

Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

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What Saved Ladysmith?

"THANK God, we kept the flag flying," said Sir George White to his troops and the town'speople on the relief of Ladysmith. Those words were printed large all over the contents-sheet of a London evening paper. One of these flashy, catch-halfpenny baits was exhibited at a certain busy North London corner, and we stood for a moment to look at it with a sort of melancholy amusement. Just then two working men passed along, evidently going home from their day's labor, and one of them caught sight of the flaring advertisement. "Just look, Bill," he said to his mate, "just look at that! Thank God, we kept the flag flying! Thank God! There's a — thing to put on a bill!" He said no more, and his mate said nothing. Neither stopped for a single second. The one-sided conversation, to use an Hibernicism, went on as they walked. But there was a tremendous emphasis thrown on that second "God," and there was quite an eloquent expression in that workman's disappearing back. "Thank God," he thought—"after all that long siege, all that stiff fighting, and all those killed and wounded! Rot, Mr. Editor, rot! Stinking rot! Enough to make a decent fellow sick. Pah! A little fresh air, if you please."

Curiously enough, those very words "Thank God" were used by the Queen in commencing both her telegrams, to Sir George White and Sir Redvers Buller, on the relief of Ladysmith. This is perhaps pardonable in the case of a lady so old and so religious. But the same words, we are told, were used by Lord Roberts, who stated in his speech at Kimberley that he had almost despaired of Ladysmith's being relieved at all. According to the *Daily Mail* correspondent at Pietermaritzburg, Lord Roberts telegraphed to General White: "Thank God, the prayers of the nation have been answered." This is putting the matter very pointedly. It is much more than a conventional exclamation. It implies an assertion as well as a thanksgiving. It implies that God saved Ladysmith in answer to British prayers. At least, it implies that God *helped* to save it. In that case it becomes a very nice point in religious casuistry, whether God helped General White or General White helped God—and which would have done best alone. Another nice point is, how far General Buller helped both of them; and a still further nice point is, how far Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener helped "the blooming lot."

Let us have a little common sense on this subject. If the Lord God Almighty intervened at all, why did he not intervene a bit sooner? Had he done so, many lives would have been saved, and much suffering and misery spared. How many Boers have been killed and wounded around Ladysmith is unknown to the outer world, the figures published from Pretoria being too obviously romantic, and Old-Testamenty (so to speak) in character. Still, a good many Transvaalers and Free Staters must have been buried amongst those hills, and a much larger number must have been wounded—some slightly, some badly, and some grievously. General Buller's relieving force, as all the world knows, lost very heavily. Hundreds and hundreds of them perished; several times as many hit by shot or shell, and sent into the hospital. Many of the survivors will be crippled for life. Then there were the besieged forces and residents, including women and children, in Ladysmith itself. For four months they suffered the

nerve-shaking horror of bombardment. Fever and other diseases were let loose upon them. Many were killed or wounded by the enemy, more fell a prey to nature's ravages, and all were brought low by unwholesome surroundings and want of proper food. Read this description by Mr. Harding Davis:—

"The faces of the besieged are yellow, the skin is drawn sharply over the cheek bones, the uniforms hang in wrinkles, the eyes are hectic and staring, but there is so much more pluck in them than fever that one does not dare to sympathise. They carry their sufferings jauntily, but under the mask of habitual British indifference. One has only to offer an officer a cigar, or a biscuit to Tommy, to find a starving man."

Surely, if only for the sake of the women and children, the Lord might have intervened sooner. He gives twice who gives quickly. For that matter, indeed, the Lord might have intervened before the commencement of hostilities. He might have bestirred himself and prevented the war altogether. But that is never the Lord's way. He always lets the devilry begin, and then "chips in" at leisure—on the winning side.

Now we come to another point. There are always two sides to a quarrel, though some people see only one. How is it, then, that the Lord has answered the prayers of the British nation? Why did he not answer the prayers of the Boers? They pray just as hard, perhaps harder, and more sincerely. Did he favor them at first, just to hint that we were slow in supplicating? Did he turn round upon them when we began to flatter his Omnipotence? The poor Boers looked forward to the anniversary of Majuba Hill, not knowing that it would be marked with black letters by the surrender of General Cronje. When the blessed day arrived it was celebrated throughout the two Republics with Thanksgiving Services and prayer. President Kruger, the report says, spoke to a vast congregation in the Dopper Church. "Dark clouds," he confessed, "are still covering the land, but faith in the Almighty and the justice of our cause will carry the Federal forces to a successful issue." Yes, that is what they all say. Those who talk in the name of God are bound to play the game for all it is worth. But they often lose, as is likely to be the case with President Kruger. Our rulers and generals can talk about God nearly as well as he can, and then we have bigger armies and vaster resources. So with God, or in spite of him—it doesn't seem to matter a cent which—we are forging ahead and getting a good deal the best of it. Kimberley is relieved, Ladysmith is relieved, Cronje and his army are prisoners, the Boers are almost cleared out of Natal and Cape Colony, and the war is being carried into their own territory. A change, a change, a palpable change! And all the prayers of all the Boers in South Africa, or of all their friends in Europe and America, will never stop the onward march of Roberts and Kitchener. Because, you see, they are pious Christians on both sides, and God is asleep or on a journey, or doesn't know how to oblige one side without disobliging the other, and so leaves them to fight it out to a finish. And when it is all over he will bless the winners and cry "wicked people!" to the losers. Thus he always did, and thus he will always do. Yet he is called a God of infinite wisdom and goodness, as well as infinite power; and people pray to him, as if he ever heard them; and they worship him, as if he cared any more for the struggles and agonies of men than the Sphinx cares how many travellers are overwhelmed by the desert sands, or how soon the vultures pick the flesh from their bones.

In spite of Lord Roberts's real or alleged telegram, in spite of the Queen's messages, in spite of Sir George White's speech, and in spite of the boasts of the professional praying-machines in this country, it is perfectly clear that the relief of Ladysmith was due to natural causes. We now know that the town could not have held out for more than another week or so. The provisions were nearly exhausted, and the ammunition was running very low. Had the Boers stopped, the town must have surrendered, or the garrison must have made a desperate sortie, in the hope that some of them would break through and reach Buller. But the Boers went (the praying folk say) just in the nick of time. Yes, but *why* did they go? What had prayer to do with it? What nonsense to suppose that God drove or led them away! Buller had been pounding them steadily for ten or twelve days, driving them back inch by inch, and getting nearer and nearer Ladysmith. Nor was that all. Something more important was behind. It was evident all along that the best and surest way to clear the Boers out of Natal was to carry the war into their own territories through the Orange Free State. This was done by Lord Roberts, and the result was what every man of sense foresaw. The surrender of Cronje and the dangerous position of the Free State capital convinced the Boers that the game was up in Natal, and that they were urgently wanted elsewhere. So they retreated, skilfully enough, and Buller was able to reach his destination.

What is the upshot then? Why this. General Buller helped to save Ladysmith by giving the Boers plenty to do, and preventing them from concentrating all their efforts upon the town. Sir George White helped to save it by holding out amidst grave difficulties, and driving the Boers back whenever they assaulted him. Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener helped to save it still more by their successful operations in another direction. Nothing was left for the Lord to do—and he did it.

G. W. FOOTE.

Is Mind an Entity?

THE popular error which exists as to the nature of life and mind has been caused through theologians insisting that both are entities, whereas science shows they are simply qualities of the physical organisation, resulting from a certain combination of the material elements which constitute the human body. Dr. Bain, in his *Mind and Body*, quotes Professor Ferrier as saying: "In vain does the Spiritualist find an argument for the existence of a separate immaterial substance on the alleged incompatibility of the intellectual and physical phenomena to co-inhere in the same substratum..... Who is to dictate to nature what phenomena, or what qualities, inhere in what substances? What effects may result from what causes? Matter is already in the field as an acknowledged entity—this both parties admit. Mind, considered as an independent entity, is not so unmistakably in the field. Therefore, as entities are not to be multiplied without necessity, we are not entitled to postulate a new cause so long as it is possible to account for the phenomena by a cause already in existence; which possibility has never yet been disproved." This ought to show at once the fallacy of regarding mind as an independent existence. Numerous instances exist of matter existing without mind; but where is the evidence of mind existing apart from matter? As Professor Huxley says, "the fact remains that, so far as observation and experiment go, they teach us that the psychical phenomena are dependent on the physical."

No one who has thoroughly studied the subject will deny that light, heat, electricity, and magnetism are forms of force; why, then, should not life and mind come under the same category? To suppose life to be an entity is about as absurd as was the old notion that there was an entity called aqueosity, which controlled the formation of water out of the elements of which it is composed. Oxygen and hydrogen unite in certain proportions and form water—that is, the water is the outcome of the union of these elements. No one would be

so foolish as to inquire where the water was before the union of the oxygen and hydrogen took place, for it should be obvious to the merest tyro that it did not exist. So in certain other combinations an organism is formed, and the result is life. The life did not pre-exist, for it had no existence at all until the organic body produced it, and then it made its appearance simply as a correlated force. Now, my contention is that the production of mind is caused in a similar way. A particular kind of organic matter, termed "nerve" or "brain," gives out mind just as a simpler kind involves life. What really occurs here is a correlation of force—that is, one form of force is converted into another, heat into light, electricity into magnetism, and some one or more of them into life and mind. The origin of mind, therefore, is like the origin of heat or electricity—namely, correlation. The force itself thus correlated was, of course, eternal in some one or more of its forms; but the particular form in which it is manifested is simply the result of correlation. Nothing is called into actual existence but a phenomenon, having no more permanent individual existence than the flash of lightning or the peal of thunder. We kindle a fire, and heat is produced; we light the gas, and the room becomes illuminated; but where were the heat and the light before the combustion upon which they depend was brought about? Surely not in existence in the form in which they are now seen. When the fire goes out the heat ceases, and when the gas is turned off there is no more light. No one thinks of asking what has become of either. Yet people talk of life as being an entity, and they discuss the whereabouts of mind before and after the existence of organic substance upon which the whole thing depends. Of course, no one force can cease to be; energy is as indestructible as matter. But mind, like electricity, is but a form of force, and when it is correlated it ceases in that particular form.

I have never been able to recognise the reasonableness of the Idealist's view upon this subject. According to that, nature, or objective existence, is only a fiction of the mind; all we know, according to idealism, is our states of consciousness, and the perception of them by something that is not consciousness. If we say that we are affected through our senses by an external cause, we are told that there is no such thing known as *external*, or objective existence. It is said that we know only that we are so affected, and this is supposed to constitute human knowledge. If this means anything, it is that we are living in a world of illusions. Some persons, however, have minds so constructed that they are compelled to repudiate all such vague notions, for to them the objective world is a reality, despite the intellectual jugglery of metaphysics, which Professor De Morgan defines as "the science to which ignorance goes to learn its knowledge, and knowledge to learn its ignorance. On which all men agree that it is the key, but no two upon how it is to be put into the lock," (Thomson's *Dictionary of Philosophy*, p. 15). Karl Pearson, in his *Grammar of Science*, writes: "Now one of the idiosyncrasies of metaphysicians lies in this: that each metaphysician has his own system, which, to a large extent, excludes that of his predecessors and colleagues. Hence, we must conclude that metaphysics are either built on air or on quicksands—either they start from no foundation in fact at all, or the superstructure has been raised before a basis has been found in the accurate classification of facts..... The metaphysician is a poet, often a very great one; but, unfortunately, he is not known to be a poet, because he clothes his poetry in the language of apparent reason, and hence it follows that he is liable to be a dangerous member of the community" (pp. 20, 21).

