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PRICE TWOPENCE.

Praying for President McKinley.

THE whole "civilised" world—which, by the way, was very little moved at the tale of the monstrous and awful cruelties of murder and lust perpetrated by Christian soldiers in China—is indulging in a perfect orgie of denunciation of the fanatic with a swelled head who shot President McKinley. It must not be supposed that we have the slightest sympathy with assassins of any persuasion, whether they commit murder on a small scale or a large one. We merely venture to suggest that a sense of humor is lacking in the civilised world as well as in the fanatic. Now a sense of humor saves us from many blunders. It also saves us from being ridiculous. Founders of religion never possess it. You can hardly imagine Moses with a broad grin. Jesus Christ is reported to have wept, but it is never said that he smiled. Paul was always in deadly earnest. Mohammed had a certain power of sarcasm, but he was never merry. The religious frame of mind tends to melancholy. It induces a man to take an exaggerated view of trifles. It kills his sense of proportion. Little sins and big sins become all alike to him. A sense of humor would often make him laugh instead of groaning. It would render him more tolerant, to himself and to others. Now this sense of humor is weak in all fanatics, even in the fanatics of Anarchism. Any man with a passable sense of humor would see the joke of reforming the Constitution of the United States by killing one President to make room for another. It is easy to talk and write pompous platitudes about the wickedness of assassins and the sacredness of the Head of the State, but what is really wanted is a little more common sense. That would make rulers more attentive to the positive welfare of the people, and it would make rebels and revolutionists more attentive to the untheatrical methods of social reform. It has well been said that many a man has the courage to die for "progress" who hasn't the sense to live for it.

But let us come to President McKinley himself. Of course we all hope he will recover, if only for his wife's sake. It is the woman who suffers most in these cases. This is a fact that ought to be borne in mind by the "men of blood" of every description. A man gets shot by a hasty reformer of the human species, or by a regular enemy he doesn't know from Adam on a battlefield. He dies, and, after all, he can only die once. But he probably leaves some woman behind, to go on living a ruined life, with an aching heart and a sad-dreaming head, who might say every day with the poet of humanity, "My grief lies onward and my joy behind."

We all know that if President McKinley recovers, as we hope, his recovery will be due to prompt treatment, high medical skill, a robust constitution, and personal fortitude. These are all natural factors. There does not seem to be any room for a miracle in the case. Yet the men of God throughout America are stirring up the faithful to pray for one, and a good many Christians in this country are joining in the supplication. Emperor William, in Germany, has also given the Almighty a broad hint on the subject, and if that doesn't settle the matter it is difficult to see what will.

Very few Christians nowadays have any real belief in the efficacy of prayer, but they keep praying from the mere force of habit. Professionals, of course, pray for a different reason. For the sake of those, however, who

fancy there is "something in it," we beg to observe that there does not appear to be any special reason why "Providence" should exert itself (or himself or herself—which is it?) on behalf of President McKinley. Abraham Lincoln was a far greater man, and his life was of far greater importance at that crisis of the nation's history, but Heaven did not interfere with the ordinary course of nature. President Garfield, who was shot by a wretched chattering religious idiot, named Guiteau, fought death for eighty days. During the whole of that time he was attended by the best physicians and nurses, besides being cared for by his devoted wife. Yet he died at last, although prayers were offered up incessantly by all the Christian Churches in America. What reason is there, then, for supposing that any supernatural power will intervene in favor of the third President who now lies fighting his battle with death?

Were there any providential interference in human affairs, it would be likely to take a more sensible direction. Prevention is better than cure. Sometimes it is infinitely better. A thoughtful "Providence" would deal with the murderer's hand instead of the victim's stomach. It seems very odd to stand by inactive while a man is being shot, and then to help the doctors extract the bullet. Any simpleton could suggest an improvement on such procedure. We are told that with God all things are possible, and we may add on our own account that to Omnipotence all things are equally easy. Would it not have been more sensible and humane, therefore, to paralyse the assassin's arm for a few minutes, instead of probing about for an hour in the victim's intestines? That is how *we* should act, if we had the choice; and it is rather a poor compliment to the Almighty to suggest that he acted in precisely the opposite way.

It may also be observed, without detracting in any way from the value of President McKinley's life to himself, his wife, his nation, and the world, that there are other valuable lives on this planet, and that even the humblest of them is entitled to consideration. To the eye of the Infinite, indeed, how much difference is there between the greatest and the meanest of men? Not so much as the difference a man sees in a litter of pups playing on his hearthrug. What is the greatest ruler on earth to the ruler of the universe? What is the most multi-millionaire to the owner of all the systems in infinite space? To the ear of God the cry of a child, the wail of a woman, the groan of a man, would sound the same note of distress. How should he descend to our short-sighted distinctions? Would he not save the poor woman's husband as well as the rich woman's, the head of a family as well as the head of a State? Would a God worthy of the name devote himself to preserving the life of a President, and do nothing to preserve the life of the peasant in his cottage, or the workman in his tenement, whose sick bed is watched with as much loving solicitude as if he were the master of kingdoms?

It is against common sense and common humanity to suppose that God would bustle about because this man instead of that man is in danger, or because a million people instead of two or three long for his safety. Even the old book declares that God is no respecter of persons; and, if we are all his children, he ought not to be. But, apart from these moral reasons, there are scientific reasons for rejecting the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer. Indeed, the very fact that we fly to the best medical and nursing skill we can afford shows how little we leave to the Lord if we can help it. Moreover, it is a crime in this country, at

any rate, to let the Lord have the sole care of a sick child. A doctor must be called in too, or the parents are liable to imprisonment as felons.

G. W. FOOTE.

Do We Long for a Future Life?

"Do Men Desire Immortality?"—such is the question which Mr. F. C. S. Schiller asks the readers of the current issue of the *Fortnightly Review*, and it is one which clears away at a sweep a great deal of the nonsense that hangs round the doctrine of a future life. Best part of the structure of religious beliefs would topple to pieces if people only would get into the habit of asking themselves precisely what they meant, and how far they individually sympathised with the meaning. But, unfortunately, this is seldom done; and religion lives on, shrouded in mystery, and protected from assault by an obscurity of phrasing on the one side and the unwillingness of people to analyse their true feelings and beliefs on the other.

To most people the question will come with something of a shock. Ask the ordinary man if he believes the question of immortality to be an important one, and he will doubtless answer in the affirmative. Ask him does he feel the importance of death, and what may lie beyond, and he will answer in the same manner. Yet, if we watch people closely, we find, as Mr. Schiller points out, that their conduct hardly gives color to their statements. In social intercourse people seldom discuss the question of immortality, and in polite circles it is strictly taboo.

"No State," says Mr. Schiller, "has ever appointed a Royal Commission to inquire whether it be true that its citizens are immortal, and cannot, if the worst comes to the worst, be finally disposed of by the hangman; no Legislature has ever contained a member 'faddy' enough to hold that the decision of this question had an important bearing on the greatest happiness of the greatest number, and to demand from the supreme official of a State Church a report on the prospective condition of the masses in the future life, and suggestions arriving at its amelioration. At no University are there any researches conducted with a view to a scientific solution of the problem; at most of the seats of learning, indeed, the attempt to do so would, in spite of our boasted freedom of research, be extremely hazardous, while a scientist who came forward with evidence tending to discredit and despise the detested doctrine would be received with impunity and applause."

Even the Psychical Research Society cannot raise its membership to more than 1,500; and this general indifference, to quote Mr. Schiller again, would be "a sheer impossibility if there really existed any desire for probing into the mystery of death. Is it not obvious on the face of it that, if there exists a desire for a future life in any sense, it is *not* a desire for scientific knowledge thereof, but a feeling of a very peculiar character, which well merits further analysis."

What, then, is the cause of the superstition—for it is little else than a superstition—that mankind feels deeply the need of, and longs ardently for, immortality? For those who would sooner search for a year for a complex and obscure explanation, even though it were a false one, than seize the truth that lies near to hand, I suppose it will be called superficial to say that religious organisations are very largely responsible for this belief. There is nothing like repetition to secure assent, and when people are constantly told the same thing—provided, of course, that it does not directly conflict with their tastes and inclinations—they will end by believing it. Thousands of people, who never wasted a thought on the late Queen Victoria while she was living, expressed profound sorrow for her dead, and had no better grounds for their grief than the deluge of newspaper twaddle that swept over them. And, if such could result in a matter of this description, how much more effective must be the constant asseverations of thousands of preachers, generation after generation, that men were profoundly concerned with the question of immortality, and that this dwarfed all other questions that came within the range of human consciousness?

I do not, of course, wish it to be understood that I believe that, had it not been for the Churches, men

would not have speculated on a future life, or that it is a question with which they have no concern. There are times in nearly everyone's life when death obtrudes itself as a solemn fact in the course of our existence, and when we ask ourselves whether the ancient belief in a future life has any real basis in fact. But all must admit that this is an abnormal, not a normal, phase of individual life. We are not always thinking about death, and therefore we are not always thinking of what may come after it. Preachers of religion would evidently have us believe the contrary to be the case; but it is tolerably plain that it is not so. True, the thought of a future life may be more prominent with people during periods of religious excitement; but this species of dementia is becoming rare. The divines who lay stress upon either heaven or hell are few, and even in theological literature such teachings are becoming obsolete. In fact, the Churches are in "the humiliating position of offering men the reward of a heaven which hardly anyone desires, and of threatening them with the penalties of a hell which everyone believes to be reserved for people much worse than themselves."

The truth is that there exists in the average mind a confusion between the desire for life and the desire for immortality—two things not by any means identical; and the Church has not unnaturally profited by the confusion. All men desire to live, and this desire is a necessary outcome of the struggle for existence. Our eagerness for anything will determine the energy with which we struggle to obtain it, and in the course of animal evolution nature has set a premium upon those with whom the desire to live exists in its strongest form. Were it otherwise, the race would long since have disappeared. But the desire to *live* has really no connection whatever, either in its origin or subsequently, with the belief in immortality. What men long for is to live here on earth, not in some fantastical future state. The most confident believer in a future life is not usually in a hurry to rid himself of terrestrial existence; and there is in this fact the key to a deal that is otherwise perplexing. People are not willing to exchange the "muddy vesture of mortality" for the "glorious raiment of immortality," because the latter does not correspond to their desires nor harmonise with their real feelings. If the belief in immortality were really an outcome of the desire to live, sorrow at death—so far as the believer is concerned—would be impossible; it would be a psychological contradiction. Death would come to each as a change for the better, and the feeling of self-interest on the one hand, and concern for our friends' welfare on the other, would effectually stifle all grief. The desire for life, then, is one thing; the belief in immortality is another. The former has its origin in the struggle for existence; the latter takes its rise from the inevitable misconceptions of the primitive mind, upon which has been grafted the outcome of philosophic speculation. And the Churches have, cleverly enough, translated the desire to live in terms of their own speculations and their own creeds. Unused to analyse his own feelings, the average individual is quite ready to take the account of them presented to him by those in authority; and just as so many have accepted the dictum that the moral feelings—which are really based upon instincts that are to be seen in active operation in the animal world—are based upon the love of God, so they embrace the version of the desire to live given by those who are interested in getting their metaphysical or theological dogmas accepted.

