

Freethinker

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PRICE TWOPENCE

Kruger and God.

PRESIDENT KRUGER, the uncrowned king of the Transvaal, is a very pious gentleman. He belongs to a type which was not uncommon in England in the seventeenth century. The great Oliver Cromwell himself could offer up a prayer, sing a psalm, and now and then do a little exhorting. Not that he let his piety interfere with his designs; on the contrary, he always felt that God was with him whatever he was bent upon; and, as he was generally right, this is a kind of compliment to the Almighty. President Kruger, in much the same way, though a large distance behind Cromwell, has God's name constantly upon his lips, and the Dutch Bible always in his hands. Now the Bible is a big book, and its contents are multifarious; consequently the astute old gentleman never fails to find a passage in it which appears to support his policy, or at least to lend it a certain indirect sanction. And it is to be noticed that his scriptural quotations are invariably from the Old Testament. That is the Bible of the "chosen people," and the Boers rather look upon themselves as occupying that position at present. Their piety is simple and almost touching. They trace the hand of God in all the chief episodes of their history. It was God who guided them when they trekked into the Transvaal, God who directed them to a poorish looking land which contained vast underground wealth, God who enabled them to clear out or subdue the natives, God who sustained them in defying the British, God who guided them up Majuba Hill where an English commander was posted like an idiot, God who wrung their independence from Mr. Gladstone, God who gave Dr. Jameson and his raiders into their hands, God who inspired Emperor William to send his famous telegram, and it is God who has appointed them to reign for ever and ever over all the other whites who may settle in that part of South Africa.

Such ardent and steadfast piety is most refreshing. Bible religion has a home somewhere in the world. Here in England we put people in prison for believing the Bible and obeying it. Christianity is professed; indeed, you *must* profess it to get on, but on the condition that you never try to reduce it to practice. Perhaps this is the reason why so many men of God in this country are angry with the Boers, call them all sorts of bad names, and even style them blasphemous hypocrites. Canon Knox Little, for instance, is positively disgusted with them. He prefers the sincere piety of Mr. Cecil Rhodes. Dissenters even, like Dr. Clifford and Mr. Price Hughes, do not seem to be much enamored of President Kruger and his Bible-and-rifle followers—or should we say subjects? These gentlemen look askance at all piety which conflicts with British interests. They are quite sure that if "the guns begin to play" it will be found that God is on the side of the Queen. Well, we think so too. God is always on the side of the strongest. Providence fights with the biggest battalions. All the prayers of faith, and all the aid of

Providence, will not enable the Boers to stand up successfully against the might of the British Empire. Every man outside a lunatic asylum, who is not absolutely besotted with religion, is perfectly sure of that. There was really no "providence" in the Boer victory at Majuba Hill; and it is well known that when Mr. Gladstone gave the Boers their independence General Evelyn Wood was in a position to sweep the Transvaal from end to end. Mr. Gladstone may have been right or wrong. We think he was right. But, in any case, his action was one of great magnanimity. It was not dictated by fear of the Boers. Had he been so minded, he could easily have reduced the Transvaal to the position of a Crown Colony; and, being quite as pious and quite as great a Bibliolator as President Kruger, he would have capped texts with that gentleman, and conclusively proved that God Almighty was running in harness with the Liberal Government.

Precisely because we believe that the Boers will receive no help from above, or below, we hope President Kruger will be wise in time. It is idle to talk as some Radicals do. The Outlanders—that is, the foreigners—have real grievances. They do suffer from "wrongs unredressed and insults unavenged." Their situation is, indeed, intolerable. They have just the same natural right there as the Boers. If we are to stand upon the so-called right of original possession, the natives whom the Boers drove off have the only just claim to the Transvaal. Abstract morality can never stem the broad tide of affairs in this world. The movements of population are the expression of natural forces, which preachers, and even statesmen, are powerless to hinder. No doubt the mining population in the Transvaal is somewhat lacking in ideal elements. But how is such a country to be opened up? Will a man go from an English county to plant cabbages and potatoes in that part of South Africa? Is not some extra stimulus necessary? And is not that stimulus found in the gambling chances of gold-digging? The first adventurers in wild parts of the world must be lured on by something more than average expectations. You may think it regrettable, but it is no use quarrelling with the nature of things. Nature is what it is, and man is what he is; and all that wisdom and humanity can do is to correct the cruder aspects of the inevitable. The Boers are gradually, but certainly, being outnumbered in their own country; and, as in the long run might is right, in the sense that right is a mere abstraction without might to back it up, it follows that the majority of whites in the Transvaal will only submit to be taxed and governed by the minority as long as they *must*. The moment they are able to make a change they will make it, and they will have just the same "right" as the Boers had when they dispossessed the original inhabitants.

It is natural, too, that our Government should desire to assist its subjects in the Transvaal. But let us not rush into the frightful crime of an avoidable war. Let patience go with firmness, and magnanimity with strength.

G. W. FOOTE.



Which is the True Church?

If the usual claims urged by Christians as to the origin and nature of their Church were well founded, the above question would be superfluous. For, assuming the Church to be what is termed "a divine institution," there should be but one, whose teachings and doctrines would be uniform and free from all contradiction. Instead of this, we have many Churches, diametrically opposed to one another, and each claiming to be the true one. While, in our opinion, there may be some truth in them all, there is not a single Church in existence, of which we are aware, that is free from error. The whole of them are based upon fallacies, and supported by false pretensions. Freethinkers are not alone in demonstrating this fact, inasmuch as the adherents of the numerous denominations are ever active in pointing out the failings and mistakes of their fellow Christians who do not belong to some one particular Church. This fact must be apparent to those who are acquainted with ecclesiastical history, and who read the weekly papers representing the views taught by Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, Anglicanism, and Nonconformity. According to St. John, Christ prayed that all his followers "may be one"; but that, like other prayers, has never been answered; hence at the present time the Christian fold is divided into opposing sects, each having a Church of its own, which it regards as the true one. Now, it is certain that, as they differ widely from each other, all cannot be true; and, after a careful examination of their claims, it occurs to us that they are all more or less false.

The recent proceedings of Ritualists and anti-Ritualists, also the existing differences among the High, Low, and Broad Churches, have induced Professor Mivart once more to give the world his views upon an important theological question. It will be remembered that some time ago, in giving us a picture of the fate of unbelievers after death, he consoled us with the declaration that there was some happiness in hell. He now treats of things of the earth in an article which appears in the August number of the *Nineteenth Century*, entitled "What Church has Continuity?" He does not in that article deal with the question whether or not the Roman Church has this feature in its history; but, as he has promised to return to the subject, we venture to predict that he will claim that condition for the Roman Catholic Church to which he belongs. Whether we agree with or differ from him, his concluding sentence in the article we are considering must have some interest to those who are acquainted with the Professor's ability. He writes thus: "I hope, however, to be allowed to treat of it (the Roman Communion) in the near future, and this the more, since serious warnings that my time is probably but short make me extremely desirous to do the little I can towards the promotion of truth as it appears to me at the end of my life's experience."

He points out that by some people it is affirmed that there exists a continuity between the English Church of to-day and the one which existed anterior to the reign of Henry VIII. At the same time, he remarks that other persons entirely deny its existence. The only way, in our opinion, to settle these conflicting statements is to consider them in a scientific spirit, selecting only facts which will enable us to form an impartial judgment. We are not quite certain, however, that the Professor, in consequence of his theological training, is in a position to do this. He illustrates his views by definitions, comparing the terms "Church" and "Species," both from his standpoint as representing mere "abstractions," and neither of them having any real existence in the world. We doubt if theologians in general will agree with this view. He attaches great importance to the fact that these "abstractions" are nothing but "abstractions." Strictly speaking, this may be so, although we presume that such an idea will not satisfy the orthodox believer. In order to prove that the English Church lacks continuity, the Professor refers to Italy, France, and Spain, which, unlike England, made no changes in doctrine or ritual without the consent of the clergy and the sanction of the Pope. But England, he alleges, condemned Transubstantiation as unscriptural, and the Mass as a blasphemous fable. Besides, he urges that England left off praying for the

souls of the departed, although she retained the property left to defray the cost of the ceremony. None of these things, he observes, occurred in the three countries named. He considers that these changes in England have prevented any continuity in the English Church. In this particular Professor Mivart is quite right, and it is evident that in his opinion the only true Church possible is one where continuity can be found. Now, as it is certain that this does not exist in the English Church, it is evident, therefore, that our "National Church" cannot be the true one. As a matter of fact, we have yet to learn which of the many Churches in our midst deserves that designation.

Thus the Professor contends that the attempt to establish a National Church without any definite creed has been a failure, although it had the support of Dean Stanley and Dr. Temple. He endorses Cardinal Newman's contention, that Christians should look forward, instead of backward, for clearer and fuller religious knowledge. In support of this view he gives a very curious and, we think, fallacious illustration. He asks: "What should we think of biologists adhering to Ray, Linneaus, and Buffon, rather than looking to the most modern leaders in science?" Now, we submit that the two cases are very different. Science advances through new discoveries having been made, while Christianity is based upon a supposed direct and final revelation from God, to which nothing can be legitimately added. Science discards all error as it is revealed in the process of time, but the Church clings to its one unchanging authority for all time. To make the comparison in any sense pertinent it requires that the Church should receive a continuous revelation, and not maintain an adherence to a fixed faith which, we are told, was "once delivered to the saints." Science, from its very nature, is progressive; but the teachings of the Church, if they came from an unchanging and infallible God, should be considered the same "yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Of course we are aware that men's interpretations of Christian teachings differ and change; but that shows the indefinite character of what is taught, and the superior conception of the human to that of the supposed divine. In science progress is the result of the discovery of additional facts, which correct previous conclusions; but no new facts are imparted to Church teachings; the only fresh feature introduced is man's altered view as to what they mean.

Professor Mivart refers to the difficulty of selecting any particular century for the purpose of obtaining a model standard of what a true Church should be; the thirteenth or ninth being no better, he says, than the fifth or the second. He urges that there is no ground for stopping until we go back to the beginning of the first century, when we come in contact with the earliest form of Christianity. Now, this is precisely our view. Let us start with Christianity "as it was in the beginning"—that is, if it can be discovered in this practical age—to be primitive—to return to the condition of primitive Christianity. Such a return would lead to utter absurdity. The reason he gives for this statement is because the Christians would all have to be circumcised, attend the synagogue and pray with their heads covered, and avoid all swine flesh, and in all things become as the early Christians were, "indistinguishable from Jews." The Professor's pleading may be effective in comparing the present Anglican and dissenting Christians with their ancient supposed progenitors; but the question to be considered is, Were those original Christians a "model standard" for a true Church? And, if so, where, in the nineteenth century, are the successors of Jesus and his apostles? Further, if these practices of the primitive Christians are abandoned, what becomes of the "continuity" of the Church said to have been founded by Christ and his early followers?

It is evident to us that to have a real continuity the Church must retain to-day the same "utter absurdity" as it started with in the first century. Supposing we knew for certain what the teachings were that Christ and his apostles gave to the primitive Church, it seems obvious that such should be considered the most perfect Church on earth; and, therefore, any modern representative that does not harmonise with that first Church cannot possibly be the true one. Professor Mivart, virtually recognising the modern view, that infallibility belongs

to no Church, says: "Follow your conscience, and nothing evil will overtake you." This is good advice, provided the conscience was properly trained, and that it possessed the power of leading aright. It is an improvement upon the old aphorism, "Out of the Church no salvation." But when did the Church to which the Professor belongs allow such advice to be followed?

We may mention that, according to our Catholic defender of the faith, the new developments of important doctrinal changes are at present only spreading among the educated classes of society, whose minds are imbued with modern science and the result of advanced Biblical criticism. To some extent this may be true; still, we believe that ere long cheap high-class literature will reach the minds of those who are at present less cultured, and, in consequence of this, all the Churches will lose, even more than they have hitherto, their control over the masses. The time is past for any monopoly of the liberalising results of modern thought.

CHARLES WATTS.

The Twilight of the Gods.

(Concluded from page 548.)

ALL agree that the position is a serious one, and yet, says Momus, one of the minor deities, it is only what they might have expected. It is not surprising, he points out, that men should have ceased to believe in the gods. "What other conclusion could they arrive at, when they saw the conditions around them? Good men neglected, perishing in penury or slavery; and profigate wretches wealthy, honored, and powerful..... We affect surprise that men who are not fools decline to put their faith in us. We ought rather to be pleased if there is a man left to say his prayers..... And now men are opening their eyes. They perceive that whether they pray or don't pray, go to church or don't go to church, makes no difference. And we are receiving our deserts."

A number of suggestions are made by the different gods, some arguing that it is best to treat unbelief with silence, in the hope that its existence may pass unnoticed, others suggesting force as the best method of silencing the unbelieving Damis. Eventually it is agreed that the council be adjourned, so that all the gods may visit the scene of the disputation and listen to the various arguments.

