parson Downman is now in the Bankruptcy Court.

A Shrewsbury man of God, the Rev. G. W. Elliott, was found drunk in the streets, covered with soot and grease, and surrounded by a crowd of school children. Sentence—five shillings or seven days.

How they love one another! Four hundred Protestant workmen on Queen's Island, Belfast, surrounded a Catholic workman in the dinner hour, and called upon him to curse the Pope. Refusing to do so, he was dragged along the

ground, kicked and beaten, and thrown into the dock, where he would have been drowned but for the assistance of the bathers and a constable.

How they love each other! Once more. There was a strange funeral the other day at Bedlington. A man named Niel Conway being found dead, and an inquest having been held in due course of law, the coroner's certificate was handed over to Mr. Daves, undertaker, who was to bury the deceased at the expense of the Guardians. A relative brought Mr. Baines to officiate, but Dr. Pearce, the Church of England vicar, also turned up to do the job. Being master of the situation, the Protestant vicar refused to let the Catholic priest officiate there, so the latter had to read his burial service on the highway. After that the Protestant undertaker refused to let the corpse be buried at all. But the undertaker, who had to get rid of the coffin and its contents somehow, pushed the vicar and the sexton aside, and transacted the burial business himself.

The Bishop of London complains that "the capacity for ignoring ideas of a theological nature by the young is extraordinary." That is why the clergy fight so hard to control education. They know that theology must be stuffed into children if it is to stand a chance of living. Children take it as they take medicine, with closed eyes and open mouths. But once inside it operates.

The Bishop of Stepney says it is a terrible thing to know that out of 1,000 boys of the age of fifteen 900 go to no place of worship. Terrible to whom? Not to the boys, we guess. His lordship means terrible to the clergy.

Dr. Stubbs, Bishop of Oxford, bewails the "depressing" increase of clerical poverty, and pleads warmly on behalf of the Clergy Sustentation Fund. Well now, a poor man is unfortunately placed; but a poor clergyman is in a most happy position. He is earning the first blessing pronounced in the Sermon on the Mount, and he is sure of a good seat in heaven after his funeral. To diminish his poverty is to diminish his present condition and future prospects. Dr. Stubbs should therefore hold his tongue on the subject, and let the poor clergy—what there are of them—float to glory with light pockets instead of sinking to Hades with financial ballast.

Lord Chancellors have usually been very pious. Hatherly, Cairns, and Selborne were Sunday-school teachers. So is or was, the present Lord Halsbury. Whereupon *Society* exclaims that "Godliness, with good practice, is great gain."

A curious passage occurred in the *Edinburgh Evening News* article on the death of Dr. Robert Wallace, M.P. "His mind," our admirable contemporary wrote, "was saturated with Scotland's two great classics—the Bible and Burns." We did not know the Bible was a Scotch classic. Perhaps we shall hear next that Isaiah was a Glaswegian and that Jesus was executed on Arthur's Seat.

Philip Hambrook, an old man, was charged at Hythe with assaulting his brother without the slightest provocation. The defendant said he was bound to do it, and quoted a number of Bible texts in support of his theory. The magistrates remanded him in order that the state of his mind might be investigated. It is to be hoped they will keep the Bible Book from him in prison, and give him a chance of pulling round.

Nonconformists (bless them!) are energetically promoting civil and religious liberty at Cheltenham. Newspapers' shops are closed already on Sunday, and now the Nonconformists have persuaded the Town Council to draft a bye-law which will stop the sale of newspapers in the streets. "Come to church, damn you; come to church."

## Death Day Commemorations.

There is one condition which ought to be observed in all serious commemorations—to recognise anniversaries of the death, not of the birth, of great men. To observe both is needlessly to double the occasions, and to introduce essentially false ideas. The birth of any great man is not a national event; it is not an epoch at all; is, in no sense, a great crisis in history. It is the close of a great career which alone is marked by contemporaries, which alone concerns the world, and which only history need record. Days of birth are private, domestic, or theological festivals. Families may observe the birthdays of their children, and Christians may celebrate the purely fanciful date when God was incarnate in the Virgin's womb. But for practical and human affairs it is the end of life which determines its place in the social world, and such remembrance as it may be worthy to maintain.—*Frederic Harrison.*



Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, June 18, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road : 7.30, Through Nature to God."

To Correspondents.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—All communications for Mr. Charles Watts should be sent to him at 24 Carminia-road, Balham, S.W. If a reply is required, a stamped and addressed envelope must be enclosed.

T. D.—Thanks for the copy of Fiske's Through Nature to God. I shall have our attention.

W. P. BALL.—Glad to have your batches of cuttings, and should much like to see your pen occasionally active in our columns, as would very many of our readers.

JAMES NEATE.—Thanks for the cutting. We had, however, already seen, and written upon, the Referee paragraph.

REV. C. LLOYD ENGSTRÖM, secretary of the Christian Evidence Society, sends us a letter on Sir G. G. Stokes, which is too late for insertion in this week's Freethinker, but will appear in our next.

DOXOVAM, writing from Beverley, wishes for particulars as to the Hull Branch. He says he has written to the gentleman whose address is given in the Almanack, but has received no reply.

W. S. CLOGG.—The controversy is hardly worth prolonging. Mr. Gould's brief letter must be regarded as ending it—at least, for the present.

H. PERCY WARD.—Thanks for cuttings.

N.S.S. TREASURER'S SCHEME.—Miss Vance acknowledges :- Seth Swale, 10s.