It also appears to me to be an error to regard consciousness and thought as being identical. A sensation of heat and cold implies a change in the nerves, without which change there would be no consciousness of the presence of these external causes of sensation. What we really mean by knowledge is an inference from the consciousness of these repeated sensations. It implies discrimination, the result of comparison, by which all knowledge is obtained. No one probably would regard the movement of a plant towards the light and heat of the sun as evidence of either consciousness or knowledge in the plant. Even in ourselves, the presentation of any new object to our senses frequently revives a

remembered sensation, and there arises an idea which is not the product of sensation or consciousness alone. Of course, it may be said that some ideas are not dependent on realities, which is quite true. Consciousness of dreams is a proof of this. But, still, we learn to discriminate the sound from its echo, and the substance from the shadow. So it is with mind when not disordered by internal causes. There is much truth in the old saying, "You cannot have a healthy mind in an unhealthy body," for the obvious reason that, mind being the name given to the intellectual part of the body, it depends upon the physical organism for its vitality or otherwise.

Instead of wasting time with the absurdities of metaphysics, it is far more satisfactory to consider the development of life and mind in the child. Here we have convincing proof of the reality of the natural theory of life and mind. Everything connected with the conception, birth, and growth of a child is natural, and gives no indication of any interference of the so-called supernatural during the whole process from the moment of conception to the arrival at maturity. If by mind is meant that which results from the combination of sensation and consciousness, then its basis is the paternal parent from whom the child was derived. Touch, taste, sight, hearing, emotion, and imagination, all arise in the course of time, but none of them appear suddenly. If mind were an entity independent of the physical organism, with its brains and nervous system, it would be reasonable to expect that its functions would speedily operate. This not being so, personally I am led to the conclusion that life and mind are developed together, and that they cease together.

CHARLES WATTS.

The Prince of Egoists.

"We cannot look, however imperfectly, upon a great man without gaining something from him."—CARLYLE.

Few writers charm us so much as old Montaigne. Others may be greater, but none can stir our intellect more than that wise trifler, and none can so surely reach our hearts. It is now three hundred years since Montaigne died, yet his memory is as green and our affection for him as tender as if he belonged to our own time. Montaigne is the legitimate ancestor of all essay writing—that most delightful form of literature. He first surprised and shocked his contemporaries, and finally became a popular author.

It was an age of pedantry and stiffness. Writers gave themselves the airs and parades of professors. But this old Gascon gentleman bethought him of writing, without restriction as to subject and manner, his experiences of life. He broke down ceremony in literature, and first vindicated for prose the liberty of unscholastic writing. The result was the immortal Essays, which first astonished and then delighted those who read them.

The writers who preceded Montaigne were, generally speaking, exclusive, bigoted, self-sufficient, and uncommunicative. But Montaigne brought a new note into literature. He laughed pedantry out of the world. His merciless mockery broke down the barriers of the old learning, which confined authorship within such narrow borders. He departed from that pedantic tradition of quotation for the purpose of showing the extent of the author's knowledge. If Montaigne cited a saying of Plutarch or Seneca, it was to show how it tallied with what everybody was still thinking or saying. If he quoted Lucretius, it was not to show his intimate knowledge of a great classic, but because it touched with exquisite simplicity and truth some deep chord of feeling.

He did not disdain to turn from the grave themes of philosophy to homelier and lighter subjects. He was not above writing chapters on thumbs, coaches, or even smells. He cast a large glance on the world. His egoism, of which so much has been said, was in reality part of his protest against the pedantry of his time.

Montaigne was one of the discoverers of the genius and powers of the French language. He broke completely with scholastic tradition. A buoyant and playful

humor runs through his writing, ever and anon broken by a sob of pain. What laughter, and in the pity what an accent of tears, as of rain in the wind!

Few men's lives have been so accurately reflected in their works as that of this immortal essayist. Living as he did through the terrible years of religious wars, we learn less of battles which decided the fate of kingdoms than of his personal likes and dislikes. In the civil wars of the League, which converted every house into a fort, Montaigne kept his house open and without defence. Catholics and Protestants freely came and went, the courage and honor of this brave old Free-thinker being universally esteemed. Montaigne rarely rises to enthusiasm in his Essays, and only where his affections are concerned. There is something touching in his veneration for his father, a man of so different a stamp. Equally strong is the impression he leaves of his friendship with Etienne de la Boetie. It was a comradeship too early closed by death, but it remained to the old Gascon one of his most cherished and one of his noblest possessions.

His love for Socrates was very great. In writing of him his cheek flushes, and his otherwise placid style rises to passion.

Montaigne's glory is that he thought human life, with its actions and its passions, a very important and interesting thing. He did not, like the writers of his time, care only for the parade of knowledge. It was man he cared for, and the whole of manhood; its good and evil, its greatness and grotesqueness, its laughter and its tears. To add, by any tribute of ours, to the fame, or to enhance the glory, of this myriad-minded man is, of course, impossible. He is one of the immortals of our race who live beyond praise. The language which he enriched is a perpetual memorial of him. He has passed beyond criticisms. He survives with Shakespeare and Cervantes in the memory and affection of men.

MIMNERMUS.

["Mimnermus" desires to call attention to a slight error in his recent article, "The Rose-Garden of Persia" (March 4). Throughout the article Jalaluddin is wrongly spelt "Jalaluddin."]

The Expansion of Man.

EXPANSION is in the air. On all sides one hears of the greatness of the British nation, its tremendous growth of recent years, the necessity for further expansion, and the impetus given to civilisation generally by the growth of our Empire. Unfortunately, expansion is more often used as an equivalent of mere increase in size, rather than as an equivalent of internal coherence, co-ordination, and the growth of ideas and feelings that make for a better human nature, with the result that our expanding Empire has a dangerous tendency to assume the form of a huge animal with its nerve-centres badly co-ordinated, and with a likelihood of one day collapsing as a result of increase in size and definiteness of structure not keeping pace one with the other.

But, despite this danger, there is a sense in which the term "expansion" conveys a profound and far-reaching lesson in human evolution. From time to time we have been favored with a number of definitions of man, all more or less instructive, and all indicating aspects of human nature. The theologian has defined him as a "religious animal," the anthropologist as a "tool-using animal"; Carlyle emphasised him as a clothes-wearing animal; and, on the whole, if we were to add one more phrase, I imagine a description of man as an "expanding animal" would be as accurate as any, and far more comprehensive than most.

For the characteristic feature of human history has been that of expansion. Not expansion in the sense of the species covering a continuously enlarging area of the earth's surface merely, but in the sense that man's development has been all along dependent upon his feelings and ideas embracing an ever-widening circle of objects. Like one of the lower animals throwing out feelers through the surrounding medium in search of sustenance, human nature is continually groping in search of wider knowledge and greater comfort. There may often be an absence of conscious direction in such movements, but, from a comprehensive standpoint,

humanity may well be likened to a huge organism struggling blindly after something it knows not quite what, and yet something it is bound to secure as the condition of its own existence.

During the whole course of human history we can observe this process of expansion at work. From the family to the tribe, from the tribe to the nation, from the nation to the entire human race, we can see this principle of expansion expressing itself. Nor does the process end even with the whole of the human family. Our own age, unequalled, probably, for its humanitarian feelings and catholic aspirations, has witnessed an extension of human sympathies beyond the world of man to the larger and more helpless animal world. The doctrine of evolution has shown us our kinship with the lower animals, comparative psychology has demonstrated a community of feelings and instincts, and we are enabled to go beyond the formula of Terrence, "I am a man, and nothing that concerns a man is indifferent to me," and say: "I am a man, and the whole world of sentient being has properly a claim upon my consideration."

In ethics, in science, in religion, in sociology, this principle of expansion holds good. Everywhere we find adaptation to surroundings the essential condition of existence, and everywhere this adaptation expresses itself in an expansion of feelings and ideas that serve to adapt man to an environment that is ever enlarging its boundaries. Nature does not work so much by the eradication or destruction of old feelings as by the careful cultivation of those already existing. There is an enlightening of the intelligence controlling the old instincts, a truer perception of human interests, a breaking down of certain barriers of caste or sect or nation or race that stand in the way of a higher development, and that is about all.

Let us begin with the case of morality. If we except the feeling of revenge, which is excepted, not because it is dead, but because it is no longer openly justified—if we except this feeling, I do not know that we can say that any of our feelings have undergone an eradication, or that any new ones have come into existence, as a condition of our moral development. And even in the case of the feeling of revenge, which is primarily a feeling of resentment, there has been a transference of it from the human agent, who is more and more regarded as the inevitable product of his conditions, to the conditions themselves. But as regards the rest of the moral feelings the case is clear. We are urged to action by exactly the same impulses that spurred on our predecessors. Just as they, for example, sought the furthering of their own interests, so do we seek the advancement of ours. The difference is that the modern method of achieving the same result varies from the older one. The further back in human history we go, the more we find that concern for self involves cruelty to, or at best carelessness of, the interests of others. The more the race advances, the closer becomes the identity of self-interest with the interests of others.

But the animating principle remains the same. All that has happened is that a wider knowledge, a more profound experience, has driven home the lesson that the relation of a man to his fellows is something more than that of a single stone in the midst of a pile of other stones. We have discovered, perhaps without knowing quite how, that man's real and permanent interests are least served when he is shut up to himself and pays little or no concern to the welfare of others. Whether we will or not, we are bound up for good and evil with the society to which we belong. We share alike in its good and bad fortune; and it is the perception of this fact which is responsible for the wider sweep given to moral injunctions and commands. We no longer limit the application of the Decalogue to the tribe, or even to the nation. Their application is universal, because the real interests of all people are identical. But we have enlarged and enlightened the primitive feelings, not eradicated them. We seek our individual interests as heartily as men ever did, only we have a clearer perception of what those interests are, and of the best method of securing them. It has simply been a question of expansion. Man has grown, and with his growth he has come, or is coming, to regard every other man as a co-worker with him against humanity's inevitable enemies, rather than as a natural foe to be crushed at all costs.

It is the same, again, in religion. Much of the current talk about the purification of religion is due to the expansion of religious feelings over a larger area than hitherto. Originally the domain of a deity is limited by the tribe that worships him, and his work at most is keeping a little bit of the world in order. Gradually the many gods are reduced to a few, and the few to one, of whom the many are regarded as aspects. The concern of God spreads in the same way from the few to the many, until it embraces the whole of humanity, the planet on which it dwells, and, finally, all the planetary and stellar bodies. But, meanwhile, what the religious sense gains in extent it loses in definiteness. There can be no question that the religious conceptions of primitive man are far more positive than those of civilised humanity. The conception is so thoroughly in harmony with the then prevailing conditions of life that religious doubts—doubts, that is, concerning the existence of the gods—seldom, if ever, arise.

But this is only one side of the process. Looked at closely, this "enlargement of God," to use a French writer's phrase, is really due to an expansion of human knowledge and human feeling. It is obedience to man's own development that the gods are reduced in number and de-humanised in quality. As human knowledge grows divine interference with the natural recedes. Man "purifies" his conception of deity; and this purification is only another name for enlarging it until it touches human affairs at no discernible point, and humanising it so that it does not conflict with the moral or intellectual requirements of human nature.

