

# Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XX.—No. 33

SUNDAY, AUGUST 19, 1900.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

## Shakespeare : The Man.

UNDER this arresting title a slender volume has just appeared from the pen of Mr. Goldwin Smith; the publishers being Morang and Co., of Toronto, and the English agent Mr. T. Fisher Unwin. The author's object, according to his sub-title, is "to find traces of the dramatist's personal character in his dramas." But this is not what the author really attempts. Such an enterprise would involve the most careful and subtle analysis, and the result would extend to far more than these seventy-seven pages of type, of twenty narrow lines each, surrounded with extraordinary and extravagant margins. Mr. Goldwin Smith merely endeavors, in a rather cursory fashion, to deduce some of Shakespeare's opinions from his writings. In doing this he prints several long quotations, which help to make a small book of his little essay. By way of "apology" he expresses a doubt whether "familiarity with Shakespeare is so common as it was in former days"—a negative phenomenon which he associates with the "tidal-wave of popular and sensational fiction now flowing." But is not this a mistaken idea? Nothing in the London publishing world is so remarkable as the multiplicity of editions of Shakespeare. Library editions and pocket editions pour forth almost every season. That they are purchased goes without saying; and that they find readers is at least presumable. We will allow that the vast bulk of the British public are ignorant of Shakespeare's works; but that is only because they are ignorant of all high and serious literature. Yet the people who do read such literature are certainly, if slowly, increasing in number; and we venture to say that there are many more students of Shakespeare to-day than there ever were before.

Professor Smith remarks that materials connected with Shakespeare's personal history have been "gathered with the most loving and persevering industry." "Unhappily," he adds, "they amount to very little." Strictly speaking, this is true; relatively speaking, it is false. Shakespeare was not a public man, in the then prevailing sense of the expression. He was not a soldier, a politician, a diplomatist, or even a religious sectarian. He belonged to a profession that was more or less distinguishable, and as a man of letters he could only win distinction within a very limited circle. It is not to be expected, therefore, that we should be able to learn as much about him personally as we can about Lord Bacon, for instance, or Sir Walter Raleigh. Both these men were great writers, but they were also public men in the fullest sense of the word. Bacon was Lord Chancellor of England, and Raleigh was a renowned adventurer and explorer. Considering who and what Shakespeare was, it is wonderful that we know so much about his personal history. We have more ample and precise records of his life than we or even Spenser, who was patronised by Elizabeth, and had several other patrons amongst the proudest nobility. It is high time, in our opinion, to drop the common, but rather silly, astonishment at the paucity of the materials for Shakespeare's biography. And, after all, as Emerson said, Shakespeare is revealed to us, as far as he can be revealed, in his writings. "Speak, that I may know you," is a grand old saying. The printed page is a mechanical accident. It is the thought, the imagination, the language, purely in themselves, that come from a great writer's brain. And they disclose

his essential genius and character far more surely and intimately than any exterior records. All that a biography does is to corroborate in this or that way, or in many ways, the impression which is formed of a great writer by the "judicious reader," as some of the old poets used to say in their prefaces and dedications. We have set biographies of Dickens and Tennyson, and a scattered biography of Thackeray. Very interesting they are, for we all love to read about great men. But what do they amount to in comparison with the total volume of their work? Dickens, Tennyson, and Thackeray live for us in their writings; and Shakespeare lives for us in his writings too. He made a purchase like other men, or gave instructions to his lawyer about a suit, or signed a lease or a will, or arranged the business details of his theatre. All that sort of thing is by the way in the life of a man of genius. Where he is like other men he is very much like them. His distinctive quality alone is individual. What he is like when his genius is aroused into full activity, when his highest emotions are kindled, when his intellect takes its loftiest flights, can only be known from his creations. And to search for this information in biographical records is to seek the living amongst the dead.

Notwithstanding that "unhappily," Mr. Goldwin Smith has a perception of this truth. Instead of investigating municipal records, registers, leases, wills, and inventories, he sees that it is "better worth while to consider under what general influences—social, political, and religious—the life was passed." Accordingly he points out, as a professor of history might be expected to do, that between 1580, when Shakespeare was sixteen, and the time of his death, there were "thirty-six years full of momentous events." The Papal curse against Elizabeth, the Armada, the conflict in France between the League and the Huguenots, the insurrection of Essex, the death of the great English queen, the accession of James, the union of the Crowns of England and Scotland, the Gunpowder Plot, the opening of the struggle between Parliament and the Stuarts, and the beginning of the Thirty Years' War, make a crowded period of history. But was it really these events that moved the mind of Shakespeare? We think not. There was something mightier behind them all. Printing had only recently been invented, America had but lately been discovered, and it had just been ascertained that the world was round, that the sun was the gigantic centre of our planetary system, and that the heavens were strewn with countless other constellations. This was the mighty revolution in human knowledge, and therefore in human thought, which preceded the exercise of Shakespeare's incommensurable genius. It was another instance of the man and the hour. Such a revolution is not likely to occur twice in the history of our planet, and such a genius as Shakespeare may never be born again; almost certainly not in similar conditions, and with the same opportunities. For the first time in the world's history, it was possible to perceive man's true position in the universe. Shakespeare had the amazing intellect, not only to perceive it, but to accept it absolutely in the moral sphere. He took human nature as his province—that human nature which is eternal, and outlasts all dynasties and systems. Banishing the supernatural, except occasionally for mere stagecraft, he brought human nature into the presence of All-Nature; and showed that as the earth shares the movement of the universe, so man shares the life of the earth; and that although his soul is swept by tides of thought and

passion, those very tides are like the ocean tides in this, that they are under the sovereign sway of absolute and universal law. It was the great principle of moral causation that Shakespeare introduced, established, and illustrated. His Titanic mind rested on the nature of things. Nothing less was adequate to support it. And there, to use his own sublime phrase, he laid great bases for eternity.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be continued.)

## Freethought Propaganda.

WE shall soon be able to say, in the words of Jeremiah: "The summer is ended, and we are not saved." But, unlike the case of the ancient prophet, the means of our salvation exist, and we hope to be in a position ere long to avail ourselves more than ever of the secular agencies of human redemption. Notwithstanding the rapid progress of the Freethought movement within the last few decades, there still remains the necessity of further advancement before we shall be free from theological restrictions and priestly interference. The Church still continues its activity in promulgating false and dangerous creeds and dogmas, in striving to stifle the spread and influence of genuine Freethought, and in seeking to nullify the legitimate results of Secular progress. While, as Freethinkers, we have cause to be proud of the many victories already won, we are not oblivious of the fact that the battle with religious error and ecclesiastical domination is not over. The theological serpent is, we believe, fatally wounded, but it still lives, and exercises what little power it has left in the endeavor to strangle social freedom and intellectual liberty. Theology, supported as it is by vested interests, fashion, and centuries of accumulated ignorance, will die hard. The battle, however, between ancient superstition and modern thought is going on in earnest, and Freethinkers mean to continue the fight until complete victory over the foes of human advancement crowns their efforts, for they believe with Byron:—

Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow.

The success which has hitherto attended our efforts in the conflict of truth with error encourages us to be even still more determined in performing our Secular work. We should be only too glad if we could, for the common good, confine our labors to the inculcation of the positive principles of Secularism. But, unfortunately, the time for that has not yet arrived. The tactics of the enemy make it imperative upon us to go on with our destructive policy. If the land were virgin soil, and all the clearing done, we could at once use the plough and bring the soil under proper cultivation, sow seed, and wait hopefully for the harvest. But too much of the ground is already occupied, and the weeds must be removed, for it would be useless to attempt to plough, let alone to sow seed, until a greater clearance than we have up to the present been able to effect has been made. While, therefore, we are ever ready to expound those positive principles which, we believe, would raise the masses of the people from the grovelling and dependent condition to which priestcraft and ignorance have reduced them, we are compelled to face the fact that theological dogmas stand in the way of our enterprise; that the Church does its best to deprive us of a fair opportunity of exercising our undoubted rights in the advocacy of our views; that the clergy are ever active in misrepresenting our teachings; that special efforts are being made at the present time to force Bible reading and religious teaching upon our children in the public schools; and that various forms of superstition, with narrow creeds, mental limitations, and threatenings of cruel penalties, bar the path of progress. These are the obstacles we have to remove in order that we may have a freer scope and a less trammelled course for our constructive work. The truth in religion we respect and would conserve, but whatever interferes with personal rights, intellectual liberty, and ethical culture we declare open and unflinching war against, and regard it as a service to mankind to persistently carry on the conflict to the bitter end. As Secularists, we are opposed to all coercion, to any attempts to enforce uniformity of belief or stereotyped monotony of thought. We want no Procrustes' bed,

either of a theological or an intellectual character. Well has it been said of those who strove to bring all men to one way of thinking:—

Tyrant more cruel than Procrustes old,  
Who to his iron bed by torture fits  
Their nobler part, the souls of suffering wits.

The above has been written with a view of reminding Freethinkers throughout the country of the necessity of supporting the agencies of Secular propaganda now at their command. We are approaching the period of the year when all workers in our movement should be kept busy, and when those who are unable to render service with their tongue or pen should give, according to their means, pecuniary aid, so that the propaganda may be carried on efficiently. Now the agencies at present at our command for Freethought propaganda are four-fold. These are the National Secular Society, the Secular Society, Limited, the Freethought Publishing Company, and the Twentieth Century Fund. All of these, if adequately supported, will be found to be sufficient to enable a comprehensive crusade to be conducted against our common enemy. Once more it should be urged that it is the duty of all Secularists, who have their principles at heart, to assist in this important work. We cannot exert our due influence without mutual help. The very essence of Secularism is co-operated, not isolated, effort. We see members of churches supporting their cause with money and labor. It may be that they expect to be rewarded for their services in another world, which is a very humiliating incentive and a selfish motive. Secularists should be inspired by nobler desires—namely, the realisation here on earth of the beneficial results of their devotion and generosity to their principles. To the honor of our cause, be it said, we have men and women in our ranks who feel a pride in doing what they can to advance the interests of the movement; and the one thing needful is that others should follow their example. It cannot too often be pointed out that if the influence of Secularism be allowed its legitimate scope, if it is not dead as an inspiration to usefulness and benevolence, then every Freethinker should manifest more vigor and courage than do the abject bondsmen of creeds and conventionalities.

While the National Secular Society, with its numerous branches throughout the country, and its many self-denying workers both in London and the provinces, is doing good work in Freethought propaganda, and while the Freethought Publishing Company has supplied a long and pressing want in properly controlling the sale of our literature, the claims of the Secular Society, Limited, should be regarded also as of the greatest importance. It is through the agency of this Society that money can be safely given for Freethought propaganda. Twelve months ago the present writer stated, in the columns of a contemporary, that the establishment of this Society "destroys the baneful effects of the old Blasphemy Laws, and gives ample legal security to any donations or bequests that may be given or left for Secular purposes.....As an old soldier in the cause I ask one and all to be up and doing. The member-list of the Secular Society, Limited, should rapidly increase, inasmuch as the progress of Freethought propaganda depends largely upon the support that is rendered to this Society." This advice, which I now repeat, I have never failed to give since both publicly and privately. It is only through its agency, in my opinion, that any practical provision can be made for the future status of Freethought in this country. It would be gratifying to me to see our wealthy friends provide the means for erecting a Secular Hall in London to be under the control of this legal Society. Such an act would, I think, be far preferable to making any one person its proprietor. A permanent Secular Hall should be for the service of the party in general, and the provisions made for its management should prevent the possibility of our losing it through the action or the death of any individual.

To those friends who desire to immediately aid Freethought propaganda, the Twentieth Century Fund offers an excellent opportunity. The nature and object of this Fund will be seen by reading the *Freethinker*. In the *Morning Leader* of August 1 the following paragraph appeared:—

"The Wesleyan Conference resumed yesterday at Burslem. Rev. Albert Clayton brought up a report on

the Twentieth Century Fund, which showed that the sum already in hand was £317,443. The amount promised was 733,313 guineas. They now required 266,687 guineas to complete the fund. Many additional promises were made at the sitting, amounting altogether to 40,062 guineas."

Now, if money can be thus obtained to perpetuate superstition, surely the means to combat its blighting influence ought to be forthcoming from the friends of reason.

I have written thus because forty years' experience in the Secular Movement convinces me that the course here suggested, if adopted, would enhance the usefulness and stability of our cause. I wish with the dawn of the twentieth century to see the Secular Movement placed upon such a basis that our triumphs over error and superstition in the future shall be even greater than those of the past. Undoubtedly our platform is sufficiently broad for all good practical work. Of it we may speak in the words of Pope:—

Friend, parent, neighbor, first it will embrace;  
His country next, and next all human race.  
Wide and more wide the overflowing of the mind,  
Take every creature in of every kind.

CHARLES WATTS.

### Progress of Secularism.

It is not at all unusual for me, in my wanderings up and down the country, to meet with people who take a gloomy view of the progress of our movement. Young enthusiasts who have awakened to the discovery that the world is not to be saved in a day, old workers who have had their early energies weakened by the slow passing of years, are apt to throw up their hands in despair on discovering that the majority of people, in spite of all that they can do, seem determined to keep to the old roads, and to cherish the old beliefs. If people will not listen and be saved, let them do otherwise and be damned, is the practical conclusion of these people, whose emotions overpower their intellect; and, adopting the advice of Heine, to allow "every man to go to hell in his own fashion," they are content to remain passive spectators of a contest in which they should be active participants.