S. HOLMAN.—See "Sugar Plums."

W. C. S.—When the heroic Colonel Picquart was arrested and imprisoned, the books he had brought in to read were the works of Darwin, Spencer, and Mill. This does not favor the idea of his being a Catholic. We judge by this fact. What does the Newcastle Chronicle rely upon?

ANTI-CHRISTIAN.—Thanks for your interesting letter. We shall make an extract from it next week.

W. BRUNSDON.—We should say that the first King of England, in the complete sense of the words, was William the Conqueror.

A. E. ELDERKIN.—Don't worry yourself. We are all guilty of oversights. Jove himself nodded, and Jehovah seems generally asleep.

H. GILL.—Shelley's prose, edited by Shepherd, is published in two volumes at 7s. This is the cheapest edition now in the market. Rossetti's one-volume edition of Shelley's poems is the cheapest—price 3s. 6d.

YOUNG FREETHINKER.—If you want to get a large vocabulary, and a good command of it, don't resort to unlimited desultory reading. Take a couple of classics—say Shakespeare and Milton—and read them frequently and attentively. Milton employs eight thousand words, Shakespeare fifteen thousand.

T. FISHER.—We are obliged for the catalogue. Such things are always interesting, even when we cannot buy. The only thing we envied in the late Mr. Gladstone was his capacity for writing out cheques for whatever caught his fancy in second-hand booksellers' catalogues. A poor lover of books is too often like the hungry wretches who look through eating-house windows.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Isle of Man Times—Flaming Sword—Torch of Reason—Glasgow Herald—Awakener of India—Folkestone Herald—Free Society—El Libre Pensamiento—Crescent—Two Worlds—Boston Society—Brann's Iconoclast—Children—Public Opinion—Morpeth Herald—Freidenker—Star—Referee—New York Truthseeker—Manchester Evening Chronicle—Edinburgh Evening News—Leeds Daily News—Ethical World—New Century—Freethought Magazine—People's Newspaper—Sydney Bulletin—Edinburgh Evening Dispatch—Liberator—Progressive Thinker.

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

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

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

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.

Patrons 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.

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Sugar Plums.

MR. FOOTE lectures at the Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, this evening (June 18). His subject will be "Through Nature to God," with special reference to Professor Fiske's new book bearing that title—the latest attempt to press Darwinism into the service of Religion.

Miss Vance is busy arranging for the Sunday Freethought Demonstrations in the London Parks, etc., which Mr. Foote will speak at and generally superintend, as he did last year. It is probable that the first of these gatherings will take place at Finsbury Park next Sunday (June 25). Full particulars will be given in next week's Freethinker.

Mr. Cohen lectured to a very large audience in Victoria Park last Sunday on "The Church Crisis." Several ministers were in the meeting, but none of them opposed. A collection was taken up for the Hospital Sunday Fund.

Many of our readers will be glad to hear that the long-promised collection of Mr. G. L. Mackenzie's poems—most of which have appeared in our columns—is nearly ready for publication. We take this opportunity of correcting a misprint in a recent paragraph of ours on this matter. We were made to say that Mr. Mackenzie ghoulishly ranged "from grave to grave." Of course we wrote "from grave to gay."

Mr. Arthur B. Moss had a good and attentive audience on Sunday last in Finsbury Park, although supported on either side by Christian Want-of-Evidence lecturers. Mr. Schaller, of the West London Branch, presided, and the proceedings were somewhat enlivened by opposition from a Mr. Steggle, of North London fame. Mr. Victor Roger will occupy the platform this Sunday at the request of a few of his old friends, who do not often get an opportunity of hearing him lecture.

Although we war against priestcraft, and have a poor general opinion of clericals, we are glad to meet now and then with a man of sense and honor amongst them. The Typographical Circular, official organ of the Typographical Association, reports a really excellent sermon on Sunday newspapers by the Rev. W. Lindsay, of Christ Church, Nottingham. This reverend gentleman takes up just the positions that we have adopted in the Freethinker. He says that in a complex state of society like ours some people must work on Sunday; that it is the Monday morning paper which causes Sunday labor on the part of journalists and printers; that good Sunday papers are capital things for people who don't go to church and won't read heavy books; that news-vendors ought to be allowed to sell them freely on Sunday morning, and that they have as much right to income from such sale as "any preacher has from his Sunday sermons." Mr. Lindsay is quite a rara avis.

The West Ham Branch holds its first quarterly meeting to-day (June 18) at 10.30 a.m., at 19 Martin-street, Stratford. All members are requested to attend.

A Branch of the N.S.S. has been formed at Porth, South Wales, in a perfect hotbed of religious bigotry. A members' meeting, to which friends are invited, will be held to-day (June 18) at 6 p.m. at 7 Stanley-place, Cymmer.

Mr. Joseph Collinson, Hon. Secretary of the Criminal Law Department of the Humanitarian League, recently addressed a memorial to Sir Mathew White Ridley, Bart., M.P., on the subject of the inequality of criminal sentences passed by different judges, and protested against the extreme severity of the sentences passed by some of them. In view of this action, to which reference was made in our columns at the time, it is interesting to learn that the judges and the Home Office are making a joint effort to reduce the irregularity of such sentences, and a committee of Queen's Bench Judges has been appointed to consider the question. The first meeting of their lordships, presided over by Lord Russell of Killowen, was held at the Law Courts a few days ago.

