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PRICE TWOPENCE.

Chinese Horrors.

A good many of the clergy have used the "Peking Massacre" as a theme for their more or less facile pulpit eloquence. It is so easy (and safe) to be indignant with the Heathen Chinese, for he is a long way off and cannot retaliate, and all the "Powers" in the world are down upon him. Besides, those wretched Celéstials are so irritating. They have a civilisation far older than our own; and although it is inferior in some respects, in others it is superior. Then again, they find their own religion good enough, and even better than ours. Sometimes they say that theirs is a religion for honest men, while ours is a religion for thieves and scoundrels, seeing that it promises heaven to the worst of men provided they "lay hold" on Christ at the last moment of their evil lives, and avail themselves of the virtue of his atoning blood. Now this is calculated to fill the average Christian, and especially the professional Christian, with boiling anger. Hence the present universal shout of execration. There are pro-Boers, because the Boers are Christians; but there are no pro-Boxers, because the Boxers are anti-Christians.

Canon Page Roberts, of St. Peter's, Vere-street, preached there on Sunday for the last time, before taking his holiday, and going into residence at Canterbury. Towards the end of his sermon he referred to the "great anxiety now felt as to the possibility or ghastly certainty of an awful crime having been perpetrated at Peking." Before such a crime, he said, we stood speechless—although he was talking about it. Such a crime, he continued, had few parallels in history. But is this true? Or is it one of those cheap falsehoods which modern Christian preachers are in the habit of palming off on ignorant congregations, who know next to nothing of history except what they have casually picked up in their random reading of magazines and newspapers?

If the European Legations have been murdered, it is an act of shocking savagery, a brutal violation of the immemorial law of nations. The worst barbarians are accustomed to respecting the person of an ambassador. He is a guest, and is therefore sacred. But the Legation buildings at Peking had been for some time heavily armed, and, being defended by European soldiers and sailors, they doubtless appeared to the fanatical Chinese as foreign occupations rather than embassies. Still, the crime (if really perpetrated) is a dreadful one. We do not seek to palliate it. And if all Europeans—women and children, as well as men—have suffered the same fate, perhaps after the most sinister torture, in which the Chinese are said to be adepts; why, in that case, it is easy to understand, and hard to deprecate, the cry which is being raised for vengeance. It is at any rate necessary, at this time of day, that a nation like China should be taught that it cannot be allowed with impunity to murder wholesale and with deliberation the citizens of other countries who have a legal and recognised status within her borders; in other words, that a minimum of decency must be enforced upon all States in their international relations. That is right enough. But when a parson talks about this Peking massacre as having but few parallels in history, one is prompted to hold up one's hands in amazement at the ignorance or audacity of the speaker. Why, there have been many far worse massacres in the history of Christianity itself. The Saint Bartholomew Massacre was infinitely worse. It involved the murder of more than forty

thousand persons, it was planned and carried out by priests and statesmen, it was acclaimed and blessed by the Pope. A hundred other instances of Christian cruelty and bloodshed might be cited. Take the case of the Jews. Up to recent times they have frequently been massacred by the Christians in various parts of Europe. Prior to the reign of Edward I., when they were practically banished from England, not to return until the protectorate of Cromwell, they were often massacred in hundreds; and, on more than one occasion, they slew their wives and children to prevent them from falling into the hands of the cruel and lascivious Nazarenes; just as most of us hope that if the Chinese mob did overpower the Legations, the Europeans had time to slay their women and children with their own hands. When one reads of the sufferings of the Jews in Christian Spain one is filled with an agony of loathing. The vilest smiling butcherers in China could not possibly beat the cruelty of the Spaniard. Even in Protestant Germany the robbery, oppression, and murder of the Jews was simply diabolical. Their tormentors had nothing to learn of the Chinese in the arts of devilry.

Let us go back along the stream of time. Let us take the period of the later Saxon kings, the Normans, and the early Plantagenets. Cutting off the feet and hands of prisoners, amputating their noses, putting out their eyes, and even castrating them, were common occurrences. Yet England was then devoutly Christian. What she wanted was science and humanity.

Let us go back still farther. King Edwy, who ascended the throne of the Heptarchy in 955, fell in love with a beautiful princess called Elgiva. Had he made her his mistress, the clergy would have raised no objection. But he married her, and she was within the degrees of affinity prohibited by the canon law. Even that offence might have been overlooked if Edwy had been more humble and docile in the hands of the ecclesiastics, who were incensed at his independence. Odo, Archbishop of Canterbury, sent into the palace a party of soldiers, who seized the queen, and burnt off the beauty of her face with hot irons. Then they carried her by force to Ireland, to remain there in perpetual exile. Being cured of her wounds, she tried to return to the embraces of her husband. But the Archbishop sent a party to intercept her. She was hamstringed, and she expired after three days of frightful torture.

Branding a beautiful woman's face, only because her husband loved her! Holding the hot irons against her seething flesh! Grim hate watching with zest the defacement of the loveliest of nature's productions! And then hamstringing this unfortunate woman—cutting the sinews of her thighs, and killing her by inches! Damn these Christian monks, and these priests of Christ. Yes, damn them. What milder language can a man use? Not a monk or a priest, but a *man*; one who reverences the living temple of maternity.

The fact is that the Christians, as Christians, have no right to be indignant at Chinese or any other horrors. The history of their own religion is too black with crime and red with blood. Even if the Chinese should hold white hostages, and carry out a threat to boil some of them in oil on the approach of the European army to Peking, they would only be tearing a leaf out of the torture-book of the Inquisition.

G. W. FOOTE.

Christian Miracles a Delusion.

A CORRESPONDENT, who signs himself "A Christian Reader of the *Freethinker*," writes asking me to answer the following question: "Do not the miracles of the Bible, particularly the Creation, the Resurrection, the Incarnation, and the raising of Lazarus from the dead, prove the truth of Christianity?" My reply to the interrogation is most decidedly in the negative; and to believe that they do appears to me to be one of the many theological delusions which are still to be found existing in the minds of orthodox adherents. It would have been much easier for me to have answered my correspondent's question if he had stated what he meant by the phrase, "the truth of Christianity." In what sense does he mean is it true? As a "divine system," or as a record of actual facts? True in its entirety, or only in part? In my opinion, Christianity, like all religions, is the outcome of the human mind, and a combination of truth and error; and our duty is to accept the former and reject the latter. Broadly speaking, I allege that, even if the supposed testimony in favor of miracles were proved valid, it would be no evidence that *all* the teachings of Christianity are true. For instance, it would not establish as a fact what is called original sin, the fall of man, and his redemption through the death of Christ. Neither would it prove that the teachings of Jesus as to prayer, poverty, non-resistance to evil, the neglect of mundane affairs, the virtue of belief, and the possession of devils, were verities. Besides, the truth of Christianity is generally supposed to rest upon the supposition of its "divine" nature. But no number of miracles could possibly establish the claim of "divinity," for the reason that the Bible itself teaches that many of the miracles were performed through Satanic agencies. (See Deut. xiii. 1-3; Matt. xxiv. 24; Acts viii. 9, 10.) Was not Archbishop Trenchard right in saying that "a miracle does not prove the truth of a doctrine, or the divine mission of him that brings it to pass"?

My correspondent refers me to Dean Farrar, who writes* :—

"The miracle of Creation—the miracle which first called light out of darkness and order out of chaos—the miracle which first thrilled the spark of life into inanimate matter, and evolved from its dust the rich diversities of sentient existence—the miracle of the human nature of the Son of God—those two miracles of the Creation and the Incarnation involve and include, to my mind, the credibility of *all* other miracles. I withhold my credence from no occurrence—however much it may be called 'miraculous'—*which is adequately attested, which was wrought for adequate ends, and which is in accordance with the revealed laws of God's immediate dealings with man.*" (The italics are the Dean's.)

Now it is difficult to see how the alleged events referred to by the Dean can furnish any proof of the reality of miracles, or of "the truth of Christianity." The Dean gives no reason in support of the theory that the alleged Creation ever took place. But, granting that it did, why is it termed a "miracle"? The statement that "sentient existence" was "evolved from dust" is thoroughly opposed to scientific fact. If it be true that "the credibility of *all* other miracles" is involved in the Creation and in the Incarnation, then the evidence for their truth is, to say the least, exceedingly slender. Of the supposed Creation nothing is *known*; the belief in it is based entirely upon conjecture. As to the Incarnation, who can understand it? The Rev. George S. Barrett, D.D., in his recently-published work, *The Bible and its Inspiration*, frankly admits that he cannot reconcile Christ's "human limitation of knowledge with the fulness of the Divine omniscience our Lord possessed as Son of God." The rev. gentleman adds: "I cannot understand how it was possible for one and the same Divine Person at the same time to be limited and unlimited in knowledge, and I confess all the attempts which have been made to combine the two appear to me to be failures" (p. 143).

If the credibility of the New Testament miracles depends upon the test supplied by Dean Farrar—namely, that they are "adequately attested," and were "wrought for adequate ends," then their truth cannot

be demonstrated. What were the "adequate ends" of Jesus cursing the fig-tree; of his turning water into wine for people who had already "well drunk"; and of his extracting a legion of devils from a poor lunatic, and sending them into two thousand swine, causing them to be choked in the sea, and the owner of the swine to lose his property (see Mark v. 13; Luke viii. 33)? As to the miracles being "adequately attested," let us take two of those mentioned by my correspondent—namely, the Resurrection and the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The "testimony" in reference to both is far from being adequate. What amount of unimpeachable evidence is existing to prove that Christ rose from the dead? We have simply the New Testament accounts, but how far do they agree as to when, where, by whom, and how frequently, Jesus was seen after his death? All accounts agree, it is true, that the women, on their visit to the sepulchre, found that the body had gone, and that someone in white spoke to them; but here agreement ends. How many women went to the sepulchre? John says one; Matthew says two; Mark says three; Luke says several. How many persons in white raiment appeared to the women? Mark speaks of one young man; Matthew speaks of one angel; Luke of two men; John of two angels, who made their appearance *after* Peter and John had been there. What said these apparitions? Matthew and Mark say that they proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus, and his departure into Galilee; and that they sent a message to his disciples in order that they might follow him. But Luke says they simply stated that he was risen, and referred to a supposed prediction. According to John, they only asked Mary: "Woman, why weepest thou?" If we are to believe Matthew, Luke, and John, the women carried the information as to what had occurred at once to the disciples. According to Mark, "they said nothing to any man." To whom did Jesus, after his death, appear? Matthew says it was first to two women and then to his disciples. John says it was first to one woman, then twice to the assembled Apostles. According to Luke, it was to no woman, but to Cleopas and his companion, then to the eleven disciples. But perhaps Mark was nearer the truth in recording, "neither said they anything to any man." Where did Jesus appear after his resurrection? Was it in Jerusalem and *then in Galilee* with his disciples, as Matthew informs us; or was it in Jerusalem, and *there alone*, where his disciples were commanded to remain, as Luke says. Besides, an important question arises: Who declared "I saw him"? "He was seen" is only second-hand evidence, which is not sufficient "testimony" to prove the reality of the much-talked-of "Christian miracles." The discrepancies just cited render the accounts quite inadequate to prove that Christ, after being dead and buried for "three days," "rose from the dead," and conversed, face to face, with many of his disciples and friends. How comes it to pass, too, that scarcely any of his friends, to whom he is said to have appeared after his resurrection, knew him? When he appeared to the eleven in Galilee, by his appointment, as we are told, some of them "doubted" as to whether it was Jesus—a very suspicious statement of Matthew. Luke assures us that the two disciples, with whom Jesus conversed many hours, did not recognise him—a circumstance that would require a large amount of Christian faith to believe true. Even Mary Magdalene, after looking at, and speaking to Jesus, did not know him, but thought he was a gardener! Where is the man at the present day who would rather believe the dead came to life again than doubt the "testimony" of Christ's resurrection, as furnished in the Four Gospels?

