

Freethinker

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

If thou beest not a cedar to help towards a palace, if thou beest not amber, bezoar, nor liquid gold, to restore princes; yet thou art a shrub to shelter a lamb or to feed a bird; or thou art a plantain to ease a child's smart, or a grass to cure a sick dog.—JOHN DONNE.

Free Churches and the Schools.

A REPLY TO DR. CLIFFORD.

JUDGING from Dr. Clifford's letter in last week's *Freethinker* concerning my article on "The Education Muddle," he seems to be surprised that I should have charged Nonconformists with lacking principle in their opposition to the Government's new Education Bill. He dissents also from my statement that Dissenters, in common with Churchmen, are quite willing to accept all the State aid they can get in furtherance of their religious beliefs, and in the matter of education show no more concern for the opinions of non-Christians than Episcopalians show for the opinions of Nonconformists. He asserts that "Free Churches seek nothing from the State for their beliefs or churches; they ask for the justice in which all may share, and refuse to accept anything from the State which any citizen may not have on the same terms," and says that he would "be grateful to Mr. Cohen if he would be good enough to tell me of *one* advantage the Free Churches obtain from the State which any citizen may not have on the same terms."

The request is modest and reasonable, and the way in which I can best show my appreciation of both qualities will be by not restricting my instances to the small number asked for. Let me, first of all, point out, however, that the help given by the State to religious beliefs may be of two kinds—positive or negative. Positively, the State may assist a religion by grants of money, by special acts of patronage, or by similar methods. And, negatively, the State may assist by shielding it from attack, or by placing obstacles in the way of the growth of the frame of mind prejudicial to that particular belief.

Now the truth is that the Free Churches demand, and receive, both forms of State aid, as will be readily seen from the following instances. All churches and chapels in this country are free from taxation, which clearly equals a grant of money from the State. Buildings that are not registered as *religious* meeting-places are compelled to pay all the customary taxes, not even hospitals being legally exempt. The Established Church is by law exempt from paying paving rates; Nonconformist churches are not. Yet we find these latter seeking, and in a very large number of cases securing, exemption from this rate. I need not multiply instances. I merely ask, If these are not forms of State aid that are not given to "any citizen," in the name of all that is sensible what are they? When the Free Churches refuse to accept any exemption from rates, and subject themselves to the same taxation that a purely secular hall is subject to, then they will have given some evidence that Dr. Clifford's words correctly represent their position.

And the negative helps given by the State to the Free Churches are quite as numerous and quite as important—perhaps more so. Those who are acquainted with the history of the Freethought movement in this country know how seriously its work has been crippled

by the fact that no liberty of bequest exists such as provides the Churches, Established and Dissenting, with their principal funds. Mr. George Jacob Holyoake has asserted that, to his own knowledge, more than a quarter of a million sterling has been lost to Freethought during his lifetime from this cause alone. And the sum that is *known* to have been lost must represent only a fraction of what might have accrued to Freethought had there existed real religious equality.

Will Dr. Clifford be good enough to point out how far Nonconformists have interested themselves in getting this wrong righted, or, in the many cases where sums that have been left to Freethought have been confiscated, how many Nonconformists have protested against this downright robbery of one form of opinion for the purpose of benefiting another? I need not do more than barely mention the Sunday laws, which operate—so far as they *are* operative—by stereotyping the religious frame of mind, or to point out that the very existence of the Bible in schools is a very important piece of State aid. These regulations certainly help all forms of *Christianity*, and so far are open to any *Christian* citizen upon the "same terms," but just as certainly it is State aid for one religion against all other forms of religion or of non-religion.

But we will take the specific matter of education. Dr. Clifford's statement of the law upon the subject is substantially accurate. Parliament does not compel the teaching of religion in the schools, nor does it compel the reading of the Bible. It leaves the Board quite free either to have the Bible or to reject it. And, therefore, it depends upon the ratepayers whether the Bible is used or not, Parliament only indicating the manner in which it shall be used. Quite so; only Dr. Clifford must surely see that the essence of the Secularistic objection is that Parliament has no right to interfere in matters of religious opinion, even to the extent of saying how that opinion shall be taught, so long as its teaching does not conflict with public order. And this I have always understood to be the principle embodied in the Nonconformist objection to a State Church. It is not the function of the State to teach religion, Nonconformists have said over and over again, and with that I cordially agree. But will Dr. Clifford explain the distinction between the State teaching religion to adults who are old enough to teach themselves, and the State teaching religion to children who are unable to properly discriminate between right and wrong instruction? Personally, I fail to see any distinction; and so long as Nonconformists continue to support the State in the one case and to oppose it in the other they will richly merit the charge of lack of principle.

Dr. Clifford's argument that "any citizen" may have the same privilege in the matter of religious instruction as Nonconformists, and on the same terms, seems to me more of an evasion than a justification. All that it means is that the majority, if they want the Bible in the schools, may have it, and the majority, if they do not want the Bible, need not have it. To this the reply is threefold. First, in matters of religious opinion majorities and minorities do not or should not exist. The State, as Nonconformists tell us, having no right to select and patronise any one form of opinion, clearly has no right to create a machinery which does select and establish one form of religious belief. In the next place, the same privilege is not given to *any* majority, but to a majority of Bible believers only. If the majority believed in the Koran, or the Shastras, or any other "sacred" writing, the Education Act would

not allow these books to be used as the Bible is used, and the religious instruction in accordance therewith given. And, finally, the confining of the religious instruction to that which is not distinctive of any one Christian sect, while it does not outrage the rights of Christians, does outrage the rights of non-Christians, seeing that these are compelled to pay towards the teaching of a religion in which they do not believe. Dr. Clifford and his fellow Nonconformist ministers rightly protest against the payment of Church rates, and he is, moreover, just now joining in the threat that, if the proposed Education Bill becomes law, Nonconformists will refuse to pay the school rates, on the ground that it is to support a religious instruction which is against their conscience. Can he or anyone else tell me in what respect the taxing of non-Christians of all classes for the teaching of a religious belief held only by Christians differs from the very procedure which he and his fellows are now protesting against? Would not Secularists, Jews, Positivists, Mohammedans, etc., be equally justified in refusing to pay existing School Board rates for the same reason that Nonconformists now threaten to withhold future payments of an educational rate?

There is no escape from this dilemma by way of saying that the teaching given is not sectarian. It seems almost impossible to get Christians to realise that in the larger sense of the word Christianity itself is sectarian, and that any teaching avowedly Christian is necessarily sectarian, inasmuch as it only represents the opinions of one section of the community. I quite admit that, under vastly different conditions to those which now obtain, the Bible might be used in a non-sectarian manner; but to use it in that manner in an avowedly Christian country, and where the Christian Churches receive both direct and indirect support from the State, is a practical impossibility.

Dr. Clifford tells us we ought not to forget that in 1870 Free Churchmen were, in the main, against the introduction of the Bible into Board schools. I do not forget it, nor do I forget either the cause of their change of attitude on this matter. It was naturally supposed, prior to the passing of the 1870 Act, that, if the State taught any religion in the schools, it would be the State religion—Episcopalianism. Under such an arrangement the schools would tell dead against all other forms of Christian belief, and religious instruction was resisted by Nonconformists accordingly. But the fourteenth section of the Act, containing the famous "Compromise" clause, put a new aspect on the matter. Religious instruction that was not distinctive of any one Christian sect not only gave the Nonconformists a larger measure of State help than they had ever before had, but actually brought the religious instruction more in line with the general trend of the Free Churches than with that of the Episcopalian body. The schools were to do the work of giving children the impression of a general form of Christian belief, leaving it for Church or Chapel to affix their particular brand afterwards.

It was the recognition of these benefits that would accrue to the Nonconformists from the working of the Compromise—a compromise between *Christian* bodies, be it observed, and which quite ignored all others—that led to the diminution of opposition on the part of Free Churchmen, and not evidence that "the Bible can be used for literary and ethical purposes." In plain words, the Nonconformists deliberately went back upon their avowed principles because of the gain the Bible in the schools would be to their churches and chapels. The Nonconformist who objects on principle to State interference in matters of religion occupies a position that is logical, historically justifiable, and worthy of all respect, and has my full support in the matter. But the Nonconformist who asserts this principle, while at the same time availing himself of every species of State aid that is available; who passively—sometimes actively—supports State enactments for the suppression of non-Christian or anti-Christian opinions; who denies the right of the State to teach religion to the adult, but asserts its right to teach religion to the child; who protests against the payment of Church rates, while at the same time enforcing upon others what *is* practically a Church and Chapel rate—seems to me to embody nothing but the most commonplace opportunism, and

forfeits the respect of those who really look upon adherence to principle as the prime necessity of national greatness.

I do not think that I need devote much time or space to Dr. Clifford's statement that the use of the Bible in schools is necessary from the point of view of literature and ethics. I have already said that under certain conditions no Secularist would object to a careful use of the Bible in schools, any more than he would object to the judicious use of other "sacred" literature. But the Bible is not upon the same level in this country as other books, and cannot, therefore, be used in exactly the same manner. A teacher giving a lesson from the Koran or the Vedas would not create a predisposition to believe in these books by so doing, nor does either of these books figure in our judicial procedure and elsewhere as does the Bible. But in the case of the Bible we are dealing with a book which occupies a peculiar position, while outside the schools are thousands of ministers of religion and thousands of other agencies ready to utilise the selection of the Bible in public schools as a means of furthering their own sectarian views. Christians have themselves made a distinction between the Bible and other books, and the responsibility rests with them if it is found necessary to deal with it differently to other books.

Moreover, the Bible is not retained in the schools by Nonconformists solely on account of its literary and ethical character. Nonconformists would not be content if school teachers simply used it as a piece of ancient literature, and for deducing moral lessons therefrom; nor do I know a single scripture syllabus issued by any School Board where the Bible is used in this manner. All that I have seen do introduce distinctly religious questions, and I need hardly point out that in the working out of the syllabus the religious instruction often becomes more doctrinal than the general public is aware of. Nonconformists may plead the value of the Bible as regards literature and ethics, but the fundamental reason for keeping it in the schools is on account of its support to Christian religious beliefs.

Bearing in mind all that has been said above, can any Nonconformist minister be legitimately surprised if Secularists view with suspicion the assertion that he stands for the principle of the equality of all opinions before the law? At the risk of being thought conceited, I assert that the Secular party is the only party that really does this. We do not wish the State to interfere either for or against our opinions. We wish to see the State abstain from teaching anything for religion or against religion in the public schools, except so far as the teachings of natural science make either for the one or the other. A fair field and no favor is all we ask for; and if Nonconformists really desire the separation of State and Church they should all be aiming at the same end. Above all, we desire as earnestly as Dr. Clifford a perfecting of our educational machinery. Let us have a completely educated and a thoroughly rational people; and let the selection or rejection of speculative religious opinions depend upon the recognition by each of fitness or unfitness to the needs of social life. No real Freethinker asks for more than this, and no real Freethinker will be content with less.

C. COHEN.

Christianity and Geology.