M. Brisson, the French premier who fell over the Dreyfus Revision, but not before he had made it sure, seems likely to return to office again now that M. Dupuy has fallen. M. Brisson is a man of high character and great capacity. He is also a Freethinker. Many years ago, when President of the Chamber of Deputies, he called out to Bishop Freppel, "For the love of God be patient, and you shall be heard." "There is a God, then," retorted the Bishop. "I am merely conceding the thing to you," said M. Brisson, "to induce you to hold your tongue."

Mr. H. Trotman, a Secularist, and member of the Southwark Vestry, has moved and carried a resolution: "That it be suggested to the authorities of the British Museum that it would be an advantage to the public that lectures or short addresses on the objects exhibited should be given between three and four o'clock on Sunday afternoons in the various departments under their control." A copy of this resolution was ordered to be sent to all the Vestries and District Boards in London.

The New York *Truthseeker* for June 3 contains a photogravure reproduction of Wilson Macdonald's fine bronze bust of Thomas Paine, which has just been placed on the Paine Monument at New Rochelle. The cost of the bust was defrayed by a public subscription, organised by Dr. E. B. Foote, junior.

The great importance of the Secular Society, Limited, is made apparent by a recent decision in the Edinburgh Court of Session. The late David Hardie, of Bavelaw Castle, Midlothian, left the residue of his estate, which amounted in the gross to £1,795 18s. 8d., for the purchase of premises in the city of Edinburgh, to be used as a shop "for the sale of books dealing with the subject of free thought." The trustees bought a shop last year for £730, but, having done that, they encountered "obstacles, probably insurmountable." Then the heir-at-law, Mr. William Johnstone Hardie, appealed to have the trust set aside, on the ground that it was indefinite, uncertain, and incapable of being carried out, and was, moreover, irreligious and contrary to public policy. Lord Kincairney would not enter into the second part of this contention, but he set aside the trust as "void for uncertainty and as impracticable." Freethought, he declared, was a word that carried no precise meaning; besides, the books to be sold might be for or against Freethought—it was impossible to say which. The result is that a thousand pounds or so is lost to the cause which the late David Hardie wished to promote. Fortunately, the Secular Society, Limited, is now in existence, and money can be bequeathed to it, accompanied by special directions, if necessary, with absolute legal security.

Mr. Foote's motion, carried at the Birmingham Conference, for the raising of a Twentieth Century Fund to counteract the special efforts of the Churches, will soon be presented in a detailed form to the attention of the Secular party. Meanwhile, we may announce that the Fund has already been started by a cheque, in the Treasurer's hands, for £20 from Mr. J. Umpleby, of Blackburn, who is now the National Secular Society's oldest vice-president.

### The Conversion.

THREE godly missionaries  
To Britain said goodbye,  
And went to smash the Lares  
Of the Anthropophagi;  
And each one sang, as if he  
Would surely bust and die,  
"We'll convert you in a jiffy,  
O ye Anthropophagi!"

They reached the happy regions  
Where folk their foemen fry,  
And lived among the legions  
Of the Anthropophagi.

They fed on turtle, chicken,  
And porkers from the sty:  
"There'll be a good fat pickin',"  
Grinned the Anthropophagi.

The odors palms are rich in  
Commingled from on high  
With the odors from the kitchen  
Of the Anthropophagi.

"Would ye convert us, boasters?  
Nay, into toothsome pie  
We convert all holyghosters,"  
Sang the Anthropophagi.

EX-RITUALIST.

### Two Damns.

When a wicked and profane person cries Hell and damnation, he merely means that he is annoyed for the moment; but when a pious person utters the same words he means that the immense majority of mankind shall be tortured beyond conception for ever and ever. So infinitely more potent are godly than devilish curses! so infinitely more potent than the word of the Devil is the word of God—the Gospel of good tidings.—*James Thomson ("B.V.")*.

I believe it to be true that a feeling of humanity will ultimately prevail. What I fear is lest at the same time the world should become a great hospital, consisting of sick folk and their attendants—*Goethe*.

### "Trust in God."

ONE of the favorite exhortations of the pulpit is, "Trust in God." And the preachers exhibit their personal confidence in the teaching by practically ignoring it nearly every day of their lives. According to a story which recently appeared in a religious weekly, a certain rural dean came in for a pretty smart rebuke on this score a little time ago. And most people will agree that the rebuke was well deserved. The rural dean, in the course of his perambulations, came across a master-builder engaged in repairing a tumble-down parish church. The cleric suggested, amongst other desirable matters, that a lightning-conductor should be erected. "Certainly not, Mr. Dean," said the builder, a sturdy Christian Yorkshireman; "I am repairing this church for the use of God!"

Certainly God—if he is to be trusted to do anything—might be relied upon to take care of an edifice specially dedicated to his service. The builder was right, from a religious point of view, in placing his confidence where he had been taught to repose it, and in that respect proved himself to be the more consistent believer of the two. But the rural dean at the time had probably in his mind some painful remembrances of churches and chapels struck by lightning, just the same as if the sacred buildings had been devoted to the most ordinary, and even impious, uses. The Divine impartiality or recklessness manifested on various occasions had probably led him to be wary.

The disillusionment had not, of course, destroyed his trust in God; or, rather, had not stopped his protestations of dependence on Almighty power. Still, the trust was not so strong that it could not be strengthened by such a little worldly contrivance as an electric conductor—an exhibition of limited confidence on the part of the cleric hardly so likely to be as well received in celestial quarters as the child-like faith of the pious layman. The rural dean's cautious supplement to his trust in heaven looks very much like the usual stipulation of an employer engaging a clerk for some responsible financial post: "I have complete confidence in your honesty—I assure you I don't doubt it for a single moment—but, of course, I shall have to protect myself through a Guarantee Society."