The same lack of trustworthy testimony obtains in reference to Lazarus, who, it is said, was raised from the dead after he had been in the grave four days. To say nothing of the number of hours these "four days" may have consisted of, the mode by which Lazarus was resuscitated was very peculiar. Jesus called him with a *loud voice*. Had Lazarus been simply asleep, the "loud voice" would be understood; but supposing him to have been dead, it is not at all clear why he should have been called with a *loud voice*. If Christ really had the power of raising the dead to life, would it not have been more to his glory, and have prevented many doubts, if he had made choice of some persons

* *The Bible: its Meaning and Supremacy*, p. 224.

who were well known to have been unquestionably dead—known to have lain so long in their graves that their putrified state might have been visible to all around? Why were not the magistrates and principal rulers invited to bear witness? Why were they not solicited to examine the body, in order to prevent the possibility of fraud? Had this been done, and Christ's power made manifest, his fate probably would have been very different to what it was.

If there had been an indisputable miracle wrought in the resurrection of Lazarus, why should the Chief Priests and Pharisees have been so incensed as to take counsel from that day forth to put both Jesus and Lazarus to death for it? Where was the provocation? If the Jews had been ever so cankered with malice and hatred to Jesus before, yet such a stupendous miracle should have been enough to stop their mouths and turn their hearts. Or, if their prejudices against Jesus were insuperable, and they hated him the more for the number and greatness of his miracles, why was inoffensive Lazarus, upon whom this good and great work was wrought, an object of their hatred too? To say that it was downright inhumanity, barbarity, and brutality in the Jews to hate Lazarus as well as Jesus, will not do. Though this may, with many Christians, suffice, yet it cannot satisfy reasonable and unprejudiced men, who must have other conceptions of human nature, in all ages and nations, than to think it possible that a man, in the case of Lazarus, could be hated and persecuted for having had such a good and wonderful work performed upon him.

CHARLES WATTS.

Uselessness of Prayer.

"The religious man prays—that is to say, he begs; he sings hymns—that is to say, he flatters; he sacrifices—that is to say, he pays tribute; chiefly out of fear, but partly in the hope of getting something in return."—WINWOOD READE (*Martyrdom of Man*).

BURIED in a mass of uninteresting Old Testament history, and often overlooked by the Biblical student, is a chapter containing the following curious little passage: "And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet until his disease was exceeding great, yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians" (2 Chron. xvi. 12). In the Revised Version there is the alternative suggestion of "magicians," but practically it is the same thing, and their nostrums partook of useful herbal treatment as well as the employment of so-called "charms." Evidently Asa was a man of common sense, and considerably in advance of his age. Like Secularists of to-day, he seems to have believed that science is the Providence of life, and that spiritual dependency might involve material destruction. His judicious preference of physic to prayer in times of almost universal ignorance and superstition does him infinite credit, and entitles his biography to a much more careful study than it seems to have hitherto received.

Pages have been written of extravagant panegyric on Biblical personages much less deserving of praise than this neglected and but-little-heard-of king, whose life, as briefly recorded in the Chronicles, is at least free from disgusting incidents of murder, rapine, and pious perfidy. The record is, therefore, not unsuitable for family reading. To the scientist it is not without valuable instruction and suggestiveness. Mark, for instance, the charming amazement of the chronicler as he records the unexpected and courageous choice made by the king: "Yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians." How the simple-minded old scribe must have raised his eyes and hands in pious horror! And then the priesthood! What scowling and growling there must have been in the Temple, and what cries raised of "the Church in danger!"

This, however, was not the first occasion on which the gouty monarch had ignored the Lord, even the Lord God of Israel. It appears that, in carrying on one of his campaigns, King Asa relied on the assistance of an earthly ally rather than on the help of Jehovah; and, curiously enough, the alliance proved perfectly successful.

Funnier still, Asa purchased the assistance with silver and gold which he took out of the treasures of the House of the Lord. From this it appears that Asa was a practical man, and knew how to manage things better than his pious predecessors. It must be confessed that it was rather cruel to rob the Lord in order to hire a rival. To seek the aid of someone else would have been galling enough in all truth to the jealous God of Israel; but to pay for the assistance with the treasures belonging to the Lord was certainly the unkindest cut of all.

Immediately after the great Jehovah had thus been slighted, a seer—possibly zealous for the safety of vested interests—waited on his majesty to warn him. Said the seer to Asa: "Because thou hast relied on the King of Syria, and not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the host of the King of Syria escaped out of thine hand." This, of course, must have been a prophecy, because, so far as the "sacred" narrative goes, nothing of the kind had then happened. Naturally enough, Asa was "wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison-house, for he was in a rage with him because of this thing."

Thus we perceive that, like many other men of strong mind and passions, Asa was subject to an infirmity of temper. Indeed, it is not at all unlikely that, when the provoking seer entered the palace and commenced his croaking, the king kicked him out of doors, even with his royal toe—supposing, of course, that his majesty's infirmity permitted of such an exertion.

The Chronicler adds, with ill-disguised animus: "And Asa oppressed some of the people the same time."

In his earlier years Asa appears to have been somewhat piously disposed. He very successfully attacked idolatry, and in its place established the worship of the Lord. But, as he matured in knowledge and judgment, the fear of the Lord gradually forsook him, and at last we find him ignoring God and consulting the physicians. The Scriptures say that "the prayer of a righteous man availeth much," but Asa wasted not his breath in vain supplication to Deity. Disease is not to be averted or removed by prayer. Henry Ward Beecher once said: "There are many ills which the Bible and Prayer Book cannot cure, but which can be cured by a good perspiration and a breath of fresh air."

Eventually Asa went the way of all flesh: "And Asa slept with his fathers and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign." His life was not a long one, yet it was not uneventful. The pious Chronicler—with better taste and more honesty than his modern fellow scribes—invents no horrible death-bed for the "infidel" Asa. The king's last moments are not traduced. He seems to have died decently as an honest man should die. We are told that they "buried him in his own sepulchre, which he had made for himself in the city of David, and they laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odors and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries' art; and they made a great burning for him."

And really there seems to be something not a little poetic about this description of the death and burial of Asa. "And they laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odors and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries' art." What a contrast to the death of David, "the man after God's own heart," who closed his career of infamy by imploring his son to bring down the hoary head of an adversary to the grave with blood, and who seems to have died not inappropriately with the word "blood" on his lips. To many minds it must appear that the heretic Asa, brief as his life was, is a far more estimable personage than the pious psalm-singing, throat-cutting David.

As we have said, there is a great deal of the noble and the beautiful about the termination of Asa's career. The poetry of that expressive phrase, "And he slept with his fathers," is heightened by the picturesque description of the sweet and wholesome burial, while the introduction of "the apothecaries' art" forms an appropriate feature in the last offices performed for a monarch who seems to have had so strong a predilection for medical science.

Why—why will not Christians learn a lesson from Asa, and, instead of pretending to trust in a God who only helps those who help themselves, or, in other words, never helps anybody, turn their attention entirely to those material means which alone are efficacious?

FRANCIS NEALE.

Wanted, Parsons.

WE have all been laboring under a delusion. We have imagined, in our stupidity, that home affairs, such as land, housing, agricultural and municipal questions, and foreign affairs such as the wars in Africa, Ashanti, China, and the threatened trouble in India and the Soudan, constitute the principal matters that threaten our national security and promise of individual development. But from another source—from the high puissant convocation of the see of Canterbury—we now learn that we are faced with a still graver danger, one that it seems almost impossible to arrest. Their Reverences in the Lower House and their Lordships in the Upper House have solemnly awakened to the fact that the quantity of parsons available does not keep pace with the growth of the population, and the quality of such as are to hand leaves much to be desired. Verily, our troubles never come singly, and in the day of our greatest trial we are threatened with the decline of a body of men whose contributions to the welfare of the nation are beyond calculation.

The public at large seems oblivious to the danger. There appears to exist no burning desire on the part of the laity that the number of the clergy should be increased, although there does exist a pretty general feeling that the quality of the existing article might be improved. The necessity for increasing the number of parsons is one that is apparent to the clergy alone. And in this respect the profession of a clergyman differs from all other businesses with which I am acquainted. With an ordinary trade, the fewer there are the better pleased are its members, for the obvious reason that business is kept to a few. The clergy seem to delight in multiplying themselves, and the reason is equally obvious on a little consideration. A tradesman does, to a considerable extent, depend upon his wares, appealing to the natural needs of people for their custom. The parson, on the contrary, realises that the principal security for building up a good profitable business is the exclusion of everything in the shape of competition. The more numerous, the more powerful his order is, the more chance there is of excluding everything of an opposite character. Consequently, the less demand there is, on the part of the people, for clergymen, the more urgent seems the necessity for creating them. It is the law of supply and demand—with a difference.

Plainly, and in other words, the clerical profession is not produced and sustained as other professions are, by the normal and natural requirements of life, but is an artificial product, and requires a set of artificial conditions for its existence. The priesthood is only a normal institution so long as it is fulfilling its essential function of acting as a mediator between man and the supernatural forces by which he believes himself to be surrounded. So long as these forces are believed in, the institution of the priesthood is a natural and a normal one. But with the decline of the belief in the supernatural, the natural demand for the priest dies away, with the result that artificial conditions are created for the purpose of perpetuation, a function properly belonging to the uncivilised ages of the world's history. As the religious feelings threaten to die away unless artificially stimulated, a special body of men are trained for that purpose. The clergy labor, first of all, to create or strengthen a special set of feelings that demand *their* existence, and then appeal triumphantly to these feelings as the warranty for the existence of a priesthood. This, and nothing but this, is the secret of the frantic desire of the clergy to secure the controlling voice in matters of education. Knowing as they do that, were the acceptance of Christianity left until the individual mind was properly matured, ninety-nine per cent. would reject it, and even the remaining one would be looked upon as a reversion of type—knowing this, there comes the determination to secure the child before it is old enough to intelligently criticise all that is placed before it, and, by instilling certain beliefs while it is young, secure its support in maturity. The desire of the clergy to increase their number is, therefore, quite comprehensible. It is the expression of the desire to force certain beliefs on the nation, not because national welfare demands them, but because the existence of the clergy is dependent upon their acceptance.

To return to Convocation. According to the Ordination service, the candidate for holy orders is "inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost." According to the bishops of Winchester, Gloucester, and Rochester, the real difficulty in the way of securing more parsons is that the salaries are not large enough. The Church service declares the Holy Ghost selects the candidates with an eye to their spiritual qualifications. That is for the public ear. The bishops, assembled in a business conclave, declare that parents and guardians select the profession with an eye to its financial advantages, and, when these are not promising enough, put their sons to something else. I think the bishops have the right sow by the ear for once.

The best of humor is unconscious, and there is something supremely funny in a gathering of bishops receiving from £3,000 to £10,000 per year—to say nothing of an archbishop with £15,000—prating about poor pay keeping people from entering the clergy. About a year ago a writer in one of the dailies calculated that the salaries paid to Church of England clergymen averaged about £400 per head. There is evidently enough money in the profession, although it may be unequally divided. But the bishops do not suggest anything in the nature of a more equal distribution of Church funds. Oh dear no. It is the public who are asked to find more money, so that clerical incomes may be raised to such a point that the Church may be able to buy the support it cannot otherwise command.