THERE is perhaps no more striking instance of the opposition which Christianity has offered to science than the one afforded in the struggles that have from time to time taken place between geologists and the ecclesiastical authorities. For many centuries the Christian Church taught that God originally created the world and its primitive contents out of nothing, and that he accomplished his work within the short space of six days. Of course, the groundwork of this teaching is the first chapter of Genesis. Inspired by what is taught therein, Christians have contended that the world was formed and fashioned within the brief space named. Such teaching, of course, is now known to be utterly erroneous. A useful work, *The History of Geology and Palæontology to the End of the Nineteenth Century*, by Karl Alfred von Zittel, and translated by

Maria M. Ogilvie-Gordon, D.Sc., Ph.D., has just been published. The author points to the fact that the Mosaic account of the Creation became invested with a scientific value by the Church, whereby for many centuries the development of geology was retarded. He shows, too, the great trouble taken by early geologists to reconcile their discoveries and theories with the Mosaic account—a tendency which only ceased within the recollection of men now in middle life, if, indeed, it has wholly ceased.

The science of geology is of comparatively recent birth, but it has from its infancy militated against the Bible story of the creation of man and of the world. In the early part of the sixteenth century the attention of observant men was attracted by the fossils which were at different times dug out of the crust of the earth. These consisted of botanical and zoological forms, which bore the marks of great antiquity, and many of which had little in common with the flora and fauna of succeeding times. Besides these, there were discovered shell-mounds, bronze and flint implements and weapons, and rude carvings upon ivory, bone, etc. The science of the age, regulated and controlled by a fear of intruding upon the domain of Biblical cosmogony, included all these fossils under such headings as "sports of nature," or "creations of plastic force," or "results of a seminal air acting upon rocks," or "models" made by the Creator before he had fully decided upon the best manner of creating various beings. The last hypothesis is certainly not very creditable to what is termed "Divine Prescience and Omniscience," although it is an indication of the puerile manner with which many well-meaning Christians spoke of their Deity. "But," says Dr. White, "while some latitude was allowed among the theological-scientific explanations, it was held essential to believe that these fossils were placed in all the strata, on one of the creation days, by the hand of the Almighty; and that this was done for some mysterious purpose of his own, probably for the trial of human faith."

In the sixteenth century the theory was broached by Fracastoro and Palissy that the presence of fossils indicated that the earth was in reality much older than was popularly supposed. Their remarks, however, produced little or no effect upon either the learned or the general public; and nearly a hundred years elapsed before Bitaud, and other observant Frenchmen, openly avowed their belief in the great age of the earth. The Faculty of Theology of Paris—a most intolerant body—at once came down upon the geologists; their theory was declared to be heretical and highly dangerous; their books were seized and destroyed; and the writers were banished from Paris, and forbidden to appear in any town or public place in France. Another century went by, and Buffon, the naturalist, ventured to express similar unorthodox opinions; and we are told that the Theological Faculty immediately removed him from his high position, forced him to recant ignominiously, and to print his recantation. Such was the Christian treatment towards one who preferred scientific truth to theological speculation. This Christian Faculty, after examining Buffon's *Natural History*, condemned fourteen propositions as being "reprehensible and contrary to the creed of the Church." The first of these propositions was geological, and read thus: "The waters of the sea have produced the mountains and valleys of the land; the waters of the heavens, reducing all to a level, will at last deliver the whole land over to the sea; and the sea, successively prevailing over the land, will leave dry new continents like those which we inhabit." This Buffon was compelled by the Church to recant. "The grand principle," observes Sir Charles Lyell, "which Buffon was called upon to renounce, was simply this: that the present mountains and valleys of the earth are due to secondary causes, and that the same causes will in time destroy all the continents, hills, and valleys, and reproduce others like them. Now, whatever may be the defects of his views, it is no longer controverted that the present continents are of secondary origin. The doctrine is as firmly established as the earth's rotation on its axis; and that the land now elevated above the level of the sea will not endure for ever is an opinion which gains ground daily in proportion as we enlarge our experiences of the changes now in progress." Buffon, however, was pronounced a heretic

by the Church, which had been beaten in the field of astronomy, only to resist the geologists with as much ignorant rancor as though her authority had never been disputed. Churchmen were determined to promote the acceptance of the doctrine that fossils were the relics of creatures drowned in the Noachian Deluge, and both Protestants and Roman Catholics clung tenaciously to this belief.

The most violent opposition to geological science came from the English Protestants of nearly all denominations. They urged most strenuously that it was blasphemous to assert that animals lived and died long ages prior to the appearance of man upon the earth. Death, they declared, was a consequence arising from Adam's fall from grace; and, previous to that lapse, no creature could have died. In extraordinary distinction to certain fanatical Protestants, and in absolute contrast to the former action of theologians of his own Church, Nicholas Wiseman, first English Cardinal since the re-introduction of the Roman Catholic hierarchy into England, in his *Lectures on the Connection between Science and Revealed Religion*, insisted upon the duty of allowing freedom to scientific investigation. During the last century the progress of geology was amazing. However great the hatred and venom of the Protestant clergy, they did not possess the almost uncontrolled power and authority of the old Catholic hierarchy. With the birth of the nineteenth century circumstances were greatly changed for the better. The work of emancipation effected by the eighteenth-century philosophers of France, the myriads of anti-orthodox books and pamphlets which had been circulated throughout Europe, had altogether altered the relations between the Christian Church, taken as a whole, and the great body of the people. A spirit of inquiry, that would not be baulked or refused, had grown up, and was henceforth to be considered as an element of the greatest importance by all who proposed to fill the offices of public teachers. The time for all reservation had gone; the people had become the jurors, whose verdict would hereafter be accepted as well as that of the clergy.

It is now admitted by most well-informed persons that the notion of a creation like that described in the Bible must be abandoned. Every attempt that has been undertaken to reconcile the discoveries of the geologists with the statements in the Bible has resulted in absolute failure. To those comparatively few professed Christians who still avow their belief in the accuracy of "God's Word" it should be pointed out that there is no difference of opinion among those who are authorities upon the question of the chronology of this planet, for they contend that it must be extended by countless ages, far beyond the time assigned to it by the Christian scheme. More noteworthy even than this, as affecting orthodox claims, is the fact that remains of man have been discovered in strata—such as the later Tertiary—which must have been formed at least a hundred and fifty thousand years ago. The effect of this upon the old religious faiths can be readily imagined. Geology, combined with anthropology, reveals to us the fact that every succeeding age has educated a race of men physically superior to their predecessors; and already Darwin's system of evolution by natural and sexual selection has been generally accepted as a theory by which the existence of man may be reasonably explained, so far as any explanation may be possible.

Affrighted bigotry again and again vainly endeavored to howl down the doctrine of evolution. At last science has proved the victor in the long struggle, and now the time has arrived when religion must no longer seek to control the human intellect. Its only sphere is the emotions, and there are many brave workers who are constantly and resolutely laboring to circumscribe the evil influence of superstition upon the emotional nature of the human family. Geology, even more than astronomy, has shattered the foundations upon which Christianity was erected. It has disposed of the alleged Mosaic Dispensation, and of those after-systems which accepted that Dispensation as true, and which, by so doing, demonstrated their own weakness and falsity. Modern geologists have been, and are, the true Iconoclasts; they have learnt from the study of natural law what is necessary for man's redemption, and also what

are the obstacles to the exercise of that redemption. And, while seeking to promote the former, they use their iconoclastic power to destroy the latter.

CHARLES WATTS.

Swinburne.

"Dowered with the hate of hate,
The scorn of scorn, the love of love."

So long ago as 1857 "that unsubduable old Roman," Walter Savage Landor, discerning, with true insight, the power of a new poet, prophesied his rise. Landor was, latterly, somewhat too ready of praise, but he made no mistake in the case of Algernon Charles Swinburne, who is to-day our greatest living poet.

In him alone among a crowd of competitors we recognise that old, old voice of English song, so sweet, so august, so unmistakeable in its quality, which makes English poetry the supreme literary glory of the world. We may, perhaps, wish that Swinburne had been less combative, but, on his career as a whole, everyone will look with pride to whom the honor of our literature is dear.

From the first his genius was unmistakeable. In *Atalanta in Calydon* the strain of clear, soaring song proclaimed a real and unmistakeable poet. Who could resist such lines as these?—

But ye, keep ye on earth
Your lips from over speech;
Loud words and longing are so little worth,
And the end is hard to reach.
For silence after grievous things is good,
And reverence, and the fear that makes men whole,
And shame and righteous governance of blood,
And lordship of the soul.
But from sharp words and wits men pluck no fruit,
And gathering thorns they shake the tree at root,
For words divide and rend:
But silence is most noble to the end.

The appearance of *Poems and Ballads* fluttered the dovescotes of respectability, and aroused as much excitement in literary circles as Byron's *Don Juan* had in a previous generation. There are pieces which for distinction of melody their author has never surpassed—*Itylus*, *Laus Veneris*, and *A Match*, and the *Hymn to Proserpine*, and, above all, *Hesperia*, that lovely lyric where the gloriously moulded lines recall the magnificent rolling of the full-flushed waves.

Later came *Songs before Sunrise*, which roused men like a trumpet-blast. Throughout this volume rings out boldly and musically the cry of liberty, the utter abhorrence of tyranny of every kind and in every shape. To compare *Songs before Sunrise* with *Poems and Ballads* is to see how far the poet had advanced in the interval. In melody, it is true, progress was hardly possible. But, melody apart, the change is indubitable. For, after all, the subject-matter of *Poems and Ballads* is mainly that wine is sweet and woman lovely:—

The lilies and languors of virtue,
The roses and raptures of vice.

In the *Songs before Sunrise* the advance is from lassitude to exultation, from the pinings of youth to the passion of man. The verse rings and glows with love of freedom. It echoes the thunder of the surges and the clarions of the storm. No poet since Shelley sings more loftily or with more fiery passion, or with finer thought, than Swinburne, when he is arraigning priest-craft before the bar of humanity and truth. His most heretical poems will be found in his *Songs before Sunrise*. The *Hymn to Man*, for instance, is frankly, and even triumphantly, Atheistic. In the "Prelude" he writes:—

Because man's soul is man's god still,
What wind soever waft his will,
Save his own soul's light overhead,
None leads him, and none ever led.

In another passage he treats the priests with fearful derision. He represents them calling on their Deity, and he says: "Cry aloud, for the people blaspheme." Then he concludes with deadly irony:—

Shall God then die as the beasts die? Who is it hath broken his
rod?
O God, Lord God of thy priests, rise up now and show thyself
God.

They cry out, thine elect, thine aspirants to heavenward, whose
faith is as flame;
O thou, the Lord God of our tyrants, they call thee their God by
thy name.

By thy name that in hell-fire was written, and burned at the point
of the sword,
Thou art smitten, thou God; thou art smitten; thy death is upon
thee, O Lord;
And the love song of Earth as thou diest resounds through the
wind of her wings—
Glory to man in the highest, for man is the master of things.

In his lines apostrophising Christ on the cross he says,
with more than Voltaire's bitterness:—

Thy blood the priests make poison of,
And in gold shekels coin thy love.

The poet's terrible scorn draws no distinction between
the priests and their Deity. The following lines,
addressed to Jesus, are really the quintessence of
satire:—

Thou bad'st let children come to thee;
What children now but curses come?
What manhood in that God can be
Who sees their worship and is dumb?
No soul that lived, loved, wrought, and died,
Is this their carrion crucified.

Swinburne often sneers at prayer. In the following
lines he gives full vent to his scorn:—

Behold, there is no grief like this;
The barren blossom of thy prayer,
Thou shalt find out how sweet it is.
O fools and blind what seek ye there,
High up in the air?

