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PRICE TWOPENCE.

God Save Sunday!

THE Rev. J. Morgan Gibbon is much concerned about the future of the Christian Sabbath, and we are not surprised at it. It is one of the most cherished institutions of Christianity, and has contributed as much as any other institution to perpetuate that religion. Belief in religion, and in Christianity particularly, is very much like professional conjuring. Keep at it constantly, and you acquire and maintain proficiency. Drop it for a time, and you find that eye and hand have lost their cunning, and feats performed almost instinctively awhile since are now almost impossible. So it is with religious belief. Practise that constantly, and, above all, shun disturbing influences, and presently you will find yourself a believer of the deepest dye, clad in an armor of dulness and mystical profundity that is well-nigh impervious to common sense. This the clergy know as well as we do; hence their desire to shield their flocks from all disturbing heretical influences, and their advice that doubters must go down upon their knees in a prayerful state of mind, and in a spirit of contrition and confidence surrender themselves to God—which is only their way of saying that an intellectual anæsthetic is indispensable to true belief. When someone complained to Lamb about Coleridge's interminable disquisitions on German metaphysics, Lamb's reply was, "Yes, he has *such* a fund of humor"; and, looked at from this point of view, there is a world of humor about the average cleric. True, the humor is generally unconscious, but it *is* humor, nevertheless.

And certainly not the least humorous of clerical antics is this fear of the disappearance of the Christian Sabbath, and their frantic appeals to the people and to God to save it. Not because it is a religious institution, oh dear no! Their anxiety is solely on account of its social value—at least, so they say. It is only reverence for the Sabbath, as a *religious* day, that gives the working men one day's rest out of seven; and, if that goes, then there will be an end to the day of rest altogether. It is surprising that men who have received some sort of an education can talk such drivel with a straight face; but I suppose habit will do a great deal, and probably one feature of "trial sermons" is to see how much nonsense can be uttered without either a blush or a laugh. There is nothing religious about Saturday—that is, to a Christian—yet a half-day's holiday has been secured on that day; the working-day was reduced to ten hours on other days of the week without religion being associated with them, and it now bids fair to be reduced still further. The tendency is not for more work, but for more leisure; and one can only say that, if working men cannot be trusted with the opportunities of rational enjoyment on Sunday without allowing that to become the means of their being compelled to work seven days a week, then they deserve to have to work seven days a week and eighteen hours a day.

But to return to the Rev. Morgan Gibbon. "The Sabbath, as God gave it, was a beautiful gift," he recently informed a Stamford Hill audience, apparently ignorant of the circumstance that the Sabbath antedates by many centuries the Mosaic narrative. But now we are losing this precious gift, and there is a new generation:—

"A soft-living, pleasure-seeking, Sunday-concert people, who want a holiday, not a Sabbath; and it seems as though it were about to go. The *Spectator* wants it for

rifle practice. Clergymen, too, in Oxford and elsewhere, urge that a part of the day of the worship of the God of Peace should be given to the service of the god of war; and the Sabbath seems as though ready for flight. As the Gadarenes drove the Christ from their coasts, many have already banished the Christian Sabbath from their homes. They have now a golf day, a river day, a lounging, gardening, pottering day; but no Lord's Day. Their little children are already too late for the Sabbath. The grand background which children enjoyed for generations in England has disappeared. Poor parent! poor child!"

Sad! One can almost see the tears trickling down the preacher's face as he depicts the gloomy future of Great Britain divested of its most characteristic feature. And that pathetic touch about little children! Personally, my Jewish ancestry saved—I mean robbed—me of "the background which *childhood* enjoyed for generations"; but, judging from the outside, I must confess that Sunday never seemed to me to be the day upon which the children of *Christian* parents reaped most enjoyment—that is, unless they belonged to the same type as the boy whose father explained to the district visitor that "a good larrupin' was wittles and drink to 'im." And I have always been under the impression that, if the Christian Sabbath could have been terminated by juvenile voting, it would have been extinguished long ago. Perhaps, however, my impressions, being only those of an outsider, were wrong, or perhaps this picture of children grieving over the loss of the Sabbath is only another example of the subtle humor of the pulpit.

But the preacher is not concerned for the joyless life of children alone; it is the fate of the nation as a whole that awakens his apprehension, once it lets go the Sabbath. "These secular holidays," he exclaims, "cannot do for us as a nation. They have no message from the grave." Mr. Gibbon is evidently a cheerful kind of a preacher. Nor can you atone for the absence of messages from the grave by taking to walk in a field or garden, or the contemplation of nature. Why, he says, evidently quite aghast at the prospect, "there are men who think, or speak, as if they thought that worship means going into the fields and woods, and saying, 'How nice! how very pretty!' as flower or tree or wheatfield heaves in sight." It will not do even to stay at home and read the Bible. This he calls an "old, old foe of the Christian Sabbath," because, he says, with an insight into human nature perfectly dazzling after what has gone before, "I should hardly have thought that the Bible would have been the sort of book that man would care to read. [It is wonderful that not even the most carefully cultivated stupidity is secure against a flash of common sense now and again.] You must, if you would keep the Christian Sabbath properly, *come to church.*"

There! the cat is out of the bag at last, and Mr. Gibbon's real and fundamental objection to people shooting, driving, golfing, rowing, gardening, or walking in the fields on Sunday is that it keeps people away from church, and prevents them becoming customers of himself and his brother clerics. One can usually reckon on finding professional interest at the bottom of clerical concern for national welfare. As John Morley says, "all that they understand by national progress is a more undisputed ecclesiastical authority," and the present instance is no exception to the general rule. And in this matter history repeats itself curiously. The first legislation prohibiting certain games and amusements on Sunday was created on the express complaint of the clergy that these things kept people away from

church; and, although the surface excuses are different to-day, the real reason is the same as it always was. The chief difference is that the clergy of the fifth century were, in this matter, rather more straightforward than their descendants of the twentieth.

Yet, in all seriousness, one may venture to claim that the man who spends his day of rest in a garden, in the fields, or on the river, is spending Sunday in a healthier, cleaner, and therefore in the long run a more moral manner than if he attended church three times during the day, and wound up the evening with a species of amateur prayer meeting at home. There is no real rest or recuperation for the man or woman who has spent six days in a factory or an office to spend the seventh in a church—nothing healthy in it for either mind or body. The real rest for such as these is to get away into the fresh air, away from the crowd and face to face with nature, to drink in something of its freshness and spontaneity, and carry back something of its simplicity into our always demoralising city life. And those who are not in such need of fresh air may surely find in art gallery, reading room, museum, or concert hall more knowledge, more inspiration, and greater consolation for all the vexations and worry of life than can be found in any church or chapel in the United Kingdom.

Our daily papers have been pretty well filled of late with accounts of the evils of betting and intemperance. One London preacher, Dr. Clifford, has made the absurd statement that the cause of gambling is that people think labor ignoble, and crave for money. As though the average gambler ever thinks whether labor is noble or ignoble, and as though the most persistent gamblers are not often those who are without a craving for money as money.

The causes of both these evils are numerous, but certainly two powerful causes are the unhealthy conditions under which people live and labor and the lack of interest or variety about the average life. Both of these causes co-operate in producing a condition of the nervous system which imperatively demands some form of stimulant, and one man finds it in alcohol, another in gambling, and yet another in the excitement of a revivalist's tent or chapel.

Now, what does our English day of rest (!) do towards remedying this evil? Very little, and, so far as religion is concerned, nothing at all. Had the Churches their way, even the limited avenues for rational recreation that exist would soon be closed, and as it is they are striving to affix a certain disreputable air to Sunday enjoyments. Yet the Sunday might be a very powerful agent towards the diminution of both excessive drinking and gambling. There is to my mind no question that if this day were used as the occasion for introducing to people something of the artistic, literary, and *natural* side of life, fresh tastes might be created, vicious appetites weakened, and an altogether purer social life initiated. I do not imagine for a moment that this alone would convert society into an earthly paradise, but I do believe that it would go a long way in that direction. One has only to look at the crowds hanging round street corners waiting for public-houses to open, at boys, who are prevented by a religious council from using public gymnasiums and the like, skylarking in the streets and annoying passers-by, at other boys and girls whose Sundays are filled up with the eating of meals and attendance at church or chapel, and at adults who pass their day of rest in a state of semi-somnolence, to recognise how little the Sabbath does for the elevation of society. Spent as it is in the majority of cases, I venture to say that Sunday is the most degrading day of the week, and that as many bad habits are picked up on that day as on all the other days of the week put together.

And what prevents Sunday being properly used as a day of moral, intellectual, and physical recreation? Nothing but the professional interests of the clergy. It is the day upon which they do the bulk of their trading, and, as they know that in open competition their customers would desert them, upon that day all other places must so far as possible be closed. The poor sweetstuff seller must not take pence from children for his wares, but the parson may for that colossal swindle, the missionary box. The hawker must not cry his goods, but the parson may cry his by making the air hideous with the clangour of unmusical bells. To offer a tired people

the music of the great masters on Sunday in a concert hall is a sin, because someone is earning money by it; but it is not a sin for the parson to pay organist and singers, and earn *his* money on the Sabbath. Hypocrisy and humbug assume many forms, but surely the most detestable form of all is religious hypocrisy.

The clergy dread competition—that is the secret of all their opposition to the rationalising of Sunday. They know—none better—that, given full and proper opportunities to go elsewhere, church attendance would dwindle more rapidly than it does even now. Mr. Gibbon is shocked at seeing the fronts of churches “defaced and disgraced by the loud, lurid advertisements of devotional services with scarehead titles.” But what are the clergy to do? They must fill their places somehow, and with the clergy, as with a theatrical manager, the question is ultimately, What will draw a good audience? There is a difference in the nomenclature used, that is all. The parson calls it a congregation, the manager an audience. One calls the cash receipts an “offertory,” the other “the takings.” One says “Performance will start,” the other “Service will commence.” But they are both the same at bottom.

Mr. Gibbon himself calls upon God to save the Sabbath from destruction. I am pleased to hear of him doing this. When a man says, “God help me,” it is usually a sign of a funeral; and when the clergy can only call upon God for help it is a sign that they, too, are nearly played out. While they had strength, God was never called upon to induce people to attend church. They were forced there, or fined and imprisoned if they stayed away. The clergy can no longer force the people to attend church on Sunday; they can no longer inflict fines or imprisonment, although something of that kind is still done to petty shopkeepers and hawkers; they can only veil their real motives under a number of flimsy excuses, and in the end cry “God save Sunday!” God save it, indeed, for mankind is getting heartily sick of it. We have sacrificed long enough one-seventh of our lives to ignorance, cunning, and superstition; in the future we may perhaps learn to utilise it, if not for the glorification of God, at least for the benefit of man.