It is always trust in God *plus* trust in something else, which something else is practically, if not avowedly, the thing mainly relied upon.

The teaching of the New Testament does not admit of the "saving element of common sense" whereby professing Christians preserve themselves at the expense of their creed. Material means, as in the case of the treatment of the sick, are excluded in favor of spiritual methods from which we are taught to expect more certain, satisfactory, and lasting results. In illness we are specially enjoined to look for recovery by prayer. I am reminded of this by the fact that during a recent illness I received a letter from a pious relative adjuring me, in the most urgent terms, to "trust in God." The writer knew that I had no belief in the existence of a god of any kind, but still I was implored to trust for recovery in one of some sort who was left undefined. I fear that, being then "in a highly sensitive state, I regarded this no doubt well-meant missive as a piece of mockery of a very irritating kind. At any rate, the torn fragments of the epistle were afterwards picked up at the bedside, and I recall the gratuitous advice with no special feeling of gratitude.

A more delusive and dangerous doctrine than that of trust in God could hardly be presented to the credulous section of mankind—and how great is that constituency! Wherever it is accepted in honesty and truth, the most disastrous consequences inevitably accrue. The weak dependence on a Supreme Power, who is reputed to be not only capable, but willing, and even anxious, to help his creatures, saps and destroys at its very springs the spirit of self-reliance upon which the emancipation and progress of mankind depend. To the extent to which men are induced to conscientiously trust in God, and to rely upon heavenly support, they will be disposed to neglect as useless or inadequate, or even unholy, the natural and material means which lie at their hands, and by the employment of which

civilisation and individual happiness and improvement are alone to be achieved.

It is open, no doubt, to be said, on behalf of believers who are too wise in their generation to underrate the value of personal exertion, that their trust in God implies a confidence that he may achieve the ends they desire through the material means they employ. But where is the evidence of any such Divine working? By what means may it be traced, or defined, or identified? Only by some special act of intervention, having results not otherwise to be accounted for, could the finger of God be made clear; and the evidence of any such intervention is exactly the thing that is lacking. Against instances of alleged miraculous preservation or guidance following upon trust in God, who shall estimate the multitude of cases in which equally implicit trust has been rewarded with pitiless desertion and destruction? Theologians, of course, have a ready plea in regard to the latter. The exponents of religious dogmas must of necessity be always prepared to shift their ground and accommodate themselves to circumstances; otherwise such doctrines as Divine intervention and providential help would vanish into thin air in face of the facts of existence. Therefore they assure us that the victims will find their reward hereafter—that the Lord who has left them to their fate in this life will bestow an abundance of care upon them in another existence, though one would think that the presumption would be against such an eventuality. If a friend deserts you on the first occasion when you need his help, the chances are not in favor of his assisting you on some other occasion. However, the parsons' plea has the advantage of being a convenient postponement in the interests of belief, though it has the disadvantage of affording but little of that immediate satisfaction and encouragement which believers—who prefer a bird in the hand—seem most to desire.

There is a familiar saying that God helps those who help themselves. As a qualifying proviso, the assurance serves to lift the theologian a little out of his difficulty, though, of course, it is a pure assumption. It seems rather to limit the scope of the Divine operations, and certainly looks very much like one of those disingenuous saving clauses which are sometimes inserted in a legal document or legislative enactment, with the express object of destroying the essential feature. But, at least, it suggests that man, in the first place, should trust in himself. The Secular teaching is that he should trust in himself, both first and last, and experience proves that therein alone is safety.

FRANCIS NEALE.

### Religion, Morality, and Education.

FOR our present age and for the future a foundation must be sought and found for culture and morality different from that which can be furnished to us by religion. It is not the manner, of which the Middle Ages furnish us with a striking proof; but the ennobling of the conception of the world in general which goes hand in hand with the advance of civilisation. Let us, then, give up making a show of the profession of hypocritical words of faith, the only purpose of which seems to be that they may be continually shown to be false by the actions and deeds of their professors. The man of the future will feel more happy and contented when he has not to contend at every step of his intellectual forward development with those tormenting contradictions between knowledge and faith which plague his youth and occupy his mature age unnecessarily with the slow renunciation of the notions which he imbibed in his youth.—*Büchner*.

Every instant is to me an eternity. I do not measure time with the ell of Brabant or of Hamburg, and I need no priest to promise me a second life, for I can live enough in this life, when I live backwards in the life of those who have gone before me, and win myself an eternity in the realm of the past.—*Heine*.

All that is great and judicious is found in the minority. There have been ministers who have had the people and the king against them, and have carried out their great plans alone. It must never be supposed that reason can be popular. Passion and feeling may become popular, but reason will ever remain the possession of a few eminent individuals.—*Goethe*.

### Declaration of the Free.

BY ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

We have no falsehoods to defend—  
We want the facts;  
Our force, our thought, we do not spend  
In vain attacks.  
And we will never meanly try  
To save some fair and pleasing lie.

The simple truth is what we ask,  
Not the ideal;  
We've set ourselves the noble task  
To find the real.  
If all there is is nought but dross,  
We want to know and bear our loss.  
We will not willingly be fooled,  
By fables nursed;  
Our hearts, by earnest thought, are schooled  
To bear the worst;  
And we can stand erect and dare  
All things, all facts that really are.

We have no God to serve or fear,  
No hell to shun,  
No devil with malicious leer.  
When life is done  
And endless sleep may close our eyes,  
A sleep with neither dreams nor sighs.

