

# THE Freethinker

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## The Problem of To-Day.

In the *Christian World* of June 27 appeared an article by Dr. Farrar, the Dean of Canterbury, upon what he termed "The Greatest Problem of the Twentieth Century." That problem, in his opinion, is not how to lessen poverty with its many attendant evils; how to decrease the horrors of war; how to adjust the relations of capital and labor; how to secure for woman her proper social position; nor how to cure the evils of intemperance, ignorance, and intellectual apathy. It is, perhaps, too much to expect a clergyman of the Church of England to devote his attention to such worldly subjects as these, for is he not told in "God's Word" to "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him"? With the Dean these questions appear to be of minor importance when compared with the interests of the Christian religion. In his estimation, "the greatest problem of the present century is how to keep alive, in the hearts of the vast mass of men nominally Christian, a deep and effectual faith in those doctrines of the Christian religion to which they still give a nominal adherence." He admits "that there is a far more widely-spread spirit of doubt, and even of positive unbelief, than there has ever been." In this, no doubt, he is right. Unbelief permeates all phases of modern thought. Its influence is perceptible in the realms of science, in the productions of the Press, in the domain of poetry, in the deliberations of the legislature, and even in the teachings of the pulpit. It is really unbelief that has saved the Church from complete decay. Had it retained its old belief in the orthodox doctrines and creeds, it would now have much less support even than it has.

This rapid progress of unbelief may be deplored by the Dean, but to the disinterested thinker it is the legitimate outcome of increased mental freedom. In fact, it is a necessary form of human thought. It is quite impossible for all persons to think alike upon speculative questions. The differences which obtain in mental organisation, in education, and in nationality and climate, prevent such uniformity. Moreover, this unbelief, at which the Church is so much alarmed, is an essential condition of all progress. Unbelief means change, which is necessary to advancement. The ages of unquestioned belief were ages of comparative physical and intellectual stagnation. Ample and convincing evidence of this is given in the writings of Buckle, Draper, Lecky, and J. S. Mill. Hence we find that unbelievers have been amongst the leading Progressionists of the world. Such men as Lucretius, Bruno, Spinoza, Goethe, Humboldt, Shelley, Priestley, Lyell, Darwin, Tyndall, Huxley, and many others who could be named, were all unbelievers in the orthodox faith, but they were progressive workers in the human hive of industry. Besides, Christianity itself is the result of unbelief. If Christ and his early followers had been firm believers in Paganism or Judaism, Christianity would not have originated as it did. And to-day professed Christians are the greatest of unbelievers, for they reject all religions but their own, and that one they do not consistently act up to. Thus they condemn others for doing the very thing of which they are guilty. In the words of Christ, we say to each one of those pious dissemblers: "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

No. 1,043.

The Dean gives three answers to the question, What are the causes of the spread of unbelief, and even of openly-avowed Agnosticism? These answers are: 1. "The vast enlargement of the horizon of human knowledge." 2. "The revolt against the scholastic rigidity and positiveness of the theological technicalities." 3. The "weakening of the ancient confidence in dogmas once universally accepted without question." Now, there is much that is true in these alleged causes of the spread of unbelief. And the truth they contain is not favorable to the claims of Christianity. Undoubtedly, with the increase of knowledge scepticism has advanced, for ignorance and blind belief have always co-existed. It is also true that modern thought has rebelled against the old forms of theology. As to "the weakening of the ancient confidence in dogmas," the Dean proves this in his reference to what he admits—

"is the changed view as to the inspiration and absolute infallibility of every word, or, as Dean Burgon added, with foolish and meaningless vehemence, of every syllable and letter of the Bible. This modification of our views has been absolutely forced upon every scholar of adequate knowledge and capacity by what is known as 'The Higher Criticism.' We have been compelled to abandon the old belief that the whole of the Pentateuch was written by Moses, and we know that it is composed of documents of different ages, and by no means always in perfect agreement with each other. It has also become certain that in some parts of the Bible—as, for instance, in the Books of Daniel and Jonah—we find those elements of moral and spiritual allegory which the Jews designated by the name of the *Haggadah*."

Does it not occur to Dr. Farrar that, if the Christian religion has God for its author and protector, the causes he mentions as retarding the progress of the faith should not exist? It really means that the intellect of man is more powerful than the decrees of God. The Dean mentions another fact which has tended to produce and strengthen unbelief. He says that "in past epochs of the world's history" God gave to his people many revelations. "But since the advent of Christ nineteen centuries ago, and the death of the last inspired apostle, although many great teachers have been granted to mankind, there has been no fresh revelation of the will and purpose of God towards us.....Hence the facts of Gospel revelation seem to have vanished in the dark. backward and abysmal, of two millenniums, and their faith has become dim and uncertain." This is certainly in favor of the belief either that Christianity is merely a human system, subject to the usual vicissitudes of the production of man, or that God has withdrawn his patronage from it. Having given a number of instances to prove that "the faith of multitudes has been weakened," Dr. Farrar submits his solution to the problem as to by "what means are we to deepen, or reawaken, that deep and true faith in Christ as the Savior and Teacher of the world, which undoubtedly has lost its hold in many hearts," as follows:—

"All Christians who are in earnest must show, alike by their arguments and by the whole tenor of their lives, that neither the advance of scientific knowledge, nor the conclusions of the Higher Criticism, nor any modifications of a purely scholastic theology, necessitate the slightest change in the eternal and fundamental beliefs of any who accept Christ as their Lord and King, and who live in the conviction that this age, as the German poet sang, is 'the Age of the Holy Ghost.'"

Surely no impartial thinker, with a knowledge of the law of cause and effect, can see any solution of "the greatest problem of the twentieth century" in the Dean's suggestion. Scientific knowledge and the



conclusions of the Higher Criticism must necessarily interfere, as Dr. Farrar admits that they have done, with the beliefs of professed Christians. If the Bible is doubtful in its history and unreliable in its statements, which it is, what authority is left for the "fundamental beliefs" of those who are supposed to "accept Christ as their Lord and King"? What are those "fundamental beliefs"? Briefly these: The acceptance as true that about six thousand years ago man became a sinner through the action of Adam; that Christ was born without a human father, and that he was crucified to atone for the alleged sin caused in the Garden of Eden; that his death was a satisfaction to God, of whom Jesus himself was a part; and that those who cannot believe in the veracity of these stories "shall be damned." Who among the leading intellects of the present day believes these "idle tales"? Let the prevailing scepticism, both in and out of the Church, supply the answer.

It may be added that, if the present is "the age of the Holy Ghost," that part of the mysterious Trinity has done nothing successfully to prevent that extensive unbelief which the Dean deplors. Whoever, or whatever, the Holy Ghost is, it has no power to counteract the tendencies of the twentieth century, when cultivated reason is more potent than theological faith, and intellectual discrimination more efficacious than blind credulity.

CHARLES WATTS.

### Christian Science.

A WELL-KNOWN American preacher, the Rev. Dr. Amory Bradford, asserts that the present age is not one of doubt, but of credulity. Well, there isn't very much doubt, that's true. But there is a great deal of disbelief and absolute denial. Also there is, on the other hand, a considerable amount of credulity. More, indeed, than seems to be recognised by Freethinkers who are fond—perhaps a trifle too fond—of assuring themselves and others that religious superstition is practically dead, and that it is a waste of time and energy to trouble any further about it. No doubt it is doomed, and, in the course of centuries, will disappear; but the date is far—very far—distant. In the meantime, it has sufficient vitality for the working of incalculable evil. Some of its more ancient forms are absolutely discredited, and are beyond any power of revivification; but it has a way of breaking out into novel offshoots that may well give us pause, and create even a sort of despairing wonder.

One of these modern phases is the cult called "Christian Science," of which Mrs. Mary Baker Glover Eddy is the high priestess. It has, in less than half a century, founded and built up a sect that to-day claims more than a million members. It has 650 churches—some of them small, but most of them tasteful in design and elegantly fitted up—just the kind of places to attract people of the more refined and wealthy classes. Numerically, Christian Science stands eighth in the list of Christian denominations in the United States. But though born in that fertile land of cranks and crazes—we mean no disrespect to the bulk of our American cousins—it is now far from being confined thereto. There are numbers of Christian Scientists in Germany. Some time ago they sent to Mrs. Eddy as representatives Frau Bertha Gunther-Petersen and Fraulein Ida Schoen, of Hanover, who, of course, conveyed presents.

The high priestess, by the way, seems to be in a state of sad bewilderment over the number and variety of costly presents she receives. Though she has a large mansion, she is unable to find room for them all. She has, therefore, been obliged to decline many—probably those of the least value. Among her most valued gifts is a crown of gold and blue enamel set with five solitaire diamonds, seven smaller diamonds, and forty-three large pearls. Mrs. Eddy, we learn, is fond of jewels, especially diamonds, and usually wears a cross containing a number of the handsomest stones. It seems well, therefore, from one point of view, to be "on the side of the angels," even if you have the most ridiculous craze it is possible for the mind of man or woman to conceive.

It is not only on the Continent that Christian Science finds adherents. In our own country the cult

has secured a foothold, and seems likely to spread. It has gained favor in certain aristocratic circles where there is just sufficient intellectuality to crave for extravagant idealism, dreamy mysticism, or any novelty of a semi-religious æsthetic character which will mildly exercise the mind and relieve the *ennui* of existence. Recently it was announced that the Earl of Dunmore, with several members of his family, were at Boston familiarising themselves with the American church organisation, with a view to establishing something of the kind at home. The Countess of Dunmore, Lady Ramsay, and Lady Abinger are amongst other converts who are fired with propagandist zeal. It is quite probable that we shall hear a great deal more of Christian Science in this country, where it is likely to take a place amongst wealthy and titled folks similar to that occupied in humble social spheres by the tenets of the Peculiar People.

Christian Science may be said to be a religion, for it has a creed and a form of public worship apart from its special views as to the origin, nature, and treatment of sickness. Some have professed to discover in it little more than a form of ancient Hinduism reappearing under a Western name. This, however, is hardly an adequate description, for Christian Scientists accept the Bible and various doctrines of Christian faith. But they place their own interpretation on them—or, at least, Mrs. Eddy does. She has decided for all her followers the meaning to be attached to the Scriptures, and the deductions to be made therefrom. Her interpretation, which has been described as a "hash of the old Alexandrian and the newer Swedenborgian systems of exegesis," is entirely different from anything accepted by the orthodox Churches. Nearly all is reduced to allegory and mysticism of a most grotesque and incomprehensible type. The Biblical phraseology means only that which Mrs. Eddy chooses it to mean, and seems to be employed chiefly to give a gloss to her peculiar views. The real text-book of the cult is Mrs. Eddy's *Science and Health*, of which above 220,000 copies have been sold. It is regarded as a sort of fetish by her followers, and, as it is an expensive volume, it must be in itself the source of a very fine income. Four principles are laid down: (1) God is all, and all is God; (2) Matter is non-existent; (3) Sin is an illusion; (4) Suffering is an illusion. There is no pain. It exists only in the imagination.

Mark Twain says the literature of the Christian Scientists is enough to give one the blind staggers. And this is true, for it is impossible to imagine a greater conglomeration of incomprehensibilities. What on earth all the jargon and jumble of metaphysical absurdities can mean none are able to definitely tell except the gifted authoress, and perhaps she is at times involved in perplexity as to her original meaning. The principal teaching by which Christian Science is known to the public is its scornful rejection of medicine, and its claim to have effected thousands of cures by mental effort and the exercise of faith. It teaches the "unreality of disease and the power of immortal mind over the error of mortal mind, commonly called disease." No doubt, in purely nervous cases many successes have been achieved. But that is easily understood. There are maladies of a psychological kind to which mental therapeutics are applicable. All that can be claimed for Mrs. Eddy is that she has "stumbled on the great law of Suggestion," under the operation of which wonderful results can certainly be secured. Christian Scientists make a great boast of their successes. They never furnish any records of their failures. When challenged, they lay the blame on their subjects as being out of sympathy with the conditions required.