The gods arrive on the scene of the debate in time to hear Timocles, their defender, shout at Damis: "What! you blasphemous villain, you! you don't believe in the Gods and in Providence?" Damis replies that he sees no proof of their existence, but he is willing to listen to evidence. Timocles refuses this, but gives him more abuse, at which Zeus exclaims: "Our man is doing well. He has the rudest manner and the loudest voice. Well done, Timocles! Give him hard words. That is your strong point. Begin to reason, and you will be as dumb as a fish." Stung by the calmness and ridicule of his opponent, and the support given to him by the spectators, Damis at length puts forward reasons for his theism. His first appeal is to the "order which is visible throughout the universal scheme of things. The sun and moon move in their allotted path; the seasons revolve; the plants spring; the animals come to the birth, and are organised with exquisite skill." To this Damis replies:—

"You beg the question, Timocles. You have not proved that these things are as they are by design. What is it. That it has been so ordered by Providence is no sure conclusion..... You look at the universe as it exists, you examine the movements of it, you admire them, you assume that those movements were intended, and you fly into a passion with those who cannot agree with you; but passion is not argument. What is the second reason for your belief?"

Timocles next urges that the greatest of the poets, Homer, says there is a providence. Damis replies that Homer may be a great poet, but is no authority in other directions. Besides, poets do not intend that their imaginative productions should be taken literally, and Homer narrates many things that no one accepts as matters of fact. Damis is next asked whether "the multitudes of men and nations who have believed in

the existence of the gods, and worshipped them, have all been deceived?" to which Damis replies:—

"Thank you for reminding me of national religious customs. Nothing exhibits more plainly the foundations upon which theology is built. There is one religion on one side of a ladder, and another on the other..... At Memphis a bull is a god; at Telusium, an onion. Elsewhere in Egypt they worship an ibis, a crocodile, a cat, a monkey, a dog-headed ape..... Do you really mean, Timocles, that such things are a serious proof that the gods exist?"

Returning to the argument from design, Timocles drags forward the analogy of a ship with its sails, pilot, rowers, etc., and asks: "The ship could not reach its destination without a pilot; and the ship of the universe, you think, requires neither captain nor helmsman?" Damis answers:—

"Most inspired Timocles, the captain you speak of arranges his plans beforehand. He settles his course and adheres to it. His men are all in order, and obey his word of command. Spars, ropes, chains, oars, are on board in their places and ready to his hand. But the great captain of the universe shows none of this forethought. The forestay is made fast to the stern, and the sheets to the bow. The anchors are sometimes of gold, and the bulwarks of lead. The bottom is painted and tarred; the upper works are plain and unsightly. The crew are dispersed at random; the craven fool is a commissioned officer; the swimmer is sent aloft to man the yards; the skilled navigator to work at the pumps. As to the passengers—knaves sit at the captain's table; honest men are huddled into corners..... This is the state of your ship, Timocles, and it explains the number of shipwrecks. Had there been a captain in command, he would have distinguished the good from the bad, have promoted worth and capacity, and have set vice and folly in the place belonging to it. In short, my friend, if your ship has had a commander, he has not been fit for his place, and there is need of a revolution."

Driven from this position, Timocles declares that there could not be altars unless there were gods, and the existence of the latter is shown by the existence of the former. Damis smilingly retorts that, as he has taken refuge at the altar, as men do in extremities, they had better swear a truce and contend no more. He goes off laughing, and Timocles closes the discussion by using the time-honored religious weapon of personal abuse, hurling at him a whole string of charges concerning his own life and that of his parents. Zeus exclaims: "One has gone off laughing, and the other follows railing and throwing tiles at him. Well, what are we to do now?" Hermes replies: "The old play says you are not hurt if you don't acknowledge it. Suppose a few have gone away believing in Damis, what then? A great many more believe the reverse; the whole mass of uneducated Greeks, and the barbarians everywhere." The answer, however, yields Zeus but small consolation, who sorrowfully replies, as Darius did in the case of Zopyrus, that he would sooner have one Damis than a thousand Timocles.

It would have spoiled this dialogue, with its powerful satire and cogent reasoning, to have interlarded it with a number of reflections upon its applicability to present-day controversy. How fresh, or, if you like, how ancient, both the attack and defence are will be apparent at a glance. A mere change of names would be enough to convert the dialogue into a controversy between a modern Christian and an Atheist. There is not a single argument now used on behalf of religion that was not used in Lucian's day, and time has pretty much the same effect on religious arguments that it has on clothes—it wears off the superficial gloss and discloses their true texture. The argument from tradition, from the beliefs of great men, from the appearance of nature, from the mere existence of religion, are all used, and, when these have failed, attacks on the personal character of those who held these opinions. All were tried, and all broke down, and yet believers use them to-day as though their solidity had never been questioned.

Rightly enough, Damis pointed out that the course of nature is entirely different to what one would expect to find if the world were really governed by a benevolent intelligence. "The rain falls upon the just and unjust alike" is a sentence often quoted to illustrate the impartiality of God; but an impartiality which fails to discriminate between good and bad men, which rewards

the kindly-meant action of the good citizen with the same consequences as the evil intentions of the professional cut-throat, is a way of administering affairs that wise men will neither admire nor seek to emulate. The ship of the universe, as Damis said, runs its course in a peculiar manner. The pilot is below, the steersman up aloft, honest men are huddled into corners, knaves and rogues sit in the chief places. All this is perfectly true, perfectly unanswerable, and in the face of this we can only conclude with Damis that either the gods do not exist, or they take no interest in human affairs.

Timocles was scandalised because Damis asked, if non-belief in the gods was a crime, why did they not interfere and demonstrate their existence? Christians can see that that was a perfectly fair test when applied to the pagan gods; it becomes blasphemous only when it is applied to their own Deity. Yet the query is, after all, an eminently reasonable one. If the gods really exist, the responsibility for non-belief must ultimately rest with them, and not with those who, after honest search, find no evidence for their existence. Non-belief in God is treated as a crime. Why? Will my refusal to believe in God destroy him? I believe it will; but do Christians believe so too? The hatred shown towards those who have no faith in the existence of God, and no respect for that fatherly benevolence which allows thousands to starve to death, and other thousands to live the victims of gross injustice, seems to me to point to the existence of an uneasy suspicion that, after all, the Freethinker may be right, and that his opinions may prevail unless they are forcibly suppressed. And, therefore, as neither scientist nor philosopher can offer any dependable proof of God's existence—sometimes prove even the reverse; and as God himself—if he exists—remains perfectly indifferent, makes no sign either to prove his existence or protect his institutions, all that remains is to make the position of the unbeliever as uncomfortable as possible, so that the ease-loving majority may be always found upon the religious side.

It matters not, said Hermes, that many people believe with the Atheist Damis, since a far greater number believe with the Theist Timocles—"the whole mass of ignorant Greeks, and the barbarians everywhere." Modern Christians seem to be of the same mind. Let us not address anything in public to these sceptics, they practically say; a few may believe them, but the whole mass of ignorant and indolent are upon our side; and, although some may be of the opinion of Zeus that one Damis is worth a thousand like Timocles, still numbers have their influence, and that, after all, is some comfort. Yet one would imagine that it would be worth more to Christianity to claim one Charles Darwin or Herbert Spencer than to claim ten thousand ignorant believers, and others who are paid substantial retaining fees to plead the cause of a creed that is doomed to disappear before advancing knowledge.

It is really wonderful how little religious controversy changes from age to age. When all other arguments have been tried and failed, Timocles resorts to attacks on the character of his opponent. Are we not all well acquainted with this theological method of conducting a discussion? How were Voltaire, Paine, Bradlaugh, and all other Freethinkers answered, but by a similar method? Such tactics always betray weakness. Personalities never rise until legitimate arguments break down. Thoughtful men see that the truth of a proposition is quite apart from the character of the one who uses it, and that such defences only bring recruits of a kind that in the long run do far more harm than good.

Yet no tactics such as these, nor even of any other kind that may be resorted to, can ever preserve Christianity from that gradual decay which is the fate of all religions and of all institutions. Institutions, be they religious or non-religious, are only formed to meet the requirements of a particular period in human history, and, unless we are to remain in a stationary condition, there arrives a time when these institutions, instead of being helpful, become injurious. The more thoughtful are beginning to realise this much. There is a growing recognition, even among believers, that the weapons which Timocles wielded, and which religious men have used for so long, are losing their power; that the objects of human solicitude are gradually changing from God to man, and from heaven to earth. In church and

out of church there is a growing recognition of the fact that human interests are chiefly concerned with the universe as it is, and not with unproveable beliefs about its origin and final destination. The world is, no matter who created it; it is well within human power to make it either better or worse by thought, by speech, by deed; and man's real concern is, after all, with the facts of life, and not with the apologetic presentment of savage survivals.

C. COHEN.

The Narratives in Genesis.

THE stories related of the ancient patriarchs in the book of Genesis are full of improbabilities and contradictions, which plainly indicate their fabulous nature. The correctness of this inference is confirmed by the fact that the Bible account of the land of Canaan and its inhabitants in the days of these patriarchs is found to be in direct conflict with what we know from more trustworthy sources was the actual condition of that country at the time referred to. If to these we add the additional fact, now firmly established by Biblical criticism, that the book of Genesis is a patchwork made up of documents composed at three different periods—the earliest being several centuries after the time of the supposed Moses—and is Mosaic in no other sense, the fictitious character of the narratives is placed beyond doubt.

Looking at the Bible stories in the light of the circumstances mentioned, we find not only plain references to later events, but also clear indications of fraud. These, in many cases, take the form of "prophecies" in which "the Lord" or one of the Biblical characters is represented as predicting some future event. That these so-called predictions were the writers' own inventions is proved by the fact that when the inspired penmen leave the safe ground of foretelling only what had occurred or was believed to have occurred, up to their own times, their foreknowledge foresakes them. Their inspiration does not enable them to penetrate futurity. This can be seen clearer in the book of Daniel than, perhaps, in any other of the inspired books, though the same indications of fraud are discernible in all the sacred writings. The following are examples selected from the book of Genesis:—

1. In Genesis xxxvi. 31 we read: "And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel." This follows a list of eight kings who reigned in that country. The writer of the paragraph lived, of course, *not earlier* than the reign of the first Hebrew king, Saul. But the expression "before there reigned *any* king over Israel" implies that more than one king, if not a long succession of kings, had reigned when the paragraph was written. This was pointed out long ago by Thomas Paine, whose clear common-sense view is now proved to be correct by the highest Biblical critics; for the whole chapter in which this passage occurs was composed by a priest-writer who lived after the exile (about 444 B.C.).

2. In Genesis xii. 2 the Jehovistic writer represents "the Lord" as saying to Abraham: "I will make thee a great nation." Israel *was* a nation in this writer's days (viz., about 850 B.C.); the passage, therefore, proves that one of the legendary ancestors of the Jews was said at that time to be Abraham. The alleged prediction having been written after the event foretold, its genuineness need not be discussed.

3. The same inspired writer represents "the Lord" as predicting of Ishmael: "And he shall be as a wild ass among men; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him.....I will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation" (Genesis xvi. 12; xvii. 20). In the writer's days the Ishmaelites were a numerous and a lawless people; hence, the prediction put in the mouth of "the Lord" merely shows that at that time they were believed to be of the same race as the Israelites and to have been also descended from Abraham.

4. The same Jehovistic writer represents "the Lord" as making the following promises to Abraham, respecting the land of Canaan: "Unto thy seed will I give the land.....For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.....Unto thy seed have I

given this land, from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river Euphrates.....I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession" (Genesis xii. 7; xiii. 15; xv. 18; etc.).

This fraudulent writer knew that the Israelites lived in the land of Canaan; but there his knowledge ended. He believed that his countrymen would always retain possession of that land, and would at some future time become sufficiently powerful to annex all the territory between the Nile and the Euphrates. Both expectations were doomed to disappointment. The Israelites never possessed even so much as the whole of Canaan, and, from the portion which they occupied after the Exile, the majority of that people were dispossessed by Titus in the year 70, and the last remnant expelled by Hadrian in A.D. 135, since which time their promised "everlasting possession" has been in the hands of strangers. The inspired writer's foreknowledge did not extend to the reign of Titus or Hadrian; he has, consequently, made his Lord prophesy falsely.

5. Rebekah, we are told, under certain delicate circumstances, "went to inquire of the Lord." In reply, "the Lord" is represented as saying: "Two nations are in thy womb.....and the one people shall be stronger than the other; and the elder shall serve the younger" (Genesis xxv. 23). The nations here indicated were the Edomites and the Israelites, which are said to have been descended from Esau and Jacob. Both nations were well known to the Jehovistic writer.

Again, the patriarch Isaac, when blessing his son Esau, is made to say: "By thy sword shalt thou live, and thou shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass, when thou shalt break loose, that thou shalt shake his yoke from off thy neck" (Genesis xxvii. 40). Here the inspired writer fraudulently represents "the Lord" in one case, and Isaac in the second, as predicting that the Edomites should become subject to the Israelites for a certain time, after which they should rebel and become again a free nation.