C. COHEN.

“Beyond the Tomb.”

AMONG the numerous changes which have taken place within the last few decades in connection with Christian polemics none is more manifest than the method of expounding the theory of a life “beyond the tomb.” Formerly it was taken for granted by Christian exponents that immortality was a fact about which there could be no question. Scientists, statesmen, and poets were cited to prove the reality of a future life. At the present time, however, it is admitted that science has nothing to say upon the subject, and that philosophy and experience are equally silent; emotion and conjecture are therefore relied upon to support the hypothesis that “death does not end all.” Now, while the emotions are most valuable when controlled by reason, their effects may be very unfortunate without such control. No doubt a desire obtains in many minds to know if life continues beyond the grave. But all attempts to ascertain what (if anything) lies “behind the veil” have been in vain. As Ingersoll truly said: “We cry aloud, and the answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word.” Notwithstanding this never-broken silence, the notion is still held that this life is not the be-all and end-all of human existence. The very men who in mundane affairs rely upon their reason, upon the question of a supposed life after death are satisfied with the promptings of sentiment inspired by a hope or desire which has probably been transmitted from ancient times, when nature was less understood than it is at present. Doubtless the pain caused in parting from beloved ones, and the wish to meet them again, engendered the hope for a future existence. But we know that in the realms of reality hopes and desires are not always gratified. In estimating, therefore, the value of the desire for immortality, it should

be remembered that the basic fact in real philosophy is that nothing should be accepted as actually true unless it can be proved to be so. A subject which is believed by anyone should not be dogmatically asserted as truth if the grounds for the assertion are merely conjecture based upon desire.

The above thoughts have been suggested to me through reading an article from the able pen of "J. B.," the regular contributor to the *Christian World*, which appeared in its issue of February 27. Under the heading of "Behind the Veil," he urges a strong plea in favor of the belief that there is something "beyond the tomb," although he confesses there is nothing known concerning what it is. Referring to those who have entered the portals of death, he says:—

"They were so completely one with us, so much at home in our midst. Their laughter is still in our ears, their light in their eye haunts us. They were more to us than all the world, and now.....! The journals are full of news, but of these there is no word. The earth is a Babel of noises; but on this one side the silence is absolute. Our planet rolls in space from end to end of its vast orbit; the solar system itself is sweeping, with us in it, toward an unknown bourne; but never are we carried within sight of that undiscovered country into which our beloved have passed! How well the heavens keep their secret! No, it is not the world's uproar that plays havoc with our nerves. It is its maddening silence, where we pant to hear a voice. There is no subject on which the teacher of to-day, who is supposed to have any message for his fellows, is more eagerly questioned than this, of what, for us and ours, lies behind the veil.....What, on the one side, lies beyond the millions of stars revealed by our telescopes, and, on the other, beyond the minutest visible open to our microscopes? We are left without a guess."

Now, here is a frank admission that, whatever *may* be in store for us after death, we *know* nothing about it. "We are left without a guess." Then why worry about an imaginary something of which we are entirely ignorant? Whatever exists in some other sphere which we cannot know is to us non-existent, and, therefore, it is of no concern for us. The belief based upon ignorance is like that of the untutored savage—the difference is only in degree. Both are caused through yielding to feeling minus adequate knowledge. The man whose mind is not warped by superstition should confine his attention to the known and the possibly knowable. Within the realms of reality he will find all that is necessary to enable him to make the best of this life, and to prepare for a future one, if one there be. Of the present existence we are certain; but whether we enter upon another when we have played our part in this we must die to find out. To me it appears reasonable to study what *is*, rather than to waste our time in conjectures upon what (possibly) *is not*. Let us learn all we can in regard to the great laws and mighty forces operating around and in us. These should be our guide in life. Goethe wisely said: "Man is not born to solve the problems of existence; but he must nevertheless attempt it, in order that he may know how to keep within the bounds of the knowable."

"J. B.," leaving the romantic field of imagination, approaches the domain of argument, and seeks to obtain support for his visionary notions from the facts of evolution. But here his reasoning is impaired by assumption and false conclusions. He states:—

"Evolution, for instance, gives us life as a perpetual ascent. Each grade of being takes in all that is beneath it, with something of its own added. Man, as we know him, sums up in himself the laws and forces of inorganic matter, the vital principles of vegetable and animal life, together with a whole higher world of his own. His organism, by its subtle magic, transmutes air and water, vegetable and animal, into its own superior form. Why should not this ascent continue? Why should not the inner economy of the human spirit contain, in its turn, a principle by virtue of which the essentials of the personal human life shall be lifted to a yet higher term, in a yet higher sphere? The argument gathers weight in proportion to the values which are being dealt with. If matter, as we now know, is indestructible, preserving its being through infinite changes of form, what is there in the nature of things to forbid our belief that its nobler partners, spirit and personality, are no exceptions to this rule

It is astonishing that such an accurate reasoner as "J. B." undoubtedly is when dealing with questions within his knowledge should exhibit such sophistry as he has done in the above paragraph. Does he not see that the theory of evolution has nothing to say about what may or may not happen to the individual after death? The conditions having changed, the results must be different. Besides, the link in the progress from a lower to a higher form of existence is broken at death. True, life in man is a perpetual ascent, but it is only while that life is associated with his organism. "Why," asks "J. B.," "should not this ascent continue?" For the obvious reason that after death man, as man, no longer exists. It would be interesting if "J. B." would say how "the personal human life shall be lifted to a yet higher term, in a yet higher sphere," when there is no personal human life in which the process can take place.

The fact that what we call matter is indestructible affords not the slightest argument in support of the theory that individual life continues "beyond the tomb." No doubt matter with its properties will continue to exist, and will serve other purposes which to us are quite unknown. But not only is matter indestructible, its energy is also indestructible, although it can be transformed. It is as impossible to separate the energy of the brain from its matter as it is to separate magnetism from the magnet. It can be transformed, but it remains, nevertheless, under some other form of energy, to be gathered up sooner or later for other purposes. What is called the soul in man is the sum of the actions of his nervous system. As to the theory that man's soul continues to exist as such, and as a whole, after the bodily structure which produced it has gone to pieces, there is absolutely no evidence *whatever* to support it. All we can say is that we know nothing at all about it. But it is more rational to infer that the supposed soul, being the outcome of the organism, will resolve itself into the constituent souls of the atoms which composed that body, to serve as raw material for further unknown operations.

It is urged that belief may obtain where certainty is not; and, in support of this allegation, it is said that we believe we shall see to-morrow, yet we cannot be certain. True, belief may exist where certainty is absent, but only as belief; and then, to make it reasonable, the belief must not be *opposed* to knowledge and experience, which belief in a life "beyond the tomb" certainly is. Of course, we are not absolutely certain that we shall see to-morrow, but our knowledge of natural laws, and our experience of their operations in the past, justify us in feeling certain that we shall.

The rational view of man is that he is a being possessing thought, mind, and intelligence. These are qualities of his material system, and upon it they depend, and by its condition are their operations controlled and regulated. All such operations are natural consequences, and, so far as we are aware, they are not known apart from the material organisation. What some folk call their spiritual nature we regard as the emotional part of the material being, upon which it always depends for its manifestation. Having no idea of the alleged supernatural, I believe that all existence is governed by natural law, and that it is our duty to learn the operations of that law, and the different results which follow the obedience or violation of it. Further, man must never fail to recognise that in proportion to the knowledge he possesses upon this point will be his ability to recognise the fulness of existence. This is a view of life that commends itself to my judgment. My desire is not for a life "beyond the tomb," but to acquire the ability to promote happiness as much as possible, and to diminish misery, on this side of the grave. We can form some idea of what the result would be of a widespread sympathy and goodwill founded purely upon a desire for the common good. We know, judging from experience, that, if these existed in a greater degree than they do, society would be superior to what it now is. Ample evidence is at hand to prove that by intelligence, unity, and reliance upon secular effort, the sum of human happiness can be increased, and the amount of suffering lessened, without any dependence on, or appeal to, any God. Rectitude and self-help are the hinges by which the door is opened to the increased comfort and welfare of modern life. There is an old proverb to the effect

that "Heaven helps those who help themselves"; but, if the people have the power to help themselves, they can leave heaven out of their calculations.

CHARLES WATTS.

Mr. Dooley upon Ethical Societies.

"PHWAT's this Ithical movemint that Oi rade about in England?" inquired Mr. Hennessey.

"Oi can harrudly till ye," replied Mr. Dooley. "The Ithicals don't know thimsilves yit. They've been at Ithics for the lasht twinty years; but they haven't sitted their principils; an' they're shtill discussin' av thim."

"Havn't sitted their principils!" exclaimed Mr. Hennessey. "D'ye mane to say that they vote Dimmercrat at wan iltion an' Ripublican the nixt?"

"No! ye fool," responded Mr. Dooley. "Oi wuzn't alludin' to their politics. Ithics are no guoide to politics; an' so the Ithicals take their politics riddy made from *Reynolds' Newspaper*. It's their Ithical principils that they havn't sitted; an' they're shtill dishcussin' their Shpicial Aims an' their Gin'ral Aims; an', with all their aimin', they don't seem to hit anythin'. Ye see, it's just loike this. Whin all the wurruld was haythin' the poor people didn't know phwat wuz roight an' phwat wuz wrong; an' so there wuz O'Ristippus an' O'Ristotle, an' a lot av other Macs an' O's, that mit together to discuss phwat wuz roight an' phwat wrong; an' whin they found it, they called it 'Ithics'; but, as they hadn't toime to foind out iverythin', they lift a lot av things unsitted, an' the Ithicals are shtill dishcussin' av thim."

"Isn't there the blissid Catholic Churruch, an' his Howliniss the Pope, to till thim phwat's roight an' phwat's wrong?" asked Mr. Hennessey. "How can the poor cratures till the wan from the other, with the Divil always at their ilbows, to lade thim astray?"

"Thru for ye," assented Mr. Dooley. "But the Ithicals are all hiritics, an' won't appale to his Howliniss. An' besides, they have to lurrin to do phwat's roight, bicause they've no prieshts to absolve thim if they do phwat's wrong."

"Do the Ithicals run any paper to air their notions?" asked Mr. Hennessey.

"Yis," said Mr. Dooley, "they do; but if ye inquire for their paper, ye'll have to ask the pidigree av any sheet they hand ye."

"The pidigree?" cried Mr. Hennessey. "Oi've hurrud av horses with pidigrees; but niver a newspaper. Ye're jowkin', shure, Misther Dooley."