The utmost is made of actual cures, and a number of stories are told which are obviously apocryphal. Take the following, mentioned by a recent writer: "An elephant was sick at the New York 'Zoo.' The report was circulated all over the States that the animal only grew worse under the care of the veterinary surgeons. The Christian Scientists, however, came in, and asked permission to treat the elephant, and, under their treatment, it immediately recovered." Just as in England Lady Abinger ascribed to Christian Scientists the cure of one of her horses. These stories are evidently intended to silence the ungodly, who rely for an



explanation of Christian Science successes on the before-mentioned law of Suggestion.

Mrs. Eddy is said to have been a mystic from childhood. She relates that, when a very little child, she began to hear strange voices, not audible to others. "My mother told me," she says, "when I heard them—no matter where I was—to say 'What wouldst Thou, Lord? Here am I.' That is what Samuel said when the Lord called him." In 1866 the revelation, it is alleged, came to her in this way:—

"She was returning from an errand of mercy, when she fell upon the icy curbstone, and was carried helpless to her home. The skilled physicians declared that there was absolutely no hope for her, and pronounced the verdict that she had but three days to live. Finding no hope and no help on earth, she lifted her heart to God. On the third day, calling for her Bible, she asked the family to leave the room. Her Bible opened to the healing of the palsied man (Matthew ix. 2). The Truth which set him free she saw. The Power which gave him strength she felt. The Life Divine which healed the sick of the palsy restored her, and she rose from the bed of pain healed and free. When she walked into the midst of the family they cried out in alarm, thinking that she had died, and that they beheld her ghost. This miraculous restoration dates the birth of Christian Science."

In 1881 she founded the Massachusetts Metaphysical College, in which she trained no fewer than 4,000 practitioners. The course of tuition lasted only a month, and for this she charged each student a fee of £60. Now, at the age of eighty-five, she lives in a superb residence called "Pleasant View," and possesses a fortune little short of a millionaire's.

This, as in old Dowie's case, shows what may be achieved by working a religious delusion. The more absurd and grotesque, it is the more acceptable it seems to be, even in civilised and cultured communities. The Bible is responsible for it all. The Eddyites and Dowieites and the Peculiar People draw their inspiration from the Scriptures. They find Biblical warranty for all that they teach and do. Undoubtedly an honest and unbiassed study of the Scriptures leads to a belief, in the minds of the devout, that prayer and faith will heal the sick. As long as people regard that book as the inspired Word of God, it may be expected that these sects will live and flourish and multiply. If they have gone utterly and fatally wrong—as the medicos and the clerics and the judges assert—whose fault is it? Surely it is the fault of the Deity who sent to his creatures a revelation and a guide susceptible of such serious misunderstanding.

FRANCIS NEALE.

#### Atheism and its Critics.—IV.

IN what has gone before I have been chiefly concerned with clearing away certain misconceptions and misunderstandings that are current concerning Atheism, in order to show clearly in what it really consists. But an explanation of what a thing is is not always a justification of its existence, and something, therefore, needs be said upon this head.

Historically, as I have stated, Atheism would stand for disbelief in the special deities of a tribe or a nation; and those who have excluded the belief in the God prescribed by law have been branded, and not without some justification, with the title of Atheist. To the Pagans the primitive Christians were Atheists, as were Paine and Voltaire to the Christians of a later date. Thus, whether a man is to be classed as an Atheist or not depends, so far as the historical significance of the term is concerned, upon the standpoint from which we regard him. But development is the rule here as elsewhere, and so it happens that, while the drift of religious evolution has broken down many barriers and united under one head all who believe in a Deity either from revelation or from nature, it has also given to Atheism a more definite meaning, and has practically limited its application to such as profess an unbelief in *all* gods and in *all* supernaturalism. It is this comprehensive relegation of all gods to the region of myth that characterises modern Atheism, and it is upon this issue that the fight between Theism and its opposite has to be fought and decided.

Historically, too, modern Atheism stands as the summation of a long course of intellectual development, and not a little of its strength is derived from the fact that it is fully "in the stream of tendency," and that its most complete expression is but a final statement of a mental process that had its dawn in the first questionings of religion that agitated the human mind. In the early life of the race religion necessarily plays a large part. Gods, or the materials out of which gods are fashioned, are everywhere. Prompted by his ignorance of objective phenomena on the one hand, and by his misunderstanding of subjective states on the other, the savage sees living agencies everywhere around him. Earth and air are peopled with imaginary deities, and every natural phenomenon is accounted for by the same simple hypothesis. Amid this riot of gods the conception of unconscious force, of undeviating natural law, does not, and cannot, exist. It is reached at first in only a tentative manner, and, even when certain phenomena are reduced to their true character, the gods are still figured as behind the screen, the invisible manipulators of the visible show. But, in the case of every science, there is substantially the same process to be passed through. In astronomy we have the stars and planets figured first as living beings, later as masses of matter presided over by gods. Even at so late a date as the close of the sixteenth century we find Kepler assuming something in the nature of angelic intelligences as the cause of the planets retaining their places in their orbits. Newton's generalisation carried the process a step further, while Laplace's "God is not necessary to my hypothesis" marked the complete expulsion of Theism from the realm of astronomy.

As with astronomy, so with geology; and as with geology, so with biology and sociology, although, in the case of the two last named, the process is not yet complete. But the course of development is in each case identical. First, we have the whole field covered by the Theistic hypothesis; gradually, as the true nature of phenomena becomes known, the gods are, so to speak, edged out, thought becomes less and less Theistic, and, as an inevitable consequence, becomes more and more Atheistic. Each advance in natural knowledge kills some deity, silences some piece of supernaturalism; until at length the lesson of the constant defeat of one side and the constant victory of the other is appreciated, and it is recognised that "God" is never anything more than a euphemism for our ignorance, a term covering that portion of nature not yet brought under the dominion of science.

The whole growth of human thought consists, broadly, in the substitution of unconscious forces for volitional agencies. And the result, under whatever name it may be disguised, is practical Atheism. To exclude the idea of God from our philosophising is Atheism in theory, and to exclude it from our calculations, to lay our plans and carry them out on the certain assumption that all we have to deal with is unconscious forces in their ever-varying combinations and modifications, is Atheism in practice. To do the Christian Churches justice, they have always been ready to see and acclaim this. Their denunciations of Kepler, Galileo, Newton, Lyell, and Darwin, on the ground of their taking the government of the universe out of the hands of God and promoting the growth of Atheism, were fully justifiable from the standpoint of a logical Theism. Much as their action has been decried, they had a far more reasonable appreciation of the logic of their own position and of the consequences of scientific thought than those who protested that they were strengthened in their religious belief, even while accepting theories that robbed God of all power and left him a negligible quantity in a universe he was supposed to sustain and govern.

For all science is logically and necessarily Atheistic—that is, it altogether ignores the existence of God or of the supernatural. And it does this as a matter of absolute necessity. Prevision, which is the essence of science, would be impossible if the presence of an intelligence ruling over nature were admitted. "God" would be an incalculable power, operating no one would say how, or when, or where. Under such conditions all scientific calculations would have to be accompanied by the D. V. of a prayer meeting. To argue from the past to the future would be futile; God



might have operated then, but who could say that he will operate on the next occasion, or *vice versa*? In short, science is only possible upon an Atheistic basis. It is only when the supernatural is partly excluded that rational science can be said to exist, and it is just in proportion as our understanding of the universe is reduced to that of a number of unconscious forces, producing given results under given conditions, that science nears perfection.

Of course, it may be urged that science has nothing to say on the question of God, one way or the other, or that many scientific men never profess to believe in a God. To this the answer is clear and decisive. Whatever certain scientists may *profess*, they all carry out their experiments, elaborate their calculations, and predict results, on the plain assumption that they have nothing to deal with save unconscious, calculable forces. None of them admit the supernaturalism into their scientific calculations, and if this is not practical Atheism, in the name of all that is sensible, what is it? And as to the plea that science says nothing either for or against Theism, my contention is that the ignoring of the God hypothesis by science is evidence of, first, its uselessness, and, second, of the reasonableness of the Atheistic position.

A very strong presumption in favor of Atheism may, therefore, be drawn from a careful study of the nature and tendencies of human evolution. The entire growth of man is away from Theism, and in the direction of its negation. In the beginning the gods are everywhere; they dwarf everything else. If subsequent development confirmed this primitive conception, or gave man clearer and more definite ideas of his deities, the presumption would be in favor of Theism. But the reverse of this is the case. The gods not only grow fewer in number as the race approaches maturity; they become fainter in outline, weaker in power, and further removed from the theatre of man's activity. And this waning of the belief in God is brought about as much by the unconscious pressure of experience and knowledge as by a reasoned refutation of Theistic claims. The majority of people are no more conscious of the causes that lead to a rejection of their religious belief than they are aware of the forces that led to their adoption of it. At all times, and under all conditions, "God" has only stood as a synonym for human weakness and human ignorance, and as the race increases in knowledge and strength the belief in deity undergoes a corresponding weakening.

Now, Atheism does but make explicit in words what has long been implicit in action. It takes the God-idea, examines it, submits it to a careful analysis, and says in effect: "Such are its roots, such are the various stages of its evolution; it is a word which owes its origin to the ignorance of our ancestors; it answers to no ascertainable fact in nature; it explains nothing in nature, and does but serve to obstruct the course of rational development." In this sense, as I have said, Atheism is but the summing-up of a long historical development. The Theistic stage is an inevitable one in mental evolution, but is no more permanent than is the belief in fairies or hobgoblins. One might, indeed, paraphrase Bacon, and say: "A little philosophy inclineth a man to believe in the gods; but depth in philosophy leads to their rejection as a false and useless hypothesis." It is true that thinking brought the gods into the world; it is also true that thinking carries them out again.

But while this declining belief in the supernatural in general, and of deity in particular, gives a very strong presumption in favor of Atheism, its complete justification has to be established in another direction. Atheism clearly has no meaning apart from Theism. It would be impossible to doubt or deny the existence of gods if there were none who believed in them, or if no such conception existed. Atheism is the practical negation of Theism, from whichever point of view we look at the matter; and consequently the reasonableness of Atheism depends upon the unreasonableness of its opposite. If any evidence can be brought forward on behalf of the belief in the existence of a creative mind in nature, the Atheistic position is clearly untenable, and it becomes weakened just in proportion as a presumption in favor of Theism can be established. It becomes necessary, therefore, in order to show what is the real strength of the Atheistic position, to examine the principal

arguments brought forward to prove the belief in Deity. I do not intend to examine *all* the arguments upon which the Theist grounds his case; there are really but three or four, although there are almost endless modifications of them. It will only be necessary to examine the principal reasons adduced, and even these but briefly.

C. COHEN.

(To be continued.)

## Rationalism. --II.

REASON THE SUPREME GUIDE TO TRUTH AND THE ONLY INFALLIBLE AUTHORITY IN BELIEF AND PRACTICE.

(Continued from page 439.)

THE nature and function of reason, then, is to infer fact from previously known fact, and, in doing so, it is able to separate truth from falsehood and good from evil. We will try to illustrate in a concrete way this property and function of reason.

First, then, as to its power to infer possible fact from actual fact. The story of James Watt and the kettle is a good classical illustration. You know how, according to the story, he sat observing the steam issuing from the kettle, and how impressed he was by its expansive force, and how he inferred that, by bringing this power of steam into certain mechanical relationships, it could become a great motor force. The correctness of this reasoning is now known to the whole civilised world. This was *à priori* or deductive reasoning, or reasoning from cause to effect, and illustrates the predictive power of reasoning—that is, given certain causes at work the inevitable results can be plainly foretold; and this may be called intellectual prophecy. This is a property of the reasoning faculty which has greatly increased during the present century, and will increase still more as the data of science accumulate.