At bottom, the cause of this feeling is want of appreciation of the nature of the forces against which all advanced ideas have to fight, or, what amounts to the same thing, non-recognition of the real nature of intellectual development. That man is but a poor judge of human evolution who anticipates that any great and permanent modification of thought is to be brought about in a day or in a generation. There are not many important intellectual movements the clear progress of which can be discerned by those who take part in them. In the animal world there is a fairly constant ratio between the length of the period of gestation and the duration of individual life, and the same law holds with equal strength of intellectual growth. Movements that reach their maturity quickly die out with equal rapidity, and for a very sufficient reason. A principle that does not have to fight hard for its existence enjoys present peace at the price of future life. It is in complete harmony with the existing intellectual state, but it contains no promise for the future; and in the ceaseless evolution of thought it is soon left behind, a fossil form indicating only one of the mental stages through which the race has passed. It is the slow, imperceptible influences that tell in the long run, as the escarpment of a hill which defies the action of the strongest tempest crumbles away inch by inch under the action of forces too gentle in their operation to compel observation.

It is not by limiting our survey to the few years that comprise our individual experience that we can ever hope to estimate aright the progress of a great movement. To do so is to emulate Mark Twain's attempt to travel down a mountain side on the surface of a glacier. The sound way is to contrast what is with what was fifty or a hundred years ago, and then gauge the difference between the two periods. When this is done, I believe it will be found that, bearing in mind the nature of the forces against which we fight, our progress has been simply amazing. The end of the

century finds the pulpits ringing with teachings that would, at its commencement, have been denounced as Atheistical. Teachings then dismissed as dangerous are now accepted as strictly conservative. The heresies of the fathers have become the orthodoxies of the sons. People accept in ordinary conversation, read in books or glance casually over in papers, teachings that would have awakened a storm of religious indignation awhile ago. There is almost a competition amongst certain classes of the clergy as to which can, within certain limits, say the severest things concerning the religious beliefs that were held in pre-Darwinian days.

And this general temper rests, to a considerable extent, on specific changes. The century now dying has witnessed the practical destruction, so far as educated people are concerned, of the old claims set up on behalf of the Bible, of belief in prayer, miracles, and special providence. We have seen also the partial disappearance of the old-fashioned "Sabbath," and the development of a movement that will convert Sunday into a real day of rest and of recreation. The right of free thought and free speech has been practically won both legally and morally. And all round these has grown up a tendency to criticise measures and men and opinions more from the standpoint of their practical value in the social economy than from their agreement or disagreement with "revealed" religion.

It is from this point of view that we have to criticise the growth of our movement, not from that of the number of people who are willing to adopt the specific title of Atheist, Secularist, or Agnostic. It need surprise no one that the majority of people have not been in a hurry to call themselves by these names; the wonder would be were it otherwise. Society is, and always will be, composed largely of people who have no inclination to adopt an opinion at the price of personal discomfort. So long as the holding of any opinion opens one to the infliction of penalties, social or legal, so long the majority of people will shrink from adopting it. This may be a sorrowful conclusion, but it is unfortunately a sound one. All that we can hope for under such conditions is to influence these people by the teachings which they specifically reject. And that this is being done none can reasonably deny. All the apologising inside and outside the church, such movements as the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon," the attempts of the clergy of all denominations to run more of social subjects into their sermons and less of theology, are all indications of the spread of Secular principles, which, although they may be disowned in name, are yet adopted in practice.

Moreover, it is too often forgotten that it is not the main object of the Secular Society to capture and parade converts on the model of evangelical Christianity, nor to build up a new church on the ruins of the old, with fresh services, hymns, etc. This would mean the establishment of a new sect, with the consequent growth of sectarian feelings, which are equally objectionable wherever they are found. All of these things doubtless have their uses, but they are as instruments of warfare rather than as the main object of the campaign. Our main object is that of the propagation of certain principles, and these, while uniting men in a common bond of interest for common social objects, yet break down the sectarian feelings upon which large organisations are built.

I do not mean, I repeat, that organisation is not necessary. Indeed, it is just now vital to the welfare of our work. We have passed the stage when Secularism can attract by sheer novelty of being. Our work has been done so well that the public at large are tolerably familiar with its general outlines, and this alone renders a good fighting organisation indispensable. What I mean is, that the practical success of our work has to be tested by the spread of the principles we advocate, not by the number of members whose names appear on our books.

Forty years ago the Secular Society stood almost, if not quite, alone in providing instruction and entertainment, free from theology, on Sunday. Now there are scores of other societies carrying on the same work, and we are surely entitled to claim some portion of the credit for this change in the general state of affairs. And all this means, not merely that our ideas are spreading rapidly, but that the multiplication of fresh

centres of Secular activity is taking a share of the energy that previously flowed in one direction. In one sense, therefore, our work is an attempt to extinguish our own existence. The more powerful the principles of Secularism become, the less need there is for a society to keep their existence prominently before the world.

And this enormous change in public opinion is all the more remarkable when we bear in mind the number of people engaged in the fight and the nature of the forces against which they struggled. In all history there never was a fight that was apparently more hopeless than that waged by the Freethinkers of a century and a half ago against the Christian Churches. It was not a contest of rival sects, where the same feelings and mental characteristics would suit either; it meant a change in the mental horizon of each convert, the growth of a set of entirely new ideas. It was the fight of a handful of men, poor, and lacking social position, against a Church with practically unlimited power and money, and with all the force of fashion to support its claims. The Church could bribe the poor with gifts, it could purchase the support of scholarship by the dual process of founding lucrative chairs and lectureships, and by locking out from professions all who questioned its claims. Nor was this all. To-day it is a tolerably easy thing to advocate heresy. There is still hard work and little pay—the usual accompaniments of holding unpopular opinions; but the men who fought the fight with the halter round their necks, with all the old Blasphemy Laws in active operation, had no public opinion to which they could appeal against their enforcement.

A more hopeless outlook there could hardly have been before any body of men. Yet the Secular cause has seldom lacked strong, resolute fighters, and these men, aye, and women, with nothing but the strength of their cause to spur them on, and fighting the most powerful religious organisations that the world has seen, could yet set on foot a movement which, within the brief space of a century, has been mainly instrumental in destroying many of the harsher features of Christianity, and in so profoundly modifying public opinion that Christians now reject with genuine indignation beliefs for the questioning of which their great grandfathers sent men and women to prison year after year.

We have good reason to be satisfied with the progress of our cause when we contemplate its development from something like a scientific standpoint. That its further progress *might* be greatly accelerated cannot be denied. Indeed, my object in writing this article has been, after showing the groundlessness of the complaints one often hears, to point out how this may be done. And, in a succeeding article, in dealing with the nature of the forces that obstruct our further progress, I hope to make some suggestions on this head.

C. COHEN.

(To be continued.)

## Religion Not Morality.

RELIGION in its development takes on ethical elements. The conception of the deity which any religion offers represents the ethical standards of its adherents. The history of religion makes it clear that the moral attributes of deity are in every case drawn from the ethical ideals prevailing amongst the chief worshippers, and that they have been first constructed in human relations before being ascribed to the gods. The essential truth upon which we are insisting is that the entire history of religion bears clear and emphatic testimony to the fact that all the ethical elements which it contains have been transferred from the human sphere to the divine; they are of earthly warp and woof; they contain man's imperfect ideal of what he ought himself to do and to be. In other words, the ethical elements in religion are due to an immanent, not a transcendent, process of development.

Almost every religion has developed some more or less detailed code of morals which it has imposed upon its adherents as an element in religious obligation. Morality is, therefore, often regarded almost exclusively from a religious point of view, and it is important to

distinguish between a theological, or religious, and a scientific treatment of the problem of ethics. A theological system of ethics involves certain pre-suppositions concerning a superhuman order and man's relation to it. In such a system the accepted ethical principles appear as commands, or laws, of the deity or deities. But a scientific treatment of ethics seeks to discover and explain the facts of human conduct as facts of the existing order without regard to their ultimate philosophical interpretation. It seeks to find the sanctions of morality in the natural and inevitable results of the conduct itself, and to establish morality on a rational basis by exhibiting the inescapable consequences of right and wrong action, of good and evil character, as in themselves sufficient grounds for the choice of the one and the avoidance of the other.

In the historical evolution of religion may be distinguished three general stages. The first may be described as a stage of magical and of sacrificial rites. The second stage is that at which emphasis is placed upon creed and dogma, upon a right intellectual attitude towards the deity. The third stage is that in which the emphasis is shifted to morality—to conduct and character.

The powerful and varied influences which religious beliefs have exercised upon conduct in the course of human history cannot receive a detailed discussion. It is clear, however, that these influences have been of a dual nature—partly beneficent and partly baneful. For while heroic souls have again and again quickened their moral life at the altar of religion, the fanatic and the inhuman persecutor have no less surely drawn inspiration from the same source. An "age of faith" is not *ipso facto* an age of morality, nor an "age of doubt" necessarily one of immorality. It all depends upon the kind of faith and of doubt in question. But one should surely be cautious about identifying moral conviction with religious emotion. Examples are never wanting of those who "believe and tremble," and yet boldly play the devil's part in this business of life.

For its theoretical support, for the establishment of those metaphysical beliefs which form the intellectual bases of its faith, religion requires ethics. This order of dependence cannot, from a theoretical point of view, be safely reversed. To assert that in the last analysis morality is dependent upon a belief in a God who "exists as numerically separable from the universe," and in finite souls "eternally and immortally separable from God," is completely to invert the evidence, to place the pyramid of thought on its apex instead of on its base. To insist upon such metaphysical beliefs as the basis of ethical teaching seems to me, not only false in theory, but pernicious in practical tendency. The actual experience of the good life is its own best vindication, as that of the evil is its completest refutation. No view is more shallow than that which sees in morality only a means for securing the blessings of a future life. Nay, more, morality would still remain and its requirements be no less exacting were mankind to reject belief in the transcendent. As Martineau has said: "Did we even imagine that we came out of nothing and went back into nothing, and had ties only with one another, still so long as we are what we are, our life must take form from its own germ, and grow and ramify into moral communities."

—*International Journal of Ethics.*

## The King of Death.

How is it known that it was claimed, during the life of Christ, that he had wrought a miracle? And if the claim was made, how is it known that it was not denied? Did the Jews believe that Christ was clothed with miraculous power? Would they have dared to crucify a man who had the power to thrill the dead with life? Is it not wonderful that no one at the trial of Christ said one word about the miracles he had wrought? Nothing about the sick that he had healed, or the dead that he had raised? If Christ had wrought the miracles attributed to him; if he had cured the maimed, the leprous, and the halt; if he had changed the night of blindness into blessed day; if he had wrested from the fleshless hand of avaricious death the stolen jewel of a life, and clothed again with throbbing flesh the pulseless dust, he would have won the love and adoration of mankind. If ever there shall stand upon this earth the king of death, all human knees will touch the ground.—*R. G. Ingersoll.*

## Acid Drops.

THE late Lord Russell was first a great advocate and afterwards a great judge. He is also said to have been a great lawyer. But there was a better lawyer than Sir Charles Russell—as he was then called—at the time of the famous Trafalgar Square "riots." The present writer waited on Sir Charles at his office, in company with Mr. Tims, of the Metropolitan Radical Federation. We wanted to know the law with regard to the use and control of the Square. But we really could not obtain it from the great man, nor were we any better off when Sir Horace Davey came to his assistance. They could not make the law clear to us, because they did not understand it themselves. But it was made clear enough to us when we visited Mr. Bradlaugh.

Several weeks later the present writer sat next to Sir Charles Russell on the platform in the hall of the Borough of Hackney Radical Club. Cunninghame Graham, John Burns, and other "fighting" Radicals and Socialists were there, and brave speeches were made in favor of calling another meeting in Trafalgar-square. Sir Charles Russell strongly opposed this policy, and made a resolute speech in favor of sense and sanity. By that time the law was clear enough to everybody—thanks to Mr. Bradlaugh; and Sir Charles contended that what they had to do was to get fresh regulations carried—which, by the way, was done when the Liberals came into power again. When the ruder opponents of his view interrupted him with threatening observations, he replied to them defiantly. One could see that he was not a man to be driven or intimidated.

Mr. T. J. Macnamara contributed to the *Morning Leader* of August 7 an article on "Bible and School," in which he celebrated the "Compromise" of 1871 as a triumph of statesmanship. Under this arrangement, the children in Board schools have the Bible read to them and explained. Well, now, the Bible says that Jesus was born of the Holy Ghost, that his mother was a virgin, and that his nominal father, Joseph, had nothing whatever to do with his introduction on this planet. That is what the Bible says. But a Board-school child being asked, "Who was the father of Jesus?" replied "Joseph," and the answer was allowed to pass in the school, although a rumpus was afterwards raised about it on the Board. Mr. Macnamara also seems to think that the child's answer should pass. Could anything be more illogical? The "Compromise" is simply a burking policy; and is, at bottom, nothing but a Nonconformist dodge.