And what humbug this cry about the poverty of the clergy is! A small number of the clergy receive less than £100 per year, cries out the religious press. Yes, but the majority of these small salaried situations are in villages where, if a man is not "passing rich on forty pounds a year," yet, as a writer in last week's *Church Times* points out, the sum is enough to supply all needful comforts and leave a small margin—particularly as the official sum does not represent *all* the parson's pickings. Besides, how much would these people earn if they were out of the pulpit? Possibly eighteen shillings a week; possibly not even that. As a sober matter of fact, and taking into consideration the average ability of the clergy, there is no profession in Great Britain that is more remunerative. Another writer in the paper I have mentioned cites the case of a clergyman who had two clever, brilliant sons in one of the Universities, and who ingeniously remarked: "I don't know yet what professions they will enter, but they will not be clergymen." Exactly; but, if they had been neither clever nor brilliant, the probability is that the clergy list would have been increased, if not enriched, by at least two names.

The bishops were not quite agreed, however, that it was wholly a question of finance. The Bishop of London had discovered "a touching desire" among elderly men of business who "felt themselves called to the work of the Church." It would be interesting to know the state of their business affairs when they received the "call." The Bishop of Bath and Wells had been told of a number of young men who had gone to the war, and who had promised to take Orders if they returned. That may only have been their method of bribing the Lord to look after them, like the sailor who promised his saint a valuable gift if he brought him safely out of storm, and who, when reminded by a shipmate that he hadn't money enough to purchase it, replied: "Shut up, you dolt; I'm only fooling him." Finally, both the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury found the cause of the decrease of the clergy in modern conditions. "They saw a dislike of dulness everywhere," said the latter with unconscious satire; and the former, after pointing out that there had been "some intellectual falling off in the standard of the candidates," attributed this and the decline in numbers to the general development of secular life. And with this, too, I am inclined to agree. As I pointed out a week or two ago, the Church could only secure men of real ability and honesty while science and social life were undeveloped. Given a development of both, the Church becomes in an increasing measure a field for ability allied to intellectual crookedness on the one side, and honesty allied to stupidity on the other.

On the whole, one is inclined to do anything but weep on hearing that there is some trouble in enlisting recruits for the Black Army. Already, lumping all

together, it is about 50,000 strong, and no serious and impartial thinker can contend that this huge body of men give anything like an adequate return to the community for the money spent in their support. One here and there may take an interest in social reforms, or lend a hand to some useful movement; but this they might well be doing in their ordinary capacity as citizens. As a body, it is notorious that progressive ideas flourish least amongst the clergy. They by instinct, by training, by interest, by profession, are tied to the past, and their concern in the present and future is to keep on cherishing the beliefs that have been, and, if people will move, to keep them walking in the same circle for ever and ever. Not in Great Britain only, but in all parts of the world, it is the same. In Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Spain, the bulk of the clergy are on the side of the few and against the interests of the many. Here and there a man may rise superior to his order, and his conduct falsify its traditions. But all that this shows is that the better aspect of human nature will assert itself under the most unfavorable conditions, and that a good man is not always crushed by his training or general environment. But in the main the Black Army remains a deadly enemy to all enlightenment, considering only how it may best rivet the follies of the past upon the mind of the future, and perpetuate an order that has immortalised itself chiefly by its assaults upon the champions of human freedom.

C. COHEN.

Satan in the Ironworks.

"We drove him out beautifully," said the Ritter von Schwarz, who told the story, "and cheaply too. It was about 1884, and the works were in Bengal, near the Ganges. The Brahmins didn't like the works, and when cholera broke out, and twenty-five workmen died in one day, it was clear enough, they said, that the gods had sent Shaitan, the Devil, to destroy the people who had been so impious as to work for the British Government on the borders of the Holy Ganges. I knew that the men had caught cholera from the stagnant water which they drank—water that collected in the pits whence the iron ore had been removed—but I couldn't get the beggars to believe it.

"When the men dropped dead all over the place, right under my eyes, things became serious. I had scarcely any European workmen, and on the night of the big mortality sixty natives ran away. They burnt their dowrahs and took their families away, but they left their wages behind, which shows how they had lost their heads. The Brahmins were winning all along the line. But they had reckoned without my factotum, Jamadar.

"Jamadar," said I, 'is it true that Shaitan is in the works?'

"Certainly, sahib," said he.

"Then," I said, 'we must get rid of him. In my country the Devil sometimes visits the stables overnight and turns the milk red. Then we call the priest, and he drives him out, and we are grateful and make a present to the Church. Cannot they drive devils out in Bengal?'

"The sahib might try," said Jamadar.

"Yes," I said, 'but I don't know if your Shaitan is the same that we have to drive out in my country. But you, Jamadar, are a Brahmin yourself, a man of piety; surely you can tackle Shaitan?'

"Well," said Jamadar, 'I can't do it alone. I can help, but we must have a Holy Man from the Temple of Jugger-naut. And it will cost money—two hundred rupees at least.'

"Well, to make a long story short, I agreed to pay the money, and give Jamadar a hundred rupees for himself if he could drive the Devil out satisfactorily, and induce the people to remain. But the job had to be done clean: no cure, no pay. The Holy Man came, the people went round the works in a big procession with images of Vishnu, Siva, Gambati, and all the rest. They sacrificed twelve young goats, and sprinkled the blood over the furnace. Then the Holy Man announced that Satan had been expelled, and all went well for two days. Then there was a fresh outbreak, and twelve men died. The survivors began to show funk again, but Jamadar proved conclusively that twelve was less than twenty-five, and that the tail-end mortality was caused by the stench the Devil had left behind when expelled. That couple of days afterwards the rain came down and cleaned the ore-pits from which the men drank. When the rain ceased, I gave Keneram Sirdar, the leader of a gang of aborigines—men upon whom the Hindoos look down as unclean, men who eat pork—ten rupees to drive his pigs through the ore-pits. There was a horrible uproar, and Keneram had to run for his life. But they would drink

out of the ore-pits again, and I put a fakir at the tank of filtered water to hand out the drinks. He was a greater attraction than any barmaid in London, and we never had any more trouble."

—The Ironmonger.

Divine Anti-Teetotalism.

THE Book that fills men's minds with fears,
That mystifies and muddles,
Says Jahveh likes the cup that cheers,
Inebriates and fuddles.

The advocates of H.²O.
(They're mostly Christian croakers)
Take Scripture as their "text-book," though
The Book's more like a "soaker's."

To read the volume, one would think
(Don't fancy I'm a fibber)
There's vice in one who doesn't drink,
And virtue in a bibber.

When Captain Noah left the Ark,
Like "salts" that land at Dover,
He went and had a drunken lark,
Got more than "half seas over."

The fumes ascended to his head
(His cask he'd drained and dried it);
He then rolled home and went to bed,
But went to sleep *outside it*.

His son came in and saw his pa
While in a state of nudeness.
(I'm quoting from the Word of Jah,
So pray excuse my rudeness.)

The boozer rose from off his bunk,
Rose up an addled brain 'un;
Because his son had seen him drunk,
He cursed his grandson Canaan.

Now Noah was a "perfect" man,
God's friend, says Holy "Nosey";
The moral's therefore, Fetch the can,
Fill up, and "pass the rosy."

The Son of God, who came to save
Mankind—but didn't do it—
No temperance lecture ever gave:
If drink's a curse, He knew it.

O Christian friends, I must be frank:
According to the spinners
Of Gospel yarns, your Savior "drank"
With publicans and sinners.

He also at a marriage made
Some wine, a lot of firkins;
Then why should Christians scorn the trade
Of Barclay, Bass, and Perkins?

A friend of Christ, whose name was Paul,
Who formerly was flouting,
Through getting sun-stroke had a "call"
For scribbling and for spouting.

He wrote to Tim, his friend, one day:
"Drink H.²O. no longer,
But for your stomach's sake, I pray,
Take something that is stronger."

A pious church or chapel goer
Celebrates the supper
Ornained by One who's left the "lower"
Circle for the "upper."

Some cheap and nasty port, that's priced
At eighteen pence per bottle,
Becomes the precious Blood of Christ
While passing through a throttle.

I've shown that total abstinence
Is wicked—anti-Christian;
No one possessed of common sense
The patent fact can question!

ESS JAY BEE.

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

Acid Drops.

THE celestial clerk of the weather, who must be one of the right-hand angels of "Providence," is keeping up the heat supply in England, as well as in France and Germany and America. Many people have died from sunstroke, and hundreds of cases have been treated in the London hospitals. But the worst sufferers of all are the poor horses. It is sad to see them sweating and panting and ready to drop. Very often they do drop, and after a lot of suffering they pass off to the knacker's yard. This summer is like last summer, only more so. If the present tropical weather continues, a good many of us will feel like Ingersoll, who went as far as he could down a hot mine and then ran back, and, on being asked where he was going, said he was going to hell to cool off.

In spite of the sweltering heat, from 80 to 90 in the shade, a terrific hailstorm was arranged by "Providence" for the benefit of Northampton. Some of the hailstones were as big as hen's eggs. The town was literally bombarded, and suffered more in six minutes than it would have done if the Boers had besieged it for six weeks.

"Providence" allowed a clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Sanderson, of Brington Rectory, Huntingdon, to die suddenly from the great heat in a railway carriage. For one thing befalling them, yea they have all one breath; as the Atheist dieth so dieth the parson, and more so, for the Atheist dieth not so readily, being generally endowed with a greater gift of common sense, which explaineth his being an Atheist.

More "Providence." A Japanese volcano, Mount Azuma, which caused such great loss of life in 1888, has suddenly broken out again and killed or seriously injured two hundred persons. This is a good illustration of the late Mr. Gladstone's theory of the beautiful way in which "Providence" had fitted the earth for man's habitation.

Early in the morning of Sunday, June 10, a woman was found wandering on Clapham Common. She was stark naked and terribly burnt about the body. She refused to give any account of herself, and foul play was suspected. But before her death, which occurred some weeks later, she confessed that she had "studied the Bible too deeply," and had tortured her body to purify her soul. According to the testimony at the inquest, she had been doing this for some time, cutting herself occasionally with a table-knife. The jury returned a verdict of "misadventure," and found that the poor young woman was suffering from "a morbid state of mind, brought about by the overstudy of religious matters." Such cases used to be common in the old ages of faith. What are now called madwomen were then distinguished female saints.

The Birmingham Liberal Association, with a view to taking the wind out of the sails of the Church party, has adopted the proposed new program of religious instruction in the Board schools, but only after a long and animated discussion and the moving of several amendments. The following resolution was carried by (it is said) a large majority:—"That this meeting of the General Committee is of opinion that a short religious service conducted daily under the authority of a School Board through its teachers, consisting of—(1) The reading and repetition of selected passages of Scripture; (2) The singing of a hymn; (3) The repetition of the Lord's Prayer; should be substituted for the present voluntary religious instruction twice a week by outside agencies." This amounts to a revolution in the curriculum. The school teachers are to be turned into amateur parsons; and the Lord's Prayer, one of the most ridiculous documents in existence, is to be uttered or muttered by the children, who, if they are taught ethics at all in school, should be taught something in harmony with the best thought of the present age.

We note that the passages of Scripture the children will read are to be "selected." By whom is not stated. Still, the word "selected" shows a recognition of the fact that it will not do nowadays to let children read the Bible at hazard, and that it is necessary to guard their minds against the too frequent filth and brutality of the Blessed Book.

The Birmingham Board Teachers' Association has passed a resolution approving of the new "progressive policy." Heaven save the mark! There is nothing progressive about it. They mean the new Chapel policy, as opposed to the Church policy, only they prefer not to say so. Moreover, they know on which side their bread is buttered. They also know that the Church party would break up School Boards and Board schools if it could.