The subjugation of this people by David and their revolt in the reign of Jehoram (2 Samuel viii. 14; 2 Kings viii. 20) were well known to the writer, who lived some half a century after the later of these two events.

6. The patriarch Jacob, when blessing Joseph's sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, is represented as predicting that they should take the place of Joseph among the tribes of Israel, and also that the descendants of Ephraim, the younger, should be more powerful than those of Manasseh, the elder. The writer—who is usually termed "the Elohist," and wrote about 750 B.C.—further represents the dying Jacob as saying of the two tribes that took the place of Joseph: "Moreover, I have given thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow" (Genesis xlviii. 22).

Here the Elohist writer fraudulently puts predictions relating to matters well known in his days into the mouth of the mythical Jacob. He knew that the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh claimed to be descended from an ancestor named Joseph, and that the men of Ephraim were stronger and more numerous than those of the tribe of Manasseh. He also knew that a portion of the land on the east of Jordan, which was said to have been taken from the Amorite kings, Sihon and Og, just before the Israelites entered Canaan, had been given to Manasseh, in addition to the portion allotted to that tribe in Palestine proper. This was the "portion above thy brethren" to which reference is made. But the conquest of this territory, assuming such to have been a fact, was achieved by the Israelites under Moses "with the sword and with the bow" (Deuteronomy iii. 13; Numbers xxi. 21, etc.; Joshua xvii. 5, etc.). Jacob could have known nothing of it, for it did not take place until two hundred years, or more, after his time. Yet he is represented as speaking of the event as an accomplished fact. Christian apologists will, of course, say that this patriarch was gifted with prescience. They have, however, first to prove that the Biblical Jacob is historical, and next that he was possessed of such miraculous power.

7. In Genesis xlix. we have an account of Jacob calling his sons around his bed to tell them what should befall them "in the latter days"—that is, of course, "in the days of the writer," for it is needless to say that no

foreknowledge is evinced of the later history of the Israelites. Amongst the utterances put in the mouth of this imaginary patriarch are the following: "Judah, thee shall thy brethren praise.....thy father's sons shall bow down before thee.....the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh come.....Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea," etc. (verses 8, 10, 13).

These two passages tell us only what was known to the writer—viz., that David, Solomon, and the kings who succeeded them were of the tribe of Judah, and that the province occupied by Zebulun had an outlet on the sea. The words, "until Shiloh come," are corrupt, and need not be discussed. The whole chapter is a fair sample of pretended prophecy. Jacob knows only what the writer knows; neither the one nor the other displays the smallest knowledge of what should befall the Jews "in the latter days." The question of the foreknowledge attributed to this patriarch is thus set at rest.

8. Noah, we are told, upon one occasion got very drunk, and lay uncovered in his tent. In this beastly condition he was seen by his son Ham, who, by some unlucky chance, entered the tent. Upon awakening, and being informed of the incident, the somewhat sobered patriarch was furiously incensed, and pronounced a curse of perpetual slavery upon Ham's son Canaan, and upon Canaan's descendants throughout all generations.

In the days of the writer many of the descendants of the original Canaanites had become tributary to the Israelites; hence, to account for this fact, the sacred scribe piously concocted the story of the curse, which he put in the mouth of a legendary ancestor, Noah. But he has done more than this: he has represented the mythical characters of his story as good or bad, according as they acted in conformity with, or in opposition to, the Mosaic laws which were known in his time. Noah was a righteous man, his drunkenness notwithstanding; for intoxication was not expressly forbidden in the laws of Moses. Ham was a bad man, for he transgressed the command afterwards given in Leviticus xviii. 7. That he did so unwittingly did not alter the fact. Canaan was cursed, not because he had anything to do with his grandfather's drunkenness and indecent exposure of himself, but because the Lord's decree, given later on to the Israelites, declared: "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children," etc. (Deuteronomy v. 9; Exodus xx. 5). This was the Lord's favorite method of inflicting punishment, as is seen in the cases of David, Solomon, Pharaoh, and others. If Noah knew nothing of these matters, the writer of the story did, and that accounts for Canaan being cursed instead of Ham. There is, in fact, no other way of accounting for it.

But one point remains to be noticed. The inspired writer makes his own people to be descended from Shem, and the wicked Canaanites from Ham. He did not know that the Israelites and Canaanites were of the same race, and that, if the former were Shemites or Semites, so also were the latter. In this fact we have a conclusive proof that the story of Noah cursing a descendant of Ham is a Jewish fabrication.

ABRACADABRA.

(To be continued.)

Design.

If nature shows design,
It shows it bad and good,
Unless we all resign
The scientific mood.

The daisy on the lea,
The spider and the fly,
The wreck upon the sea,
The beggar's sightless eye.

The Heron's lanky legs,
The fish on which it preys,
The forty million eggs
A single tapeworm lays.

The useful working man,
The builder, doctor, sweep,
The useless priestly clan,
And noxious things that creep.

The thoughtful man who gets
His knowledge link by link ;
Jehovah's pious pets
Who ne'er require to think.

The scientist who comes
With reasoned knowledge fraught ;
The Lord's enlightened chums
Who teach before they're taught.

The godless men who teach
The truth that nearly dies ;
The godly men who preach
Robust religious lies.

The pulpit's dupes in pews,
The infant mind's infectors,
The circumcising Jews,
And other vivisectioners.

The rose's lovely bud,
The tyrant's bloody hand,
The earthquake and the flood,
The desolated land.

The wheat upon the plain,
The water in the well,
The drought, with famine's pain,
Diseases, death, and—hell !

G. L. MACKENZIE.

Acid Drops.

"NUNQUAM," in the *Clarion*, quotes our paragraph stating that we had looked in vain for "a good notice of the death of Ingersoll" in its columns. He says that the paragraph had been chasing him from town to town for nearly a fortnight, and that it was the first intimation he received of the Colonel's death. Well, well ! Who would have thought it ? We do not believe that "Nunquam" would tell anything but the truth ; but, in that case, what a sequestered life he must lead ! Not only far from the madding crowd, but far from daily news.

"I'm afraid," the *Clarion* editor says, "there is not a man amongst us who knows enough about Ingersoll to write an obituary." But surely, friend "Nunquam," you know something of Ingersoll's published discourses. We fancy we remember your references to him in your old *Sunday Chronicle* days. But, however that may be, it would seem decidedly odd if you were ignorant of the beautiful speech of one so famous as Ingersoll, and one who agreed with you in so many things, though not in the doctrine of State Socialism.

"Nunquam" speaks in his humorous way of maintaining "friendly relations with the *Freethinker*." Well, we beg to assure him that our feelings towards him are those of the utmost friendliness. We have often read him, especially in past years, with much pleasure. He has held up a high ideal to the working classes, who are too often appealed to only through the stomach, as though they had merely the rudiments—or barely that—of conscience and intelligence. He has made a brave, disinterested fight for the truth as he sees it. And for all this we honor him. Indeed, it was because of this that we wondered at his silence over the death of Ingersoll. We could understand the silence of many other journals, but the silence of the *Clarion* puzzled us—and pained us too.

Some of the English papers are circulating an American story about an "infidel" millionaire called Waggoner, of Toledo, who has become converted to Christianity, and now declares that Ingersoll is burning in hell ; and who has also made a bonfire of his "infidel library, costing thousands of dollars." Well, we see there is a reference to this gentleman in our esteemed contemporary, the *New York Truthseeker* ; and it appears that Mr. Waggoner's "conversion" took place, and was referred to in the *Truthseeker*, quite eight months ago. The loss of his wife or financial embarrassment is said to have affected his mind. "From what we know of him," our contemporary says, "nothing he might do would afford occasion for surprise. As for the library costing thousands of dollars, it is undoubtedly a myth. It may be worth ten dollars, and it is contrary to our opinion that Mr. Waggoner would burn it if he could get half that sum by selling the books."

Another story passing current in the English papers is that the son and daughter of the late Mr. Henry M. Taber, to each of whom he left a million dollars, are trying to suppress his book entitled *Faith and Fact*, to which Ingersoll wrote an introduction. This may be true for all we know. If it is true, it only shows what curious notions some people have of filial gratitude. To take your father's money and try to kill his book is an odd form of virtue. Mr. Taber was not responsible to his children for the exercise of his intelligence, and his right to be heard even after his death does not seem questionable. If he made a mistake in publishing *Faith and Fact*, he perhaps made a greater mistake in leaving his son and daughter two million dollars.

Still another "infidel" is being referred to in our newspapers—Joseph Benoist, of Kansas, who died leaving a fortune of 150,000 dollars, all but 4,000 dollars of which he has left to charitable institutions, including Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish. He seems to have held out, however, in his "infidelity." "Don't bury my body," he ordered, "in a church cemetery. Don't let any minister hold services at my grave, or preach my funeral sermon."

The *Sunday Companion* reports a sermon on "The Unbelief of a Fool" by the Rev. J. H. Jowett, who speaks with an air of authority. To borrow the phrase of a famous French wit, he seems full of his subject. His text was the Psalmist's elegant exclamation, that "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God"—which invites the retort that there is a frightful number of fools who say there is a God.

Mr. Jowett came to the pith of his sermon when he declared that "sin makes for unbelief." This is a very old wheeze of the pulpit. Nearly every preacher assumes that whoever does not believe as he does must be a scoundrel. Mr. Jowett's portrait, at the top of his sermon, reveals great cocksureness and conceit. And, as the Yankees say, that's all there is in it. Further notice of his sermon would be a waste of time.

Directly after Ingersoll's death the *London Daily Mail* printed a story of how he was "silenced" some twenty years ago at Toronto. The story came from "a correspondent"—an anonymous one, of course—and it was simply a pious invention. We said at the time that this story would soon be reproduced on the authority of the *Mail*, without any reference to the anonymous correspondent. And we were not mistaken. It is reproduced in precisely that way in the August number of the *Highbury Hill Baptist Church Monthly Messenger*, conducted by the Rev. William Stevenson. But scrupulous veracity, or even decent accuracy, was never a Christian virtue.

Household Words for January 30, 1892, contained an Ingersoll story. When the great orator visited St. Paul's Cathedral, the guide showed him the tomb of Wellington, and told him that the marble weighed forty-two tons, and there was a steel receptacle inside that weighed thirteen tons, inside that again a leaden casket weighing two tons, inside of which was the mahogany coffin, holding "the ashes of the great 'ero." "Well," said the Colonel, after thinking a while, "I guess you've got him. If he ever gets out of that cable me at my expense."

Incense is used in no less than 289 gospel-shops of the Church of England, and the number is increasing. Intianity in this country threatens to end in smoke.

A Christian weekly observes that "unbelievers are certainly not entitled to derive much encouragement from the various reports of Christian progress." After this sententious prelude it proceeds to cite returns showing the number of copies of the Scriptures circulated by the British and Foreign Bible Society. The real point, however, is, How many of these copies are read ? The Bible Society, of course, will go on printing and circulating any imaginable quantity that may be covered by the subscriptions and bequests of pious people who can find nothing better to do with their money.

Discussing on Sunday excursion traffic, the *Christian Herald* alludes to the inconveniences encountered by many who went to the seaside by trips on the Sunday before Bank Holiday, and failed to find quarters at any price. The *Herald* adds—and it is a beautiful Christian sentiment that deserves to be placed on record—"But the discomfort thus caused is nothing in comparison with the agony awaiting all unrepentant Sabbath-breakers in Tophet."

Is Providence setting its face against Popery ? The Christi nunnery in Segovia, so well known to tourists, which dates back to the time of the Moors, has been entirely destroyed by fire. One of the nuns was burned to death.

A Sunday-school superintendent was trying to get the child to tell him what weapon Samson used in killing the Philistines. Thinking to aid them, he laid his hand on his cheek and said : "What is this ?" "The jaw-bone of an ass," the child cried.

Last summer the *South London Mail* stood up for "righteousness." And sat down—severely kicked. It raved at the Freethought movement in Peckham and Camberwell with great virulence and a lavish display of ignorance. The result of its efforts was to bring about, one fine Sunday afternoon, a splendid Freethought demonstration on Peckham Rye. Since then it has subsided into a state of helpless, aimless imbecility. But for an amusing little editorial note in the *London Argus* we should have forgotten its existence.

The *Argus* says : "In its issue of the 10th inst. the *South London Mail* prints a column and a-half of 'Notes and Com-

ments' in leaded leader type, rather more than half of which is conveyed from the pages of the London *Argus* without acknowledgment. With polite irony these stolen goods are signed 'Fair Play.'

A firm of widely-advertising soap-makers have received a curious offer. The elders of a Presbyterian church intimate their willingness to put up in the interior of their conventicle announcements of the superior merits of the firm's soap—of course, for payment. The church is in debt, and the elders have thought of this novel method of adding to its income. Well, the famous picture of "Bubbles" might not be out of place in a temple devoted to the childish exploiting of many theological theories and aspirations of an equally insubstantial and easily exploded kind.