Wesleyan ministers are great on "temperance," by which they mean the un-Christlike policy of absolute teetotalism. Most of them are ready to stand up and denounce the drink traffic as the greatest curse of the age. But they are afraid, or they do not care, to go further. When the Rev. Thomas Champness introduced his annual resolution at the recent Wesleyan Conference, declaring it to be undesirable that persons engaged in the liquor traffic should be appointed church officers, Dr. Stephenson got an amendment carried by an overwhelming majority. Only nine hands were held up in support of poor Mr. Champness's motion. The fact is, the Wesleyan Church cannot afford to ostracise brewers and publicans.

It appears that the English rabbis are not very partial to the Zionist movement. But what else could be expected? Here in England the Jews enjoy full rights of citizenship; they are in every respect equal with the Gentiles, and often that any considerable number of them are going to emigrate to Palestine? What would any of them, except perhaps the very poorest, gain by leaving a country like this and settling down in a country like the old land of their distant forefathers; a land which, as Gibbon sneered, is about the size and of the fertility of Wales?

Mr. Zangwill must have felt this, we imagine, when he remarked at the Zionist Congress the other day that if gold were discovered near Jerusalem there would be a great rush of Jews there, who would soon have to wrest the franchise from the Turks?

The Rev. Dr. Hanson writes to the *Daily News* criticising the views of the Right Hon. Sir George Goldie on China. "The burden of his message to the world," says Dr. Hanson, "is that Christian missions are unnecessary in China, because China has as high a code of ethics as Christendom possesses, and does not require our assistance in the moral domain. We may, he urges, have a good deal to teach China 'in the art of war, in pure science, and in those mechanical and other arts which have developed with such leaps and bounds in the Western World during the nineteenth century.' But, religiously and morally, the Chinese are very good people, and our attempt to introduce Christianity into the Celestial Empire is only waste of time."

To this Dr. Hanson dissents in a letter in which there is a lot of impassioned nonsense about "He is the Light of the World; He is the Lamb of God; He is the Resurrection and the Life"; and so on, which—if Dr. Hanson will forgive us for saying—is simply silly Tommy rot.

Sir George Goldie writes, in reply, to the *Daily News*: "I had for years heard it repeated that our troubles in China were due to the manner in which our missionaries preached religion, to their want of tact, and to other cognate causes. I, therefore, felt bound, when asked, to say that, in my opinion, this was not true, and to point out that the real quarrel of the Chinese people is with *Christianity itself*; because this religion, unlike Taoism and Buddhism, is (as Dr. Hanson will doubtless agree) wholly inconsistent with that ancestor-worship on which, for countless centuries, the whole social fabric of Chinese life has been based."

Mr. Baring Gould, in his recently-published work, gives some references to neolithic China. After describing the extraordinary amount of respect for his ancestors, which seems to be the first obligation to a Chinaman, Mr. Baring Gould says: "It is resentment against lack of respect shown to the dead, neglect of duty to the dead, which has provoked the massacre of Christians."

Ambrose Bierce observes: "With reference to some remarks of mine on missionaries a pious correspondent asks if I do not know who was the author of a certain command to go forth into all the earth and preach the gospel—the Christian gospel. No, I do not, nor does he; but I know that it has cost more hundreds of thousands of human lives than it contains words."

Instead of sending missionaries to China and elsewhere, it would be, says a contributor to the *Topical Times*, "in far more excellent taste for certain generous, but meddlesome, busybodies to begin their charities nearer home. I know I am traversing old ground, but, as Heine says, '*Es ist eine alte Geschichte das bleibt sich ewig neu.*' If the money spent on missionaries and mission-houses, etc., for the so-called benefit of the savages of various countries were only expended in a proper and legitimate way amongst the poorest of the poor in the East-end, much crime and unpeppable misery would be averted. 'Wot aggrawates me, Samivel,' said Mr. Weller, shaking his head gravely, 'is to see people wastin' all their time and labor in making clothes for copper-colored people as don't want 'em, and taking no notice of flesh-colored Christians as do.'"

The *Topical Times* further remarks that it would be "quite politic, on England's part, to lessen the raging mania for sending out missionaries—whose mission, by the way, appears more to stir up strife than to bring about peace and goodwill.

For modes of faith, let graceless zealots fight;  
He can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

The most intrepid of explorers and keenest of observers, Mary Kingsley, in her *Travels in West Africa*, inveighed strongly against the system of missionary work. It is an entire waste of money, energy, and labor. How much better could these latter be employed in ameliorating the condition of the poor of our great cities.

Chinese converts to Christianity should now hold a prayer meeting (providing there be any left to attend), and tell what the Lord has done for them. He has, at least, removed several thousand believers from a world which, in his wisdom, he did not make a fit place to live in. These Chinese, by their conversion, made enemies of their countrymen, and discovered that the Lord does not protect his own.—*Lucifer*.

According to a *Daily News* special correspondent at Tientsen (Mr. T. C. Cowen), the Chinese imperial gazette—an official organ—says that the troubles are solely due to religious disputes. That is the Chinese view of the matter, and we believe it is thoroughly accurate. It is not true that the Chinese object to trading with foreigners. They are wise enough to know that they benefit by an exchange of commodities. What they object to are the airs and interference of the Christians, who come there for the benefit of their souls, which they think they are quite able to take care of themselves.

An Italian priest, of Troy, New York, has caused a rumpus by saying that King Humbert brought about his own death by his attitude towards the Church. This can only mean that the Church, or God, prompted the assassination.

"Pardon all who did him wrong." This is an extract from a prayer composed by Queen Margherita after the assassination of her husband. We don't suppose, however,

that it will save the life of Bresci. These pious exercises are not to be read *au pied de lettre*, as the French say.

Father Bannin, rector of the Italian Church, Hatton-garden, London, is reported to have said from the pulpit that regicides should be dealt with by the mob. This is no doubt a very common feeling, but we are surprised to hear it expressed by a Christian preacher. He may be able, for all we know, to reconcile it with his religion; but we defy him to reconcile it with the elementary principles of civilisation, one of which is that trial must always precede sentence and execution.

"Who will protect me?" asked the frightened Archbishop as the Iron Crown of the Lombards was being conveyed from the Cathedral to the Royal Villa. The poor man of God was frightened by the great crowd at the cathedral door, and evidently did not put much faith in the protection of heaven. "Fear nothing, Monsignore; I am here," said the Marquis Benzoni, laying his hand on his sword-hilt. Whereupon the man of God recovered his equanimity.

Cardinal Vaughan recently delivered a discourse at Chester on "Criticism of the Holy See." It was truly Roman Catholic in its intolerant spirit. He spoke of the "intellectual pride and licence of thought which characterize modern society in England." He said that this disintegrating atmosphere penetrates wherever it is not deliberately excluded, and added that, "like many other temptations, it has to be repelled with determination and *even with violence*."

The Cardinal apparently means intellectual "violence" in the individual. But that was not exactly the kind of violence his Church once believed in and practised. There is evidently some bitterness of feeling in the Cardinal's mind over the Dr. St. George Mivart episode, if we read between the lines of the following remarks: "There are Catholics who permit themselves to read and discuss whatever is printed, if only it falls under their notice and is written in an attractive style. In their presumption and ignorance, without careful intellectual training, and without any necessity, they seem to deem themselves a match against the most subtle arguments, and the false presentation or half-presentation of the facts which they have never mastered or even heard. They criticise the conduct of the Holy See as though they had a mission to rescue the government of the Church from failure. These public criticisms and attacks upon the Church by children professing to belong to her are proofs of an un-Catholic and disloyal spirit."

So that there are troubles and dissensions and doubts and difficulties even in this religious haven of rest to which bewildered and storm-tossed sceptics are invited to betake themselves and unburden themselves of Reason, if they would have "Peace, perfect peace."

An Evangelical journal quotes the remarks of "a leading preacher" on "Honest Doubters." He said: "There is a fashion in doubt as there is a fashion in dress. Many men borrow their doubts from their neighbors." If he had said that men borrowed their religion from their neighbors or inherited it from their parents, he would have been nearer the mark. Curiously enough, the same journal publishes in the same issue a sermon by the Rev. Marcus Rainsford, Vicar of St. James's, Holloway, who says, with undoubted truth: "There are numbers in every community who readily assent to the main doctrines of the Bible and of the Church, making no objection, raising no question:—

As to the Christian creed, if true or false,  
I never question it, but take it as the vulgar do."

These people, says the Rev. Rainsford, are "assenters" and nothing more. He thinks they are even worse than Dissenters.

Elisha the prophet opened the eyes of his blind servant, who saw the whole mountain full of guardian horses and chariots. But the Rev. W. W. Jubb, an American preacher, who has been discoursing in a London Congregational church, says that the horses and chariots may have been seen in a dream, and were perhaps not real, but figurative. Some day or other the clergy will recognise that the Bible is *all* a dream. A good many other people realise it already.

When a parson dies while pronouncing the benediction, or is seized with a fit which terminates fatally, what are we to think of the occurrence? This sudden stroke fell upon the Rev. Charles Burd, vicar of Shirley. Did he displease the Almighty just at that moment? Or was it simply another proof that inside churches, as well as outside them, the laws of nature pursue their inevitable and irresistible course?

"The Church in Cap and Bells" is the heading given by

the *Islington Gazette* to a communication from a correspondent signing himself "Passer-by." It seems that the writer came across, outside the Mission Hall of a well-known Islington church, a prominently exhibited poster, on which were the following lines:—

In the name of the Lord Jesus.

BANK HOLIDAY AROUSEMENT,  
Monday, Aug. 6th, at 8 p.m., in this Hall.

Hon. Sec.  
and  
Workers.

WILL WITNESS for CHRIST with SWORD, and  
Testimony. R. U. KUMIN?

Later in the week he happened to pass the same Mission Hall, where there was another bill. This time it read as follows:—

In the name of the Lord Jesus.

BANK HOLIDAY AROUSEMENT,  
Monday, August 6th, at 8 p.m.

SAVED POLICEMEN WILL WITNESS  
For CHRIST and Take Part In The  
EUROCLYDON OF PRAISE.

EMOC UOY ERUS EB—C? MOVE ON PLEASE.

There are some good, honest, truth-telling, fair dealing men in the police force as well as some unblushing liars and hypocrites. But probably the bulk of the members of the City and Metropolitan forces will feel more than a trifle disgusted at a few of their comrades allowing themselves to be exploited and paraded in this "circus" fashion. The correspondent of the *Islington Gazette*, as an English Churchman, observes that these poster "jokes" may be all very well when "used on behalf of a penny show, but when used to attract people to what is apparently a devotional meeting —?" He adds some remarks on the use of "vulgar buffoonery" in the supposed interests of religion.

Obviously, the vicar is ill-advised in approving of these clownish announcements. As for the police "buffoons" who contribute to the show, they ought to be decidedly refused the promotion they hope to gain from pious Aldermen and Police Commissioners.

"Why doesn't the working-man go to church?" is still a question with the orthodox. The answer is, in theological terms, that he doesn't care a damn about church.

"A working-man of over thirty-three years' Church membership" writes to the *Record* on the "very serious non-attendance of working-men in our churches." He says: "What man, with any principle of Christianity in him, can go into any of our churches on a Sunday and see the great number of vacant seats and the deplorable absence of working-men without a feeling of humiliation and sorrow at such a shameful sight? The very marked predominance of the female worshippers over the male is quite ten to one. Let us take the East-end of London, that part being a pre-eminent working-man's neighborhood. The churches are capable of accommodating 700 to 1,500 people. But, as a general rule, what number of men do you find at the morning service? My experience tells me about twenty to thirty; at the evening service, at times, as many again. The other parts of London are on a par with the East-end."

Yes, and the answer is still that working-men do not care about church, and no enticements are equal to attracting them to religious establishments in which they are called upon to thank heaven for the "state of life to which it has pleased God to call them."

To what a quaint use at least one of the Church services is put may be gathered from the old wives' practice—and one by no means unique—of retiring to the cellar when a thunder-storm is taking place and reading the service for those at sea. But this is capped by the undertaker who, when his son was seriously ill, read the Burial Service to him by way of consolation.

Undoubtedly Tommy Atkins is devout. He must be so, unless his paid chaplains are terrible liars. We now have a remarkable incident to record which may throw a sidelight on the question. Recently there were three Welsh battalions of Militia training at Milford Haven. On the first Sunday

136 Wesleyans and other Protestants were marched to a church which is two miles from the camp. When they returned from the service all the men "changed their religion" in order to avoid such a walk! This is the extent of Tommy Atkins's faith.

In the Established Church of Scotland, before the days of popular election, when a minister was "presented" to the parish any parishioner had the right to lodge objections to his settlement. In one case a parishioner, who disliked the use of "the paper," lodged the following three objections to the presentee: First, that he read his sermon; second, that he didn't read it well; and third, that it wasn't worth reading.

Mrs. Conger, the wife of the American Minister in Peking, is, it seems, a Christian Scientist, and her co-religionists—if that is the correct term—maintain that, with their co-operation in America, she quelled the ferocity of the "Boxers" by sheer thinking.

A young and guileless missionary went to Uganda. He speedily found himself in an embarrassing position. A black damsel of very handsome appearance came to visit him, bringing a basket of fruit as a present. The following day she brought another present. This went on day after day for nearly a fortnight. Then the missionary learnt that, according to the native usage, any young woman seeking a husband, and finding a young man to whom she feels drawn, immediately brings him a present, and, if he receives it, she is encouraged to repeat the gift. Each acceptance makes it more certain that she has found favor in the sight of the young man. At the end of a certain time he is expected to propose to her, and she becomes his wife.