And, finally, in sociology there is precisely the same lesson. History shows us the earlier conditions of mankind as that of a number of warring tribes, each bent upon the destruction of the other, and combining only for purposes of increased slaughter. Gradually what takes place in the sphere of morals takes place here. The advantage of combination, not merely for defensive purposes, but also for internal development, is impressed upon people both by the crude force of the survival of the fittest and by conscious reflection. The same necessity that brings about a combination of individuals serves to produce a combination amongst groups of individuals. The welfare of each is best secured through the welfare of all. The self is buried to rise again in a purer form and with greater strength. Finally we reach the stage when men recognise that nations are no more the inevitable and necessary enemies of each other than are individuals. What is true of the real interests of individuals is also true of the real interests of nations—they are complementary, not conflicting. It is not to the interests of the people of this country that the people of Russia, France, Germany should be ignorant, poor, or discontented. That makes them bad customers and worse neighbors. It is to our interest that all people should be enlightened, prosperous, civilised; and it is to their interest that we should be in the same condition.

We are reaching this last stage, even though it be but slowly. The interest of educated men and women is no longer confined to the land that gave them birth, or to the people who speak their language. They are beginning to realise that all such distinctions are merely superficial, and must give place to considerations of a more durable character.

In brief, from the earliest period of human history all development has been dependent upon an identification of self with a larger and larger area of human affairs. In our day, thanks to the establishment of better methods of communication, the consolidation of human interests has gone on apace. We can no longer say with truth that it is no concern of ours that this or that country should fail to bear its share in the burden of developing civilisation. The concern lies with all of us, the interest lies with all of us, and the noblest type of human being is that which finds its sympathies co-extensive with the range of human suffering, and its activities directed with a due regard to the welfare of the entire human race.

C. COHEN.

"Mary had a little lamb;
A pretty little beast;
She took it to a church bazaar,
And had it nicely fleeced."

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Two Crucified Saviors.

THERE are not, in all the range of history, two characters that are such exact counterparts as the crucified Hindoo Savior, Chrishna Jeseus, and Jesus Christ the crucified Savior of Christendom.

Chrishna Jeseus descended upon the plains of India through human birth, to suffer and die for the sins of the human race.

The New Testament of the Hindoos, the Ramazand, says that "Chrishna represented a full measure of the Godhead bodily."

The evidences are incontrovertible that such a legend was current amongst the Hindoos, or such a personage really existed, as the evidences of this sin-atonng God are memorialised with history, sculpture, and monuments. The legend or reality of his birth, life, works, and crucifixion are deep chiselled in the granite rocks which have defied time, or the ruthless hand of the iconoclast, who claims that there never was but one crucified Savior, and that all others are impostors.

Godfrey Higgins, who is a Christian writer, makes the damaging admission that Christians have tried in vain to destroy the sculptures and monuments of India, in order to keep from the Christian world the history of the crucifixion of the sin-atonng Chrishna Jeseus.

Much of our knowledge on this subject has come to us through Christian missionaries and priests.

The British Parliament in 1850 sent a deputation to India for the purpose of examining sacred books, monuments, and sculptures. Voluminous documents containing the result of this investigation were placed by this deputation of linguists in the hands of the Christian Bishop of Calcutta, with instructions to forward them to England.

On their arrival in London the documents were found to be so mutilated with erasures and otherwise that the truths they contained were destroyed.

The entire testimony bearing on the crucifixion of Chrishna had been eliminated bodily. The fair-minded searcher for truth can draw her or his own conclusion from this circumstance.

The history of Chrishna Jeseus is contained in the Baghavat Geta or Mahabarat Bible, which, the Hindoos claim, is 6,000 years old.

Chrishna's disciples believed him to be God, and millions worshipped him up to the time of Alexander the Great, 330 B.C. The Hindoo Bible, with Chrishna as its central figure, in its teachings is almost an exact counterpart of the Christian Bible, except that it has no angry, ferocious, repentant, or obscene deity, no sanguinary observances, or tortures by divine decree.

To parallel the lives of the Hindoo and Christian Saviors, we find that:

The coming of each was foretold by prophets. Bali Rama foretold the coming of Chrishna, and John the Baptist the coming of Christ.

Both these Saviors, it is said, were immaculately conceived, and born of spotless virgins who had never known man.

The author of both of these conceptions was the Holy Ghost.

The name of Chrishna's virgin mother was Yasoda.

The name of Christ's mother was the Virgin Mary.

Chrishna and Christ each had an adopted father, whose trade was that of a carpenter. Both were of Royal descent.

The birthday of both is fixed on December 25, and wise men were conducted by stars to the birthplace of the holy infants.

Chrishna was threatened in infancy by the ruling tyrant Causa.

Christ was threatened by Herod.

The parents of Chrishna had to flee with him to Gokul for safety.

Christ's parents fled with him to Egypt.

All male children under two years of age were slain by the orders of both Causa and Herod.

Angels and shepherds attended the birth of both infants.

Both were presented with myrrh and frankincense.

Both Chrishna and Christ led lives of humility and moral practical usefulness.

Both healed the sick, restored sight to the blind, cast out devils, and raised the dead.

Chrishna and Christ were both crucified between two thieves, descended into hell, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. The Hindoo Bible says "Chrishna ascended into heaven in the sight of all men."

The virgin mothers of Chrishna and Christ both had other children begotten by men.

Both these Saviors were without sin, and their mission was to destroy the devil and his works, and both are represented as "the seed of the woman bruising the serpent's head."

Both the Hindoo and Christian New Testaments record that at the crucifixion of these Saviors there were darkness and convulsions of nature.

Chrishna and Christ both teach the same doctrines of rewards and punishments and repentance for sin.

The same views of heaven and hell are presented in both Testaments, except that the Hindoo New Testament uses oil for fuel to burn the wicked in everlasting fire, and the Christian Testament uses brimstone.

A day of judgment and general resurrection is taught by both.

Each professes to have the only true and living faith. Both glory in "the religion of the cross."

Both teach that "to die is gain."

Both teach that faith alone can save, and that faith can remove mountains.

Both Saviors enjoin their followers to pray without ceasing.

Both Hindoo and Christian Scriptures command that we should love our enemies, pray for them, and feed them.

Both Chrishna and Christ were reformers.

Chrishna was a Vishnuite, and he condemned the ancient faith of those who preceded him, and Vishnuism finally centred in Buddhism.

Christ condemned the religion of the Jews, and his religion centred in Christianity.

Christianity and Buddhism were both divided into various conflicting sects, each one condemning all the others.

(MRS.) JOSEPHINE K. HENRY,

—Blue Grass Blade.

(To be concluded.)

Jesus Christ Sheldon's Experiment.

REV. C. M. SHELDON, of "What would Jesus Do?" fame, is to run the Topeka *Capital* on Christian lines for a week, to see what will come of it. Whereupon the editor of the *Atchison Globe* moraliseth thusly:—

"I cannot understand why Mr. Sheldon does not attempt to reform the church and clergy rather than the newspapers, which are doing well.

"A useless, vicious newspaper is abandoned by the people, and soon loses power to do harm, since a newspaper stands or falls on its merits. People do not support newspapers as a matter of duty, but when a useless, vicious clergyman is driven out of one community, is he not accepted in another? In towns where I have lived I have known many clergymen who were either wicked, or who stirred up so much discord as to be worse than useless. I never knew one of these to be retired. They have received 'calls' from other congregations. Why does not Mr. Sheldon attempt to reform this habit instead of widely advertising himself by editing a secular paper six days? Is Mr. Sheldon better than the editors of the town in which he lives? I will state an incident which has been widely printed, but which has not been denied, and the reader may judge for himself.

"Five years ago Mr. Sheldon purchased four bottles of beer, under false pretences, of an old Topeka druggist. At that time the Kansas Prohibitory Law was held by many persons to be important. It is now a dead letter. Mr. Sheldon placed the beer on his pulpit the following Sunday and preached a sensational sermon, and caused the arrest of the druggist, who was the father of four motherless little girls. The druggist was sent to jail. His pardon was secured through the efforts of Frank P. MacLennan, editor of the *Topeka Journal*, and J. K. Hudson, editor of the *Topeka Capital*. Both the editors named were strong advocates of the Prohibitory Law. Topeka people say that the old druggist, whose name was Holler, was an excellent citizen, and during the Civil War he was a soldier in the Union army.

"The only excuse for a daily newspaper is the news. If the Rev. Mr. Sheldon does not print the news, his paper will be no more useful to Christianity than the excellent religious weeklies and monthlies already in existence. Indeed, it will

not be so useful, for he cannot compete with the trained editors of the religious press.

"Both the Topeka papers are excellent. They are sold now at four dollars a year. When Mr. Sheldon takes hold of the *Capital* the price will be increased more than three-fold.

"The Rev. Mr. Sheldon's announcement that he will conduct the Topeka *Capital* a week as Jesus would conduct it is not only an advertising scheme, but it is blasphemous, as I heard a clergyman say the other day. If Christ were infinite, it is blasphemy for a finite man to say what he would do under the circumstances.

"The *Capital* will do well during the week that the Rev. Mr. Sheldon edits it, for the word Christian attracts a certain class of people, as the flame attracts the moth; but the general result of the experiment will be a straw fire—something which burns very hot for a brief time, leaving an objectionable smut and smell."

Acid Drops.

THE Boer politicians must have stuffed the Boer masses with extraordinary notions of the inhumanity of the British; or is it that the Bible-reading Boers expected the victorious British to act like the Jews in the Old Testament? Mrs. Cronje herself, we are told, feared that her husband would be shot! Such a fate was commonly expected by the Boer rank and file who surrendered to Lord Roberts. They actually begged to have their lives spared after the surrender. The very Boer women in the laager thought they would be killed. One grey-haired old Boer lady, who looked about eighty, implored a newspaper correspondent to intercede for her and get her life spared. Poor old soul! She must have thought Tommy Atkins was a perfect glutton at murder to want *her* life. Let us hope that one result of this war will be a better understanding between the Boer and the Britisher. From this point of view it is well that Lord Roberts is in command of our forces. He is a magnificent fighting man, but he is something more; he is a perfect gentleman, with endless tact and humanity. This will sound strange to the narrower sort of humanitarians, who do not quite understand the complexity of human nature.

Cronje is a very brave and capable soldier, but he is just as "slim" as Joubert. By way of gaining time for possible reinforcements, he asked for twenty-four hours to bury his dead. Lord Kitchener refused him a minute, and Cronje complained of his "inhumanity." But the number of the dead he had to bury, according to his own official report to Pretoria, was only fourteen, and the time he asked for amounted to nearly two hours apiece! This is what comes of studying the Old Testament too thoroughly. There is something very shaky about Bible arithmetic. We suppose even Lord Wolseley would admit that.

Cronje's refusal of Lord Roberts' offer to let the women and children leave the bombarded Boer laager was described by some of his own men as an act of positive barbarity. So it was, judged by ordinary standards. But here again the religious factor comes in. May not Cronje have thought that the presence of the women and children was a strong appeal to God? We should hardly like to think he thought it an appeal to the feelings of the enemy.

Mr. Winston Spencer Churchill, who escaped from Pretoria, and is sending vivid letters again to the *Morning Post* from Natal, tells how the chaplain who conducted a Sunday service for 5,000 of Buller's army missed a great opportunity. It was a grand occasion; the men had all been face to face with Death, and were going to face him again in a few hours, but the man of God could find nothing better to preach about than "the siege and surrender of Jericho." "The soldiers," Mr. Churchill says, "froze into apathy, and after a while the perfunctory service reached its welcome conclusion." An officer remarked that the medical profession was represented at the front by some of its greatest exponents, while "wounded souls" were left to the care of "a village practitioner."

The siege of Jericho, by the way, was a poor affair in comparison with the siege of Ladysmith. It was completed in a few days. Priests blew trumpets—their *own*, you bet—and the walls fell flat; as flat as the fools who believe it. Then the army of Joshua entered and arranged for the surrender. The terms were the destruction of every man, woman, and child in the city, with the exception of a lady named Rahab, who kept a place of accommodation, where she had entertained some Jewish spies a little previously. Everybody perished but that old bawd.