We have no master on the land—  
No king in air—  
Without a manacle we stand,  
Without a prayer,  
Without a fear of coming night,  
We seek the truth, we love the light.

We do not bow before a guess,  
A vague unknown;  
A senseless force we do not bless  
In solemn tone.

When evil comes we do not curse,  
Or thank because it is no worse.  
When cyclones rend—when lightning blights,  
'Tis naught but fate;  
There is no God of wrath who smites  
In heartless hate.  
Behind the things that injure man  
There is no purpose, thought, or plan.

We waste no time in useless dread,  
In trembling fear;  
The present lives, the past is dead,  
And we are here.  
All welcome guests at life's great feast—  
We need no help from ghost or priest.

Our life is joyous, jocund, free—  
Not one a slave  
Who bends in fear the trembling knee,  
And seeks to save  
A coward soul from future pain;  
Not one will cringe or crawl for gain.

The jewelled cup of love we drain,  
And friendship's wine  
Now swiftly flows in every vein  
With warmth divine.  
And so we love and hope and dream  
That in death's sky there is a gleam.

We walk according to our light,  
Pursue the path  
That leads to honor's stainless height,  
Careless of wrath  
Or curse of God, or priestly spite,  
Longing to know and do the right.

We love our fellow man, our kind,  
Wife, child, and friend.  
To phantoms we are deaf and blind,  
But we extend  
The helping hand to the distressed;  
By lifting others we are blessed.

Love's sacred flame within the heart  
And friendship's glow;  
While all the miracles of art  
Their wealth bestow  
Upon the thrilled and joyous brain,  
And present raptures banish pain.

We love no phantoms of the skies,  
But living flesh,  
With passion's soft and soulful eyes,  
Lips warm and fresh,  
And cheeks with health's red flag unfurled,  
The breathing angels of this world.

The hands that help are better far  
Than lips that pray.  
Love is the ever gleaming star  
That leads the way,  
That shines, not on vague worlds of bliss,  
But on a paradise in this.

We do not pray, or weep, or wail ;  
We have no dread,  
No fear to pass beyond the veil  
That hides the dead.  
And yet we question, dream, and guess,  
But knowledge we do not possess.

We ask, yet nothing seems to know ;  
We cry in vain.  
There is no "master of the show"  
Who will explain,  
Or from the future tear the mask ;  
And yet we dream and still we ask.

Is there beyond the silent night  
An endless day ?  
Is death a door that leads to light ?  
We cannot say.  
The tongueless secret locked in fate  
We do not know. We hope and wait.

### The Gospel Writ in Steel.

*A List of Victims of the "Religion of Love" during this Present Century, including the Glorious Reign of Victoria.*

THE gross ignorance everywhere displayed as to the persecution of Freethinkers should not be left without direct challenge. Only the other day many of our leading papers, in reviewing the recently-published *Life of Richard Carlile*, spoke as if tolerance had always been the characteristic of Christianity. The following list of sentences on Freethinkers, which, being mainly compiled from memory, is very incomplete, will be an eye-opener to any fair-minded reader. The newspaper men are not so much to blame, as the chief works of reference on which they rely for information are hopelessly biased and invariably inaccurate. We ask our readers to help us in dispelling this illusion about Christian toleration, which has been fostered by the clergy:—

Daniel Isaac Eaton, two years' imprisonment and the pillory (1812).  
— Houston, two years' with fine £200 (1813).  
Richard Carlile, nine and a-half years', with fines amounting to thousands of pounds.  
Jane Carlile, two years'.  
Mary Anne Carlile, two years'.  
Joseph Rhodes, two years' (1821).  
H. Boyle, eighteen months' (1822).  
James Watson, twelve months' (1823).  
William Campion, three years'; John Clarke, three years'; William Haley, three years'; T. R. Perry, three years'; R. Hassel, two years'; W. Tunbridge, two years'; T. Jefferies, eighteen months'; William Cochran, eighteen months'; John Christopher, six months'; James Afleck, three months' (1824).  
And some thirty other persons, mostly shopmen of Carlile, the rest small booksellers.  
Robert Taylor, three years'.  
John Cleve, four months', with fine £50 (1840).  
Henry Hetherington, four months' (1841).  
Charles Southwell, one year's with fine £100 (1842).  
George Jacob Holyoake, six months' (1842).  
George Adams, one month's.  
Mrs. Harriet Adams, one month's.  
Thomas Paterson, eighteen months' (1846).  
Miss Matilda Roalfe, two months' (1844).  
Henry Robinson, twelve months'.  
James Finlay, two months'.  
Mrs. Emma Martin, six months' (1857).  
Thomas Pooley, twenty-one months' (five months' only served, owing to the exertions of such men as John Stuart Mill and Henry Thomas Buckle).  
George William Foote, one year's; W. J. Ramsey, nine months'; H. A. Kemp, three months' (1883).

It must be borne in mind that the Blasphemy Laws, which are still unrepealed, may be at any time invoked by the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, who was himself crucified after being arraigned as a blasphemer.

MIMNERMUS.

Society is a republic. When an individual strives to rise, the collective mass press him back through ridicule and abuse. No one shall be wiser or better than the rest. But against him, who by the invincible power of genius towers above the vulgar masses, society launches its ostracism, and persecutes him so mercilessly with scoffing and slander that he is finally compelled to withdraw into the solitude of his own thoughts. —Heine.