Ye must have gods, the friends of men,
Merciful gods, compassionate;
And these shall answer you again,
Will ye beat always at the gate,
Ye fools of fate?

Ye fools and blind; for this is sure,
That all ye shall not live, but die.
Lo, what thing have ye found endure?
Or what thing have ye found on high
Past the blind sky?

In the *Hymn to Proserpine* he says:—

O, ghastly glories of saints, dead limbs of gibbeted gods!
Though all men abase them before you in spirit, and all knees
bend,

I kneel not, neither adore you, but, standing, look to the end.

Swinburne has quite a materialistic view of death. In his superb *Ave Atque Vale*, an elegy in memory of Charles Baudelaire—perhaps his noblest poem—he strikes the same keynote as Lucretius:—

Thou art far too far for wings of words to follow,
Far too far off for thought or any prayer.
What ails us with thee, who art wind and air?
What ails us gazing where all seen is hollow?
Yet with some fancy, yet with some desire,
Dreams pursue death as winds a flying fire,
Our dreams pursue our dead and do not find:
Still, and more swift than they, the thin flame flies,
The low light fails us in elusive skies,
Still the foiled earnest ear is deaf, and blind
Are still the eluded eyes.

And again, in the same beautiful poem:—

Content thee, howsoe'er, whose days are done;
There lies not any troublous thing before,
Nor sight nor sound to war against thee more,
For whom all winds are quiet as the sun,
All waters as the shore.

When Swinburne is at his best it is well-nigh impossible to do justice to the music of his verse. From the simplest metres he ranges through the most elaborate. He can charm you with a lyric such as *The Ballad of Dreamland*, and he can thrill and inspire you with such a chorus as the great war song in *Erectheus*, where the words clash and sparkle till the verses seem filled with the splendor and terror of battle.

Above all English poets he is the poet of the sea. His love of ocean is not merely sensuous. That delight he has rendered wonderfully in his *Tristram*. But his finest sea pieces are born not of sensuous enjoyment, but of imaginative sympathy and insight. None has so vividly rendered the magic of the dawn breaking over the fields of the green-rippled deep, or the terrors of the trumpets of the night and the lightnings of the foam. Among the cruelest abstractions of the cosmos he exults; he drinks the ether of space as men drink wine.

He is too great a poet to be, properly speaking, a pessimist. But he frequently insists on the painfulness of life:—

For the crown of our life as it closes
Is darkness, the fruit thereof dust.

It is as a lyricist that his fame will endure. A dramatist he is not. When you read *Atlanta* and *Erechtheus*, you do not care greatly what befalls Meleager or Praxithea; what you care for is the magnificent music, resistless as the glorious galliambics of old-world Catullus, or the honeyed perfection of Marlowe. When you think of a great play, you do not think of any single person or passage. The glory of that most perfect tragedy, *Othello*, is neither the Moor nor Desdemona nor Iago, but each and all. To recall Swinburne's great trilogy is simply to think of Mary, Queen of Scots. But who is not the happier for his incomparable lyrics?

Swinburne's finest work time can have no power to destroy. Of laudation he may well be satiated, to condemnation indifferent. There has been no such metrical inventor in the English language, save only Tennyson. Compared to Swinburne, Keats and Coleridge are poor of resource, limited in range, timid and commonplace in execution. That is not to say that Swinburne has excelled them in ideas or melody, only he is an adept in the use of a far wider choice of instruments.

For the storm that was raised about the sensuality of *Poems and Ballads* we care little—as little as we care for the same asinine opposition when directed against the intemperance of Omar Khayyam, or the audacity of Heine. Of late Swinburne has given us nothing but the excrements of his genius. But we remember gratefully that he has in his time given us of his best, and that is the highest kind of poetry. He is the one man of the English race who in our time has held his ear close to the movement of the modern world, and brought away with him some sounding echoes of its music. The poet is, for the moment, silent, and the political versifier stammers and stutters in his place. Perhaps some greater, more earth-shaking wave of thought and feeling than we are conscious of to-day is needed to rouse again that golden accent which has within it the deepest message known to the sons of men.

MIMNERMUS.

The French Republic and the Schools.

[The following article, from the pen of Professor François Simiand, of Paris, and which appeared originally in the *Torch of Reason*, will doubtless be of interest to those of our readers who are interested in the question of education. While on this side the Channel we allow the sectarian quarrels of Church and Chapel to obstruct the perfecting of our educational system, our French neighbors are busy transforming the State schools into a real preparation for civic life.]

In Higher Primary Schools.—In the present plan of studies for the higher primary schools *social instruction* is represented by morals, civics, common law, and political economy.

The end to be pursued is to create and maintain in the pupils an *ensemble* of moral dispositions proper to prepare them for the life that awaits them in society.

The motives to be employed are of three kinds: Action upon the heart, by appealing to the moral sense which a previous culture has developed in them; action upon the intellect, by explanation and demonstration of the truths of the moral order; action upon the will, by the practice of moral life, according to their own experience and their individual character.

Having laid down these principles, the program points out with some detail the three kinds of school exercises that correspond to these three modes of action. The "exercises tending to develop the moral sense are readings, recitals, and conversations adapted to bring forth and strengthen in the child the various sentiments that favor the development of the moral sense [examples].....and in a general way all the healthy emotions that predispose men to do right." The "exercises tending to instil into the mind the fundamental notions of morality" are concrete and living lessons, but methodical, and conformable to a program given with detail.

In the first year are to be treated the principles of ethics: (1) "The conscience, intuitive idea of duty, the power of man over himself"; (2) "society and its duties"; and, in the third place, "return to self; such an application of the principles as to begin to make life understood by the adolescent mind." A few points in the detailed plan may be cited:—

To cause to be observed the categorical differences

which distinguish the condition of man, his rule of life, the constant and certain laws by which nature works in the moral world.

Different types of men: The idle, the industrious, the economical, the improvident.....heroes. Egoism and disinterestedness; distinctive characteristics of moral obligation.

In proportion as the pupil shall have acquired a certain habit of personal reflection, he is brought to recognise that the individual is a small matter in himself, incomplete and dependent; that he forms part of a whole.....that he owes a debt to others, his fellow-beings, without whom he either would not be, or would not be what he is; whence the idea of society.

To insist upon the fundamental law of solidarity, the principle of all social organisation.

Within society to distinguish two societies—the family and the nation; to insist upon what the individual owes to each of these.

For the second year there is indicated a series of lessons on "human life and its duties; man in society, in the family, in the nation." The order and method of putting the questions, the nature and scope of the ideas suggested, seem sufficiently remarkable to justify the reproduction entire of this part of the program:—

1. *Society.*—What society is; man is not born to live alone; society necessary to his security and to the indefinite progress which is his law; it is his end and reason for being. Barbarous societies and civilised societies; traits that distinguish them; law is substituted for force; labor a common obligation; no more slaves and no more corporal punishment (supplices); the intellectual capital (fortune) of mankind daily guaranteed, as well as its transmission to posterity. Social solidarity in the economic world, in the moral world. Natural inequality of aptitudes, inevitable diversity of functions.

Social Justice.—Respect for the person of man in whatever rank he may be placed, and, as a consequence of this imperative respect, slavery and serfdom recognised as intolerable. Respect for the honor of others. Defamation and calumny. Respect for the products of labor; principle of property, its necessity; capital and labor; respect for contracts and for one's word. Respect for individual beliefs and opinions. Religious and philosophical liberty; tolerance.

Social Fraternity.—Moral and social inadequacy of strict justice. Accidents of birth, physical and intellectual inequalities; accidents of life. Public instruction; public aid. Goodness; love of one's neighbor; devotion; disinterestedness.

2. *The Family and Private Man.*—The family a special kind of society, but not exclusive in society; its function in the social order to which it is subject; its moral basis; its constitution, its members—solidarity implies; respect for women the basis of the family in the modern world. Husband and wife; parents; children; their reciprocal duties. The spirit and virtues of the family. Private virtues; loyalty, labor, temperance, courage, frugality, charity (consequences of the vice of alcoholism from the point of view of the family and private life to be insisted upon). Social effects of private virtues.

3. *The Nation and Country.*—How our society is at the same time a nation; the idea of nation and country; its moral basis. Solidarity of generations; unity of direction. The national spirit; defence of the country; the army; obligatory service; military discipline; courage.

4. *The State and the Laws.*—What the State is; its origin; its rôle; various forms of its authority; the republican form; its principle, and its superiority; proceeding from our consent and modified by our will, it can possess nothing arbitrary. National sovereignty; democracy (the *élite* in democracy). Laws, social and national foundation. Duties of the citizen; obedience to the laws; taxation; suffrage, etc. Repression; social legitimacy of penalties. Rights of citizens; individual liberty; freedom of conscience; freedom of worship within the limit of respect for law; freedom of labor; freedom of association. Public liberties. Dangers of arbitrary power; dangers of absence of government.

5. Nations among themselves; international duties and rights; international solidarity; humanity; love

of humanity and reconciliation with love of country. The *jus gentium*; aspiration towards a juridical ideal among nations; arbitration.

For the third year is prescribed a thorough revision of the principles of morals, and a return to their principal application; the articles drawn up recall much more closely the subjects known to classical courses (showing that our nature leads us to love the beautiful, to affirm the true, and to desire the good); conscience; liberty; personality; duty; moral ideal. The last paragraphs only will be quoted here.

To point out that it is in the nation that man fully realises his nature, that he really becomes man—that is, a moral person—conscious of his duties and his rights; that the duty of the individual member of a nation is to co-operate willingly with the nation in human civilisation.

The social ideal at different periods of humanity. To insist upon the traits characteristic of the true genius of France; explanation of the Republican device—"Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

Sanctions of morality, internal sanction (moral satisfaction and remorse); natural sanction (consequences of our good or bad conduct for ourselves and for others as to the body and as to the soul); social sanction (public esteem or contempt); philosophical or religious sanctions (the idea of God). The teacher will take pains to speak of religious beliefs only with great respect, and in such a manner as never to ruffle the minds of the children who are entrusted to him.

Finally, there are indicated the third class of exercises, those tending to test the conscience and form character (to study good or bad tendencies that appear in each pupil; to ascertain the practical morality of each one under the circumstances of daily life; appeals to sincerity; appeals to strength of will; transformation of effort into habit; development of delicacy of conscience).

Acid Drops.

We have consistently asserted that the religious teaching in Board schools is simply the result of an agreement between Church and Dissent at the expense of all outsiders. Dr. Clifford contests the truth of this assertion. We do not intend to reply to him again just now. He is in Mr. Cohen's hands at present, and may be safely left there. Our object is rather to show how Nonconformists share our view in their lucid intervals of candor and confession. Mr. J. S. Greenwood, for instance, writing to the *Daily News* from 17 Annandale-road, Greenwich, S.E., lets the cat out of the bag as follows: "A solemn compact was entered into between Conformists and Nonconformists. Both parties agreed that the religious teaching in the Board schools should be love to God and man, with the Bible as a text-book." A Daniel come to judgment; yea, we say, a Daniel.

Mr. R. W. Perks, M.P., the wealthy Wesleyan layman, has been giving his views on the new Education Bill to a *Sunday Sun* interviewer. With regard to the vexed question of religious education in the elementary schools, he is for leaving "sectarianism" outside and using "a form of religious instruction which would not offend the susceptibilities of any section of the community." But how on earth is this possible? What form of "religious instruction" would prove acceptable alike to Churchmen, Dissenters, Catholics, Jews, Atheists, Agnostics, Secularists, and Ethicists? Mr. Perks is invited to explain.