And as we get a lot of mistaken and misleading talk concerning man's belief in, and longing for, immortality, so we also get much senseless babble concerning man's fear of death. Of course, no man under normal conditions faces death with pleasure, but neither does he under normal conditions face it with fear. The death-bed terrors we read of are mostly manufactured for a very definite purpose. But, in real life, death comes far more often as a gentle sinking into sleep than a conscious struggle against a dreaded enemy. With all the deaths that occur, day after day, one yet hears but seldom of one that can be said to transpire amid scenes of terror. Ordinary experience will supply most people with proofs that in the vast majority of cases, when death does take place, body and mind are already so enervated that there is little or no struggle. The

look of calm contentment on the face of the dead is alone enough to prove that death is anything but a "King of Terrors" to those who are passing under his sway.

The truth of the matter is, as I have already said, that death usually occupies but a very small portion of the thoughts of the normal healthy mind. And where it is otherwise we may fairly attribute the difference to the influence of a religion that has done its utmost to surround death with almost inconceivable terrors, while at the same time doing all that it could to fix the public mind upon it. The ancient world—certainly so far as Greece and Rome are concerned—knew nothing of the horror of death that Christianity afterwards conjured up. Greek and Roman literature provides us with none of that morbid dwelling upon death and the after life which is so characteristic a feature of Christian writings. There was, of course, speculation on such subjects, and the natural repugnance of healthy people to quitting the world; but the general tone was that of accepting death as a normal fact of existence to be faced without fear or idle lamentation.

Christianity it was that altered human feeling, and for the worst, on this matter. The world was to the Christian essentially evil, the body necessarily vile, and life a burden, with death coming to usher the soul into eternal felicity or eternal torture. For centuries the best intellectual material that the Church could control was devoted to adding horror upon horror to death. And, having supplied the poison, the Churches prided themselves on possessing a questionable antidote. The fear of death is historically very largely artificial. It does not exist among savages, nor is it present in early civilisations. It is a product of Christianity, except where it is shared by religions that are closely affiliated to it. For it is not, after all, death which people fear, but the thought of what may come afterwards; and the history of the last eighteen or nineteen centuries is eloquent with the record of the load of miseries heaped by the Christian Churches upon the human mind in connection with this subject.

There is one point in Mr. Schiller's otherwise excellent paper that calls for a word of criticism. And this is all the more necessary because it is a sample of the same kind of error which his article is written to combat. Mr. Schiller refers to the "fear of death [which] has been redeemed and ennobled by the consoling belief in immortality, a belief from which none are base enough to withhold their moral homage." Curious how a writer, in the very act of breaking down one superstition, straightway re-echoes another! For there is no better reason for regarding the belief in a future life as ennobling than there is for picturing men continually hungering for immortality. Let anyone carefully read the history of religious beliefs, and he will find that in general this belief has led to brutal practices and degrading customs. How many uncivilised customs, such as the wholesale slaughtering of servants on the death of a chief, the burning of a widow along with the body of her husband, the murdering of parents by their children so that they may enter the next life strong and healthy instead of entering it bowed with years and decrepitude, and dozens of kindred customs, may we not trace to this belief? Where can we trace the ennobling effects of the belief in immortality in the history of Christianity? Is there, in fact, any single article of religious belief that has had a more disastrous influence than this? There is really nothing more ennobling in immortality than there is in the bare fact of life itself. Seventy years of life demands quite as much "moral homage" as seventy thousand—or as little. It is the crudest of all fallacies to imagine that we add to the intrinsic value of life by lengthening its duration, or take from it any of its value by cutting short its existence. The hope of immortality has no more ennobled death than it has enriched life. In the last resort, the value of life has to be estimated by its existence here—the only certain theatre of its existence. And history bears eloquent and emphatic testimony that the conception of a future life, whenever it has been allowed to emerge beyond the region of pure speculation, has been prolific of little but danger and disaster to the best interests of the race.

C. COHEN.

Christ's Sacrifice: A Myth or a Mistake.

IN my article last week I pointed out that the Christian scheme of salvation constitutes the basis of the orthodox faith. This scheme, of course, involves the belief in the doctrine of the Atonement, which means, in the language of Scripture, that "Christ died for the ungodly"; that he "suffered for us"; that "Ye are bought with a price"; that "The son of man came to give his life a ransom for many"; "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Romans v. 6; 1 Peter 11-21; 1 Corinthians vi. 20; Matthew xx. 28; Ephesians i. 7). Bishop Butler puts it that "Christ offered himself a propitiatory sacrifice, and made atonement for the sins of the world." The Church of England teaches that the death of Christ secured "perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual" (Article XXXI.).

It may be well to remember that about two hundred years after the death of Christ the atonement was represented as being a payment made to the Devil. This was the view held by Origen, who wrote:—

"Paul affirms 'we are bought with a price'; therefore we must have been bought from someone whose slaves we were, and who demanded what price he pleased, that he might dismiss those whom he held [in bondage]. But it was the Devil who held us [in bondage]; for to him we had been given over for our sins. Wherefore he demanded the blood of Christ as the price of our redemption."

The Latin Fathers, some centuries after Origen, maintained the same theory, "that the blood of Christ was a price paid to the Devil for the souls of men." It was also believed that it was God himself who died on the cross. Osiander, a friend of Luther, contended that Christ died, not as man, but as God; the great divine, Hooper, avowed that he cared "for no knowledge in the world but this, that man hath sinned and God hath suffered." This notion of a dying God permeates the hymns of Dr. Watts. Here is a sample:—

Well might the sun in darkness hide,
And shut his glories in,
When God, the mighty Maker, died
For man, the creature's, sin.

God, who did your souls retrieve,
Died himself that ye might live.

It has been stated that "whatever is built upon a mistake must of itself be a mistake also." If this be correct, the Christian doctrine of Sacrifice is one of the greatest delusions that ever misled the human mind, for it is based upon the false assumption of the inherent depravity of human nature. It is not here denied that depravity obtains, for priestcraft has too long existed for us to be free from such contamination; but we allege that man is not necessarily depraved. Man is the result of his education and general environment. If he is surrounded by bad conditions, and his mind impregnated with a degrading faith, no doubt his better nature will be suppressed; but if his noblest aspirations are fostered, and his highest qualities cultivated, virtue will predominate. For the Christian to assert that man is morally worthless except he is regenerated by the atoning blood of Christ is not only to belie the creature, but also to dishonor the alleged Creator. If a God exist, he should be in every particular superior to man. Such a being, therefore, could not be guilty of such an act as making the members of the human race corrupt and bad by nature, and then of damning them for being so. Fortunately, we do not lack proof that this notion of "inherent depravity" is as false as it would be degrading. Throughout society real virtue is honored and admired. It is the goodness in a person's character which we all respect and venerate. The hypocrite knows this; hence he assumes "a virtue if he has it not," because he feels that virtue possesses advantages which vice under the most polished phase cannot command. Now, this general love and preference for the good and true would not be manifested if mankind were naturally depraved. Secularists are

sometimes accused of undervaluing human dignity. But, it may fairly be asked, what part of Secularism forms such a low, grovelling estimate of human nature as Christianity here exhibits in this doctrine of human depravity? When we peruse the records of history, and read of the many self-denying acts of men who have sought to promote the welfare of their race; when we witness the various efforts at the present day that are being made to alleviate the woe and misery of a so-called divinely-governed world, we cannot believe that man is radically corrupt. On the contrary, we have faith in his goodness and the nobility of his nature.

It is alleged that there were two principal causes which rendered Christ's sacrifice necessary—namely, sin upon the part of Adam, and the enmity existing between God and man which was caused by the eating of certain fruit in the Garden of Eden. Now, the question is: Were these supposed causes real or imaginary? The honest answer is: They are pure fiction; a priestly invention, without the slightest foundation in fact. We hold that no sin is committed in the performance of an act when the actor is compelled through the force of circumstances to perform it. In the case of Adam, what he did was through compulsion, the whole plan being arranged for him, and not by him. As to the alleged enmity, if man was created by God, he must have been the cause of the enmity, or it must have originated in man, independently of any power from God. But if God were infinitely good, how could he have implanted that which was bad in his children? And I fail to see how man could have acquired evil apart from God, if he is the cause of all things. It may here be suggested that, if the Sacrifice were really necessary, it should have been made immediately after Adam's transgression, so as to have prevented a single generation going to the grave with the curse of original sin unremoved. But, according to Bible chronology, God was not disposed to show his fatherly care too soon. He allowed four thousand years to elapse, and numbers of generations not only to live and die, but to run riot in all descriptions of ignorance and iniquity, ere the tardy reparation was made. If no man could be saved except those who believed in Christ, what has become of those millions of human beings who passed away prior to his birth; and what will be the fate of those now living who have never heard, and probably never will hear, of him? Besides, if men could enter heaven without the crucifixion, then Christ need not have suffered at any period. Further, if ignorance of this scheme will save from damnation, is it not useless and cruel to send missionaries to the heathens with the "glad tidings"? Let them not know of it, and they cannot be punished for rejecting it; inform them of it, and their eternal happiness becomes at least doubtful, for their diversity of organisation and education ensures that not all can accept it as true.

The theory of the Sacrifice is essentially unjust. Justice has been defined to "consist in rendering to everyone according to his moral deserts; good if he be good, and evil if evil." If, therefore, Christ was without sin, as it is stated, was it not unjust to make him suffer for the misdoing of others? Suppose a parent who has seven children, six of whom are bad, and the seventh good. Would it be deemed right on the part of this parent to punish his innocent child because the other children were disobedient? Such injustice would ensure for its perpetrator emphatic condemnation. The inconsistency of this scheme is as glaring as its injustice. If Christ made a full and complete sacrifice in order that we might be saved, that should end the matter. If he did pay man's debt to God, why should we be called upon to make a second payment? Moreover, if universal salvation were the object of Christ's mission, was it not inconsistent upon his part not to make an effort to achieve such a result? The fact is, he came to the Jews, if he came at all, and even they had no knowledge that a part of the Deity was to expire on the cross. Finally, this Sacrifice failed to gain its avowed object. The sins of the world have not been taken away, and, if Christian teachings be true, the vast majority of the human race will *not* be saved, despite the sacrifice of Christ.

CHARLES WATTS.

Education and Agnosticism.

(A Discourse delivered before the congregation of the Church of This World, Kansas City, Missouri, and reported for the New York "Truthseeker.")

(Concluded from page 571.)

WHICH IS THE BETTER WAY?

WHICH is better, to take the old God of tradition, the old God of blood and vengeance; or, discrediting that unworthy conception of the infinite, to say: "Thou Invisible One, vaster art thou than our best thought; higher than our noblest name; let our worship for thee be only silence!"

The sources to which the university appeals for knowledge would never in the world yield to man the knowledge of the Church doctrine about sin. In learning we can only study the things at hand, accessible, and we are only warranted in making conclusions respecting the inaccessible that are justified or suggested by the things near at hand. Because we find in ourselves and in our world the evidences of moral imperfection, it does not follow that we must infer that man was once perfect; nor does it follow that, because we find him imperfect, we must infer that God Almighty in his infinitude was angry with man and damned him to everlasting pain. Those things do not follow from anything we know. Sin, the bugbear of the world, the sheet anchor of the Church, the source of all its revenue and all its power, has no place in the things that are really natural, that we find at hand.

CHURCH PLAN OF SALVATION A MONSTROSITY.