### The National Secular Society.

REPORT of Executive Meeting held Thursday, June 8, at the Society's offices; the President in the chair. Present: Messrs. C. Watts, C. Cohen, E. Bater, R. Edwards, T. Gorniot, W. Heaford, B. Munton, A. B. Moss, J. Nonte, C. Quinton, E. W. Quay, T. Thurlow, G. J. Warren, F. Schaller, W. Leat, and the Secretary.

The cash statement for the month was received and adopted. Twenty new members were admitted—from West Ham, nine; Porth, eleven.

An application for the formation of a Branch of the Society at Porth was considered, and permission granted.

The Secretary reported upon the later arrangements for the Annual Excursion, and it was resolved to change the previously suggested date in June to Sunday, August 27, to allow ample time for advertising.

The matters arising from the Conference Agenda were then discussed, and the Secretary was instructed to forward the resolutions passed at Birmingham to the families of the late Professor Büchner and Mr. Edward Truelove.

The method of carrying into effect the resolution of the Twentieth Century Fund was then considered, and Mr. Watts moved, and Mr. Heaford seconded: "That Mr. Foote be asked to draw up a scheme for the next Executive meeting." This resolution was carried unanimously. The President threw out the suggestion that the Fund should be equally divided between the N.S.S. and the Secular Society, Limited. There would be absolute security if the whole of it were placed in the keeping of the Incorporated Society; but, on the other hand, jealousies might arise, and it would be well to avoid them. Mr. Warren thought such jealousies ought not to arise. He proposed, and Mr. Bater seconded: "That the Twentieth Century Fund be held by the Secular Society, Limited." Mr. Moss feared the position would be misunderstood, and in order to give time for explanation seconded an amendment proposed by Mr. Munton: "That the debate on this matter be deferred." This, on being put to the meeting, was lost, and the resolution carried. The President then promised to have a detailed plan ready by the next meeting.

The election of officers for the year was the next business. Prior to the election of Secretary, a somewhat lengthy discussion arose concerning the financial position of the Society, and various suggestions were made with a view to decreasing the expenditure. Eventually, this matter was also adjourned until the next meeting, and the following officers were elected for the year:—Secretary, Miss E. M. Vance; Benevolent Fund Committee, Messrs. G. J. Warren, Victor Roger, E. Bater, R. Forder, S. Hartmann, and E. W. Quay; Finance Com-

mittee, W. Leat and B. M. Munton.

Some discussion arose upon attendances at the meetings, and it was resolved that the Honorary Secretary be desired to attend the Executive meetings more frequently, as his absence often occasioned difficulty and delay. The meeting then adjourned until Thursday, June 29.

EDITH M. VANCE, Secretary.

### Book Chat.

MR. F. J. GOULD is known to our readers as an occasional (a too infrequent) contributor to our columns. He is also known to the reformers who call themselves Ethicists as an ardent and indefatigable worker in their special field. For eighteen months he sub-edited their weekly organ, and he is now acting as Secretary—really a sort of "pastor" to the Leicester Secular Society. It would be impossible to speak too highly of Mr. Gould's many fine qualities, which are all displayed so admirably in the volume he has just published through Watts and Co., entitled *The Children's Book of Moral Lessons*. Perhaps the title of a book is not of the first importance; if it were, we could have wished for a more insinuating one in this case; for morality has usually been presented to children with so much repellent sternness, or so much nauseating cant, that the very word "Moral" on the title-page of a book meant for them is calculated to raise a certain antipathy, or at least a certain suspicion. No doubt the average boy is a dreadful young savage, but he has a quick ear for a preaching snuffle, which generally prompts him to the performance or the contemplation of something particularly devilish. But happily the contents of Mr. Gould's book are of a character to allay any demoniac agitation that may be occasioned by that ominous word on his title-page. He takes such virtues as temperance, patience, courage, modesty, severance, self-control, courage, prudence, order, modesty, candor, and truthfulness, and talks with the children about them in a most simple, genial, unpedantic manner, bringing in a multitude of illustrations—which are the life of all teaching—from all kinds of sources; from science, art, history, biography, and daily experience. The style is fluent and lucid, and adorned with touches of poetical color. Appeal is made both to heart and head. The book is well conceived and finely executed, and we hope it will have a good circulation. Freethinkers may place it with absolute confidence into the hands of their children. Not only may they do

so, but we venture to say they *should* do so. Mr. Gould has provided what has long been a desideratum. Of course he has not covered the whole ground, but the present volume is intended as the first of a series, which he hopes to complete "if health, leisure—and the public kindness permit."

\* \* \*

And now may we pick a bone with Mr. Gould? We believe he thinks John Milton a greater poet than William Shakespeare. Perhaps we are mistaken—we hope we are; but this is our impression—and let Mr. Gould correct it if he can, or if he thinks it worth while. In any case, is "very pretty" a suitable description of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*? Would not "very beautiful" be an improvement? To be pretty, a thing must be small; and there is nothing small about any work of Shakespeare's.

\* \* \*

Some will say that this is minute criticism. So it is, in one way, but not so in another; for blaspheming Jehovah is nothing to blaspheming the mighty poet, who was a grander creator; for whereas Jehovah created but one man, Adam, who was rather a poor specimen, Shakespeare created Hamlet, and Othello, and Lear, and Macbeth, and many more—and when it comes to women, what is poor Eve to Cordelia, and Portia, and Imogen, and Beatrice, and Juliet, and Cleopatra?