But we not only reason from causes to effects, we also reason from effects to causes, and this is called *à posteriori* or inductive reasoning, and is explanatory of phenomena, while the other, or *à priori* reasoning, is predictive of phenomena. As has been well observed, explanation and prediction are really the same mental operation, though they are worked in opposite directions—the one from effect to cause, and the other from cause to effect. Cause, you must remember, is not an abstract something existing apart from matter, but the property of some form of substance, or the relations existing between substance, and, therefore, is itself a fact; and so, starting from the fact cause, we trace it forward to the fact effect, and this is prediction or the *à priori* mode of reasoning. Starting from the fact effect, we trace it back to the fact cause, and this is explanation or *à posteriori* reasoning; and this mode of reasoning we will now try to illustrate. In this case the question we ask is, How does this or that happen? What is its cause? We will again take for our illustration James Watt's steam engine, but now as a practical reality, and not as an idea or inference in his fertile brain. Here, then, is a steam engine at work, giving us a rotary motion by which all sorts of mechanical operations are accomplished. Now, suppose we have a person observing this engine and its work for the first time, a person who never heard of it before, and has heard of no theory as to how it performs its work. In order, then, to understand this, to him, new phenomenon, he would require to learn all the facts in connection with it, before he could fully understand it. He would examine the structure of the engine, and the mutual relations of all its parts, and, following up his investigations, he would find the motive force in the steam, and also how it was distributed alternately on each side of the piston in such a way, by the structure of the engine itself, that it necessarily resulted in the effect—the rotary motion he had observed. This is what he would do if he was a naturalist; whereas, if he was a supernaturalist, he would prostrate himself before it, and call it a miracle. That, of course, is a much easier way of disposing of the matter, though, we think, you must all admit it is not so intelligent and not quite so profitable.

But, according to our definition of reason, it also



enables its possessor to separate truth from falsehood and good from evil, and so has a relation to morals as well as physics. Let us see, then, how it separates truth from falsehood; and, if we can do so, we will at the same time be showing, to some extent at least, how it separates good from evil, since truth is good and falsehood is evil. We will take for our illustration, in this connection, the question of criminality. What is the cause of crime? Two great parties in the State give two great and opposite answers. They cannot both be true, though they may both be false. But if either one is true, the other must be false. The one is the answer of the Church; the other is the answer of science. The Church says man was made perfect; but, by eating a forbidden fruit, he became imperfect in his seed, breed, and generation. How does the Church know this to be a fact? It does not know anything about it; it just says so. But there are certain facts which reason proves to be inconsistent with this assertion. If the Church is right in its gratuitous theory of evil, then the inference of reason—an inference, too, which the Church does not deny—would be that all men, in a state of nature, would be equally wicked and equally criminal. But we all know that this is not so. Even Paul had to admit this when he confessed that the Gentiles, though they had not the written law, yet they did by nature the things contained in the law, which showed the work of the law written in their hearts. The Church's theory of crime being contrary to the facts, as we know them, the inference of reason is that the Church's theory is false. Thus reason proves its capacity to distinguish truth from falsehood and good from evil, for it must be good to know the truth rather than be lost in a quagmire of error.

Now let us look for a moment at the scientific theory of the origin of crime, and see if it is in harmony with the facts as we know them, and therefore has the approval of reason. The scientific theory of crime then—which, unlike the theological theory, is based on a large number of facts—is that man is a progressive being, who began his career low down in the scale of life, and has gradually reached his present physical and mental development as witnessed in the most perfectly developed individuals of the most perfectly developed race—namely, the Caucasian; and that crime in the individuals of this race is merely a case of atavism, a going back to characteristics which were quite normal at certain periods of its development. This atavism is largely, if not entirely, produced by the abominable physical and mental conditions to which great numbers of this race are condemned to exist and work in, through the private monopoly of land and capital.

In this way reason proves the soundness of the scientific theory of crime, and accounts for the undeniable fact that all men, even those in a state of nature, and not of Christian grace, are not criminals, which they should be if the theological theory of crime were correct—total depravity.

We might as well, before leaving this aspect of our subject, see what reason teaches us in regard to the treatment of crime. What should be done with our criminals? What is the true and what is the false treatment? What is the good and what is the evil way to treat those unfortunate persons?

As mental pathology resembles physical pathology in this respect, that some of its victims are incurable—at least, on this side of eternity—the conclusion of reason would be that, while society should restrain them from crime, it should treat them with as little harshness and as much kindness as possible. Harshness may be needed at times, but it does not necessarily follow that it must always be applied, although—according to the orthodox doctrine of hell—this is what is done by the wisdom and love of the Almighty.

In the case of those who are curable, the best influences of all kinds—physical, intellectual, and moral—should be brought to bear upon them, seeing they are amenable to their operation; and, while nothing which is generally agreed upon to be criminal should be encouraged, the criminal himself should be. This is what should be done, because there is causation in crime, as in every other phenomenon. Even "the man in the street" admits there is no effect without a cause. If a person is a criminal, it is because he or she, in the

womb of time, has come under evil influences which the more virtuous and well-behaved members of society have been fortunate in escaping. This, then, is the voice of reason in regard to the treatment of crime; and we are sure that all of you will agree that this voice speaks true—all of you, at least, who have adequate ideas of causation, and

Who see how vice her venom wreaks  
On the frail babe before it speaks,  
And how heredity enslaves  
With ghostly hands that reach from graves.

The false and evil treatment of crime is that which has been practised by the theologians, but which they are now forced to abandon, because reason has shown the folly of it. When the Church was supreme her treatment of crime and insanity was the purest folly and the most cruel barbarism, as was also her treatment of any who differed from her teaching. Indeed, in her whole policy and practice in regard to crime and heresy, she was the greatest criminal, and has the same right to our sympathy. But her criminality and bloodguiltiness prove her to be—what she is—a natural and human institution, and not an infallible or heavenly-guided one. In regard to crime and its treatment, then, we see how reason enables us to distinguish truth from error, and good from evil.

J. MACDOUGALL.

(To be continued.)

### The Man of God goes Forth to Jaw.

(A Hymn, "Ancient and Modern.")

The man of God goes forth to "jaw"  
The "heathen" o'er the main;  
The "Lion" with a greedy maw  
Soon follows in his train.

Who best can drink his cup of woe,  
His bottle of champagne?  
The holy man of God—and so  
It follows in his train.

The parson winks the other eye,  
And says beyond the grave  
Hell-fire awaits us when we die,  
And "kids" us he can save.  
He tries, with twaddle on his tongue,  
To gammon men for gain,  
Backed up by boozy brother Bung,  
Who follows in his train.

A glorious band, the Christian crew,  
Of never-dying fame!  
The creed of Christ, the peaceful Jew,  
They've spread with sword and flame.

The heathen meet the brandished steel,  
The Lion's gory mane;  
They scorn the creed, their eyes reveal  
What follows in its train.

Our Freethought Army, men and boys,  
The matron and the maid,  
Will strike a blow for freedom's joys  
With reason's flashing blade.

The creed of "blood and fire" and heaven  
Too long has been our bane;  
O men, to you may sense be given  
To follow in our train!

ESS JAY BEE.

### Three Good Reasons.

A Scottish minister who was looking up his folk one day called upon a parishioner.

"Richard," he said, "I hae na seen ye at the kirk for some time, and wad like to know the reason."

"Weel, sir," answered Richard, "I hae three decided objections to goin'. Firstly, I dinna believe in being whaur ye does a' the talkin'; secondly, I dinna believe in si' muckle singin'; an' thirdly, an' in conclusion, 'twas there I got my wife."—*Albany Argus.*

### Obituary.

I REGRET to report the death of Willie Fricke, aged nine years, son of Mr. W. Fricke, of Islington. The interment took place on the 12th inst., at Finchley Cemetery; Mr. Charles Watts reading the Secular Burial Service at the request of the parents.—W. J. CAISEY.



## Acid Drops.

PATRIOTISM is sometimes a virtue and sometimes a weakness. A good many people think their own country a great one because they were born in it. This, of course, is simply vanity; unconscious, perhaps, as vanity often is, but still vanity. Now and then this sentiment rises into a perfect sublimity of egotism. Only the other day, for instance, an eminent Russian declared that God was great because he had created the great Slav nation. It did not occur to this gentleman to reflect that the great Slav nation is only a small part of the world's inhabitants, and that the world itself is only a paltry speck in the infinitude of the universe. On the whole, a cockroach might just as well exclaim, "God is great because he made me." In face of the difference between the world and the universe, the difference between a cockroach and the Slav nation is not worth talking about.

"Spirit Merchants" is Nat. Gould's name for the mediums who, in Shakespeare's language, call spirits from the vasty deep. He offers £100 to any one of them who can call up the spirit of Fred Archer, the jockey, and get him to repeat a statement he made privately when in the flesh with respect to a certain Derby. Nat. Gould is a man to keep his word, but he isn't in much danger of having to shell out.

The *Name on the Sky* is the title of a new Chicago magazine devoted to Spiritualism. The first number contains "contributions" from Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Eve, Queen Victoria, Socrates, and St. Paul. Future numbers are to contain "contributions" from Horace Greeley, St. John, Judas Iscariot, Noah Webster, Martin Luther, Moses, King Solomon, Methuselah, and Adam. We do not see the names of Mary and Joseph in the list. Between them they should be able to explain the mystery of the Incarnation, and their "contributions" would be of general interest throughout Christendom. We hope the *Name on the Sky* will be able to extend its list of contributors in this direction.

After the abominable Allport case comes the abominable Jackson case. The wretched fellow who got children into his "God's Garden" as a professional philanthropist, and then starved and flogged them mercilessly, is now doing six months' in one of His Majesty's prisons. Allport and Jackson were both very pious; at least they affected to be so, and it was under the cloak of piety that they carried on their rascalities. Jackson was beastly as well as cruel, for he had a fondness for wielding the lash upon the naked bodies of big boys and girls. "Lust hard by hate" is one of Milton's terrible and true expressions. And it is exemplified more often than is generally supposed by those who are fond of flogging. They generally develop a taste for flogging naked flesh.

Mr. Waugh unsaid his slander that working-class Secularists were the worst ill-users of children, though the Bishop of Chester never had the grace to share the retractation. The truth is that the facts were too glaring a disproof of the slander. Since it was perpetrated all the very worst cases taken up by the Society for the Protection of Children have shown that the worst offenders are professed and even ostentatious religionists.

Solomon Mandrachy was a good religious man. He was also a Turk, likewise a fine hand at curing fits. Mrs. Mandelbom, of Hornsey-road, London, called him in to treat her daughter twelve years old. She allowed him to be alone with the child, and he is now under arrest on a charge of criminal assault.

It is not so very many years since the House of Commons was fighting a religious battle (in which it got badly beaten) with the late Charles Bradlaugh; and now the *Daily Telegraph* has to observe that "members of the House of Commons do not seem well up in the Gospels"—*apropos* of a little discussion between Mr. Wilson (Durham) and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in which the story of the importunate widow was very sadly mangled. The fact is, there are two classes of people who know the Bible well—the enthusiastic Christians who believe it all, and the "infidels" who reject it altogether. These classes together form a minority. The great majority do not read the Bible. They reverence it as professed Christians reverence the House of God who never go to church.

Dear old Pope Pecci, God Almighty's head agent in this world, declares that the new Associations law in France is at variance with the absolute right of the Church. No doubt it is. But the French Government doesn't happen to share Pope Pecci's belief in the absolute right of the Church. It has some belief in the rights of the French nation.

The Pope consoles the religious orders by reminding them of the blessedness of suffering persecution. No doubt persecution is a blessing, for Jesus Christ said so; but his followers, and particularly the Roman Catholic section of

them, have always been self-sacrificing enough to distribute it as widely as possible amongst infidels and heretics. It must be quite a treat to the Pope's flock to enjoy some of the blessing themselves.

A number of policemen allege that they have been deceived into subscribing for an encyclopædia by listening to the persuasive tongue of a rev. gentleman who, from being a prison chaplain, and becoming unnerved by a hanging, has gone into the book-trade. This pious canvasser—by name the Rev. W. R. Guthrie—represented, according to the police officers, that the encyclopædia contained information useful to them in connection with their duties. The nearest approach, however, seemed to be some generally interesting facts about the Mongolians, the American bison, etc. In a County-court action one of the police witnesses was asked by the judge: "Why did you not make sure of the contents?" Witness replied: "I left it to the parson." There is a great deal "left to the parson" besides vouching for the contents of an encyclopædia.