Nor could we ever by these sources of knowledge reach the conception of the Church plan of salvation; we never should have been able to guess that a God would die on the cross, die for man—never; and if we had guessed it, if there was anything in nature to hint that the infinite sacrifice would sometime be made for man, for this human world, one part of that guess would have been that so adequate, so vast and all-embracing were the merits of that sacrifice that it would be sufficient for all men.

Failing to find any of these fundamental doctrines of the Church in the ordinary sources of knowledge, it is said education produces Agnosticism.

Contrast the believer and the Agnostic. The believer begins by discrediting this world, the world his God has made; you can learn nothing from it that is really vital or important—the carnal mind is at enmity with God. The light of nature is an *ignis-fatuus*, leading man into error. God Almighty made it in such a way that it contains no sufficient hint of him. Great nature, athrob with beauty and thrilled with passion, contains no hint of him; he cannot be found that way. It was necessary, they said, that the infinite should choose an amanuensis, or several of them, and set them to writing with sharpened sticks on skins overlaid with wax, and that these should be hidden away and kept and handed down from generation to generation in order that after the world had progressed thousands of years they might sweep off the dust from this divinely-given scroll, and open its wondrous pages, and find the story of the infinite. It never occurred to them that the last and newest bud that spread its bosom to the sun was a nearer, better, finer revelation of the infinite than any skin or parchment can be. The believer discredits not only the world, but his own mind. He says it is impossible to learn of God; he will believe; he longs to believe everything, to escape the wrath of that God he fears. It never occurs to him that nature or God Almighty could endow him with a mind, endow him with a thinking brain, and that then the only revelation the maker of the brain can give is through that brain he made, not through another's, not through the work of ages past, not through memory or tradition, but through the active, living, thinking brain.

And all this for what? What is the end of belief? What does religion give as a compensation for blinding the intellect? What does it give? Salvation!

Let me say that the honest man has no business to think about his soul's salvation—none whatever; his

business is to be honest, to be loyal, to be true, to be sane, and take the chances. The universe belongs to infinite justice. The Agnostic takes this world as his text-book, and goes out to learn, having no theories to maintain, regardless of results, careless of consequences, seeking only the truth.

THE THINKER'S RESPONSIBILITY.

The thinker has no responsibility whatever for truth. His responsibility begins and ends when he keeps tirelessly in the search and loyal to all discoveries. If there is a God, or if there is not a God, we can neither change nor alter the fact; our business is to seek, to learn, to find, to advance, to develop, to grow. The Agnostic is at perfect liberty to change his opinion. He seeks the opportunity to change it, is waiting for more light. He believes the universe will keep faith with him; he knows that he has not exhausted truth; that as he approaches the horizon it recedes, that there are heights not accessible and mysteries untold, and by the shores of the everlasting sea he wanders and waits, he seeks and watches for new revealing light. He trusts, and there is more of the spirit of reverence, there is more sincere religion in the heart of the doubter, in the attitude of the silent man, in the passion of the thinker, than in all the clamorous babblers about God this world ever had. There is no morality in believing in a God against evidence. There is immorality in believing in anything against evidence.

The soul that will or can believe in order to be saved has already been damned intellectually. "Believe and be saved" is but placing a price on hypocrisy. "It were better far to doubt, and, doubting all our days, to die, at last enter hell, and there, in everlasting pain, believe, though lost, and find the truth to be: God, only another name for fiend."

(DR.) J. E. ROBERTS.

—*Truthseeker* (New York).

Cardinal Newman.

A RECENT announcement in regard to the rebuilding of the Edgbaston Oratory recalls various events in connection with that Roman Catholic institution. Most of all, it recalls the former central figure there—a sweet and eloquent soul, unfortunately immersed in superstition, to which he imparted a charm which was adventitious and something that it never deserved. Everyone about him loved him. It is now proposed to build a memorial church at a cost of some £30,000 in the place of the Oratory building which was never regarded as other than temporary.

I knew the Cardinal, and have lunched in the refectory with him. We had chats on various subjects. He did not wish to be approached by ordinary journalists. In that respect he was excessively timid. Father Neville, his private secretary, constituted himself a barrier. But it happened that I not only knew him before he was made Cardinal, and had reported some of his sermons not for any newspaper, but for a collection of sermons to be subsequently published, and had spent a considerable portion of my time at the Oratory. It was afterwards my regrettable task to cable his decease to the American press.

The Cardinal unknowingly gave me extreme anxiety, because, apart from the fact of losing an eminent personage, though then feeble and incapable, the exact time when he died was a point of considerable importance. I had a fair number of banknotes from New York, and when he died I cabled his decease to America long before any journalist knew that he was dead. I had practically lived in that Oratory for some weeks. I knew the priests there, and found them infinitely preferable to Protestant preachers in a social sort of way. They knew I was a disbeliever, but they did not say they were "shocked" as members of common Dissenting sects would have said. They afforded me every information which was necessary to the obituary of Cardinal Newman which I was preparing. They came out at the final moment and whispered to me, "The Cardinal is dead!" In a few minutes I set the wires to work, and the world knew that the brightest, sweetest advocate of the Church of Rome had ceased to exist.

I have a book which was handed to me by a friend of mine—a barrister on the Oxford Circuit. It is called *The Present Position of Catholics in England*, and is written by Cardinal Newman. I have read that book, I believe, a score of times. I don't agree with it a bit, except in so far as it pleads for toleration. And there I am with the author—though it is not toleration, but independence and perfect liberty of thought and speech on theological matters, that everyone wants.

It may be said that we are assured of it. But I am doubtful. Christians are a spiteful crew. They have been cruel enough, as history shows, and I have no confidence in their good sense.

The Cardinal's *Apologia* is another of the books which I am constantly re-reading. It is his chief book, of course. I don't agree with its doctrinal conclusions; but I suppose I am only one of ten thousand, perhaps half a million, who are fascinated with his literary style and his delightful power of expression, and the sweetness and softness of the way in which he says what he has to say—saying neither less nor more than he means, and everything with tenderness.

The Church of Rome, I believe, will exist long after the time when the Church of England and all the mushroom sects are dead. There is dignity about it, derived from antiquity, and a universality which lifts it far above any other Church. If I were inclined to become a Christian—which "God forbid"—I would never associate myself with the paltry Dissenting sects or the Anglican Church.

As Charles Bradlaugh used to say: There is nothing between Rationalism and Rome. But Rome is impossible to one who uses his reason.

FRANCIS NEALE.

In Memory of Auguste Comte.

THE modest little house in the Rue Monsieur-le-Prince at Paris, where Auguste Comte died, was yesterday [September 6] once again the scene of the most touching part of the ceremony by which French Comtists commemorate the anniversary of the death of the author of the *Positive Philosophy*. In the morning the band of disciples placed a few flowers on the grave at the Père-Lachaise Cemetery, and later on in the day they discussed, in the room where their founder died, the date of the inauguration of the monument in memory of Auguste Comte which is to be erected in the Place de la Sorbonne. With the reverence for their founder which the French Comtists have shown from the beginning, they have preserved the simple little room where the philosopher died in exactly the same state in which it was on the evening of Comte's death. There on the pegs hang the clothes which he wore last; his portrait looks down from the wall where formerly, by its side, hung that of his "ideal friend," Madame Clotilde de Vaux; in the corner the bed on which he slept, and near it the writing-table, with the blotting-book and pen he used. The drawing-room and the library in the little house are equally well preserved, and it is in the drawing-room that the Comtists held their meeting yesterday afternoon.—*Westminster Gazette*.

Chatter About God.

The manner in which all religions talk of God revolts me; they treat him with so much certainty, levity, familiarity. The priests, who have this name always on their lips, irritate me above all. It is with them a kind of chronic sneeze—"the goodness of God, the wrath of God, to offend God," these are their phrases. It is considering him as if he were a man, and, what's worse, a middle-class man. They are further wild to decorate him with attributes, as savages put feathers on their fetish. Some paint infinity blue, others black. Utter savagery all that. We are still cropping the grass, and walking on all-fours in spite of balloons. The ideal that humanity forms for itself of God does not go beyond that of an Oriental monarch surrounded by his court. The religious ideal is, in fact, several centuries behind the social ideal, and there are heaps of mountebanks who make a pretence of falling down faint with admiration in its presence.—*Gustave Flaubert*.

Old Merchant—"Where is your reference?" Tommy Tucker (who wants a job as office-boy)—"Here's one from my Sunday-school teacher, sir." Old Merchant—"We don't want you to work on Sundays. Give me a reference from someone who knows you on weekdays."—*Brooklyn Eagle*.

The Boy from Up There.

You have heard of the realms of the blest, if you've ears ;
Well, there came down a Boy from up there.
And he tarried awhile in this valley of tears,
Did our hero, the Boy from up there.
Gentle Jesus, condemned to be nailed to a post,
To prevent a few sinners from having to roast,
Said good-bye to his Father, the Unholy Ghost,
And the Beasts and the Elders up there.

You've read of some "heroes," no doubt ; but the Prince
Of them all was the Boy from up there.
Not another was ever seen prior or since
That has equalled the Boy from up there.
You have read of young Jack and the Beans, if you've eyes,
And the Jack that killed giants as though they were flies ;
But there isn't a hero of yarns that are lies
Who's a patch on the Boy from up there.

On the ocean he walked, never sank in the least,
Did this buoyant young Boy from up there ;
Manufactured some wine for the folks at a feast,
Did this bibbing young boy from up there.
Cured the people's diseases by touching their "polls,"
From a fish obtained cash to pay taxes or tolls,
Filled a mob with some multiplied "tiddlers" and rolls,
Did this Maskelyne "cook" from up there.

He offended the parsons with one of his works,
Did this "infidel" Boy from up there ;
Made a raid upon one of their favorite "kirks,"
Did this "anarchist" Boy from up there.
Honest traders who worked for their beds and their boards
He assaulted, and called them felonious hordes ;
It was rather a Hooligan's deed than a Lord's,
And a "Lord" was the Boy from up there.

"You should honor your parents," said Jah the Most High ;
But he didn't, the Boy from up there ;
Ran away from them once without saying good-bye,
Did this dutiful Boy from up there.
With some doctors at last their "young hopeful" they saw,
And they'd ocular proof of the power of his jaw ;
Though they'd sought him with sorrow, he cared not a straw,
This unfilial Boy from up there.

Their religion he scorned, so the Jews had their knife
In the "infidel" Boy from up there ;
And they "ran in" for blasphemy, tried for his life,
And convicted the Boy from up there.
If a Britisher posed as the son of a God,
At the most he'd be sentenced to twelve months in quod ;
But the ways of the ancients were deucedly odd,
And they "finished" the Boy from up there.

His disciples, who saw him entombed when defunct,
"Resurrected" the Boy from up there ;
For his guards were asleep, and they came and they "bunked"
With the corpse of the Boy from up there.
But we're told that he afterwards had a repast
That would probably make a mere boy stand aghast ;*
Then retired up aloft. Let us hope 'twas the last
To be seen of the Boy from up there !

ESS JAY BEE.

Pathetically Indignant.

"Now, boys," said a Sunday-school teacher at Sterling,
"surely some one of you can tell me who carried off the
gates of Gaza. Speak up, William."

"I never touched 'em," said the indignant William, with a
suspicion of tears in his youthful voice. "I don't see why
folks always think when things get carried off that I've had
something to do with it !"