"Sorra a bit," assured Mr. Dooley. "Oi'm tillin' ye the sowber thruth. Ye have to inquire the pidigree av the Ithical paper, to make shure ye git it. Ye see, it's loike this: it's always changin' its name, loike the camellia. At wan toime it wuz the *Ithical Wurruld*; until wan day wan av the Ithicals wuz oratin' in Hoyde Parruk, an', in a fit av intusiasm, he croid out: 'We've had Plutocracy an' Autocracy an' Theocracy; but phwat Oi say is, "Damn Ocracy."' An' so they changed the name av their paper to *Damin Ocracy*. But they found it didn't sell; so they called a meetin', to ask whoy people didn't buy it; an' the parruties there said it wuz on account av the name. They said it taught innocint little childrin to swear, an' a workin' man couldn't sind his woife to the bookshop to ask for a 'Damn' paper; an' the morrils av London were corruptid boy such a toitle bein' seen in the windows. An' so they looked up a new name, an' called the paper *Ithics*. But some people say the toitle is shtill wrong, an' they want to call it *Grievances*, because the paper doesn't consarn itsilf with Ithics at all, but is continilly harrupin' upon grievances av wan koind an' another, an' reminds ye av an owld woman with the rheumatics. An' so, Hinnessy, be shure ye inquire about the pidigree. Don't be put off with shpurious imitations, an' be shure the signature is an the box."

"Are the Ithicals agreed about anythin' in particular?" queried Mr. Hennessey.

"Will, yis!" remarked Mr. Dooley. "They're agreed about the four cardinal vartues. An' Oi need harrudly till a lurruned man loike yersilf, Hinnessy, that

wuz iducated in a hidge-school in Connemara, that the four cardinal vartues are *Phronesis*, *Andreia*, *Dikaiosyne*, an' *Sophrosyne*; an' if ye take the initials av these four vartues ye'll foind they make up the wurrud 'phads.' An' so if there are any *fads* runnin' loose in England ye may be shure that the Ithicals have got thim sthrong. The Ithicals are simply bubblin' over with schames for middlin' with things they don't undershtand, an' so increasin' the rates."

"Whoy do the Ithicals want to increase the rates?" asked Mr. Hennessey. "Are they rate-collectors; an' do they git a commission on thim?"

"No," said Mr. Dooley. "Oi don't know that they git anythin' out av the rates. But ye see the Ithicals are partly rich, an' partly poor. The rich live in flats, an' don't pay rates; an' the poor live in lodgin's an' don't pay rates; an' so they both agree to make the ratepayers shill out as much as possible. An' ivery Ithical has his own grand schame for realoisin' the millinium, at the xpinse av somebody ilse. It's a remarrukable thing, Hinnessy, how ginerous a man can be whin somebody ilse pays for the ginerosity. The latest thing they're croyin' for is an Ithical theater, where the nigger orators will deliver nothin' but orations on timperance; where the knockabout arrutists will assure the audience that they're not really hurrutin' wan another; where the ballet-girls will be careful to cover up their ligs; an' where ivery thurrud turrin will be a parson to prache a sarmon."

"An' who'll attind the performance at the Ithical theater?" inquired Mr. Hennessey.

"The imbeciles from the lunatic asoylums, an' the patients from the homes for inebriates, will be admitted free," explained Mr. Dooley.

"Thin there's no fear av *their* brains bein' softened," remarked Mr. Hennessey. "But who'll pay for this theater?"

"The ratepayers," replied Mr. Dooley. "But Misther Billy Sandhers is afraid the ratepayers will not roise to their opportunities, an' so he asks for some wilty philanthropist to walk up, and foind the money; so *there's* a chanst for yez, Hinnessy."

"Oi suppowse as the Ithicals follow the tachin's av the haythin, that they're did agin religion," said Mr. Hennessey.

"That's just where ye're wrong," said Mr. Dooley. "They claim that they're religious."

"How can they do that?" exclaimed Mr. Hennessey.

"Whoy! They claim to have found new manin's for iverythin'," responded Mr. Dooley. "Ye see they claim that riligion isn't riligion, but it's Morrility touched with Imotion."

"Morrility touched with Imotion?" cried Mr. Hennessey. "Phwat on airth is that?"

"Whoy," said Mr. Dooley, tapping himself on the forehead, "ye say a man's 'touched' whin he's lost his sines. Will thin, the Ithicals say that whin Morrility has lost its sines owin' to Imotion, thin it's 'Riligion.'"

"But they can't have riligion without the Saints an' the Blissid Vargin," objected Mr. Hennessey.

"That's where ye're wrong," rejoined Mr. Dooley. "The Ithicals venerate the Blissid Vargin an' the howly Saints. Wan av their branches is called the 'St. Pancras Ithical Sassiety' to remoind thim av the mirits av the iver-blissid marthyr St. Pancras. Wan av their hymns begins:—

Jews were wrought to cruil madniss,
Mary shtood the cross besoid.

An' another av their hymns is about the Howly Churruch:—

Wan Howly Churruch av man appears
Through ivery age an' race."

"But if they're hiritics, phwat do the Ithicals want with a hymn-book?" queried Mr. Hennessey.

"Will," replied Mr. Dooley, "they don't call it a hymn-book. They shtoyle their hymns 'Ithical Songs'; for it's a shtandin' rule av Ithicalism to call sicular things boy a religious name, an' religious things boy a sicular name, on the principil that 'ye can always alter the marmalade boy changin' the label on the jar.' For inshtance, whin they found a Sassiety, they call it a

'Churruch'; but whin they prache a sarmon on a tixt av the Boible, such as 'Am Oi me Brother's Keeper?' or 'To him that hath shall be given,' thin they don't call it a sarmon, but a 'licture.' An' so they go round callin' things boy wrong names, an' puzzlin' plain people. An' they have great schames for disicratin' the churruches. Oi will rade to ye phwat Father McCabe wants to do. He says, says he: 'The churruches an' places av divotion will no longer be dicked with crucifixes an' images av the saints [the infidil villain!], but with arrutistic reproductions av the inixhaustible beauties av nature, an' the loife av man [that's the ladies, Hinnessy! God bliss 'em]. Bitween the lofty inwreathed pillows av some great gothic cathedral, stately palms an' graceful bananas will remind us av the creative powers av the Trowpics [that's wan av the gods av the haythin, Hinnessy]. Undher the windows in great aquaria there will be beautiful forrums av midusa an' siphonophora [that's the soientific name for the say-sarpint, Hinnessy], an' the many-tinted corrals an' shtar-fishes. The place av the hoigh althar [holy saints prisarve us!] will be occupoied by assthronomic symbols, which will illusthrate the suprimacy av the law av substance in comic move-mints.' An' the Ithicals howld Bible-classes, inshtead av radin' the books av the haythin that furrust wrote about Ithics. An' they talk about Ithical cirimonies, an' Ithical sacrimints, an' Ithical sarvices."

"Phwat do the Ithicals throy to make thimsilves such apes av religion for?" queried Mr. Hennessey.

"To make Ithics aisy for Kirristyuns," replied Mr. Dooley. "They think that if they make Ithicalism as much loike religion as possible, the Arruchbishop av Cantherbury will go to sleep wan noight as a Kirristyun an' wake up nixt mornin' an' Ithical."

"An' is the Arruchbishop loikely to do anythin' av the koind?" asked Mr. Hennessey.

Mr. Dooley placed his forefinger by the side of his nose, and winked one eye.

C. EGAN.

The Bible Creation Story.—VIII.

We have now to compare the Bible account of creation with geology. As we have already seen, the word "day" is interpreted by Bible reconcilers as signifying a long period of time comprising many thousands of years. By this interpretation these harmonisers appear to imagine that the statements in Genesis are brought into harmony with science. Such, however, is very far from being the case. For, even if it be assumed that the creative "day" represents a geological age, the Bible account is as far off reconciliation as ever, and, sad to relate, Christian misrepresentations have all been made in vain. This can very easily be demonstrated.

In comparing the Creation story with geology, Christian advocates first carefully ignore the calling into existence of the flora, and then represent the Bible account as recording the creation of the fauna in the order in which some of the genera of each class of the animal kingdom are proved by their fossil remains to have existed on this globe. A notable example of this method of misrepresentation is furnished by an article which appeared in the February number of a certain Christian Evidence journal, in which the writer, who is also the editor, undertakes to prove that "the first chapter of Genesis is all true, and even scientifically true," and that "the author of Genesis i. is strictly accurate, and in complete accord with modern scientific discovery in the field of geology." The writer then, for the purpose of comparison, places in parallel columns what, he says, is the "order of creation," both as given by geologists and by the writer of Genesis. This remarkable document reads as follows:—

ORDER OF CREATION. (Geology.)	ORDER OF CREATION. (Genesis.)
1. The Invertebrate.	1. The Invertebrate.
2. Fishes.	2. Fishes.
3. Reptiles, large and small, and marsupials.	3. Reptiles, large and small, and marsupials.
4. Fowl.	4. Fowl.
5. Mammal.	5. Mammal.
6. Man.	6. Man.

In concluding his article, the writer says: "The way the account of Moses harmonises with geology is marvellous and complete. Nobody but an inspired seer could possibly have been the author of Genesis i." Every reader will, no doubt, admit that the agreement between the two columns is certainly "marvellous and complete," as, indeed, was bound to be the case, for the second column was copied from the first without any reference to the statements in Genesis. As a matter of fact, neither column correctly represents the "order of creation" to which it is said to refer, though the one relating to geology may, in one sense, be regarded as fairly accurate.

In order to compare the two "orders of creation," we must first see exactly what are the Bible statements with respect to the calling into existence of the animal and vegetable kingdoms. These statements are as follows:—

Third Day (Gen. i. 11): "And Elohim said, Let the earth put forth grass, herb-yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit after its kind, wherein is the seed thereof, upon the earth: and it was so."

Fifth Day (Gen. i. 20): "And Elohim said, Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let fowl fly above the earth on the face of the expanse of the heavens."

Sixth Day (Gen. i. 24): "And Elohim said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after its kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after its kind: and it was so."

According to the foregoing Bible statements, every variety of vegetation, from the smallest herb to the largest tree, was created on the Third day; next, all the orders, genera, and species of the water and air populations, both large and small, were made on the Fifth day; lastly, every kind of land animal, large and small, was formed on the Sixth day. There is not the faintest suggestion that a single member of either the animal or vegetable kingdoms was called into existence at any other time. It is, on the contrary, clearly implied in the narrative that all forms of life were created on the days specified, and none at any later period; that is to say, a small number of every genus and species was created, and these were commanded to "be fruitful and multiply," and in time to fill the earth. The phrase, "after its kind," means, of course, some of every species. Every form of life was thus brought into being by Special Creation; Evolution is necessarily excluded. The order and work of creation, then, according to Genesis, is as follows:—

Third day: Every kind of vegetation, including grass, herbs, and fruit trees.