The great Christian Endeavor Convention which has been boomed for months is now a thing of the past. The best description of it would be "a week of religious intoxication." It will leave little impression behind it, for, apart from drawing together crowds of Christians, it is difficult to see what the Convention has accomplished. The Deity must have had enough of it the first day, for the affair opened with an "all day long" prayer meeting at Wesley's Chapel. As, however, different leaders took charge of different hours, possibly relays of angels were told off to listen to the praying Endeavorers. Of course, all the prayers were duly answered. The day concluded with a sermon on the text, "Follow after love." Possibly the parson had in view the ceaseless wranglings of the sects, as Marie Corelli must have had when she with pointed significance dedicated her latest novel "to all those Churches who quarrel in the name of Christ."

One of the visitors was a Dr. Clark, who had just come from China, where he admitted he "had to carry a revolver." He omitted to explain how he reconciled this with Christ's command to "resist not evil."

The most noticeable feature of the meetings was the absolute sameness of the speeches. Not a flash of originality or wit brightened the severe solemnity of the gatherings. Even Mr. Hugh Price Hughes could say nothing new, but worked off so-called jokes that the writer heard him repeat a dozen years ago.

Rev. W. K. Chaplin greeted the Endeavorers "for what they are going to accomplish." Christians are always great on what they are "going to do." The Endeavorers once upon a time "were going to" convert Ingersoll, but it didn't come off.

The Rev. Hugh Price Hughes proposed to postpone further religious controversies till they met in heaven, and the Christian Endeavorers cheered. Evidently the author of the *Atheist Shoemaker* wants to jump the day of judgment.

The great Dr. Parker recommended Americans to nominate Sheldon for the Presidency of the States. Christ's kingdom "is not of this world," but Christ's disciples are always on the track of the world's plums.

The Christian Endeavorers claim to number three and a half millions. And all this in a few years. But what does it mean? Simply this—that three and a half millions of Christians of various denominations have affiliated to a new organization. That doesn't involve the presence of a single additional Christian on this planet. The whole thing reminds us of a theatre army, which crosses the stage, works round behind the scenes, and crosses the stage again, and looks a multitude when it is only a handful.

There was no Jesus Christ at the Christian Endeavor Convention to do the multiplication of food and drink trick. Nor was any disciple present with the miraculous power which the Master promised to those who believed in him. They had therefore to patronise a vulgar victualling department. In one day they consumed 60,000 bottles of mineral water, 25,000 buns, 20,000 rolls, 600 large slabs of cake, 30,000 veal and ham pies, tons of meat and hogsheads of milk. It was a teetotal orgie, and the Gospel was mixed up with it all.

A farmer at Amiens has just been immured in a lunatic asylum. He believed that all the pigeons in a huge dovecot on his farm were inhabited by the spirits of his departed ancestors and kinsmen, and did the hospitable by throwing grain, etc., to the appreciative birds from morning to night.

The *Rock* is very much disturbed over a "bicycle gymkhana" held in connection with the Bi-centenary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. It suggests that Bike-centenary, rather than Bi-centenary, is the proper term to use. And it regards with disfavor the fashion in these days of providing "something for something" in religious work. "Concerts, gymkhanas, even amateur theatricals, are called into requisition for this purpose of raising money for the work of God. Is this really 'giving to the Lord'? Is it not giving to self to please self? I often wonder what would the early Church have thought of our modern methods of collecting funds for the progress of the Gospel. Fancy St. Paul patronising a bicycle gymkhana for providing for the evangelisation of the heathen, or St. Peter taking part in amateur theatricals to send relief to the poor Christians at Jerusalem! Neither of the amusements may be wrong *per se*, but surely it is not the way to evoke the spirit of giving to the work of the Lord to be ever trying how to give a *quid pro quo* which will draw the public, and make them open their unwilling hands."

Sabbath-breaking seems to be permissible on the Clyde if

You are prepared to pay a penalty of £5. Sunday sailing has been resumed for the season. At Dunoon, we learn, there was a repetition of the stirring scenes of three years ago. On the arrival of the steamer, the *Heather Bell*, the Castle Hill, Esplanade, and other points of vantage were crowded with spectators. Two or three passengers leaped from the paddle-boxes to the pier, and a gangway was promptly commanded, by which a few more landed, and the steamer left, those on board exchanging cheers with the crowd on shore. The pier gates being closed, the passengers scaled a ten-feet high railing near the goods entrance. The police did not interfere with the passengers' landing, though a prosecution may yet follow, the byelaws providing a penalty of £5 for every passenger landed between midnight on Saturday and midnight on Sunday.

The bigotry of the Yarmouth Watch Committee is something astounding. In defiance of the Corporation's recent resolution, it has renewed the Sunday trading prosecutions, and the other day nearly thirty cases came before the magistrates. Strong exception was taken to the proceedings by a minority of the Bench, who suggested a 3d. fine without costs. By a majority, however, a conviction was recorded in every case, and various oystermen, tobacconists, and fruiterers were fined 14s., including costs, for each offence. Notice was given that a summons would be applied for against the Corporation for employing bands on Sundays and taking money for admission to the pier.

Southampton Harbor Board has been agitated on the question of Sunday excursions from the pier. Alderman Le Feuvre moved that they should be stopped. He said he was not a severe Sabbatarian, but he drew the line at excursions. Besides, the Board's employees should have an opportunity, and so should the general public, of attending to their religious duties. Mr. Parker seconded. He protested against the further abuse of the Sunday in the town of Southampton. Mr. Hutchens opposed. He wanted to know why people shouldn't enjoy themselves in a rational manner on Sunday. Those who objected to going down to the pier had only to stop away. Alderman Emanuel also opposed. He thought that people were entitled to a little relaxation after a week's hard work. Mr. W. Beavis wanted to know what right the mover and seconder of the resolution had to prevent him from going where he liked. He didn't propose to interfere with churches and chapels. Mr. Radford was in favor of stopping the excursions. He was great on "the thin end of the wedge" argument. Where were they going to stop? By-and-bye they would have horse-races on the Lord's Day. Well, the Board divided, and the Sabbatarian motion was lost by twelve votes to six. Poor bigots! They have our sympathy.

Just now it may be of interest to notice the enormous amounts which religious enthusiasts subscribed last year to the various foreign and other missionary societies. The following are some of the totals exclusive of Bible, tract, school, and similar societies:—Church Missionary Society (including £80,619 of centenary fund), £404,905; Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, £136,846; London Missionary Society, £157,910; Wesleyan Missionary Society, £133,787; Baptist Missionary Society, £77,692; China Inland Mission, £53,197; United Methodist Free Churches Foreign Mission, £15,483; Primitive Methodist Foreign Mission, £10,751; Moravian Missions (whole income £79,940), British contribution, £15,090; Church of Scotland Foreign Mission, including Women's Missions, Jews, Colonial, etc., £58,696; Free Church of Scotland Foreign Mission, including Women's Missions, Jews, Colonial, etc., £129,015; United Presbyterian Foreign Mission, including Women's Missions, Jews, Colonial, etc., £62,735; Irish Presbyterian Foreign Mission, including Women's Missions, Jews, Colonial, etc., £33,297; English Presbyterian Foreign Mission, including Women's Missions, Jews, etc., £28,571; Universities Mission, £37,549; Friends' Foreign Mission, £12,852; London Society for Missions to the Jews, £40,342; British Society for Missions to the Jews, £6,430; Mildmay Jewish Mission, £8,800; Barbican Jewish Mission (including £3,500 special building fund), £4,846; North African Mission, £8,800; South American Missionary Society, £18,086; "Regions Beyond" Missionary Union, £23,640; Church of England Zenana Missionary Society, £67,669; Zenana Bible and Medical Mission, £22,282; Bible Lands Mission Aid Society, £2,162; Waldensian Missions (British contributions), £4,746; Mission to Lepers, £11,298.

"Millionaires who don't believe in Parsons" is the heading to one of the notes in Mr. Joseph Hatton's entertaining weekly *Cigarette Papers*. There are, he says, "parsons and parsons. Curiously enough, there are millionaires who have money to give away who don't believe in parsons. Mr. Hugh Price Hughes in the *Methodist Times* admits this. Though he does not mention Mr. Carnegie by name, it is plain that he wants the Scotch-American to assist in restoring the Acropolis at Athens. He urges this because, though Mr. Carnegie and Mr. Passmore Edwards seem not to believe in parsons, they go in for promoting education in every possible

way. I knew Josiah Mason, the Birmingham millionaire, who built, endowed, and filled with orphans one of the most perfect institutions of the kind extant. He left it to the Birmingham Corporation, on condition that no minister of religion of any denomination should have anything to do with its management."

"We have Stigginses," continues Mr. Hatton, "in the Church as well as Stigginses in the Dissenting Community. The clerical agitators who are obstructing every movement for humanising the Sabbath bring discredit upon their cloth, and keep far more people out of church than they attract thither."

"Then there are the parsons who neglect their sacred calling, and devote themselves to business; the stock-broking parson with an intermediary, the newspaper parson who haunts Fleet-street seeking for books to review, the literary parson who edits magazines, the parson who fills journalistic positions to the neglect of his parish, the musical-critic parson, the sporting parson, and all the rest..... The man who makes a business of the Church for social and other purposes outside his real duties, and the other who is ambitious to make a show of his office, and who breaks his ordination oaths, and still takes the money of the Church—those men will have a very serious account to settle on the last day, and, in the meantime, ought to be made to settle up on this side the grave."

One more note by Mr. Hatton is specially worth reproducing for its spirit of manly common sense: "I think if it had fallen to my lot to be a parson, and therefore a preacher, I would not have left all the teaching to the Press. Is it the denunciation of a cruel sport, it is the newspaper that has to be the medium of public action. Is it the exposure of some great City abuse, the warning of men and women against luxury, the exposure of a commercial trickery that saps the nation's naturally high sense of honor in race-course and Stock Exchange betting; is it the bribing of officials in St. Pancras, the blind fight of the upper middle classes with fashion to keep up appearances, the disloyalty of some politicians, the treason of others, the crowding of alien paupers into the East-end of London, and the consequent beggary of English laborers and skilled workmen; what has the Established pulpit to say about such things? Nothing. It launches out against breaches of Church discipline, or goes on mumbling its old texts and ancient beliefs, while the great world is surging on."

Sickening disclosures were made in a breach of promise case against a Salvationist last week. The "saved" individual—Henry James Parkins by name—living at Drayton Park, Holloway, did his best to seduce a Salvationist lass whom he met at the Holloway "barracks." He gave her a ring at Christmas, 1898, and at the same time said a prayer that they might be a blessing to each other in the future. Defendant in all his letters breathed religion, and was always quoting Scripture; but the true nature of the man, said counsel, was shown by his conduct when at Clacton-on-Sea, where he tried unsuccessfully to take liberties with the plaintiff. In consequence of the treatment plaintiff had received, she became ill, lost her situation, and had suffered considerable pecuniary loss. A verdict of £25 damages was returned against him.

On account of opinions expressed in his *Resurrection*, Count Tolstoi has been excommunicated from the Orthodox Christian Church, and it is thought he will refer to the matter in his forthcoming book, *The White Slavery*. He takes no payment for his literary work, and his writings become public property as soon as they are published. Fortunately, his wife is rich, and humors the Count's whims. He is a vegetarian, but at times the craving for flesh becomes too strong for him, and he grabs an enormous piece of meat, swallowing it in one bite.

So we have gone back three or four centuries. Once more Rome is displaying, though in a feeble form, its ancient despotism. Dr. Bagshawe, Roman Catholic Bishop of Nottingham, has addressed to his clergy a circular prohibiting them, under pain of *ipso facto suspension*, from publishing, in the Press or otherwise, *reflections on himself or any of the clergy* under his charge. The editor of a Roman Catholic weekly paper telegraphed to the Bishop as follows: "To the Lord Bishop of Nottingham—Reported your lordship has issued instructions to priests about writing to Press. Will you favor us with copy for publication?" EDITOR. The following day the Bishop replied: "Sir,—It would almost appear from your telegram that you think the Press and the public are the divinely-constituted judges of a Bishop's government of his diocese. I think this attitude is one of the worst and most dangerous evils afflicting the Church of England. I cannot hinder you from usurping this office, but I decline to be a party to your doing so. I am, sir, your obedient servant, EDWARD, Bishop of Nottingham." What Dr. Bagshawe would do if he could "hinder" any Press opinions or comments on the public actions of himself or his

clergy does not appear. Probably he would burn the critics, in accordance with the mediæval custom of his Church.