He—"But you should hear him when he is really full of his
subject." She—"Carries his audience with him, does he ?"
He—"Right into it. Why, when he was preaching on
'Hades' the other night, he had to stop till the ushers dis-
tributed fans."—*Brooklyn Lije.*

Trivial people, limited people, presumptuous and enthu-
siastic minds, want to have a conclusion in everything ; they
seek for the aim of life and the dimensions of infinity. They
take a handful of sand in their poor little fists and say to the
ocean, "I am going to count the grains on thy shore." But
as the grains slip between their fingers, and the calculation
is long, they stamp and cry. Do you know what one should
do on the seashore? Kneel or walk. Do you walk !—
Gustave Flaubert.

* Broiled fish and honeycomb (see Luke xxiv. 42).

Acid Drops.

How soon does piety go to work upon its inventions ! It
was promptly reported that, when President McKinley was
shot, he looked at his assassin and exclaimed, "May God
forgive him !" This story, however, has since been authori-
tatively denied. It appears that the wounded President's
first consideration was a more natural one. He begged that
the news might be kept back from his wife, or at least
conveyed to her gently.

Perhaps the "Father, forgive them, they know not what
they do," of Jesus Christ upon the cross, was manufactured
for him in the same fashion.

Praying for the recovery of President McKinley, a negro
preacher from Washington, Dr. P. A. Hubbard, opened his
mouth as follows at the Methodist Conference in Wesley's
Chapel : "O may the Angel of thy Peace abide with them,
and grant that thy restoring hand may rest upon him !" The
praying preacher did not reflect that it would have been
better if God, instead of resting his *restoring* hand upon the
President, had placed his *arresting* hand upon the assassin.
In such a case, prevention is infinitely better than cure,
besides being ever so much more certain.

The depth of bathos was reached at the Methodist
Ecumenical Conference by the Rev. Dr. Bristol, pastor
of the Methodist church which President McKinley has
attended at Washington. Dr. Bristol spoke with "the
tears running down his cheeks," and he "thrilled the great
audience" by what he said of the President who had been
laid low by a would-be assassin. "Not merely is he a great
man," said the weeping pastor, "not merely is he President
of the United States, but he is William McKinley, a brother
Methodist." It would be hard to beat this as an anti-climax.
Swift might have used it as a first-rate illustration of "the art
of sinking."

There has been a great blaring of statistical trumpets at
this Methodist Ecumenical Conference. Delegate after
delegate got up and said we have so many members, so
many Sunday-school children, so many churches, so many
other buildings, and so much money. They forgot that if
their "Master" were judged by this standard he would prove
to have been an ignominious failure. Jesus Christ had nothing
that he could call his own, not even a mission-shed ; his
disciples were only a handful, and when he was arrested they
"all forsook him and fled."

Statistics can easily be handled to suit almost any purpose.
For instance, a correspondent of the *Westminster Gazette* the
other evening, in protesting against long sentences on account
of their expense to the community, remarked that "According
to Mr. Tallack the average cost of keeping a man in prison is
£175 a year." Now we daresay that this bill could be made
out somehow. An ingenious arithmetician will make out
almost any bill you ask him for. What is the use of being an
ingenious arithmetician otherwise ? Nevertheless, we venture
to suggest a very serious doubt in this particular instance.
We know something about prison diet, and we are pretty
confident that three or four shillings a week would cover the
cost of a prisoner's victuals ; and as for his drink, well that is
nearly as cheap as ditch-water—and sometimes as tasty.
Then there is the cell in which he resides. It is a brick vault
twelve feet by six, and the furniture is of the scantiest descrip-
tion. A seaside landlady, even, would be lucky to get three
shillings a week for it as a furnished apartment. The next
item is the prisoner's clothes, for which (say) thirty shillings
a year may be allotted. Altogether, let us say the prisoner
costs £20 a year for his board and lodging and outfit.
Between this figure and £175 a year there is a great gap,
and we do not see how it could be bridged over, even by the
most extravagant charges for superintendence and safe-
keeping.

"Providence" has had another warm innings in America.
The town of Cleveland, Ohio, has been badly flooded.
Scores of bodies were washed out of their graves in St.
Joseph's Cemetery. The damage amounts to millions of
dollars.

"Providence" might look after the safety of its own
houses. Had it done so, All Saints' Church, Dalston, would
not have been half destroyed by fire. However, the trustees
did not leave everything to "Providence." They had effected
an adequate insurance. So all's well that end's well.

How people can still talk of Providence as an active agent
in the affairs of the world is more than a little astonishing.
Here we have the announcement that the Rev. John Driver,
resident priest at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church,
Bishop's Stortford, has died from eating poisonous tinned
salmon. Where was Providence when this event occurred ?

Ought he not, according to religious tradition, to have paid special attention to his professional servant?

"Thou hast delivered my feet from falling" could not be said by the late Venerable William Pelham Burn, Archdeacon of Norwich, who was seized with an apoplectic fit while descending the Croda di Lago, near Ampezzo, and fell over a cliff, meeting with instant death. Some people would say it was "tempting Providence" for an unyouthful man of God to put himself in such a position.

The Church of England "Burial Service" is beautiful as a composition, but very tough as assertion and doctrine. It seems to be too much even for a codfish. Mr. C. Voelcker, of Laregan, Penzance, caught a cod the other day weighing nearly nineteen pounds. On opening and cleaning it next morning he found a copy of the "Burial Service" in its stomach in perfect preservation. It sounds odd, of course; but, after all, it is not so astonishing. We know that sea animals find a difficulty in disposing of religious objects. Once upon a time there was a whale who swallowed a prophet and tried hard for three days to digest him, but found the task impossible, and finally vomited him up none the worse for his three days' imprisonment.

At the Coronation of Edward VII. the Archbishop of Canterbury is to present him with a copy of the Word of God on behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society. No doubt it will be a handsome volume; something that a bit could be raised on at "uncle's," though Bibles, and even Family Bibles, have long been a drug in those establishments. When the poor widow sneaks into the side doorway with the Holy Scripture in gilt and morocco, which her deceased partner bought when he was "flush" for two pun ten on the instalment system, the pawnbroker turns up his nose and asks her if she couldn't bring along a chip of Noah's Ark.

"And how about the new preacher?" a stranger asked the chapel-keeper; "is he sound?" The answer came sadly: "Nothing else."

According to Dr. Witherspoon, who writes in the *Central Presbyterian*, published at Richmond, Va., "the greatest man in London is Dr. Parker." The pastor of the City Temple ought now to feel proud. He has sufficient self-esteem to regard the designation as by no means extravagant. Still, there are a few other people of some importance in the great city, or belonging to it, whose friends might dispute the matter with him.

A grey-headed clergyman with no sense of humor was taking the chair at a penny reading the other day. "I have great pleasure in announcing," said he, "that Miss Mary Jones will now sing 'For ever and for ever.'" And the greater part of the audience, who knew Miss Mary Jones's singing, and put rather too literal a construction on the chairman's words, arose and left the building.

The following extraordinary placard, printed in huge block type, recently adorned the headquarters of Luton Salvation Army Barracks: "Great special meeting, September 8. Will Lord Salisbury go to heaven? Everybody should come and hear this important question answered."

Certain Chinese residents in San Francisco take full credit for bringing about the prolonged resistance to our troops in South Africa. They have not forgiven Britain for annexing Hongkong and opening the Treaty Ports. So, when hostilities began, they petitioned their joss to help the Boers as much as possible, and the deity was promised if the prayer were answered an unlimited quantity of sandalwood and sweetmeats. It is reported that many whose religious fervor had hitherto been of the coolest have been considerably impressed by the joss's power.

Here is a catastrophe at a London City church. A congregation of at least half-a-dozen locked out! Clergy and congregation of Christ Church, Newgate-street, have passed through the strange experience of being locked out of their place of worship. Although all were in attendance at the appointed hour for evensong, they found the doors "closed," and consequently had to retire. It appeared that, on leaving the church on Sunday afternoon, the cleaner failed to slip back the bolt of the inner lock, and, as was his custom, he left the master key in the church. Then the door swung to, and the church was locked up absolutely. Every other door was bolted on the inside, and as the vicar, the Rev. E. H. Pearce, was away on his holidays, the churchwardens, without whose authority the doors could not be forced, were not present; and the clerk, who has the duplicate master key, was out of town. Next morning, says the *City Press*, which records the incident, the door was unlocked by means of another key.

There is some little fuss made over the locking out at this particular church. But observation shows that if most of the City churches were locked up there would be none to complain except the clergy and a few dowdy old women who are engaged in charing, and have an eye to the City doles.

Mathew Hackney, a Mormon missionary from Salt Lake City, was recently arrested at Temesvar, in Hungary, for seeking to make converts to Mormonism. This is not quite creditable to the Hungarian authorities. Why shouldn't Mormonist missionaries be allowed a hearing?

Though Buddhism cannot be said to be a strictly aggressive religion, being far more philosophic than dogmatic, its high priests have come to the conclusion that they have as much right to spread their views in Christian countries as the said Christian countries have to send missionaries to Japan. That, at any rate, is the view taken by Count Koson Otani, a noble ecclesiastic of Kioto, who is said to have a longer genealogy than the Emperor. Accordingly he has dispatched a couple of Buddhist priests to San Francisco, where they have established a Buddhist mission. Judged from the outside, the mission has a very un-Oriental aspect, being simply a two-storey dwelling in Frisco's residential quarter. The back parlor, with its two tall brass candlesticks on the mantel, gives a different impression.

This is how it is described in an American paper: "The back parlor is the temple, and the mantel is the altar of Buddha Sakyamuni, and the glimmering light is the Light of Asia—the light of the faith of six hundred millions of people, carried piously across the seas to illumine for the new West as it does for the ancient East the Eightfold Way that leads at length to Nirvana."

We give the following from *The Missionary News*: "Many years ago a planter in South America planted some grain, and he ordered one of his darkies to make a scarecrow and set it up in the field. The man carved out a woman's face, and put it up to scare away the crows. The rains soon after swept the image away, and it was carried some distance down the stream. Another negro found the image lying on the ground, and he took it to the parish priest, who said he must build a chapel for it. 'It is Our Lady herself, who has come down from heaven,' he said.

"To-day the jewels and gold on that image, which was formerly a scarecrow, are said to be worth 150,000 dollars. Still more amazing is the fact that from 75,000 to 100,000 pilgrims every year come to that church and shrine, in the vain hope that the block of wood may take away their sorrow and suffering."

A complaint from German missionaries is made in *Afrika* concerning the methods of the (Roman Catholic) Trappists, both in intruding upon fields occupied by Protestant missionaries and in enticing away their members. At Marangu, where the Leipzig Society had established a school, the Trappist Fathers have likewise opened one, in spite of remonstrances as to the confusion which might arise from such interference. Some twenty-five boys have already been "decoyed" from the Protestant school, and they tell their former associates that it is much pleasanter to learn under the "Mopia" (corruption of "Mon père"), as they are not so strict about singing and dancing, and are always ready to pardon sins against the Commandments. The dances form part of the heathen worship.

Joseph Edwin Archer, who shot himself dead at London Bridge Railway Station, was a religious man, a member of a church, and secretary of a Sunday-school. One of his delusions was that he and his family had offended God by going to live at Ilford.

Jones, the Hyde Park orator, and champion of Christianity and the Bible, has been bound over to keep the peace for six months. He complained that he was "annoyed a great deal in the park by Atheists and Atheist boys," but the police said the disorder was all his own fault. We are really sorry for poor Jones. He is a bit of a fool, but he appears to mean well; and there are so few opportunities of innocent merriment in public places that it is almost a pity to see poor Jones put under restraint. If laughter is good for digestion, he must have lightened the burden of many a heavy Sunday's dinner. Not that he is exactly witty, but he is very funny. People laugh at him, if not with him.