With the double recommendation of Pears' Soap and the Blood of Jesus, the congregation should be in a fair way of getting "washed as white as snow." The Gospel of Soap is worth preaching even nowadays, far as we have advanced from the time and spirit of those early saints who prided themselves upon their dirty linen and abstinence from ablution. Still, some care will have to be exercised as to the nature of the soap-announcements displayed. It would be too much, even if in debt, to be confronted with pictures, say of the "Monkey Brand" type, through all the long mortal hours of divine service.

George Simms, a journalist, of 18 Frederick-street, St. Pancras, was charged at the Clerkenwell Police-court with damaging a lamp valued at twelve shillings, belonging to a street-preaching party. Defendant said the damage was accidental. The evangelisers kicked up a row from 8.30 to 10.30, and prevented him from sleeping. He had remonstrated with them before, and on this occasion he went out to give them another dose, and in the darkness he fell against the harmonium and knocked over the lamp. Mr. Horace Smith, the magistrate, said that he sympathised with the defendant. The law was incomplete, and police magistrates ought to have power to issue an injunction "restraining people from pursuing such objectionable practices." Their intentions might be good, but they did not benefit mankind by disturbing the peace and rest of respectable citizens.

The *Woolwich Herald*, a Tory paper, commenting on the case of the last lot of Peculiar People sent to gaol on the ridiculous charge of fatally "neglecting" their children, quotes the passage in James on which these sincere Christians rely, and adds that "If these words do not mean what the Peculiar People believe them to mean, then all we can say is that we have no knowledge of the English language. Either the law is wrong or the New Testament is wrong, and in either case these people are being sent to gaol for accepting literally the teaching of the New Testament." This is precisely the view which we have expressed; and, as it is the only honest view, we are glad to see it adopted by at least one other journal.

The gentleman who was found dead in a bathing establishment at Northampton, twenty-two hours after he expired, was the Rev. Joseph Walker, a Baptist minister. There was nothing mysterious about it, the cause of the fatality being heart disease. But if the case had been that of a Secular lecturer, it would probably have been used as a "warning" in many a searching sermon.

Rev. Arnold D. Taylor, of Churchstanton Rectory, Devon, has a very intelligent dog. According to the reverend gentleman, who writes to the *Daily News*, the wise animal knows the word "church." Directly he hears it, he puts back his ears in a discontented way, goes to his basket, and curls himself up with a resigned sigh. The sound of a church bell makes him miserable. We wish human beings were half as discriminating.

Reference was made in these columns last week to the remarkable enterprise of the *Christian Budget*. That journal—taking a wrinkle from the advertisements of Mother Siegel and the Pink Powders for Pale People—is now publishing a number of testimonials from celebrated people of to-day to the cure-all efficacy of the Christian religion. Four military men begin the series. Amongst these curiously-selected "witnesses to the truth" is Lord Wolseley, who is pleased to accord Christianity the honor of his approval. He does not reply by his own hand, but delegates the duty to an *aide-de-camp*. The *Budget*—so as to make the most of its opportunity—presents its readers with a full-length facsimile of the A.D.C.'s scrawl. After this, the Commander-in-Chief and the enterprising journalist should be *persona grata* at the Heavenly Court.

The Marked Testament—i.e., an edition with what are regarded as the best or specially sectarian passages underlined—seems to have aroused some indignation. The idea amounts to impertinence, says the *Church Gazette*, "besides being a refutation or repudiation of the Evangelical dogma of verbal inspiration." The *C. G.* is indignant at the fact that the Sermon on the Mount is left unmarked. But why?

Is it not practically a dead letter? As Christians pay no heed to it in their lives, where is the use of wasting underlines upon it, except to bring into glaring prominence the inconsistency of alleged believers? A New Testament marked from a Freethought point of view might be an eye-opener to many of the faithful, but such a lot of rubbish would have to be printed that the experiment is hardly worth trying.

The Rev. W. H. Hay-Aitkin affirms, we are told, that the collects seem to be designed to give the Almighty a lesson in dogmatic theology. It may well be asked whether all prayer does not partake of the nature of unnecessary information—telling the Almighty what he already knows, and asking him for what he is well aware we desire, and has long ago made up his mind whether he will grant or not. Of course, he may like to be appealed to and coaxed. Is that the idea of prayer?

We know now why the Ritualistic clergy are beginning on reflection to fight shy of disestablishment. A Church paper has let the cat out of the bag. "Disestablishment would reduce Ritualism to the proportions of the Plymouth Brethren, and, practically, its adherents would be merged in Rome. Now many of the Ritualists are married men and could not be re-ordained by the Roman rite, so they would find themselves out in the cold."

Are there many roads to heaven, or only one? In the words of the *Church Review*: "Is there more than one revealed religion? There may be many 'religions' so-called, but is it possible for one God to reveal to mankind more than one set of truths about himself, or more than one way of gaining access to himself?" We should think not; but then, in the name of God, how are we to find out which is the "one way" when so many are pointed out to bewildered humanity?

A New York telegram to the London *Evening News* says that Mrs. Sarah S. Appelby, wife of a Methodist clergyman, threatens to apply for a warrant against the Rev. F. K. Sandford, whose building of the Temple of Truth in Maine, and founding of a new sect, one of whose tenets was to be a belief in the Anglo-American alliance, caused such a sensation a few days ago. Mrs. Appelby declares that while at the Temple of Truth she was brutally beaten by male attendants on the order of Sandford, who declared that she was possessed of a devil. She also says that she was forced to undress herself in the presence of Sandford and two other ministers. The scandal will probably prevent Sandford sailing for England on Saturday, which he had arranged to do. —*Liverpool Echo*.

Thomas Reader and Jane Maria Skinner have appeared in the dock at Worship-street, London, charged with stealing a quantity of household furniture, the goods of Frederick Skinner, the woman's husband. According to the evidence, it was a case of elopement. The husband said of the male prisoner: "He came into my place as a friend, as a Temperance worker, and a Sunday-school teacher."

Thomas Doughty, wearing the Salvation Army uniform, appeared before the Walsall magistrates, and was fined forty shillings and costs, or fourteen days' imprisonment, for behaving indecently at Aldridge, on August 17. Defendant said it was accidental, but the Bench declared that he had behaved in a most disgraceful manner.

Butcher Hall Wesleyan Mission, Birkenhead, had a special attraction recently. It was a visit from Jonney Carroll, converted prize-fighter and drunkard, who has had "a remarkable career," having been fifty-eight times in prison in England, and many times in Ireland, Wales, and India, besides being five times reported as dead. We have not heard how many souls he succeeded in saving at Birkenhead. Any number short of a thousand would only prove the toughness of the local sinners.

The great Talmage preached on Jephthah, and the *Cincinnati Inquirer* reported his discourse verbatim the next day, with the following up-to-date headlines, which show how entertaining the Bible would prove in the hands of an American newspaper man:—

JEPHTHAH,
THE OLD FREEBOOTER.
At an Early Age He was Forced to Rough It.
HE HELD UP THE END OF HIS STRING IN GREAT
SHAPE,
AND SOON SEWED UP THE GAMES OF TWENTY CITIES.
On His Return From Victory He Kept a Promise.
He Must Sacrifice the First Person Seen in His Door.
HE LOOKS!!
HOLY HORRORS!
IT IS HIS FAIR DAUGHTER!!
BUT JEPHTHAH WAS A MAN OF HIS WORD,
AND THE BEAUTIFUL YOUNG GIRL WAS SLAIN.

Sunday theatres are popular in Omaha, Nebraska. Mr.

Ensor, the Mayor, who has been trying to close them, is called upon to resign by the City Council, on which he has only one supporter.

Sir R. B. Llewellyn, Administrator of Gambia, in his annual report states that the Protectorate is flourishing. Christianity is not making any advance, but Mohammedanism is going forward rapidly, and carries with it temperance and decency. It is favored by the women, who don't care to marry drinking men.

The *Young Man* for September prints a Chat with the Rev. J. W. Horsley, ex-chaplain of old Clerkenwell Prison. Mr. Horsley says that the prison system has almost entirely failed. One reason of this, in his opinion, is that too much is thought of the governor and the doctor, and too little of the chaplain, who has been "tolerated as a concession to popular sentiment." But would it not be still worse if the chaplains were made the virtual bosses of our penal establishments? These gentlemen scarcely do more than manufacture hypocrites and time-servers.

When the editor of the *Freethinker* was in Holloway Gaol for "blasphemy" he became acquainted with the following case. An unfortunate prisoner, sinned against as much as sinning, applied for the post of assistant to the Librarian, who was also schoolmaster, church organist, and leader of the choir. This post was in the gift of the chaplain, and the applicant did not get it because he was a Dissenter. The man of God said he must find a good Churchman, and he did find him—an old hand doing a fresh term of seven years for burglary.

Mr. Horsley tells of a man, under sentence of death, who said to him: "I should like to be converted, if you can make it convenient, someday. I don't know what it is, but I've heard there is such a thing." Comment would only spoil this religious jewel.

The reply of a Jew to Mr. Horsley on one occasion was distinctly good. He was about to swear on an ordinary Bible, and the chaplain offered him another volume. "Take this," Mr. Horsley said; "it is only the Old Testament." "It's of no consequence," the Jew answered; "I only kiss my own side of the book."

A Burslem correspondent of the *Weekly Liverpool Courier* declares that Paderewski is merely a performing spiritualistic medium. One or two demons get inside him and give the entertainment, for which the supposed artist is paid so handsomely. This may be true for all we know, and we sympathise with a correspondent of ours who sends us this item and adds on his own account: "I am a pianist myself, and I should like that Burslem correspondent to compel one or two of those demons to dwell in me, for which I am willing to give him half the gate-money. Paderewski earns more pounds in one evening than I can get shillings in a month."

Reviewing *Brimstone Ballads* by Mr. G. L. Mackenzie, the *Sun* says that the "work has a kind of smartness, but we can find no pleasure in it." This reminds us of a passage in *As You Like It*. When a certain gentleman says he does not like Rosalind's name, Orlando answers: "There was no thought of you when she was christened." Mr. Mackenzie did not write for the *Sun's* pleasure. He wrote for his own.

Obituary.

I DRAW my breath in pain to tell the story of my faithful friend and fellow Freethinker, Edward Woodhall, aged forty-five, who died on August 16, after a long and painful illness. Deceased was for some years a member of the West Ham Branch of the N. S. S., and had dearly at heart the Freethought cause, to which he drew many converts, myself among the number, by exposing the "cunningly-devised fable" of Christianity, and by his cheerful views of life. He bore with wonderful fortitude the slow-destroying disease from which he suffered; for the principles which he upheld and defended in health sustained and cheered him all through his sickness, and made his end a peaceful one. Freethought has lost in him a staunch upholder; his family, a good husband and father; and I have lost a true friend, who led me out of the darkness of faith into the light of Freethought. It was a great disappointment to me that my own ill-health prevented me from being in London to see the remains of my friend placed in the bosom of mother earth.—J. KERSEY (Margate).

Nor is truth arid or disconsolate, for it is in the very nature of true knowledge to restore more with one hand than what it seems to take away or destroy with the other.—*Büchner*.

Special.

I FIND that the new Company takes longer to start properly than I expected; but I have no doubt it will be through, as the Americans say, in time for announcement in next week's *Freethinker*. It may be stated at once that the new venture will be called "The Freethought Publishing Company, Limited." This name, without the "Limited," was the one that Charles Bradlaugh traded under, but of course it is none the worse for that. On the other hand, as Bradlaugh has been dead for nearly nine years, there can be no harm in reviving the name now.