Fifth day: Fishes and fowl; that is—all the water-population and all the air population.

Sixth day: All the land population, including wild beasts, cattle, and "creeping things."

Examples of what the Biblical writer meant by "fowl" and "creeping things" are given in Lev. xi. 13-19; 22, 29). Amongst the former are the eagle, vulture, kite, falcon, raven, ostrich, owl, pelican, stork, and heron; amongst the latter are the locust, grasshopper, weasel, mouse, lizard, and chameleon. Insects are not included among the animals created; they appear to have been overlooked.

Before going farther it should be noticed that the Fishes and the Birds were not only created on the same day, but at the same instant. The command was: "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let fowl fly above the earth." We cannot do otherwise than suppose that the uncreated fishes and sea-monsters would at least have the decency to wait until the Creator had finished speaking before rushing incontinently into existence. Thus, all the inhabitants of the water and the air were created simultaneously, and immediately after their creation they were blessed together (Gen. i. 22). In the same way, all the land population, man excepted, was created simultaneously. The Bible order of the creation of the animal kingdom is therefore: (1) Fish (including Invertebrates and "sea-monsters") and Fowl; (2) Mammals and Reptiles.

These two stages of creation our Christian Evidence editor has twisted into five. According to this Bible reconciler, there was, first, a creation of Invertebrates; later, a creation of Fishes; later still, a creation of Reptiles and Marsupials; still later, a creation of Fowl; latest of all, a creation of Mammals. The concocter of

this "order of creation" knew perfectly well that he was perverting the Scriptures, in whose inspiration and truth he professes to believe, and he knew also that he was deceiving his ignorant and credulous readers. The object of these perversions was, of course, to make it appear that the statements in Genesis are in complete agreement with the facts proved by geology.

Numerous illustrations of the manifold Christian misrepresentations of the Bible story may be found in the work by the Rev. Dr. Kinns on *Moses and Geology*. The following is a sample. Speaking of the creation of the Fishes, the author says (p. 241):—

"Notice particularly that Moses does not say that this was the first dawn of animal life, but simply that the command had gone forth that the waters should bring forth abundantly.....This passage seems to relate to a great increase in the number of genera of marine animals, and also to the increase of insects and of reptiles, both of sea and land."

The words in the passage do *not* relate, nor even seem to relate, to a "great increase" in the number of the genera of the classes of animals named by Dr. Kinns. They describe in the very plainest terms the *origination*, once for all, of *all* the genera of one class—the water population—and of that class only. The writer of the narrative (who was *not* Moses) does not, of course, say that no forms of animal life had been created before the Fifth day, for the simple reason that he records the calling into existence of the other classes later on—on the Sixth day. Moreover, the non-existence of animal life prior to the record of its creation is plainly implied.

Now, assuming for the sake of argument that the word "day" in the Bible Creation story was intended to signify a geological age, there was, according to that story, first an age or "day" during which nothing but vegetation flourished; next, there was a vast period of time during which Birds and Fishes were the earth's sole inhabitants; later on there was an age when four-footed beasts and creeping things of every kind sprang suddenly into existence, followed (during the same era) by man. Bearing these Biblical "facts" in mind, we will now see what was the real order of "creation" from "the beginning" to the Human period, as revealed by witnesses that cannot lie—the fossiliferous rocks.

ABRACADABRA.

(To be concluded.)

Acid Drops.

MR. GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE's long connection with Free-thought entitles him to a respectful hearing whenever he has anything to say upon this particular topic. Writing in the *Bradford Truth Seeker*, he falls foul of the National Secular Society's description of Secularism as teaching that "Conduct should be based on reason and knowledge," on the ground that it is not distinctive, as Archbishop Whately declares that to be the tenet of Protestantism. It is, of course, not new to us to find Christians defining their faith so that it may not conflict with modern tendencies; but we must confess to a feeling of surprise that Mr. Holyoake should tacitly concede that Protestantism, any more than other forms of religious belief, is based upon reason and knowledge. We should have thought that a veteran like Mr. Holyoake would have been well upon his guard against these verbal subterfuges of apologetic Christians.

Mr. Holyoake's definition of Secularism, as specifying "a quality by which the thing defined can be known from all others," is "The improvement of this life by material means." We are all most attached to our own offspring, and are apt to discover in them beauties not quite so patent to other eyes; and, while we have no quarrel with this definition, we would simply point out that it is both inadequate and open to the same objection brought against the Secular Society's definition. Inadequate because, unless the attempt to improve this life by material means is based upon reason and knowledge, disaster or failure is almost certain to ensue. And it is certainly not more distinctive, since this method is adopted, more or less, by all Churches and religious organisations, notably by such as the Salvation Army. Mr. Holyoake's further declaration, that Secularism teaches that it is "Good to do good, whether there be other good or not; the good of the present life is good, and it is good to seek that good," strikes us as a somewhat bewildering specimen of question-begging alliteration, which conveys but little solid counsel to such as read it. The real distinction between Secularism and Christianity lies in the complete exclusion by

the former of all forms of supernaturalism. When we have got beyond that, Secularists and Christians, seeing that they are both constructed in the same manner, and open to the influence of exactly the same natural forces, necessarily have much in common.

Mr. Holyoake strikes a somewhat ungenerous note in writing of "later years" when "other leaders" arose and Free-thought dwindled into mere church fighting to the neglect of teaching that the "sphere of Secularism is Moralism, whose text is utility and human welfare in this life," and in expressing a hope that Secularism may be *restored* to its rightful place in public opinion. It is certainly news that Free-thought has dwindled into "mere church fighting," and also that the teaching of utility and human welfare in this life has been neglected. Charles Bradlaugh, who led the Free-thought party for so many years, could hardly be accused of having narrowed his energies down to mere church fighting, and the present printed "Immediate Practical Objects" of the N. S. S. seem to us a sufficient reply to all such lamentations. What Mr. Holyoake has evidently lost sight of is that the multiplication of other agencies, Sunday Societies, and the like, has relieved the N. S. S. of the necessity of continuously advocating certain ideas, and allowed it to concentrate upon other aspects of Secular work. And these other agencies are very largely the result of the strenuous teaching of the N. S. S. that human welfare in this life is the sole thing worth striving for. As for the estimate people in the mass may form of Secularism, that is a matter about which we are little concerned. It is well if they form a high estimate; but if they do not our task is simply to keep on with the work and trust for better days. Public opinion is the bugbear of little minds, but it will never rob a sturdy thinker of a night's sleep or cause him an hour's uneasiness.

Very usefully Dr. Sanday has defined in a recent discourse the respective spheres of the Higher and the Lower Criticism. Briefly, he said, the latter deals with the smaller questions of words and texts: its problem is to determine, as nearly as may be, what the author really wrote. The Higher Criticism deals with the larger questions of authorship, date, sources, composition, literary, and historical character; its problem is to set each writing in its place among other writings, to determine what are its relations, internal and external, to the surrounding literature and history of the time when these writings appeared. Naturally, for the general public the questions of the Higher Criticism must have a greater interest than those of the Lower; they are less technical, and they touch points of greater moment.

Whatever the results of the Lower Criticism may be, they are not thought likely to affect in any degree significant points of doctrine or practice. "But," says Dr. Sanday, "when we pass over to the Higher Criticism the case is altered. Here far larger interests are at stake. Questions of date and authorship, that might be indifferent in themselves, become serious through the facts which depend upon them. We say that Christianity is a historical religion; that means that it rests to a large extent on historical evidence, and it is the function of the Higher Criticism to determine the exact nature and weight of that evidence. For this reason the process is felt to be one of no light responsibility."

That being so, it is interesting to note Dr. Sanday's acknowledgment that there is, in this connection, "a spirit of enterprise and experiment abroad." He does not think it has yet attained mature results, but he says "it is actively at work"—an assurance that can hardly sound otherwise than ominous to orthodox ears.

Prebendary Wace, D.D., waxed quite warm at the recent Conference of the Bible League at Oxford, when the question of modern criticism of the Bible was introduced. He adjured everyone who had any influence in the matter "to think once, to think twice, to think thrice, before he allowed himself and others to be persuaded that the uniform belief of the Jewish and Christian Churches for nearly three thousand years had been proved—not merely in details, but in its broad, substantial outlines—to be utterly wrong by some modern German professors."

Here we see that two rather divergent authorities, like Dr. Sanday and Dr. Wace, are agreed that the Higher Criticism does, indeed, affect matters of great importance to the Christian faith, and is not mainly concerned with minor points, as many preachers seem anxious to assure their flocks.

At this Oxford Conference Prebendary Webb-Peploe appeared to be specially disturbed by the disposition of the modern critics to throw overboard the historicity of many parts of the Old Testament, notwithstanding their recorded citation and obvious acceptance by Jesus Christ. He mentioned as a curious fact that in the Old Testament the expressions, "Thus said the Lord" or "God said" or "God spoke," occurs no fewer than 1,904 times. Naturally, he

wanted to know whether these expressions carried no weight with them in the minds of the modern critics.

Professor Burrows admitted that the historical position of the Bible was now being attacked systematically with all the modern aids of language and literature. There was great uneasiness. During the last twenty years the progress of German theology had made vast strides. It had, in fact, become fashionable.

Archdeacon Taylor, preaching recently at Liverpool on the Higher Criticism, pointed out that some of the later critics distinguish between the New Testament and the Old. But, said he, the New Testament rests on the Old. Every book of the Old rests on the preceding, from Malachi to Genesis. Law, prophets and Psalms, miracles, history and prophecy, interpenetrate and are inextricably bound up one with the other, and each with all. They stand or fall together. They may not be got rid of by dissection and rejection in piecemeal, nor can the Old Testament be separated from the New.

In *The Messages of the Prophets and Priestly Historians*, one of the "Messages of the Bible" series, the results of scientific investigation are so far accepted that the writer, John E. McFadyen, M.A., admits that the earlier Bible historians "cared more for idea than for fact," and further says that "this tendency grew and was exaggerated in later times into a positive indifference to fact." Yet he concludes that the "believing man" will find his faith quickened and rekindled by reading prophetic and priestly historians who were positively indifferent to fact. After all, this quite agrees with the conclusion that faith and fact have little in common.

These pronouncements are worth recording as showing the present attitude of the Christian Church in regard to a movement the progress of which continues to arouse the utmost apprehension among the more discerning of the faithful.