"Imagine," says this sucking young dove of a missionary, "my feelings when I realised the undeniable proofs I had given her of my love. With great embarrassment I had to tell her of my ignorance, and to explain that a white man could not possibly marry a black woman. Alas! she saw no reason why this should be so, and went away, I fear, with a heavy heart." He does not say whether they afterwards met, nor—what Exeter Hall would be most anxious to know—whether she was converted.

"There can be no God" was written on a paper clenched in the hand of an unknown woman who poisoned herself at South-wark. Poor woman, she had found the battle of life too hard, and came to the conclusion—arrived at on other grounds by other people—that Theistic belief is mere imagination.

It is much to be regretted that Professor Marshall-Hall has eventually been hounded from the Chair of Music at Melbourne University on account of his public expressions of disbelief in Christianity. This contemptible piece of bigotry seems to have been rendered possible only by the casting vote of the Vice-Chancellor of the University. The *Topical Times* remarks: "We suppose now that some brainless mediocrity, with no ideas on anything, least of all on music, but with an infinite capacity for kow-towing to orthodox authority, will be appointed to undo the great work that Marshall-Hall has done in the Colonies. It is a thousand pities; and if Sir Henry Wrixon, and the fearful souls outside the Council who supported him, never regret this stupid heresy-hunt of theirs, we are sure that artistic Australia will have plentiful reason to do so."

"A Priest" writes a letter to the *Church Times* in which he says: "I have often wished that someone with a persuasive pen would write an article upon 'The Conceit of Anglicanism,' for I am sure it is much required." This looks like a suggestion to contributors to the *Freethinker*, though sent to the wrong shop.

This candid Church friend continues: "Bishops, dignitaries, and many others, are constantly trying to impress upon the world how very superior we are to any other part of Christendom, and yet, when one goes about amongst men in this and other countries, one cannot fail to see that there is little to be proud of in the 'religion of Englishmen.' We are thinking a good deal this week of religions being 'known by their fruits,' and it requires very little investigation to see what the fruits are of Catholicism and Protestantism respectively. We have only to look at the Protestant parts of Germany to see how short is the step from Protestantism to infidelity. Or look at those parts of this country which are most under the influence of Protestantism—Wales and Cornwall, the strongholds of so-called Wesleyanism, which, alas! are conspicuous for immorality and untruthfulness."

Talking of clerical conceit, the following little incident which occurred recently seems to be very *apropos*. The clergyman of a small parish in Glamorganshire turned up the other Sunday morning at church very late, having kept the congregation waiting. One of the churchwardens went up to him and mildly remonstrated. The clergyman promptly replied: "What has this to do with you? This is my church."

So the men and women of the parish are pondering on the problem.

The *Church Gazette*, in regard to the question, "Why men don't go to church," says: "One of the main reasons which we suspect to be positively driving men away from church is found in the extreme fatuity of the ordinary run of pulpit utterances which prevail in our own community. This habit of feeble conventional twaddle and failure to speak so as to touch men's business and bosoms is fatal."

The "Rubaiyat" is popularised in *Scribner* with half-a-dozen quatrains, entitled "How Granny reads her Omar." Here are three:—

Come, now! cheer up an' have a cup o' tea,  
Things ain't so hard's you mak' 'em out to be.  
Be happy while you can; time ain't so long  
But what it soon must end fer you and me.

You nee'n' ter think the worl's a-goin' ter know  
About it, when you quit this earth below;  
There's several others died sence Time began,  
An' likely others will keep doin' so.

'Twont pleasure me ter have you mourn fer me—  
I'd rather you'd be happy, as I be;  
So when you pass my empty place, jest stop  
An' laugh a little laugh fer me to see.

It is suggested that this parody of the sentiments of Omar is satirical. If it be so, it is satire of a very gentle sort as far as Omar is concerned, and of rather a bitter tone as regards the pious rubbish with which poor old women are usually crammed.

The latest achievement of Providence deserves to be placed on record. The *Stroud Journal* publishes two paragraphs relating to Painswick Edge. One refers to anniversary sermons in that locality; the other to a terrific thunderstorm which passed over the district. A resident at Butt Green had a narrow escape of being struck by lightning. He had been sitting near a window, but, as the lightning became more severe, moved away into the room. The next flash struck a Bible placed near the window and shrivelled the covers. The impartiality or the indifference of Providence is more than a little remarkable.

Providence, who has fashioned the locust and planted him on the earth, is probably unaware that in these latter days the locust plague scourges forty millions of the fifty-three millions of square miles of the earth's solid surface. The locust causes more pecuniary loss and misery than a native war, or a series of native wars combined, or, according to Dr. Munroe, "a greater loss both in blood and treasure than a war even between Great Britain and the South African Republics."

So that apparently the evil on the earth does not all originate with man—notwithstanding the doctrine of Original Sin. All the same, he has to fight it, and remove as much of it as he may. Often a weary task, leading to acidulated utterances.

The Gospel tent in the Waulk Mill Field of Morpeth, in which "with increasing fervor" evangelistic services have been held for five weeks, was burned to the ground the other Sunday. The reliance on the Lord was such that the arrangement remained uninsured, though it was a large circular marquee beautifully finished inside and seated with backed wooden seats.

Of course, it may inspire the pious folks, who have received this apparent Providential rebuff, to build a stone structure. True, but what a precious waste of material. And very likely when the people have built a handsome edifice and nicely fitted it up, there may come another fire and burn the whole affair to the ground.

"Meeting in the House of the Lord for worship and prayer" does not assure and exempt the worshippers from meteoric disturbances. A terrific thunderstorm broke over Boston (Lincolnshire) on Sunday evening, and the famous tower of St. Botolph's Church was struck by lightning, a pinnacle from the summit falling a distance of nearly 300 feet into the church below, where the congregation were assembled. The "Dead March" in "Saul," as a tribute to the late Duke of Edinburgh, was being played at the time, the congregation standing. The mass of masonry fell with a crash through the leaden roofing, and a scene of indescribable confusion followed. The worshippers were panic-stricken, women screamed and fainted, the organ ceased playing, and many persons ran hatless out of the various exits. The clergy remained at their posts, and attempted to restore order. The pinnacle fell close to the font, and fortunately no one was injured.

Good old Providence

A curious accident happened at Bologna the other day. A bell-ringer, while ringing the bells in the campanile of a church, was struck by a great bell in its swing and thrown violently out of the window of the tower. Fortunately he fell in a sitting posture on the roof of the church some fifty feet below, and was only stunned. Shortly recovering, he was able to descend unhurt, and was acclaimed by the crowd which had witnessed his involuntary flight and now called out: "A miracle! a miracle!"

Cleanliness may be next to godliness, but it is not necessarily the same thing. A reporter has been visiting some property belonging to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in the London lums where ice cream is manufactured. He says: "The horrible, unspeakable filth that permeates the district is simply appalling."

The Shah of Persia, like our early Quakers, religiously objects to take off his hat in a Christian church. On his way from St. Petersburg to Paris the Shah stopped at Cologne, and, says the *Daily News*, expressed a wish to see the interior of the famous cathedral. His Grand Vizier was sent to the Ecclesiastical authorities to make the needful arrangements for his master's visit. The Persian Minister was informed that it was the rule of the Church of Cologne, as unchangeable as the laws of the old Medes and Persians, that every visitor, however sublime his position, should uncover his head whilst in the cathedral. "In that case," said the Grand Vizier, "my master will never come." Subsequently, however, it was arranged that all ordinary visitors should be excluded during the Shah's presence, and that he and his ten Ministers should be permitted to inspect the Church of the Three Kings of the East—for such is the dedication of the cathedral—not, indeed, with their ten hats, but with ten small lambswool caps upon their heads. It was casuistically, but very conveniently, determined that this would be no more irreverent than the wearing of a biretta by a priest or of a mitre by the archbishop within the sacred walls.

A strange mishap has occurred at Braintree, in Essex. It is ludicrous in itself, but, from an ecclesiastical point of view, it may have serious consequences. It seems that the Bishop of Colchester was taken round, for consecration purposes, the wrong half of a meadow recently added to the Braintree Cemetery. The ceremony was thus performed on the half belonging to the Nonconformists. It remains to be seen whether the Nonconformists will agree to change their land for the other half. If not, it is suggested that things will be rather awkward.

Dissenters will, unless something is done, receive the great "privilege" of interment in prelatially consecrated ground, to the horror of all true Churchmen. Or, for the sake of deceased Churchmen, the other, and really the Church portion, will have to be consecrated, which, again, will not remove the precious value and importance already conferred on the Nonconformist portion. Is it possible to un-consecrate part of a cemetery?

The Churches have, for the most part, tacitly ceased to preach hell-fire. Curiously enough, quite a number of "sacred edifices" have, during the last year or so, become the prey of fire—i.e., the common or garden "devouring element." Meanwhile Providence, as usual, exhibits absolute indifference. The last convective which has been assailed by fire is a church at Westminster. The worshippers, we are told, gave place to firemen, and the outbreak, which began in the nave, was eventually quelled.

The methods of missionaries are indeed about as insane and mischievous as human imbecility could make them. We learn now from an article in the *Nineteenth Century* that a certain Christian mission band at Alexandria has seriously disturbed the confidence in British rule in Egypt. Its secretary has published in Arabic a controversial tract, "Jesus or Mohammed," and forwarded copies to all the mudirs of provinces, principal sheikhs, doctors of the El Azhar University Mosque and others, in wrappers resembling those used by the Government. Much trouble and misunderstanding have ensued. The writer, after citing this as an instance of the indiscretion and unwise methods of zealous English missionaries, mildly observes that the missionary must recognise that he will make hardly any converts at all for the present. "It is as an educator, as a moral force, by his example indirectly influencing the lives of his people, that he can be of use."

This is a pretty fining down of missionary aims and prospects. We can be sure that such a calm and philosophical view will not commend itself either to the sectarian missionaries, who have gone abroad, or to those rabid religionists who have sent them thither. There must be the "beating of the big drum" of our own blessed faith, and an unmeasured denunciation of the ancient beliefs of foreign people upon whom we have chosen to intrude ourselves—or pious subscribers to missions will think their money thrown away.

Wonderful is the conceit of some preachers, fostered, no doubt, by the fulsome flattery of their admirers. Much is made in the recent issue of a religious weekly of a "crush" at Westminster Abbey "to hear Canon Gore." The Canon, no doubt, has a certain popularity, but it can hardly be denied that there were other, and even more potent, attractions to the Abbey. For one thing, it was the August Bank Holiday Sunday, and the major part of the "crush" consisted of visitors to London who came to view the interior of the Abbey. Many of them had probably never heard of Canon Gore, nor heard his sermon, though they were there. Next there was a great and continuous downpour of rain which drove many inside for shelter. Really remarkable, indeed, are the doubtful ways in which some religious journals endeavor to build up a reputation for their favorite preacher.

The danger, from a sanitary point of view, of the collective use of the communion cup at sacramental services has been frequently dwelt upon. Now we learn that in America, to provide against contagious diseases of the mouth and throat, a number of individual cups have been provided at various churches. The cups are of glass, or are silver plated, about two or three inches deep, each holding an individual portion of the wine. These are handed round upon trays or holders of a cruet form, containing usually forty cups in each, secured in sockets.

Here we have the Lord's Supper brought up to date. Medical science has, indeed, progressed from the times of Christ, and taken possession of his followers. But the new idea seems to be more than a little incongruous with the story and design of the Lord's Supper, as anyone may perceive who reads the Gospel narratives. These modern "individual cups" irresistibly remind one of a barber's shop. We have now, it seems, in these latter days become so super-fine and so sensitive to possible danger that one Christian brother cannot drink out of a cup after another. Where does the old "loving cup" of some generations ago, and still connected with certain ceremonies, come in?

It would be easy to imagine Jesus Christ regarding with intense scorn—such as that which he is said to have visited upon the inwardly unclean Pharisees—these modern so-called "brethren" who worship in his name. Not that there may not be a real danger in drinking from a cup handed from one to another; but when the Lord Jesus Christ is so intimately mixed up with the business, it seems rather cowardly and contemptible on the part of Christians to exhibit any hesitation in following the example which he and his disciples are said to have set.

At last we hear of a real appreciation of "religious books" by Tommy Atkins. It seems that someone at home, acting upon a suggestion made a few months ago, marked a parcel that he addressed to a private of the Coldstreams in South Africa "Religious Books" as being a likely way of ensuring its delivery. The private has written back, "Thanks for the parcel marked 'Religious Books' which contained real Yarmouth red herrings. They went down a treat. Fancy bloaters for breakfast on active service!"

The *Church Gazette* has the following editorial note in its latest issue:—"The *Freethinker* has rescued a valuable utterance from unmerited oblivion. It appears from its last number that the Rev. Mark Guy Pearse lately delivered a discourse in the Wesleyan Chapel of Lowestoft, which was too good to be lost, but which, but for the accidental presence of a 'chiel takin' notes' on behalf of that journal, would never have reached the public ear. It is incomprehensible to us why Mr. Pearse should not desire publicity, and no less so why the *Freethinker* should volunteer to confer it upon him. But that is their business."

Well, if the advanced views which were reported are familiar and acceptable to the *Church Gazette*, being, as it were, mere elementary ideas, they are not so to vast numbers of Christians. Hence the preacher's apprehension in regard to publicity, and our generous gift of space.