War is more scientific nowadays. It is also more humane. That is because the men of God take a back place in the operations.

One of our readers sends us the following extract from a letter written to him by a young sergeant out "at the front" who is a Christian: "The native boys—all are called boys irrespective of age—with us are employed by government to drive mule and oxen wagons, for which they get three shillings per day and nearly the same rations as we do. They are very useful and willing, and can be depended upon to do anything they are asked. They are respectful, and address all whites as 'sir.' If told not to do a thing, there is no necessity to speak to them again; and, unless they have been brought up in a missionary school, are strictly honest. It is rather curious that the natives who have been to these schools are a pest; they are arrogant, intemperate, dishonest, unreliable, deceitful, vicious, and useless."

This Christian sergeant's surprise at the *virtues* of native Christians in South Africa is very natural. He does not know that right and wrong, and virtue and vice, are a very simple business all over the world, until a religion like Christianity steps in and confuses and perverts them with theology, metaphysics, casuistry, and priestcraft.

For once Dr. Parker admits that he has been nonplussed. He told his City Temple congregation the other Sunday that on the previous night he received a letter from "one of the most respected journalists in this country," which description probably refers to W. T. Stead, begging him to cry out against "this most unrighteous war." That, said Dr. Parker, seemed to be very simple. But when he came down to the vestry that morning he found a letter from Cape Colony, begging him to support the most righteous war that ever was fought. He asked his congregation to help him in the dilemma.

This position of being appealed to by the contestants on both sides is not unique with Dr. Parker. That great man shares it with the Almighty. Let him think of this, and take comfort from the fact.

One of the Queen's chocolate boxes saved the life of a soldier in South Africa. A Boer bullet lodged in it, and is there still. The box, containing the chocolate and the bulk, is to be forwarded to the Widow of Windsor. Query.—Has anybody got a Bible or a New Testament that saved a soldier's life in the same way? We have often heard of such a case, but never of the "sacred volume" being on exhibit.

Professor Mivart speaks out finally and decisively. He leaves the Roman Catholic Church, and there is little likelihood of his returning to it. "An impassable gulf," he says, "yawns between science and Roman Catholic teaching," and it is "absolutely impossible for any reasonably well-educated man to join the Roman Catholic Church if he understands what her teaching about Scripture really is, and what the doctrines are which he must accept." Dr. Mivart scornfully adds that "An assembly of men, such as the Pope and the Bishops of the Vatican Council, solemnly declaring that dogma shall undergo no change or modification in meaning 'as long as the world shall last,' seems to me comparable with an assembly of ants solemnly declaring that the stability of their nest shall know no end."

Bishop Brownlow, of Bristol—who represents Cardinal Vaughan, who represents the Pope, who represents God, who represents Nothing—has issued a Lenten Pastoral, in which he boasts that the Catholic Church is the only faithful upholder of the authority of the Scriptures. Has not this Church got rid of Professor Mivart as a bold bad heretic? And does it not censure "light and dangerous talk" about Eve's talking serpent, Balaam's ass, Jonah's whale, and other inspired narratives? Yea, verily. Wherefore all good Christians should embark on board the said Catholic Church and sail (or sink) with it. Amen.

Poor Bishops! We note an announcement that "Glynartha a large modern house standing in beautiful grounds on the Anglesey bank of the Menai Straits, is to be the future official residence of the Bishops of Bangor, having just been purchased by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners." The right reverend father's old "palace" was "uncomfortable" and in a "bad situation," but it has been "advantageously sold." Does this mean that the purchaser has been sold too?

Really, one would like to know what it is possible to do on Sundays without giving offence to Sabbatarians who are so mightily interested in the doings of other folks, having, apparently, made their own calling and election sure. Sunday visits to museums and picture-galleries are by them tabooed. Sunday fishing, boating, and cycling are heinous offences. One may not go to a barber's for a shave, or into a public house or hotel for a drink, or into a newsagent's for a newspaper; the sale of tobacco and confectionery is a violation of the Lord's Day, and so are Sunday lectures in the ratepayers' Board schools. Sunday concerts at the Crystal Palace and elsewhere are objected to, and now the Lord's Day Observance

Society are protesting against military bands playing music in the parks and public places on Sundays.

The Committee of that silly, fussy Society have, we learn from the pious *Rock*, repeatedly addressed the War Office and other military authorities on "the impropriety" of permitting the bands of some of the most distinguished regiments in Her Majesty's service to take part in the "so-called religious services" of the Sunday League and in other Sunday entertainments.

They observe, we further learn from the same ultra-sanctimonious authority, "with the strongest regret and dissatisfaction," that on the recent Day of Intercession, and during the actual hours when the special intercession services were being used in the Churches, regimental bandmen were engaged in providing Sunday entertainments.

Well, all this may be very distressing to the "unco guid," but at the worst it can hardly be such a source of annoyance as the hideous uproar of Salvation Army brass bands and the clanging of gospel-shop bells. Folks who have the misfortune to live in the neighborhood of Ritualistic churches know, to their deep disgust, that on the very morning on which they wish to indulge in a little extra sound sleep the hateful clatter of the bells calling to early Communion, or some other nonsense, begins with daylight—in winter sometimes almost before, and is continued at intervals throughout the day.

On the other hand, the admirable music of regimental bands in public parks is a distinct Sunday pleasure to thousands. The War Office—which is not in the best-odor just now—has shown sound sense in treating the appeals of these miserable Sabbatarian busybodies with silent contempt. The special object in life of these Puritanical bigots seems to be to make religion as hateful as possible to folks of common sense. Such marplots might well be restrained by others of the Christian creed, for theology does not commend itself to modern acceptance so readily that it can afford to be saddled with this most objectionable Sabbatarian interference and humbug.

"Even Bishops do not care to look ridiculous," says the *Rock*. A second glance was necessary to be quite sure that sarcasm of this kind could appear in the extremely proper and usually very dull pages of that ultra-Protestant organ. But when we found that it was employed in connection with York Convocation, and that vital and absorbing question of the use of incense, all was made clear. Still, this irony of the *Rock* is open to the comment—perhaps is intended to convey it—that, whether Bishops care to look ridiculous or not, they are marvellously successful in so appearing.

The *Church Gazette* is now reduced in price to one penny. And, judging by last week's issue, there has been a decline in the quantity and quality of the contents. It proposes now to aim at being popular rather than academic—which is a mistake that seems likely to land it in being neither. At present, it seems to be on a par with the *Christian Budget*—and there is no possible condemnation severer than that.

Believers in the watchful care of Providence will derive strong support for their theory from a piteous story which comes from the Isle of Man. It appears that the greatest sufferers from the recent bank failure on Mona's Isle are the poorer clergy. During the past six years there has been a fall in the value of their tithe, and now, to make matters worse, the clergy had just received the greater part of their tithe, and had paid it into the bank when the stoppage came. Whatever funds may be ultimately restored, it is certain that for some time to come these clergy will be in a distressed condition. Numerous church accounts also are in a similar position, and those of the laity upon whose assistance the clergy have been accustomed to rely are also affected by the failure.

This is not a particularly bright outlook for the Manx men of God. Surely the Lord might have been relied upon to better protect the interests of his servants and his Church. Perhaps there may be a "judgment" hidden in the calamity. There usually is in such cases when the pious begin to look for one.

A story of recent tyranny on the part of Spanish priests is published, and may be true or otherwise, for it is not accompanied by sufficient details to ensure verification. A Spanish colporteur says that an old woman whom he met with in the course of his travels told him that when she lived in a village in the mountains it was her duty to keep a light burning in the church for the souls in Purgatory. For that purpose she used to supply the priest with a gallon of oil each month. After her husband's death she failed to bring the oil for three months. When she went to confess in the fourth month the priest imposed as a penance climbing on her knees up a hill more than 600 feet high. When she still failed to supply the oil he declared that she was not a Christian, and forced her

to leave the village. The woman left, but made up her mind not to see a priest again. The story is likely enough.

Mark Twain, being written to by a lady applicant for assistance in connection with a church bazaar, is stated, in a recently-published paragraph, to have addressed the following humorous letter to his publishers: "Please charge £2 against me, and for the same sell me several of my books, making a discount to me that will make the £2 go as far as possible, for the cause is a pious one. Don't send the books to me. Send them to Mrs. —, Birmingham. I don't know the lady, but she has applied to me on behalf of her husband's church. Going to hold a church fair there, and wants some of my books to sell to the godly. I have assured her that the same shall be done, I being rather down on the godly, though I did not tell her that."

A pretty squabble has taken place over the burial of a youth who recently died while kneeling by his bedside in prayer. The *Christian World*, in ventilating the scandal, says that, though the boy was a scholar in the Primitive Methodist Sunday-school, he was unbaptised, and, in consequence, the aged rector of the parish refused him Christian burial. He would not admit the funeral to the church, but was willing to take charge of the burial in the churchyard, as, he said, there was a service provided for such persons. Distressed at the idea of their son being treated as an outcast, the parents delayed the funeral a couple of days to obtain the services of a Nonconformist minister. Even then this old clergyman's scruple was not satisfied, for he must needs prohibit the Rechabite Lodge, of which the youth was a member, from placing an artificial wreath on the grave, referring the mourners to the bishop of the diocese.

India is at present in the throes of a religious excitement. According to Hindoo theologians, Vishnu, the second person in the Hindoo trinity, is shortly to have his ninth and last incarnation in this world. He will come on a white horse and with a sword to purify the earth, and to inaugurate a new era of virtue and happiness. At his coming every caste woman in India will lie unconscious for an hour and a-half; then those who are worthy will rise to join the men of the faithful in rejuvenating the earth.

Professor Mitchell, of the Theological School of Boston, has been accused of heresy. In a letter of explanation, with which the Boston faculty and trustees were satisfied, Professor Mitchell says: "I am accused of teaching that a belief in the Deity of Christ is not necessary for salvation. This is correct, and in so teaching I have the support of the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, and I am proud to be his follower. I shall have to plead guilty to the charge of believing that some of the stories in the first chapters of Genesis are more or less legendary. I am said to have belittled the significance of the death of Christ. I prefer to speak of salvation through Christ, rather than lay the whole stress on his death; and in this I follow Wesley."

Says the *British Weekly*: It may be hoped that Christian teachers are beginning to understand that there is no hope for a volatilised Christianity. The plan of throwing dogma after dogma to the wolves and accepting Christ as a merely ethical teacher is futility itself. If he is nothing more than an ethical teacher, he is not fit to be an ethical teacher.

Another house of God damaged by fire—this time the old church at Clapham Common in which the "Clapham sect" formerly worshipped.

In an obituary of the Rev. Dr. W. H. Green, professor of Old Testament literature in the seminary at Princeton, the *British Weekly* says that in the long series of publications in which he attempted to repel the higher critics he displayed knowledge, competency, and care. That statement is hardly to be reconciled with the fact that in his latest volume he maintained the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and the Isaianic authorship of all the prophecies of Isaiah. Dr. Green belonged to an old school that is rapidly dying out, and happily, too, for the credit of the intelligence of the age.

The *Birmingham Gazette* very effectively disposes of an interesting story which has been going the round of the press in reference to the retiring chaplain of Dartmoor Prison. It was said that, whilst he was in residence, an ex-convict broke into his house at midnight, and attacked him with a large knife, cutting and wounding him. Fortunately, the Rev. Clifford Rickards succeeded in disabling the villain, and journalistic enterprise has since evolved the pathetic record that "the effect was fatal, and the chaplain proceeded to minister in his spiritual capacity to the dying man." Alas for this pretty picture! The ministrations were not spiritual, but spirituous. Mr. Rickards ran to get some whisky for the ruffian whose arm was broken, and who was soon removed by the police beyond the sphere of the Dartmoor chaplain's spiritual ministrations. As the burglar had by far the worst of the encounter, it can be readily credited that the active chaplain did not press the case at the Assizes against

his combatant, but practically begged him off with a month's imprisonment.