\* \* \*

Freethinkers have always been rigorously punished for attempting to bring religion into contempt, as the phrase goes. Other people may do as they like. The booksellers are displaying just at present two novels bearing the profane titles of *Jesus Delaney* and *Adam and Eve*.

\* \* \*

Our readers are doubtless familiar with the "Story of the Nations" Series. The scope of the series is admirable, but, unfortunately, individual volumes are sadly open to criticism. Take the example of the book, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, by W. D. Morison. This is said to be "the first English book which is exclusively occupied with this period." The author writes like a Sunday-school superintendent, and not at all like an historian. There is no attempt at the historic method. Christ is dragged in here, there, and everywhere, and always referred to as "Him" and "One," with a capital letter, if you please. But the crowning absurdity is reached when we find the author raising the question of Pilate's guilt of the alleged judicial murder of Jesus.

\* \* \*

We suppose that the motive of the author, if he has any, is to insinuate that the Jews are responsible for killing the Christian Savior. But for the recrudescence everywhere of the Jew-baiting epidemic, which makes any contagious word slung into a hitherto immune area in some sense dangerous, it would not be so much illiberal as nonsensical to insist on the responsibility of the Jews as a nation for the alleged crucifixion of the Second Person of a Trinity which never existed. It is the use of this accusation that has caused the Jews throughout nineteen centuries to realise the true inwardness of Christian charity. Dreyfus pathetically said, after being unjustly sentenced by that infamous Court-martial: "My only crime is that of being born a Jew!" The cry of Dreyfus is so full of meaning that their import cannot be avoided. "Suffering is the badge of all their tribe," wrote Byron of the Jews; but it is the Jew, conscious of the yoke of centuries, who alone can recognise the awful sham of the pretence of Christians loving their enemies.

\* \* \*

*The Story of the Jews*, by Professor J. K. Hosmer, in the same series, is quite as unsatisfactory, from the historic point of view. The two books were evidently written for orthodox people, which simply means that they are worthless as history.

\* \* \*

The orthodox journals are praising a book by Dr. Mackintosh, with the strange title, *From Comte to Benjamin Kidd*: *The Appeal to Biology or Evolution for Human Guidance* (Macmillan). We have alluded to the strangeness of the title. The two names are very incongruous, and strike the reader like a comparison between Jesus Christ and Ally Kipper. Comte we know; but what on earth has Mister Kidd done that he should be compared to a great philosophic writer? A book with such a title cannot be regarded seriously.

\* \* \*

A criticism of Comte, Herbert Spencer, Leslie Stephen, Charles Darwin, Walter Bagehot, Professor Huxley, Professor Darwin, Walter Bagehot, Professor Huxley, Professor Weismann, and smaller fry, including the inevitable Kidd, which is compressed in less than three hundred pages, must be superficial. Moreover, the book, we are told, had its origin in two years' lecturing to a senior class at Lancashire Independent Theological College. The occasion of the book is instructive. It probably accounts for the book abounding in maxims-gun discharges of tearing adjectives. The author is as biased as an Old Bailey Special Pleader. He advances the childish idea that, as the authors he criticises do not see the eye to eye on all subjects, and as he, the great and only Mackintosh, is unable to extract very little common truth from them, therefore we are bound to return to the old

authorities. Whatever the "senior class" did, we are positively unable to accept the Doctor's invitation. Our author lives in a balloon, bearing the label "Christian Hegelianism," which moves serenely above contemporary knowledge. We are lost in admiration at the superb command of language of our author, which destroys, by means of full-bodied adjectives, the reputations of so many philosophic writers of eminence. It reminds us of the coxcombs vanquishing Berkeley with a grin. The fact is the book is a burlesque. Only Comte and Spencer, of those mentioned in this volume, are great philosophers. The knowledge that these polemics were delivered to that "senior class" does not favorably influence us, for Dr. Mackintosh has drawn an overdraft on the sufferance of the general reader. There is no objection to his acting the part of omniscience before his "senior class," but on a larger stage and before a discerning audience the thing is preposterous. The book is a crowning example of how not to write a philosophic work, despite the approval of journals run in the interest of Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

\* \* \*

The popularity of Omar Khayyam is increasing by leaps and bounds. Messrs. Duckworth have just issued a romance entitled *Omar the Tentmaker: A Romance of Old Persia*, by J. H. Dale. The story is well written, and the author has carefully incorporated all the known facts about the Astronomer Poet of Persia. The book opens well with some reflections on the unchanging East. The best part of the story is the description of the old Freethinker's last moments, which is very impressive and has the true note of pathos. The author brings out clearly in his book the fact of Omar's vast knowledge. He had, indeed, accumulated a mass of learning, though his incomparable quatrains show how far he was from being a mere pedant overweighted with unnecessary lore. He was, in fact, a man of commanding intellect, who assimilated what he learnt, and could not only acquire but create. And that is why we are all reading his poetry after he has gone down to the dreamless dust these eight hundred years.

\* \* \*

Now that Holywell-street is coming down, the "National" Vigilance Association and other dealers in garbage will have some difficulty in finding a new locality. It certainly will not be easy to find another street with a church at each end, in so central a position.

## Correspondence.

### SARAH GRAND'S JOKE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I presume Sarah Grand's letter in your last issue is intended as a joke. If not, some practical difficulties occur to me. (1) Until we get not merely female suffrage, but female members of Parliament, it will be difficult to find a proposer and seconder for the proposed Bill, to say nothing of the subsequent stages. (2) Women and children would be unwilling to give evidence if the punishment was death, though, of course (like flogging), it would afford a rare chance for the female blackmailer. (3) Juries would be unwilling to convict, or else would bring in a verdict for some minor offence. (4) How would Sarah Grand prevent the Home Secretary from sparing the prisoner's life, as he now invariably spares the lives of women convicted of child murder?