"Providence" is still visiting America with a foretaste of Hades. New York is like a furnace, Chicago has had 102 degrees in the shade, and in Kansas many people have been driven insane, while the fields are withering from lack of rain.

One curious effect of the hot weather in London has been an increase in the congregation of Dowieites, the followers of the gentleman in Chicago who dresses himself in wings like an angel and objects to broiled ham for breakfast. They worship in a small place, it is true, and even a few persons give it the appearance of being well patronised. Since the faith-healer's departure from the metropolis the church he founded was practically empty until the hot weather set in, but it is now looking up somewhat. With a temperature at 87 in the shade, and reaching something like 145 in the full blaze of sunshine, one is inclined to accept anything—even a winged angel who flies at sixteen stone. The Mormon mission in London is also making converts temporarily. Many cases of cerebral excitement are recorded from this burst of summer heat.—*Daily Telegraph*.

According to Dr. Warren H. Hunter, county physician, the records of the Detention Hospital (Chicago) show that from ten to twenty per cent. of the 2,000 patients received yearly in that establishment are victims of religious mania, and ten per cent. of these come from Old Dowie's "Zion."

Sabbatarianism is organising itself in Canada. Recently the Lord's Day Alliance held a special session at Hamilton. It declared that every working man needs at least one day's rest in seven—which no one disputes. It said the Sabbath is a Divine institution—which is simply rubbish. The organising secretary—a man of God named Shearer—went in strongly for Dominion legislation. The pious Shearer has evidently no mercy for ungodly lambs. Sunday on the Shearer lines would be a deadly infliction. Far better to work on Sunday and take a holiday on Monday, when the parsons cease from troubling and the weary can really rest.

"Neweasthenia" was the defence set up on behalf of a Berwick post-office girl charged with stealing postal orders. It was said that she had been very much excited about religious affairs. She had attended revival services in Berwick, and spent much of her time in organising Christian Endeavor meetings, and so forth. The minister of the English Presbyterian Church at Berwick, and others, were called to prove that the great interest she had taken in religious affairs had made her hysterical and weakened her will-power. We can quite believe it. But the defence is a serious indictment of religious emotionalism.

A "churlish priest," of Wickham, near Newcastle-on-Tyne, came in for a good wiggling by the coroner sitting at Dipton the other day. In supreme disregard of a hope expressed by the coroner, the man of God had refused the rites of burial to a person who had committed suicide whilst temporarily insane. The coroner described his refusal as narrow-minded in the extreme.

The deceased, of course, was none the worse for being buried without the Church Service being mumbled over his grave. But, all the same, the action of the cleric was both stupid and cruel, having regard to the feelings of the relatives. As we have said before, the best way to take down the clerical conceit is to ignore altogether the rites and ceremonies to which the clergy attach such an absurd importance.

The extremely insolent man of God who officiates as perpetual curate of St. Martin's, Chipping Barnet, has been taken down a peg or two by Mr. Justice Farwell. He claimed some land which didn't belong to him, and denounced the Charity Trustees, who were the rightful owners, as Ananias and Sapphira. Justice Farwell, in deciding against him, said he seemed to be laboring under some extraordinary misapprehension. It was a pity he had used the expression he



had in reference to the Charity Trustees. They had acted properly throughout, and done their utmost to meet the defendant, who, however, was an unreasonable man.

This perpetual curate of Chipping Barnet is a pretty preacher of the Gospel of Christ, who went to quite the other extreme, and counselled, not only the relinquishment of rights, but the surrender as a present of what might not even be claimed.

The minister of the Baptist Church at Fort Smith, Tenn., addressed a severe reprimand from the pulpit to Grace Sullivan and her escort. The girl went home from church, and committed suicide by drinking carbolic acid. She was nineteen years old. The girl and her escort had whispered during the service.

One must really sympathise with the Rev. William S. Brandon, of Detroit, who—says the New York *Truthseeker*—seeks divorce on the ground of cruelty. He alleges that his wife often locked him out of the house and threw a shoe at him when he tried to climb in at the window. He further alleges that, after his Sunday morning sermon, he was frequently compelled to wash clothes and get dinner.

Poor man, he has a right to complain of such a tyrannical spouse. If *she* had preached the sermon, he might have been reasonably expected to do the washing and the cooking. But there doesn't seem to have been any division of labor in that holy household.

Our colossal neighbor, St. Paul's Cathedral, seems to be in a bad way. Owing to tunnels and other excavations in its vicinity, the foundations are reported to be endangered. Cracks have appeared in the walls, and the vast structure "shows an inclination to slide down the hillside towards the Thames." Isn't this rather indicative of the condition of the faith which the cathedral represents?

A Scotch minister—Rev. Henry Neville, of the United Free Church, Kelby—seems to have been going it rather strong in the spirituous as well as the spiritual department. Sued by a tradesman for the value of whisky supplied, he availed himself of the Tippling Act to the extent of £10. He admitted getting half a gallon of whisky on three occasions—two bottles in one day. He did not know how long a quart lasted him; less than a week, he thought. The Sheriff reserved judgment.

Rev. Wm. Rowley, who is still nominally the vicar of Reighton, near Bridlington, has been tried at Hereford Assizes for forgery at Malvern. He elected to give evidence on his own behalf. In the end, Judge Bigham sentenced him to three years' penal servitude, and characterised his evidence as the most wicked perjury.

The passive endurance of evil taught in the Sermon on the Mount does not appear to have commended itself to the Rev. G. S. Hitchcock, Unitarian minister, Chatham. Councillor Lamb, at a meeting of the Medway Guardians, called him a man of no principle. Whereupon the rev. gentleman struck Lamb on the nose. For this the preacher of the gospel of the "meek and lowly one" has been bound over to keep the peace. "Blessed are the peacemakers," who in this case appear to be the Chatham "beaks."

Mr. W. Holman Hunt has written to the newspapers complaining that the Bill to legalise marriage with a deceased wife's sister has been shelved for the present Session at any rate. A religious weekly rather unkindly informs the public that Mr. Hunt has a personal interest in the matter, having contracted a union of the sort contemplated by the defunct Bill. But surely that fact should entitle him to speak with the authority of experience.

In Iceland whistling is regarded as a violation of the Divine law. It is almost as bad an offence as amusements on the Sabbath are thought to be in our own country.

The *Record* is of opinion that the present position of a diocesan prelate is not in agreement with the spirit and feeling of the times. "The pomp and circumstance of a Bishop's life, his high stipend, and his aloofness from the clerical world" are matters which, it says, were in former times the "objects of the satirist's scorn and the caricaturist's pencil." The stipends now attacked are, it points out, sums of quite modern settlement. There is, therefore, precedent for readjustment. "This, in fairness to occupants of the Sees, could only be done as each bishopric fell vacant; but that in time it will be done is, we take it, an absolute certainty."

"Peter Lombard" tells us that recently a minister of a church in an English diocese announced after the last hymn: "Owing to the great escape of gas, there can be no sermon this evening."

A perplexed "Lay Preacher" writes to a Church newspaper on the subject of gambling. He says he has always felt that betting is a sin; but he is by no means sure that he can prove it to be more than a very pernicious habit. How can he? There is nothing against it in the Bible. As he himself points out, an eminent Romanist like Father Bernard Vaughan has excused it in his sermons, and told his people that they are not required to confess it in the Sacrament of Penance.

To this we may add that some little time ago Father Vaughan challenged Dr. Horton to prove that betting was prohibited in the Scriptures. Dr. Horton made an attempt, but lamentably failed. All that he could do was to cite the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," which obviously has no bearing on the question, except in so far as it might apply to "weshers."

The truth is Christ did not say anything about betting, because he never anticipated that any such practice would arise. They didn't know or foresee everything "down in Judee," though the parsons pretend that they did. Christ never suspected that a time would arrive when hosts of people would "back their fancies," and a whole system spring up providing a regular occupation for a large class of men, and catered for by the general newspaper press and by widely-circulated journals exclusively devoted to the pursuit. Recently the House of Lords appointed a Committee to consider the question of betting. Will the Bishop of Hereford, who is a member of that Committee, tell us where the Bible prohibits betting?

It would seem that this was one of the many matters on which Christ might, and ought to, have made some anticipatory pronouncement, but didn't. Short as his earthly sojourn is represented to be, he seems to have frittered a lot of his time away, and to have booked for Paradise before half his work was accomplished. Why, for instance, instead of troubling to curse, in a peevish way, a barren fig-tree, did he not make some definite reference to slavery and polygamy, and, by anticipation, to gambling, not to mention other matters which his followers have had to settle for themselves?

The Church and Tory newspaper of Birmingham, the *Daily Gazette*—an infinitely brighter and more liberal paper than Chamberlain's mouthpiece, the *Daily Post*—has recently been throwing light on the slums and dark corners of the Midland City. A local High Church vicar, in a sermon on the subject, said they were told that the Bishop and clergy had become awake to what was taking place in their midst. But if the clergy had been doing their duty, the recent revelations should be no news to them. The fact was, said the preacher, the slum disgrace lay at the door of the Church. Instead of making themselves acquainted with the condition of things in their parishes, the clergy lived away from their churches, and then expressed themselves as surprised at what was taking place around them when a newspaper reporter did work that ought to have been done by themselves.

On the same subject of housing reform, Mr. C. Cochrane, of The Downs, St. Neots, writes to the *Church Times*: "I have to confess to the painful fact that in all the village churches I have attended through many years in different parts of the county I have never yet heard any reference from the pulpit as to the duties and responsibilities of landed property and small ownership. I have known nuisances and abuses of the most horrible kind to exist in cottage homes, and those who were responsible for them to be regular attendants at the village church, sometimes also holding special offices in connection with it; and yet no faithful word has been spoken from the pulpit, or, as far as I have known, outside it."

The writer mentions that in one village the conditions were so bad that the clergyman did not like his wife to visit a certain part of it—and yet that cleric continued silent. "I have known of illness and death from insanitary surroundings, and on the following Sunday the mourners have been counselled to submit to the Will of God!.....Out of some 750 letters and returns that I have received on the subject of village housing and sanitation, I am glad to say that a few rural clergymen have written in warm sympathy, but it has been a surprise and a disappointment to me that the proportion has been so small as compared with the laymen who have also written."

Some anxiety is expressed by the ultra-pious as to the possibility of a repetition at the forthcoming Coronation of certain incidents on the occasion of the Coronation of the late Queen in Westminster Abbey. These are regarded as very unbecoming the "solemnity of the occasion or the sacred surroundings." It seems that "as the peers advanced to make their homage to the newly-crowned Queen, the more notable of them were greeted by cheers." Whilst the aged Lord Rolle occasioned "much laughter" by falling in his endeavors to reach the Queen's throne. Again: "During



this part of the ceremony the Lord Treasurer of the Household threw to the occupants of the choir and galleries the silver Coronation medals, which were eagerly scrambled for."

Well, there is nothing so very dreadful in this after all. Gaiety and a sense of humor needn't be frowned upon in this "vale of tears," even though displayed in a "sacred edifice." Life—especially religious life—is much too dull as it is, and some persons would make it even worse if they could have their way.

An army chaplain is relating in the *Church Times* his experiences at the front. He doesn't seem to be gifted with much nous, for many of the incidents he relates are calculated to raise smiles rather than to touch a sympathetic chord. In his introductory remarks he goes out of his way to refer to the fact that on Septuagesima Sunday, February 11, 1900, the Church, as a body, lifted her voice in supplication to Almighty God for a speedy restoration of peace. She did; and we have ever since been waiting, with more or less impatience, for a response. Either God was deaf or disinclined to accede to the supplication, which, for all practical purposes, might have been addressed to thin air.

But it is when this army chaplain begins to talk about his experiences at the front that he amuses us with his childish naivety. He can't understand why a number of the officers regarded his spiritual performances with so much indifference, not to say cool disdain. "One cannot," he says, "be surprised if sometimes the men stay away from services when the officers stand aloof, and that, alas! they sometimes do." He has "heard from the soldiers many sad accounts of their officers' indifference to religion." Of a surety, the "Tommys" have made many complaints as to their treatment during the war—too often with grave and sufficient cause. But surely this particular complaint must be the least frequent of them all.