The Bishop of Southampton has been airing his views about hymns. I like this Bishop. True, I have not the pleasure of his acquaintance, neither am I filled with reverential awe, like Dr. Johnson, at the mere mention of a Bishop. But our views are alike, and this is why I like him. You attend service on Sunday, and as likely as not you will find a lot of healthy, happy people shouting lustily in favor of being translated to the "Jerusalem above." This sort of thing he objects to. Just imagine the fever many people would be in if the wishes they express in certain hymns were suddenly realised.—*Echo*.

It is not so easy as it looks, perhaps, to combine the functions of soul-saver and Company promoter. This, at any rate, must be the conviction of the Rev. A. A. Barret, of Holy Trinity, Claygate, who, after figuring as the promoter of eight public Companies under the pseudonym of Alfred Allen, has now made his final appearance in the Kingston Bankruptcy Court.

Another Evangelist gone wrong! Frank Evans Kessel, a leading Evangelist of East Grinstead, was brought before the police-court of that town, the Rev. Crawford presiding, charged with stealing a pair of boots value twenty-two shillings and sixpence. Sentence, two months' hard labor.

At Highgate, recently, a child of seven years of age was so neglected by her mother that she nearly died of starvation. She was rescued by an inspector of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Probably those dear ravens who fed Elijah are too old and infirm to get to Highgate as quickly as a mere man.

Fresh cases of plague are occurring at Sydney every day. Two actresses have died there of the disease. Cholera is raging in Canton and its neighborhood, and has carried off Commandant Bair, of the British warship *Britomart*, besides numbers of Chinese. Providence is apparently endeavoring to diffuse these blessings impartially among Christians and heathens alike.

Some people are advocating the use of prayer as a precaution against small-pox. Why don't they pray all the time against going to bed? More people die in bed than anywhere else.

Providence was too deep in the calculations of the number of hairs on all our heads to notice such an incident as the fall of a young girl into a tank of vitriol at an Aberdare tin-plate works last week.

The wholesale slaughter of thousands of sea-gulls for millinery purposes continues. The eagle eye of Providence can only see sparrows fall.

At the annual meeting of the Cancer Hospital the chairman alluded to the generosity of a titled gentleman who had given a thousand pounds towards a stipend endowment for a

chaplain for the unfortunate patients. Considering that the hospital badly needs funds through the great increase in the prevalence of this truly awful disease, the chaplain had better occupy himself exclusively with petitioning the Throne of Grace to mitigate this special form of its loving kindness.

The tower of a "house of God" at Hutton Bushel, near Scarborough, was struck the other Sunday evening by lightning, and wrecked. About half a ton of *débris* fell with a great crash on to the roof. Perhaps the watchful care of the One Above was displayed in the fact that no one was injured, but it might also have been extended to the preservation of the fabric erected to his honor and glory.

The spirit-rapping fraternity are being dealt with by the hand of the law in Prussia. Frau Rotha and four other leading lights in Berlin spiritist circles have been arrested on the charge of deception at a *séance*. After pretended messages from deceased persons, flowers began to rain on the people present. The police at once seized Frau Rotha, and found flowers and fruit on her person, together with an ingenious mechanism. It is believed that raids will also be made on the Christian Scientists. The Emperor is anxious to repress these faith-healers, and has already prohibited their appearance at Court.

A Polish priest has been dragged off to prison by Russian soldiers for refusing to mention the Czar in his prayers. That priest is now, in all probability, invoking the King of Kings to bestow all the plagues of Egypt on the Emperor of All the Russias.

The Spanish Government intends to suppress ten bishoprics, ten seminaries, and a hundred canonries. The Spanish ambassador at the Vatican resigned rather than bring such proposals before the Pope. His successor has been appointed, and it is expected that the proposals will be carried into effect.

The Italian clergy do not always meet with popular support, although they have recently overthrown a Government and shipwrecked a Divorce Bill. Addressing a huge crowd of people assembled together for the solemn unveiling of a statue of St. Dominic, Bishop Maiello delivered a fiery oration against the proposed legalisation of divorce, and invited the people to follow him in shouting "Long live the Church! Away with divorce!" To his surprise, however, the working men, who were present in large numbers, replied by shouting "Long live Socialism! Success to divorce! Down with the priests!" In the scenes of confusion that ensued the clergy had some difficulty in escaping, and the Bishop was glad to be driven away in his carriage as fast as possible amidst vehement groanings and hissings.

Besides attacks on Jesuits in Spain during the recent riots, a religious procession of children was broken up. Anarchic violence of this kind seems, however, to be a result of the Spanish character, rather than of genuine Freethought based on reason. The passionate excesses to which Southern races are prone provoke reaction, and are calculated to rivet the chains of superstition more firmly than ever around the necks of the victims of priestcraft, because religion then appears to be the only security for law and order.

Some twenty centuries ago Almighty God chortled about the blessings of poverty and the infamy of riches. To-day the tendency is for the rich to get richer, and the poor poorer. Perhaps this is owing to the fact that his Almightiness came to grief by being nailed to two pieces of wood with three ten-penny nails.

Enormous sums of money are to be spent at the Coronation of Albert Edward Guelph. When the King of Kings entered Jerusalem the sole decorations were palm leaves, which were less expensive than "Kruger's ticklers."

Although the alleged Founder of the Christian Superstition was an insolvent beggar, some of his devoted followers are familiar with finance. Pope Leo XIII. looks after the Pontifical treasure himself, and has managed to form a reserve-fund from the income known as Peter's Pence, which brings in £1,500,000 a year. Blessed be ye poor is a fine sentiment, eh Papa Pecci?

This is enough to make Judas Iscariot turn in his grave. He sold the original Salvation Army, including its Managing Director, for thirty bob. We are not surprised that he "went on the burst" afterwards.

The present Pope has one of his earlier works entered on the list of prohibited books. He wrote the volume in 1874 when he was Archbishop of Perugia. It is on "The Very Sacred Blood of the Holy Virgin." The Censors smelt heresy in the work, and it is still in the Index; but the author's name has been removed, so that people may not be reminded of the awkward fact that the man who is now supposed to be infallible once went astray in doctrine so

seriously as to call forth the condemnation of the Church of which he is now the head.

The newspapers say that the Pope has ordered his tomb. His Holiness had better order another for the Christian religion.

A floating church and hospital, belonging to the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, has arrived at Yarmouth. She is provided with gear for trawling. The dear old gospel of Christ always runs in harness with the Mammon of unrighteousness.

It is proverbially difficult to extract blood from a stone, but those uncivilised brigands in Eastern Europe have accomplished this difficult feat with the unwilling assistance of the American Christians.

A new edition of George Muller's Autobiography has been published. We do not know precisely how many editions have been printed, but very many thousands are in circulation. Every child used to have a copy given him on leaving the Bristol Orphanage, and the book always sold freely. These factors for publicity, and the constantly recurring paragraphs in the religious journals, have always been ignored by the credulous creatures who still believe in answer to prayer.

"Father" Dolling has been airing his views about Church and Dissent. As regards the Great Lying Church of England, he frankly admits that "she fails in her work for two reasons"—the first being "because she is tied and bound by a system which admits of no rearrangement of incomes." He points out that a little town like Winchester has more established soul-doctors in it than populous Portsmouth, and that the City of London—all warehouses and offices—has more churches and clergy than the great London boroughs. What does "Father" Dolling expect? Is he only beginning to find out that soul-saving is a profession?

Some of the clergy are clamoring for the multiplication of bishoprics. If the proposed new "Fathers-in-Gawd" are to be as well paid as the present holders, we can quite understand the cause of the excitement.

The Church of Rome, with its celibate clergy, has an advantage over its Anglican sister-in-law. A pound a week will keep an ordinary priest. Unfortunately, celibacy means, as Horace Smith long ago pointed out, "a vow a man takes that he will enjoy none but other men's wives."

The Early Christians believed in a community of property. This may account for the fact that one cannot go into any hotel or boarding-house in a Christian country without finding the touching text framed and hanging in a conspicuous position: "The proprietor is not responsible for any articles left in the bedrooms."

An amusing story is told of a pious young imbecile who occupied his leisure hours in defending the impregnable rock of the Christian superstition against the assaults of the wicked sceptics. He quoted from that "large infidel," Omar Khayyam, those lines commencing:—

O Thou, who did'st with pitfall and with gin
Beset the road I was to wander in—

and then gravely proceeded to argue that Omar meant the "unsweetened" sold at all the pubs.

The average liar, who lolls on his cushions at church on Sunday and confesses himself a miserable sinner, would start a libel action if called one on Monday.

A story—piquant enough, but probably apocryphal—is now being told at the expense of the Broad Church. A latitudinarian Dean, it is said, whose thirst for information makes him the dread of the society in which he moves, recently catechised one of the Siamese Princes about the religion of Siam. The Prince replied that it was Buddhist. "Yes," replied the Dean, "I know that Buddhism is the religion of the common people. But what is the religion of the upper and educated classes?" "Ah!" replied the Prince, with an engaging smile, "we are what you call Broad Church. We profess to believe, and do not."

The eclipse of faith among Anglo-Indians is one of the subjects of lament in a recently-published work, called *Faith and Life in India*, by Robert Lee Lacey. The author says: "The feature of Anglo-Indian life which strikes the Christian man as the most ominous of all is the irreligion which obtains in all sections of society." He asserts that this, "more than all things else, menaces the stability of our rule in India," but fails to show why and how. He says it "opposes itself, directly or indirectly, to the advance of Christianity," which is intelligible enough, though not, from one point of view, in any way reprehensible. "Behind nearly all the adverse criticisms of the Christian propaganda in India, especially by

English people, there is the same story of divorce from the religion of the old country—a divorce effected in the shortest space of time by hundreds of otherwise fine men, and invariably attended with disastrous results." The "otherwise fine men" might dispute the allegation as to disastrous results.

Sir Henry Burdett, after careful investigation, arrives at the conclusion that the cost of managing the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Church Missionary Society is "excessive and out of all proportion." This is no new discovery. It has been patent to many people for a long time past. Apart from any discussion as to the utility of the objects aimed at by these Societies, it has long been a scandal that the money subscribed to advance them should, in so large a degree, be diverted to the retention of unnecessarily large staffs and the payment of lavish general expenses. There are always plenty of sky-pilots on the look-out for nice "soft jobs," and these Societies liberally meet the want. But we have no sympathy for the subscribers.

A short time ago (says a prelate of the Church of England) I was visiting some friends at Clevedon whom I met at San Remo, and we were talking over the days spent there. A certain lady of rank had lately died. I happened to say that I knew her well, and that she always attended my ministry at San Remo. A lady present said: "Ah, yes—poor lady!—she was always known to be a person of weak intellect."