"I have always," Mr. Perks said, "been opposed to the exclusion of the Bible from the elementary schools, but I would place religious instruction in the hands of the teachers, who, I think, can be thoroughly trusted; and I would, as far as possible, exclude the clerical element from the control of these institutions." No doubt the teachers can be thoroughly trusted. But what is it that they may be thoroughly trusted to do? Why, to give their own views and sentiments as gospel. They would be more or less than human if they did anything else. And it is this chaos that Mr. Perks looks upon as a perfect ideal. Surely it would not be tolerated in regard to any other subject. Personal geography, arithmetic, and grammar are not permitted in the schools; and why personal theology? For our part, we quite understand why Catholics and Churchmen are bitterly opposed to *this* solution of the problem.

Lord Hugh Cecil recently lectured at Battersea on Christianity and Education. Questions were invited, and a gentleman—presumably a Board-school teacher—said that "in a

long experience he had only once had an objection made to him in regard to the carefully-drawn-up religious syllabus of the London School Board. Only one objection! That was from a Freethinker. But he explained to the objector that no creed was taught, and surely he would, as a Freethinker, allow his child to read the Bible as well as any other book. The Freethinker went away satisfied. He did not withdraw his child from the religious instruction."

That Freethinker—if he really were a Freethinker—must have been easily satisfied. True Freethinkers object to the Bible being read at all in rate-aided schools. To make it an authoritative text-book there, is as bad, in principle, as to teach in addition creeds drawn from its pages. Lord Hugh Cecil, in reply, said that "religious instruction which would bring up a child a Freethinker was hardly satisfactory for a parent who desired his child to be brought up an earnest Christian; and if the Freethinking parent had a right to have his child brought up in this way, the Christian parent had an equal right to have his child brought up as he desired."

But the Freethinker does not want his child to be brought up as a Freethinker in schools supported by the State. He simply asks that the Bible and religious instruction should not be imposed on his child in such institutions, which should be neutral ground. The Christian parent who desires such instruction to be given should arrange for it and pay for it elsewhere.

It is often pretended that piety on the part of guardians is a protection to helpless children, but this view is not borne out by the general run of facts. Every now and then we read of some atrocious cruelty being perpetrated by religious people on the little ones. One of the latest cases is that of the Roman Catholic boarding-school near Bury, which has been the subject of a question in the House of Commons. Children were sent there from the workhouse, and this is the result, according to the report of the clerk of the Leigh Board of Guardians to the Local Government Board: "I am sorry to inform you that the children presented a very poor appearance—in fact, it was difficult to realise that they were the fine children who left the workhouse in August last. But their outward appearance was by no means all, for when the matron and nurse undressed them they were found to be in a pitiable condition. The little ones on being put into a bath screamed loudly, and it was found that the flesh between their legs was raw and bleeding; the elder girls were suffering from sore heads and ears, ringworms, eczema, and skin eruptions. The whole of the children were in such a filthy, neglected condition that the medical officer was sent for in order that he might bear testimony to the treatment they had received. The children.....state that their meals consisted of the following: Breakfast—Tea without milk, and bread and butter. Note.—The tea is stated to be of poor quality, and the bread and butter insufficient. Dinner—Five days in each week potatoes mashed in the water they are boiled in. Note.—No bread or meat is given; in fact, it is stated that meat is only seen on rare occasions. One day in each week peas and pea-water; one day in each week rice and water. No milk is given. Note.—Milk is never seen in the institution. Lunch (?) at 4.30 p.m.—Tea and bread and butter. Supper—Tea and bread and butter. Particulars are given in detail of the condition of the children, and Mr. E. Williams, clerk to the Guardians, closes his report with the word: 'Since their admission to the workhouse the children have been given milk, beef-tea, etc., and, I am pleased to report, are now looking considerably better.'

About one hundred of the workmen engaged in fitting up Westminster Abbey for the Coronation service assemble in the cloister nearest the south aisle after the midday meal and attend a special service conducted by Archdeacon Wilberforce. This looks as if, after all, the services of the Church have an attraction for the "orney'anded son of toil." But there is an explanation. The Archdeacon gives each man an ounce of tobacco and allows the men to seat themselves on the stone benches and smoke their pipes. It remains to be seen how long this solatium will serve. Not unlikely the men may a little later on expect to be supplied with beer.

Canon Wilberforce is the gentleman who deliberately, in a book, classed drink, prostitution, and "infidelity" together. We are not much surprised, therefore, at anything he does. Otherwise we should marvel at his inviting workmen, engaged in putting up woodwork, to smoke in the Cloister. Should the Abbey be burnt down it would be impossible even for Canon Wilberforce to rebuild it. No doubt he thinks himself equal to most things, but he can hardly think himself equal to that.

Sometimes a preacher has a very hard task to keep on the sunny side of the female part of his congregation. We read that the Rev. W. H. Walker, pastor of the First Congregational Church, Willmeter, Chicago, has lost nearly all his lady members through combing his hair in pompadour style, at the instigation of his mother-in-law. We should imagine

that Jesus Christ, with the pathetic eyes and the long curls, would draw the Yankee ladies in crowds. He was very successful with the feminine half of the *genus homo* in Palestine. Lots of petticoats (if we may be pardoned the anachronism) gathered around him, and rich women administered unto him of their substance. A perfect paradise for a tramp evangelist.

Now that the Spion Kop despatches have been published, we are able to see that the real hero of that sanguinary farce was the very pious Sir Charles Warren. General Buller, of course, damned his own reputation as commander-in-chief by letting his subordinate muddle along day after day, when he knew that the delay meant all the difference between carrying the Boer position defended by some six hundred men and carrying it days afterwards when it was defended by fifteen thousand men, owing to the Boers having had time to concentrate. Fancy a Napoleon saying, "I knew my general was losing his opportunity by dilatoriness and incapacity, and leading up to a defeat and the slaughter of his own troops; but I shrank from removing him or taking command myself for personal reasons." General Buller is evidently no Napoleon. But this is not a political and still less a military journal, so we leave General Buller to the newspaper critics and the mob of the music-halls. Our game is Sir Charles Warren. This gentleman was the hero of Bloody Sunday—the day when Radical demonstrators were barred from Trafalgar-square by five thousand policemen, behind whom there were regiments of soldiers all ready to march from their barracks. It was subsequently shown that Warren's proclamation was not really worth the paper it was written on. It was perfectly illegal—though the blunder was remedied by the following Sunday. There he was as Chief Commissioner of Police, clanking his sword, taking the law into his own hands, and making war upon the citizens of London. He was in a dreadful hurry to carry Trafalgar-square. The enemy on that occasion were easily dealt with. They were simply unarmed men and women, who were not so much frightened as amazed at the antics of this military mountebank. Yet he was terribly proud of his victory. Wellington was not half so proud of Waterloo. But it was quite another matter when Spion Kop was to be carried. Warren was in no hurry then. He dawdled and shuffled, and at the end, when poor Tommy Atkins was sent to his bloody doom, Warren took care never to get within miles of the fighting. What a Bobadil!

We recollect with much pleasure that we took an opportunity of snubbing this hero of Bloody Sunday—and runaway of Spion Kop. It was some days after the battle of Trafalgar-square. A demonstration of protest was called in Hyde Park on Sunday afternoon, and we went to the Home Office with Mr. James Timms, the secretary of the Metropolitan Radical Federation, to obtain a guarantee from Mr. Matthew that the police would be restrained from molesting the processions and endeavoring to cause a riot. It was hard work getting to see the Home Secretary, and it was only done at last by means of an urgent private note from Sir Charles Russell. Mr. Matthew was polite enough; in fact, his manners were rather those of a fashionable undertaker. We believe he meant well and was sorry for all the trouble caused by his Chief Commissioner of Police. Sir Charles Warren, however, who stalked into the room clanking his toasting-iron on the oak floor, was as haughty as they make them. He jumped up from his seat at one point and interjected a foolish, insolent observation. "Who is this gentleman?" we asked, affecting not to know. "It is Sir Charles Warren," Mr. Matthew replied. Whereupon we said—keeping our feet as Sir Charles Warren kept his—that we wanted no words with him, but were there to see his superior. Mr. Matthew's face wore a pleased sort of a smile. Perhaps he was glad to hear somebody snub his strutting Chief Commissioner of Police. Sir Charles Warren seemed quite dumbfounded. He grunted and sat down in a huff.

It was a long way from Trafalgar-square to Spion Kop; but Nemesis, if slow, was sure; and Sir Charles Warren, the hero of Bloody Sunday, the pious general who likes above all to see his soldiers praying and psalm-singing, stands at last discredited before the whole world. Verily the Radicals and Socialists of London have got their revenge.

We would not be unjust even to Sir Charles Warren. It is only fair to state that since the above paragraphs were in type Sir Charles Warren has written to the press declaring that "important documents" bearing on the Spion Kop affair have not been published, and that their publication would be his own best justification. Buller's opinion of Warren is published. Apparently we are now to have Warren's opinion of Buller.

That "wretched thing," Ping-Pong—as the Bishop of Manchester called it—has come in for further clerical disparagement. The Vicar of Leamington, in opening a sale of work in aid of a Church Mission Society, said there was an element of sadness in the fact that the great mission work of God necessitated Ping-Pong tournaments. He did not

think so many would be present if it were a missionary meeting. The vicar was probably right—at any rate, he ought to know.

A quaint ping-pong story comes from the South of Scotland. A young minister and his spouse purchased a ping-pong kit, and indulged in the game every lawful evening. Their servant fell ill, and her place was taken for the nonce by her fourteen-year-old sister, a maiden of the serious and outspoken order. One morning the minister gravely observed to the girl: "Jessie, I hope you say your prayers every night." "Aye, I dae that, sir! Last night I prayed for you an' the meestress." "Indeed, Jessie; why?" queried the reverend gentleman. Jessie, without hesitation, responded, while pointing contemptuously to the ping-pong appliances: "Sir, whan I see you an' the meestress sae far left tae yersels as tae play at that nonsense, I'm thinkin' that ye baith sair need prayin' for!" The minister paid heed to the rebuke, and, after communing with his better half, quietly removed the ping-pong accessories to the garret.—*Daily News*.

Someone has offered £10,000 towards a Bishopric of Birmingham, and the local papers have made a great fuss about the "munificent" offer. But the offer is accompanied by the absolute condition that the total sum required (about £100,000) is raised in three years. Now this condition is not at all likely to be fulfilled. One of the local papers admits as much. When the Bishopric scheme was first set on foot some years ago only £30,000 could be raised, and the project was, for the time, abandoned. The prospects of success were much more favorable then than now.

This plan of making "munificent" offers and nullifying them in the same breath by imposing impossible conditions has become rather too common of late years. It is the cheapest form of benevolence, and is usually born of mere purse-proud ostentation. Perhaps no one would be more surprised than the individual who offers the £10,000 should the balance of the £100,000 be subscribed. Whether his pleasure at having to write the cheque would be equal to his astonishment at being called upon to do so is a point not absolutely beyond discussion. In this case, the gentleman who makes the offer has the grace to conceal his name. He has, therefore, the limited gratification of hearing all the eulogistic gush poured on his guarantee rather than upon himself personally.