Several instances are cited by this army chaplain of the "shocking" indifference of officers to religious observances. He says: "In one case a gunner of the R. F. A. asked his officer for permission to attend Holy Communion after parade service. 'You have been to one service,' was the reply; 'that is surely enough for anyone.' 'No sir,' said the man, 'I have been taught to look upon Holy Communion as the highest service of the day, and I should like to go if I might.' 'Oh,' replied the officer, 'you mean that bread and wine thing; no, you can't go.'"

The story requires a little final touch. The army chaplain supplies it: "In the next engagement they had that officer was killed!" There now, we have judgment visited by offended Deity on one of the ungodly. A few other officers, we believe, have been killed in the war, and some no doubt were pious. But they don't count when a story of this sort has to be told. All the same, it is interesting to know that the Lord is doing something. If he couldn't stop the war, he is at least able to display his power by smiting an impious officer, who talked of Holy Communion as that "bread and wine thing."

Here is another story from the same source: "A sergeant in the M. I. told me that one Sunday the colonel ordered parade service, and as there was no chaplain with the column the senior lieutenant, who was acting-adjutant, took it. When the parade was formed up he walked from his tent with a Prayer Book in one hand and a cigarette in the other, and said: 'Now, men, we've got to have parade service, so just listen.' He then read the Lord's Prayer, dismissed the parade, and resumed the smoking of his cigarette."

The army chaplain moralises upon these incidents, observing that "most army chaplains, if discipline permitted, could tell of disagreeable episodes and opposition to their work which they have experienced at the hands of officers. Whether it is the lack of religion in the home, or in the public schools and at Sandhurst, etc., the fact is that amongst the officers, especially the juniors, there is far too little attention paid to religious duties."

Amongst the rank and file his first experience of sick visiting was rather discouraging. He went to administer spiritual consolation to two enteric patients. Both said they were members of the Church of England, but neither had been confirmed or was a communicant, and, "what was even worse, neither knew the meaning of Holy Communion!" They couldn't get even so far as to describe it as "that bread and wine thing."

A volume on Zwingli, the Reformer of German Switzerland, has recently been published by Professor Jackson, of New York University. While Zwingli was a priest he cohabited with a woman whom he married some years later. Two years before that event he was one of the signatories of an address to the Bishop, in which the memorialists ask their diocesan to permit them to marry or to wink at their irregularities. "They very honestly, and with expressions of shame and penitence," says Zwingli's biographer, "confess

that they have violated the law of chastity very often; but they plead in extenuation of these offences that God had not seen fit to give them the gift of continence." Professor Jackson adds a note to the foregoing passage, saying: "Yes, he was unchaste. But what does that show?"

Numerically, the Sunday-school system is declining, according to a leader in the *Rock*. No wonder, considering the way in which Sunday-schools are carried on. In the opinion of many, present-day children have quite as much instruction as they can safely endure in the ordinary week-day schools. The pious rubbish crammed into their heads in the Sunday-schools is simply a cruel and gratuitous infliction. Both in the Sunday-schools of the Church and Non-conformity a considerable shrinkage in teachers as well as scholars is observable.

With reference to the falling-off, this year's report of the Church of England Sunday-school Institute observes: "It may mean that our scholars between the ages of ten and thirteen find the requirements of the Education Code, with which they are compelled to comply, so arduous and engrossing that they are tempted to use the leisure of Sunday in the pursuit of change and recreation; or it may mean that they find the teaching power of the Sunday-school so inferior as, in their judgment, to render attendance at the Sunday-school undesirable."

The *Rock*, however, thinks that in a great measure the decline must be traced to the "laxity in the observance of the Lord's Day and of public worship which is gaining ground in town and country amongst all classes. In London and all our large towns Sunday is spent by the majority in pleasure excursions, in visiting or receiving friends," and the children accompany their parents. Why, certainly.

Rev. Dr. Horton believes that the comparatively small number of churchgoers in London has been lessened by the advent of the bicycle. That is true; but what a humiliating confession for the sky-pilots to have to make. Christ unable to hold his own against the bike!

A baker in Middlesex-street, E.C., has been summoned under an obsolete act for baking bread on Sundays. But the prosecution failed, and rightly so too; for it was shown that the defendant was a Jew, and he employed none but Jews on the Sunday. These employees had their own Sabbath (Saturday) free, and, as a matter of fact, they worked fewer hours per week than Christian bakers. It happened that the summons—which was dismissed on payment of costs—came before Alderman Sir William Treloar at the Guildhall Police-court. Those who know the worthy knight's service in regard to Sunday reform—particularly in connection with the opening of the Guildhall Art Gallery on Sundays—will realise that he was hardly likely to regard this prosecution with favor.

The King will not be required to kiss the bishops on the occasion of his Coronation. This will be a great relief to his Majesty, if it isn't to the prelates. Some of them are so much of the type of Court flunkeys that it is possible they may feel aggrieved. It is even conceivable that they may think the Church is slighted.

William IV., we are reminded by Mr. Labouchere, wished to get rid of the ceremony of being kissed by each peer in 1831, but ultimately he was obliged to submit, and was even kissed by the archbishops and bishops—a part of the affair to which he had strongly and specially objected.

Quaker influence has made itself felt in the editorial columns of the rejuvenated *Echo*. The other day, commenting on the decision to modify the monarch's oath against Romish error, it mildly suggested that the Committee should have first considered the propriety of any oath being taken in the face of Christ's injunction to "Swear not at all."

Dr. E. A. Abbott has published, through Black's, a work which will occasion some comment amongst students of the Gospels. His object is to prove that Mark's gospel was the earliest of the four, and that Matthew and Luke wrote their gospels with the work of Mark in front of them. The inference is that, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they "expanded" the sacred narrative, as some press agencies are accused of expanding their foreign telegrams.

An English working girl on an emigrant ship is reported to have written thus to her former mistress: "Dear Madam,—I hope this finds you well as it leaves me. The ship is in the middle of the Red Sea, and it is fearfully hot. I am in a terrible state of melting all day long. But, honored madam, I know you will be pleased to hear that I am still a member of the Church of England."



## Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, July 21, at 6.15, Freethought Demonstration at Victoria Park.

## To Correspondents.

ALL communications for Mr. Charles Watts in reference to lecturing engagements, etc., should be sent to him at 24 Carminta-road, Balham, S.W. If a reply is required, a stamped and addressed envelope must be enclosed.

T. F. writes that these sudden swerings round from friendship to the opposite are a common experience in all gatherings, from mothers' meetings to the alliances of kings and princes. But to compare the growth of the Freethought movement to that of the Salvation Army is foolish. Freethought has not the same abundant material to work upon, nor can it appeal to the selfishness of supernatural hopes and fears. Besides, a great many Freethinkers are unable to avow themselves as such, through dread of the consequences to their wives and children, who are too often made to feel in such cases the full meaning of "Christian charity." This correspondent was himself assisted into the light by an active church member, who is obliged to "wink the other eye." A steady work of permeation is going on in all directions, and, if our register is small at present, the next generation will see the harvest of to-day's sowing. Meanwhile, it is necessarily a hard and thankless task to lead the Freethought movement; and whoever undertakes it, with the party's mandate, has a claim on the fullest consideration and support. "No more of the Salvation Army, Mr. Anderson," is this correspondent's last word.

W. P. BALL.—Thanks for the cuttings. There are circumstances that make us attach a peculiar value to your subscription to the "Fund for Mrs. Foote." Your association with us for a considerable period in the *Freethinker* office, to which we look back with unalloyed pleasure, gave you some insight into the nature of our task.

J. LAIRD writes from Dundee with reference to our paragraph (p. 423) on a "Novel Census taken at Greenock." "Permit me to point out," he says, "that licensed premises in Greenock (with the exception of hotels, which admit what are called *bond fide* travellers only), as well as in all other parts of Scotland, are by Act of Parliament closed on Sundays. The thousands of men, women, and children mentioned as having entered the 143 licensed premises on Sunday I am very much afraid only existed in the Census taker's imagination." There is clearly a mistake somewhere. Perhaps the Census taker meant the "two hours" statistics of the public-houses to apply to Saturday, and the Church statistics only to apply to Sunday.

E. PARKER.—See "Sugar Plums." We have a big fight of our own on, but we shall not forget to do what we can for the West Ham Branch. Please let us know how you stand, financially and otherwise, in the struggle.

F. E. WILLIS.—Thanks for cuttings and letter.

L. PRICE.—The Ecclesiastical Commissioners have control of a good deal of property, but it does not amount to the value of two hundred millions. Perhaps the speaker meant that figure to represent the capitalised value of the whole revenues of the Church of England. The Commissioners administer only a part of those revenues.

GERALD GREY.—Shall appear.

S. J. W., sending 10s., says: "I hope it will be announced in next week's *Freethinker* that 1,000 sums of a like amount have been received from all parts of the country. There should be thousands to come forward and support the President."

ALLAN begs Mrs. Foote not to let her husband waste money on an appeal.

C. DAVIES, sending £1 for the Fund for Mrs. Foote, says: "I have just taken my week's wages, and the above amount is just one-half of it.....Lots of men of your stamp have endured a similar trial. You know their names better than I do." It would have been a cruel insult to return this correspondent's subscription. We hope, however, that comparatively poor Freethinkers will not tax themselves unduly, and letters of sympathy will be valued where reasonable means of giving do not exist.

J. HUGHES.—Thanks for your letter as well as the enclosure.

MARY M. DANSON MARTINEZ.—Yours is a letter from a woman's heart—the best thing in the world.

J. F. and MRS. AUST write: "If Mr. Anderson had as much sympathy for the cause as we have, and if he knew how slender our purse is, he would write off that little debt without any further hesitation. Please ask him not to compare us with the Salvation Army any more."

MISS VANCE, N. S. S. secretary, acknowledges:—Towards Regent's Park Demonstration, Mrs. B. M. Smith, 5s.; Towards Brockwell Park Demonstration, W. J. Caisey, 10s.; General Fund, R. Carroll, 6s. 6d.; Benevolent Fund, H. M. Ridgway, 10s.

E. KIRTON hopes that Freethinkers all over the country will unite to support Mr. Foote in this emergency.

J. FERGUSON.—Thanks. Let the other matter be forgotten.

HOWARD ROSS says that all Freethinkers, whether members of the N. S. S. or not, should give some *substantial* evidence of their sympathy in this crisis.

E. NEWELL, aged eighty-four, and an Atheist since 1839, sends his mite and "an old man's good wishes."

V. T. M., in sending cheque to the Fund for Mrs. Foote, with an encouraging letter, says: "I am not particularly surprised, as I had some of that gentleman's promises, and failures to redeem them, as Chairman of the Ball's Pond Secular Hall Society, Limited."

W. CONSTANT hopes there will be hundreds of letters with enclosures for Mrs. Foote.

W. AINSWORTH trusts that Mr. Foote will pull through, and that the Freethought Publishing Company will be properly supported. This correspondent means to take Shares in a few weeks.

T. ROBERTS promises to send another subscription next week.

A. G. LYE (Coventry) says: "I have spoken about the Anderson matter to several friends. In my humble opinion, you have been, and are, shamefully treated. But I hope you will be supported so that you will be freer than before."

R. L.—Thanks for the message from yourself and wife. We note your wish that "the necessary will be found to repel this venomous attack."

F. J. VOISEY.—Yes, if you were here, we could say more than we could write. Your advice shall have full consideration—"Whatever you do, save your home."

GEORGE DIXON, sending cheque to the Fund for Mrs. Foote, says: "I have every confidence in your leadership, I sympathise deeply with Mrs. Foote, and I hope you will bring a certain party to his knees—legally speaking."

JAMES NEATE, on behalf of himself and Mrs. Neate, sends a two-fold subscription as "a small acknowledgment of your services to Freethought, and as a sign of our confidence in you as the leader of the Freethought movement in England. We regret we cannot make it twenty pounds instead of two. And we sincerely trust that you will have (as we believe you will) sufficient help to carry you through your present embarrassments and cruel persecution."