One would think, says the *People*, that the solicitude of the Churches for news of their missionaries in China would allay their asperity in regard to the Sunday paper, and the truth is the vast majority of religionists of all denominations have no hand in the narrow policy of the "over-righteous," who too often air their "professed" religion in a cheap persecution of newsagents. Fortunately, their attempted tyrannous use of an obsolete Act of Parliament only promotes the circulation of the *People*, which is the experience of every attempt to interfere with its Sunday edition.

More Christian harmony! The Rev. Alexander Connell, a true-blue Protestant, protests against Lord Salisbury's "cruel suggestion" that missionaries place their reliance partly on God and partly on the gunboat. He declares that the missionaries are too pious to do anything of the kind. That is to say, the Protestant missionaries. As for the Catholic missionaries, he says they are at the bottom of most of the trouble in China. Codlin's the friend, not Short.

The venerable Dr. Guinness Rogers also stands up for the missionaries in China. "The missionary," he says, "is the one man who cannot help being there, being impelled by a divine necessity." The trader might keep away from China and lose business, but the missionary must go there to save souls. Yes, and anything else he can get.

Rev. A. B. Lloyd, one of the Church Society's missionaries, has written a book on *Dwarf Land and Cannibal Country*, in which he declares that the blacks of that part of Africa are the jolliest men on earth and "when not interfered with they are perfectly harmless." "That the worst savages in Africa," the *Daily News* says, "are neither poison-shooting pygmies nor cannibal Bangwas, but white officials in the service of a Christian government—that of Belgium—becomes painfully evident from Mr. Lloyd's testimony."

The Birmingham *Weekly Mercury* gives a glowing account of a recent Theosophical discourse by Mrs. Besant. According to the reporter, it was a wonderful intellectual effort; it was "witchery," it was "magic"—which we daresay it was—and it "sparkled with sincerity and was radiant with Faith, Hope, and Charity." They did not write in this way of Mrs. Besant when she opposed the religious prejudices of her countrymen, especially of her countrywomen, and talked the language of Secularism and common sense.

Mrs. Besant said that man was evolving new powers of vibration that he might vibrate with the vibrations of the universe. We suppose we must take her word for it, whether we understand it or not. But we venture to say that she talked sheer nonsense when she introduced the Roentgen Rays by way of illustrating the power Theosophists had of seeing through the opaque. A clever woman like Mrs. Besant can easily play these tricks with half-educated people, who want somebody to pander to their superstitious emotions.

Dr. G. C. Lorimer, of Tremont Temple, Boston, U.S.A., preached last Sunday in Dr. Clifford's chapel at Westbourne Park. At the close of his sermon he said that the ancient Greeks, Romans, and Hebrews died in fear, but the fear of death had been immolated by the glory of Jesus Christ. Now, if this gentleman (Dr. Lorimer, not Jesus Christ) is honest and sincere, he must be very ignorant. It is not true that the Greeks and Romans died in fear. This is proved by their poetry and their epitaphs. Nor is it true that the fear of death was destroyed by Christianity. It was rather intensified and made definite by the dread of everlasting hell. Indeed, it may be almost said that the fear of death is peculiar to Christians. There is very little of it amongst Brahmans, Buddhists, Mohammedans, and Confucians. "Prepare to meet thy God" has been the burden of innumerable Christian sermons. And the way to heaven is narrow, and the road to hell is wide.

"If ever they wanted to know what the Devil wished people to think, they should buy the *Westminster Gazette*." So said a clergyman at a Church education meeting in Yarmouth. Our contemporary reproduces the man of God's observations in order that its readers may be "duly warned."

Good old Papa Pecci, God Almighty's vicegerent at the Vatican, has uttered many pathetic things in favor of the working men and their claim to decent wages and hours of labor. These little outbursts, of course, cost him nothing. When his own pockets are touched his Holiness cries out as loudly as any capitalist. Recently his Swiss Guard petitioned for an increase of pay, on account of the increase of work laid upon them during the present Jubilee year; during which year, by the way, the Pope is raking in piles of money from east, west, north, and south, and every other point of the compass. Well, what was the result of this petition? The man who got it up was dismissed for "insubordination," and all who signed it were threatened with "expulsion." That is

how the Pope believes in good wages—when he has to pay them himself.

What a sarcasm it is when science is employed to call people to church! This has happened down at Runwell, in Essex. The rector, finding a difficulty in obtaining bell-ringers—perhaps while the "pubs." are open—has invented an electric apparatus to do the work. He just switches on the current, and the bells go ding-dong; or, as the Italian monk put it, *dando dando*, which meaneth "give, give."

Chancellor McCracken, of New York University, has been speaking of "bald Materialism," and the local *Truthseeker* (one of our most valued exchanges) wants to know what relation there is between spirituality and hair. "Are we," it asks, "to think of new truths as bald because the old lies are bearded and hoary?"

North Lew is the place where "the devil died of cold," and his remains are said to be buried beneath the preaching cross there. Berenger sang "The Devil is Dead," but he did not know where buried. Nor did he exactly know what the Devil died of, though he might have guessed it was a bad cold, for an inhabitant of hell must find every other place draughty.

Nature.

I CARE for nought in all the world but my resistless will,
And though men pray to many gods I give no answer still.
For I am Love, and Life, and Death, and Hate—all things
that be
Are but the creatures of my brain who have their power from
me.

The pleasure that you have I buy by others' grief and pain,
And when the soul is overstrained I turn the scale again.
I starve the young birds in their nests, I make the aged die,
I look on love and pain and joy—I look, and what care I?
With strange beliefs and senseless creeds I hold the world
in fee

That none may learn in bitterness, *There are no gods but
me!*
For vile to me and things of scorn are all their worshippings
(Those small, brief creatures of the clay who yearn for angels'
wings!).

In mockery I bid them pray and hymn they know not what;
Alike to me are shaven priest, and king, and drunken sot.
In mockery I take them all, I bid them live and die;
I look on love and pain and joy—I look, and what care I?
In peace I play with pestilence, and when my pleasure's o'er
I call on Greed and Avarice to loose the dogs of war
To watch them tear the throats of men and feed upon the
blood—

I, who am Mother unto all, I love the fiery flood.
For youth is youth, and age is age, and I would have them
both;

I win to ways of bitterness the maiden nothing loth,
I charm the aged sage to sin; aye! all the World is mine;
I trip the priest upon the path, and leave him to repine.
For I am Love, and Life, and Death, and Hate—all things
that be,

And Superstition, of them all, is dearest unto me,
For this it is that makes men blind and holds the world in
fee;

Though yet 'twill learn in bitterness—there are no gods but
me.

—*Sydney Bulletin*.

WILL M. FLEMING.

The Sunday Bigot.

"I SEE you are carrying a petition in favor of Sunday trading," said the long-nosed man, severely; and the smart young man turned on him: "You're wrong," he said; "it's against the singling out of a certain class." "Ah! doesn't matter," replied the other party; "you evidently countenance the desecration of the Sabbath, that I can see." "I can see something as well," snapped the smart young man; "you're a bigot—s-s-sh—don't jump like that—you are, really. You read your Monday's newspaper that was printed on the Sunday; you wear clothes probably made on the same day; you drink milk vendred on Sundays; and if you have money you will hold shares in one of the local works that are in full swing on the Sabbath. You are, by your appearance, pretty well off, and, consequently, don't know what it is to feel the pinch of poverty, and to have to sell a few pennyworths of sweets to help pay your rent. In short, you are a hypocrite and a —tut, tut, don't have a fit. I hope I have made myself quite understood —I see that I have—You won't sign the petition, eh? So long!" and the smart young man went down a side street, leaving the long-nosed party clawing the air.

—*South Wales Daily News*.

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Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, July 29, at 7, West Ham Branch (Stratford-grove), Freethought Demonstration.

To Correspondents.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—July 29, at 7, West Ham Branch (Stratford-grove), Freethought Demonstration.—All communications for Mr. 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.

F. E. WILLIS (Birmingham) informs us that the Bull Ring lecturer referred to by us last week was not Mr. H. Percy Ward, but Mr. Hanks. This gentleman is also a prominent Socialist, hence the "red tie." This correspondent is thanked for cuttings.

W. P. BALL.—Your batches of cuttings are always very welcome.

W. TOWNSEND.—You can order Mr. J. M. Robertson's *Christianity and Mythology* from the Freethought Publishing Company. The price is 8s. 6d. net, or 9s. carriage free.

J. F. HAMPSON.—Very glad to hear that you have got over the unexpected difficulty, and hope you will be as prosperous as you deserve to be. Thanks for your promised donation to the Twentieth Century Fund. We note your desire to see "a long and strong list of donors."

E. SELF.—Pleased to hear that you intend to interest your friends in the Twentieth Century Fund.

ADRIENNE VEIGELE (Miss), the Healtheries, 119A Praed-street, Paddington, W., supplies the *Freethinker* and exhibits a contents-sheet.

W. H. SPIVEY.—Your letter to hand with enclosure. See our special notice. Thanks.

H. PERCY WARD.—The correction had already been made. But thanks.

D. FRANKEL.—See paragraph. We wish your Branch all success.

T. OLLERENSHAW.—Many thanks. In our next. See notice.

E. S.—Pleased to hear that a friend of yours gave you the *Freethinker*, and that you found it just to your taste. You say you would have taken it long ago if you had known of it. That is one of our difficulties, getting people to know of it. With regard to the books, you might read the following three by Mr. Foote to begin with—*Bible Romances*, *Bible Heroes*, and the *Book of God*.

A. HURCOM (Cardiff) is astonished that anyone could perceive a reflection on Charles Bradlaugh in our article on "Blank Atheism."

W. H. FRY.—You will see from our note to the gentleman's letter that we don't think such a controversy worth pursuing.

T. E. (Southampton).—Thanks for cutting. See "Acid Drops."

W. J. NEWBY (Birmingham) reports that his newsagent's sale of the *Freethinker* has risen from three to twenty copies weekly.

J. T. IVES.—Of course the smallest contributions will be welcome to the Fund.

A. F. BULLOCK.—Address altered as requested. The other matter stands over for a week.

W. MUMBY.—Thanks. We shall quote from your letter in our next issue, when the new Fund will be dealt with at some length.

F. H. WATTS.—See paragraph. Thanks.

ALERT.—We are obliged.

J. C. BANKS.—Your letter received. More in our next.

E. WRIGHT.—You cannot do better than refer to Dr. Giles's *Christian Records* advertised in our "Remainder" List.

F. J. GOULD.—Your valued article has to stand over for a week. We were already overset when it arrived.

W. COX.—You must please send a Lecture Notice if you want the outdoor meetings announced again.

S. JOHNSON.—The new edition of the *Bible Handbook* is now on sale at the Freethought Publishing Company's office. We think you will find it is a book that every Freethinker should keep by him, as well as a very useful volume to place in the hands of a Christian.

RECEIVED.—Liberator—Munsey's Magazine—South Wales Daily News—Lucifer—Truthseeker (New York)—Crescent—Ethical World—New Century—Echo—Christianity and Mythology, by J. M. Robertson (Watts & Co.)—Two Worlds—Secular Thought—Torch of Reason—Labor Chronicle—Evening Express (Cardiff)—Blue Grass Blade.