Dr. Horton, the Hampstead preacher, is said to be "endeavoring to remove the reproach often hurled against the pulpit that it is the 'Coward's Castle.'" Once a month he is to preach on topics suggested by his congregation. But the essence of the "Coward's Castle" is not that the preacher chooses his own text and subject, but that he never allows discussion or contradiction. Dr. Horton, therefore, is not quite so liberal, after all, as Dr. Clifford, who sometimes submits himself to a severe heckling.

Parsons do say funny things now and then. Here is the Rev. Edward Husband, vicar of St. Michael's, Folkestone, who has started "church parades" for cyclists and photographers; on which he writes very piously in his church magazine. "The invention of cycling," he says, "is what we have much to thank God for. And it occurs to us that the same may be said of photography." Perhaps the reverend gentleman will tell us when "God" took out a patent, and what it was he invented. We never heard of anyone of that name before in the technical history of cycling or photography. Still, we live and learn; at least we are ready to.

One of the Peculiar People in Holland recently broke his arm. He declined to call in a doctor, and wrapped a leaf out of a Bible round the small toe of his left foot. He declares that this gave him instant relief. But he still walks about with a broken arm.

It is a very curious thing that the *Freethinker* has hitherto been the only paper to say a word for the prosecuted Peculiar People, and to protest against their imprisonment. Even the ministers of religion, who might be expected to strain a point in favor of sincere men and women who, if they are misled, are misled by an honest trust in the literal meaning of Scripture; even the ministers of religion, we say, have left these unhappy people to their fate. Of all the myriads of professional apostles of Jesus Christ in this country, not one, as far as we know, has raised his voice, however feebly, against the sending of these men and women of simple, child-like faith to herd with common felons. This shameful abuse of justice has been denounced only in our own columns. We think the Peculiar People mistaken, but they are not criminals, and they only believe, after all, what every Christian should believe.

It is rather a pleasant surprise to find the *Hospital* criticising adversely the imprisonment of the Peculiar People. Our contemporary looks upon it as a case of "misdirected zeal" on the part of the prosecutors. That is not much, perhaps, but it will suffice as a beginning. If justice is not

invoked, it is something to invoke expediency. The *Hospital* goes on to observe how easily gin-sodden parents get rid of well-insured infants, and how little protection the law really affords to children; and then "doubts the expediency of these prosecutions of people who admittedly do everything they can except that one thing—the provision of medical attendance."

An official of the English Church Union has signalled his recent election on the Cheltenham Board of Guardians by urging that the pauper inmates of the Union should be compelled to attend church every Sunday morning. It is satisfactory to know that the idea of compulsion found no approval on the part of the other members of the Board. One of the Guardians observed: "We can't make the inmates go to church if they don't want to." And another said: "Nor would anyone wish to do so. There must be no thrashing to church here."

Rev. Dr. Lorimer anticipates that, if things follow their present course, we shall have no Christian Sunday fifty years hence. The possibility is not so dire if by Christian Sunday is meant a day monopolised by the men of God.

Replying to the Bishop of Bangor, who recently made so much fuss about Sunday golf, a Welsh layman writes to point out that many of the clergy may be found playing golf on weekdays, when he is deprived of the opportunity.

Says the *Rock*: We are sorry to see the Bishop of Manchester has been advocating Sunday pleasuring.

Apropos of a recent address by the President of the Wesleyan Conference on "Preaching in Relation to Unbelief," the *Christian* observes: "It is a grave question to what extent a Christian minister should deal, in the pulpit, with current unbelief." Yes, it is indeed a grave question, especially when the Christian minister is afterwards dealt with by unbelievers. "No true servant of God," continues the *Christian*, "desires to shirk the difficulties which may be troubling his people, nor does any true man desire to suggest sceptical notions to those who, happily, have never been troubled with them. And yet the latter danger is always present when a man undertakes publicly to combat scepticism." The moral is to leave scepticism publicly alone. That is an easy way out of the difficulty, and obviates all possible discomfiture in debate.

A Yankee yarn, headed "A Blasphemer Stricken Dumb," has recently gained publicity in this country. It is the story of a man named John T. Kelley, of Baltimore, who, whilst pouring forth a torrent of oaths, was seized with sudden and complete speechlessness. "It was as if divine wrath had sealed his lips," says the pious reporter. But, of course, it was simply an attack of aphasia. The other day a Parisian actress, Mdlle. Thérèse Cernay, completely lost her voice just five minutes before the rising of the curtain at the Théâtre des Nouveautés.

De Witt Talmage was fond of pointing to what he considered to be "judgments" on the ungodly. But he avoided drawing any moral from the fact that his church at Brooklyn was burned down on three different occasions. It was in the autumn of 1889 that his Tabernacle was first destroyed by fire, owing, it is believed, to a lightning-stroke during the night. On May 13, 1894—the very Sunday after he had completed the twenty-fifth anniversary of his Brooklyn pastorate—his Tabernacle was again destroyed by fire. On this occasion the insurance was barely enough to pay off a debt that still remained on the building. When, subsequently, his third church was burned, he said he "didn't feel called to build a fourth in the same place." He went to finish his life in Washington, where he held no regular pastorate.

Once more the question has cropped up, Why do not men go to church? It is now estimated, according to the *Daily Mail*, that not more than seven per cent. of male adults habitually attend Church services on Sunday. All sorts of reasons are assigned, including the length of the services, the archaism of the languages and ceremonies, the barrenness of the sermons, and the spread of unbelief. "Yet another reason is suggested—that it is no longer a mark of respectability, as it once was, to attend the Sunday services." But, whatever the reason, seven per cent. is a pretty low return, especially when we consider the large army of clerics and the heavy annual expenditure of the Church.

"A Mere Business Man" writes to the *Church Times* on the subject of alleged clerical poverty. He points out that the voluntary offerings of the Church run into some 7¼ millions of pounds, the annual income of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners represents some 5½ millions per annum, and the total net income of the incumbents represents another 3½ millions of pounds. A layman might naturally ask himself: "How comes it that an institution dealing thus with many millions of pounds per annum can have starving servants in its employ? What would one think of an institution other than the Church which, handling such enormous

sums, appealed through its managers from time to time to the public to pay the salaries of its clerks?"

The Vicar of Stanwix (Cumberland), in his parish magazine for this month, says the placing of buttons by some in the bags is doing dishonor to God and the Church. Certainly it is rather a slight upon the parson; but how can it dishonor God? The Deity must have a bad time of it if he takes notice of all the mean little tricks of his worshippers. But it was ever thus; tread on a parson's toe, and he instantly howls about it as an outrage on High Heaven.

Surprise is expressed in a Dissenting weekly that the clergy of the Established Church object to individual communion cups, especially as, under the existing system, the clergy are obliged to drink the dregs of the cup, either alone or with others. "It is certainly revolting," says the writer, "to think of the clergy being compelled to drink wine which has touched the lips of many persons, some of whom may be suffering from consumption or other loathsome diseases. The result of analysis of the dregs has revealed, and would reveal, some alarming facts."

Did the Redeemer think of all this when, as it is said, he instituted the rite? Cannot something be done to protect the dear clergy, even against their wills, from the danger lurking in the communion cup?

The Catholic Truth Society is to hold its annual Conference this year at Newport. We understand that it is an important organisation from the point of view of number and influence. We should imagine, however, that the Catholic Falsehood Society would be a much bigger affair.

Viscount Halifax, the High Churchman, has a sister who is "more so" than himself. She is very wealthy, having inherited the vast estates of the late Mr. Hugo Meynell. Mrs. Meynell-Ingram, for that is her name, is devoting £30,000 to the endowment of a new Church living in Holbeck, Leeds. There will be a church, schools, and a vicarage—with a parson in it, of course, who will be appointed by the lady patron. We wish some wealthy lady would come along and spend as much on Freethought.

An American minister, in the course of a discussion in the Southern Church as to the right of women to speak in public, contends that the Greek word translated "woman" in the passages of Paul should be translated "wife." Hence it is only wives that are commanded to "keep silence." This does not very much improve matters, since spinsters may still protest—this time against the disability put upon their married sisters.

For sheer audacity of assertion commend us to the clerical man of God. A book with the title, *The Most Certain Fact in History*, is published by the Rev. T. P. Ring. What is the "most certain fact in history" according to Mr. Ring? Why, the Resurrection!

The Manchester Watch Committee, after a full investigation, has pronounced the Rev. John Gamble's mission unworthy of public support. The reverend gentleman's methods of raising money were objected to, and his balance-sheet was severely criticised.

Amongst the letters sent to the notorious brigand Musolino in prison at Lucca are many calling down the blessing of heaven upon him, and containing holy pictures and blessed medals. Perhaps it is felt that he has a good deal in common with Saint David.

Courage.

If Fate should steal your happiness
And take it far away,
And then return expectantly
To watch you weep and pray;
Just hold your head well up, dear,
And face the threatening years;
Drink the bitter cup she gives,
And smile through all your tears.

Fate knows no law or justice,
Nor cares what heart she breaks;
To him who hath enough she gives,
From him who hath nought, takes.
So run your race with lifted head,
And take things like a man;
Don't grieve if Fortune fails you,
You've done the best you can.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

The business of the Freethought Publishing Company, including the publication of the **FREETHINKER**, is now carried on at No. 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, E.C., situated between Ludgate Circus and Holborn Viaduct, and rather nearer the latter. The new premises are in every way more suitable and commodious, and will furnish the opportunity for much-needed developments on the literary side of our propaganda.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

May 4 and 11, Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court-road, London, W.

May 18, N. S. S. Conference.

To Correspondents.

CHARLES WATTS'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—April 27, morning, Stanley Hall, London, N. June 1, Masonic Hall, Camberwell.—Address, 24 Carminia-road, Balham, London, S.W.

C. COHEN'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—April 27, afternoon, Victoria Park; evening, Stepney.—Address, 241 High-road, Leyton.

TOM PACEY.—We have written you. Of course it was meant that all engagements were cancelled. Thanks for your good wishes. The Liverpool Branch shall have one of our earliest dates in the fall of the year. We are very glad to hear that you have had a good winter season at the Alexandra Hall under the new régime. You say we ought not to resume work again until we are "thoroughly fit and well." Good advice, doubtless, but not so easy to follow.

J. UMPLEBY.—Pleased to see your handwriting again, and to note that, in spite of your great age, you still retain a lively interest in "the good old cause." We hope to meet you once more at the N. S. S. Conference.

THE KELSEY FUND.—Will the subscribers to this fund please send their addresses for the return of their subscriptions, or transfer the same to some other fund? We are anxious to close this matter immediately.

A. HOPKINS.—Pleased to have your sympathetic letter. The note you say you have found in our "personal work, by voice and pen," is at least the note we have always tried to strike. As to the "irregular sniping of the past two years," which you say we "have suffered," it is well to detest it, but not well to make too much of it. We have sometimes found it very trying, and there is always the temptation to retaliate; but it is better, after all, to get on with one's own business as forthrightly as possible. In the long run, it is only true words and good work that tell. Treachery and malice and calumny die away into nothingness in time. Nature gets rid of them as she gets rid of other putrefactions.

W. TIPPER.—Thanks for your hope that we shall "soon be well enough to give the world a little shaking up again." Your suggestion as to the disposition of the Kelsey Fund is not a bad one, but we think we ought to leave it to the subscribers; although, if they don't respond to our invitation, we shall have to act "on our own"—as the man in the street says.