E. L. thinks the "mean treatment" we have received "must awaken sympathy" for us in "all fair-minded readers of the *Freethinker*."

J. W. DE CAUX writes: "I hope Freethinkers everywhere will rally round you"—with other encouraging words in a valued letter.

T. OLLERENSHAW, a Huddersfield stalwart, says: "How Mr. Anderson could bring himself to do such a thing I cannot imagine. It appears as if there were an underhand scheme to deprive you of the confidence of the N. S. S. members; and, failing that, to impoverish you. I hope the attempt will be futile."

E. J.—If all followed your example in proportion to their means, our trouble would soon vanish.

W. MUMBY says: "I also 'am sorry for you,' but you need not search the envelope for a writ on that account. I send a cheque for £5 for your wife, and hope you will soon again have your mind at liberty for Freethought work."

H.—Yes, now is the time to find out our friends, and you are evidently one of them.

L. E. ALLWORTH.—It would be instructive if our wealthy pursuer could read your letter and others in the same vein.

C. D. STEPHENS writes: "There ought to be in this country alone a sufficient number of friends who, by contributing a small sum per head, could easily see this matter through without inconvenience to themselves, and I hope they will come forward without urging."

G. TAYLOR.—Glad to hear you will take Shares in the Freethought Publishing Company shortly. That enterprise is very near our heart. We expect it to carry on the work when we are dead and gone.

R. JOHNSON.—Thanks for your letter. It is as welcome as the subscription.

S. HOLMES.—Yes, if a few hundreds do what you have done, it will be all's well that ends well. Your letter is a cordial. Mrs. Foote read it with much pleasure.

W. WARD.—Glad to hear from one so near the spot where we once fought "The Battle of Douglas Head."

C. J. PEACOCK sends cheque for Mrs. Foote with an expression of "deep sympathy in her present trouble and warm admiration for her gifted husband." At which the said husband blushes. Mr. Peacock is one of those who promised to take a considerable number of Shares in the Freethought Publishing Company, and took them.

W. CONY's advice is, "Don't let any of the curs subdue you. You are sure to come out on top at the finish. Why, your letter in this week's *Freethinker* is worth a guinea to read."

T. DUNBAR.—Thanks for your kind letter.

W. GARTHWAITE doubts the wisdom of fighting to a finish with such an adversary. "The situation," he says, "has been forced upon you, and you should look after yourself now."

G. BRADY.—Our health is good, in the sense that we have a good un abused constitution; but we are getting very weary, and sighing for a holiday.

H. GILL writes: "Now is the time for Freethinkers to be practical. Those who have received pleasure and instruction from your pen and tongue have now a grand opportunity to show their gratitude."

J. G. BARTRAM.—Help was required by Monday, but not by then exclusively. See our statement in another column. Thanks.

W. W. R.—We note your promise to send another subscription "to avoid the odium of bankruptcy." Mr. Conway is not in England, and it would be of very little use to ask either of the other gentlemen you mention to "influence Mr. Anderson to do what is right and consistent with what he professes." We note that you have read Mr. Anderson's letter, and that you "must say it does not in any way justify his actions."



JOHN CROSS considers Mr. Anderson's action "atrocious." "Keep up that brave heart of yours," he adds, "fight him to the finish, and win."

A. C. BROWN.—The *hundreds* have not come forward yet, but those who have done so have responded liberally, and the help of the slower ones is awaited.

A. POPE.—Pleased to hear from one who has read the *Freethinker* from the first number.

S. BURGON.—Written like a true woman. We thank you. But you don't understand your opposites. Some old men's hearts are very tough.

R. GIBBON.—No, the party you mention was not "in" that £20.

MARY SAMBOURN.—Yes, it is often a thorny road indeed, and there is no call to plant bombshells in it. Mrs. Foote thanks you, through us, for your letter.

J. H. C. gallantly says that the acceptance of his guinea by Mrs. Foote will more than repay him for the outlay,

J. DUNN.—You cannot understand Mr. Anderson. We are afraid we do.

B. L. COLEMAN regrets that his twenty shillings are not twenty pounds. "I hope," he says, "that *all* will do their duty, and then there may be enough for the crisis."

MARTIN WEATHERBURN.—Your sympathy and support are always highly valued.

E. TRUELOVE thinks it a "mean trick to fasten fangs on a man who has devoted his whole life to the cause of Freethought."

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Truthseeker (New York)—Sydney Bulletin—Searchlight (Waco, Texas)—Blue Grass Blade—Manchester Daily Dispatch—El Libre Pensamiento—Two Worlds—Free Society (Chicago)—Newcastle Leader—Toronto Globe—Open Court—Freethought Magazine—Zoophilist.

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.

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

LECTURE NOTICES must reach 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.

## Personal Again.

I HAVE heard nothing further from Mr. Anderson, so I presume he is satisfied with the statement of his case in the letter which I published for him in last week's *Freethinker*. But I have neither seen nor heard of anyone else who is satisfied with it. He appears still to retain the grace of singularity.

What I want my readers to pay particular attention to is this. Mr. Anderson has not dared to contradict me on any statement of fact. He indulged in a dark hint about monetary dealings with me, but I challenged him to deny my assertion that he never gave me any money privately beyond the advances for which he is suing me and his only answer is silence. This is not because he could not be heard if he wished to speak, for I offered to print his denial in these columns. His silence, therefore, is a virtual admission that my assertion is true, and that his dark hint was all nonsense.

It should be noted, too, that Mr. Anderson has nothing to say about his Shares in the Freethought Publishing Company. He passed the subject by in his letter, and he now treats in the same way my important discovery of documents in his own handwriting. He called me a "liar"—yes, and a "scoundrel" and a "thief"—for declaring that he had promised to take those Shares. Well, I have demonstrated that he did promise to take them. And what does he do? Does he offer me an apology? Does he utter the least word of regret? Nothing of the kind. He lies low with his finger on his lip. Perhaps he thinks it is dignified silence, but others will be apt to think it a dumb disgrace.

Personally, I am very sorry that the matter has taken this turn. I hoped he would correct his mistake. I fancied he had some regard for the good opinion of the Freethought party. I imagined, if he still felt a grudge against me, he would wish to put himself right with the

great body of Freethinkers. But it appears that I was only dreaming.

Some correspondents ask if there is no one who can persuade Mr. Anderson to be just and sensible. But he cannot annul now (if he would) the receiving order he obtained against me. Moreover, I have a notion that there are strong, though contemptible, influences at work persuading him *not* to be just and sensible. I gave him hints of this long ago, and it may yet be my duty to probe this matter to the bottom.

It is only my own appeal that can possibly annul the receiving order. Apart from the Registrar's week of grace, I find I have a statutory right of appeal within twenty-one days. I must decide, therefore, by Friday (July 19). My solicitor—who was the late Charles Bradlaugh's solicitor, and is of course a thoroughly honest and competent lawyer—is strongly of opinion that I should win on appeal. I have no right to fly in the face of his advice without very grave reason. Still, I am not yet resolved what to do, and it is always a blunder to make up one's mind before it is necessary. The legal issue really turns upon whether I did or did not pay Mr. Anderson that £100 to enable him to take Shares in the Freethought Publishing Company. If I did—and the documents now seem to prove it—then Mr. Anderson loses his case and with it his "debt."

With regard to my appeal for the Fund for Mrs. Foote, I have to thank, as she thanks, all who have responded. Some of them have sent very touching letters with their donations. In a few cases, where poor men have offered to get their small savings out of the bank—a thing that cannot be assented to—I confess that I have hardly known how to restrain my tears.

During my presidency of the N. S. S. my out-of-pocket expenses have averaged about £30 a year. Multiply that by ten, and you have the amount which (at least) I ought to expect in this emergency. There is yet time for this to be realised. About a half of the amount has already been received.

G. W. FOOTE.

## The Fund for Mrs. Foote.

SYDNEY A. GIMSON, £10; F. S., £20; C. J. Peacock, £5; W. P. Ball, £1; C. D. Stephens, 5s.; W. Mumby, £5; G. Brady, £1; E. Wilson, £2 2s.; Mrs. M. Danson Martinez, £1 1s.; S. Holmes, £1; R. Axelby, 5s.; T. Roberts, 2s. 6d.; Felix Hermann, 10s.; C. A. W., 2s. 6d.; W. Lamb, £2; A. E. W., 5s.; Silex, £1; E. J., £1; E. Rhodes, £3; R. H. Side, £1; J. Bray, £1; A. Nugent, £1; W. Clarkson, £1; G. Taylor, £1; T. Young, 5s.; J. Gallery, 2s. 6d.; J. S. Dobson, 5s.; H., 10s.; L. E. Allworth, 5s.; W. Garthwaite, £1; T. Dunbar, 1s.; W. Cody, £2 2s.; S. Sackville, 10s.; G. Davey, 1s. 6d.; A. Riley, 2s. 6d.; T. Ollerenshaw, 5s.; R. Johnson, £2 10s.; A. T. Young, 10s.; J. W. de Caux, £5; W. Bean, 5s.; G. Jacob, 5s.; W. Stevens, £1 1s.; E. L., 2s. 6d.; M. L. B., 2s. 6d.; J. T. Ives, 1s.; Brockwell Park, 10s.; W. J. Caisey, 10s.; Mary Lambourn, 10s.; J. Milner, £1; F. J. Pinnell, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Burgon, £1; R. Gibbon, 10s.; Trinity, 5s. 6d.; E. Truelove, 5s.; R. Gray, 2s. 6d.; C. Lacy, 2s. 6d.; J. H. Hallows, 5s.; M. Weatherburn, 10s.; R. Richards, 5s.; A. J. B., 5s.; W. E. B., 2s. 6d.; J. Hipwell, 5s.; W. Stephens, 5s.; Friend, 1s.; B. L. Coleman, £1; James Dunn, £1; G. F. Finn, £1; J. H. C., £1 1s.; Uncle Jim, 5s.; Miss M. Ridley, £1; E. Andrews, 10s.; J. Sullivan, 10s.; H. Hyman, 2s. 6d.; A. Livesey, 2s. 6d.; W. Thacker, 2s. 6d.; F. E. Willis, 1s.; F. P., 6d.; J. R., 1s.; W. T. Pitt, 10s.; W. Ward, £1; A. C. Brown, 5s.; J. Hartgrill, 5s.; A. Pope, 3s.; John Cross, 10s.; Samuel Pearce, 10s.; T. Lowndes, 2s. 6d.; L. Bristol, £2 2s.; W. W. R., £1; Newcastle Branch, 10s.; G. Weatherall, 2s. 6d.; R. Turnbull, 2s. 6d.; J. Peacock, 2s. 6d.; J. G. Bartram, 2s. 6d.; H. Gill, £1; Bishop, 5s.; Rich, 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. Bowman, 5s.; John Sumner, junr., £1 1s.; H. Silverstein, 5s.; James Neate, £1; Mrs. Neate, £1; George Dixon, £5; F. J. Voisey, £2 2s.; R. L., 5s.; J. D. Stones, 10s.; A. G. Lye, 10s.; A. A. Perry, 2s.; J. F. and Mrs. Aust, 5s.; W. Murray, 3s.; C. Davies, £1; J. R. Holmes, £1 1s.; G. Roleffs, £1; J. Little, 5s.; J. Hughes, £2 2s.; per T. Johnson, £1 15s.; T. Jones, 2s.; C. J. Pottage, £5; W. Rowland, £1; Mr. and Mrs. Willis, 10s.; Allan, 7s.; E. Self, 2s. 6d.; S. J. W., 10s.; Sarah Watts, £1 1s.; S. J. B., 2s. 6d.; F. O. F., 10s.; C. S. and Roberts, 5s.; W. Constant, 4s.; Poor Man's Mite, 1s.; T. Roberts, 2s. 6d.; G. Carrington, 5s.; W. Ainsworth, 5s.; G. Calcutt, 2s. 6d.; J. Bevins, £1; A. Flook, 5s.; Failsworth Friend, 1s.; A Friend, £10; H. E., 5s.; V. T. Mitchell, £2 2s.; C. Newell, 2s. 6d.; J. Stanway, 7s. 6d.; Howard Ross, 10s.; S. Samuels, 5s.; W. Atkinson, 2s. 6d.; J. Ferguson, 5s.; Edward Kirton, 10s.; A. F. and J. M., 4s. 6d.; F. Jones, 2s.