Amongst the hundred English pilgrims to Lourdes, under the auspices of the Catholic Association, was a girl suffering from lupus. She had better have stayed at home and gone

in for the light cure, which works more wonders than all the miraculous shrines in Europe.

The Bishop of London cunningly refers to "Wesley's love for the Church," and hopes that the Methodist body will "one day be reunited to the old Church from which it sprang." But the Methodist bird isn't going to be caught with a bit of salt like that. Besides, two Churches give more employment and salaries to the men of God than one. Unity may be strength, but it isn't profit.

The torpor of the season, outside the killing of birds for food and sport, and Boers and Englishmen for national supremacy, is relieved by the scientific world, which was never more active. The inventor is abroad in the land—hopeful, industrious, and ingenious. He is designing air-ships to conquer the air, and torpedoes to conquer the world under water. This, but for one thing, would be worthy of the Government of the Universe. Everywhere we see the evil, grinning face of the Demon of Destruction! Even the air-ships are not designed to bring humanity nearer to God. They are designed to destroy humanity, and raise Hell a step higher towards Heaven. The torpedoes certainly are free from hypocrisy. Their mission is to make the pure blue sea a purple pool of blood. The world has many churches—enough, and to spare. When the earth is parched with thirst, or flooded to destruction, they meet and pray, in one case for the blessed rain, in the other for the blessed sun. Prayer, as the great Greek father, Origen, held, may be an impertinence, but it is the weak, articulate, entreating voice of the child in distress. Let the churches pray that some God-inspired inventor may arise—and arise quickly—with some great destructive force in his hand which will make the mission of Christ a reality, and war impossible.—*Umpire.*

There has been a sort of spiritual earthquake in County Antrim Gaol. A prisoner named Robert Calvert applied for leave to change his religion. He had got classed as a member of the Church of Ireland, and he wanted to be ticketed properly as a Presbyterian. No doubt if he died with the wrong label on he would find a difficulty in entering heaven. The visiting justices have acceded to his request, and we presume he is now booked through to glory.

Sergeant Patrick M'Laughlin summoned Henry M'Crudden at Lugan Petty Sessions for selling intoxicating liquors during prohibited hours on Sunday. The defence was that it was the Sunday of the dedication of St. Peter's Chapel, and that many visitors came from a distance with a fine, healthy thirst in their throats. Defendant added that he could not have kept his front door closed, for "after the people came out of chapel he was too busy."

Another correspondent, taking umbrage at my recent criticism of the Bishop of London's letter, advises me to "pray for guidance," and adds: "But there, perhaps you don't believe in prayers. Probably you don't know how to pray. I advise you to study the subject of prayer, and you will find that in all ages, with every class of people, prayer has always been the most beautiful and comforting part of their lives." I am sure my correspondent means his letter kindly. But he should not presume too much upon my ignorance. The man who cannot pray in some way—I don't care how—is without a soul, and the man who is without a soul is a beast. But all depends upon the way in which a man prays. Mere fulsome laudation of deity, with interspersed requests for petty personal benefits, is a type of supplication which never commended itself to my ideas of either true religion, true manhood, or good taste. That is the prayer of the savage—and it is sad to see how much of it still survives in civilised countries. My good correspondent probably doesn't know quite as much of the subject as he thinks he does, or he wouldn't wax so eloquent as to the beauty of prayer "in all ages, with every class of people." He will find, if he studies the question, that in all cases selfish, personal benefit, frequently at the expense of others, is the foundation of most prayers. I'll give him a few illustrations:—This is the prayer of the Nootka Indian, when he sets out for war: "Great Quahootzee, let me live, not be sick, find the enemy, not fear him; find him asleep, and kill a great many of him."—*Horatio Bottomley, in the "Sun."*

"Argumentative sermons to prove the Resurrection," says a writer in the *Guardian*, "fall dead and flat except at Easter and Springtide with renewed vegetation to inspire them." Precisely so. We have often observed the same thing. And the explanation is that the real resurrection is the resurrection of nature from the death of the winter to the new life of the spring and the after glories of summer and autumn. Most mythology, including that of the Christian religion, is connected with sun-worship.

Here is news, indeed! The *Rock* says that the central branch of the London Wesleyan Mission is gradually transforming the district of Clerkenwell, "where the Secularist spirit, so predominant for many years, is passing away." Is it passing away? The wish seems to be father to the thought. How many Secularists can the Wesleyan Mission claim as converts?

A little New Zealand girl recently wrote to ask Mark Twain if his real name was Clemens. She knew better, she said, because Clemens was the man who sold patent medicine. She hoped not, for she liked the name of Mark. Why, Mark Antony was in the Bible! Her letter delighted its recipient. "As Mark Antony has got into the Bible," Mr. Clemens characteristically remarked in telling about it, "I am not without hopes myself."

"How they love each other!" caustically observes a journal in a headline to the following: "The Pope having issued a Bill authorising the erection of a Crotian College in Rome, all the Dalmatians resident in Rome yesterday invaded the college and took forcible possession of the building. The Crotians were driven out by the Dalmatians, who carried a flag."

A Cuban correspondent writes to a number of Catholic papers that "the American atmosphere is less perilous to Catholic faith and morals than the Cuban," and that "Atheism, infidelity, indifferentism, and disrespect for things religious are more pronounced in Cuba than in the United States." In the Havana theatres, this correspondent avers, "the priest is represented as a hypocritical hero of amors, with a palm ever reaching out for the dollars," while public sentiment approves, and "the audience invariably applauds this feature of the performance." Doubtless the public and the audience recognise the representation as true to life.—*Truthseeker (New York).*

England is the classic land of exiles. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Jesuit, Benedictine, and other monks, are emigrating here from France, in order to avoid the operation of the new law affecting Religious Orders. They prefer not to apply for Government permission to remain in France. To obtain this they have to lodge a statement as to their property, and they find that extremely awkward.

The famous Chartreuse liqueur is, as everybody knows, made by monks. So is Benedictine. The manufacture of both liqueurs is now being shifted from France. Chartreuse goes to Spain, and Benedictine goes to God knows where. An account of other palatable drinks manufactured or invented by monks may be found in Mr. Foote's *Bible and Beer.*

A parson had a parrot. When the parson's household knelt down solemnly to prayers, the parrot cried out "Cheer up, boys; cheer up!" This story was communicated by the parson himself to the late Professor Romanes. Of course the parrot didn't know what he was saying, but his words were singularly apposite.

Mrs. Carrie Nation, the notorious "saloon smasher," forgetting that her "Master," Jesus Christ, was twitted with his friendship for wine-bibbers, says that she doesn't care whether President McKinley recovers or not, as he is "the friend of the brewers." The result of this statement being that she had to be protected by the police from the violence of other Christians in her audience. We say "other Christians" because Freethinkers would only have smiled at such a noisy lunatic, even if they had condescended to attend her lecture.

Later the same day the sublime but hard-featured Carrie took her hatchet in her strong right hand and attacked a cigar shop. She was handcuffed and dragged to gaol, shouting and kicking. Afterwards she made a desperate attempt to break out of Black Maria. No wonder her husband (poor man!) seeks for a divorce from this screaming apostle.

Applying the Rule.

Tommy had been quiet for fully five minutes. He seemed to be engaged with some deep problem.

"Papa," he said.

"Well?"

"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you"—that's the Golden Rule, isn't it, papa?"

"Yes, indeed."

Tommy arose, went to the cupboard, and returned with a knife and a large apple pie. The latter he placed before his astonished sire.

"Eat it, papa," he said.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, September 15, Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, London, W.: 7.30, "Anarchism and Assassination."
 September 22, Manchester.
 September 29, Glasgow.
 October 6, Birmingham.
 October 13, Hull.
 October 20 and 27, Athenæum Hall.
 November 10, Camberwell.
 November 24, Leicester.

To Correspondents.

CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—September 15, New Brompton; 22, Sheffield; 24 and 25, Chesterfield, debate on "Spiritualism." October 6, Athenæum Hall, London; 13, Camberwell. November 10, Athenæum Hall, London; 24, Birmingham. December 15, Glasgow. All communications for Mr. Charles Watts in reference to lecturing engagements, etc., should be sent to him at 24 Carminia-road, Balham, S.W. If a reply is required, a stamped and addressed envelope must be enclosed.

J. NEATE. Thanks. See acknowledgment in list.
 WELL-WISHER.—Your goodwill is appreciated.
 D. CLARKE writes: "Although I am not a member of the N. S. S., you may not object to a line from me respecting the strange action of Mr. Anderson. Through my believing that there are two sides to most quarrels, I waited for Mr. A. to state his side, and have come to the conclusion that, morally, it is not worth stating. His solitary letter does not give a good reason. I am glad that you have spoken *plainly*. It is clear that the President of the N. S. S. will not be 'kept out of heaven' by a pile of gold. Something has been said about the President having a salary; perhaps it would be better than the present system. I believe that many outsiders (like myself) would subscribe."

C. J. WOOSNAM.—Thanks for your good wishes.
 JOHN HUME hopes we shall get through all our troubles, and triumph over all our adversaries.

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY.—Lecture Notices must reach us by the first post on Tuesday morning. Please note.

JAMES WESTON, of Sheffield, one of the Old Guard of Free-thought, sending a donation to the Fund for Mrs. Foote, writes: "I need not repeat what so many have well said about the treatment your husband has received at the hands of those of whom he was justified in expecting something very different."

W. H. SPIVEY.—No need to describe Mr. Tabrum. We know him very well. Thanks for your trouble.

W. P. BALL.—Thanks for cuttings.

W. SANDERS.—Sorry we are unable to give you the reference. Why not ask the friend who furnished the quotation?

A. H. SANDERSON.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

C. SCOTT.—Thanks for letter and copy of the verses. Similar ideas would occur to most people who took the trouble to think, instead of letting their minds lie benumbed under the influence of religious prejudice.

G. ALWARD.—Very sorry to hear of your brother's death from such a painful malady. Good men are often the worst sufferers in this ill-regulated world. Mr. Foote would certainly have attended the funeral, as you requested, if the bankruptcy proceedings had not kept him in London on Tuesday. We are glad to know, however, that you found an efficient substitute in Mr. Watts.

J. C. BURROWS.—We must again remind you that Lecture Notices should be written on separate slips of paper.

G. THWAITES sends £1 to the Fund for Mrs. Foote, and wishes he could make it £20. He regrets that the trouble should have been caused by one who could as easily have been a friend.

J. B.—Your sympathy is welcome. There are many good hearts that would obviate every difficulty in our path if they only had as good purses.

E. REDWOOD.—Mr. Foote is writing you *re* lectures at Plymouth. Pleased to hear you hope to "forward something to swell the Fund for Mrs. Foote."

L. SIMPSON.—We have as much copy as we can use for the *Freethinker* at present.

G. L. MACKENZIE.—Thanks.—Shall appear.

G. HARRIS.—See acknowledgment. Thanks for your good wishes.

R. SOMERVILLE.—If you want a good and un mutilated edition of Hume's *Essays*, you must either buy the Green edition or a second-hand copy of the older editions in two octavo volumes. The latter costs anything from 3s. to 6s., according to condition. The separate edition of the *Treatise of Human Nature* is very rare. Of course it is included in the reliable Green edition.