W. W.—The words were not Shelley's, but Coleridge's. You will find them in his *Table Talk* (Bohn's edition, p. 313). They run as follows: "Not one man in a thousand has either strength of mind or goodness of heart to be an Atheist. I repeat it. Not one man in ten thousand has goodness of heart or strength of mind to be an Atheist." Never mind the "trouble." We are always glad to help our readers. Most of them cannot be expected to have read as widely as we have. They have other things to do.

G. A. FURMAN.—We took the statement you refer to (in our *Shadow of the Sword*) many years ago from (we believe) the *Financial Reform Almanack*, which is usually a well-informed publication.

W. P. BALL.—Your cuttings are always welcome.

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 (seventh list) have been received:—A. Hopkins, 2s. 6d.; W. Bean, 2s. 6d.; W. Tipper, 2s.; Tom Pacey, 2s. 6d.; J. H. Hill, 2s. 6d.; Robert Lloyd, 5s.; E. A. Charlton, 5s.

E. A. CHARLTON.—Transferred from the Kelsey Fund as requested.

W. A. JOHNSON.—The loss on the Athenæum Hall has averaged £1 a week for some time. The audience there was principally worked up by Mr. Foote, and his long absence is, of course, a serious disadvantage. This is inevitable under such conditions of propaganda.

W. H. LEWIN.—Next week.

THE National Secular Society's office is at 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, 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 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

LETTERS for the Editor of the *Freethinker* should be addressed to 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

ORDERS for literature should be sent to the Freethought Publishing Company, Limited, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, 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.

Editorial.

FOR the first time in three months I have (last night) enjoyed four and a-half hours' continuous sleep. This fact, and its results, make me feel that I may soon be something like my old self again; although I suppose I shall be more or less sensitive until the advent of settled warm weather.

I have announced myself to lecture at the Athenæum Hall on the first Sunday in May. This is naturally subject to correction in next week's *Freethinker* if I suffer another throwback. But I really believe I shall occupy the platform this time.

Mr. Charles Watts has sent me a letter with reference to the question put to him by the editor of *Secular Thought* (Toronto). "Why send us the Anderson pamphlet?" asked Mr. Ellis. It seemed rather an odd thing to do, and I privately invited Mr. Watts to write a brief letter to the *Freethinker* on the subject. That appeared to me very much better than calling attention to it myself. Mr. Watts, however, professed not to have time to do what I requested, although the letter in which he informed me of the fact was quite as long as his "explanation" had any need to be. It is he, therefore, and not I, who must be held responsible for the matter being raised in this "personal" way. I did not see why I should await his convenience indefinitely, as his attitude seemed to suggest. Moreover, I had long known that the Anderson pamphlet had been posted to persons whose addresses could not possibly be known to Mr. Anderson himself; and it seemed to me that when I found someone (whoever he was) who had been sending the pamphlet uninvited, I had a right, and something more than a right, to endorse the recipient's request for an explanation.

Mr. Watts took a long time answering. He wrote on Wednesday to say his reply would reach me on Saturday. He did not post it until Saturday. He was then off to Glasgow, and "would not be back till Tuesday." By this delay he made himself inaccessible until the *Freethinker* had gone to press, so that I had to insert his letter as he wrote it, or curtail it, or hold it over for another week. I prefer to print it as he wrote it:—

24 Carminia-road, Balham, London, S.W.
April 19, 1902.

DEAR MR. FOOTE,—

You ask me for an explanation as to why I sent Mr. Anderson's pamphlet to Mr. C. M. Ellis, my able successor in the editorial chair of *Secular Thought*. Simply that he, as a brother journalist, might be the better acquainted with the details of the unhappy misunderstanding between yourself and Mr. Anderson. Since my return from America I have been in the habit of now and then despatching papers of interest to my old colleagues, and, at the time referred to, I included the pamphlet you advertised in the *Freethinker*, and in the columns of which you stated that you hoped it would be read by all your friends. *Secular Thought* is a purely friendly paper, and Mr. Ellis a sympathetic laborer in our cause. Had I sent the pamphlet to a known enemy

of yours, the case would have been very different. The idea of my motive being misconstrued never occurred to me, and but for the mischievous influences of late directed against me, a wrong interpretation could never have been put upon such a simple action as the one in question.

I trust and believe that I have rendered some little service to the Freethought movement, and I ask you to point to one disloyal act on my part towards those principles which have guided me all my life.

Far from having a desire to weaken your position as President of the National Secular Society, I sincerely hope you will soon regain your health and strength to continue your valuable work, and I shall be pleased, as heretofore, to render what co-operation I can.

Considering my forty-three years' work for the Freethought movement, perhaps it is not egotism if I remark that I expected other consideration than the studied slights and supersession which have been regrettably to the fore during the past year.

Freethought has already suffered through a surfeit of the "personal" element, and, although I feel acutely the wrong construction placed upon even my simplest actions, I desire to avoid anything that may injure the cause we all have at heart.

CHARLES WATTS.

Mr. Watts's answer to Mr. Ellis's question might easily have been given last week. The substance of it would go in very few lines. With regard to Mr. Watts's "motive" being "misunderstood," I must remind him that I said nothing about his motive. I left that to *him*, and he now assigns it. His object was to enlighten Mr. Ellis—who appears to resent the enlightenment. How many other persons has Mr. Watts sought to enlighten in the same way? And does he really think that sending the Anderson pamphlet to persons who never asked for it is the sort of business in which a vice-president of the N. S. S. and a member of the *Freethinker* staff should be engaged? Certainly I expressed a hope that my "friends" would read the pamphlet, but the word "friends" clearly meant those who had read my own statements in the *Freethinker*. I do not hesitate to say that the circulation of the pamphlet amongst those who have *not* read those statements is a mischievous act, calculated to cause great prejudice to me personally and to the whole Freethought movement as represented by the National Secular Society.

Mr. Watts raises a number of gratuitous points on his own account in the second half of his letter. He seems inclined to increase the "surfeit" he refers to. I have not the time or space for an adequate reply this week. For the present I can only say that I should like an explanation of such cryptic expressions as "slights" and "supersession" and "mischievous influences directed against me." As far as I am concerned, I think I can easily show that I have always treated Mr. Watts with much kindness, and latterly with great patience. I regret to have to do this, but Mr. Watts himself invites it.

G. W. FOOTE.

Sugar Plums.

THE Athenæum Hall will not be open for a Freethought lecture this evening (April 27). It will be used for a private purpose by the proprietor, who needs it in this way occasionally. London friends will please note this fact, and not go to the Athenæum Hall, and then come away (finding there is no lecture) and declare themselves disappointed and deceived.

On the following Sunday (May 4) Mr. Foote hopes to be able to occupy the Athenæum Hall platform himself. He will also take the second Sunday in May. His subjects will be announced in our next issue. On the following Sunday (Whit Sunday) the Athenæum Hall will be used for the morning and afternoon sessions of the National Secular Society's Annual Conference. We may add that the evening public meeting in connection with the Conference will be held, as it was two years ago, in the handsome minor Queen's Hall.

Mr. J. Umpleby, the Blackburn veteran, writes to say that he is willing and ready to subscribe £50 if nineteen others

will do the same, or £100 if nine others will give the same amount; the money thus raised to go to the Secular Society, Limited, which can hold it (for expenditure, of course) with absolute legal security. Mr. Umpleby does not wish his offer to stand after the N. S. S. Conference on Whit-Sunday. What do the wealthier friends of the movement say? Now that the war in South Africa seems approaching an end, there is likely to be a fine opportunity of putting the Freethought movement in a more satisfactory condition. Fresh interest will be taken in intellectual movements, and it would be well if the Secular Society, Limited, in conjunction with the National Secular Society, were able to strike into the newly opened field with the effectiveness that is only possible with adequate financial resources.

We are sometimes asked how on earth the war interferes with the prosperity of Freethought lectures and Freethought journals. Well, just in the same way as it is hard work talking against a brass band with a big drum. Men love a "scrap," and won't heed much else while one is going on. Suppose the Lord Jesus Christ himself were addressing an open-air meeting, and a dog-fight started within twenty yards, how many auditors would he have left in two minutes?

The Victoria Park Branch of the National Secular Society commenced its open-air propaganda on Sunday afternoon last, the lecturer being Mr. Heaford. Despite the discouraging climatic conditions, there was a very large audience, and a fairly good collection was taken up. To-day (April 27) the lecturer will be Mr. C. Cohen. Mr. Cohen is limiting the quantity of his open-air lecturing very considerably this summer. Three lectures in one day in various parts of the metropolis is a great strain upon the strongest constitution, and last summer he received several ugly warnings by which he intends to benefit. Victoria Park is the principal place at which he will speak, but other parts of London may be visited occasionally. To-day his subject will be "The New Education Bill: A Secularist's View." The lecture commences at 3.15.

Mr. Cohen also lectures in the evening at 7 at the Stanley Temperance Bar, 7 High-street, Stepney. Admission free.

Dr. E. B. Foote, senior, of Larchmont Manor, New York, recently celebrated his seventy-third birthday. Speaking with strict correctness, we should say that his friends celebrated it for him. Those immediately around him organised a very pretty surprise. It was a big pie placed upon the dinner table, and when it was cut open it was found to contain a mass of letters and souvenirs from his legion of friends all over the world—although chiefly, of course, in the United States of America. Mr. G. W. Foote (of London, you know) had the honor of figuring with the rest of Dr. Foote's friends in that pie. He wrote his letter just in the nick of time, the night before he fell into his late illness. We wish we could print it here, but he did not keep a copy; in fact, it was with great difficulty that he wrote the letter. One thing it stated is indisputable; namely, that Dr. Foote's name, with all who know him, stands for intellect, courage, and benevolence.

Dr. Foote has since written to his namesake in England. As a regular reader of the *Freethinker*, he says he is sure that our editor's breakdown was simply the result of overwork. He advises Mr. Foote to "go easy" for a good while to come, and let his colleagues look after the paper and other things. A temporary absence from the field, Dr. Foote shrewdly remarks, is better than a permanent one.

On Tuesday and Wednesday next a public debate is to take place at the Picton Hall, Liverpool, between Mr. H. P. Ward and Mr. G. Wise. The subject for debate is "Theism or Atheism: Which is the More Reasonable?" We hope there will be a good muster of "saints" to support the Secular speaker.

The Camberwell Branch holds its last indoor gathering to-day, and recommences its outdoor propaganda at Station-road and Brockwell Park. It is hoped that local friends will help to make these meetings a success. Whether the Peckham Rye station will be opened will depend upon how the Branch is supported by the South London Freethinkers. Certainly they *owe* it their support.

Mr. F. Bower Alcock, M.A., is a candidate for the Birkenhead School Board. His program includes "the total abolition of theology from our schools, and the founding of ethical instruction upon a purely humanistic and social basis." We therefore hope he will have the warm and vigorous support of all Freethinkers in the borough. Mr. Alcock dates from Ruskin Hall, and, judging by his photograph, should make an excellent member of the School Board. The Rev. E. F. Davies, one of his opponents, standing in the Church interest, admits that Mr. Alcock's address is beautiful, but, alas, there is no religion in it. And what is morality without religion? Why, they had moral teaching instead of Bible instruction for ten years in Australia, and there was such an enormous increase of crime that the people voted the Bible back again

as the only safe basis of morality. So says Mr. Davies. But he should surely be more precise. What colony does he refer to? There is no colony called Australia. Probably the reverend gentleman is only echoing, and that very loosely, the oft-exposed nonsense of Bishop Moorhouse with respect to the colony of Victoria.