G. W. FOOTE.

P.S.—The following are the promises of support already received, the figure after each name indicating the number of £1 shares:—

Previously acknowledged:—

Mr. George Anderson, 500; A London Friend, 500; Mr. Horace S. Seal, 200; Mr. Fr. Essemann, 100; A Scotch Friend, 50; Mr. S. Hartmann, 30; Messrs. John and James McGlashan, 20; Mr. Richard Johnson, 20; Mr. C. Girtanner, 20; Mr. T. E. Green, 10; Mr. George Dixon, 10; Mr. C. Davis, 10; A Gateshead Friend, 10; Dr. T. R. Allinson, 10; Mr. G. J. Warren, 5; Mr. Joseph Barry, 5; Mr. Jas. Partridge, 5; Mr. A. L. Brame, 5; Mr. S. M. Peacock, 5; Mr. W. H. Spivey, 3; Mr. M. Christopher, 2; Shares to Mr. G. W. Foote (say), 1,000; Mr. Sydney A. Gimson, 25; Mr. W. Hardaker, 20; Mr. Joseph Guy, 15; Mr. B. L. Coleman, 10; Mr. L. Gjemre, 10; Mr. William Bailey, 10; Mr. Peter Gorrie, 10; Mr. R. A. Strange, 10; Mr. G. Langridge, 10; Mr. Richard Green, 5; Mr. A. B., 5; Mr. G. E. Lupton, 5; Mr. J. D. Leggett, 5; Mr. J. H., 5; Mr. T. Ollerenshaw, 3; Dragon, 2; Miss E. M. Vance, 2; Mr. L. Leggett, 2; Mr. R. Alger, 2; Mr. G. Freeman, 2; Mr. T. A. Spivey, 2; Mr. C. Shepherd, 1; Harold Elliot, 1; Mr. A. G. Lye, 2; Mr. John Sumner, 1; Mr. John Roberts, 3; Mr. J. Maling, 5; Mrs. Mary Ann Button, 5; Mr. David Mitchell, 5; Mr. Jesse Oliver Bates, 10; Mr. James Fulton, 10; Mr. H. A. Cumber, 5; Mr. C. E. Brammer, 5; Mrs. Martha Dye, 5; Mr. G. H., 1; Mr. E. G. H., 1; Mr. Martin Weatherburn, 5; Mr. James Neate, 3; Mrs. Neate, 2; Mr. George Taylor, 2; Mr. H. Foyster, 2; John Waller, 5; Mr. J. Bullock, 2; Mr. A. F. Bullock, 2; Dr. R. T. Nichols, 10; Mr. J. Keast, 1; Mr. R. Dowding, 2; Mr. J. G. Thompson, 2; Mr. Albert Smart, 5; Mr. Richard Carroll, 10; Mr. J. M. Day, 1; Mr. W. N. Sweetman, 2; Mrs. D. P. Sweetland, 2; Mr. T. H. Seymour, 10; Mr. C. E. Hayes, 2; Mr. H. Barratt, 5; Mrs. Charlotte S. Gillin, 2; Mr. F. W. Donaldson, 5; Mr. R. Axelly, 2; Mr. F. J. Gould, 1; Mr. J. F. Hampson, 5; Mr. H. Garthwaite, 1; Mr. W. Garthwaite, 1; Mr. C. E. Hall, 5; Mr. George L. Alward, 2; Mr. H. B. Dodds, 2; Mr. T. Hill, 2; Mr. J. G. Dobson, 2; Mr. G. W. Holloway, 4; Mr. Robert Jacob, 10; Mr. A. C. Brown, 1; Mr. W. M. Constant, 2; Mr. G. Parr, 2; Mr. James Davie, 10; Mr. J. W. Dawson, 2; Mr. Peter Dawson, 2; M. A. Lewis, 2; Mr. David Watt, 1; M. H. J., 5; Mr. Luke Vickers, 2; Mr. J. Fish, 1; Mr. S. Holmes, 2; J. W. Griffiths, 1; Mr. J. T. Embleton, 2; Secular Societies Limited, 20; Mr. George Ennson, 5; Mr. J. C. Pickett, 2; Mr. Jas. Baker, 1; Mr. J. M. McInnes, 2; Mr. Hugh Irving, 10; Mr. E. Wilson, 5; Mr. John Proctor, 10; Mr. J. Slyfield, 1; Mrs. Mensbier, 5; Mr. E. C. Cooke, 20; Mr. R. Robinson, 2; Mr. J. Seddon, 1; Mr. Frederick Ryan, 4; Mr. R. F. Mack, 3; Mr. William Barks, 2; Mr. Arthur Button, 5; Mr. J. Garvey, 1; Mr. C. Cohen, 2; Mr. C. Pegg, 5; Mrs. M. E. Pegg, 5; Mr. A. E. Elderkin, 1; Mr. J. Jones, 5; Mr. T. E. Whitta, 1; Mr. H. F. Sesemann, 20; Mr. B. Dudley, 2; Mr. Joseph Gibbon, 2; Mr. J. C. Banks, 3; Mr. J. Oscar, 1; Mr. Robert Gibbon, 1; Mr. E. B. Foote (New York), 5; Mr. J. Ferguson, 1; Mr. W. J. K. Rider, 2; Mr. Thomas Johnson, 10; Mrs. A. W. Hutty, 3; Blackburn Branch, 2; Mr. James Weston, 5; David Jones, 3; Mr. E. Jackson, 1; Mr. W. H. Deakin, 2; Mr. R. Slack, 2; Mr. T. Perkins, 1; Mr. William Williamson, 2; Mr. Henry Trotman, 5; Mr. J. M., 1; Mr. G. H. Williamson, 2; Mr. G. Fryar, 2; Mr. F. S. Finden, 1; Mr. Albert Hebble, 10; Mr. G. A. Lovett, 1; Mr. George Brady, 10; Mr. H. Thomas Whiteley, 3; Mr. William Hewson, 2; Mr. W. Price, 1; Mr. Francis Neale, 1; Mr. J. H. Bain, 1; Mr. T. Garthwaite (2nd), 1; Mr. James McGhee, 3; Mr. T. Williams, 2; Mr. W. McCulloch, 3; Mr. Edwin Lucas, 2; Mr. C. Williams, 2; Mr. J. G. Henderson, 2; Mr. James Wainwright, 2; Mr. C. Mascal, 2; Mr. Andrew, 1; Bella and William Scott, 2; Mr. A. McLean, 2; Mr. M. S. Turner, 5; Chatham Secular Society, 5.—Total, 3,170.

This week's acknowledgments:—

Mr. Charles Watts, 5; Mr. R. Forder, 5; Mr. A. B. Moss, 2; Mr. W. Heaford, 2; Mr. A. S., 5; Mr. C. Heaton, 1; Mr. W. Mann, 2; Mrs. M. Mann, 2; Mr. H. Good, 3; Mr. E. Self, 2; Mr. C. G. Quinton, 2. Total, 31.

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Mr. Cl 3, New road, Noven -All to him require E. PINDE H. McGu the ma be put H. R. St take ca N.S.S. S. HOLM H. GOOD. R. BLO.- ANTHONY untrue, in disc certain whethei questio lous. I he neve answer, T. YOUN the Re about th thinker i preache Of cour person now he i J. B. AST invitation DONOVAN of busin amends i H. PERCY pleasant. was sev that you A. H. MILI "DISAPPOI quam 'to has done from one able, and have ma is silence G. CRUDDA have obta through Catholic S. GRAHAM J. F. NASH the little l of membe E. SELF.-V have now R. P. EDWA occasion. The little l appears to manners. PAPERS REO Reason-C Hill Bapti Progressiv Bulletin-I Evening J Science Sit LETTERS for 28 Stonecu LECTURE NO Tuesday, c THE Freethi office, post 10s. 6d.; ha FRIENDS who marking the ORDERS for li cutter-stree SCALE OF AD ceeding ten 4s. 6d.; half for repetitic

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

September 3, Athenæum Hall, London: 7.30, "Colonel Ingersoll: Living and Dead."
September 9, Stanley; 10, South Shields; 17, Glasgow; 24, Athenæum Hall.
October 1, Athenæum Hall; 15, Manchester.

To Correspondents.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—September 3, New Brompton; 10 and 17, Athenæum, 73 Tottenham Court-road; 24, Birmingham. October 1, Sheffield; 29, Glasgow. November 12, Liverpool. December 10 and 17, Manchester.
—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.

E. PINDER.—Thanks. See paragraph.
H. McGUINNESS (Derby).—Mr. Ward had already written us on the matter. We are quite sure that the Derby Branch will not be put down by Christian rowdyism.

H. R. SPARKES.—Glad to hear that the West Ham Branch will take care in future not to let its excursion clash with that of the N.S.S. Executive.

S. HOLMAN.—May use it in our next.
H. GOOD.—Your previous letter must have miscarried.
R. BLO.—Thanks. We hope to use them.

ANTHONY RUSSELL (Glasgow) asks us to give our word that it is untrue, as a Christian friend informs him, that we were worsted in discussion by the well-known Mr. Harry Long. Well, we certainly did debate with Mr. Harry Long in the City Hall, but whether either of us was worsted, and which it was, is not a question for us to determine. Mr. Harry Long is less scrupulous. He defeated everyone he ever discussed with, and some he never discussed with. If our correspondent wants a definite answer, he must apply to that gentleman.

T. YOUNG writes: "Verily it must be a 'slow coach' in which the Rev. Mr. Mayer is travelling. The tale which he tells about the old woman and the orange, and noticed by the Freethinker for August 27, I myself heard told by a Methodist local preacher, almost word for word, as far back as the year 1863. Of course the 'Campania' is a recent interpolation, and the person who gave the orange was then a 'noted infidel,' but now he is merely an unknown Freethinker."

J. B. ASTBURY.—We are too busy at present to accept your invitation. However, the subject is one that will keep.

DONOVAN.—Sorry it was overlooked in consequence of pressure of business and a subsequent holiday. We will try to make amends immediately.

H. PERCY WARD.—Your experience at Derby was far from pleasant. It seems almost a pity that Harcourt's connection was severed with that godly place. You need not assure us that you will stand to your guns. We know you will.

A. H. MILLER.—See paragraph.

"DISAPPOINTED" writes: "No reasonable man wanted 'Nunquam' to devote so much space to our dead hero as Mr. Foote has done, but I do say we had a right to anticipate better things from one so gifted as Mr. Elliot's champion. Let us be reasonable, and even generous; but in this case 'Nunquam' should have made a beginning just to encourage the others. The rest is silence."

G. CRUDDAS.—See "Sugar Plums." Pleased to hear that you have obtained the Board-school for Mr. Foote's visit to Stanley, although your previous application was strongly opposed by a Catholic member of the Board.

S. GRAHAM.—Thanks for cuttings.

J. F. NASH.—Pleased to have your letter. Our compliments to the little lady. Miss Vance will send you your N.S.S. ticket of membership.

E. SELF.—We did not hear from Mr. Forder on the matter, but have now entered your name for two shares. Thanks.

R. P. EDWARDS.—You acted with good sense and spirit on the occasion, but nothing Mr. Waldron says is much worth notice. The little brains he had seem to have exuded, and the process appears to have been accompanied by a sad deterioration in manners.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Freidenker—Der Arme Teufel—Torch of Reason—Crescent—Ethical World—Two Worlds—Highbury Hill Baptist Monthly—Secular Thought—Blue Grass Blade—Progressive Thinker—Liberator—De Vrije Gedachte—Sydney Bulletin—Isle of Man Times—Boston Investigator—New York Evening Journal—People's Newspaper—Sunday Companion—Science Siftings—Oxford Times—Church Times.

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 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.

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

LONDON Freethinkers are notified that the Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, re-opens for Sunday evening lectures to-day (September 3). Mr. Foote occupies the platform, and will lecture on "Colonel Ingersoll: Living and Dead." This is intended as a Memorial Address, and the hall should be crowded. The chair will be taken at 7.30.

Mr. Foote starts for the North on Saturday next (Sept. 9). In the evening he will deliver his first lecture at Stanley, near Newcastle-on-Tyne. The large Board-school, in Front-street, has been secured for this visit. It will hold about a thousand people. The subject of the lecture will be "Life, Death, and After." Tyneside friends are desired to note that a train leaves Stanley (Shield-row Station) at 9.2 for Newcastle, stopping at intermediate stations. We should add that the Stanley meeting begins at 7.30.

The following day, Sunday, September 10, Mr. Foote lectures in the Royal Assembly Hall, South Shields; in the evening for certain on "Colonel Ingersoll: Living and Dead," and probably also in the afternoon on "The Dreyfus Case and the Future of France." It is a long while since Mr. Foote paid Shields a visit, and his Tyneside friends will no doubt be glad of the opportunity to hear him again.

Mr. Foote will go on from the Tyneside to Scotland, lecturing at Glasgow on Sunday, September 17, and on the preceding week-nights at towns in the surrounding district, in one of which he may possibly hold a public discussion. He returns to London to lecture at the Athenæum Hall again on September 24.

Mr. Charles Watts delivers his first lectures since his illness to-day (September 3) in the Secular Hall, New Brompton. His evening subject will be "Colonel Ingersoll as I Knew Him."

Mr. Cohen lectures to-day (September 3) in the Royal Assembly Hall, South Shields. This is a large and expensive room, and the Tyneside "saints" should try to fill it.

Mr. A. B. Moss lectured to capital audiences on Sunday, in the morning at the Newington Reform Club, and in the afternoon and evening at Brockwell Park. Some time ago Mr. Moss had a debate at Camberwell with Mr. Quelch, of Justice, on "Malthusianism and Socialism." A full, though not verbatim, report of it is now published at one penny by the Twentieth Century Press, 37a Clerkenwell-green, E.C.

The London Freethinkers' annual excursion, under the auspices of the N. S. S., took place on Sunday. A special train was chartered to run from Victoria and London Bridge, taking up passengers also at Clapham and New Cross; and as the weather was glorious there was naturally a large gathering of the metropolitan "saints," amongst whom we noticed Mr. S. Hartmann, the N.S.S. treasurer, Mr. Killick, the Deptford veteran, Mr. Deane, Mr. G. J. Warren, Mr. Tom Shore, Mr. Schaller, Mr. Mascall, Mr. Leate, Mr. Bater, Mr. Henderson, Mr. Thurlow, Mr. William Heaford, Mr. C. Cohen, Mr. Forder, Mr. Charles Watts, and Mr. G. W. Foote. Mr. Watts was accompanied by Mrs. Watts, and Mr. Foote by his wife and two of his daughters. Of course there were many more who escaped our observation, for the crowd of excursionists soon dissipated on reaching Littlehampton, some wandering by the seaside, some rambling into the country, and others journeying to beautiful Arundel, where the river winds in loveliness under the Duke of Norfolk's castle. The return journey began at 7.15, and soon after to all were safely landed in London. A little rain fell during the run homewards, but it only served to accentuate the delightfulness of the weather which prevailed all day.