J. H. K.—You can hardly expect your "first literary effort" to be worthy of publication. Shakespeare himself must have spoiled a good deal of clean paper before his compositions were worth printing.

T. HUNT.—Not of your best. You have done much better—unless we are mistaken.

H. S. WISHART.—Your letter is not without interest, but we would rather not insert it at present. It seems to us that the difference between Mr. Ball and Mr. Kingham is now reduced to one of nomenclature. If the former wishes to reply again, we shall be pleased to find room for his letter, but the discussion must then terminate.

YOUNG FREETHINKER.—Yes, you have to give notice of marriage at the Registrar's office, and the notice is posted up there, just as the "banns" are "published" in church. Witnesses to the marriage, when it takes place, are also necessary. The formalities are about the same in both cases. It is only the religious ceremony—that is, the man of God's shibboleths—that makes the difference.

C. W. FLINT.—We are pleased to know you think that "for moral courage Mr. Foote has few equals." Even if it isn't quite true, it is a kind of encouragement.

R. P. EDWARDS.—Thanks for letter. Notice inserted; also see paragraph.

D. KERR.—Glad to receive your cuttings.

A. S. MATTHEWMAN.—We read between the lines that you are a Christian, and a Christian is hardly the best person to advise how Freethought propoganda should be conducted. You find fault with our *Bible Heroes*, for instance; well now, if you can show that we have painted any one of the said worthies blacker than he stands in the Bible, we invite you to do so. General censure is useless. You must condescend to be specific.

RECEIVED.—El Libre Pensamiento—Two Worlds—Was Alfred King of England?—Portsmouth Evening News—The Torch of Reason—Boston Investigator—Progressive Thinker—Discontent—International Book Finder—Public Opinion (New York)—Free Society—Crescent—Blue Grass Blade—Lucifer—Truthseeker (New York)—Lloyd's Newspaper—Catholic—La Raison—Umpire—Witness.

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.

I DESIRE at the outset, this week, to correct a misapprehension into which I understand that some persons have fallen. It was never my intention to say or to insinuate that Mr. Anderson's benefactions to the Freethought movement were confined to his old advances to me. Nor do I think that this is really a reasonable interpretation of anything I have written. Mr. Anderson alluded to his "monetary transactions" with me, and I denied that there were any such transactions except the old advances for which he was suing me. That was all the money, I said, that I had ever received from him privately; or, in other words, all for which I could be supposed to have any sort of personal responsibility. It would have been absurd to suggest, as I am told that some have inferred, that Mr. Anderson had not given anything beyond that to the movement, for his subscriptions to this or that Fund have been publicly acknowledged at various times in the *Freethinker*. Very often such subscriptions were handed or sent direct to me. But that was a mere accident of my position. They were not *for* me, but given *through* me. Hundreds of people, during many years, have contributed to the funds of the movement in precisely the same way. If a friend of the cause hands me (say) £5, in cash or by cheque, and the amount is acknowledged in the *Freethinker*, and applied to the object for which it was given—for instance, a Lecture Scheme, the N. S. S. General Fund, a Delegates' Luncheon, a Children's Party, or what not—I do not understand how this could be called a "monetary transaction" *with me*. It was that idea which I repudiated and denied, and denied again with emphasis. Mr. Anderson has indisputably subscribed a good deal, in one way or another, to the movement during the term of my presidency of the N. S. S.; that is to say, during the past twelve years, the period for which alone I have any right to speak. I have not denied this, I have had no wish to deny it, or to conceal it; indeed, if I had the time, I could indicate many passages in former issues of the *Freethinker* in which I have cordially admitted it. Curiously enough the only letter of mine which Mr. Anderson was able to produce, and that rather accidentally, at the

hearing of his application for a receiving order, was one that contained a clear and frank admission of his "generous assistance" to the movement; but, on the other hand, I observed that he appeared to have forgotten "my services" to the movement, which I thought I was entitled, without vanity, to regard as at least of *some* value, considering the amount of work I had undoubtedly done, and the post—the unpaid post—to which I had been repeatedly elected.

I am given to understand that Mr. Anderson helped the late Mr. Forder rather extensively. Neither of them made me his confidant in the matter. I was aware of something between them, but I did not know its precise nature or extent, nor do I know it now. I have also heard a whisper that Mr. Anderson gave cheques from time to time to other workers in the movement, though not necessarily in the N. S. S. But I was never informed of these things, and I cannot recognise them as any business of mine. Whether tens, hundreds, or thousands of pounds were expended by Mr. Anderson in this way, does not seem to me to have any sort of relation to his conduct towards me; unless he has selected me as the scapegoat to carry the "sins" of the whole party into the wilderness of bankruptcy.

The reply of Mr. Anderson's solicitors to the message from the Board of Directors of the Freethought Publishing Company, which was promised in "a few days," has not arrived yet. I incline to think, therefore, that it will *never* arrive. A reply to a former communication was also promised in "a few days." But that did not arrive either. It would appear, then, that Mr. Anderson has placed his conscience, as well as his business, in his solicitors' hands, and that those gentlemen do not think he ought to fulfil his public pledge unless he is compelled to. On that point I prefer to say no more at present. I have to make a final statement to the Freethought party, and I will say all I have to say then—once for all. I do not promise to make it next week, but I hope to do so then, for I shall be glad to dismiss this unpleasant subject and devote all my energies to my proper work.

Meanwhile, I may just express a wish that all who intend to subscribe to the Fund for Mrs. Foote would do so immediately. I intend to close this Fund when I have made my final statement. It is naturally not a thing that I like to see dragging on interminably.

On Tuesday morning I went through my public examination, and I do not fancy I suffered much in the ordeal. The Official Receiver did his duty, but he did it like a gentleman. We faced each other within a few feet, and I was much impressed with his fine, powerful, and capacious head—in which I include the expressive face. What impression he formed of me is not likely to be revealed. Mr. Registrar Hope sat observant on the Olympian height of the bench, the image of silent justice, though he did break the silence once or twice in a penetrating manner. He decided against me on the question of the receiving order, but I am not so foolish as to imagine that he administered the law with anything but absolute impartiality.

When the Official Receiver had done with me, Mr. Registrar Hope inquired whether any creditor wished to ask me any questions. Whereupon there was dead silence. After a slight pause, my solicitor, Mr. Harper, was called upon by the Registrar. He put a few pertinent questions, tending to show that I had acted fairly and squarely throughout, and that Mr. Anderson had himself been a party to the formation of the Freethought Publishing Company. And then my public examination ended.

G. W. FOOTE.

The Fund for Mrs. Foote.

Horace W. Parsons, £3 3s.; John Hume, 5s.; C. J. Woosnam, 5s.; D. Clarke, 5s.; Well-wisher, 1s.; G. P., 10s.; A. Button, 2s.; James Weston, £1 1s.; R. Tabrum, 2s. 6d.; Stamps, 1s.; Bristol Friends, per G. Harris, 7s. 6d.; G. Thwaites, £1; A. G. P., 1s.; Three Highgate Friends, 3s.; Newtonian, 1s.; J. N. Woolfe, 2s. 6d.; A. C. Brown, 2s. 6d.

Sugar Plums.

In spite of the rain there was a very good audience at the Athenæum Hall on Sunday evening, and all present seemed delighted with Mr. Foote's lecture on "Mr. Hall Caine, the Pope, and Christian Democracy," with special reference, of course, to Mr. Caine's new romance, *The Eternal City*. The lecturer intends to criticise this book at some length in an early number of the *Freethinker*.

Mr. Foote occupies the Athenæum Hall platform again this evening (Sept. 15), after which he will be lecturing out of London for a month or so. His subject on this occasion will be "Anarchism and Assassination." It should attract a crowded audience.

Mr. Cohen follows Mr. Foote at the Athenæum Hall on Sundays, September 22 and 29. Mr. Watts lectures there on Sunday, October 6, as well as on other dates, which will be duly announced.

Mr. Charles Watts commences his lectures for the season this evening, September 15, at New Brompton, taking for his subject "The Growth of Freethought." He is in excellent health, and we hope he will have a good audience.

The Birmingham Branch of the N. S. S. has the use of the magnificent Town Hall granted once a year by the Mayor, the only charges being a few pounds for the cost of gas and cleaning. This year the Sunday granted is October 6. The Branch would have liked another Demonstration like last year's, but, as the Central Executive cannot undertake to defray the heavy expenses on this occasion, Mr. Foote has promised to deliver two lectures in the afternoon and evening. As there cannot be a charge for admission, it is to be hoped that the local Freethinkers will be as liberal as possible when the collection boxes are handed round.

Three numbers of Mr. Joseph Symes's *Liberator* have just arrived together. The paper is not dead, therefore, as we almost feared. We are very glad to know it is still alive, and we hope to receive it more regularly in future.

We have received the following letter from Mr. H. Percy Ward:—

Bradford, September 9, 1901.

DEAR MR. FOOTE,—I have now been in Bradford a little over a week, and hope to get settled down before the end of the month. I have delivered five open-air lectures during the past nine days to orderly and fairly large audiences.

I have in hand the following schemes:—

1. *A Bradford Club and Institute*.—A good-sized room has been taken in the centre of Bradford, at the Victoria Buildings, 17 Little Horton-lane. The place is now being fitted up with gas, chairs, tables, a piano, etc., and will be opened next Sunday. You will find particulars of the opening meetings on the enclosed bill. The Club and Institute will be opened during the week, and will be provided with all the various reform periodicals, light refreshments, chess, draughts, etc., and, in course of time, we hope, a library.

2. *A Branch of the N. S. S.*—About twenty-five have given in their names as members. By the end of the month I hope to increase this number, and then send an application to the Executive for permission to form a Branch. The Club and Institute will be the headquarters of the Branch, and three lectures will be delivered weekly under its auspices.

3. *A Federation of the Northern Branches of the N. S. S.*, with the following objects:—

(a) The federation of the Northern Branches of the N. S. S.
(b) The formation of new Branches in the Northern Counties.
(c) The propagation of Secular philosophy, and the destruction of theological superstition, by means of debates, Freethought lectures, and the publication and distribution of Freethought literature.

Next month I am taking over the editorship of the *Truthseeker*, and shall make it the organ of the Federation. I am awaiting replies from several of the Northern branches before taking steps to have formed the constitution, etc., of the Federation. At present I am prepared to deliver Freethought lectures in any Northern town, at a reasonable distance from Bradford, on week nights, for bare travelling expenses. Any advice or suggestions from you would be highly appreciated.

We are communicating with Mr. Ward. His new sphere of activity is a wide one, and we wish him every success in it. We shall also be glad to assist him in any way that is possible. There is room enough, and to spare, in England for all who honestly aim at spreading Freethought—as we are sure Mr. Ward does. It is impossible to do everything from London, and we hope Mr. Ward, Mr. Gott, Mr. Grange, and their colleagues, will find a fertile field in the North for their zealous labors.

The East London Branch joins the National Sunday League's excursion to Southend to-day (September 15). The committee will be outside Liverpool-street Station at 9.15, wearing green and mauve badges. The train starts at 9.45.

and the return fare is 2s. No doubt the East London "saints" will turn up in strong force on this occasion.