Rev. J. Morgan Gibbon has "often noticed, stuck in the front of places of worship, loud, lurid advertisements of sermons with flaming headlines." He asks, Is Christianity such an insipid thing that it requires to be made enticing and palatable? We should say that apparently it is, judging by the wails of the sky-pilots at the absence from places of worship of vast multitudes of the population.

Bible-kissing in the law-courts is well on the way to discontinuance. An indication of the growing disfavor with which it is regarded may be found in the fact that Sir Francis Jeune and Mr. Justice Barnes have thought it well to order the following notice to be put up in their Courts respecting the swearing of witnesses: "If any person to whom an oath is administered desires to swear with uplifted hand in the form and manner in which an oath is usually administered in Scotland, he or she is permitted to do so. The following form of oath may be used: 'I swear by Almighty God that I will speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.'"

All the same, the general requirement of a simple affirmation would be better still. Invocations of "Almighty God" might with decency be dispensed with in the Divorce Court, at any rate.

The condition of rural society in some parts of Southern Europe, where the Roman Catholic Church has long reigned with almost unquestioned authority, seems to be deplorable in the extreme. The country towns of Sicily, for example, are characterised by an intellectual inertia and a social degradation which are almost incredible. They mostly look much as they must have looked three hundred years ago. One of them, with twenty thousand inhabitants, has neither a newspaper nor a bookseller. Compulsory education is supposed to be the law of the land, but the law is virtually a dead letter. Both the clergy and the landowners are opposed to it.—*Christian World*.

Dr. Guinness Rogers, opening an "Ancient Merchant" course of lectures at the Dutch Church, Austin Friars, selected "Rationalism" as his subject. Speaking of knowledge, he said that of the mysteries of human affection, of the forces of human purpose and resolution, of all that belonged to the empire of life, it knew nothing. This kind of statement may suit "ancient merchants," but to educated and thoughtful minds it is merely the reckless exaggeration natural to a pompous and self-conceited preacher who feels licensed to say anything that will please a pious audience. Of our own feelings and affections, as of our sensations, we have more direct and certain knowledge than of anything else. With the forces of human purpose and resolution we are fully acquainted from personal experience and the wider experience embodied in history. To say that science, after all its triumphs in saving human life and in dealing in innumerable ways with vital phenomena, knows nothing of all that belongs to the empire of life is—well, the kind of truth in which certain Christian preachers revel, and on which Christianity bases itself.

There is such a dearth of candidates for ordination that the Church Pastoral Aid Society has decided to establish an "Ordination Fund" to help "godly young men" to enter the ministry. Prayer and faith are not sufficient to keep up the supply without the potent aid of ready cash.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

IN consequence of his illness all Mr. Foote's lecturing engagements have been cancelled or postponed. Immediate notice will be given when he is able to resume his platform work.

To Correspondents.

- CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—March 16, Athenæum Hall. April 6, Sheffield; 13, Bradford; 20, Glasgow; 27, morning, Stanley Hall, London, N.—Address, 24 Carminia-road, Balham, London, S.W.
- C. COHEN'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—March 16, Porth; 23 and 30, Athenæum Hall. April 13, Manchester; 20, Birmingham Labor Church; 27, afternoon, Victoria Park; evening, Stepney.—Address, 241 High-road, Leyton.
- T. HOPKINS.—Miss Vance has forwarded your humorous letter with enclosure. The Friday you saw Mr. Foote must have been the very last day he was standing up against the influenza before dropping into the doctor's hands.
- AMICUS.—Thanks for your good wishes, and the proof of them.
- M. CHRISTOPHER.—You were always one of our steadfast friends.
- W. C. MIDDLETON, veteran North Shields Freethinker, and one of our oldest friends in the North of England, writes: "I am sorry to see you are ill, and hope the friends will rally to your aid and enable you to take the rest you require."
- E. COTTRELL.—You need not advise Mr. Foote to "cheer up." He is not prone to the dumps. But he will follow your advice as far as possible and "take care" of himself a little more in future.
- A. WEBBER.—We had an invitation from friend Voisey in your town (Dartmouth). It was very good of him, and he would have done his best to make us comfortable. But we should only have been a nuisance to any host in our wretched condition; besides, for certain business reasons, we had to be somewhere within easy travelling distance of London, in case of necessity. Thanks for your kind letter.
- W. W. PEARCE wishes his purse were longer, in view of the "pleasure and benefit" he has derived from our "writings and lectures."
- A. RUSHTON hopes we shall gather fresh strength at the seaside, and return to continue what he is pleased to call our "noble work"—
- Still achieving, still pursuing,
With a heart for any fate.
- J. OSCAR.—Pleased to have your sympathetic letter. We regret to hear that you also have suffered from the superstition and bigotry of others.
- JOHN CAPON, in sending a subscription, wishes he could make the shillings pounds, and hopes we shall derive as much benefit from it as he has derived from hearing our lectures.
- JAMES JUNIOR.—You ask whether a householder, not a church-goer, helps in any way whatever to support the clergy. Not directly, of course, unless he happens to pay Church Rates, which are not universally abolished, or to pay tithes. But indirectly every citizen helps to support the clergy, because all the revenues of the Church of England are held upon a statutory tenure, and it is competent for Parliament to divert those revenues into any other channels it pleases. What the nation, through Parliament, can do as it likes with, is the nation's property. The Church is only a temporary trustee. It must also be borne in mind that all registered places of worship are exempted from rates and taxes. This, in itself, is a large public contribution to the maintenance of religion.
- H. PERCY WARD writes: "I am exceedingly sorry to read of your illness. I sincerely hope that your recovery will be speedy and complete. You have, indeed, been overwhelmed with a sea of troubles during the past few years. No one more earnestly wishes than I that you may successfully weather the storm and reach, with uninjured timbers, the port of health."
- C. D. STEPHENS says: "I hope you will nurse yourself up well, and not overwork yourself again in a hurry. You have repeatedly proved your claim to the generosity of the Secular party, though your modesty has not allowed you to put it forward, and I think that the least your friends could do would be to make it possible for you to take a much-needed rest."
- C. MASCALL.—Thanks for your help "to keep things moving." We have, indeed, suffered a great deal lately from what you call "the cussedness" of things. But we hope to win all along the line in the end.
- D. FRANKEL.—We wish the Walthamstow effort all success.
- OWING to Mr. Foote's absence from London, letters that arrived at the *Freethinker* office on Tuesday stand over for acknowledgment or reply till next week.
- JOHN HUGHES.—Thanks for your wish that Mr. Foote will soon be himself again. Your cheque for the Neale Fund was duly received, and we believe it was acknowledged as soon as we were able to do so after the first brunt of our illness. We are writing away from the file of the *Freethinker*, and cannot therefore be quite certain, but we will look into the matter on our return to London and rectify the omission if any has been committed.
- C. J. PEACOCK, sending cheque to Mrs. Foote, says: "I hope that those who, like me, have benefited by Mr. Foote's propaganda will, by liberal contributions, sustain him in his arduous fight against the majority, who, according to a great authority, are always in the wrong."
- J. MARTIN.—Thanks.

THE FOOTE CONVALESCENT FUND.—Subscriptions to this Fund are all gifts to Mrs. Foote, to be expended by her at her absolute discretion in the restoration of her husband's health, and in defraying various expenses caused by his illness. The following (second list) have been received:—John Capon, 10s.; Pauline Hull, £1; J. Attley, £1; J. W. Griffiths, 5s.; Mrs. Cottrell, 1s.; Miss Cottrell, 6s.; E. Cottrell, 1s.; Goddard, 6d.; Dodge, 6d.; Friend, 6d.; Cumes, 6d.; A. Webber, 5s.; T. H. G. (Glasgow), 10s.; T. W. Roberts, 2s. 6d.; W. W. Pearce, 9s.; A. Rushton, £1; Gustav Roleffs, 5s.; C. D. Stephens, 5s.; C. Mascall, £1; T. Hopkins, £1; Amicus, £1; M. Christopher, 10s.; J. Milner, 10s.; G. J. Warren, £1; Mrs. Burgon, 10s.; T. Johnson, 2s. 6d.; John Robinson, 2s. 6d.; W. C. Middleton, £1; C. J. Peacock, £3 3s.; J. Martin, 2s. 6d.; John Sumner, 10s.; R. B. Middleton, 2s. 6d.; John Hughes, £1 1s.; M. Ridley, 2s. 6d.; J. H. R., 2s. 6d.; J. P., 2s. 6d.

JOHN SUMNER, JUN., writes: "I trust that the rest and change may very soon recuperate what I should suppose is a really sound constitution, which has no doubt been severely strained by the many demands which you have unhesitatingly placed upon it on behalf of the cause."

J. PARTRIDGE.—You see it would have been useless for Mr. Foote to engage himself for the Birmingham Town Hall in April. He hopes to be in his old form by the September date. Perhaps by that time, if the weather should be cold, the London and North-Western Railway Company will have arranged to warm its through carriages, instead of leaving the passengers to warm up the carriages for themselves. It is strange that the elementary comforts of travelling are not enforced upon the monopolist companies by law. After delivering three lectures on Sunday, and perhaps sleeping none too well in an hotel bed after them, a man is hardly in a condition to act as a warming-pan on Monday morning.

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 HAVE very little to say to my readers this week. I am still nursing myself, with my wife's assistance, at the seaside; and my strength is gradually returning; so gradually, however, as to accentuate the fact that I have passed through a very grave crisis. This is my eleventh day here—I am writing on Monday evening, March 10—and yet it was not until this afternoon that I was able to draw one leg after the other with any degree of briskness. I am still far from having got rid of the insomnia; though the cough, which the doctor said I should probably carry about for weeks, has almost entirely disappeared. Work is at present out of the question—I mean strenuous work such as I am accustomed to. I am still but a dabbler. I have done just a little for this week's *Freethinker*, mostly replies to Correspondents; the "Acid Drops" being contributed by various hands, chiefly by Mr. Cohen, Mr. Neale, and "Mimmermus." Mr. Cohen is also mainly responsible for the "Sugar Plums." For twenty years, except during the year I spent in prison for Freethought, I have kept this journal going, very largely with my own pen. I do not think I have been absent from the *Freethinker* half a dozen weeks in the whole period, except during that year of *enforced* absence. That is a good record, I venture to say; and a temporary breakdown is not so wonderful after all that long spell of work, diversified with all sorts of worries. I think I am entitled to get really well now before I begin serious work again. Of course my pen will be active sooner than my tongue. I shall take my doctor's advice about resuming platform work. Still, I take by no means a pessimistic view of the immediate future. The one

thing my father left me was a good constitution; he had a magnificent one himself. And a constitution like mine is apt to assert itself suddenly and peremptorily. I do not despair of waking up some fine morning and feeling like a man reborn. Meanwhile, at any rate, I am steadily travelling the right road.