Miss Vance did not return to London with the party. She was not looking too well, and, having seen the excursion through, she stayed behind for a few days' rest and change, which will, we hope, enable her to return to work with renewed energy.

The Birmingham Branch has appointed Mr. H. Percy Ward as Organiser and Lecturer for a period of twelve months. He will lecture for the Branch every third Sunday, look up subscribers and lapsed members, reply to attacks on Freethought in the local press, deliver open-air addresses during the summer, etc. Of course the Committee want funds for this experiment. Subscriptions should be sent to Mr. J. Partridge, secretary, 65 Cato-street.

Mr. Ward had a bad experience at Derby on Sunday. A gang of Christian rowdies mobbed him after his outdoor lecture, and he had to take refuge from their violence in an hotel. He has arranged to return to Derby on September 24, in order to show these rowdies the futility of their tactics.

The West Ham Branch had its first excursion on Sunday

t properly trough, as ext week's enture will Limited." at Charles the worse been dead viving the . Foote. ort already he number 1, 500; Mr. tch Friend, McGlashan, r, 20; Mr. Daviss, 10; ; Mr. G. J. dge, 5; Mr. I. Spivey, 3; Foote (say) ker, 20; Mr. Gjemre, 10; Mr. R. A. rd Green, 5; Leggett, 5; , 2; Miss E. r, 2; Mr. G. ird, 1; Mr. i Sumner, 1; . Mary Ann ver Bates, 10; ; Mr. C. E. Mr. E. G. H. ate, 3; Mrs. yser, 2; Mr. Bullock, 1; Dowding, 2; Mr. Richard weetman, 2; to; Mr. C. N. S. Giffin, 1; r. F. J. Gould, 1; Mr. W. L. Alward, 5; Dobson, 3; Mr. A. L. Parr, 2; Mr. Peter Dawson, H. J., 5; Mr. olmes, 2; Mr. cular Society, C. Pickett, 2; Hugh Irwin, Mr. J. Slyfield, R. Robinson, r. R. F. Macs, Mr. J. Garven, . Pegg, 5; Mr. Whitta, 15; Mr. eph Pruett, 10; bert Gibbon, 5; guson, 1; Mr. Mrs. A. W. Veston, 5; Mr. H. Deakin, 2; illiam Mitchell, H. Williams, . Albert Heald, rady, 10; Mr. H. S. 2; Mr. H. S. Jain, 1; Mr. M. r. T. Stone, as, 2; Mr. J. mes Waugh, 2; William Scott, hatham Secular

by brakes to Stanford Rivers. The party numbered nearly ninety, including several children. After tea at the "Woodman" brief speeches were made by President Sims, Vice-President Leggatt, and Secretary Sparkes. Altogether it was a most enjoyable outing. The West Ham Branch, by the way, meets every Thursday evening in the Workmen's Hall, West Ham-lane, where all friends of Freethought will be welcome.

We have received a copy of the annual report of the Glasgow Branch for 1898-99, and it is a most encouraging document. Never has the Branch been in a better position. Audiences have increased in size, and on some occasions people have had to be turned away from the door owing to the hall being crowded. The sale of Freethought literature has also increased; moreover, the surplus of £23 in the last balance-sheet has grown into a surplus of £60, thanks chiefly to a donation of £30 by an anonymous friend. No wonder that the Committee intends to carry on Freethought propaganda vigorously in the surrounding district, and to distribute Freethought tracts and publications widely at the most important religious gatherings in the city during the approaching winter.

Mr. T. Robertson, corresponding secretary of the Glasgow Branch, whose address is 218 Allison-street, writes to us that the Committee will be very happy to receive old copies of the *Freethinker* or other Secular literature for judicious free distribution. He will take charge himself of any parcels forwarded to him, and pay carriage if necessary, though we hope it will not be necessary. We are sending on a large parcel of back numbers of this journal.

By the way, the Glasgow Branch re-opens its hall in Brunswick-street to-day (Sept. 3). A social meeting will be held in commemoration of Bradlaugh and Ingersoll, for which tickets can be obtained from Mr. D. Baxter, 72a Glassford-street. On the following Sunday the lecture session will be opened by Mr. H. Percy Ward.

Christians, being lovers of authority in matters of belief, are fond of citing the names of distinguished men who are professed Christians, whatever they are in reality. Perhaps these Christians will be pleased to read the following extract from the *Torch of Reason*, of Silverton, Oregon, written by Mr. P. W. Geer, of the Liberal University there, who is travelling in the Eastern States. We may observe that the Edison referred to is the great Edison, of electrical fame throughout the world: "Homer said Edison wanted to see me, and told me where to find him. I entered at the end of a long brick building, and after passing through several doors, and winding around among a wilderness of apparatus, with the odor of chemicals strong enough to kill bed-bugs, I saw a room at the extreme end of the long building. I walked up to the door, and saw a man seated at a long table, with a lot of jars of chemicals before him. The man was Edison, the prince of inventors. He was clad in a gray suit, which was literally plastered with dirt and dust. His face was full and smooth shaven; his hair is turning gray in places; his eyes have a hungry expression—a relic, I suppose, of his past life. The wizard motioned for me to enter, and as I approached he held out his hand to welcome me. As I grasped it he spoke, and his voice sounded like his head was in a barrel; that is on account of his deafness. 'Well,' said he, 'I am reading the Bible.' 'Yes,' I replied, 'the Bible of nature is a splendid book if one understands how to read it.' 'The best damn Bible in the world,' said Edison, enthusiastically; 'its laws are perfect and grand, and all the prayers in the world can't change them. There is intelligence and law in this world, and there may be supreme intelligence and law; but, so far as the religion of the day is concerned, it is all a damned fake.' Mr. Edison is a pleasant talker, and his swearing is not harsh; it is simply amusing. I explained in a few words what we are doing in Oregon, and he said he was very glad to hear such glorious news, and asked me for some literature, which I gladly gave him. I did not wish to detain the world's great benefactor from his work, so, after a few moments' chat and exchange of ideas, I bade my friend goodbye."

Mr. Joseph Symes, of Melbourne, in the last number of his *Liberator* to hand, recurs to the subject of his projected visit to England and the possibility of a visit from Mr. Foote to Australia. This is what he says: "In reply to many inquiries, I may say that nothing further is yet known of my suggested trip to England. The difficulty of finding a *locum tenens* on the *Liberator* is great. Able men are not generally willing to work for nothing. A supply for the platform may also be difficult, unless Mr. Foote can induce one of his lieutenants to come on a trip to Australasia. I believe he might pay himself, and infuse new blood into our Southern Freethought, as well. What may be done I am unable to say. I have been asked repeatedly if Mr. Foote could not come to Australasia while I visit England. Of course, I have no right to say yes or no to that; but I feel sure many thousands of people would be glad to welcome him here, and I will ask him to come if our people in the great centres of

population will let me know that they will do something reasonable towards his welcome, and towards affording him every opportunity of displaying his great abilities and making an impression upon the colonies. Will Freethinkers everywhere give me their opinion upon the subject? I shall be glad to hear as soon as possible."

Mr. Symes, of course, did not know when writing this that Mr. Foote was busy with a fresh organisational effort—the new Company—which will make it absolutely impossible for him to leave England for any length of time during the next year or two.

Brimstone—Without Treacle!

Brimstone Ballads, and Other Verse. By G. L. MACKENZIE. With an Introduction, by G. W. FOOTE. (Forder; 1899.)

MR. JOHN MORLEY once described a certain book as "a thunderous engine of revolt." The phrase aptly describes Mr. Mackenzie's book of verses, *Brimstone Ballads*. At a time when reaction is especially noticeable in religious circles, Mr. Mackenzie's literary effort to stem the tide of irrationality is to be welcomed. Within the couple of hundred pages of his book he has packed an astonishing amount of wit, satire, and argument. The whole is directed against superstition in general, and the Christian religion in particular, which, by the way, is not so near the undertaker as some Ethical Culturists and Agnostics seem to imagine. A tale is told of a French journalist, that when the great Napoleon took him familiarly by the ear, and said, "I intend giving you the Legion of Honor," the man answered: "Thank you, sire; but could not your Majesty give it to my father?" In some such spirit we may picture Mr. Mackenzie's acceptance of the title of poet. His ability and his honesty have always been united with a modesty which is, in these days of self-advertising, extremely rare.

Yet his unmistakable success in such efforts as "The Salvationist's Prayer" and "Miracle" makes the reader, like Oliver Twist, ask for more. There is something more than mere versification in these *jeux d'esprit*. It was a happy idea on his part to commence his very blasphemous book with lines entitled "In the Beginning," and to finish with some verses on "Cremation."

Mr. Mackenzie wields both the battle-axe and the rapier. He does not disdain to use, on occasion, the harmless, necessary coke-hammer. There is nothing—not even the button at the back of our skirt-collar—so treacherous as memory. We have, however, a distinct impression that the majority of these pious verses of Mr. Mackenzie's appeared at intervals in that deeply religious journal, the *Freethinker*. We liked them on their first appearance in these respectable columns, and we like them even better in their collected form.

Mr. Foote, who is the literary godfather to Mr. Mackenzie's first-born publication, says, in his felicitous introduction, that to many people the verses will appear "shocking." We fear that this will be so. Mr. Mackenzie's medicine must prove strong for orthodox stomachs at all inclined to be delicate upon points of theology. They will, probably, think that, for one thing, Mr. Mackenzie is "too blooming facetious" about the Ever Blessed Trinity, and other *dramatis personæ* of the Christian religion. He ladles out the *aqua-fortis* of criticism with a very free hand.

There is a quite refreshing robustness about the style of his verse which should go far to disarm even those purists of language to whom "the vernacular" in any shape is grief and pain.

Mr. Mackenzie ranges over a variety of topics, from the Mahatmas of Tibet and the Kaiser to parodies of well-known poets; but he is invariably the consistent and inveterate foe of Christianity, with a capital C. We wish that Mr. Mackenzie's volume of verse could penetrate into the rectories and vicarages and other homes of the intellectually lost. *Brimstone Ballads* would be a perfect present for those newly-fledged B.A.'s who, with the graceful assurance of youth, explain the origin of evil in twenty minutes. It would straighten up the beardless Oxonians in ecclesiastical post-coats, with their hair parted in the middle and an assumed, mortified stoop. It would prove an eye-opener to the ignorant Boanerges, the tedious pulpit-punchers, the chartered Inquisitors, who oratorically conduct sinners with gusto to "the place where there is no winter." And lastly, and certainly least, it would enlighten the "Helioquous Hespositors" of Engström; those blind Christian Evidence guides who jauntily slay their Atheistic men of straw for arf-a-crown an hour.

The fact is these "reverend" and irreverend hypocrites have too much "side." If Mr. Mackenzie's literary fire-engine could be got within measurable distance, it would not be long before he washed some of the starch out of them.

Although this book may never reach the country rectories, Freethinkers need not "dissemble their love" for Mr. Mackenzie. He has deserved well at the hands of that party which has inscribed on its banners that significant phrase, *Ecrasez L'Infame*.

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The Bible and Dickens.

THE Bible is the secret of England's greatness. This is the only secret on record that defies discovery; but we know the assertion is true, because we saw it in a Christian paper. It is equally certain that all great men are Christians—or, at least, they had Christian mothers. Personally, we do not know of any English genius in the whole realm of art and science who does not belong to a Christian country. In face of this stupendous fact let every Atheist hang his head, and no longer deny that Moses described his own burial. Let him admit it like a man, and renew his spiritual Fire Insurance.

Some time ago a writer in this journal referred to the Holy Bible as a work of humor. At first we thought he had been "too much i' the sun." Then we doubted the condition of his soul. There seemed something so heterodox in the idea. But we have thought about it, and prayed about it, and sworn about it, and the upshot of it all is—we agree with him.

The *fin de siècle* Miss Miggs may denounce the discovery as "pagin," and the discoverer as concentrated "whitening and sepulchres." But if the Bible is not a humorous production, whence did men like Dickens derive their inspiration? It is true that Mark Twain only perceived one joke in the Bible, but it is to be feared that Mark did not search the scriptures in a proper spirit. The process may be an unconscious one; but if humorists do not obtain their ideas from Holy Writ, they must get them from some other source, which is absurd on the face of it. To use an expressive Gallicism, the thing is not "God possible." If the Bible does not contain humor, it is not the only fountain of genius—a blasphemous conclusion at best.

Arrived at this point, we felt that we were immortal. We experienced the honest, touching pride of the physician who has laboriously discovered a new disease. We had unearthed a new theological difficulty!

We immediately put the principle in operation, taking Charles Dickens as our subject. We set to work, and traced some of his happiest passages to their only possible foundation. Our success, "for which the Lord be praised!" (as dear old Pepys used to say when he ascertained the state of his accounts), is best exemplified in the following parallelisms:—

THE BIBLE.