In the course of a correspondence on "Street Preaching" excellent letters on the side of Freethought have appeared from the pens of R. J. Brown and W. Firth in the *Kentish Independent*. Such letters in the local papers do a great deal of good. They show that there are Freethinkers in the neighborhood, and not merely in London or other distant places. We wish the "saints" would avail themselves more extensively of this means of propagating their opinions.

The Church and the Mill.

(From the French of Victor Charbonnel.)

IN the first rays of dawn and the last gleams of sunset, in the warm splendor of noon and the pallid whiteness* of the moonlit nights, two elevations, sharp-defined, look down upon the village and the plain.

One is the Church.

The other—the Mill.

The church lifts towards the sky, where sleep the gods, the faith-offering of its ancient and venerable stones.

The mill projects in space, where Nature's forces work, the life-throbs of its new and fertile sheafs.

The gods and nature, faith and life, dreams and nutriment: the church and the mill. All there is of human inquietude.

The church has seemed beautiful in men's eyes.

They have magnified it in their dreams divine. They have placed upon its heights, among its flowering vaults and arches, the affirmation of their hope. They have even fettered infinite power and infinite goodness to its walls. Some have really believed that God was there, as in his dwelling-place.

And they have said: "Come, pray to a helping God, consoler of misery." The suffering ones have gone in crowds. They have been told of happiness in the sky, up yonder, far distant in another world, after the expiatory sufferings of earth. The poor village houses have sheltered their distress under the consoling shadow of the church, the house of God.

There have been the Sundays, days of repose and forgetfulness, and sometimes *fête* days, celebrated by the pealing of bells, glorified by the brilliancy of candles. The church has thus broken the monotonous woof of their unhappy destinies with a little joy.

It is the church, again, which from birth to death has solemnised the chief epochs of each existence with some rite or some beautiful similitude—the baptismal holy water, the white robes of the first communion, the wedding songs and flowers, the solemnity of the mourning veil, the sad light of the funeral torch.

The more credulous have even thought that God spoke in church through the words of the priest, and that he gave in the host his own flesh, his own blood, his own divinity, to eat and drink in an ineffable communion.

But these are but vain enchantments which do not satisfy man. For he has felt that the Church imprisoned, obscured, and falsified his dreams. He has recognised that its consolations and its joys, its rites and its beliefs, were no generous gift of truth and beauty, but a perfidious illusion cunningly calculated to deaden human suffering. He has understood, he has seen the lie.

And his eyes, turning from the gods, look towards Nature.

More beautiful than the church, here is the mill.

If yonder dead stones are but petrified visions, here the verity of nutritive force lies accumulated in living sheafs. The sun has fertilised the earth. The ploughman has ploughed, the sower has sown, the reaper has

reaped. The heavy ears are there, ready to make the bread which will nourish the ploughman, the sower, the reaper, their families, and their brothers of the village, or of distant cities. All the good in nature has been gained—conquered by the work of man, surest of all prayers. And to-morrow it will expand in floods of life.

To believe, to hope, to join pious hands, to kneel, to renounce happiness till an uncertain time—such is the teaching of the Church. To will, to strive, to grasp the tool with vigorous hand, to work and wrest at once from earth all it can furnish of energy and joy, to eat the bread of health and intellect, of love and conscience—such is the teaching of the mill. Of the two lessons, which is the more salutary?

The Church has its Sundays and its *fêtes*. But the real Sundays and the real *fêtes*, are they not every day in which the mill gives a little more good white bread for the family table?

The Church dispenses to the assembled faithful the poetry of the pealing bells and radiant candles. But the mill, when the threshing-time comes, does it not animate the workers on the threshing-floor with the sonorous gaiety of the flails, the powerful boom of the threshers; and does it not make the golden stream of grain that pours into the sacks shine in the splendor of the mid-day sun?

The Church marks the monotonous course of existence with a few emotions. But see. Since the ploughing has destroyed the snows of *nivôse*, winter has vanished. The spring appears in the furrows with the green shoots of *germinal*. Summer is cradled in the undulation of the pale yellow crops till the warmth of *thermidor* has ripened them. And already autumn is announced in the wind that carries the first shiver of *vendémiaire* around the mills and over the thatched roofs. The mill thus epitomises in itself the whole history of the past year, and beautifies it at every season.

What more? The Church baptises, administers sacrament, marries, buries—thus following the stages of all human destiny: infancy, adolescence, youth, age, and so to death. But it is a sheaf of straw taken to the mill which furnishes the cradle, and hushes the infant in its first sleep. It is among the wheat, looking for nests or gathering the red poppy and the azure corn-flower—or, again, encircling the mill with their cries, and taking it in mimic assault—that the boys and girls arouse their youthful blood. It is amid the mystery of the growing harvest, in the paths of the fields, that the youth and maiden whisper, some evening, the serious words of love, pledge their lives in a hand-clasp, or in the pure kiss of betrothal. And if they have but a humble cottage to shelter their devotion, it is still the mill that gives them the dear thatched roof. Finally, the aged sleep yonder on the plain, in the cemetery; it is the plaintive billowing of the wheat that best hushes the dead's eternal peace; it is the nutritive force within the mill that best protests against all mourning and all regret, holding up in the light the hope of younger lives.

O you who yet believe the legends told at church, ir only for their moral elevation and their mystic beauty, know that the mill proclaims the power of earth, the virtue of labour, the generous magnificence of days and months and changing seasons, faith in the mysterious energies of universal nature. And know that there is more of moral elevation, and even of mystic beauty, in these beneficent realities than in all your vague visions. The workers who plough and sow and reap in the fields say to the wheat and the mill: "Give us to-day, us and all men, our daily bread." Is there a holier or more beautiful prayer?

O believers, you have at the church, you say, the treasure of the host, by which you take in sacrament the flesh and blood of a God. And you celebrate the blessing of that divine communion. But we have there, in the mill, the simple bread of nutriment, and by that bread we have communion with the eternal Energy, with the Life of Nature. In that bread, at every meal, at the Holy Table of the family, mother and children take the sacrament of the father's labor, of the strength and devotion of his arms, of his flesh and blood, which he has sacrificed to nourish them. We will celebrate more proudly than you, poor dupes of

* *Blancheur pâle*. Emphasis by repetition, here regarded with disfavor and styled tautology, is a frequent and effective element in French literature.—TRANS.

divine communions, the blessing of our real communion with Nature and Humanity.

And you, People, see.

Behold the Church and the Mill.

Fear not to recognise true beauty and holiness. More beautiful and more sacred than your churches, love your mills.

Churches, temples of dreams! Mills, sources of life!

(Translated, with the author's permission, by E. R. WOODWARD.)

The First Assassinated President.

LINCOLN was a many-sided man, acquainted with smiles and tears, complex in brain, single in heart, direct as light; and his words, candid as mirrors, gave the perfect image of his thought. He was never afraid to ask—never too dignified to admit that he did not know. No man had keener wit, or kinder humor.

It may be that humor is the pilot of reason. People without humor drift unconsciously into absurdity. Humor sees the other side—stands in the mind like a spectator, a good-natured critic, and gives its opinion before judgment is reached. Humor goes with good nature, and good nature is the climate of reason. In anger, reason abdicates and malice extinguishes the torch. Such was the humor of Lincoln that he could tell even unpleasant truths as charmingly as most men can tell the things we wish to hear.

He was not solemn. Solemnity is a mask worn by ignorance and hypocrisy—is the preface, prologue, and index to the cunning or the stupid.

He was natural in his life and thought—master of the story-teller's art, in illustration apt, in application perfect, liberal in speech, shocking Pharisees and prudes, using any word that wit could disinfect.

He was a logician. His logic shed light. In its presence the obscure became luminous, and the most complex and intricate political and metaphysical knots seemed to untie themselves. Logic is the necessary product of intelligence and sincerity. It cannot be learned. It is the child of a clear head and a good heart.

Lincoln was candid, and with candor often deceived the deceitful. He had intellect without arrogance, genius without pride, and religion without cant—that is to say, without bigotry and without deceit.

He was an orator—clear, sincere, natural. He did not pretend. He did not say what he thought others thought, but what he thought.

If you wish to be sublime, you must be natural—you must keep close to the grass. You must sit by the fireside of the heart: above the clouds it is too cold. You must be simple in your speech: too much polish suggests insincerity.

The great orator idealises the real, transfigures the common, makes even the inanimate throb and thrill, fills the gallery of the imagination with statues and pictures perfect in form and color, brings to light the gold hoarded by memory the miser, shows the glittering coin to the spendthrift hope, enriches the brain, ennobles the heart, and quickens the conscience. Between his lips words bud and blossom.

If you wish to know the difference between an orator and an elocutionist—between what is felt and what is said—between what the heart and brain can do together and what the brain can do alone—read Lincoln's wondrous speech at Gettysburg, and then the speech of Edward Everett.

The oration of Lincoln will never be forgotten. It will live until languages are dead and lips are dust. The speech of Everett will never be read.

The elocutionists believe in the virtue of voice, the sublimity of syntax, the majesty of long sentences, and the genius of gesture.

The orator loves the real, the simple, the natural. He places the thought above all. He knows that the greatest ideas should be expressed in shortest words—that the greatest statues need the least drapery.

Lincoln was an immense personality—firm, but not

obstinate. Obstinance is egotism—firmness, heroism. He influenced others without effort, unconsciously; and they submitted to him as men submit to nature—unconsciously. He was severe with himself, and for that reason lenient with others.

He appeared to apologise for being kinder than his fellows.

He did merciful things as stealthily as others committed crimes.

Almost ashamed of tenderness, he said and did the noblest words and deeds with that charming confusion, that awkwardness, that is the perfect grace of modesty.

As a noble man wishing to pay a small debt to a poor neighbor reluctantly offers a hundred dollar bill and asks for change, fearing that he may be suspected either of making a display of wealth or a pretence of payment, so Lincoln hesitated to show his wealth of goodness, even to the best he knew.

A great man stooping, not wishing to make his fellows feel that they were small or mean.

By his candor, by his kindness, by his perfect freedom from restraint, by saying what he thought, and saying it absolutely in his own way, he made it not only possible, but popular, to be natural. He was the enemy of mock solemnity, of the stupidly respectable, of the cold and formal.

He wore no official robes either on his body or his soul. He never pretended to be more or less, or other, or different, from what he really was.

He had the unconscious naturalness of Nature's self.

He built upon the rock. The foundation was secure and broad. The structure was a pyramid, narrowing as it rose. Through days and nights of sorrow, through years of grief and pain, with unswerving purpose, "with malice towards none, with charity for all," with infinite patience, with unclouded vision, he hoped and toiled. Stone after stone was laid, until at last the Proclamation found its place. On that the goddess stands.

He knew others, because perfectly acquainted with himself. He cared nothing for place, but everything for principle; nothing for money, but everything for independence. Where no principle was involved, easily swayed; willing to go slowly, if in the right direction; sometimes willing to stop; but he would not go back, and he would not go wrong.

He was willing to wait; he knew that the event was not waiting, and that fate was not the fool of chance. He knew that slavery had defenders, but no defence, and that they who attack the right must wound themselves.

He was neither tyrant nor slave; he neither knelt nor scorned.

With him, men were neither great nor small—they were right or wrong.

Through manners, clothes, titles, rags, and race he saw the real—that which is. Beyond accident, policy, compromise, and war he saw the end.

He was patient as destiny, whose undecipherable hieroglyphs were so deeply graven on his sad and tragic fate.