Recently a caustic letter appeared in the *Daily News* on "clerical headmasters." There is much to be said which is not favorable as to the methods and performances of clerics who thus duplicate their offices. The writer of the letter pertinently observes that the "school pulpit" which these clerical pedagogues profess to think the chief part of the school is often "degraded to the utterance of platitudes or cant."

Of the making of new religious sects there is no end. The more absurd they are, the quicker seems to be their growth. We now hear of an American sect calling themselves "Faithists in Jehovah." It has sprung up not inopportunely, for most folks of intelligence and culture have now practically abandoned any faith in the tribal god of the Old Testament. But the "Faithists" have some scriptures of their own called "Oahspe." This book they believe to have been written by some sort of inspiration through the hands of a New York dentist in 1881.



## N. B.

The FREETHINKER is no longer published at 28 Stone-cutter-street, but at 1 Stationers' Hall Court, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C., the office of the Freethought Publishing Company, Limited, where all orders and communications should be addressed.

## To Correspondents.

MR. CHARLES WATTS'S ENGAGEMENTS.—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.

A GOOD deal of matter has to stand over till next week in consequence of the editor's absence from London. He will be back in the editorial chair in time to supervise the next issue of this journal. Meanwhile a call is made upon the indulgence of correspondents and other persons.

A. L. WILKINSON.—Mr. Foote will deal with the point in the course of his criticism of Mr. Goldwin Smith's volume. There is evidently room for a book on Shakespeare from a Freethought standpoint, and Mr. Foote has for some time had an idea of writing it. He has at least one qualification for the task—an intimate knowledge of Shakespeare's works, and a good acquaintance with the most important things that have been written about them.

C. NEWELL.—Your suggestion shall be considered. Pleased to hear from a Freethinker of sixty years' standing. Acknowledgments for the Freethought Twentieth Century Fund will be made next week.

W. H. M.—The words in the second column that are enclosed in brackets are editorial, and are intended to draw the readers' attention to the contradiction in the two texts. The "third day" can only mean the third day after the baptism.

J. W. BARKS.—Received. In our next.

F. E. WILLIS.—Handed to the secretary as desired. Thanks for the cuttings.

W. P. ADAMSON.—Too late for criticism in our present issue. Will deal with it next week.

JAMES MCGHEE.—(1) Sorry we are unable to give the address of an intelligent elder of the Peculiar People." (2) Nor do we know of any special book on non-Catholic shrines. (3) Mr. Ward was quite right. Tyndall proposed that the ward devoted to testing the efficacy of prayer should be treated, as far as doctoring and nursing are concerned, precisely like other wards. That was a necessary condition, in order to see whether praying for the patients made any difference in regard to their recovery.

T. K. HOLMES, Temple of the Muses, Lancaster, thinks it would be a very good thing to publish a list of newsagents who sell the *Freethinker*, and will be happy to have his own name included. "I not only sell the paper," he says, "but I read it and appreciate it, and push its circulation with all my might." This correspondent is hereby informed that Mr. Foote's *Prisoner for Blasphemy* has long been out of print; also that the Sunday Act of Charles II. does not contain the clause he supposes.

J. Y.—Shall appear.

A. NUGENT.—You must expect to find plenty of superstition in a country like Ireland. Thanks for your letter.

FREETHOUGHT TWENTIETH CENTURY FUND.—Miss E. M. Vance acknowledges:—H. L., £1; L. Simpson, 5s.; W. Lamb, 10s.

A. HALLAM.—The articles by Mr. Neale on "Brother Prince," and his "Agapemone, or Abode of Love," appeared in our issues for January 29 and February 5, 1899.

MISS VANCE would be glad if any readers, having spare copies of the *Freethinker* for September 10, 1899, would communicate with her.

KANGAROO.—We are glad to know that our old friend, Jos. Symes, is well and active, notwithstanding the attempt of the bigots to kill him, and that he is starting on a lecturing tour in New Zealand.

RECEIVED.—Blue Grass Blade—Friedenker—Glasgow Evening News—Nottingham Evening Post—Morning Leader—Crescent—Torch of Reason—Two Worlds—Secular Thought—Boston Investigator—Hereford Times—Stroud Journal—Birmingham Daily Gazette—Truthseeker (New York)—Public Opinion—Islington Gazette—Manchester Sunday Chronicle—Morpeth Herald—Melbourne Liberator—La Petite République—People's Newspaper.

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.

LETTERS for the Editor of the *Freethinker* should be addressed to 1 Stationers' Hall Court, Ludgate Hill, E.C.

ORDERS for literature should be sent to the Freethought Publishing Company, Limited, 1 Stationers' Hall Court, Ludgate Hill, E.C.

THE *Freethinker* will be forwarded direct from the publishing office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One year, 10s. 6d.; half year, 5s. 3d.; three months, 2s. 8d.

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

## Sugar Plums.

THE Freethought Demonstration, which will take place to-day in Victoria Park, at the usual meeting-place of the Branch of the National Secular Society, will commence at 6.30 p.m. instead of 7 p.m. as previously announced. The speakers will be Messrs. G. W. Foote, C. Watts, Cohen, A. B. Moss, and Heaford. It is particularly hoped that there will be a large and early attendance of Freethinkers.

The Annual Children's Excursion, under the auspices of the N. S. S. Executive, takes place on Saturday, September 1. Brakes will convey the youngsters to Underhill Farm, New Barnet, where provision will be made for their entertainment. Application for free tickets should be made to the Secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, at 1 Stationers' Hall Court, E.C. Subscriptions towards the expenses of this function should also be sent to her at the same address. We hope the London Freethinkers will not forget to support this effort to give the children a first-rate holiday. All the work will be done gratuitously—and gladly; but brakes, bread and butter, buns, cake, milk, lemonade, and prizes cost money, which the workers can hardly be expected to contribute all by themselves.

The subscriptions for the excursion already to hand include: Mr. George Anderson, £3 3s.; Mrs. Marks, 5s. Next week we hope to have the pleasure of announcing considerably more. Miss Vance wishes it to be known that it is not proposed to take children under five or over fourteen years of age, and the tickets are to be obtained from her.

Mr. H. Percy Ward's excellent letter, printed in the Birmingham *Daily Gazette*, has neatly pricked the bubble of the new religious instruction policy of the "Liberal Eight"—representing the non-Church Christians of the Midland metropolis. We are glad to see the "Secularist View" so ably presented in the local press.

*Reynolds's Newspaper* writes as follows of the new edition of the *Bible Handbook*:—"This is a volume which we strongly commend to all interested in the study of the Judaic-Christian Scriptures. It is edited by G. W. Foote and W. P. Ball, and published by the Freethought Publishing Company, 1 Stationers' Hall Court, London, E.C., price 1s. 6d. Indeed, we cannot conceive any Christian as having a faith worth regarding unless he has studied this remarkable volume. Teachers in Sunday and elementary schools will find it of special value as an aid to the exposition of the Christian religion from a thoughtful and critical standpoint. It is a perfect army of facts and comparisons. Since 1888 it has been the standard volume of the subject with which it deals, and its popularity is emphasised by the fact that the public have demanded a new edition."

A complete list of promised donations to the Freethought Twentieth Century Fund will be published in next week's *Freethinker*. Mr. Foote finds it impossible to publish a complete list this week, as at the time of going to press he is still absent from London; and it seems better to postpone the list altogether than to print a partial one which may cause dissatisfaction.

Those who intend to subscribe to this Twentieth Century Fund should lose no time in communicating with Mr. Foote. Next week's list ought to be both long and strong.

Readers of the *Freethinker* are desired to bear in mind that the first week in October is a "Shilling Week." During that period we expect to receive at least one shilling from hundreds (why not thousands?) of Freethinkers throughout the kingdom towards the Freethought Twentieth Century Fund. We do not mean that subscribers are to be limited to one shilling. They are free to send us any number of shillings. The more the better. We mean that one shilling is the minimum. The maximum will be the largest number of shillings sent us by a single subscriber. Everyone's gift will be separately acknowledged in our columns.

## A Seaside Sermon.

ON that popular holiday height, Douglas Head, in the Isle of Man, the Ven. Archdeacon Madden preached a sermon the other Sunday, and notes of it have since been published. He does not seem to have "improved the occasion," except for unbelieving folk, who, having heard or read his discourse, can hardly fail to be confirmed in their unbelief. When *will* preachers realise that vapid commonplaces, unwarranted assumptions, a lot of scrappy texts, and a great deal of nauseating nonsense about Jesus and his blood, do *not* constitute a discourse equal to the intellect, taste, or sentiments of even the average man?

Somehow preachers, especially of the Anglican Church, seem incapable of learning or moving with the times. The same dry old sermons which used to send our forefathers to sleep in their high-topped pews are thought good enough—without even the pretence of hashing up—for modern hearers, who may well turn away with disgust mentally, though perhaps forced out of decency's sake to remain in person till the preacher is pleased to wind up with those ever-blessed words: "And now to God the Father," etc.

This seaside sermon of the Ven. Archdeacon Madden seems to have been one of that numerous class of inflictions. Not even the invigorating breezes which fan the beautiful Manx island at every point, and at none more than on Douglas Head, seem to have swept the old cobwebs out of his brain, and inspired him to a little exhilarating effort. The probability is that he "prepared" his address far away, and delivered it perfunctorily and inartistically, as most of these cut-and-dried discourses are pitched at the heads of harmless people who have done nothing to deserve any punishment of the kind.

He commenced with a text, of course. What a notable innovation it would be if some high Church dignitary would start the fashion of preaching without a text. Often the so-called text turns out to be a little disjointed phrase which frequently has no real bearing on the main subject of the discourse. Though sometimes one has observed that the text and a conscientious notion of sticking to it, and repeating it from time to time with damnable iteration, has spoiled what might have been otherwise a fairly interesting sermon.

The Venerable Archdeacon's text was from Matthew xi., "Rest unto your souls." It will be seen that this text or motto has a vague bearing upon the occasion—namely, the gathering of a holiday crowd. But then it is a little too much to assume that the crowd were upon Douglas Head and in the Isle of Man to rest their *souls*. They have all eternity to do that in—in one place or another! They were there to rest, recruit, and reinvigorate their bodies and their brains too, which latter theologians will not admit to be functionally identical with the soul. The Ven. Archdeacon was willing to admit that his hearers had "come from warehouse and factory, from shop and store, from office and mart, to seek rest and refreshment for their bodies." Quite so, a sufficiently sensible remark; but then, of course, we must be immediately told that "the body is sanctified and made sacred by the Incarnation and by the blessed hope of the Resurrection." We can imagine the solemn tones in which this piece of godly nonsense would be uttered. "Sanctified and made sacred by the Incarnation."

What an awful, wretched, absolutely hideous perversion of the facts of science, history, and plain common sense to say that our bodies are "sanctified and made sacred" by the tradition that a Nazarene carpenter was nailed to a cross for some offence of which the tribunal of his place and time adjudged him, rightly or wrongly, guilty! Our bodies have been "sanctified and made sacred"—if the terms are not still misapplied—by a prolonged martyrdom to the forces of nature and environment which commenced incalculable eras before the appearance of this much-belauded and sadly overrated person, who, in spite of all pious protestations to the contrary, contributed very little or anything to our development.

And then, according to this Ven. Archdeacon on Douglas Head, these same bodies are sanctified and made sacred by the blessed hope of resurrection. But

how are these bodies to be resurrected? How are all the scattered fragments, long dissolved into dust and scattered to the winds and absorbed into other bodies, to be gathered and invested with their original individuality? Not to pursue this point, we notice that the Ven. Archdeacon goes on to say that "increase of insanity is undoubtedly due to overworked brains." Insanity is undoubtedly due, in a large measure, to religious delusion, and it may even be, in a few cases, to the heroic resistance of religious persecution—and there the primary cause is still religion.

"But I am present to-day, not to address you on rest for body and brain, but on rest for your soul." The Ven. Archdeacon, solicitous for the Church of Christ—the augmentation of which means a great deal to all ministers of the Gospel in more ways than one—fears that "many here are haunted with a sense of unrest—suffer from a lack of peace—in their souls." There might be a few, of course, who are so disturbed, but no one would think it, if they watched the bulk of the holiday visitors, when released from the ministerial voice, as boys from school. The round of amusements in the island, as elsewhere at seaside resorts, find, and have always found, so much patronage, have been entered into with so much gaiety and gusto, are so universally regarded as the main object of life for the time, that the Archdeacon's fears must strike everyone as more than a little unfounded. Without doubt—allowing for a few exceptional instances—they originate and are confined very much to himself and others of the clerical and ministerial profession who, like pushing tradesmen and vendors of patent medicines, think that the wants of mankind are such that it is impossible for folks to live without patronising their wares.

It seems idle to pursue this seaside sermon further, with all its talk about "Jesus who hung on the cross for you," which, being interpreted, means for *us* ("the bishops, clergy, and ministers of all denominations," according to the old toast at public banquets, now largely discarded). But there is a pretty little verse which was recited on Douglas Head by the Ven. Archdeacon, which is not to be commended for its poetic elegance or its accordance with solid facts, but which is rather comical. This is it, and it may be given without further comment as an expression of the maudlin piety of folks who have never troubled to make any inquiry into the foundations of their faith, but rely on the old explanation, "Mother told me so!"—

"I came to Jesus as I was,  
Weary and worn and sad,  
I found in Him a resting-place,  
And he has made me glad."