The Metropolitan Radical Federation has forwarded a resolution to Mr. Balfour—the one at Westminster, not the one at Wormwood Scrubs—expressing deep regret that the King's Government had lacked the courage to submit an education scheme that was adequate to the crying needs of the nation, and pointing out that if the Government were to follow the excellent example of New Zealand in providing only secular education, a very great deal of the present religious difficulty in the schools would be disposed of. We welcome this resolution, though it is somewhat less than the truth. The adoption of secular education would necessarily remove *all* the religious difficulty in the schools. There could be no religious difficulty where there was no religion.

The West Ham Branch of the N.S.S. has also passed a series of sweeping resolutions condemning the proposed Education Bill, on the grounds of its utter inadequacy and monstrously unfair provisions. We regret that pressure on our space prohibits printing the full text of these resolutions.

Secular Thought (Toronto) reproduces Mr. Foote's article on "The Dear Bishops" from the *Freethinker*.

If any of our readers possess clean copies of this journal for October 29 and November 6 and 12, 1899, and would care to part with them, full price will be paid by Miss Vance if she is communicated with.

Apropos the Geneva Freethought Congress, 1902.

THE Freethought Societies on the Continent are not content to circumscribe their activities within narrow local limits. Their members perceive that the interests of the movement must widen itself out into national and international proportions, in order that it may be able to defeat the machinations of that world-embracing clericalism which, in its various forms, so largely dominates the destinies of mankind.

It was only so recently as Easter Monday that the National Federation of French Freethinkers met for their annual Congress at Paris. On Sunday and Monday, April 13 and 14, the Belgian Freethought Federation met and discussed a long and interesting program of questions at Brussels. One of the principal items of discussion was the subject of the International Freethought Federation, which, as our readers are already aware, will meet at Geneva from September 14 to 17, both days inclusive. The delegates to this Congress will comprise representatives of all the principal countries in Europe, and those who followed the account given in these columns of the proceedings at the International Freethought Congress of 1900 at Paris will know something beforehand of the ability and high character of the devoted men and women who are so nobly fighting the battle of Freethought in the chief countries on the Continent. It is to be hoped that the N. S. S. will take measures to secure adequate representation of the Freethought element in our "tight little island."

Some idea of the importance of the questions proposed for discussion at the Congress will be gained from the subjoined statement in detail of the subjects to be set before the Congress. The program is as under:—

1. The relations between Freethought and Positivism.
2. The practical means of combating the spirit of authoritarian despotism now manifesting itself in a state of recrudescence in various countries.
3. The development of the ideas of Freethought in the minds of children, viz.:—
 - (a) In those brought up in a particular religion.
 - (b) In those brought up outside all religious influences.
4. The means of evoking in woman an interest in the Freethought movement.
5. What are the defects inherent to the morality ascribed to Christ?
6. The doctrine of Evolution and the dogmas of religion.
7. International action against religious corporations.

M. Furnémont, the Deputy for Brussels, and General Secretary of the International Freethought Federation, writes me to say that he is anxious that this program may be set down for discussion at the N.S.S. Conference which will meet this year in London next Whit Sunday.

As a mark of the progress of our ideas abroad, let me add that the Department of Public Instruction at Geneva has placed the Aula of the University of the city at the disposal of the Congress during the four days it will assemble.

WM. HEAFORD.

The Logic of Persecution.

NEITHER the cruelty of tyrants, nor the ambition of conquerors, has wrought so much mischief and suffering as the principle of persecution. The crimes of a Nero, the ravages of an Attila, afflict the world for a season, and then cease and are forgotten, or only linger in the memory of history. But persecution operates incessantly like a natural force. With the universality of light, it radiates in every direction. The palace is not too proud for its entrance, nor is the cottage too humble. It affects every relationship of life. Its action is exhibited in public through imprisonment, torture, and bloodshed, and in private through the tears of misery and the groans of despair.

But worse remains. Bodies starve and hearts break, but at last there comes "the popped sleep, the end of all." Grief is buried in the grave, Nature covers it with a mantle of grass and flowers, and the feet of joy trip merrily over the paths once trodden by heavy-footed care. Yet the more subtle effects of persecution remain with the living. They are not screwed down in the coffin and buried with the dead. They become part of the pestilential atmosphere of cowardice and hypocrisy which saps the intellectual manhood of society, so that bright-eyed inquiry sinks into bleary-eyed faith, and the rich vitality of active honest thought falls into the decrepitude of timid and slothful acquiescence.

What is this principle of persecution, and how is it generated and developed in the human mind? Now that it is falling into discredit, there is a tendency on the part of Christian apologists to ascribe it to our natural hatred of contradiction. Men argue and quarrel, and if intellectual differences excite hostility in an age like this, how easy it was for them to excite the bitterest animosity in more ignorant and barbarous ages! Such is the plea now frequently advanced. No doubt it wears a certain plausibility, but a little investigation will show its fallacy. Men and women are so various in their minds, characters, circumstances, and interests, that if left to themselves they inevitably form a multiplicity of ever-shifting parties, sects, fashions, and opinions; and, while each might resent the impertinence of disagreement from its own standard, the very multifirmity of the whole mass must preserve a general balance of fair play, since every single sect with an itch for persecuting would be confronted by an overwhelming majority of dissidents. It is obvious, therefore, that persecution can only be indulged in when some particular form of opinion is in the ascendant: and if this form is artificially developed; if it is the result, not of knowledge and reflection, but of custom and training; if, in short, it is rather a superstition than a belief; you have a condition of things highly favorable for the forcible suppression of heresy. Now, throughout history there is one great form of opinion which *has been* artificially developed, which has been accepted through faith and not through study, which has always been concerned with alleged occurrences in the remote past or the inaccessible future, and which has also been systematically maintained in its "pristine purity" by an army of teachers who have pledged themselves to inculcate the ancient faith without any admixture of their own intelligence.

That form of opinion is Religion. Accordingly we should expect to find its career always attended with persecution, and the expectation is amply justified by a cursory glance at the history of every faith. There is, indeed, one great exception; but, to use a popular though inaccurate phrase, it is an exception which proves the rule. Buddhism has never persecuted. But Buddhism is rather a philosophy than a religion; or, if a religion, it is not a theology, and that is the sense attached to *religion* in this article.

All such religions have persecuted, do persecute, and will persecute while they exist. Let it not be supposed, however, that they punish heretics on the open ground that the majority must be right and the minority must be wrong, or that some people have a right to think while others have only the right to acquiesce. No, that is too shameless an avowal; nor would it, indeed, be the real truth. There is a principle in religions which has always been the sanction of persecution; and, if it be true, persecution is more than right—it is a duty. That principle is Salvation by Faith.

If a certain belief is necessary to salvation, if to reject it is to merit damnation, and to undermine it is to imperil the eternal welfare of others, there is only one course open to its adherents; they must treat the heretic as they would treat a viper. He is a poisonous creature to be swiftly extinguished. But not *too* swiftly, for he has a soul that may still be saved. Accordingly he is sequestered to prevent further harm, an effort is made to convert him, then he is punished, and the rest is left with God. That his conversion is attempted by torture, either physical or mental, is not an absurdity; it is consonant to the doctrine of salvation by faith. For if God punishes or rewards us according to our possession or lack of faith, it follows that faith is within the power of will. Accordingly the heretic, to use Dr. Martineau's expression, is reminded not of arguments but of motives, not of evidence but of fear, not of proofs but of perils, not of reasons but of ruin. When we recognise that the understanding acts independently of volition, and that the threat of punishment, while it may produce silence or hypocrisy, *cannot* alter belief, this method of procedure strikes us as a monstrous imbecility; but, given a belief in the doctrine of salvation by faith, it must necessarily appear both logical and just. If the heretic *will* not believe, he is clearly wicked, for he rejects the truth and insults God. He has deliberately chosen the path to hell, and does it matter whether he travel slowly or swiftly to his destination? But does it *not* matter whether he go alone or drag down others with him to perdition? Such was the logic of the Inquisitors, and although their cruelties must be detested their consistency must be allowed.

Catholics have an infallible Church, and the Protestants an infallible Bible. Yet as the teaching of the Bible becomes a question of interpretation, the infallibility of each Church resolves itself into the infallibility of its priesthood. Each asserts that *some* belief is necessary to salvation. Religious liberty, therefore, has never entered into the imagination of either. The Protestants who revolted against the Papacy openly avowed the principle of persecution. Luther, Beza, Calvin, and Melancthon were probably more intolerant than any Pope of their age; and if the Protestant persecutions were not, on the whole, so sanguinary as those of the Roman Catholic Church, it was simply due to the fact that Catholicism passed through a dark and ferocious period of history, while Protestantism emerged in an age of greater light and humanity. Persecution cannot always be bloody, but it always inflicts on heretics as much suffering as the sentiment of the community will tolerate.

The doctrine of salvation by faith has been more mischievous than all other delusions of theology combined. How true are the words of Pascal: "Jamais on ne fait le mal si pleinement et si gaiement que quand on le fait par un faux principe de conscience." Fortunately a nobler day is breaking. The light of truth succeeds the darkness of error. Right belief is infinitely important, but it cannot be forced. Belief is independent of will. But character is not, and therefore the philosopher approves or condemns actions instead of censuring beliefs. Theology, however, consistently clings to its old habits. "Infidels" must not be argued with but threatened, not convinced but libelled; and when these weapons are futile there ensues the persecution of silence. That serves for a time, but only for a time; it may obstruct, but it cannot prevent, the spread of unbelief. It is like a veil against the light. It may obscure the dawn to the dull-eyed and the uninquisitive, but presently the blindest sluggards in the penfolds of faith will see that the sun has risen.

—Reprinted.

G. W. FOOTE.

Man turns to religion for support when he grows old and weary, when his physical and intellectual powers fail him, when he can no longer either enjoy or reason. So many Freethinkers, you say, have been converted on their death-bed. But, at any rate, do not boast of this! Such stories belong at best to pathology, and are very bad evidence for your case. After all, they only prove that it was impossible for you to convert those Freethinkers so long as they went about in the enjoyment of their healthy senses and in full possession of their reasoning faculty.—Heine.

The Engraving of Romney's Portrait of Paine Identified.

ALL lovers of Freethought are indebted to Dr. Conway for his noble volume on Paine in America and Paris. Mr. J. B. Elliott, of Philadelphia, thinks there ought to be a book on "Paine in England," illustrated as is your fascinating volume, *The Age of Reason*. Dr. Clair J. Grece, who has relics of Paine and his friends, would be a good person to write such a work, so would G. W. Foote, who has written a masterly little introduction to a sixpenny edition of the *Age of Reason*. Mr. J. M. Robertson, himself a distinguished Freethought author, might produce a classic volume on this subject. F. J. Gould, one of the attractive writers of the Rationalist Press Association, would make a book of note upon Paine in England. Paine needs to be vindicated in England more than in America or France, and there is a mine of information unexplored in England. It is for Mr. Elliott's information that I send these and other particulars to the *Truthseeker*.