Nothing discloses real character like the use of power. It is easy for the weak to be gentle. Most people can bear adversity. But if you wish to know what a man really is, give him power. This is the supreme test. It is the glory of Lincoln that, having almost absolute power, he never abused it, except on the side of mercy.

Wealth could not purchase, power could not awe this divine, this loving man.

He knew no fear except the fear of doing wrong. Hating slavery, pitying the master—seeking to conquer not persons, but prejudices—he was the embodiment of the self-denial, the courage, the hope, and the nobility of a nation.

He spoke not to inflame, not to upbraid, but to convince.

He raised his hands not to strike, but in benediction.

He longed to pardon.

He loved to see the pearls of joy on the cheeks of a wife whose husband he had rescued from death.

Lincoln was the grandest figure of the fiercest civil war. He is the gentlest memory of our world.

—Colonel Ingersoll.

Correspondence.

ATHEISM AND MORALITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Concerning the *real* significance of Mr. Ball's statement—"In answer to the appeal by 'S.,' who wishes me to resume the controversy on the above subject, I may say that I can do but little work, and that I prefer to reserve my efforts for tasks of a more useful and agreeable nature than the unravelment and correction of the misconceptions and irrelevancies poured forth so copiously by Mr. Kingham. I have no hope that controversy with such a disputant would satisfactorily 'thresh out' the question of the alleged incompatibility of morality and Atheism"—the fact that he does adopt the controversial attitude after does not argue much for the sincerity of his statement. Far from showing the existence of any conviction on his part as to the non-utility of further argument with me, his letter shows that he himself felt conscious that there was still something which required answering, side by side with the *irresistible* desire not to acknowledge his inability to answer. Under the impression, no doubt, that where wisdom is bliss it is folly to *appear* ignorant, he *contented himself* with referring me to "Darwin's teaching on the evolution of morality by natural selection (*Descent of Man*, chapters iv. and v.)." Does Mr. Ball's argumentative faculty or "backbone" go no further than making assertions, etc., and referring a person to a certain authority? In taking up the cudgels against me as he did, it was *his* place to show *where* and *how* Darwin proves "the evolution of the moral sense by purely natural causes." If he (Mr. Ball) considered that he had *reasoned out* Darwin's teaching on this subject, why did he refrain from putting his *competency in this respect* to the test? From my appraisal of Darwin's nature, I think that it would have been a source of great pain to him to have thought that those which were to come after him were to be merely his *echoes*; that he felt that the *continuation of his work in the advancement of human knowledge* would be the only true and lasting tribute which could be paid to him. *Science* is all right, but *scientists* not *always*. If I, for instance, had tried to prove that Christianity was true by simply referring Mr. Ball to what Dunkus Funkus Macgregor or some other great scientist had written in support of it, I am afraid that Mr. Ball would have given me an extra-special dose of his *morality*.

I quite agree with Mr. Ball that any admission on my part "that the moral sense (*like the 'five senses'*) exists independently of theological *belief* [mine own italics]," would have to depend altogether upon my *acceptance of his instruction*; but his statement about me having "to admit that the social instincts have nothing to do with supernaturalism.....and that Atheists can be good men—in which case his accusation against Atheism falls to the ground," makes it more than doubtful whether Mr. Ball is any better than those Christians who are credited with *reading into* their Bible, instead of *reading out* of it. To show, as I have done, that the theological position of duality is the only one consistent with the *theory of morality* is by no means equivalent to showing that Atheism represents a summing-up of anti-social tendencies. It is Mr. Ball, and Mr. Ball alone, who associates Atheism with *immorality*, and Atheists with "murderers, adulterers, thieves, and scoundrels of the deepest dye"; while I have emphasized all along that if man "is wholly of material organisation" there is no such thing as morality, and, consequently, no such thing as immorality. Taking by itself Mr. Ball's continual attempt to foist upon me charges that are traceable in their origin to the *belief* in duality, even *immorality* could hardly be worse than *his system of morality*; so that, in this respect, he need not fear anything of a *deteriorating* nature in such a charge. On the other hand, seeing that the remarks he makes in his second paragraph on my statement that "morality stands or falls by the existence of a supernatural sanction" show that he does not know the difference between *disbelief*, or denial, and *unbelief*, or the absence of any knowledge, we may remind Mr. Ball that there are many Theists who so far realise what the postulation of morality involves that they are prepared to allow extenuating circumstances in the case of ignorance. "Social instincts" and "moral sense" are by no means synonymous, or even connected. "Instinct" I define as stored habit; and "social instincts" are simply the summing-up of a gradual process of negation of the individualistic aspect of organism's activities in favor of the social aspect; a process which is the product, not of individual effort, but of the—on the whole—unconscious operation of the principle of the survival of the fittest; first, between individual and individual; next, between organisation and organisation; and so on till the struggle for the primal needs of life brings about the greatest possible coherence of useful factors in the perpetuation of the species.

I do not seem to have pricked Mr. Ball's conscience in the slightest by pointing out that he did not insult me by the use of such terms as "incredibly ridiculous assumptions," "long-winded reiterations," "ridiculously perverse idea," and many like others; but that he really insulted himself. Well, my "social instincts" make it so that I am pained to find another cutting off his nose to spite his face. Not that, under the

circumstances, abuse from Mr. Ball is anything else than an honor, for abuse is one of the trade-marks of progressive endeavor—as likewise is that *unconscious* misrepresentation to which I called his attention in the words, "without—to say the very least of it [mark these words]—having once paid me the compliment of understanding me." If Mr. Ball had only placed "a special sanctity" upon "*truthfulness* and *appropriateness*," the greater part of his letters would never have been written. As it is, the tactics employed by him spell in plain language that fear of the truth which is always in a man when he seeks not the truth. Still, the fact that one is given to coloring things with one's own prejudices only makes stronger the reasons for submitting one's self to the challenge by inquiry. Undoubtedly "S.'s" remark—"Facts are stubborn things—in fact, 'they're all right'; and as for the other things, well, if they be neither truths nor facts, let them take care of themselves in their own fanciful way—if they can"—still holds good, and *will* hold good. Yes, Great is Truth; and it *will* prevail.

T. W. KINGHAM.

The Four Hundred Mistaken Prophets.

KING AHAH, the leader of Israel's band,
With the Syrians fain to do battle,
Invited Jehoshaphat into his land,
And slaughtered large numbers of cattle.
And doubting his venture was like to succeed—
For kings in all ages have blundered—
He sent for his prophets the future to read,
And asked the advice of four hundred.
And all the four hundred they prophesied thus—
Go enter the battle and win it:
The Lord reserves victory only for us,
And the Syrians never were in it.
A calamity howler, Micaiah of name,
Spoke—and the people all wondered—
"Your highness," said he, "do not credit the same;
The Lord hath deceived your four hundred.
"Take heed how you go against heathen, my Lord;
Unfasten your armor and doff it;
Keep clear of the point on a Syrian sword,
And never put faith in a prophet."
"Lock the croaker in jail, on water and bread!"
So Ahab of Israel thundered.
'Twas done; but the king on the morrow lay dead,
Which did not surprise the four hundred.
Now, truth, of our prophets to-day, as of old,
Is not a distinguishing merit;
In the name of the Lord their mouths are controlled
By a most unreliable spirit.
The word which they speak hath a counterfeit ring;
Who trusts it will find he has blundered.
Remember what happened to Israel's king,
And discount the preaching four hundred.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

—Truthseeker (New York).

Obituary.

DIED on Saturday, September 7, at the age of fifty-three, at his residence, Welholme-road, Grimsby, S. W. Alward, after a long and painful illness. In October last he underwent a most critical operation for cancer. He was informed on the highest authority that he might die under the operation; but, nothing daunted, he surrendered himself into the hands of the surgeons. The operation was in part successful, but brought only temporary relief; the malady baffled the surgeons' skill, and he soon knew the end was near. For twenty-five years he had been a most pronounced Freethinker; he enjoyed the respect of all who made his acquaintance. Many kind Christians were very anxious for his future welfare. The clergy of the different denominations called to offer their consolations. Their good wishes were accepted, but their prayers were declined. He died as he had lived, free from the terrors of superstition. His hope was in the skill of man, not in the fear of the Lord.—G. A.

I REGRET to record the death of Mr. Absolam Horsfall, brother-in-law to the late Mr. Thomas Slater, of Leicester. He was a true Secularist from his youth, and a great admirer of Charles Bradlaugh. I had visited him weekly for the last twelve months. During that time he was suffering from paralysis. He had learnt by heart *The Secularist's Manual of Songs and Ceremonies*. On one occasion he told me he had been visited by a Christian lady, who asked him if he was prepared for death. His answer was "Yes," and he quoted the lines on "The Slumber of Death," by Eliza Cook. He told me he did not know whether he or she was paralysed the more for a few minutes. Then she excused herself, and left the room. He has had many a laugh at his intended converter since then. One thing I much regret, that he could not have a Secular burial, as he told me it was his sincere wish.—V. PAGE.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, etc.

[Notices of Lectures, etc., must reach us by first post on Tuesday, and be marked "Lecture Notice," if not sent on post-card.]

LONDON.

THE ATHENÆUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "Anarchism and Assassination."

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall, ante-room, first floor): 11, W. Sanders, "Industry and Progress."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 11.30, A. B. Moss, "The Fruits of Christianity."

BROCKWELL PARK: 3.15, E. B. Rose.

STATION-ROAD (Camberwell): 11.30, E. B. Rose.

PECKHAM RYE: 3.15, W. J. Ramsey.

CLERKENWELL GREEN: 11.30, F. A. Davies, "Thomas Paine."

EDMONTON (corner of Angel-road): 7, F. A. Davies, "Christianity and War."

FINSBURY PARK (near Band Stand): 3.30, F. A. Davies, "Christianity and Common Sense."

HAMMERSMITH BROADWAY: 7.30, E. White, "Claims of Christianity."

HYDE PARK (near Marble Arch): 11.30, W. Heaford, "Christ and Salvation"; 3.30, A lecture.

REGENT'S PARK (near the Fountain): 6.30, A lecture.

MILE END WASTE: No lectures morning or evening owing to annual excursion. Wednesday, September 18, at 8.30, A lecture.

POPLAR (West India Dock Gates): Closed for the season.

STRATFORD (The Grove): 7, S. E. Easton, "Jesus Christ."

VICTORIA PARK: 3.15, W. Heaford, "The Ethics of Christianity."

KINGSLAND (corner of Ridley-road): 11.30, R. P. Edwards, "What Must I Do to be Saved?"

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Brockwell Park, near Herne Hill Station): Lectures every Sunday morning at 11.30.

COUNTRY.

BRADFORD (Bradlaugh Club and Institute, 17 Little Horton-lane): 3, H. Percy Ward, "From Wesleyan Pulpit to Secular Platform"; 6.30, Debate between H. Percy Ward and S. H. Pollard, "Can Socialism Benefit Humanity?" September 19, at 7.30, H. Percy Ward, "A Christian Ghost Story."

CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school; 7, Charles Watts, "The Growth of Free-thought."

GLASGOW (110 Brunswick-street): Mrs. H. Bradlaugh-Bonner—12, "Woman's Work"; 6.30, "Some National Delusions."

LEEDS (Woodhouse Moor): 6.15, W. D. Leybourne, "What Think Ye of Christ?"

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Humberstone-gate): 6.30, A lecture.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Capt. Duncan's Navigation Schools, Market place): 7, A reading.

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