Well, it does not require much to make some people glad. This fact is especially observable in children. But how the Gospel narratives, which are the only record of Jesus that we have, can make any person glad is quite beyond ordinary comprehension.

FRANCIS NEALE.

## A Future Life.

THE great majority of mankind think that a belief in future existence is absolutely necessary to present happiness. We believe the doctrine to be a mistake. Time a thousand years hence is no more to us now than time a thousand years past. As no event could have harmed us when we existed not, so no event can possibly harm us when we are no more. By anticipating and calculating too much on future felicity, and dreading, or at least fearing, future misery, man often loses sight of present enjoyments and neglects present duties. When men shall discover that nothing can be known beyond this life, and that there is no rational ground for any such belief, they will begin to think more of improving the condition of the human species. Their whole thoughts will then be turned upon what man has done, and what he can still do, for the benefit of man. As they will be delivered from all fear of invisible voluntary agents that may do them harm, so they will no longer look up to such agents for help, but they will study more their own powers and the powers and properties of nature. They will discover how much time and labor are spent entirely uselessly, and worse than uselessly—perniciously; that so far from improving the condition of man, such labors only tend to destroy his own peace and render him an enemy to his fellow-man.

—"Occasional Thoughts," by Horace Seaver.

## The Bible and a Future Life.

FROM A LETTER TO THE CLERGY.

"I PRAISED the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive. Yea, better is he than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not yet seen the evil work that is done under the sun" (Eccles. iv. 2, 3). This is rank pessimism, no doubt; but, as the Holy Ghost inspired it, you will not blame me for it, I presume. A man comes with nothing, and "in all points, as he came, so shall he go" (v. 16). A man's (18). All go to one place (vi. 6), yet *you* pretend there are three places, at least, heaven, hell, and purgatory! "I commended mirth," says the Holy Ghost, through this writer, "because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry," etc. (viii. 15). Here is another text: "All things come alike to all: *there is* one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as *is* the good, so *is* the sinner; and he that sweareth, as *he* that feareth an oath. This *is* an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that *there is* one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness *is* in their heart while they live, and after that *they go* to the dead. For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun. Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works. Let thy garments be always white, and let thy head lack no ointment. Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity; for that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labor which thou takest under the sun. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest. I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race *is* not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding; nor yet favor to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all" (Eccles. x. 2-11).

This is tolerably plain language, gentlemen. The righteous are no better off than the wicked, the pious than the profane; there is the same event to all. The dead positively know nothing; there is no reward for them; their very sentiments, good and evil, have perished; therefore, live as fully as thou mayst, for thou goest to sheol, the grave, the state of the dead; and in that state work is impossible, for there can be no plan laid out, there is no knowledge, there is no skill. All this is the exact reverse of what you are paid so well to teach and preach. Why do you not show people what your Bible contains? and why do you explain away and begot what the Bible so explicitly declares? Lawyers are bad enough; but not half so bad as you, not half so uncandid. In the ninth verse, I must note, the translators have stuck *this* before life: *this* life—a dodge intended to suggest that the writer really expected another life. This is piety, but extremely dishonest. Perhaps you will point to Ecclesiastes xii. 1 as showing that the writer was quite orthodox (also the Holy Ghost who prompted him, of course); but I have a word to say upon that passage: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity..... Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh" (Eccles. xi. 9, 10; xii. 1).

"Creator," says the Authorised Version; but the Hebrew word never means that, and is both plural and

feminine too! It may mean "thy fruitful ones," thy prolific females, wives, or concubines. That is probably the sense, and the following verses give an enormous weight of evidence to that view. Remember thy fruitful ones while fruitfulness is possible, ere the barrenness and dryness of old age shall come, when both pleasure and gain shall be at an end.

The writer evidently had some vague belief in a God (what his God was I know not, any more than you know what yours is), but he clearly and emphatically denies the future life, as regards both men and beasts; and, of course, what he wrote the Holy Ghost inspired; and thus shows us that *he* denied the future life at that time, whatever change of views his unchangeableness underwent in later ages. To be sure, the god of every sect changes his views just as his worshippers change theirs. There is, I presume, no remedy for that, and you must endure it. Still, the fact is instructive—and amusing.

Having noticed its positive denials of a future life, we may turn to the Bible texts usually adduced on the other side. It is said that Jesus "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." And many very sincere believers have been duped by you and your predecessors into the belief that Jesus really shed some light upon that subject, and imparted to man views and notions of future life such as never had been current before. Of course, by this time you must be well aware that Jesus said very little upon the subject, that what he did say is extremely vague and unsatisfactory, and in no respect an advance upon what the Pagans believed long before. The text I have partially quoted will afford us a little insight into the state of mind of that typical Christian who wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy. He speaks of Christ, and says, "Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light," etc. (2 Tim. i. 10). This reminds one naturally of John xi. 25, 26, where Jesus so shamelessly imposes upon poor Martha. He told her he was the resurrection and the life; that those who believed on him, though dead, should live; and that the living who believed on him should never die. To the Jews he had spouted the same rabid nonsense before.

We learn from this that the gospel taught the abolition of death and revealed life and incorruptibility, as the Revised Version renders it. The two allegations or promises stand or fall together. That Christ did not abolish death, that death is as prevalent as ever, needs no proof. Even your effrontery is not capable of denying that, I presume. Even your most submissive dupes would be apt to stare were you to tell them death had been abolished. But, if we cannot accept the former allegation, neither can we the latter. The dream that death was abolished was a mere dream, and the dream of immortality or incorruptibility is equally a dream.

But we will look to see what light Jesus or his gospel did shed upon this immortality question, and how much he advanced beyond the Pagans in this particular. In Matthew v. 12 he says to certain characters. "Great is your reward in heaven." The word "heaven" (*ouranos*) occurs very frequently in the New Testament, as well as in the Septuagint. We know very well how the Hebrews and Jesus blundered in their cosmology. To them the earth was flat, though diversified by hills and valleys; and over the earth was a roof or ceiling, the firmament or heaven. Heaven was up above the earth they trod upon, and beneath the earth was Hell, Gehenna, Hades, Tartarus, etc. In heaven above dwelt God and his angels; from it Jesus assured his dupes (and his foes) that he descended (though whether before his birth or after he does not explain). He brags to poor bewildered Nicodemus of his knowledge of heavenly things; and Paul babbles childish nonsense about bodies terrestrial and bodies celestial, and, full of divine learning, informs us that the glory of the celestial differs from that of the terrestrial. To say all in one sentence, it would be impossible to teach more absolute nonsense about the earth and the sky than is taught in the Old and New Testaments; and this absolute nonsense forms the substance of what the Bible says of the future life. As far as we are able to track and test the book, we find it hopelessly and absolutely wrong in its statements and references to the physical universe. And we can but conclude that it is no better in what it says of the future life.

Add to this that other wretched blunder—namely,

that death is the "wages of sin"; that "by sin death entered into the world," etc., and we see that no reliance whatsoever can be placed in what the Bible says respecting a future life. It is inconceivable that men who could write the nonsense about Elijah going to heaven in a whirlwind, of Jesus coming down from heaven and rising thereto again, could have *known* anything about a future life. Those who wrote of the Gods on Olympus, and descents therefrom and ascents thereto, could give us as much information about the future life as did Jesus and his apostles.

Besides, as we shall see, what the New Testament really says upon the subject is extremely scrappy and indefinite; so much so, that all of you together cannot tell us the locality of heaven, hell, or purgatory, or the direction to take for them; you do not know whether bodies are there or not; you know not whether any of the dead have yet reached their destination, or ever will; you know not how they spend their time; you know not a single particular about them. In a word, all that you *do know* would make you ashamed to make money by preaching of heaven, hell, purgatory, and human immortality, if you were honest men. I am not sanguine enough to hope that Freethinkers will convert you to honest courses, but we are doing, and shall continue to do, what will make priests and parsons impossible in the future.

JOS. SYMES.

### The Truth About China.

THE real authors of this blackest page in modern history [the Chinese insurrection] are the missionaries. It is to be hoped they are proud of their work. Whether they are not, it is the last work they are likely to do in China for a good long time. In all Christendom there is not a Government that will dare to encourage these infatuated men and women to resume their horrible work. They would need encouragement, and a lot of it, to persuade them again into the field to gather the harvest of Asiatic souls. We hear a good deal about their "heroism" and "devotion," but all that is now a pricked bubble. They have shown no such qualities. Apparently the crown of martyrdom is a headgear which they are nowise desirous to wear. None than they are more clamorous for protection when menaced; none as they so loudly invoke the military arm. Time was when they who went abroad to preach the gospel to the benighted accepted martyrdom with avidity. Their reliance was on God; he was their refuge; if he failed them they said: "Thy will be done," and died in harness, praising him. But these modern missionaries put their faith in legations and gunboats. They have, in this instance, leant upon a broken reed, and for weeks the poor-spirited creatures have been scampering to the seacoast like frightened rats, and pickling their shins in the brine to hail the passing ships. They have had more than enough of the missionary business—a veritable bellyful of it. Pitiful to relate, their poor "converts," mostly women and children, have been slain by thousands. Doubtless these holy men are capable of rejoicing in the thought that they converted the wretched victims just in the nick of time to save their souls; but, doubtless, too, they will be a deal older than they now are before they care to undertake the salvation of any more.

—Ambrose Bierce.

### Lord, Have Mercy!

An old man in Georgia named Jack Baldwin, having lost his hat in an old, dry well one day, hitched a rope to a stump and let himself down. As the story is told by the *Atlanta Journal*, a wicked wag named Neal came along just then, and, quietly detaching a bell from Baldwin's old blind horse, approached the well, bell in hand, and began to ting-a-ling. Jack thought the old horse was coming, and said: "Hang the old blind horse; he's coming this way, sure, and he ain't got no more sense than to fall in on me—*whoa, Ball!*" The sound came closer. "Great Jerusalem! The old blind fool will be right on top of me in a minit—*whoa, Ball—**whoa, Ball!*" Neal kicked a little dirt on Jack's head, and Jack began to pray: "Oh, Lord, have mercy on—*whoa, Ball!*—a poor sinner—; I'm gone now—*whoa, Ball!*—Our father who art in—*whoa, Ball!*—hallowed be thy—*gee, Ball, gee!* what'll I do?—name. Now I lay me down to sl—*gee, Ball!* [Just then in fell more dirt.] Oh, Lord, if you ever intended to do anything for me—*back, Ball!* *whoa!*—thy kingdom come—*gee, Ball!* Oh, Lord, you know I was baptised in Smith's mill-dam—*whoa, Ball!* ho! up! murder!" Neal could hold in no longer, and shouted a laugh which might have been heard two miles, which was as far as Jack chased him when he got out.

### Physical Education of the Young.

THE above subject is receiving, at the present time, a good deal of attention in many quarters, and a few words from a Freethinker's point of view may not be out of place.

The mental development of the children has received its full share of attention for many years past, and many people have stated that this is the only means of putting the coming generation on a level footing with that of other countries. But a clever brain is of little consequence without a healthy constitution to back it up, and there is no doubt that the physical welfare of our children has been sadly neglected. "Secular education" in the schools has been the cause of a good deal of controversy during the last few years, and will doubtless be the cause of more again this year at the coming election; and I would advocate that this subject of physical education be incorporated with it. Many hours every week (sometimes a whole week) are wasted in our schools with "Scripture lessons." I say *wasted* because no possible good can come of them; for, if the teachings of the Bible were true, they are far above the understanding of the average school-boy or girl, and many of them too difficult for the Archbishop of Canterbury to understand himself.

The Church has set itself against Secular education, naturally; but it seems surprising that they should be averse to physical education. But this they have been for years, as they also have been against every other "forward" movement. This is probably due to an instinct handed down from the religion of the East, where even at the present day they look upon their bodies as an enemy of man's spiritual welfare. The contempt for the body, in fact, is the very core of Eastern metaphysics and of many Eastern religions. "The Eastern Yogis," we are told, "wear a large iron ring round their necks, which prevents them from lying down to sleep at ease." "Some hang for an incredible length of time with their heads down."

Although these things appear as "absurd nonsense" to anyone of sound mind, yet they actually have some effect in England.

The following I cut from a paper about twelve months ago: "At the last meeting of the school governors Mr. — rose and made a bitter speech against the grant for the gymnasium. He based his chief argument upon scriptural grounds." "Scripture told them," he said, "to 'mortify the flesh.' Was this the way to do it? He did not believe in spending money on this new-fangled idea of physical training."

The "Scripture reading" and "religious teaching" have received far more attention than it deserves in our Board schools; while, on the other hand, the physical welfare of the children has been neglected. What we want is that every child attending our schools, from the age of five to fourteen, shall receive a proper course of physical instruction, which will develop his or her body, and make it healthy.

The struggle to keep apace with other countries in the race for existence is becoming keener every year we live, and a brain that is clever and full of business principles is no good without a healthy body to provide it with the necessary working material. Our school children must receive a better physical training than has been the case of late. School is the proper place for them to receive it, and the time at present devoted to religious teaching would be more profitably employed in this cause.