My kingdom is not of this world (John xviii. 36).

I, even I, am he that comforteth you (Isa. li. 12).

The kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt. x. 7).

Be not righteous over much (Eccles. vii. 16).

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up (John iii. 14).

I am meek and lowly in heart (Matt. xi. 29).

Be not faithless, but believing (John xx. 27).

Her ways are ways of pleasantness (Prov. iii. 17).

How long will ye vex my soul and break me in pieces with words? (Job xix. 2).

I will pour out mine indignation upon thee, I will blow against thee in the fire of my wrath (Ez. xxi. 31).

All we like sheep have gone astray (Isa. liii. 6).

Seek not ye what ye shall

DICKENS.

MRS. GAMP: Don't ask me to take none (*Martin Chuzzlewit*, 19).

CODLIN: Codlin's the friend, not Short (*Old Curiosity Shop*, 19).

MICAWBER: I have now an immediate prospect of something turning up (*David Copperfield*, 27).

If you make a brag of your honesty to me, I'll knock your brains out (*D. C.*, 13).

CHOLLOP: We must be cracked-up, sir..... We are a model to the airth, and we must be jist cracked-up, I tell you (*M. C.*, 33).

URIAH HEEP: I'm a very 'umble person (*D. C.*, 16).

CODLIN: Take my advice; don't ask me why, but take it (*O. C. S.*, 19).

MANTALINI: She...coils her fascinations round me like a pure and angelic rattlesnake (*Nicholas Nickleby*, 34).

MR. VENUS: Don't sauce me, in the vicious pride of your youth (*Our Mutual Friend*, i. 7).

QUILP: You and I will have such a settling presently; there's such a scratching and bruising in store for you, my dear young friend (*O. C. S.*, 11).

MISS MOWCHER: What a refreshing set of humbugs we are to be sure, ain't we, my sweet child? (*D. C.*, 22).

SQUEERS: Subdue your

eat, or what ye shall drink (Luke xii. 29).

Mine eyes are upon all their ways (Jer. xvi. 17).

But the red-vested genius of Gad's Hill went further. In the course of our researches we were startled to find that many of his remarks are really oblique commentaries on Scripture. In short, Charles Dickens—humorist, realist, sentimentalist, weaver of plot, analyst of nature, mover of tears—was a Bible commentator! This important fact has been hitherto overlooked, because he did not announce his intention. He commented *sub rosa*. Real art is art concealed. That is why the sterling merits of our English painters are so hard to find.

The following remarkable instances will show with what wonderful adroitness Dickens was able to seize upon the inner meaning of a text. In the elucidation of dubious passages our commentator has no equal:—

THE BIBLE.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son (John iii. 16).

The very hairs of your head are all numbered (Matt. x. 30).

Save me, and I shall be saved (Jer. xvii. 14).

Worthy is the lamb that was slain (Rev. v. 12).

The Lord shall smite thee in the knees and in the legs with a sore botch that cannot be healed (Deut. xxviii. 35).

About the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea (Mark vi. 48).

Swear not at all (Matt. v. 34).

He that believeth on me believeth not on me (John xii. 44).

Keep that which is committed to thy trust (1 Tim. vi. 20).

Having eyes, see ye not? (Mark viii. 18).

appetites, my dears, and you've conquered human nature' (*N. N.*, 5).

JENNY WREN: I know their tricks and their manners (*O. M. F.*, ii. 1).

ROB THE GRINDER: What a thing it is to be perfectly pitched into with affection like this here! (*Dombey and Son*, 52).

MANTALINI: What's the dem'd total? (*N. N.*, 21).

SAM WELLER: That's what I call a self-evident proposition, as the dogs'-meat man said when the housemaid told him he warn't a gentleman (*Pickwick*, 22).

SAM WELLER: It's the scasonin' as does it! (*P.*, 19).

JERRY CRUNCHER: It's hard in the law to spile a man, I think. It's hard enough to kill him, but it's very hard to spile him (*Tale of Two Cities*, ii. 2).

JERRY CRUNCHER: I leave you to judge what a damp way of earning a living mine is! (*T. T. C.*, ii. 2).

ROGUE RIDERHOOD: That's knowing the obligations of an Alfred David, ain't it? (*O. M. F.*, i. 12).

MRS. GUMMIDGE: Everythink goes contrairy with me (*D. C.*, 3).

CAPTAIN CUTTLE: A parting gift, my lad. Put it back half-an-hour every morning, and about another quarter towards the afternoon, and it's a watch that'll do you credit (*D. and S.*, i. 19).

SAM WELLER: Yes, I have a pair of eyes, and that's just it. If they was a pair o' patent double million magnifyin' gas microscopes of hextra power, p'raps I might be able to see through a flight o' stairs and a deal door; but, being only eyes, you see, my wision's limited (*P.*, 34).

Of course such instances might be almost indefinitely extended. We might even enlarge the scope of the present article. The writings of Dickens fairly bristle with veiled allusions—if we may be pardoned a *mélange* of metaphor—to matters controversial. He must surely have been thinking of Methodist prayer-meetings when he wrote in *Great Expectations* (chap. xxvii.): "I put it to yourself, sir, whether it were calculated to keep a man up to his work with a good hart, to be continually cutting in betwixt him and the Ghost with 'Amen!'" And in Betsy Prig he evidently typified the blatant unbeliever of our day, who, in spite of constant allusions to the Deity by fervent Christians, has the "Bragian" boldness to declare: "I don't believe there's no sich a person!"

E. R. W.

"My son," said a man of doubtful morals, putting his hand on the head of a young urchin, "I believe Satan has got hold of you." "I believe so, too," replied the urchin.

More Ingersoll Gleanings.

ON the authority of a beastly, drunken Christian, who made a little dishonest profit by libelling Ingersoll for the delectation of the baser sort of believers, it has been asserted that he was a coward as a soldier in the Civil War, that he ran away during action and hid himself in a hogpen, and that he surrendered himself to a Confederate boy of sixteen. Ingersoll, of course, never troubled to contradict this malignant nonsense. No decent American believed it, and to prosecute its worthless author would only have been to hoist a skunk into the notoriety he craved. But the silly slander was repeated by the Christian Evidence vermin in England, and they will go on repeating it as long as there are bigoted fools who will listen to it. Even the great John Kensit, the Protestant reformer, was not above publishing this and other lies about Ingersoll, just to raise a little cash by the defamation of one who had never done him any sort of injury.

The answer to this lie has been given since his death, and given decisively, by Ingersoll's old comrades in arms. The Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, which Ingersoll commanded during the early part of the war, held a meeting that was reported in the *Peoria Weekly Herald* of July 27. Mr. B. D. Meek, who was lieutenant-colonel of the regiment while Ingersoll was colonel, and who has been master-in-chancery of Woodford county for many years, presided over the meeting, and declared that "a greater mind than his had not existed since Shakespeare," and that he would have been a great military leader if his mind had turned in that direction. Amongst the clauses of the long resolution passed at this regimental meeting was the following: "We knew him in the military camp, where he reigned an uncrowned king, ruling with that bright sceptre of human benevolence which death alone could wrest from his hand. We had the honor to obey, as we could, his calm but resolute commands at Shiloh, at Corinth, and at Lexington, knowing, as we did, that he would never command a man to go where he would not dare to lead the way."

Surely that is enough to silence Ingersoll's libellers—if they could be silenced—on this point for ever. Men who have fought under a coward, and lost blood and suffered hardship and wounds, do not get up afterwards and call him a hero. The veterans of Ingersoll's old regiment know the facts, and their word outweighs the malicious statements of a myriad slanderers, but few of whom were out of their boyhood at the time of the war, and many of whom had not yet been introduced into the world which they defile and disgrace.

This is not all, however; for we note that at the Peoria Memorial Meeting, reported in the local *Herald-Transcript* of July 24, an old ex-soldier named Buchanan rose and spoke as follows: "I have heard something said of Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll's capture by the Confederates during the Civil War, and that he was captured while standing in a hogpen. I am probably the only living witness of his capture, and can say that there was no pig pen or building of any kind in sight. I was wounded and lying not twenty feet away when he was captured, and if there had been a pig pen near at hand I most certainly should have crawled into it for shelter from the cold, as there was snow on the ground where I was lying. When the Confederates came up to Colonel Ingersoll he shouted: 'Stop your shooting! I have been wanting to recognise your old Confederacy for the last ten minutes.' Those officers thought so much of him that they did not take from him his horse, pistols, or sword. He was not a great soldier, but there was not a cowardly hair in his head. Everybody loved him, and there was not a man in the regiment who would not have followed him to the death."

Peoria, it must be remembered, is the city in which Ingersoll lived for many years, where he married, where his children were born, and where he laid the strong and firm basis of his fame. And men got up and spoke his praise at that Peoria Memorial Meeting, with tears streaming down their faces; men who had known him, in some cases for forty years, in other cases from boyhood, and could testify to his splendid character as a man, a husband, a father, and a citizen.

Another of these Christian Evidence lies about Ingersoll—also retailed on the authority of the aforesaid beastly, drunken maligner—is that he was dissipated and demoralised before his marriage, and was frequently in the gaol at Peoria. Well, this lie too has been nailed down since his death. According to the *Peoria Journal* of August 4, Mr. Alexander S. Bacon, an attorney of New York city, wrote to Sheriff John Kinsey, of Peoria, asking for information about Ingersoll's earlier years, and stating that he had been advised that before 1860 Ingersoll was "of a dissolute character, and frequently an occupant of the Peoria gaol. My informant," he added, "whose reputation is beyond reproach, alleges this on his own personal knowledge, and there seems to be no reason to doubt it." Such is the license that respectable Christians allow themselves when they deal with an "infidel's" reputation!

Sheriff John Kinsey answered Mr. Bacon's letter, and gave him the information he requested. The following is the principal part of his letter: "I have personally known Mr. Ingersoll since 1861; was a member of his regiment, and was with him in three engagements—namely, the Battles of Shiloh, Corinth, and Lexington. He was taken prisoner at the latter, and did not return to his regiment to perform any more military services after he was paroled. A braver or truer soldier than he never drew a sword, and no commanding officer ever went to the front who was better liked and more respected by his men than he. As he practised law in this city for a number of years after the civil war, and as I was connected with the sheriff's office about all of the time during Ingersoll's home in this city, after the time mentioned above, I necessarily met him almost daily. During that time I saw nothing in his habits or conduct different from what he has a reputation of practising at home and abroad, while a resident of your city (New York). You say you have been credibly informed by a prominent old resident of this city that Colonel Ingersoll in his earlier years (say before 1860) was a dissolute character, and frequently occupied the Peoria jail, etc. In answer to this accusation I will say that I have full access to the records of the Peoria county jail, which date back to the year 1846, some years prior to R. G. Ingersoll's home in this city. His name does not appear in said record."

Attorney Bacon, of New York city, was also obliged with a long report on Ingersoll's youth, which Sheriff John Kinsey gathered from several old and respected citizens: including Henry Baldwin, who was mayor of Peoria in 1862; Barrett White, who was justice of the peace from 1862 to 1891; Colonel John Warner, who has lived in Peoria since boyhood, and is "personally known to nine-tenths of the people" in the city; and Dr. William Hamilton, an old retired practitioner, known and respected by all the old settlers. Every one of them bore witness to Ingersoll's high character. His only fault as a lad was high spirits and reckless generosity. "As long as Bob had a dollar in his pocket," one of them said, "he would divide the same with a friend, or give it all to a beggar." Yes, it was the same Ingersoll, even then.

"Ingersoll as a Vegetarian" is the title of a long and eulogistic article by Mr. Joseph Collinson in last week's *Vegetarian*. He points out, with quotations, how Ingersoll was opposed to slavery, to capital punishment, to flogging women or men, to vivisection, and other brutalities; indeed, he says that Ingersoll was "the friend of every humane movement." The last quotation that Mr. Collinson gives is from a letter by Ingersoll, written in July, 1887, to Mr. J. Andrews, author of *Vegetarianism and Evolution*. In this letter it is pointed out that all life on this planet feeds upon life, and that people who live on vegetables are no more merciful than people who live on meat. At the same time, it is admitted that "probably the time will come when man will be civilised enough not to kill and eat his fellow creatures." "I must admit," Ingersoll added, "that the eating of meat, when I think about it, is shocking, and that I am somewhat ashamed to look into the peaceful and trustful eyes of cattle."

Mr. Collinson concludes his article in the *Vegetarian* with the following passage, which could have hardly been gratified to some readers of that paper: "Colonel Ingersoll recognised the moral rights of animals; these were, he thought, involved in the Darwinian demonstration of the kinship of life. This leads up to the reflection that the Christian Church has never recognised any rights in animals. On the other hand, Freethinkers have usually held that not only have they rights, but that we had duties towards them."