## Sugar Plums.

THE fifth of this season's Freethought Demonstrations took place on Sunday evening in Brockwell Park. Mr. Wilson's brake, which served as usual as a platform, was driven to a suitable spot, whence it was easily visible to the multitude of people entering that fine pleasure-ground. There were a few religious meetings going on at some distance, but they were small affairs in comparison with the Secular gathering. The crowd in front of the brake kept on growing and growing splendidly. It included a good sprinkling of ladies, who were most interested auditors. From beginning to end perfect orderliness prevailed. There was not so much as a single interruption. Mr. Davis, who would have been lecturing in Brockwell Park in the ordinary course of things, acted as Chairman of the Demonstration, and acquitted himself very ably in that capacity. Mr. Cohen's address was extremely admirable, and Mr. Watts followed in his best vein. Mr. Foote's speech, which closed the proceedings, was delivered to a vast and appreciative audience. Altogether, it was a red-letter evening.

Collections could not be made at the Demonstrations in Regent's Park and Hyde Park, as they are forbidden by the new regulations. They can be made, however, in the Parks under the control of the London County Council. Miss Vance superintended the collection at Brockwell Park on Sunday evening, and we are glad to hear her report that it realised more than double the amount taken up there last year. This doesn't look like going backward, anyhow—let the enemy say what they will.

The sixth Freethought Demonstration will take place *this evening* (July 21) in Victoria Park—instead of next Sunday evening (July 28), as originally arranged. This change of the program will necessitate a little extra advertising of the Demonstration, particularly by Freethinkers amongst their own friends and acquaintances in the neighborhood. The speakers will include Messrs. Foote, Watts, and Cohen, and the Branch platform will be used on this occasion, as the place devoted to Demonstrations is too remote from the course of people. Fortunately, the Branch platform is a lofty one, enabling the speakers to command a very large audience. East-end Freethinkers will probably co-operate to make this a record gathering in Victoria Park, if only to encourage the N. S. S. President with a special greeting at a time of unusual trial.

When the last Sunday Demonstration was held at Stratford Grove an irate gentleman came up and talked about the place being private property. Last Sunday morning the place was fenced in, to prevent the West Ham Branch from holding a meeting. A few of the members consulted Councillor Territt, and that gentleman and Mr. E. Parker broke down the fence. They were immediately marched off to the Police-station, but were soon liberated, and told that they would be summoned. The question will have to be fought out, first of all at any rate, in a constitutional manner, and funds will be necessary for proper legal assistance. Subscriptions should be sent to the secretary, Mr. Giles, at the Workman's Hall, West Ham-lane, Stratford, E., as promptly as possible. The general opinion is that this is a blow aimed at Freethought propaganda. Of course the Branch can rely upon our help in the struggle.

"I fully intended," Mr. H. R. Clifton writes, "to have joined the N. S. S. excursion this year, but was prevented at the last moment. The next best thing appeared to be to join the National Democratic League's excursion to Sevenoaks, which I did with my family, and the following account may not be uninteresting to you:—The less worship given to the Lord the more service given to man. It would have made a Sabbatarian roar with rage could he have beheld the National Democratic Leaguers indulging in fun and frolic at Knole Park on Sunday last. There were various kinds of races for the juveniles, which afforded amusement not only to those who took part in them, but also to many of the adults; and those of the company who preferred a more prosaic form of enjoyment foregathered a little distance off, and listened to gleees, recitations, comic songs, etc.—and loud was the applause, and hearty was the laughter, which echoed through the beautifully-wooded dells of the ancient Park. The cloudy sky of the morning gave place to a bright, sunny afternoon, and all who had gone into the country to worship Hygeia instead of staying in London, to make a pretence (some of them) of worshipping the God who asked for the blood of his innocent Son as an atonement for the sins of mankind, were amply rewarded. It was a pity, though, that a view of the interior of Knole House could not have been arranged, seeing that it possesses so many interesting relics of the past."

The Manchester Branch had its annual picnic on Sunday. A most enjoyable day was spent at Hardcastle Crag. Friends came from Todmorden, Halifax, etc., and all expressed a hope to hear Mr. Foote in Manchester very shortly.

Mr. A. B. Moss had a capital meeting on Sunday evening in Victoria Park. Mr. W. Heaford, who happened to be present, acted as chairman. "Mr. Moss," the secretary says, "ridiculed the Bible in a masterly manner, and the poor old book could not find a single defender."

The New York *Truthseeker* reproduces Mr. Foote's article on the Parentage of Jesus, which appeared in our columns on June 16. The seventh number of the *Searchlight*, published at Waco, Texas, is an excellent example of what may be done in the way of Freethought journalism. In addition to a series of articles of more than average ability, the *Searchlight* reprints Mr. Cohen's article on "The Prospects of Freethought," which appeared in the *Freethinker* of June 2.

"Our English brethren," the New York *Truthseeker* says, "have published a Twentieth Century edition of Paine's *Age of Reason*, and call it marvellously cheap at sixpence, which equals twelve cents of Uncle Sam's coin. Considering the lower price of labor and material over there, it isn't in it with our edition at fifteen cents, ten copies for a dollar. But the motive influencing Mr. Foote to publish it is exactly the same as ours—to get it into the hands of the masses. And, like him, we ask our readers to advertise the book, and show it to as many persons as possible. Buy a dollar's worth and give them away. It will be a good investment for Freethought, for the book has perhaps made more infidels than any other one publication."

We have seen our American contemporary's fifteen cents edition of the *Age of Reason*, but our contemporary has evidently not seen our Twentieth Century edition. We have ordered a copy of it to be sent to the *Truthseeker* office, so that the editor may see what a mistake he has made. The fact is, the present sixpenny issue of Paine's masterpiece would not have been possible as a business undertaking. It is really a propagandist effort at the risk of the Secular Society, Limited, which will be thoroughly satisfied to get back the major portion of the outlay.

The next undertaking of the Freethought Publishing Company will be a cheap popular edition of Büchner's *Force and Matter*, which has been called the Bible of Materialism. It will involve an outlay of hundreds of pounds, for a very large edition must be printed at a low price in order that the sale may cover the outlay and also yield a reasonable profit. This fact will give some idea of the working capital that is needed to carry on such a publishing business, and should be an incentive to Freethinkers to take Shares in the Company. Application Forms for Shares can be obtained from the secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, at the Company's office, 1 Stationers' Hall Court, London, E.C.

A special meeting of the Birmingham Branch was held on Sunday to consider the "Personal" articles by Mr. Foote in the *Freethinker*. A vote of sympathy with the President was carried unanimously, and everyone present hoped he would be able to meet successfully his "sea of trouble." The silent and active Mr. Partridge collected the tokens of immediate practical sympathy, and transmitted them to London; and Mr. Percy Ward was commissioned to communicate to Mr. Foote the result of the meeting. In doing so he adds the following words on his own account: "Considering the many personal sacrifices you have made on behalf of the Secular movement, the invaluable services that you have rendered to the cause with tongue and pen, it appears to me terribly cruel that you should be the victim of such ingratitude and injustice as that which Mr. Anderson is displaying."

## Strategy.

Office Boy—"A lady out in front wants to see you just a minute."

Mr. Man—"Does she look as if she had Sunday-school picnic tickets to sell?"

Office Boy—"Yes, sir."

Mr. Man—"Well, tell her I want to sell her a Sunday-school picnic ticket, and that I'll be out in a second."

—*Chicago Record-Herald*.

In the old days, when religious wars were rife, the little town of Bandon, in the county of Cork, was a Protestant centre; and, the better to protect themselves from the Catholics roundabout, the inhabitants built a wall round the town. Over the chief gate was written: "Turk, Jew, or Atheist may enter here, but no Papist." One night a Catholic wag crept up to the gate and wrote under the inscription: "The man who wrote the above has written well, for the same is writ on the Gates of Hell."



## The Chinese Horror and its Lessons.

EVIDENCE as to the carnival of obscene brutality which has been going on in China is now pouring in from all sides. Murder, plunder, rapine, outrage, loot—these are the marks to show where the armies of Christian Europe have passed. Wild beasts let loose appears a mild simile. Dr. E. J. Dillon has told the story in a dreadful article in the *Contemporary Review* a few months ago, and, since then, the same tale has been repeated by every observer who has any regard for truth. The only consolation which the English narrators can offer their countrymen is, that the English troops were not quite so barbarous as the French or the Germans, whereat the ungodly, or those with an eye on the smoking homes of the Transvaal and the efforts of half the English press to excuse any blackguardism of the English army by pointing to the blackguardly exploits of other nations, merely smile. Probably the French correspondents, in a spirit of strict veracity, record that the Germans were ever so much worse fellows than the French. Soon, however, Sheridan and his Shenandoah Valley will have lost flavor with the jingo journalist, and he will be able to find in China a sanction for the worst barbarities which his chivalrous patriotism can desire to inflict on the Boers.

This outburst of savagery, it must be confessed, is at once surprising and disquieting. It is not pleasant to find that we are really so little removed from maniacal brutes; and even if the arm-chair brutes, who write up blackguardism for so much a week in their papers, are insincere, and would be somewhat less bloodthirsty in real life, it is still appalling that they should affect such bloodthirstiness, and should find it pay. Presumably they know what best suits the palates of their readers, and, in these circumstances, even the affectation of brutality is alarming. Is Europe going to sink to savagery because it has not been able to solve the problem of orderly living? For there are two maxims that may well, at the present juncture, be enforced on all who will listen to them. No nation ever yet took away the liberty of another nation without—in part, at any rate—surrendering its own; the conqueror is injured by his conquest, almost in like degree with the conquered. And, secondly, no nation ever behaved brutally to another without lowering itself thereby in the scale of civilisation, and fostering brutality at home. For instance, does anyone imagine that the gentlemen who, for the best part of a twelvemonth, have been cutting off Chinamen's heads and outraging Chinese women will suddenly settle down into the turtle doves of peace when they return to the slums of Manchester or Montmartre? Human character is a little more complex than to allow us to assume that. But it is thus the process of degradation is carried on. Our capitalist society first, by the play of "free competition," produces a superfluously wealthy class on the one side, and a helot class on the other. The capitalist class are driven to find means for speculating with the wealth which they cannot rationally use. A popular method of speculation is "opening markets" in the waste places of the earth, and forming joint-stock Chartered Companies for plundering savages. All this creates trouble; and then the capitalist class hire members of the outcast class, many of whom are driven so low by economic pressure at home that they will willingly sell themselves for a shilling or five shillings a day, to kill whomsoever they are ordered. At any time, of course, the capitalist class, by its wealth, can control sufficient newspaper machinery to set going the doctrine that all this marauding is pure philanthropy, spreading Christianity and freedom and good government, and showing the heathen the glories of civilisation.

One need not here emphasize the religious hypocrisy of the whole business. That all these horrors should be the result of "avenging" some outrages against missionaries of the "Prince of Peace" is a sufficiently ghastly irony to stand without comment. At the same time, it would be somewhat of a mistake to suppose that the "outrages to missionaries" in China were other than the merest excuses, just as Outlander grievances were the excuses in the Transvaal. Indeed, some day one may well discover that the outrages in China were to the last detail as much works of pious capitalist

imagination as the Boer "atrocities." When capitalist Europe goes on one of her pirate raids, as Mark Twain calls them, her journalists will always provide the necessary justifications. These things are now set by the linotype at so much per yard.

Hence it is that no sane political outlook can possibly be attained by those who see in all these wars isolated phenomena, having no relationship with one another, and who are prepared to minutely discuss every piece of twaddle furbished up to excuse or justify them. They are all symptoms of the one malady, the disorder and iniquity of our social system at home. A society properly organised, the energy of whose citizens was properly directed and balanced, would have no need for this raiding and plundering abroad, nor, if the people lived a decent human dignified life, would they have the means for it. It is only because men and women and children are going hungry and ill-clad about all our big cities that wealth can be found for carrying on this butchery and blackguardism afar-off.