According to *M. A. P.*—which is just as infallible as the Bible, but not more so—Mr. Cecil Rhodes has four years more to live. He has been told so by a palmist, and presumably that settles it. Anyhow, his sister believes it. She also believes the palmist's prophecy that her brother, during those four years, will achieve more than in all his previous career—which begins to look possible. All this is, of course, very edifying; so much so that our Spiritualist contemporary, the *Two Worlds*, rejoices over the perfecting of "communications from the spirit world." "The flash-signals," it says, "are becoming clearer every day."

What is a palmist? A person who palms a fee for guessing. The same definition fits a clergyman.

Phyllis Leslie Tempest, a lady said to be well connected, has been fined £10 at Luton for practising palmistry. She "foretold" events, for the usual consideration, and seems to have done good business. Perhaps it was right to punish her, but why be so hard upon a lone woman when so many thousands of able-bodied priests follow the same sort of profession?

It is the duty of Church people to see that education should be based on religion. So says Canon Ivens, of Sowerby Bridge, to the Churchmen of Huddersfield. What he means, of course, is that the trade of the clergy should be properly protected, and that full opportunity should be afforded them of training up other men's children to become paying Church members.

If you put your ear to a shell, you find, as Landor said, that "It remembers its august abodes, And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there." So, some people say, if you put your ear to the universe you hear murmurs from behind the veil—that is, the next life. But all this talk is based upon a physical fallacy. What you hear in the shell is not the murmur of the ocean, but the reverberation of your own pulsations. And, in the same way, what man hears from "behind the veil" is but the echo of his own voice. All religion, and all spiritualisms, are based upon the blunder of taking the echo for an original utterance.

"A Warning to Atheists" is the heading of a paragraph in the *Northern Whig*. Where the warning comes in we fail to see. The case is related of Mr. Marshall O. Waggoner, of Toledo, Ohio, a wealthy Atheist, seventy years of age, with long grey hair and a longer grey beard reaching half-way down to his waist. After being an Atheist for forty-two years, this interesting gentleman has at length found God, or found Jesus—it doesn't appear which, but perhaps it is both; and, being converted, he has burnt his library, which is "said to be one of the finest in the country." Well now, we have heard of this gentleman before. Our Freethought contemporary, the *New York Truthseeker*, describes him as a bit of a crank, and says that his magnificent library was probably worth a few dollars. Waggoner seems to be a man who loves to be talked about, and as long as his name is in the papers he is happy.

Secular Thought (Toronto) prints the following from a New York correspondent about this Waggoner case: "When it was announced last August that Mr. Waggoner had turned Christian, and had determined to burn the 'magnificent Freethought library' that he possessed, it was found that the Freethinkers as a body had never heard his name, only a few in his immediate neighborhood knowing anything of him. An old Chicago Liberal says that he knew Waggoner some twenty years ago, and that he found him 'a blow-hard who thought himself a greater man than Ingersoll.'" Waggoner, it was said, was going to burn his big library in public; but, after six months' delay, he decided that the church furnace was large enough to hold the books. This may be an index to the size of the library, but a correspondent of the *New York Truthseeker* says that he examined the library a short time ago, and found but a small collection in it, and a Chicago publisher offered to duplicate the whole lot for \$3.25. It is unlikely that he possessed, or has destroyed, any valuable or rare books or manuscripts, for not long ago he wrote to a person who wished to obtain a copy of *Godly Women of the Bible*, saying that he had a 'friend' who was willing to sell one. Waggoner may have burnt this book, but his readiness to sell it clearly shows that, if he possessed any rare and valuable books and manuscripts, he was hardly the man to throw away cash by burning them. He appears to have been actuated simply by a desire for notoriety, for in this age it is ridiculous to think that 'books' can be disposed of by burning a few copies. Waggoner has only made himself ridiculous by pretending to imitate the savage deeds of the religious fanatics of former days."

Public libraries should all be open on Sunday. So says the *New York Journal*, which suggests Monday as a good

day for closing them. This is not a bad idea. It would suit the working classes very well, and give all the library attendants the day off which they are entitled to. The *Journal* says: "Let the city refuse to pay a single cent towards the support of any library that is closed when the people want to use it." Hear, hear!

The present year 1900, although the number is divisible by four, is not a leap year. This is provided in the Gregorian Calendar. Pope Gregory promulgated this Calendar, which had become necessary, as an error of ten days had resulted from the Julian Calendar. Naturally the Protestants resisted this Popish innovation, and even when it was adopted, as in England, the clergy assisted the people in rioting. The mob protested that they were being robbed of ten days, and demanded to have them restored. A funny idea, was it not? But people will do funny things under the influence of religion.

A dramatic effect went wrong in the course of a sermon at a Wesleyan church in Portsmouth on Sunday night. The preacher, who is a man of forceful eloquence, was dwelling on the subject of love, and, as a means of driving home his arguments and illustrations, he asked: "What, then, is the greatest power on earth?" He made an impressive pause, as if awaiting a reply. Just at that moment a street urchin popped his head inside the building, ejaculated "Kruger!" and fled. First a titter went round among the congregation, then it developed into a general laugh, and in that laugh the preacher himself was constrained to join.—*Westminster Gazette*.

Apropos of the late Mr. Traill's *New Lucian*, a *Daily News* leader writer (query, Mr. Andrew Lang?) remarks of the original *Lucian*, the marvellous wit and satirist, that there are "few more exquisite specimens of humor in literature" than his "Dialogue of the Gods." "Jupiter," this leader writer says, "expresses his fear that, if the human race loses its faith in them, they may cease to exist. This is pushing anthropomorphism to its logical conclusion." Of course it is. Either the Gods made Man, or Man made the Gods. Choose which alternative you please, but be logical anyhow.

Mr. Bernard Reynolds, London Diocesan Inspector, notes with regret that "there is not in many cases the same determination to keep up Church schools that there was some years ago." He does not assign the reason of this change. Probably it is due to the fact that the Board schools are winning in the race of education. Mr. Reynolds touches upon the subject of religious instruction. "To teach," he says, "that the world was made in six periods of twenty-four hours, or that the sun stood still, is to endanger the child's faith and to lay a foundation that will in after years be rudely disturbed." No doubt. But does not Mr. Reynolds see that one miracle is just as incredible as another, and that the size of it makes no sort of difference? The stopping of the sun is no more unscientific than the birth from a virgin mother or the resurrection of the dead. The objection to Joshua is equally valid against Jesus.

Mr. H. S. Nicholls writes to the press stating that he is being prosecuted for publishing "a scholarly and admirable translation (at three guineas) of Gautier's masterpiece, *Mdlle. De Maupin*." Mr. Swinburne has written a sonnet on this Romance, calling it "the golden book of beauty." Its literary style is one of exquisite loveliness, but all that must evaporate in a translation, however "scholarly." And what remains? Some beautiful descriptions and a deal of "decadent" morality. The original is a work of art; the translation is probably something different. After all, those who could read Gautier without harm have sufficient brains and knowledge to read him in French, and others had better turn their attention elsewhere. Still, the police might be much more usefully occupied than in worrying a publisher who goes to work quite openly and honestly, even if he does not share their professional views of propriety. They might try their hands on Piccadilly by night, instead of prosecuting (or persecuting) Mr. Nicholls.

Mr. Matthew Arnold was Professor of Poetry at Oxford, but he dropped the title, explaining in his playful way that he felt the designation of Professor was borne so much more worthily by gentlemen like Professor Pepper. We suppose the "Professor" Wells who has got into trouble at Birmingham was not styled so by any University. Nevertheless, he is entitled to an English citizen's right of free speech, provided he does not overstep the bounds of common decency. He is in the habit of addressing meetings of men only on sexual and hygienic topics, and the Birmingham police authorities are prosecuting him for obscenity. Some of the utterances they allege against him are not exactly defensible, but he denies their allegations, and the whole affair is considerably mixed. We understand that the Council of the Malthusian League has been invited to consider the matter fully, and we await the result of its investigation.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, March 11, The Athenæum Hall, London, W.; 7.30, "Mother Church and the Professor: Dr. Mivart Turns his Back on Rome."

To Correspondents.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—March 11, Huddersfield. April 1, Birmingham. 8, Camberwell.—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.

S. HOLMAN.—Pleased to hear of the good meetings at Pontypridd. There is a good field for Freethought propaganda in South Wales.

W. WADDELL.—Pleased to hear that Mr. Watts had such a good audience at Motherwell, and was in such good form; also that you enrolled some new members during his visit.

W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for your ever-welcome cuttings.

BRUNO (Tyldesley).—(1) We cannot understand why your *Freethinker*, which you used to be able to get on Thursday evening, is now obtainable at your newsagent's only on Saturday afternoon. We publish as early as ever—in fact, a little earlier to meet the wishes of the wholesale trade. We go to press on Wednesday, and more than half our issue is ready for distribution by or before six o'clock. Unfortunately, there have been many complaints lately, and we fear the matter will not be rectified until the Freethought Publishing Company enters its own premises. (2) What the late Bishop of Peterborough, Dr. Magee, said (in the *Fortnightly Review*) was that any Society which acted upon the maxims of the Sermon on the Mount would go to ruin in a week. Extracts from the Bishop's article are given in Mr. Foote's pamphlet, *The Impossible Creed*, price twopence.

T. WILMOT.—April 22 is booked for Camberwell. Mr. Foote does not care to send his subjects on far in advance, as he likes being quite up to date in his lectures, and audiences appear to like it too. It is the application, rather than the mere enunciation, of Freethought principles that is most interesting.

W. H. SPIVEY.—Thanks. It was an oversight. Mr. Foote is in good physical trim at present.

J. G. BARTRAM.—See paragraphs. Sorry to hear of the member's misfortunes.

X. (Batley).—The Livingstone passage was taken, as far as we recollect now, from one of the Reviews. No doubt it occurs in one of his books of Travels, but we haven't time at the moment to hunt up the reference.

JAMES NEATE.—We wish the gallant Bethnal Green Branch every success.

T. ROBERTSON.—Delighted to have your good news from Glasgow, where you and your colleagues maintain one of the strongholds of the cause.

C. N. (Calcutta).—Thanks for your letter. We wish we deserved half your handsome compliments. What we can honestly say is that we have always done our best, often in the midst of great difficulties, and that we have never spared time, thought, and labor in the interest of Freethought. Whatever else may be said in our disfavor, no one can say that we ever scamped a bit of work, whether on the platform, in the press, or in organization. Fortunately, some of our efforts are beginning to produce tangible and gratifying results. The new year opens more favorably for the party than any other year we remember, except when the party was roused and stimulated by fierce persecution.

W. A. THOMSON.—John Calvin called Servetus the greatest knave that Spain had ever produced, simply because he did not see eye to eye with the Genevan Pope on the doctrine of the Trinity. History records how basely and malignantly he hunted Servetus to a most cruel death at the stake. It was Ingersoll who said that John Calvin and John Knox fitted each other like the upper and lower jaws of a wild beast.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Sydney Bulletin—Isle of Man Times—Public Opinion—People's Newspaper—Liberator—Truthseeker (New York)—Western Daily Press—Huddersfield Examiner—Free Society—Blue Grass Blade—Torch of Reason—Ethical World—Crescent—Truthseeker (Bradford)—Northern Whig—Secular Thought.