Ingersoll was the subject of a eulogy in *Tuesday's Times* (Aug. 29) by "A Correspondent," evidently an American, who knew the Colonel personally. We extract the following anecdote: "I remember once riding up Pennsylvania-avenue in Washington, with Ingersoll. He was on his way to the sitting of the Court which was trying the famous Star Route case. The car was overcrowded, and the poor horse who drew it jibbed. Ingersoll was out in a moment, and, with his hand on the horse's collar, discovered a gall as big as the palm of his hand. I will not repeat the language he employed, but was not Parliamentary, but he unhitched the horse himself, and stopped the street-car traffic of the avenue. And when the sulky driver complained 'that he would lose his fare,' 'Bob' slipped a dollar into his hand, and I overheard him say: 'If you do, come and see me.'"

Only a few days before his death Ingersoll wrote the following letter in reply to Mr. Clinton J. Robins, telephone operator at police headquarters in Dayton, Ohio, who had written to ask whether (as reported for the thousandth time) he had changed his religious opinions: "New York, July 13, 1899.—C. J. Robins Esq.—Dear Sir,—First, thank you a thousand thanks for your good letter. The only trouble is that it is too flattering. You are right in thinking that I have not changed. I still believe that all religions are based on falsehoods and mistakes. I still deny the existence of the supernatural, and I still say that real religion is usefulness. Thanking you again, I remain yours always, R. G. Ingersoll. G. W. F."

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Amusing Imitation of Christ.

RECENT stories concerning the Holy Ghost and Us believers and other sects of religious worshippers in various parts of Maine have called out remembrances from some of the older people of the State of some of the strange sects of former days. The story of one preacher who had a large following in the western part of the State is interesting and not a little amusing.

In the year 1816 a handsome, well-built man with a pleasing personality appeared in the town of Porter. He introduced himself as Jacob Cochrane, a native of New Hampshire, and professed to be appointed by God to Christianise the whole world. He went even further in his claims than Elder Sanford of the "Holy Ghost," for he not only claimed to heal the sick by divine aid, but professed to have the power to strike a person dead if he saw fit. He was possessed of a good voice and magnetic presence, and soon had a fanatical following of over 2,000 people, mostly farmers, their wives and children. Cochrane taught that all property must be held in common, and proclaimed that all marriage vows among its adherents must be annulled. This is what got him into serious trouble subsequently. He further taught that the Lord gave to him and his followers special privileges and powers; that they could heal the sick and perform miracles, among other things increase the size of the crops raised by the farmers.

Success seems to have caused the "apostle," as Cochrane was called, to go to still greater lengths in his teachings and actions. He urged his followers to become as little children, exhorting them to roll in the dirt and grovel on the ground. And they did so, even going so far as to make mud pies and speaking and acting like children. Foot washing was another custom which the "apostle" taught, and young girls were instructed to wash the feet of the leaders of the sect. Prayer, exhortation, and singing were too tame for these fanatics, and to liven things up marching, dancing, and clapping of hands and violent exercises were introduced at the meetings. Men and women would spin around as swiftly as possible until, overcome by dizziness, they would fall to the floor.

"Apostle" Cochrane was much given to the spectacular, and upon one occasion, in the town of Porter, he imitated Christ's entry into Jerusalem riding upon an ass, he being followed by hundreds of his adherents, who clapped their hands and shouted and sang. On another occasion he announced that he would walk on the water, like Christ, and the scene of his display of power was to be Sebago Lake. On the day appointed several thousand people gathered upon the shores of the lake, believers and unbelievers. As the story goes, Cochrane had secretly fixed a line of planks in the water and several inches underneath. A scoffer discovered the trick, and, unobserved, removed one of the planks, so that when the "apostle" walked he very soon walked in over his head, and was with difficulty rescued by his disciples.

This was the beginning of the reaction against the man. The meetings became more and more violent, and finally indecent. Cochrane was arrested and indicted for several offences. The trial was most dramatic, his followers standing by him and calling upon the Lord to smite his oppressors. Just as the jury was rendering a verdict of guilty, Cochrane made a flying leap and a swift run, and escaped from the court-room. He got away, too, and the sect proclaimed that God had interposed and set the persecuted apostle free. Several months later Cochrane was arrested in Massachusetts on grave charges, and finally committed to State Prison on sentences aggregating four years. He served his term, and came out a broken-down man. A few years later he died at the home of one of his friends in Alfred.

Book Chat.

UNDER the title of "His Brother's Brother," Colonel T. W. Higginson furnishes in the August number of the *Atlantic* a biographical and anecdotal sketch of John Holmes, a younger brother of the famous "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," who possessed many of the qualities of mind and heart which brought Oliver Wendell Holmes to so much distinction.

Here is another instance to be added to the humors of the book catalogues. In the list of a well-known firm of publishers *The Archbishops' Decision as to the Liturgical Use of Incense and the Carefulness of Carrying Lights in Processions* is immediately followed by *The Light that Failed*.

The Bible has now been edited for modern Jews, and comments and reflections added by Mr. C. G. Montefiore. The editor speaks of the Book of Daniel as "now acknowledged on all hands to be the work of the Maccabean era, and the date of which, within a four years' limit from the *terminus à quo* to *terminus ad quem*, can be fixed with satisfactory precision." He regards the *Song of Songs* as "neither more nor less than a poem about love, not the religious love of man to God, but the love of man and woman for each other." Of

course, it is as much out of place in the Bible as would be the sonnets of Shakespeare.

A ridiculous publication is entitled *The Social Reformer's Bible*, compiled and arranged by M. L. Hart-Davis (Simpkin, Marshall, & Co.). It is merely a manual of selections from the Bible and the Apocrypha which bear more or less on social matters. The selections remind us of the copy-book maxims with which we are all made so familiar in youth. The fact is that the Holy Ghost is not good at political maxims; and the same remark applies to the party who wrote the Apocrypha. Otherwise they seem equally gifted at coining sentences in the style of Martin Tupper. And, frankly, the latter's *Proverbial Philosophy* is the least of these evils.

The September number of the *Literary Guide* opens with a spirited article by Mr. J. M. Robertson, criticising a recent sermon by a distinguished preacher, the Rev. J. Llewellyn Davies. The next article by "A. G. W." is a plea for propagandist energy amongst Rationalists. This writer takes "Cui Bono?" for his title—which, we may remind him, does not mean What good? but To whom is the profit? Mr. F. J. Gould, having apparently ended his Chats with the living, begins a series of Chats with the dead—a far more perilous undertaking, in which it is praise to say that one has not entirely failed. Mr. Gould's object is to show that, in spite of the scientific triumphs of the present age, it lags behind the noble philosophy of the great Emperor, Marcus Aurelius, one of the grandest and serenest souls in all human history. Mr. Charles Watts replies with firmness and temperance to a rather sneering editorial notice of his latest pamphlet, which was described as "questionable propagandism." Mr. Watts, in our judgment, scores against his critic, who seems to imagine that the so-called Higher Criticism is taught in most churches and chapels, and is the common possession of the multitude of Christian believers. That this is a very great mistake is proved by the new Free Churches' Catechism—the latest statement of Nonconformist Christianity.

The Image of God.

A FRENCH artist named Millet, who lived from 1815 to 1875, painted a picture involving a man and a hoe. It represents a French farmhand, of obviously inferior intellect, resting upon his hoe, which appears to be an implement for grubbing out roots. For all we know, the man with the hoe is quite satisfied with himself; but Mr. Edwin Markham, a Pacific Coast poet, being imbued with the notion that "God made man in his own image, in the image of God made he him," finds that the man does not fit the scripture, and hence concludes that something is the matter with the man. Having reached this sage decision, the poet casts about for the parties who are responsible for "this monstrous thing." He inquires:—

Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?
Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?

Pausing for a reply, and receiving none, he answers the query by charging the whole thing on the "masters, lords, and rulers in all lands," which is the height of nonsense. As a man of intelligence, he ought to know that men much lower than this "monstrous thing" peopled the earth before masters, lords, and rulers had been elected, and it is beyond doubt that among the earlier members of the ruling class the man with the hoe would have been a distinguished despot, hoeing off heads instead of roots. The cold and unpoetic truth is that the "brutal jaw" of the man was never a more human jaw than it is to-day: "this brow" never bulged with thought, and "the light within this brain" is set there by the poet's own fancy. Here are four more empty lines, and with them the poem closes:—

How will it be with kingdoms and with kings—
With those who shaped him to the thing he is—
When this dumb terror shall reply to God
After the silence of the centuries?

Well, as God made him, and as, according to Markham's theology, God has permitted the king and kingdoms to make a monkey of him, the probabilities of anything happening to them are extremely vague. If the man with the hoe has a grievance, it is against his alleged creator and preserver, who gave him the brutal jaw, the slanting brow, and the brain without a light in it, and when "this dumb terror shall reply to God" he will be justified in assuming the attitude of a plaintiff. The mildest language he could employ would be that of Omar:—

O Thou who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake,
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd, Man's forgiveness give—and take!

And the best that Mr. Markham's god could do would be to settle it on those terms, which are better than he could obtain in any tribunal where justice is dispensed.

—*Truthseeker* (New York). GEORGE MACDONALD.

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, "Colonel Ingersoll: Living and Dead."
BRADLAUGH CLUB AND INSTITUTE (36 Newington Green-road, Ball's Pond): 8.30, A Concert.
WEST LONDON BRANCH (15 Edgware-road): September 7, at 9, Monthly Meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 11.30, E. White.
BROCKWELL PARK (near Herne-hill Gates): 3.15, A lecture.
CAMBERWELL (Station-road): 11.30, A lecture.
EDMONTON (corner of Angel-road): 7, E. Pack.
FINSBURY BRANCH (Clerkenwell Green): 11.30, W. J. Ramsey.
HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): Lectures every week evening at 8. Sunday, at 11.30, R. P. Edwards, "A New Religion."
HAMPSTEAD HEATH (Jack Straw's Castle): 3.15, R. P. Edwards, "Blasphemy."
HAMMERSMITH (The Grove): 7.15, R. P. Edwards, "Triumph of Rationalism."
KILBURN (Glengal-road): 7.15, W. J. Needs.
KINGSLAND (Ridley-road): 11.30, S. E. Easton.
MILE END WASTE: 11.30, A lecture; 7, A lecture. September 6, A lecture.
PECKHAM RYE: 3.15, E. Pack.
S. L. E. S. (Peckham Rye): 11.15, A lecture. (Brockwell Park): 3.15, A lecture.
STRATFORD (The Grove): 7, F. A. Davies.
THE TRIANGLE (Salmon-lane, Limehouse): 11.30, C. Cohen. September 5, R. P. Edwards.
VICTORIA PARK (near the Fountain): 3.15, J. Rowney, "Holy Moses and Co.;" 6.15, J. Rowney, "The Life of Jesus."
WESTMINSTER (Grosvenor Embankment): 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "Saviors of the World."

COUNTRY.

BRISTOL (in the Horse Fair): 8, J. Keast, "Reasonable Unbelief."
CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): C. Watts—11.30, "The Secular View of Existence"; 7, "Colonel Ingersoll: Lessons of His Life." To be preceded and concluded with appropriate music.
EDINBURGH (Moulders' Arms, 105 High-street): 7, An Edinburgh Gentleman, "Did the Bodily Death of Colonel Ingersoll Terminate his Existence?"
GLASGOW (110 Brunswick-street): 12, Discussion Class—business meeting; 6.30, Social Meeting in Commemoration of Ingersoll and Bradlaugh.
GREAT YARMOUTH FREETHINKERS' ASSOCIATION (Freethinkers' Hall, bottom of Broad-row): 7, Violin Selections by Professors Elliott and Ray; 7.15, J. W. de Caux, "Fatalism and Free Will."
LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, Mr. Bergmann, B.Sc.
MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): Closed for Summer Season.
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (1 Grainger-street): 3, Monthly Meeting.
PORTH BRANCH (Tonyandy, 100 Primrose-street): W. Heaford—2, "Religion and Common Sense"; 5, "The Christian and the Secular Ideal." September 4, at 7, "Is Christianity True?" September 6, at 7, at Porth (near the Foundry), "The Moral and Intellectual Difficulties of the Bible."
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, M. D. O'Brien, "Do we Know More than Experience Tells Us?"
SOUTH SHIELDS (Royal Assembly Hall, Mile End-road): 7, C. Cohen, "In His Steps; or, What would Jesus Do?"

Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 17 Osborne-road, High-road, Leyton.—September 3, South Shields. 10, m., a., e., Victoria Park. 17 and 24, Manchester. October 1, Glasgow.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, London, S.E.—September 3, m., Clerkenwell. 10, m., Edmonton. 17, m., Battersea; e., Stratford. 24, m., Mile End; e., Stratford.

R. P. EDWARDS, 9 Caxton-road, Shepherd's Bush.—September 3, m., Hyde Park; a., Hampstead; e., Hammersmith.

E. PACK, 10 Henstridge-place, Ordnance-road, St. John's Wood.—September 3, a., Peckham Rye. 10, m., Hyde Park; a., Hampstead Heath; e., Kilburn. 17, m., Mile End. 24, Battersea Park.

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