### The Atheist's Grave.

I WANDERED among the churchyard's dead  
On a sunny Sabbath day,  
And I marked a grave where the sexton said  
An Atheist's ashes lay.  
A headstone pointed the lowly spot,  
Inscribed with his age and name,  
But other memorial there was not  
To draw either praise or blame.  
Yet the daisy there was as fresh in its hue,  
The elm did as light wave,  
And the springtide grass as greenly grew  
As over the Christian's grave.  
And I marked that the sunbeams through the trees  
Fell as lightly on the sod  
As if its inmate had been of these  
Who had lived in the faith of a God.  
And over my mind the reflection came  
Of a new and startling kind,  
'Twas whispered within me that man may blame  
Where nature no fault can find.  
The bigot's curse from the Gothic pile  
On the sceptical few may fall,  
But Nature extends, with a mother's smile,  
Her pity and love to all.

—Truthseeker (New York).

## Correspondence.

## "OBJECTIONABLE RELIGION."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I must confess that I feel astonished that "Chilperic" so strangely misunderstands my position as to assert that I assure people that the adherents of "Objectionable Religion" are the *only* people who attempt to further the good of others, and that the opponents of "Objectionable Religion" are destitute of moral emotions, conscience, faith in high principles, etc. I have never taught any such monstrous doctrine. I honor and admire the good work done by many brave men and women who have objected to the word "religion." My own "hero-worship" glorifies the heroes and martyrs of Freethought quite independently of so relatively trivial a consideration as their use or disuse of a particular word.

So far from having asserted or argued that "Chilperic" and his supporters are without "faith" and "conscience," I have maintained the exact contrary. I merely pointed out that it is *they* who object to these words, and *not I*. I inserted words (such as "honest men," an assertion that such moral destitution was of course "impossible," and so forth) in order to show clearly and unmistakably that I myself believed and affirmed the exact opposite of their being faithless and unscrupulous. I have *not* charged them with the usual theological list of bad qualities." I have *not* suggested that Secular Religionists are "the only Secularists who have any spark of virtue left in them at all."

Similarly in other matters "Chilperic" leaps to conclusions which appear to me to be of a most extravagant and illogical character—as when he makes "figurative" language the equivalent of "meaningless" language. It is perfectly true that I said that language was "more or less figurative, poetic, metaphorical," etc.; but if such qualities rendered language "meaningless," then large portions of Shakespeare's works would be destitute of meaning, whereas critics generally find that such portions are unusually *full* of meaning. If a man has used a word (say "cycle," or "secular," or "liberal," or "religion," or what not) in a new or unusual sense, I really cannot agree that he has thereby been guilty of "denying that words had any meaning," or of reducing all the language he employs to so many thousands of "meaningless words."

Repeating once more a misleading statement which I previously passed by to save time, "Chilperic" says: "We are furthermore assured by the same gentleman that it is irrelevant to mention the crimes and atrocities which have always been associated with religion." What I said (see *Freethinker* for June 3, p. 349) was that the *paragraph* concerning religious crimes was *either* irrelevant *or* unfair. The paragraph contained more than the mere "mention" of religious crimes, inasmuch that I had to meet it by arguing that it was as unfair to associate such crimes with the kind of religion advocated by Mr. Gould as it would be if he were to retaliate by identifying all secular crime with Secularism.

I had better correct one or two other inaccuracies while I am about it.

I have not excluded pure Buddhism, Shamanism, etc., from the list of religions, but only argued that "Chilperic's" definition was highly disputable *because* it thus excluded them—this conflict of opinion illustrating the difficulty of agreeing upon a single rigidly-fixed definition for the word "religion."

I have *not* said that "the opponents of O. R. are flippant." My remark about "means which appear to them [Secular Religionists] to savor of flippancy" obviously referred to "Chilperic's" letters, and to these alone.

I have felt compelled to write thus far in order to justify myself against misrepresentation. But as this dispute engenders friction, misunderstanding, and an endless crop of side issues, and as my main object has, I trust, been sufficiently attained, I desire to close my own share in the controversy as soon as I can do so without discourtesy to either of my opponents.

W. P. BALL.

## "CHRISTIAN FALSEHOODS."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In your issue dated July 15 Mr. Cohen asks this question: "In what debate would a man like the Rev. Dr. Horton have ventured to tell a deliberate falsehood concerning the religious opinions of Mill, Dr. Clifford to have ranked Darwin as a 'typical Christian leader,' or Dean Farrar to give four references, for statements concerning the character of Roman women, three of which had absolutely no existence outside his own heated imagination?" I ventured to ask for the names of the works containing these "falsehoods," and in a subsequent issue (July 29) Mr. Cohen gives his "authorities," upon which I beg to offer a few observations:—

(1) Dean Farrar's statement, in his *Early Days of Christianity*, has reference to "noble Roman matrons," and is to the effect that they "counted the years not by the consuls, but by their discarded or discarding husbands." The authorities he cites are Seneca, Tertullian, Tacitus, and Suetonius. It

is perfectly true that these writers do not all use the same words, and, doubtless, it never occurred to Dean Farrar, for one moment, that anyone would entertain the notion that they did. One reference (Seneca) contains *the fact*. This Mr. Cohen admitted, as he was bound to do. And Suetonius, thirty-six (not thirty-four), fully confirms what Seneca wrote regarding their moral (or immoral) character. The other citations are pointed out (as is common in histories) as having a bearing on the general subject. Where, then, I ask, do the "heated imagination" and the "manufacturing" of references come in? Not with Dean Farrar, I think.

(2) Dr. Horton, says Mr. Cohen, has told a "deliberate falsehood" concerning the opinions of J. S. Mill. The name of the work containing that "falsehood" I asked for, and the reply is: "Mr. Horton is reported as saying....." But surely no man has a right to charge another with uttering a "deliberate falsehood" simply and solely because he is "reported"? Before making such a grave accusation, Mr. Cohen should, at least, have ascertained if the "report" of the sermon had been revised by the rev. gentleman, and appeared with his knowledge and sanction.

(3) Dr. Clifford has "ranked" Darwin as a "typical Christian leader," writes Mr. Cohen, and to this he objects. Well, to deal with Darwin's religious views in this letter is hardly possible, for an obvious reason; but what the Doctor has said, in his published addresses (*Typical Christian Leaders*), will bear full and honest criticism.

I venture to add that to use violent language, and to accuse men of "mental obliquity," on such flimsy grounds will not, in my opinion, advance the cause of truth or serve any good purpose. Rather let us follow the advice of one of the greatest apostles of freedom contained in the words, "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good." A. H. TABRUM.

## German Soldiers and Chinese Gods.

A LETTER from a German soldier gives a very picturesque description of German military life in China, after the Kaiser's "lease" of a slice of Chinese territory. "One fine morning," he writes, "our company started upon an exploration, heavily laden with black bread and cartridges. We passed through two villages, and then came to the town of Tsimo, where we took up our quarters in a temple of idols just outside the town. It was full of gods, and we found them very useful as posts, and slung our hammocks on them. The Chinese thronged in thickly, and gaped with astonishment at the position we had chosen for our sleeping-quarters. They evidently expected that the gods would avenge the insult done them by the German devils, and would destroy us all during the night. But we slept famously, their deities not even troubling us with bad dreams, and started fresh for our next march early in the morning. The Social Democratic *Vorwärts*, a journal with which we cannot often agree in its political extravagance, published a very just and moderate criticism upon this trooper's narrative. It is to be remembered that the incident happened before there was any hint or anticipation of the late Chinese barbarity to the German Ambassador, or to any other Europeans, and that the German soldiers were not marching across Kiautschou as the enemies, but as the civilising friends and allies, of the Chinese people. "What would be said by our Berlin experts in the comparative scientific study of religions," asks the *Vorwärts*, "if the Chinese Kaiser were to 'lease' a province of Germany, and his soldiers to sling their hammocks to the figures of the Christian saints in our parish churches? Does not the letter—printed by our local contemporary—which, by the way, is a semi-official journal—give us a hint how it is that the common Chinaman takes so barbarous a dislike to his European civilisers?"

—Daily News.

## Superstitious Man.

To all earth's blessings deaf and blind,  
Lost to himself and to his kind,  
With mad presumption, lo! man tries  
To pierce the ether of the skies.

His fancy winged to worlds unknown,  
He scorns the treasures of his own;  
By fears of hell and hopes of heaven,  
His noble mind to madness driven.

Oh, first of all the tribes of earth,  
Wake to the knowledge of thy worth;  
Then mark the ills of human life,  
And heal its woes and quench its strife.

Victim and tyrant thou, O man;  
Thy world, thyself, thy fellows scan,  
Nor forward cast an anxious eye;  
Who knows to live shall know to die.

—Torch of Reason.

## 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.

#### OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

STATION-ROAD (Camberwell): 11.30, A lecture.  
 PECKHAM RYE: 3.15, E. Pack.  
 BROCKWELL PARK: 3.15, A lecture; 6.30, E. Pack.  
 CLERKENWELL GREEN: 11.30, R. P. Edwards.  
 HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, E. Pack.  
 KILBURN (corner of Victoria-road): 7.15, F. Schaller.  
 HAMMERSMITH (outside the Lyric Opera House): 7.15, F. A. Davies.  
 FINSBURY PARK: 3.30, A lecture.  
 VICTORIA PARK (near the Fountain): 3.15, C. Cohen; 6.30, Freethought Demonstration—Addresses by Messrs. G. W. Foote, C. Watts, C. Cohen, and A. B. Moss.  
 MILE END WASTE: 11.30, W. Heaford; 7.15, R. P. Edwards.  
 August 22, at 8.15, W. J. Ramsey.  
 EDMONTON (corner of Angel-road): 7, A lecture.  
 WEST HAM BRANCH (Stratford Grove): 7.30, W. Heaford.  
 BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 11.30, F. A. Davies.

### COUNTRY.

LIVERPOOL: Alexandra Hall, Islington-square. Closed until September 2. Outdoor lectures at the Monument, bottom of London-road, on August 19 and 26, at 7 p.m.; and on September 2, at 3 p.m. August 19, at 7, Stanley Jones, "The Reaction in Modern Society."

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation Schools, Market-place): 7, Important Business Meeting.

### Lecturers' Engagements.

C. COHEN, 17 Osborne-road, High-road, Leyton.—August 19, a. and e., Victoria Park.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, London, S.E.—August 26, m., Mile End.

H. PERCY WARD, 2 Leamington-place, George-street, Balsall-Heath, Birmingham.—August 19, Northampton. 26, Birmingham. September 10, Debate at Bradford. 16, Birmingham. October 1 and 2, Debate at Birmingham.

F. A. DAVIES, 65 Lion-street, S.E.—August 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.

## PECULIAR PEOPLE.

*An Open Letter to Mr. Justice Wills*

On his sentencing THOMAS GEORGE SENIOR to Four Months' Imprisonment with Hard Labor for Obeying the Bible by not calling in a Doctor to his Sick Child.

By G. W. FOOTE.

16 pp. Price ONE PENNY.

London: The Freethought Publishing Company, Limited,  
 1 Stationers' Hall Court, E.C.

### PHOTOGRAPHY. Good Work only.

Every description of Photographs copied same size, reduced, or enlarged. Cartes-de-Visite, 12, 3s. 6d.; Cabinets, 6, 4s.; 12, 7s. 6d. Larger sizes at proportionate rates. Send 1s., with photograph, for sample sheet of 12 midgets.

Developing, Printing, etc., for Amateurs.

GEO. CROSS, M.N.S.S., The Studio, 15 Cambridge Arcade,  
 Southport.

VEGETARIAN, Health Foods, Drinks, and other Household Goods. Vegetarian, Temperance, Advanced Thought, Humane, and Dress Reform Literature. (Send stamps for price list.)

J. O. BATES, Vegetarian Stores, Victoria-street,  
 Gloucester.

(Mention the *Freethinker*.)

THE LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY invites Freethinkers and Ethicists throughout the country to contribute gifts of toys, furniture, clothing, books, pictures, etc., to its BAZAAR to be held in September, 1900. The Society carries on its work by means of lectures, library, Sunday-school, Young People's Ethical Guild, classes in Ethics, Psychology, Sociology, etc., and it desires to extend its activities.—F. J. GOULD, *Secretary*, Secular Hall, Humberstone-gate, Leicester.

WANTED, Secondhand Debates or rare Freethought Works. Cheap for cash. Send list. W. H. W., care of F. P. Co., 1 Stationers' Hall Court, Ludgate Hill, E.C.

## GREAT SUMMER SALE!

21s. PARCELS that contain £2 worth of Goods.