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

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

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

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.

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

MR. FOOTE had a capital audience at the Athenæum Hall on Sunday evening. Mr. Thurlow occupied the chair. Mr. Foote lectures there again this evening (March 11), taking for his subject "Mother Church and the Professor: Dr. Mivart Turns His Back on Rome." Mr. Foote will deal with the whole matter from the start to the finish, and Freethinkers should try to induce any Catholics they know to hear this lecture.

The Athenæum Hall will be closed, as far as Freethought meetings are concerned, on Sunday evening, March 18. The proprietor of the hall desired to have the use of it for a private purpose on that date. Mr. Cohen will lecture there on March 25. Frequenters of the Athenæum Hall will please note.

Mr. S. Hartmann, the National Secular Society's treasurer, is also a director on two Boards—that of the Freethought Publishing Company, Limited, and that of the Secular Society, Limited. Mr. Hartmann has a very deep interest in all these Associations, and thinks that the last one has laid a sure basis for the future financial success of our movement. We learn that he has just made his will, and has mentioned the Secular Society, Limited, for a legacy. Should he live long enough, this legacy will be increased. Of course, we are far from being anxious to realise it. We hope Mr. Hartmann will be an active worker in our movement for many years to come. The matter is only referred to "to encourage others"—as Voltaire said. Freethinkers who can afford to leave something towards promoting the cause at their deaths should remember the Secular Society, Limited, in their wills.

Mr. Foote has assisted in arranging the conditions of several bequests to the Secular Society, Limited, amounting in the aggregate to some thousands of pounds. He has recently been in communication with the solicitor of a friendly testator in the North of England, and he will be happy to hear from any other quarter on the same subject.

Mr. Charles Watts lectured twice last Sunday in Dundee. The evening meeting was very successful; the gathering, we are informed, was the largest the Dundee friends have had during the season. An interesting debate followed the lecture on "The Decay of Christianity," which the audience enjoyed immensely. Mr. Watts wishes us to record his unqualified admiration of the activity of the Glasgow branch of the N. S. S., and also of the earnest labors of the Secularists in Motherwell. His four days' propagandist work in Glasgow and its districts was exceedingly gratifying.

To-day, Sunday, March 11, Mr. Watts lectures afternoon and evening in Huddersfield, and he will be pleased to meet friends from Bradford, Leeds, and surrounding districts, to arrange for a special lecturing tour in the immediate neighborhood.

The N. S. S. Summer Excursion has been fixed by the Executive to take place on the first Sunday in July. Branch secretaries, and all others concerned, will please note the date. We hope to have this time the biggest party on record. The place has not yet been determined, but it is sure to be a good seaside resort, with ample accommodation for visitors. A special train will be engaged as usual.

Arrangements will be made in due course, and adequately announced, for the annual Children's Excursion. This function had to be dropped last year, for various reasons, which it is not worth while going into now.

We are informed that Mr. Cohen's visit to Pontypridd was very successful. He had good and appreciative audiences on Sunday, and our correspondent says he is "just adapted to this district." Before leaving the town Mr. Cohen debated with a local Spiritualist the question of a future life. We have not heard "the result," but the Secular disputant is sure to have acquitted himself most ably.

Members of the Newcastle Branch are requested to note that a special meeting will be held to-day (Sunday, March 11) at 7 p.m. at 1 Grainger-street, where a room has been specially arranged for meetings and discussions, in order to enable members to foregather and fraternise. The initiation of the discussion class, which will be held weekly, takes place to-day, and a good attendance is requested.

The committee of the Newcastle Branch are arranging for a prize drawing of two volumes of the *Freethinker* for 1893-4,

newly and neatly bound and profusely illustrated. The proceeds are for the benefit of one who has been a good member and subscriber for over twenty years, and who with his widowed mother have both suffered from a severe illness for over a year. This being a most deserving case, the committee hope that the tickets, which are 1s. each, will be cheerfully bought, and thus help a poor brother in distress who was always willing to help others.

The Bethnal Green Branch sends us its annual balance-sheet. A millionaire would think nothing of it, but it is an eloquent document nevertheless. So much good work done on such very slender resources! Forty meetings were held in Victoria Park, and a large quantity of literature was distributed. The Branch starts work again on the first Sunday in April. Arrangements have been made for afternoon and evening meetings on the old spot. Unfortunately, there are only two or three real workers to share the burden with Mr. Neate. Some fresh workers are badly wanted, if only to give the present ones an occasional Sunday off. We hope they will be promptly forthcoming.

Mr. Joseph Symes, of the *Melbourne Liberator*, was fifty-nine years old on January 29—Thomas Paine's birthday. He does not regret the time he has given to Freethought propaganda. "No," he says, "I am not sorry that I have spent so much of my time in battling with holy monsters. There is no work more necessary. Every theological dogma is a lie; and the only use those lies have is to fetter mankind and make them bondslaves to the priests and clergy. A lifelong study and practical acquaintance with the subject assure me that all clericals are cheats; though some of them are too ignorant to be aware of it. I detest them as the worst enemies of our race. I am proud to think that I had force of character and self-respect enough to break from them, and that I have spent over twenty-three years of my life in incessant attacks upon their trade."

According to the *New York Truthseeker*, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Watts contemplate visiting America again next autumn as Freethought lecturers. Our contemporary adds: "The war with the Boers is making things pretty dull in England, as our little difference with Spain made them here, and from which in the Freethought work there has been little recovery."

The Glasgow Branch is sustaining its work admirably, in spite of the "war fever." Mr. Watts had better meetings recently than during his previous visit, and the same is true of Mr. Cohen. The propagandist lectures in the district are also well attended. Mr. Watts broke new ground at Pollokshaws, and had a capital meeting. An innovation in the Branch's work was the Children's Entertainment held on March 3. The hall was crowded, and the youngsters were entertained and fed—and they *can* eat—for a couple of hours. It was a glorious affair, what with ventriloquism, conjuring, comic limelight views, performing dogs, music, a Punch-and-Judy show, and boisterous hilarity. The elders present enjoyed the function immensely, and mean to provide the children with another treat next year.

Mr. Foote is compelled to postpone the long address he has to make to the Freethought Party on practical business matters. He has no doubt of being able to make it next week. Certain negotiations, which must form an element of his address, are not yet concluded. When our readers are in possession of what Mr. Foote has to say they will understand the reason of the delay.

No Such Luck.

A new military prison chaplain was recently appointed in a certain town in Scotland, and, entering one of the cells on his first round of inspection, he, with much pomposity, thus addressed the prisoner who occupied it:—"Well, sir, do you know who I am?" "No, nor I dinna care," was the nonchalant reply. "Well, I'm your new chaplain." "Oh, ye are; well, I hae heard o' ye before." "And what did you hear?" returned the chaplain, his curiosity getting the better of his dignity. "Well, I heard that the last twa kirks ye were in ye preached them baith empty, but I'll be hanged if ye find it such an easy matter to do the same wi' this one."—*Argonaut*.

Of the Christ himself, if a Christ there were, we know little or nothing. The account of his life which has come down to us in the Gospels is so devoid of authority, and so entirely built up of miraculous fragments, derived from elsewhere, that we may be well excused for gravely doubting whether he is not rather to be numbered with St. George and St. Catherine, with Perseus and Arthur, among the wholly mythical and imaginary figures of legend and religion.—*Grant Allen*.

The Deistic Movement.

BY THE LATE J. M. WHEELER.

AFTER the Restoration adherence to the Church was considered a test of loyalty. The bishops and clergy were restored to their former privileges, with the important exception that the right of self-taxation through Convocation was rescinded (1664). Archbishop Sheldon, as Canon Molesworth admits, "employed all the powers that belonged to his high place to force on the expulsion of Nonconforming ministers" (p. 50). Not only were conventicles suppressed, but a rigid censorship was held over the press.

The Licensing Act of 1662 ordered that all works concerning divinity, physic, philosophy, or science should be licensed by the Archbishop of Canterbury or Bishop of London, with a saving clause in favor of the Universities for their own publications. No book was to be imported without episcopal license. There were to be no more than twenty master-printers; and these were to be licensed by the archbishop or bishop, and each was to be bound in a recognisance of £300. We may be sure these censors were little disposed to relax their severity in favor of any sceptical speculations. Hobbes, being a favorite with Charles II., his *Leviathan*, first published during the Commonwealth, proved strong enough to break the clerical net, but after the plague and great fire of London the bigots seized the occasion to give expression to the uneasy conscience of the people in a bill against atheism and profaneness. On October 17, 1666, the *Journal of the Commons* orders a Committee to "receive information touching such books as tend to atheism, blasphemy, and profaneness, or against the essence and attributes of God, and, in particular, the book published in the name of one White and the book of Mr. Hobbes called the *Leviathan*, and to report the matter, with their opinion, to the House." (Mr. White, be it said, was a philosophic Roman Catholic priest, who held the natural mortality of souls.) What steps were taken does not appear. Hobbes, then nearly eighty years old, was alarmed. He set himself to inquire into the actual state of the law, but his tract on Heresy, which was the result, was not published until after his death. The *Leviathan* then became scarce. Pepys writes (Sept. 31, 1668): "To my booksellers for Hobbes' *Leviathan*, which is now mightily called for, and what was heretofore sold for eight shillings, I now give twenty-four shillings for it second-hand, and is sold for thirty shillings, it being a book the bishops will not let be printed again."

During the civil wars and afterwards many of the aristocracy resided for a season on the Continent, and there imbibed something of the scepticism which was the natural result of the French religious wars. Despite the supremacy of the Church, the poets and dramatists of the period freely show their contempt for the clergy and their craft.

A sign of the growing spirit of scepticism was the publication (1661) of Joseph Glanvill's treatise on *The Vanity of Dogmatizing*, a second edition of which (1665) received the more appropriate name of *Scep sis Scientiarum*, doubt and free investigation being considered the safe guides to knowledge. Notwithstanding his subsequent defence of witchcraft on the ground of evidence, Glanvill was one of the most thoughtful writers of his day, and was one of the first and most zealous members of the Royal Society. He defended the use of reason in religion, which he made to consist mainly in conduct. He also advocated the theory of the pre-existence and transmigration of souls, as a defence of divine justice.

In 1663 the Royal Society was instituted with the object of increasing knowledge by direct experiment, and, as Buckle has remarked, the charter granted to that famous institution declares that its object is the extension of natural knowledge as opposed to that which is supernatural (vol. ii., p. 371). That author observes: "Speaking generally, there is no doubt that in the reign of Charles II. the antagonism between physical science and the theological spirit was such as to induce nearly the whole of the clergy to array themselves against the science, and seek to bring it into discredit" (p. 372). South, when orator at the

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University of Oxford; Gunning, Bishop of Ely, and Barlowe, Bishop of Lincoln, were prominent in the attack. Science, set forth by such men as Sir Isaac Newton, slowly spread, and the belief in astrology, witchcraft, and modern miracles, which but a little before presented little difficulty, gradually began to vanish. In 1660 the majority of educated men still believed in witches; in 1688 the majority disbelieved. The geological speculations of Dr. Thomas Burnet already showed a tendency to disregard, if not discredit, Scripture, and thoughtful men could not but contrast the progress of science founded upon observation with the logomachies of sky-politicians and divines.

During this period the Quakers, as the most heterodox of the sects, suffered greatly. In 1668, when Penn published his *Sandy Foundation Shaken*, in which he impugned the doctrines of the Trinity and imputed righteousness, he was committed to the Tower of London. Being in bad odor, Penn, on his release, got into a fresh scrape for preaching in the open air. The jury refusing to convict, Edward Howell, the recorder, declared "it will never be well with us till something like the Spanish Inquisition be in England" (*Somers' Tracts*, vol. xii., p. 185). In truth, the doctrines of toleration were but slowly making their way.