Assuming that Sarah Grand is not joking, her letter will hardly help forward her theory of the superiority of woman to man. But, perhaps, if we allowed women to act as legislators, barristers, judges, and jurors, they would soon form more intelligent opinions than those which some of them have been recently uttering. As long as we make certain subjects preserves for the male sex, we cannot expect women to write much about them that will prove worth reading. I do not know whether Sarah Grand was ever present at a criminal trial in any capacity, but I think it will be found that she has never studied criminal law or the rules of evidence, and that, if asked to draw up an Act of Parliament for the purpose of carrying her views into effect, she would completely fail in the task of defining the crime for which she would award the death penalty. And I am not without hope that, when she studies the subject a little further, she will become an advocate for the abolition not only of the death sentence, but also of the life sentence, which, if carried out in its entirety, would, I think, be still more objectionable.

X.

As Mr. Grote says, we live in a day when the philosopher affects to prostrate himself before the priest. I should be full of hope if I thought the time were come when a frankly Positive flag could be successfully hoisted, every rag of the old doctrines openly shaken off (except for their historical value), and no concession made, even tacitly, to supernatural theories. I believe this time is not so distant as many think. Perhaps nothing is wanted but a little courage.—*J. S. Mill, Letter to Auguste Comte.*

## 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, "Through Nature to God."  
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 8.30, A Concert.

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road, S.E.): 7, Stanton Coit, "The Mighty Atom."

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall): 11, Stanton Coit, "Sabbath-Breaking."

## OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 11.30, F. A. Davies.

BROCKWELL PARK (near Herne-hill Gates): A. B. Moss—3.15, "The Drama of Christianity"; 6.30, "Darwin and Design."

CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, G. Standing.

EDMONTON (corner of Angel-road): 7, E. Pack.

FINSBURY BRANCH (Clerkenwell Green): 11.30, Stanley Jones.

FINSBURY PARK (near Band Stand): 3.30, Victor Roger.

HAMMERSMITH (The Grove): 7.15, Stanley Jones.

HAMPSTEAD HEATH (Jack Straw's Castle): 3.15, W. Heaford.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): Lectures every week evening at 8. Sunday, at 11.30, W. Heaford.

KILBURN (corner of Victoria-road): 7.15, F. A. Davies.

KINGSLAND (Ridley-road): 11.30, R. P. Edwards.

MILE END WASTE: 11.30, E. Pack; 7, R. P. Edwards. June 21, at 8, R. P. Edwards.

PECKHAM RYE: 3.15, Stanley Jones.

THE TRIANGLE (Salmon-lane, Limehouse): 11.30, E. White. June 20, at 8, W. J. Ramsey.

S. L. E. S. (Peckham Rye): 11.15, Mr. Campbell. (Brockwell Park): 3.15, Mr. Quilter.

STRATFORD (The Grove): 7, W. J. Ramsey.

VICTORIA PARK (near the Fountain): 3.15, R. P. Edwards.

WESTMINSTER (Grosvenor Embankment): 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "Bible Facts and Figures."

## COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH (Prince of Wales Assembly Rooms):

H. Percy Ward, "Some Social Evils of the Age."

CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school; 7, A. E. Elderkin, "Science and Satan: An Examination of Evolution and Evil."

GREAT YARMOUTH FREETHINKERS' ASSOCIATION (Freethinkers' Hall, bottom of Broad-row): 7, Violin Selections by Professors Elliot and Ray; 7.15, J. M. Headley, "Some Thoughts about Heaven."

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Humberstone-gate): 6.30, F. J. Gould, "Waterloo and Napoleon."

LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, Mr. Hammond, "Darwinism."

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): Closed for Summer Season.

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): R. Law, F.G.S.—3, "Soils and Sub-soils: their Formation and History"; 7, "My Journey to Switzerland, and some remarkable Geological Features of the Alps." Tea at 5.

## OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: 11 (Quayside), C. Cohen; 6.30 (Town Moor, near Military Sports Stand), C. Cohen.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Market Place): June 20, at 7.30, C. Cohen.

## Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 17 Osborne-road, High-road, Leyton.—June 18 and 25, Newcastle-on-Tyne. 27, Mile End.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, London, S.E.—June 18, a. and e., Brockwell Park. 25, m., Battersea. July 9, e., Edmonton. 16, m., Clerkenwell; a., Hampstead Heath; e., Kilburn. 23, m., Mile End.

H. PERCY WARD, 5 Alexandra-road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.—June 18, Birmingham; 25, Northampton.

R. P. EDWARDS, 52 Bramley-road, Notting-hill.—June 18, m., Ridley-road; a., Victoria Park; e., Mile End. 25, m., Camberwell. July 2, m., Hyde Park; a., Hampstead; e., Hammersmith. 9, m., Ridley-road; a. and e., Peckham. 16, m., Station-road; a. and e., Brockwell Park. 23, m., Battersea; e., Stratford. 30, m., Limehouse; a., Victoria Park; e., Edmonton.

E. PACK, 10 Henstridge-place, Ordnance-road, St. John's Wood.—June 18, m., Mile End; e., Edmonton. 25, m., Pimlico Pier; a., Brockwell Park; e., Peckham Rye.

A. E. ELDERKIN, Watford.—June 18, Chatham; 25, Finsbury Park.

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