FRIENDS who send us newspapers would enhance the favor by marking the passages to which they wish us to call attention. The National Secular Society's office is at 1 Stationers' Hall Court, Ludgate Hill, E.C., where all letters should be addressed to Miss Vance.

LECTURE NOTICES must reach 1 Stationers' Hall Court, Ludgate Hill, E.C., by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

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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.

The Freethought Twentieth Century Fund.

It was my intention to write at length on this Fund for the present number of the *Freethinker*. But the tropical heat in sweltering London has taken some effect upon me, and I don't care at the moment to face more work than is quite necessary. I am also afraid that, in such climatic conditions, almost anything I could say would be practically lost upon my readers. These are two good reasons for a postponement. By next week the heat may have abated, or we may all have got more used to it, if we are lucky enough to survive. I may state at once, however, that I have received several replies to the preliminary circular I sent out, with promised donations (and a few paid up) from £25 downwards. A list of these, with extracts from the donors' letters, will appear in the next issue of this journal, as an appendix to my authorised appeal on behalf of the Fund. Those who wish to have the honor of being included in the first list should communicate with me by Monday.

G. W. FOOTE.

Sugar Plums.

THE fourth of this year's series of Freethought Demonstrations took place on Sunday evening in Hyde Park. As the brake could not be taken near the spot where the people congregate, the West London Branch's large lecture-stand was made use of by the speakers. A dozen chairs formed a semi-circle in front of the platform—if we may call it so, for there is only room for one person at a time upon it. Mr. and Mrs. Anderson, of Chicago, were again present, and there were two other American visitors—Mr. and Mrs. Levi, of Cincinnati, who entertained Mr. Foote and Mr. Watts when they were together in that city, some three years and a half ago. Mr. Schaller acted as chairman, and Mr. W. Heaford was the first speaker. Then came Mr. Cohen, then Mr. Watts, and finally Mr. Foote. Fortunately the evening air was a little cooler, although it was still hot enough; and the audience stood for the best part of two hours, listening with unabated interest to the various speeches on Freethought and Secularism. There was an immense crowd before Mr. Foote concluded his address, just as the shades of night were beginning to fall upon the scene. All the speakers were in good form, and the great meeting was orderly and appreciative from the first moment to the last. Every point was taken up readily, prompt laughter greeted every witty or humorous sally, and warm applause marked the conclusion of each speech; indeed, there was quite an ovation at the finish, and hearty cheers were raised as the Demonstration party drove away in Mr. Wilson's brake.

Mrs. Foote did not arrive in time to get into the centre of the meeting. She entered the Park just as her husband was speaking, and she could hear his voice at the Marble Arch gates, although (of course) she could not discriminate his words at that distance. Moving about on the outside of the crowd, she was the unsuspected hearer of some curious things about the "wicked" man with whom she is so closely associated. Two opposition speakers, with microscopic audiences, were indulging freely in lies and libels; in fact, they indulged in nothing else, and "Foote, Foote, Foote" was the burden of their wretched songs. Near one of these Gentle-Jesuites, right on the edge of the big Freethought crowd, a man was listening with both ears, and another man—probably belonging to the sweet band of mercy—kept talking to him. "Ah," he said, "I reckon that's his game"—smacking his pocket. The man he spoke to made no reply, but went on listening. "Yes," said the amateur critic, "I reckon he gets a tidy bit for it." Still no answer. "Well,"

the critic resumed, "he wouldn't stand up there talking for nothing. I wouldn't talk like that for nothing." "Well," said the taciturn man at last, "I wish you'd shut up, and that man there too (meaning the Gentle-Jesuit), for I've not seen this Foote before and I want to hear what he's saying."

The amateur critic wouldn't talk like that for nothing—which, by the way, Mr. Foote was doing. "No," said Mr. Cohen, when he heard of it, "and he might just as well have said he wouldn't talk like that for something."

One good Christian said that Mr. Foote ought to be snowballed. It was a capital idea. What a pity it wasn't carried out! Snowballing would have been a treat in that weather.

Probably some of the Gentle-Jesuites stood on the outskirts of the meeting in order to drop their malignant nonsense into the ears around them. There was a clergyman, however, listening to Mr. Foote with close attention. He didn't exactly applaud, but he laughed heartily at some of the jocularities.

Monday's *Daily News* referred to last Sunday's meetings in Hyde Park, and singled out the West London Mission's ten-hours' entertainment for special praise. But it did not so much as allude to the Freethought Demonstration. This ostrich policy has always been pursued by the *Daily News*. The Nonconformist Conscience doesn't like to hear of great and successful Freethought meetings. So if they are not mentioned they didn't happen. See?

The fifth of these Freethought Demonstrations will take place this evening (July 29) in connection with the new West Ham Branch at Stratford Grove at 7 o'clock. There will be a good list of speakers, including Messrs. Foote, Watts, and Cohen, and the brake will be used as a platform.

"Mimnermus's" article on Ernest Renan is reproduced from our columns in the *Liberator* (Melbourne), also Mr. G. L. Mackenzie's "The Priests of Prey."

Secular Thought (Toronto) has not been reaching us for some time. The last number just to hand, dated June 30, reproduces a portion of Mr. Foote's article on "Blank Atheism." We are glad to get Editor Ellis's paper again. In our opinion he well sustains its character. His editorial notes are always interesting.

The Cardiff *Evening Express* devotes a column of small type to the report of a conversation between an invalided missionary and a layman who is an Agnostic. The latter makes some strong and caustic remarks about the missionary business in China. That column will be an eye-opener to the more pious readers of our Welsh contemporary.

The South Shields Branch friends hold their annual picnic in Holywell Dene to-day (Sunday). Four brakes have been engaged, and with very few exceptions the seats are all booked. Anyone desirous of not being left behind had better give timely notice. Given fine weather, they will enjoy a happy day. Newcastle and Sunderland friends are cordially invited.

The Liverpool Branch's excursion to Ormskirk on Sunday was a complete success. The drive was delightful, and the "Falcon" put on a good tea for the visitors, after which they strolled about viewing the various points of interest. All felt they had passed "a good time" on returning to Liverpool.

Mr. Cohen had a large and appreciative audience on Sunday afternoon in Victoria Park. His place there was taken in the evening by Mr. Davies, who also addressed a good meeting. The evening meetings in this Park are a great success in this hot weather, as more people are about when the broiling sun is declining.

Mr. A. B. Moss lectured to good audiences at Northampton on Sunday. He will join the speakers at the West Ham Freethought Demonstration this evening (July 29).

The Bethnal Green Branch Secretary reports that Mr. G. J. Warren has wiped off the balance due to him as Treasurer. This is felt as a great relief, and if one or two others would be as kind as Mr. Warren the Branch would feel able to take an active part in the coming School Board elections, with a view to securing the return of a "secular education" candidate—a matter which will be considered at the approaching members' meeting.

Shakespeare and Inspiration.

NOT only is the Bible said to be inspired, but the same is said of the orator and the poet. This implies a gradual secularisation of the idea. The teacher, the enthusiast, the prophet, is no longer the oracle of an indwelling divinity. Genius has ceased to be what it once was, a spirit attending a man and speaking through him; it means no more than a natural exaltation of certain mental or moral powers. It would seem that the time is approaching when the word Inspiration will be emptied of all its supernatural meaning. When that time arrives, as it assuredly will, I very much doubt if the Bible will hold its place at the top of our literature. There are splendid things, when adequately translated, in the old Scriptures of India; and the great voices of Greece and Rome carry a high message. Nor did the vein of inspiration close with the ancients. Poets, thinkers, and moralists, as lofty as any of antiquity, have been amongst us, and only require age to mellow their golden reputations. One of them, the mightiest in the roll of fame, the magisterial genius of this planet, lived, died, and was buried in our own England. Upon his brow sits the shadow of thought beyond the scope of the bards of Israel; his eye has depth within depth, until the beholder is lost in its profundity; every passion trembles on his mobile lips; and in the corners of his mouth there lurk the subtle sprites of wit and humor—a wit as nimble as the lightning, a humor as sweet and impartial as the sunshine. His very language is divine, speaking every note from the whisper of love to the tempest of wrath, from the mother's lullaby to the hero's challenge, from the soft flutings of sylvan peace to the thunder-roll of battle and death. Let the poets and prophets of Israel approach. The mighty palace of his genius shall find them all an appropriate apartment, leaving a host of chambers to spare, in some of which the decorations are too lovely for their stern regard.

—G. W. FOOTE, "Letters to the Clergy."

The Message of the Preacher.

"If you want to gain the kingdom,"
Says the preacher, gazing round,
"Want that home in glory
Where you lay your burdens down,
Pay attention to this message,
And the heavenly city see;
Give your heart to God Almighty,
And your pocket-book to me!
"Don't be nowise discouraged
If the stony way is long;
Pass the hat around, my brother,
While we sing another song;
If you expect religion,
Salvation full and free,
Give your heart to God Almighty,
And your pocket-book to me!
"Hear the words of the blessed Jesus,
'Lay not treasures up on earth';
Give a liberal, large collection,
And receive the second birth.
When the dimes and nickles jingle,
Then we'll shout our jubilee;
Give your heart to God Almighty,
And your pocket-book to me!
"Give it all, and don't begrudge it;
Don't be holding any back;
Sacrifices must be offered
When we walk the narrow track.
Pass the hat along the benches;
Pass it slow so all can see;
Give your heart to God Almighty,
And your pocket-book to me!"

—John Morrissey.

His Denomination.

At the close of the service one Sunday morning of a city church went down the aisle, as was his custom, to greet the strangers in his congregation.

"You are not a member of our church," he said to one of them.

"No, sir," replied the stranger.

"Do you belong to any denomination, may I ask?"

"Well," replied the other hesitatingly, "I'm what you might call a submerged Presbyterian."

"How is that?"

"I was brought up a Presbyterian, my wife is a Methodist, my eldest daughter is a Baptist, my son is the organist at a Universalist church, my second daughter sings in an Episcopal choir, and my youngest goes to a Congregational Sunday-school."

"But you contribute, doubtless, to some one church?"

"Yes, I contribute to all of them. That is partly what submerges me."—*Youth's Companion*.

Mind and Evolution.

ACCEPTING the doctrine of evolution, the Rev. Scott Lidgett says: "But let us, for the present, suppose this difference [the alleged intellectual, moral, and physical difference between man and the lower animals] to be explained by ordinary natural causes, and the difference to be bridged over by this means; that man, including his higher powers, stands at the summit of a purely natural development, simply fulfilling prophecies uttered by creatures below him, what then? Would it destroy, or even injure, the spiritual and religious view of human life?" Mr. Lidgett answers this question by laying down four propositions. First he says:—

"However far the doctrine of evolution may be extended, and its evidence completed, nothing has been done by it to destroy the fundamental difference between the conscious and the non-conscious. Mind is distinct from matter, and as inconvertible into matter, when the method of evolution is accepted, as it was before."

Let us examine these points. It is quite clear that if the human mind is the result of a "never-ceasing evolution," it will not only injure, but destroy altogether, the ordinary Christian notion of the "spiritual and religious view of human life." The ordinary Christian believes that the Bible teaches that man was a special creation, that into his nostrils alone "the Lord breathed the breath of life, and man became a living soul." On the assumption, therefore, that man has risen from the lower animals, it would be necessary to inquire at what point in the development of the animal does the "spiritual and religious element" begin to manifest itself. Suppose we dismiss, as unworthy of argument, the question as to whether fishes, reptiles, or birds have a "spiritual and religious element" in them, and take only mammals, we may then inquire at what precise point in their development did these extraordinary qualities first make their appearance; and, if they were perfectly natural products, why, then, should they be spoken of as entirely different from anything else nature has done—in fact, as being supernatural? What faculties has man by which he can distinguish the supernatural from the natural? Is there any man with knowledge so vast that he knows precisely the limit of nature's capabilities? Can he scale her heights or fathom her depths so completely as to be able to say, "So far nature can go, and no farther?"