Under the Romney portrait of Paine in your bright edition of the *Age of Reason* you put these words: "From the engraved likeness in the possession of W. H. Burr, of Washington, D.C., who identifies it as a copy of Romney's portrait of Paine from its close resemblance to copperplate engravings of that celebrated picture." All this is very indefinite. There is no proof on this that Paine ever saw or approved of the engraving, whereas you had in New York, for many years, the first certified copy; in other words, the first proof of the engraving of Romney's painting. I have that proof now in my possession. Paine received it himself, and presumably approved of it, as he presented it to a valued friend. On the back of it are the words, "Thomas Paine, to his friend Clio Rickman," in Paine's own handwriting. There is no other testimony of its authenticity in existence.

This engraving hung for nearly half a century on the walls of a room in New York. On the death of the tenant Dr. Hollick, in kindness, bought the effects. As the frame of the engraving was worthless, he took out the portrait, and, to his astonishment, found Paine's handwriting at the back of it. I know the engraving came into New York, but I have no time to tell the story. Dr. Hollick wrote to Colonel Ingersoll, offering to present him with the engraving; but the Colonel made no reply. The letter may have been miscarried, or the Colonel may not have noticed its interest. He never called for it nor wrote, and, I being Dr. Hollick's earliest and oldest friend, he gave it to me. A few years ago Dr. Clair Grece was offered, by a bookseller, a portrait in sepia of Paine, but, doubting its authenticity, he asked me to obtain the opinion of my brother William, who was then curator of the Royal Academy Art Schools. At my request, he went and saw the portrait, and said it was no doubt the one from which Sharp made his engraving. It was the brightest portrait of Paine I have ever seen. Light and genius shone in it. I should have bought it "on sight," but that would have been treachery to my friend, who had given me the commission of inquiry. It is now in the possession of Dr. Grece, at Red Hill, Surrey.

Thus I fulfil my promise to send you the facts which prove that the Romney engraving of Paine Vale introduced to the Freethinkers of America is authentic.

GEORGE JACOB HOIYOAKE,

—*Truthseeker* (New York).

No one who is cognisant of the fact of the case nowadays doubts that the roots of psychology lie in the physiology of the nervous system. What we call the operations of the mind are functions of the brain, and the materials of consciousness are products of cerebral activity. Cabanis may have made use of crude and misleading phraseology when he said that the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile; but the conception which that much-abused phrase embodies is, nevertheless, far more consistent with fact than the popular notion that the mind is a metaphysical entity seated in the head, but as independent of the brain as a telegraph operator is of his instrument.—Huxley.

"And They Sung a New Song"; or, Dan Leno
in Heaven.

ONE night I had some pork for supper—
Hence the yarn I'm telling :
I went to sleep upon the upper
Storey of my dwelling.

I dreamt I'd been and had a gory
Bath, and was converted ;
I dreamt I was a saint in glory,
Feathered, crowned, and shirted.

I took a back seat near a pearly
Gate of Jah's the-ay-tre ;
The front seat holders got there early,
I was rather later.

I soon discovered 'twasn't what a
Cockney calls a "cop" there ;
I wished to God that I was not a
Fellow doomed to stop there.

The Elders' trumpets loudly brayed ;
The walls I sat inside of
Vibrated with the tune they played—
"The tune the old cow died of."

I heard a knock, and more than one, for
Pete's a sleepy mortal ;
Then, "Young men taken in and done for"
Through the opening portal.

"Is that you, Dan?" I shouted gladly.
"Sure, I thought I knew yer.
You're just the chap we wanted badly.
Glory allelu-yer!"

The angels sung a new song, saying,
Worthy is—and so on.

Sarcastic Dan began hooraying,
Shouted "Encore, go on!"

And so they did ; they kept on killing
That infernal ditty,
"A song that wouldn't fetch a shilling
Way down London City."

So said the scoffing "one and only"
Unto me, his neighbor ;
"The author ought to do a lonely
Eighteen months' hard labor."

"You're looking thinner than a poker,"
Said the man of "patter."
"And who's your tailor?" said the joker ;
"Who's your golden hatter?"

"Thin?" said I, "thou man of patter,
Angels' grub is thinning ;
I've heard that laughter makes you fatter ;
Sing, and start us grinning."

We heard the voice of Jesus, saying :
"Daniel, come up hither ;
Come where the booze—the band is playing."
Daniel hastened thither.

He sang ; the angels joined in chorus,
Split their sides with laughter ;
Said Christ : "We'll have no hymns to bore us
Henceforth ever after."

"Ye elders, cease your hideous braying,
Drown the Beasts that bellow."
And then they sung a new song, saying
"He's a jolly good fellow."

"Now this *is* Heaven, Dan," I mumbled ;
Daniel's face was beaming ;
"Now this *is*"—out of the bed I tumbled ;
'Twasn't—I'd been dreaming!

ESS JAY BEE.

A Death-Bed Trouble.

The *Western Mail* is responsible for the following story :
"A Welsh Independent minister in South Glamorgan was
recently called to the bedside of a man who had been a prize-
fighter, and, in a general way, was a very rough character.
When the minister called, the old fighter said that he could
not live long, and that two things troubled him : (1) He had
been such a bad character, but had hope for forgiveness, and
on this point the minister did much to console him ; and (2)
he had lost one of his limbs seven years ago, and that had
been buried at M—. But, having removed from the dis-
trict, his body would be buried about twenty miles distant
from M— ; and he failed for the life of him to see how on
the resurrection morning the limb and the body were to be
brought together, as they would be twenty miles apart. The
minister tried long and manfully to bring assurance to the
troubled mind, but in the end he had to leave, confessing
utter failure."

Correspondence.

THE ROOTS OF MORAL POWER :
EVOLUTIONARY?

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I am obliged to Mr. Ball for his answer to my letter concerning "The Roots of Moral Power." I might say, in passing, that I have read Darwin's *Descent of Man* with pleasure. However, it is precisely because his account of the origin and development of the moral sense fails, to my mind, in effectively locating such roots that I venture on further inquiries. In the first place, the theory of evolution has limitations. There can be no question as to the fundamental truths of the theory as applied to the origin of species, but beyond this we are on doubtful ground. It would appear, on reflection, that the theory of evolution should be even easier of demonstration in the inorganic world than in the many complexities of organic being. However, little or no attempt seems to have been made to trace the presence, operation, and influence of the theory on inorganic matter.

Where do we see, in the constituents of the inorganic world, the principle of Natural Selection at work, to say nothing of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest, inseparable concomitants of evolution? No elements or their compounds, analogous to species, are known to be extinct. Each and all have the same physical and chemical constants in the present as they possessed in the past, and will possess in the future—so far as we know. Certain elements are here alone, and in combination, in great abundance—oxygen and silicon; while others are comparatively rare—cobalt and platinum; but there is no evidence of probable extermination as the result of any struggle for existence. The germ of the human being, monkey, or dog, is said to be identical for all at two or three days old. In the inorganic world the smallest conceivable atoms preserve their identity; there are always fixed and definite physical and chemical constants peculiar to each. No arrested development is here. The growth of the crystal epitomises no past. What answer does evolution give?

In the face of these limitations I object to the too general application of the principles of evolution, as at present obtains. I fail to see how a theory, embracing all the horrors that the acceptance of the "struggle for existence" and the "survival of the fittest" implies, can have any weight in determining principles of right—as between man and man, in thought and deed. The underlying principles of the theory of evolution may be correct, as applied to birds, fishes, plants, reptiles, and beasts; but as applied to the actions of intelligent, reasoning men, conscious of the nobility and strength of right doing, such principles are low, mean, and contemptible to a degree. "The roots of moral power" are not likely to be identified in the workings of this great theory. Further, where does evolution show the relation of mentality to the general phenomena of the correlation of force?

Science has, on the whole, been more successful in classification—in giving names to things—than in determining the functions of things, and the roots from which such functions spring. But to return to our point. The fact remains that there are occasions when the inner moral sense, or feeling, of an individual rebels against the course sanctioned by experience. Here is divided authority. Which is right? Seeing that the principle of right doing is necessary for our felicity and well-being, it behoves us to diligently search for the roots from which such feelings spring, in order that we may be able to quote our authority for what we think and do, in justification of our conduct, actions, and deeds.

Finally, I would suggest to Mr. Ball that I am not so much concerned about the *phases* of moral power as I am about the *roots* from which such power is derived, and the sources from which that power is sustained. Why this feeling of right, in spite of counter feelings inspired by prudence and experience? ALFRED HOPKINS.

UTILITARIANISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Mr. Bennett asks me to answer an attempted "poser" to Atheists, in which the Rev. W. T. Lee assumes that a Utilitarian could not consistently allow himself to rescue a thief from a house on fire. But to leave the thief to burn when one might save him from a peculiarly agonising death would be merely a slightly disguised form of murder. A Utilitarian is not bound to acquiesce in a form of murder in order to repress theft. He may rightly save himself from the sympathetic pain of seeing even a thief burnt to death, and from the moral injury (which means incalculable future as well as present pains) involved in the cold-blooded violation of his ideals of justice and humanity. Death by fire is neither a desirable nor a recognised method of punishing theft; and if any individual on his own responsibility dooms the thief to an excruciating death by fire he usurps the functions of legislator, prosecutor, witness, jury, judge, tormentor, and executioner all in one. Such irregular methods,

and the frame of mind which inflicts death or torture on its own responsibility, are highly adverse to the welfare of the community. On the other hand, the habitual cultivation of the sympathies or social instincts which teach us to save the lives of our fellow beings is as essential to the general happiness as the instinctive and habitual avoidance of murder. The Utilitarian would deal with the thief by regular methods agreed upon by society, and not by private murder or its equivalent.

W. P. BALL.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, etc.

LONDON.

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

THE ATHENÆUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): No lecture.

NORTH CAMBERWELL HALL (61 New Church-road): 7, Conversazione.

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

BROCKWELL PARK: 3.15, R. P. Edwards.

EAST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Stanley Temperance Bar, 7 High-street, Stepney): 7, C. Cohen.

LIMEHOUSE (outside Eastern Hotel): 11.30, F. A. Davies, "An Hour with the Devil."

MILE END WASTE: 11.30, A. B. Moss.

WALTHAMSTOW (Mission Grove, High-street): April 26, at 6.30, Debate between Messrs. W. J. Ramsey and Taylor.

STRATFORD (The Grove): 7, E. White, "The Miraculous Element in the Life of Jesus."

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 11.30, W. J. Ramsey.

VICTORIA PARK (near the fountain): 3.15, C. Cohen, "The Government's Education Bill."

RIDLEY-ROAD: A. B. Moss, "What Do Christians Believe?"

EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Bromley Vestry Hall, Bow-road): 7, Stanton Coit, "The Personality of Christ."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Surrey Masonic Hall): 7, Dr. W. Sullivan, "The Tragedy of Calvary."

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall, ante-room, first floor): 11.15, Rev. Stewart Headlam, "The Education Bill."

STREATHAM AND BRIXTON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Carlton Hall, Tunstall-road, Brixton-road): 7, T. Adams, "Garden Cities."

COUNTRY.

CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school; 7, G. Hood, "Justice."

GLASGOW (110 Brunswick-street): 12, Discussion Class—Open Discussion; 6.30, J. F. Turnbull.

LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, T. E. Rhodes, Dr. Nico's *The Church's One Foundation*.

MANCHESTER (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road): 6.30, Tom Swan, "Tolstoy and Modern Science."

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, G. Berrisford, "Did Jesus Ever Live?"

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

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