- 1—2 Splendid Suit lengths, Tweed or Serge, any color.
- 2—4 Trousers Lengths, wear guaranteed. Stripe, Check, or Mixture.
- 3—2 Full Dress Lengths, with lining and buttons complete.
- 4—3 Dress Skirts, made to measure from any kind of material.
- 5—Complete Costume to measure, and a Silver Mounted Umbrella.
- 6—1 Suit Length, 1 Dress Skirt to measure, and 1 Beautiful Crepon Blouse.
- 7—50 yards high-class Flannelette, in five different designs.
- 8—11 yards very deep Pile Velveteen, black, or any color.
- 9—1 Gent's Mackintosh, 1 Trousers length, and 1 Umbrella.
- 10—1 Gent's Umbrella, 1 Trousers length, 1 Dress length, and 1 Lady's Umbrella.
- 11—1 pair All-wool Blankets, 1 pair Large Sheets, 1 Quilt, 1 Tablecloth, 1 pair Curtains.
- 12—1 pair Trousers, 1 Dress Skirt, 1 Gent's Umbrella, and 1 Lady's Umbrella.
- 13—15 yards of Suiting for Boys, very strong and durable.
- 14—30 yards Remnants for Children's Dresses, all good in color and quality.
- 15—2 pairs All-wool Blankets and 3 Pillow Cases.
- 16—2 Night-dresses, 2 Chemises, 3 pair Knickers, 2 Skirts, 2 pair Stockings, 2 Handkerchiefs, 1 Fur Necktie, and 1 Silver Mounted Umbrella.
- 17—2 Men's Wool Shirts, 2 pair Drawers, 2 Under Vests, 2 pairs Socks, and 1 Umbrella.
- 18—1 Youth's Suit to measure; chest, over vest, not to be more than 32 inches.
- 19—3 pairs Trousers, to measure, all different.
- 20—Parcel of Goods made up of anything you name in reason. Please remember that during Sale we are selling everything at about half ordinary price. This will be a guide as to what you might ask for.

Each Parcel, sent carriage, paid for 21s.

Agents wanted in every Town and Village in the United Kingdom. You can easily add 10s. to 30s. weekly to your income. WRITE FOR TERMS.

J. W. GOTT, 2 & 4 Union-street, Bradford.

## THE BEST BOOK

ON NEO-MALTHUSIANISM IS, I BELIEVE,  
 TRUE MORALITY, OR THE THEORY AND PRACTICE  
 OF NEO-MALTHUSIANISM.

By J. R. HOLMES, M.M.L., M.V.S., M.N.S.S.

160 pages, with portrait and autograph, bound in cloth, gilt lettered,  
 Price 1s., post free.

In order to bring the information within the reach of the poor, the most important parts of the book are issued in a pamphlet of 112 pages at ONE PENNY, post free 2d. Copies of the pamphlet for distribution 1s. a dozen post free.

The *National Reformer* of September 4, 1892, says: "Mr. Holmes' pamphlet.....is an almost unexceptional statement of the Neo-Malthusian theory and practice.....and throughout appeals to moral feeling.....The special value of Mr. Holmes' service to the Neo-Malthusian cause and to human well-being generally is just his combination in his pamphlet of a plain statement of the physical and moral need for family limitation with a plain account of the means by which it can be secured, and an offer to all concerned of the requisites at the lowest possible prices."

The Council of the Malthusian League, Dr. Drysdale, Dr. Allbutt, and others, have also spoken of it in very high terms. Orders should be sent to the author,

J. R. HOLMES, HANNEY, WANTAGE, BERKS.

## Thwaites' Liver Pills.

The Best Family Medicine in the World. Will cure Liver, Kidney, and all Stomach Diseases effectually.

Good for Heart Troubles and Cardiac Complaints, Female Ailments, Anæmia, etc. 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. per box. Post free, 14 or 33 stamps. Directions with each box.

G. THWAITES, Herbalist, Stockton-on-Tees.

**CHEAP BOOKS FOR FREETHINKERS**

(Continued from p. 528.)

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>THE EVOLUTION OF CHRISTIANITY.</b> By C. GILL.   | s. d.<br>2 6 |
| <small>A bold and able Rationalist work. It was quoted by Mr. Foote during his trial for "Blasphemy" in the Court of Queen's Bench before Lord Coleridge. Postage 4d.</small>   |              |
| <b>THE OUTCAST.</b> By WINWOOD READE.   | 1 6          |
| <small>A Freethought novel by the accomplished author of the <i>Martyrdom of Man</i>. Winwood Reade was a thorough-going Atheist. His great powers were recognised by Darwin. Freethinkers can read this story with pleasure, and do a service to Freethought by lending it to their friends. Postage 3d.</small>   |              |
| <b>ESSAYS TOWARDS A CRITICAL METHOD.</b> By JOHN M. ROBERTSON.  | 2 6          |
| <small>Mr. Robertson's admirers will be anxious to obtain this book when they hear that it contains some of his best writing. Besides a hundred pages devoted to "Science in Criticism," there are special essays on "Mr. Howell's Novels," Mandeville's "Fable of the Bees," and "The Art of Tennyson." Postage 4d.</small>  |              |
| <b>ESSAYS ON SOCIALISM.</b> By ANNIE BESANT.  | 2 6          |
| <small>Written in the first ardor of Mrs. Besant's conversion to Socialism from Bradlaughian Radicalism. Contains essays on "The Evolution of Society," "Modern Socialism," "Why I am a Socialist," "Radicalism and Socialism," and "The Socialist Movement." Postage 2d.</small>   |              |
| <b>THE PEOPLE'S DARWIN.</b> By Dr. E. B. AVELING.   | 1 0          |
| <small>A plain and interesting exposition.</small>  |              |
| <b>DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.</b> By EDWARD GIBBON. 2 vols., royal 8vo.  | 7 6          |
| <small>Virtue's well-known edition, now out of print. An excellent edition, with Guizot's notes, and a fine steel engraving of Gibbon from the portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Quite new, and in perfect condition. An exceptional bargain. This is a work that ought to be in every Freethinker's library, and the present edition would look handsome there. Only a limited number of copies in stock.</small> |              |
| <b>JOHN WILKES AND WILLIAM COBBETT.</b> By REV. J. S. WATSON.   | 2 6          |
| <small>Two excellent biographies of two famous English politicians, with engraved portraits. These are not mere eulogies or diffuse essays. The author was a very able clergyman, who became unpleasantly notorious at last by murdering his wife.</small>  |              |

*Orders for any of the above Books must be sent direct to the Freethought Publishing Company, Limited, 1 Stationers' Hall Court, London, E.C. Orders to the amount of £1 will be sent carriage paid. Smaller orders must be accompanied by postage as well as the price of the Book*

**NOW READY.**

**THE BIBLE HANDBOOK**

FOR

**FREETHINKERS AND INQUIRING CHRISTIANS.**

EDITED BY

G. W. FOOTE and W. P. BALL.

A NEW EDITION, REVISED, AND HANDSOMELY PRINTED.

**CONTENTS :**

- |  |                             |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Part I.—Bible Contradictions.  | Part II.—Bible Absurdities. | Part III.—Bible Atrocities. |
| Part IV.—Bible Immoralities, Indecencies, Obscenities, Broken Promises, and Unfulfilled Prophecies |                             |                             |
- Cheap Edition, in paper covers, 1s. 6d.; Best Edition, bound in cloth, 2s. 6d.*

THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING Co., LTD., 1 STATIONERS' HALL COURT, LONDON, E.C.

**BIBLE ROMANCES.**

By G. W. FOOTE.

**CONTENTS :**

- |                     |                     |                      |                   |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| The Creation Story. | The Tower of Babel. | Balaam's Ass.        | A Virgin Mother.  |
| Eve and the Apple.  | Lot's Wife.         | God in a Box.        | The Resurrection. |
| Cain and Abel.      | The Ten Plagues.    | Jonah and the Whale. | The Crucifixion.  |
| Noah's Flood.       | The Wandering Jews. | Bible Animals.       | John's Nightmare. |

**THE SECOND (REVISED) EDITION COMPLETE.**

160 Pages. Bound in Cloth. Price Two Shillings.

*Free by Post at the Published Price.*

*"The neat little volume before us, which ought to be read by everyone desirous of the truth in such matters. Mr. Foote's style is always bright, and the topics dealt with are of a nature to awaken interest even in the dullest mind."*—*Reynolds's Newspaper.*

THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING Co., LTD., 1 STATIONERS' HALL COURT, LONDON, E.C.

# CHEAP BOOKS FOR FREETHINKERS.

All New, Uncut, and in Perfect Condition, and  
NOT OTHERWISE OBTAINABLE.

AT GREATLY REDUCED PRICES.

- FORCE AND MATTER.** By PROFESSOR BÜCHNER. s. d.  
3 6  
This work caused an immense sensation throughout the civilised world, and gave rise to endless controversy. Christian opponents have called it the Bible of Materialism. Its famous author lost his professorship in consequence of his bold, uncompromising Atheism. The work itself is thoroughly up-to-date, and embodies the latest conclusions of Evolution. Postage 3d.
- THE ENGLISH LIFE OF JESUS.** By THOMAS SCOTT. 2 6  
A trenchant criticism of the Gospel records on Rationalist lines, and still the best book on the subject in English. It is doubtful whether it was written by the late Thomas Scott, of Ramsgate, who devoted his fortune to the printing and circulation of Freethought literature. A claim has been put in for its authorship on behalf of the Rev. Charles Voysey. Mr. J. M. Wheeler held that it came from the pen of Sir George Cox. It was highly praised by S. Hinds, ex-bishop of Norwich, and by Professor F. W. Newman, who said it had "the great excellence of common sense." Dr. Inman, the author of *Ancient Faiths*, declared that "it is impossible for a philosopher to speak too highly" of this work; and Dr. Davidson mentioned it as one of the books that had for ever changed "the old point of view." Postage 3d.
- RELIGION IN THE HEAVENS.** By LOGAN MITCHELL. 2 0  
The sub-title of this book is "Mythology Unveiled," and the edition is the one published by Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant. It is a valuable work for the student of Religion from the Mythological and Astronomical points of view. But being far from dry—in fact, written with considerable verve—it will prove very interesting to the ordinary reader. Postage 3d.
- THE DEVIL'S PULPIT.** By the REV. ROBERT TAYLOR. 2 vols. 3 6  
Contains Forty-six Astronomico-Theological Discourses. Taylor was a clergyman of the Church of England, but, becoming an Atheist, he threw off his gown, and joined Richard Carlile in popular Freethought propagandism. He was imprisoned for a year in Oakham Gaol as a "blasphemer." And if "blasphemy" is a real crime, he amply deserved his sentence. These discourses are as witty as they are learned. They are calculated to draw laughter, in spite of himself, from the sourest bigot. Postage 4d.
- GALILEO GALILEI.** By KARL VON GEBLER. 3 0  
Translated from the German by Mrs. George Sturge. A very learned, careful, and honest work of 352 pages. Contains all information concerning the great Galileo's prosecution and persecution by the Roman Curia as a heretic. Invaluable to students, and interesting to serious general readers. Postage 4d.
- SERVETUS AND CALVIN.** By Dr. R. WILLIS. 3 0  
The frontispiece is a fine Portrait with Autograph of the "heretic" whom Calvin hunted down to a fiery doom. Dr. Willis's work is a standard one. It gives a full account of the life and teaching, as well as the death, of Servetus; and proves Calvin's responsibility for his martyrdom up to the hilt. This is one of the books that every sound Freethinker should have on his shelves. Postage 4d.
- THE APOCRYPHAL NEW TESTAMENT.** 3 0  
William Hone's edition. Contains the Gospels and Epistles which the Church threw out when it became respectable, and sheds an instructive light on primitive Christianity. Postage 3d.
- ANCIENT MYSTERIES DESCRIBED.** 3 0  
William Hone's edition. A learned and (unintentionally) amusing account of the Mystery Plays which preceded the Modern Drama, and by means of which the people got their ideas of the Bible story. Postage 3d.
- RUINS OF EMPIRES.** By C. F. VOLNEY. 2 0  
A justly famous book, replete with philosophy and eloquence. This edition contains a Prefatory Notice of Volney by Charles Bradlaugh, and an engraved Chart of the Astronomical Heaven of the Ancients. Cloth. Post. 3d.
- THE FREETHINKERS' TEXT-BOOK.** By ANNIE BESANT. 3 6  
Part II. of a work projected and nearly completed by Charles Bradlaugh and others. Mrs. Besant's portion is complete in itself. It deals with "Christianity: its Evidences, its Origin, its Morality, and its History." The most laborious and effective of Mrs. Besant's writings. Only a few copies in stock. Postage 3d.
- HEBREW AND CHRISTIAN RECORDS.** By the REV. DR. GILES. 2 vols. 7 6  
This work is in beautiful clean condition. It was published at 24s. Dr. Giles was a sound scholar and the editor of a number of Classics. When he turned his attention to the Bible, he resolved to ascertain the truth and tell it. The result was a perfect treasury of the most damaging revelations. It is safe to say that this careful and candid work has not been superseded. Covering the whole ground in a masterly fashion, it establishes its claim to a place in every Freethinker's library. Dr. Giles has never been answered by the scholars of his own Church—the Church of England. They sneer at him when they cannot ignore him. But his work remains—strong, solid, and irrefutable. Postage 6d.
- APOSTOLIC RECORDS.** By the REV. DR. GILES. 3 0  
Having told the truth about the Bible records, Dr. Giles did the same with regard to the early Christian writers, from the date of the Crucifixion to the middle of the second century. This is the fullest work on the subject by any English writer. Postage 4d.
- FOOTSTEPS OF THE PAST.** By J. M. WHEELER. 2 0  
With an Introduction by G. W. Foote. This is a very valuable collection of "Essays on Human Evolution." It contains much of Mr. Wheeler's best work. Freethinkers, and even students of human culture, especially on the religious side, will find it full of interesting and precious information. A book to be read, and read again, and often referred to. Bound in cloth; originally published at 3s. Postage 2d.

[Continued on p. 527. Look There!]

LONDON; THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY, LIMITED,  
1 STATIONERS' HALL COURT, E.C.