The Rev. Scott Lidgett, however, argues that evolution "fails to destroy the fundamental difference between the conscious and the non-conscious." Mr. Lidgett will no doubt admit that evolution does teach that not only is man not distinct from the lower animals, but that all species of animals and all species of plants are artificial groups gliding one into the other, just as into their gradual development they evolved out of one another; and evolution also teaches that the line of demarcation between the animal and the vegetable cannot be drawn, nor can we say where vegetable life ends and mineral begins. And in like manner the line between the living and the non-living is equally hard to define; in fact, we are able to go so far down as to come across protoplasmic masses that may be said to hover on the borderline between the organic and the inorganic.

The Rev. Scott Lidgett goes on to affirm that "mind is distinct from matter." He does not, however, define what he means by the term "mind." But it is quite clear that he regards it as an entity—a something that exists within man, that can exist apart from the material organisation. Let us see what Dr. Büchner said on this subject:—

"The brain is the seat and organ of thought; its size, shape, and structure are in exact proportion to the magnitude and power of its intellectual functions. Comparative anatomy furnishes us in this respect with the clearest proof by showing the prevailing law, that through all classes of animals, up to man, the intellectual energy is in proportion to the size and material quality of the brain. Animals which possess no brain proper, but merely nervous ganglia, or rudimentary brains, generally occupy the lowest place in relation to mental activity, and appear rather to vegetate than to live. Man, on the contrary, occupying the highest place, as an intellectual being, has absolutely and relatively the largest brain" (*Force and Matter*, p. 162).

Bastian, in his admirable work, *The Brain as an Organ of Mind*, demonstrates that not only do the size and

quality of the brain have to be taken into account in determining the value of the brain, but also the complexity of the convolutions. Now, if mind is something separate and distinct from matter, can it exist and act without matter?

Spinoza has an axiom which runs thus: "Two things having nothing in common cannot be the cause of, or affect, one another." If matter has nothing in common with mind, how do they come to be associated the one with the other? And while we know that matter can, and does, exist apart from mind, we do not know of mind existing apart from matter. Can a man think without a brain? If a man gets concussion of the brain, what becomes of the activities of the mind while he lies unconscious? "The greatest thinker of the age," says Tuttle, "may in one hour during illness lose all his intelligence; in advanced age he enters a second childhood. The decay of the body induces decay of the mental faculties, which being extinguished with the last breath, like a lamp without sufficient oil, emitting only some feeble glimmers." Again, Valentine says: "If both hemispheres of a mammal are removed in layers, mental activity will be reduced in proportion to the mass removed. Perfect unconsciousness is generally the result if the loss extends to the ventricles." (Quoted by Büchner.)

Now, if the mind has nothing in common with matter, surely the removal of the hemispheres of the brain should not interfere with the thinking power of either the animal or man. Cannot the mind think without the instrument called the brain? If it cannot, how is it to carry on its work when the brain ceases to perform its functions? And, further, if the "soul" and the "mind" are but synonymous terms, then, by parity of reasoning, the soul in any other existence will require an organisation and a brain through which to manifest itself.

The third argument stated by the Rev. Scott Lidgett is perhaps a little more subtle than the others, but I do not see that it furnishes any stronger evidence for putting man into an entirely "different realm" from the lower animals, although it certainly does demonstrate what no Evolutionist would for a moment dispute—viz., that the development of man's mind, under rational conditions, does place him on a higher plane, in every sense, than the highest among the lower animals, or even the lowest of mankind. This is the way Mr. Lidgett puts his argument:—

"And, again, the study of mind in its highest human embodiment must be carried out by means of mental science, and not of natural history. What mind is must be found out by examining mind. It is no use to offer the natural history of its descent, or the account of its physical or physiological accompaniments. It is of slight service, if we are to study its contents, to observe its manifestations in the lower animals."

He goes on to affirm that we must study man at his highest, not in his physiological but in his psychological development, to understand exactly what mind is. Our answer to this statement is that no study of the human mind can be considered to be complete which does not embrace a study of the evolution of the mental faculties from the lowest up to the highest phase of their development.

The fourth point elaborates the results of this study. The Rev. Scott Lidgett says:—

"And when we come thus psychologically to examine the human mind, there are three great outstanding elements—reason, conscience, and religion. Reason, first aroused by material needs, steadily grows, throws off its shackles, and soars to asking the meaning of the world, and to recreate the world within itself on the basis of order, system, and purpose. That is to say, reason demands, perceives, creates a new environment for itself, and that environment is a universal mind, speaking to it in terms of order, system, purpose, which alone reason can understand, and which reason is driven to demand. And in the end, to the noblest men and the loftiest thinkers, only the rational is real."

If by this is meant that reason demands a consistency between subjective impressions—that is, impressions made by phenomena on the mind—and what is believed to exist objectively in the world in which "we live and move and have our being," we agree. With regard to "conscience" and "religion," it is impossible to discuss them at length now; we merely content our-

selves by saying that we do not agree with Mr. Lidgett when he declares that "conscience asserts the awful distinction between right and wrong in conduct." In our judgment, it is the province of reason to inform us what is right or wrong in conduct.

Conscience merely informs us whether we are acting up to our convictions or not. For instance, a man's conscience allows him to have one wife in this country at a time; but in Turkey his conscience would approve of him having as many as he could afford. The subject of "evolution and religion" is so large and important a theme that we must defer our comments on this subject to another article.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

Christian Falsehoods.

I AM asked by "A. H. T." to give my authority for accusing Mr. Horton of telling a falsehood concerning J. S. Mill, and also of accusing Dean Farrar of manufacturing three out of four references for a statement concerning Roman women. I do so with pleasure. In a sermon preached at Lyndhurst-road Chapel, on the last Sunday in November, 1899, Mr. Horton is reported as saying that at the age of eighteen the idea occurred to Mill: "Now supposing all these reforms were effected what then? He felt that if all were realised, so much would be left unrealised, and so little, indeed, realised [italics mine], that the whole of life..... lost its savor..... And then he tells us that he.....underwent what he describes as a kind of conversion by reading the poetry of Wordsworth, that poet of immortality." The implications of the above passage are: (1) that Mill felt the necessity of a belief in a future life, (2) that without such a belief this life lost its "savor," and (3) that Mill was "converted" by reading Wordsworth on Immortality. Now, (1) Mill did not say that *so little, indeed, would be realised* if he obtained all the reforms he was striving for. He said that, if there was nothing to strive after, life would be colorless; and he himself describes this feeling as akin to the fear that the sun would be burnt out, and attributes it to his low state of health; (2) Mill nowhere uses the term "conversion." This phrase is placed in his mouth for obvious reasons. He did say that he derived benefit from Wordsworth's pictures of rural scenery, but he describes the *Intimation of Immortality* as "bad philosophy." When two such phrases are placed in Mill's mouth by Mr. Horton, there is only one word accurately describing such statements, and I used it.

The statement made by Farrar is that "Noble Roman matrons counted the years, not by the consuls, but by their discarded, or discarding, husbands" (*Early Days of Christianity*, ed. 1894; p. 26). Authorities cited are Seneca, *De Benef.*, III., 16; Tertullian, *Apology*, 6; Tacitus, *Germ.*, 19; Suetonius, *Calig.*, 34. Of these Seneca does make the statement, although it is spoiled by being separated from the context. Tertullian is writing a tirade against extravagant dress, and says no such thing. Suetonius makes no such statement at all. And Tacitus does not, in the chapter cited, even mention Roman women directly or indirectly, nor does he make any such statement in the whole of his treatise. I might cite other examples of Farrar's mental obliquity; but, as I intend devoting a special article to him one day, I let the matter rest here. A full notice of Mr. Horton's sermon will be found in the *Freethinker* for December 17, 1899.

C. COHEN.

No Parsons in Heaven.

The chaplain of one of the lunatic asylums tells the following:—A woman (a patient of the asylum) is very keen on making him ask her conundrums. One day the chaplain asked her: "Why are there no marriages in heaven?" She could not answer then, so he told her that it was "because there are so few women there." Two days later a woman from the patients' ward gave him the following letter: "Rev. Sir,—The answer you gave me on Saturday was not the correct one. The reason why there are no marriages in heaven is because there are no parsons to perform them."

Gin and Religion.

THOUGH we may run the risk of shocking some of our Exeter Hall subscribers, we make bold to assert that a lot of this trouble which is at present endangering the future of the corrupt old Chinese Empire is directly traceable to the mischievous meddling of missionaries sent out from this country by foolish old spinsters whose sovereigns might far better be spent on the poor starving little brats of our countless and indescribable London slums. It is a bit cheeky, to say the least of it, to try and stuff our own pet, particular religion down the throats of all the rest of mankind not exactly of our way of thinking; but A. SLOWER is not going to moralise, but to tell a little story.

Out in a far North China Station a batch of these unordained parsons were converting the poor Heathen Chinese by getting him to accept, as it were, Christianity in one hand and a pair of winter scarlet wool blankets in the other. Now, the Heathen Chinese of North China, or this particular part of it, has no immediate need of scarlet wool blankets—as blankets—because he always carries enough dirt on him to keep him warm. But he is glad to get them all the same. He is glad to get them because there are plenty of European traders knocking about ready to do a little business swap at the rate of one bottle of good old London gin for two pairs of the wool blankets aforesaid, so that any two of the Celestials who care to take their gifts together to the unsentimental storekeeper can be sure of getting "blind" to their hearts' content that night, out of the same bottle.

It was a long time before the good missionaries "tumbled" to what was really up; but, of course, it came out eventually. They appealed to the British Consul to step in and stop it, but the British Consul wasn't quite such a fool as to interfere in such a matter. They tried as well as they knew how to suppress the illicit trading themselves, but the half-converted Heathen Chinese is a very tricky customer to handle, and ignominious failure resulted all along the line. All they could do was to exhort the almond-eyed converts to take more care in the future of the precious red blankets, which so frequently got "lost"; but even this scarcely diminished the traffic.

It happened that there strolled into the Mission Hall one evening a certain Wun Lung, who had already "lost" four sets of the precious blankets. He came to tell the old, old lie of being robbed again, and he spoke of how cold it was of nights. Of course the missionaries knew that he was lying like truth all the time, but they didn't quite know how to act in this emergency. They consulted together, long and earnestly, and finally they concluded not to give him any more blankets, for a week or two at any rate. With a very serious countenance the head missionary conveyed the verdict to Wun Lung, and that pesky child of sin was a bit flabbergasted.

"Whatee, whatee—no more blanketee?" he cried.

"Not at present," replied the missionary, still a little afraid of losing a convert.

"Velly well then—," began the Chinese, deliberately.

"Very well what?" interrupted the missionary.

"You no givee (blanky) blanketee, I no play bleing (blanky) Clistian. Wichée glood day!"

But they called him back and set him up with blankets again!

—*Sloper's Half Holiday.*

Grace before Meat.

THE scene of the following tale of family worship is laid in Port Jervis, New York, and the story is told in the *New York World* of June 29: "Henry Gotte, a farmer, wished to pray, and, being balked, stabbed his wife and daughter because they objected to his saying grace before meat. He is in the local jail. Gotte, wife, and daughter seated themselves at the dinner-table on Tuesday. 'We will now return thanks for all the good things we are about to receive,' said Gotte, devoutly. 'Oh, what's the use of praying?' interrupted Miss Gotte, who is seventeen years old. 'You'll be only quarrelling and fighting and cursing afterwards.' Her prayerful father threw a plate at her. 'I say we will pray,' he insisted. 'You're a thankless—,' 'The child is right,' said Mrs. Gotte, jumping up and striking her husband on the nose. 'We want peace and quiet here, not prayers.' Gotte stabbed his wife in the arm with the carving-fork. 'We'll pray,' he yelled, 'or there'll be—.' 'Let mother alone!' screamed the daughter, springing at her father. Gotte the devout stabbed his daughter with the fork, too. Mother and daughter ran shrieking to a neighbor's house. Gotte pursued, crying at every jump: 'You won't pray, eh? Just let me catch you!' The neighbor sheltered Mrs. and Miss Gotte, who on Thursday went to the local justice and swore out a warrant for the truly good Gotte's arrest."