G. W. FOOTE.

Sugar Plums.

MR. FOOTE was to have lectured at Glasgow on Sunday, March 2. He was too ill at the time to say anything about the matter, but he now takes the earliest opportunity of saying how sorry he was to miss his arranged visit to a city in which he counts so many good friends, and to a Branch which works so hard and effectively for the spread of Free-thought. It is just possible that Mr. Foote will not be able to visit Glasgow again until the autumn. We shall see, however, what we do see. But in the meanwhile it is pretty safe to say that the attachment between the Glasgow Branch and the N.S.S. President will not suffer much from the long interval of absence.

Mr. Charles Watts had a good meeting and a good reception at the Athenæum Hall on Sunday last. The lecture was given in Mr. Watts's well-known style, and had the effect of calling forth opposition from one member of the audience. Mr. T. Thurlow occupied the chair. This Sunday (March 16) Mr. Watts again lectures from the same platform; subject, "Forty Years of Christian Study." We hope there will be another good attendance.

Mr. Cohen had three good audiences at Aberdare, South Wales, for his lectures on Sunday last. In the evening every seat was filled, and many had to be content with standing room. People came from many miles round, and some of those who stayed to the end of the meeting were obliged to remain all night in Aberdare. The enthusiasm of the audience was most marked. Mr. S. Holman, of Porth, acted as chairman at each of the meetings, and filled that post with firmness and dignity. A good help to Free-thought in Aberdare has been given by one newsagent who has a book-stall in the Market Hall and offers a liberal display of our literature, and who exhibits announcements of meetings. We are pleased to learn that he finds this rather profitable than otherwise. It would be well if others elsewhere would follow his example.

To-day (March 16) Mr. Cohen lectures three times in the Town Hall, Porth, South Wales. The meetings are held at 11 o'clock, 2.30, and 6.30. It is to be hoped that the audiences will be large ones on each occasion.

The East London Branch held its first meeting at Walthamstow on Saturday evening (March 8) in the Mission Grove. The speaker was Mr. Ramsey, and the chairman Mr. Frankel; and the audience was one of gratifying proportions. There were a few interruptions, but most of those present were in sympathy with the object of the meeting. The East London Branch considers it worth while to continue operations at this station. A counter demonstration at the same spot, and at the same time (6.30), is threatened by the Christian Evidence Brigade. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the local "saints" will rally round the Free-thought platform on the occasion of the second meeting (March 15). Mission Grove—not a bad name, by the way—is off High-street, Walthamstow, about a minute's walk from the St. James'-street Station of the G. E. R.

The distinguished American writer, Mr. H. C. Lea, who is favorably known to Freethinking students by his *Historical Sketch of Sacerdotal Celibacy in the Christian Church*, has recently published through Mr. Quaritch a volume dealing with the conversion and expulsion of the Moors of Spain. The material on which the volume is based was collected for a chapter of a general history of the Spanish Inquisition, which Mr. Lea hopes to prepare in due time. This study is another nail in the coffin of the Great Lying Church.

The *Athenæum* (March 8) announces that the large collection of books and pamphlets by or relating to Thomas Paine—first or early editions—made by Mr. Moncure Conway while writing Paine's life and editing his works has been purchased by the Library of Congress. The collection includes a number of prints, engraved portraits, cartoons, caricatures, and autograph letters of Paine.

Mr. G. Autenrieth, of Market Rasen, Lincolnshire, has a number of copies of the *Freethinker* for which he has no further use, owing to his early departure from England, but which he will be pleased to send to any Freethinker who will undertake their distribution. Perhaps some of our

readers may care to write for the parcel. The circulation of the copies in the proper quarters is bound to be productive of good.

"Father Ignatius's" contempt for compromising clergymen is well known, and his admiration for the late Charles Bradlaugh is equally marked. In a recent conversation with Mr. Raymond Blathwayt he is reported as saying that Bradlaugh was one of his greatest friends. "He was," said the famous preacher, "a brave, fine soul, and you always knew where you were with him. How different from Charles Gore! I could tear him limb from limb. He has drawn more from the faith than any living man. Why, he actually spoke of Adam and Eve as being merely two anthropoid apes." Father Ignatius has an evident weakness for a man, whether he be Christian or otherwise, and just as evidently a dislike for all forms of compromise. Which is healthy.

Should Happiness be Our Aim?—III.

II.—THE "HEDONISTIC PARADOX."

It is alleged as a "paradox" that the pursuit of happiness defeats its own purpose, or even that pleasure-seeking is the road to misery. One source of this kind of paradox is the coarse or shallow or otherwise inadequate conceptions of pleasure or happiness, which are far too prevalent,* and are often accepted and encouraged by people who should know better. We may admit—nay, the Hedonist must insist—that what is called "pleasure-seeking" will in many cases not bear the morning's reflection, and that greed and unreason commonly overreach themselves. But if we correct our false ideas, and we use words in their legitimate meanings rather than in a hopelessly vulgarised and demoralised sense, the paradox will disappear, or, at least, should cease to give us any trouble. The failure is not due to the intelligent, forethoughtful building-up of as happy a life as is possible under the circumstances, but to the *short-sighted, unintelligent* pursuit of *immediate* pleasure of an inordinate, transient, and often mischievous character. If seeking pleasure brings pain, the Hedonist, by the very rule of his life, will avoid seeking pleasure. He will ascertain, and follow, the course which brings most happiness or least pain. He will train himself to needed habits of self-denial, self-control, fortitude, industry, and so forth. He may teach himself to take pleasure in feeling a contempt for "pleasure," just as he may trample on vulgar, ostentatious forms of pride and vanity with higher or better kinds of pride or self-respect. He may "scorn delights and live laborious days" if he sufficiently prefers solid satisfaction to temporary frolics and revellings.

Exaggerated expectations are a frequent source of disappointment. If we wish to protect ourselves against such delusions, we must learn to rely on reason and on moderation, or sobriety of all kinds. We must cultivate the contented mind which is a continual feast. We are not evolved or selected for happiness as Nature's primary object, but for success. Nature preserves the "fittest" as her plan of procedure; but the "Survival of the Fittest" is not necessarily the survival of the happiest; and survival itself is not identical with happiness. Pleasure and pain are not aims of Evolution, but only bye-products, subserving the main end—survival or victory. We may, however, legitimately improve upon Nature in this matter, in order to secure the more thorough fulfilment of our own wishes, Nature herself thus prompting and guiding us. Far from being irreconcilable, Nature's aims and man's are largely, though not entirely, identical, and are mutually helpful. Nature aims at preservation or success, which includes happiness as guide or aid or means. Man aims at

* I remember *Punch's* picture of a poor fellow who, on the day after a Bank Holiday, appears in the dock with blackened eye and battered and plastered head, and in a generally dilapidated and woebegone condition. In reply to the magistrate's lecture, he defends himself with the excuse that "It's a poor heart as never rejoices, yer washup." Similarly grotesque conceptions of pleasure or happiness are by no means uncommon. Young men ruin themselves in constitution, in fortune, and in reputation, and their pursuit of ruin is called pursuit of pleasure. They diligently blast the prospects of a lifetime, and such "a fool's game" is credited to Hedonism as if the greatest amount of happiness were really secured by such deplorable means. Intelligent and adequately-developed Hedonism would obviously teach the fish *not* to swallow the baited hook, and the fly *not* to alight on the treacled paper.

happiness, which includes preservation or success as its necessary basis. If Natural Selection aims at efficiency, so must man, because efficiency is essential to happiness as well as to success. Man's primary aim is merely Nature's secondary aim, and *vice versa*.

If the "Hedonistic Paradox" troubles us, we can imitate what has been said of ambition or the pursuit of greatness. We can say, "Seekest thou happiness, seek it not." Epigram has its valuable truth in its self-contradictory setting. Happiness is apt to become a bubble, a will-o'-the-wisp, an intangible ever-distant rainbow to those who clutch too eagerly and greedily at its insubstantial and elusive form. The healthy mind *forgets* that it is pursuing happiness, and does not even notice or reflect that it is usually the chase itself which is the happiness. It works for the actual desirable objects before it, receiving thereby its due items of happiness, whether weekly wages, social approval, a peaceful conscience, or other gratifying rewards or consolations. It cultivates the steady satisfaction of keeping the wolf from the door, or of adequate victoriousness in the struggle for existence. It finds pleasure (not always unmixed, of course) in employing its powers and faculties in the active work of life, or in absorbing interests or ideals that specially appeal to it, just as it will also take to itself such other pleasures or recreations as may reasonably and suitably be superadded. It sets itself to prevent preventable miseries and realise realisable wishes, without troubling itself to reflect that all this may be summed up as the pursuit of happiness.

Actual happiness—as may be seen in young children, or, indeed, in most happy people—is entirely independent of such conceptions or generalisations as the idea of "happiness" and the "search after the greater happiness." The absence of such ideas, indeed, usually facilitates the attainment of personal happiness. To cultivate a craving for happiness in general, or for greater happiness, in addition to ordinary wishes for appropriate objects or conditions, is to cultivate a new want and an additional dissatisfaction without any new or additional means of appeasing that discontent—whereby, if we are not careful, we easily create for ourselves a new source of trouble or misery.

When Carlyle would have us seek "blessedness" instead of happiness, what he is really saying is, Seek a finer, better, more satisfying, and more attainable sort of happiness, such as is to be found in noble thoughts and feelings, in kindly actions, and in useful and honorable work, and so forth, instead of clutching ravenously at crude, vulgar, disappointing kinds of pleasure that leave the inmost soul unsatisfied. Once for all, abandon—not all hope and all contentment and all feelings of love, gratitude, reverence, and so forth, which in themselves are most important forms of happiness—but vulgar ambitions, greeds, vanities, and all other tormenting desires or tantalising cravings for impossible or improbable kinds or degrees of pleasure. Learn to save thyself the perpetual misery of continually and vainly hungering for such a happiness as thou canst not hope to possess. Avoid a covetousness more foolish than that of the miser, whose gold is at least a solid and retainable reality. The desire for happiness is insatiable. Reasonable men *must* moderate appetites or desires which, in Emerson's words, "would eat the solar system as a cake." We ought not to be like little children crying for the moon. We must each cut our coat according to our cloth. And if we are wise we shall teach ourselves to take delight in the superior kinds of pleasure which leave no bitter taste behind. Man does not live by bread alone, and we must satisfy the hunger and thirst for righteousness, the love of knowledge and understanding, and the many high faculties, emotions, and ideals which raise man so pre-eminently above the beasts of the field.