Milton died November 8, 1674, leaving in the hands of his friend Cyriac Skinner a manuscript of his thoughts on Christian Doctrine, which, although not printed until 1825, may fitly be considered here. It would seem that the MS., with others, had been sent to Elzevir, of Amsterdam, who refused to print.

Milton founds his whole belief on the independent reading of Scripture, without which he believed men would have been in a state of complete Agnosticism. Scripture, he admits, has come down to us with corruptions, falsifications, and mutilations, and by this very uncertain guardianship we learn "that the spirit which is given to us is a more certain guide than Scripture." In regard to Jesus, Milton's doctrine is Arian. The dogma of the Trinity he calls "the commonly-received drama of the personalities in the Godhead." The Father alone is God. Matter is an efflux of God himself. This view, as Professor Masson observes, places Milton in the company of the Pantheists.

"There is no evidence, indeed, of any approach on his part to such thorough and systematised Pantheism as that of his junior contemporary, Spinoza; but the inference from his language is that his mode of imagining Nature had come to be that of a modified or arrested Pantheism, stopping short of Spinoza's mainly by a strong prior reservation of that freedom of will for all rational intelligences which Spinoza denied."

In regard to the soul, Milton held with Overton that the whole man died, and that not till the resurrection will he be revived. These opinions show a distinct advance of the poet in a Freethought direction, not only over those of the general run of his contemporaries, but over his own, as expressed in his earlier works, and they warrant us in saying that, although an independent Christian, he cannot be claimed as belonging to any distinct section of the Christian Church.

The advance of scepticism was signalled in 1677 by the abolition of the statute *de heretico comburendo*, a provision, however, preserving the jurisdiction of the archbishops, bishops, and ecclesiastical courts in cases of Atheism, blasphemy, heresy, or schism, with powers not only of excommunication, but of other penalties, not extending to death.

It is evident, from an anonymous *Letter to a Deist*, published in 1677, that objections to Scripture were being circulated in manuscript. Two years later the Licensing Act was allowed to expire. Charles Blount, who laid the stepping-stones from the rational theologians of the seventeenth century to the Deists of the succeeding era, at once issued his plea on behalf of the liberty of the press, and availed himself of the breathing space to publish his *Anima Mundi*, which he followed up with *Great is Diana* and his notes to the *Life of Apollonius*. When James II. came to the throne (1685), the censorship was renewed for seven years.

Of course, this growing liberty was deplored by the clergy. In the *Demonstration of the Law of Nature and of the Truth of the Christian Religion* (1681), by Samuel

Parker, the Puritan converted by a bishopric who was flagellated by Andrew Marvell, he complains:—

"Atheism and Irreligion are at length become as common as Vice and Debauchery.....In short, this is the first Age of the World that I know of in which Atheism ever appeared anywhere in publick open and barefaced.....Plebeians and Mechanicks have philosophised themselves to Principles of Impiety, and read their Lectures of Atheism in the Streets and the Highways. And they are able to demonstrate out of the *Leviathan* that there is no God nor Providence, but that all things come to pass by an eternal Chain of natural Causes.....That the Christian Religion has no sufficient proof of its pretence to Divine Authority, and that no wise Man is under any obligation to embrace it, but only as it happens to be commanded by the Laws of the Realm."

Parker himself makes a pretence at reason, but relies on such barefaced forgeries as the testimonies of Josephus and Phlegon, the Acts of Pilate and the epistles between Jesus and King Agbarus, which did duty even later with Addison, notwithstanding the introduction of the Boyle Lectures and the rise of a school of evidential writers, who based supernaturalism upon history and demonstrated an infinite deity beside the universe.

Summing up the seventeenth century, and giving the keynote to the following era, appeared the philosopher Locke, who, while adhering to a rationalised Christianity, was looked up to by all the unbelievers of the eighteenth century, and whose influence on Toland, Collins, and Shaftesbury was direct and undoubted. In dispelling the doctrine of innate ideas, Locke swept away the stronghold of mystery and logomachy in which theologians love to hide themselves, and did much to forward that psychology of observed facts which, in the hands of Hartley, Hume, Priestley, Mill, and Bain, has gone hand-in-hand with a scientific rather than a theological interpretation of nature. In seeking to make Christianity reasonable, Locke made it subordinate, and showed himself in strong opposition to Christian tradition, which looks rather to faith and authority than to carnal reason. In advocating toleration, Locke equally set himself against the great body of Christian tradition.

The boasted Toleration Act of 1693 only exempted some of the dissenting bodies from subscribing to certain of the Thirty-nine Articles. There for a long time it ended. The Test Act remained unrepealed, and a new Act against blasphemy, which still disgraces the statute-book, was passed in 1698. By this Act—which there is good reason for believing Bishop Burnet had a considerable share in drawing up—to deny any one of the persons in the Trinity to be God, or that the Christian religion is true, or to deny the Old or New Testament to be of divine authority, is a crime punishable with imprisonment for three years. This "ferocious" statute, as it has been described by Lord Coleridge and Justice Stephen, was in part directed against the Unitarians, who, under the patronage of Mr. Thomas Firmin, a wealthy merchant, had put forth many tracts. In 1693 William Freeke was sentenced to pay a fine of five hundred pounds, to find security for good behavior during three years, and to make a public recantation, for having published *A Brief but Clear Confutation of the Trinity*. In 1695 another Unitarian, John Smith, recanted under threat of prosecution. In 1697 the Dissenters, with Dr. Bates at their head, requested King William, in an address presented to him, to shut the press against the Unitarians. Unitarianism, however, spread, and early in the eighteenth century both Whiston and Clarke followed Locke in his Arianism. The former was deprived of his professorship at Cambridge, and expelled the University. Convocation attempted further proceedings against him, but they were abandoned. Whiston, however, seems to have feared a worse fate, since, in his *Memoirs*, he speaks of learning the prayer of Polycarp, "if it should be my lot to die a martyr."

(To be continued.)

I differ with Moore in thinking Christianity useful to the world; no man of sense can think it true.—*Shelley*.

Atheism.

OCCASIONALLY, still, one hears a growl against Atheism, and also an expression of doubt as to whether any real Atheist exists. In the old times, when Atheists were necessarily few, as the general intelligence of mankind was quite incapable of producing them, the godly never doubted the existence of Atheists. Now, when Atheists abound in all intelligent grades of society, and the godly find that they have not a single solid argument to urge against them, they pretend to doubt if any *real* Atheist exists! This sort of disgusting sham is not likely to help Godism, we are pleased to know. Atheists abound—real Atheists—who no more believe in any God than in the man in the moon, and who deny *in toto* the existence of any and all metaphysical gods yet defined or described, most especially the Christian God. It was Chalmers, we think, who advanced the insane statement that a man would not be warranted in saying there was no God until he had explored every foot of space. If Chalmers had meant some minute thing called God, that might have been true enough; but as he was arguing for an infinite God, all that one needs to do is to point to something which is *not* God, to upset that dogma. If "God" means some small thing lost in the universal ocean of space, with no certain or particular marks about him by which he may be identified, no sane man would go in search of him. But the Christians have defined their God, and they have so distributed him that he is in one place as much as in any other, and all his almightiness is located as much in a coal-cellar as in the world at large. And yet those men "of God" are so shifty and so shameless that they can change their God from an infinity to an atom, an atom to an infinity, at a moment's notice; and by this most disreputable shuffle they impose upon their dupes.

Of course, it does not matter a rap for any honest or practical purpose whether there be a God or not. Common, universal experience proves that he is no good at all, if existing—nay, more, that if he is existing, and knows what is going on in this world, he must be the worst of all possible beings, for the worst of all possible crimes are perpetrated in his name, and by fellows who have persuaded thousands of fools that they are his agents and representatives. No honest God or Devil could permit the priests to misrepresent him so for half an hour; but they go on in their wickedness for many thousands of years; and while the rascals have the impudence to call upon honest men to repent, they themselves, the very worst of all possible criminals, show no sign of amendment or reform, but plunge deeper and deeper into crime as the years roll on.

Dr. Isaac Watts, the well-known twaddly-waddly hymn writer, was probably a bit of a Freethinker, after all, and may have died a Unitarian—that is, two-thirds an Atheist. He was certainly sceptical as to the power of Christianity to make people comfortable or confident in death. Speaking of the prospect of Heaven, "just over the river," he says:—

But timorous mortals start and shrink
To cross this narrow sea;
And linger, shivering on the brink,
And fear to launch away.
O could we make our doubts remove
Those gloomy thoughts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love
With unobscured eyes!
Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Should fright us from the shore.

There we see the doubter, the despairer. He would be all right if he only felt sure; but he feels all wrong, because he knows nothing to trust to, no guide to conduct him, no raft, craft, or buoy to bear him safely over the river of death.

—*Liberator*.

JOSEPH SYMES.

The scene was New York, and the date February 10. A little girl named Mary O'Brien, eight years of age, was on her way to church with a Bible in her hands. She was taking it to the priest to have it blessed. But she did not reach the holy father. She was run over by a waggon and killed. This is clearly a case of special providence.

Jesus.

ANOTHER saying of Jesus is, if a man smite you on one cheek turn to him the other also. Is there one of you that can do that? If you should do it, the whole world would call you a coward. If you should allow a member of any club in this city to slap you on the cheek and calmly turn the other, you would be expelled from the club. It is not enough that an individual should develop. The race must develop. Last Sunday I read you the Bible story of a woman who committed an act which in that day was punishable by death. Jesus said to her, "Go and sin no more." That is one of the most beautiful stories ever written by the pen of mortal man. And that is the particular story the critics say Jesus never said at all. That is as if a judge now, with tender sympathy in his voice, should say to a red-handed murderer, because that is the only offence in this state punishable by death, "Go and sin no more." We have not reached that point yet, but we are getting there. We are beginning to deal with criminals on the theory of "Go and sin no more." We have not yet learned how to let criminals go.

If Jesus has done anything to the world, he has kept it back a little. For example, he says in the beatitudes, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." When he said that, he said what is not true. You start out meekly and let everybody step on you, and see whether you will inherit the earth or not. You may inherit honor, but you will not inherit anything else. Some people have been meeking it all through life. Meek wives are scrubbing floors and washing dishes and working for domineering husbands, and at last they go into meek graves. So far as Jesus had any influence at all, he sent a long procession of round-shouldered people down the ages trying to be meek.

He also said "Blessed are the poor." The man that ever said "Blessed are the poor" said a wrong thing. There are many blessed people who are poor. To teach the doctrine as Jesus taught it is not true. Think of Dives and Lazarus. The poor man went to heaven because poor, and the rich man went to hell because rich. That idea ought not to be taught to this world. The rich Christians have clubbed the poor into subjection. The whole world has been chloroformed by this anæsthetic of poverty, but it is not true. It may be true you cannot get out of your poverty, but if you cannot get out of it you had better have as good a time in it as you can. To say that you can be in poverty all that you could be if not in poverty is an idea you should get out of your mind, in spite of what Jesus said. In so far as Jesus has dominated the world with those two ideas of meekness and poverty, he has kept the world back. The poor are getting ready to throw that idea off.