And as the seat of the malady is at home, so the cure must begin at home, and must go down as deep as the disease. It is for that reason that the attitude of mere peace-advocates, even of men like Mr. John Morley, admirable as that attitude is, and worthy of respect as it is, yet falls short of the necessities of the case. As long as we have a society so organised as to produce a superfluously wealthy class and an excessively poor class, so long we will have a top-heavy society with a constant tendency to disaster. In such circumstances there may be war to-day in Africa for gold-mines and war in Asia to-morrow for coal-mines. The capitalists are filled with avarice, and the mob with ignorance. A populace so toil-worn and so badly housed and educated that it is in condition to be fooled by any sophistry which a subsidised press foists on it, such a populace is a permanent political menace. The remedy, then, must begin at home, and it must consist in gradual measures of social emancipation which shall eliminate alike the millionaires and the mob, and organise a healthy and educated democracy which shall efficiently control its own economic interests; on any other lines the anti-war party may be very well-intentioned and very heroic, but it is beating the air.

FREDERICK RYAN.

### To My Children.

You ask me to tell you, *mes enfants*, of how  
Ze great Seigneur Dieu his son did allow  
To coome to zis earth and to die? Very well,  
Ze history simple I go you to tell.

'Tis ter-rible, vary, but one zing we know:  
Zere are now many years—*eet may not have been so!*

Ze son have two gran'fazers (see in God's Word),\*  
And likewise two fazers (and one was a bird);  
At one time in two places his parents abode,†  
At one time on two donkeys ze Holy One rode.‡  
*Mes enfants, ne dites pas ze foolish "What ho!"*  
Zere are now many years—*eet may not have been so!*

He makes many meeracles; blind people see.  
"You are whole!" says ze Christ, and ze sick ansaire,  
"Oui."

At last he is crucified; Pilate he say:  
"Zat man was a good man; *quel mal a-t-il fait?*"  
But all ze world ansaire, "Barabbas let go!"  
(Coome, weep not, *ma chère*—*eet may not have been so!*)

Ze Lord Jesus Christ to his fazer arose  
Vrom Galilee Matt'ew would have us suppose;  
But Bet'any, Olivet, Jerusalem,  
Say ozaires, and we must believe *all* of zem.  
And one says, my dear children, it was a brave show—  
Still, zou are some years—*eet may not have been so!*

Now, eef when you die (so ze parson he tell)  
You don' believe zis, zen you scootle to hell;  
And ze *père* and ze son and ze heavenly dove  
See you burn in ze flame—and zey burn you for love!  
Why zey tell you zis lie, which is dead long ago?  
*Zeir purses, mes enfants! eet fattens zem so!*

JOHN YOUNG.

\* Matt. i. and Luke iii. † Matt. ii. and Luke ii. ‡ Matt. xxi.

"The Next World's Fair" is the heading of an editorial in the *Philadelphia Press*. Oh, dear! So we are to have them there, too, are we?—*The Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*.



Hyde Park Blackguardism.

LAST Thursday night the Christian Evidence Society made another effort to convince the promenaders in Hyde Park that the N. S. S. was dead. Apparently a great deal of convincing was wanted, judging from the way in which Mr. Edward Baker indulged in indiscriminate "tilting" (to use no stronger expression, which would not be unjustifiable) at the present unfortunate financial position of the N. S. S. President. Even the most gullible, however, refused to swallow whole the calumnious statements put forward by the lecturer, and frequent interruptions made the post he held anything but a sinecure. Luckily the secretary of the N. S. S. happened to be there, and Mr. Baker was tripped up over a more than usually atrocious statement (in connection with Mr. Joseph Symes and the now twenty-third years old "Leeds Scandal"), for which the C. E. S. lecturer had been brought to book by Miss Vance on their own platform some years ago and made to apologise publicly, the secretary of their own society having officially stated in writing "that the affair could not be said to have happened under the auspices of our party."

At the end of the lecture opportunity was given to Miss Vance to oppose, which she did briefly and to the point, holding the attention of every unit of the crowd, which had grown to a good size as opposition was seen to be forthcoming. Miss Vance wound up her concise rebut to the various statements by pointing out that, even should individuals fall short of a given standard, this was not peculiar to the Freethought section of the community, but a counterpart of this state of things might be found even amongst the Christians; and, should the N. S. S. entirely collapse that night, it could not affect the fact that Freethought was working as a leaven amongst the people. Perhaps it would not be out of place to suggest to Mr. Baker that but a slight acquaintance with the workshops, offices, and factories of this city alone would indisputably demonstrate that this remark was true.

Mr. Baker's reply was merely an attempt to shift his ground, which, however, was a failure, as this not unusual method of the C. E. lecturers was forestalled by pinning him down at the time of utterance to the actual words used.

Finally, it was decided to give Mr. Baker the opportunity of verifying the statement as to Mr. Engström, and also that Miss Vance be informed which evening it was convenient to hold a meeting in Hyde Park, when the result could be publicly announced. Here, for the time being, the matter rests.

FAIRPLAY.

Correspondence.

"THE DECALOGUE."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—The confidence of the Rev. Henry J. Alcock is truly remarkable. He demands my reasons for an observation made by me in a recent article. Then, before he can possibly learn what those reasons are, he "undertakes to prove them utterly weak and worthless."

Passing over this amusing prescience and "cocksureness," I will endeavor to make clear to the rev. gentleman what I had in my mind. But, first, I must explain that at the end of an article, which was not primarily devoted to the Decalogue, I quoted the following from Exodus xx. to show, as I said, "the kind of Deity" the Israelites had whilst in the desert:—

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in the heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

"Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.

"And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

Then I asked: "Is it possible to conceive a more contemptible caricature than this of the Supreme Being, who might be supposed to rule the universe?" And it is to this observation that Mr. Alcock takes exception.

Now there are certain pictures that tell their own story, and may well be left without any supplementary description. The above extract from Exodus seemed to me to give a very fair representation of the sort of tribal god we might imagine to have been set up for the worship of the Israelites by their high priests. The Israelites do not seem to have been constantly impressed in his favor, but murmured so frequently that serious apprehensions arose in the minds of these high priests, who eventually deemed it necessary that their god should be represented as doing something to assert himself.

Consequently we have Mount Sinai enveloped in fire and smoke, and to the accompaniment of thunder and lightning Moses is said to have presented to the people the ten commandments supposed to have been given to him by the Lord.

This god, it will be seen, assures the Israelites that he is specially their god, and they are to have no other gods but him. He recognises that there are other gods, and accepts the position of one amongst many. All he asks is that the people shall select him and serve him in preference to any of the others. He is a candidate for their worship, and feels that he has competitors whom he cannot afford to despise. He is fearful that the people should make graven images, and bow down to them. He wants all the homage for himself. He can't spare even a scrap for any other god, and threatens the people by telling them that he "is a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation, of them that hate me."

Now, suppose any of the Israelites became idolaters, as many of them did, or went so far as to "hate" him, which would at least have been an acknowledgment of his existence, was he so covetous of adulation that he must needs threaten to punish, not only the actual offenders, but generations yet to be born? It is an evasion of the plain meaning of the text to suggest, as it is sometimes suggested, that only the descendants who hated him were to be punished. That makes the whole passage nonsense. Why talk about the sins of the fathers being visited if the children are simply to be punished for their own sins? The threat, in its plain, obvious meaning, is pure vindictiveness; indiscriminate, revengeful savagery, only conceivable of a mere tribal god who is jealous of other gods, and is afraid that his people will forsake him, and who tries, by turns, to cajole and to frighten them into allegiance. A Supreme Being, infinite in power, wisdom, and beneficence, could never have descended to such a dishonoring position. He could have educated and won to his will the people of Israel without demeaning himself in the manner represented, especially as he had the ordering of everything from the beginning.

The picture of God presented in these three Commandments is lacking in dignity and in the attribute of elementary justice. It discloses petty feelings of jealousy, fear, vanity, anger, and malevolence, which might be looked for in the king or chief of a semi-savage nation or tribe, but are entirely incongruous with any conceivable idea we may have of an infinitely powerful and beneficent Being.

FRANCIS NEALE.

THE PRESIDENT'S POSITION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Why should the President of the N.S.S. be driven into the Bankruptcy Court through liabilities which are not personal, but party? It is clear the Freethought party is under a moral obligation at this moment to step in and take the responsibility and the consequences of the President's burdens off his shoulders completely.

May I suggest that the N.S.S. act at once in this matter?

1. Pay out Mr. Anderson, Shares or no Shares.
2. Take the future financial responsibilities off the shoulders of Mr. Foote.

3. Pay the President a decent sum for his duties.

The N.S.S., as a Society, ought to do this; and, if it would not do it, Mr. Foote should resign.

It is a scandal that the President, with his unique abilities, should be worried by the financial obligations of the party. His mind ought to be free for higher work than this. If the Freethought party allow Mr. Foote to suffer any more, then, if I were Mr. Foote, I would never do another day's work for it, but work for the cause independently. A. E. E.

A good anecdote is told by the Bishop of Minnesota of the sarcastic powers of the Indian. "I was holding," says Bishop Whipple, "a service near an Indian village camp. My things were scattered about in a lodge, and when I was going out I asked the chief if it was safe to leave them there while I went to the village to hold a service. 'Yes,' he said, 'perfectly safe. There is not a Christian within a hundred miles!'"

A preacher riding down a ravine came upon an old mountaineer hiding in the bushes with his rifle. "What are you doing there, my friend?" "Ride on, stranger," was the easy answer. "I'm a-waitin' fer Jim Johnson, and, with the help of the Lawd, I'm goin' to blow his damn head off."

Two ladies contended for precedence in the court of Charles the Fifth. They appealed to the monarch, who, like Solomon, awarded: "Let the eldest go first." Such a dispute was never known afterwards.—*Argonaut*.

If a man looks all right as an angel, with nothing on but a thin bath robe, why wouldn't he look all right in the same sitting on his back porch at home?—*Achison Globe*.



## 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 for the summer.

#### OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 11.30, A. B. Moss, "Wandering Jews."

BROCKWELL PARK: 3.15, R. P. Edwards; 6.30, J. W. Cox.

STATION-ROAD (Camberwell): 11.30, R. P. Edwards.

CLERKENWELL GREEN: 11.30, F. A. Davies, "Christianity and Common Sense."

EDMONTON (corner of Angel-road): 7, F. Davies, "Creed and Conduct."

FINSBURY PARK (near Band Stand): 3.30, F. A. Davies, "Thomas Paine."

HAMMERSMITH BROADWAY: 7.30, R. P. Edwards, "Is the Bible Inspired?"

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, W. Heaford, "The Christian System"; 3.30, C. Cohen, "Follow Jesus"; 7, W. J. Ramsey.

MILE END WASTE: 11.30, C. Cohen, "This World and the Next"; 7.15, A. B. Moss, "The Bible as a Guide."

PECKHAM RYE: 3.15, J. W. Cox.

STRATFORD (The Grove): 7, S. E. Easton, "Can Man by Searching Find Out God?"

VICTORIA PARK: 3.15, W. Heaford, "Salvation"; 6.15, Free-thought Demonstration—Addresses by G. W. Foote, Charles Watts, and C. Cohen.

KINGSLAND (corner of Ridley-road): 11.30, S. E. Easton, "The Scheme of Christianity."

### COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH: H. P. Ward—11, in the Bull Ring; 3, near Ship Hotel, Camp Hill; 7, in the Prince of Wales' Assembly Rooms, Broad-street. Wednesday, at 8, in the Bull Ring; Friday, at 8, at Nechell's Green—Debate.

CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Humberstone-gate): 6.30, H. Major, B.Sc., "A Half-hour with Tennyson."

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, Pleasant Sunday evening—Musical and other recitals, etc.

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

### Lecturer's Engagements.

H. PERCY WARD, 2 Leamington-place, George-street, Balsall Heath, Birmingham.—July 21 and 28, Birmingham.

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