Unfortunately, such words as "pleasure" and "happiness" are not altogether happy terms for our purpose, just as "bliss," "ecstasy," etc., would be even more immoderate, and thereby still more inappropriate, expressions. Life in general cannot reach the standard of joyousness implied by such words. The average human being is only fitted to enjoy a very moderate amount of happiness. By the terms "pleasure" and "happiness" we mostly understand unusually agreeable sensations or excessive degrees or exceptional kinds of

joyousness, such as cannot long be maintained even at the cost of the subsequent penalties or painful consequences that fall upon immoderate pleasure-seekers. A milder or less ambitious (and also less tainted) word, such as "satisfactoriness," might express our aim better, but it is not easy to find a term sufficiently explicit for our purpose and sufficiently free from clumsiness or other defect. "Comfort" is by no means such a word, for it savors of idleness; it ignores the good sense in the wise maxim, "Better rub than rust"; it neglects the stronger pleasures or more exciting and stimulating joys of the active and strenuous exertion so necessary for human welfare. The word "welfare" nearly hits the mark. It expresses the basis or primary essential of the greatest happiness, though it fails to state whether happiness (or satisfactoriness) is to be its ruling criterion or not. The word "good" is still more acceptable to all parties, the only fault in the word being that it leaves the point in dispute still unsettled—a fault equally shared by such generally-accepted terms as "morality," "right conduct," etc.

I will conclude my remarks on the Hedonistic Paradox by appending two of the old stories which I tell to young people when I think they are likely to be interested and instructed by such narrations.

In the Eastern story, the prince who complained of being unhappy was told to wear the shirt of a perfectly happy man. After prolonged inquiry, he learned, to his surprise, that no such person could be found throughout his dominions. At last, after many journeyings far and wide, the prince and his retinue had the good fortune to come upon a common laboring-man who answered the description. They found him lying by the roadside, fast asleep. On being roused, and asked the usual question, he acknowledged that he was perfectly happy, and that nothing troubled him. They promptly stripped him for his precious shirt, but were disappointed. The only happy man in the kingdom wore no shirt.

According to another story, Buddha, in his tender-hearted wisdom, employed a similar device when a young woman, broken-hearted for the loss of her child, came to him for consolation in her intolerable grief. He sent her to find someone who had not known sorrow or suffering. Of course, she found no such person, but she learned that she was by no means alone in suffering sorrow, and her attention was diverted from her own griefs and troubles to those of other people, till her own burden became bearable, and almost passed away.

W. P. BALL.

INDEPENDENT DEPARTMENT.

[With a view to broadening the scope of the *Freethinker*, and thus to widen its interest for its readers, we have decided to open an Independent Department, in which other questions may be treated than those that come within the settled policy of this journal. Such questions—especially political ones—may be of the highest importance, and yet questions on which Freethinkers may legitimately differ, and on which they ought not (as Freethinkers) to divide. Our responsibility, therefore, in this Department only extends to the writers' fitness to be heard. Freethinkers may thus find in their own organ a common ground for the exchange of views and opinions; in short, for the friendly enjoyment of intellectual hospitality. Writers may be as vigorous and uncompromising as they please, as long as they are courteous and tolerant.—EDITOR.]

Spencer's Political Ethics.—II.

It is strange, too, that Mr. Spencer, in crying out against State enactments, loses sight of the important consideration that the class who cry out loudest against them is the very class that derives the greatest benefits from their existence. Employers who protest against the State legislating on behalf of the employed, and landowners who cry out against the State legislating on behalf of the agricultural or other classes, are, consciously or unconsciously, blind to the fact that it is the very existence of legislation that gives them the powers they already possess. No one can pretend that, were the wealth of the country thrown into a common pool and offered as the reward of pure competitive superiority, it would fall back again into all the present owners' possession. And if this would not be the case, it is obvious that its present possessors have to thank the

Government for the legislation which secures it to them. It need not be questioned here whether these legislative acts are wise or unwise, just or unjust; it is sufficient that it is so, and is enough to demonstrate the truth that the people who object to State action are precisely those who chiefly benefit by its operations.

So that we come, ultimately, to this conclusion, that the Government which does not protect the weak against the strong is really protecting the strong against the weak. The Government which does not protect the tenant against the slum landlord or the rackrenter is defending them from the assaults of the tenant. The State which does not protect the employee against the employer is protecting the employer against his dependents. There is really no such thing as a Government standing strictly neutral in such matters.

Largely, no doubt, Mr. Spencer loses sight of these things, owing to his abiding faith in contract. He follows Maine in believing that the progress of society is from status to contract—from a condition, that is, in which labor, among other things, was determined by the class in which a man was born to a condition in which everything is determined by contract. And, *prima facie*, everything with him is a legitimate contract on which two people come to an agreement. But, as a sober matter of fact, in a society constituted as ours is all contracts are more or less unequal, and therefore more or less unjust. The contracting parties do not meet on anything like equal terms. *Competing* labor is generally pitted against *combined* capital. Capital may be shifted with comparative ease from one geographical area to another, while labor is practically tied down to a particular locality; nor is the choice of work anything like as varied or as extensive as the choice of workmen. What equality is there in a contract made between one who *must* have a place of business or a house within a particular area and the landlord who, knowing such to be the case, demands and receives a scandalously high rental? Or what equality can there be between an employer who either has the choice of a large number of applicants for a particular vacancy, or capital enough to keep his works idle until the men "come to their senses," and a workman who has only the wherewithal for a day-to-day existence? There is no *real* equality in contracts made under such conditions; and one very strong argument for State action is that the State is the only power that can either compete with capital on fair terms or compel it to grant something like equitable conditions.

It may be as well at this stage, before entering into any discussion concerning Mr. Spencer's view of the nature of a political society, to deal with his criticism of the actions of Governments in the past, and their probable consequences in the future. In the *Study of Sociology*, and elsewhere, he has drawn up elaborate lists of the failures of governmental action, of the number of Acts of Parliament passed and subsequently repealed, and of the evils created by legislative acts now in force. And he treats his readers to the following:—

"The belief that faulty character can so organise itself socially as to get out of itself a conduct which is not proportionally faulty is an utterly baseless belief. You may alter the incidence of the mischief, but the amount of it must inevitably be borne somewhere. Very generally it is simply thrust out of one form into another; as, when in Austria improvident marriages being prevented, there come more numerous illegitimate children; or as when, to mitigate the miseries of foundlings, hospitals are provided for them, and there is an increase in the number of infants abandoned; or as when, to ensure the stability of houses, a Building Act prescribes a structure which, making small houses unremunerative, prevents due multiplication of them, and so causes overcrowding; or as when a Lodging-house Act forbids this overcrowding, and vagrants have to sleep under the Adelphi arches or in the parks, or even, for warmth's sake, on the dungheaps in mews. Where the evil does not, as in cases like these, reappear in another place or form, it is necessarily felt in the shape of a more diffused privation. For suppose that, by some official instrumentality, you actually suppress an evil, instead of thrusting it from one spot into another—suppose you thus successfully deal with a number of such evils by a number of such instrumentalities, do you think these evils have disappeared absolutely? To see that they have not, you have but to ask: Whence comes the official apparatus? What defrays the cost of working it? Who supplies the necessaries of

life to its members through all their gradations of rank? There is no other source but the labor of peasants and artisans."

Now, there are two assumptions made in this indictment of State action, both of which seem to me to be very highly questionable, and even capable of a direct disproof. No one would deny that the creation of "official instrumentalities" and the payment of officials is, *per se*, an evil. But, then, so from the same point of view are doctors; but no one would seriously argue that therefore one should cease to consult them when necessary. What Mr. Spencer quietly assumes is that the evil created by an Act of Parliament is the exact equivalent of the evil removed, or even a greater evil. But this he nowhere proves to be the case, although it may be cheerfully admitted that such have been the results of some legislative Acts. In these cases, however, the Acts are allowed to drop into oblivion or are repealed, and so go to swell the catalogue of governmental failures which Mr. Spencer compiles. But this is not *always* the case, and this evil tends to diminish, not to increase. The whole question here is whether an Act of Parliament does more good than harm, not whether it is wholly beneficial. Human nature is, as the schoolboy said of the character of Lord Bacon after reading Macaulay's estimate, "streaky," and we must expect to pay some price for our pleasures here as elsewhere. And even to change the *form* in which evil appears may at times be a great social benefit.

But Mr. Spencer argues that you only diffuse the evil, without diminishing the quantity of it. To which we may reply that its diffusion may often be one of the conditions of its diminution. Take the example of a place of business which is covered by insurance being destroyed by fire. Mr. Spencer might argue, on the lines of the above quotation, that the evil was only diffused among the shareholders of the company, not destroyed. Quite so, but what has happened is this: a loss, which, falling on a single individual, would have meant irretrievable ruin, by its being scattered over a large body of people affects no one to any appreciable, or at least any serious, extent. And in this case its diffusion means a distinct gain to the community at large. There is some distinct gain, then, in effecting either a transformation or a diffusion of social evil, and our doing so is strictly defensible upon Mr. Spencer's own philosophy. No one has emphasised more than he the lesson that society is a growth, not a creation; an organism, not a mere accidental agglomeration of atoms, although no one neglects it more than he in his socio-political writings. And surely the fact that society is an organism and does grow casts a joint responsibility upon all its members for whatever evil exists, and its being borne by all is only the bearing of a perfectly legitimate burden.

But, even as it is, Mr. Spencer's argument proves rather *too* much. He has argued that legislative action produces evil, and this, instead of destroying the case for State action, really justifies it. If human intelligence *cannot* regulate the forces that determine social growth, then it is impossible to see how its action, in the shape of Acts of Parliament, could produce any of the evils we have been treated to. They should be as powerless to affect society as would be an Act of Parliament for the repeal of the law of gravitation. But if, on the contrary, these acts of legislative interference have disturbed for the worse the state of society because they have been framed in ignorance or dictated by a spirit of cupidity, then surely it must be admitted that, given adequate knowledge and a desirable motive, the contrary result might be obtained. Once admit that social forces are modifiable and the case for State action is granted, it then only becomes a question of whether any *particular* measure that is proposed is good or the reverse. And the answer to this query can only be determined upon grounds of expediency.

And this would place legislation upon precisely the same grounds as any of the arts and sciences. In art and science people succeed or fail just in proportion as they understand the nature of the forces with which they have to deal. One might chronicle exactly the same failures in any of the sciences that Mr. Spencer records in the sphere of legislation. Yet he does not decry art, he does not denounce science; all his indignation is reserved for the failures of government; and

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