But people say, "Ah! Christ was the founder of this Christian civilisation in which we live." I was talking with a Christian minister the other day on this subject, and he said: "You cannot deny civilisation runs along hand in hand with Christianity. Wherever you find Christianity you find modern civilisation. Wherever you do not find Christianity you do not find modern civilisation." Well, that is true enough. Modern Christianity and civilisation do run along together. Wherever a merchant sends a barrel of rum to the heathen, the Church sends a missionary. The rum, the opium, and the missionary all go together. Wherever there goes an army with guns and bursting shells, the missionary goes with the army. Whether this is Christian civilisation or not, it is not built on the teachings of Jesus. It may be a Christian civilisation, but it is not a Jesus of Nazareth civilisation by any means. Development of art, of literature, of science and invention, characterises our civilisation to-day. I defy you to find where Jesus says a word about any of those things. To have a piece of statuary was a sin, because it looked like an idol. Jesus never wrote, only when he wrote on the ground, and nobody knows whether he wrote anything then. There is not a word in Jesus's teachings to promote art, science, or invention. Do you mean to say the Vanderbilts, the Rochefellers, and the Morgans, the money trust of to-day, are built on the teachings of Jesus? Do you mean to say this elaborate system of court houses throughout the city, where battles are fought out because men cannot settle their disputes themselves, are those founded on the teachings of Jesus? Did his teachings build the hospitals and insane asylums? Try to show a Christian all of the glories of heathen civilisation, and he will say there is not a hospital or insane asylum in heathendom. Jesus did say, "Blessed are the poor," but he did not advocate the building of poorhouses. He did not advise the building of hospitals. He told his disciples to go out and cure the sick. He said: "I have given you the power. You have the faith and power of the Holy Ghost, and prayer to do it." He told his people to find the demoniacs and cast the devils out. He did not tell his people to build anything, because he said before that generation was dead the world would come to an end. I believe that Jesus of Nazareth thought before fifty years were over the world would come to an end, and his own kingdom would be set up, and no insane asylums or hospitals would be needed.

Do not tell me that Paul is accountable for the freedom that we enjoy to-day. Paul said, Obey the king; Jesus is

coming back any day to set up his kingdom. Obey the king. Slaves, be obedient to your masters. And to the women he said, Be silent in the churches; if you want to know anything go and ask your husband; he is your head, as Christ is the head of the Church; do not have an independent thought; do not braid your hair; do not put on any jewelry, and dress yourselves only in the most plain and simple manner. Do you mean to tell me progress has developed from the teachings of that man? Civilisation is not built up on the teachings of Christ or his apostles, because they were looking to the end of the word, and not the continuing of the world. There is no getting away from that. The world has developed contrary to the teachings of Jesus, so how did Jesus make the world what it is to-day?

Did you ever see anybody living any differently now than he would have lived had Jesus not been born? A man said to me the other day: "If I did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, life would not be worth living for me." I said to him: "My dear fellow, no man was ever more deceived than you are. You are talking about the hopes of heaven and the resurrection of the dead, and I do not know of a man in New York who cares more for roast beef, fine furniture, and a bank account than you do." I do not like to see a man whose thoughts are centred in heaven so fond of those things. That man is living exactly to-day as if he had no such belief, and he does not know it. We are living exactly as we would had we never heard of Jesus Christ. And every member of the Christian Church is governing his or her life by ordinary human motives, and Jesus has absolutely nothing to do with it.

You say there are people whose lives have been changed by the teachings of Jesus. Apparently that is so. You say there are men in the Roman Catholic Church who have given themselves up to a life of poverty. The Church takes care of them and feeds them, so they have given themselves up to a good thing. Those mystical people would have devoted their attention to some other religion had Jesus never been heard of. That is their tendency and their disposition. I do not want you to want the Church people to change their lives because of anything Jesus has said or done. I claim as far as people think in their own minds, Jesus has had far too much influence in this world. I do not like to see anybody dominate the world as, apparently, Jesus has dominated it. I think people have put themselves under his dominion to their own hurt. I study Jesus of Nazareth, and have a brotherly feeling for him; but I do not believe you or I or anybody else ought to allow him or anybody else to dominate us. Do nothing merely because he told us to do it. First see whether he is right or wrong, then act accordingly. Revere Jesus for what he is, but do not be dominated by him. Live your own life, and if he has anything good for you, take it. Develop yourself, and come along with the world the best you can. Hold up the ideals he presented to you, and work them out in your own way as well and as fast as you can.

—*Truthseeker* (New York).

H. O. PENTECOST.

A Good Samaritan.

In the New York *Mirror* of November 20, 1886, Mary Fiske told the following pretty story:—

"On one of the very wet days of last fall—a dreary, gloomy afternoon in late November—I was waiting in a *coupe* at the door of a friend's house in Thirty-ninth-street, and I fell to watching a poor devil of a man who had sat down in a church door opposite.

"I thought he was the result of some corner gin-mill until he lifted his miserable head and showed a lean, anxious, but perfectly sober face, and I made up my mind that I would not leave the spot without an effort to help an evidently-suffering human being.

"It was approaching dinner-time, and a world of returning citizens hurried past the homeless man. Perhaps he thought the story of his need was written on his haggard face, for he kept it upturned in speechless misery to the callous passers-by.

"The side door of the church opened, and three sleek, well-fed gentlemen, one of them in clerical-cut garments, came forth.

"Thank the Lord!" said I to myself; 'here's help at last. They will never fail to see that poor sinner by the gate.'

"But they raised their umbrellas, they exchanged parting words at his very knees, and went their several ways as indifferent to the water-soaked wretch who leaned against their door-post as they would be to a bottle of cod-liver oil in a drug-shop window.

"Perhaps ten minutes went by; fifty more prosperous gentlemen gave the poor man a careless look, when, piling down the street, I saw a big man with a boy's face and a very small umbrella. Robert Ingersoll, by the big, unlighted torch of liberty!

"I made a mental bet in a second that this man, this

Cheeryble brothers rolled into one, would never bestow indifference on my miserable claimant. And he didn't. On he lumbered, into one puddle and out of another, revolving some pleasant circumstances in his mind, for almost a smile played over his broad, jolly face. He plodded straight by my man, his head bent. Was it possible he didn't see him, or, seeing him, would display the same Christian indifference I had been watching for twenty minutes?

"No, bless him! He halted in the pleasantest puddle on the block; he turned an inquiring look on the lowly wayfarer; he held the small umbrella carefully over his humble brother that the streaming tips might not add a drop to his streaming misery. I watched him question the sinner by the tabernacle, and, as the answers were given from the pitiful face, a sympathetic interest shone on my good Samaritan's. He stretched forth his hand and helped the man to his feet; he studied him for a moment, for the drenched wretch was ill, and finally Mr. Ingersoll, who had been heading eastward, reversed his engines, took the poor man by the arm, and went off west, piloting, sustaining, comforting, and, I have no doubt, providing for a woe it had struck no other man to relieve during all the afternoon.

"I've seen Robert Ingersoll in very swell company. I've seen him in more dress-coats than would run a Delmonico ball—guests and waiters. I've seen him when he thought he looked well enough to have his picture taken. But I could see a nimbus round his trouser-legs, and a halo round his shirt-collar, as he paddled off down the street with the famished wanderer of the church-gate, and I know he was the finest-looking man in the United States that afternoon."

In Hell, of Course.

IF THE ORTHODOX CREEDS ARE TRUE, ABRAHAM LINCOLN IS AMONG THE ETERNALLY LOST.

"SOME LESSONS from the Life of Abraham Lincoln" was the theme of Dr. Minot J. Savage on Sunday, February 11. It was the day before the anniversary of Lincoln's birth. For part of his text Dr. Savage took two quotations from the writings of Lincoln: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in," from the second inaugural address; and "Die when I may, I want it said of me by those who knew me best that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower where I thought a flower would grow," written in a letter to his friend Speed.

"I do not know where any nobler words can be found in any scripture, written in any nation or in any age in the history of all the world, than those which I have given you from Lincoln himself," said Dr. Savage.

"Leaving on one side the central character, the Nazarene, there is no man mentioned in the Bible, from the first verse of Genesis to the last of Revelation, who for one moment can be compared with Lincoln, either for greatness or for goodness."

Of the religious side of Lincoln's character Dr. Savage said:—

"Was Lincoln a religious man? If we are to judge by the standards asserted and reasserted every day in the year by the Vatican, judged from the point of view of the great Roman Catholic Church, Lincoln was not a Christian or a religious man, and to-day he is tasting the cup of torment pressed to the lips of the lost. If the teaching of the Infallible Church is true, Lincoln has never been and never can be saved.

"Judged by the standards of the Anglican Church and the Episcopal Church of this country, Lincoln is lost, and there is no hope for him in any period of the future. Measured by the standard of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, which a thousand ministers tell me every day almost they do not believe, but which is yet being published as their creed and platform all over Europe and America, Lincoln is lost. He never complied with one single condition of the Presbyterian Church for being saved. Judged by the standards of the great Methodist Churches of England and America, Lincoln is lost. Judged by the standards of the Congregational Churches, as affirmed in their great national council at Plymouth Rock a few years ago, Lincoln is lost.

"If it seems to you incredible, unbelievable, too horrible to be true, to think that the great, gentle, magnanimous, loving, tender, helpful man is lost, then do not any longer support the creeds that say so. Be honest and clear-headed enough to say on the street what you think in the privacy of your souls."

Dr. Savage said that Lincoln had written things in his younger days which would now be called infidel creations, and that, if they had not been suppressed by his friends, his political prospects would have been shattered. Incidentally he said: "Let me say in passing there is not an office in the gift of the American people that might not have been in the reach of Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll if he had been dishonest enough to conceal his opinions."

—*Truthseeker* (New York).

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, "Mother Church and Professor Mivart."
CAMBERWELL (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 7.30, F. A. Davies, "The Fallacy of Patriotism."
EAST LONDON BRANCH (Swaby's Coffee House, 103 Mile End-road): 8, A lecture.
EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (78 Libra-road, Old Ford, E.): 7, J. C. Millington, "Rousseau, the Man-hater."
NORTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Leighton Hall, Leighton-crescent, Kentish Town): 7, Harry Snell, "The Religion of the Body."
SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road): 7, Professor Earl Barnes, "The Control of Education by Dreamers."
WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Royal Palace Hotel, High-street, Kensington, W.): 11, Stanton Coit, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."
WESTMINSTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Grosvenor Arms, Page-street): 7.30, A lecture.

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH (Prince of Wales Assembly Rooms): 11 and 7. For particulars see *Daily Mail*, March 10.
CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday School; 7, Chilperic Edwards, "The Book of Daniel."
GLASGOW (110 Brunswick-street): 12, Discussion Class—T. Robertson; 6.30, Mr. Graham, "From Christianity to Secularism."
HIDDERSFIELD (No. 5 of Friendly and Trades' Club, Northumberland-street): Charles Watts—3, "Secular View of Existence"; 6.45, "Colonel Ingersoll as I Knew Him."
HULL (Friendly Societies' Hall, No. 2 Room): 7, L. Billany, "Religion."
LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Humberstone-gate): 6.30, Vocal and Instrumental Concert. Arranged by Mr. Lowe.
LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, L. Bergmann, B.Sc., will lecture. After lecture, meeting of members, when business of importance will be discussed.
MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): F. J. Gould—3, "Voltaire"; 7, "The Religion of the First Christians." Tea at 5.
SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): H. P. Ward—3, "Christianity Before Christ: or, the Pagan Origin of the Christian Religion"; 7, "Ingersoll and his Gospel." Tea at 5.
SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation Schools, Market-place): 7, A Reading.

Lecturer's Engagements.

H. PERCY WARD, 2 Leamington-place, George-street, Balsall Heath, Birmingham.—March 11, Sheffield; 18, Birmingham. April 1, Glasgow; 8, Birmingham; 15, Stockton-on-Tees; 29, Birmingham.

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