—*Truthseeker* (New York).

Correspondence.

THE FALL OF MAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I thank you much for kindly inserting my letter, and still more by implying in your first article that you will permit its defence. You truly represent my views by stating I hold "Adam and Eve were real personages, and the Garden of Eden a definite portion of the earth's surface." I have neither fear nor scruple in proclaiming my unshaken belief is that Scripture account of the Temptation relates an actual historical fact which took place about eight thousand years ago. Permit me now to discuss your replies. To save space I put my remarks under three heads:—

(1) You say, with respect to Satan's employment of a snake: "Serpents are not endowed with a talking apparatus, and all the devils in hell could not make them use organs which they do not possess." My answer is, I do not believe the serpent spoke at all. I believe Satan alone spoke, and that Scripture himself he made it appear the serpent spoke, and that Scripture relates what appeared to take place. Subsequent disclosures (as I have said) show the Devil was really the speaker.

(2) By way of showing Adam and Eve were legendary figures, you write: "Thousands of years before they were created, according to Bible chronology, countries like Egypt were inhabited by millions of civilised men and women." Now this assertion I flatly deny, on the authority of such books as Dr. Southall's *Epoch of the Mammoth and Recent Origin of Man*, published by Trübner and Co., Ludgate Hill. I add that if any author has even attempted to refute Dr. Southall, I am unaware of the fact. I give some quotations from the first chapter of *Epoch of the Mammoth* to illustrate argumentation of the work. Southall writes: "The primitive condition of mankind was one of civilisation. The first glimpse we catch of the race in Egypt and Babylonia presents it as engaged in erecting pyramids," etc., etc., etc. Further on he writes: "All the evidences for the antiquity of man are found in Europe or in the river-valleys of India, but none such in Egypt, nor in middle or western Asia, which has been generally accepted as the primeval centre of the families of man." He then explains that ancient vestiges of man found in Europe are those of primitive tribes wandering off from the seats of civilisation (pp. 3 and 6). The last clause of Chapter I. runs thus: "If, again, it be true that man did appear in a civilised condition abruptly on the scene some six thousand or ten thousand years ago, and there are no traces of such a being prior to this, then, so far as man is concerned, the theory of Mr. Darwin, and all theories of evolution as applied to man, are negatived." These statements meet your assertion that we are sprung "from savage progenitors." Pardon me if I add geography further traverses your idea. Savages have been found hundreds of years ago in countries where Europeans cannot flourish, and they remain the same savages still, unable to take one step to elevate themselves.

(3) You say: "After asserting the 'innocence' of Adam and Eve, and their being without any 'evil inclinations,' Mr. Alcock states that their sin was 'deliberate.' We beg him to reconcile these apparent contradictions." I "reconcile" by reminding you that the evil inclinations from which I said they were free were any desires to break the moral law, as illustrated in that comprehensive summary known as the Ten Commandments. The sin of which they were guilty was an attempt to seek forbidden knowledge, which, as they hoped, would render them independent of God. That a possibility of going wrong may exist in perfect men and women is plain, because to human existence certain appetites are indispensable which, unless held under control, will lead to sin. Thus, we cannot get on without hunger and thirst; yet, if these appetites be not restrained, they lead to gluttony and drunkenness. So likewise we cannot make mental progress, unless we have a desire for information; but this, unless restrained by conscience and duty, may lead to deliberate sin, as it did Adam and Eve. It is well for us to be ignorant of certain information, whereby wicked men carry on their evil designs. Would you or I be profited by learning how to coin base money? I make this letter as short as I can.

HENRY J. ALCOCK, M.A.

195, Portsdown Road, W., July 19, 1900.

[We think a very brief reply is all that Mr. Alcock's second letter demands. What he believes is quite unimportant. All we care about is what he knows—that is, the facts. He believes that Adam and Eve actually lived 8,000 years ago, though the Bible chronology only allows about 6,000 years. He believes that the serpent did not talk, but the Bible says it did. He believes that Satan used the serpent, but the Bible says nothing whatever about Satan in this story. Mr. Alcock must try to pardon us for saying that his remarks on Darwinism and the antiquity of the human race are childish. Not knowing the facts, he is misled by the first orthodox "authority" he meets. Dr. Southall is a nobody in this connection. For the rest, we have simply to say that Mr. Alcock does not explain how two beings without any "evil

inclinations" could go morally wrong. His statement that perfect men and women are capable of going wrong is to us sheer nonsense. Let him extend the same idea to God, who is declared to be perfect, and God could go wrong too.—Ed.]

"OBJECTIONABLE RELIGION."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Having been away from home, I was precluded from following the interesting controversy on the use of the word "religion," for the starting of which I think I was responsible. As to that controversy in its details between "Chilperic" and Mr. Ball, I do not desire to intervene; but there are two main points that seem to me important, and which require to be brought out.

Neither Mr. Gould nor Mr. Ball has answered the question I asked in the original article as to how they would check anyone who proposed to deal with other words as they deal with the word "religion." There is not an argument which Mr. Gould or Mr. Ball advances for the secular appropriation of "religion" which would not equally apply to the annexation, say, of the word "Christian." That word certainly is often recklessly used to indicate what is considered moral and high-minded conduct, the assumption, of course, being that such conduct implies a belief in Christianity. And the word, I presume, also fulfils Mr. Gould's condition of having "embodied the sincerest ideals of [our] fathers," and for that matter, doubtless, of embodying the sincere ideals of some people still. Well, why not annex it? For aught I know, Mr. Gould may be prepared to do so. But by that time we would be back at Christian Atheism and phrases like "the good Atheist is the true Christian," which even to-day do pass current with muddle-headed and loose-thinking people. But I fancy not many Rationalists would be prepared to go that length in the annexation policy.

The second point is Mr. Ball's argument, in the postscript to his letter of May 20, as to the common usage of the word "religion." He says my argument, that nine out of ten attach a theological significance to the term, is inconclusive because certain people pretend that Atheism connotes immorality. But surely Mr. Ball perceives the difference in the two cases. Some uneducated, and even some supposedly educated, persons may argue that Atheism involves immorality, but that is an inference—a matter of controversy. No educated person and no dictionary pretends that *directly* Atheism carries that meaning. But the question raised on the word "religion" is one of etymology. Most educated persons and most dictionaries *do* define religion as involving theological belief, though of course we are all aware that some Positivists and some Ethicists use the word without intending such significance. Mr. Ball's argument, therefore, either means that, because some people infer immorality from the profession of Atheism, we can use words indiscriminately, or it is meaningless.

Verbal scrupulousness is surely one of the essentials of intellectual progress. And that Mr. Ball should describe as "exclusively critical or fault-noticing" those who are anxious to promote this scrupulousness, in contradistinction to the "more constructive" people, who add to the existing confusion by using words out of their common accepted meaning, is to me an example of the carelessness with which these words "destructive" and "constructive" are themselves frequently used. Indeed, that Mr. Ball should disparage criticism is itself extraordinary. What other part than that of critic did he play in the present dispute? He entered it—perfectly legitimately—to criticise "Chilperic"; and the spectacle of a critic condemning criticism—though not uncommon in the world of thought—is always somewhat humorous.

As I endeavored to point out originally, all intellectual advance implies accurate thinking, and is, therefore, comparatively slow. An apparent rapid advance may be made by borrowing words and labels from the reigning creed, by taking old formulas and striving to make them live again, by adopting obsolete ceremonies and endeavoring to give them new significance. But all that work could be much better applied, for some of it helps to keep in countenance the old superstition by making its old formulas seem respectable. If a Rationalist, say, calls himself a Christian, he is really, in part, helping to buttress Christianity; and, whether or not he thinks it useful to waste his time explaining that he means the word to be taken in an extraordinary sense, his conduct will be turned to the account of orthodox Christianity, and his example thrown at the heads of less convention-bound men than he. How often do we not hear from the common pulpit such phrases in reference to a semi-Rationalist as: "He never ceased to reverentially call himself a Christian."

No; progress comes by thinking, and one of the ways of making men think is by challenging their accepted formulas and breaking with their shibboleths. For progress can only be measured in intellectual stimulus. FREDERICK RYAN.

Mrs. Sparks—"Can't you get the stove-pipe together, John?" Rev. Mr. Sparks—"No, I cannot, Mary; and if it wasn't that I'm a minister of the gospel, I'd kick the whole darn business to pieces."—Judge.

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.): Closed during the summer.

WEST LONDON BRANCH ("Victory," Newnham-street, Queen's-street, Edgware-road): July 31, at 9, Business meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

WEST HAM BRANCH (Stratford Grove): 7, Freethought Demonstration.

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, E. White.

KILBURN (Glengall-road): 7.30, F. Schaller.

HAMMERSMITH (outside the Lyric Opera House): 7.30, E. White.

STATION-ROAD (Camberwell): 11.30, C. Cohen.

BROCKWELL PARK: 3.15, A lecture; 6.30, A lecture.

PECKHAM RYE: 3.15, C. Cohen.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 11.30, R. P. Edwards.

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

CLERKENWELL GREEN: 11.30, A lecture.

FINSBURY PARK: 3.30, A lecture.

VICTORIA PARK (near the Fountain): 3.15 and 6.15, W. Heaford.

MILE END WASTE: 11.30, A. B. Moss: "Scripture and Science"; 7.15, R. P. Edwards. August 1, at 8.15, W. J. Ramsey.

EDMONTON (corner of Angel-road): 7, A lecture.

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH (in the Bull Ring): 11, F. Hanks: "An Hour in Hell." Mr. Percy Ward will also lecture in the Bull Ring on Wednesday and Friday evenings at 8—weather permitting.

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): Open air.—Ducie-street, Piccadilly, near London-road Station: 3, H. Percy Ward: "The Gospel of Secularism"; Stevenson-square, 7, "Does God Answer Prayer?"

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (1 Grainger-street): 3, Members' Meeting SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): Members and friends meet at 2.45 at corner of Arundel and Norfolk-streets to go, at 3 prompt, by conveyances, to Mr. Ewing's Farm, Wharnclyffe Side.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation Schools, Market. place): Annual Picnic at Holywell Dene. Brakes leave Jarrow Ferry (North side), 1; Tyne Dock (fountain), 12.45; Shields Ferry, 1.15; North Shields, 1.30.

Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 17 Osborne-road, High-road, Leyton.—29, m., Station-road, Camberwell; a., Peckham Rye; e., West Ham Demonstration.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, London, S.E.—July 29, m., Mile End; e., Stratford. August 26, m., Mile End.

H. PERCY WARD, 2 Leamington-place, George-street, Balsall-Heath, Birmingham.—July 29, Manchester. August 5, Birmingham; 12, Failsworth; 19, Northampton; 26, Birmingham.

F. A. DAVIES, 65 Lion-street, S.E.—August 5, m., Clerkenwell Green; a., Finsbury Park. 12, m., Hyde Park; a., Victoria Park; e., Kilburn. 19, m., Battersea; e., Hammersmith. 26, a. and e., Brockwell Park. September 2, m., Clerkenwell Green; a., Finsbury Park. 9, Hyde Park; e., Kilburn. 16, Mile End; e., Hammersmith. 23, e., Stratford.

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