

Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXII.—No. 18.

SUNDAY, MAY 4, 1902.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

Speak properly, and in as few Words as you can, but always PLAINLY; for the End of Speech is not Ostentation, but to be understood.—WILLIAM PENN.

Religion and Democracy.

THE task before the Church, said Lord Salisbury some years ago, is to capture the schools. This was sound advice, from a Churchman's point of view, although it might be merged in a much wider counsel, applicable to all churches and religious organisations—that of capturing the Democracy. Democracy is here, and is a power to be reckoned with for either good or ill. It is young, full of flaws, and too easily led by those who are skilful enough to play upon its passions and prejudices; but it is here, and here to stay. It is a force that all have to reckon with, and it possesses a certain dumb power of its own that impresses its views even upon those who are manipulating it. In the body politic, as in the individual organism, infection may spread from the higher to the lower centres, or in the reverse direction; and, while the leaders of the people may imagine that they are forcing their own views upon the mass, their real power and ability for leadership must ultimately rest upon their success in putting into definite and concrete expression the unexpressed and semi-conscious aspirations of those whom they lead.

The real task of the Churches, therefore, the point upon which their permanent success hinges, is the capture of the democracy. And this is precisely what the Churches are not doing, and cannot do. Every decade shows the democracy of not only this country, but the whole of Europe, less influenced by religious teaching, and less in touch with organised religious institutions. According to the Bishop of London, not more than one per cent. of the male population of East London ever attends any place of worship, and Dean Farrar caps this by the declaration that not more than three per cent. of the entire working-class population "are really influenced by the Gospel of Jesus Christ"—and the working-class represent, according to the latter, eighty-three per cent. of the entire population. Nor do any of the devices adopted by religious organisations increase the area of their influence. A strenuously conducted evangelical campaign may rouse a little enthusiasm for a time, but it soon subsides, and things remain as they were, or slightly worse than they were. And, in the main, these evangelical campaigns do not touch outsiders at all. There is a certain transference of people from one church to another, or a duplication of membership; but the world outside the Churches remains stolidly looking on, regarding the whole affair pretty much as it would an uninteresting theatrical performance.

Even the much-vaunted charities of the Churches are losing their influence. The teachings of political economy have not been quite in vain, and the democracy are beginning to realise that charity can afford no real cure for the evils it suffers under—even that it does in a large number of instances actually perpetuate them, and is always a mark of the backward state of our civilisation. It is nothing to be proud of that so many thousands of people are dependent upon the charity of others for a meal, and still less is there anything to congratulate ourselves upon in the circumstance that the majority of these look upon their dependence on charity as the

normal and natural condition of their existence. All charity, even while it may be an indication of the existence of generous feelings, is also a condemnation of the efficiency of our civilisation; and one cannot help drawing the conclusion that, had the Christian Churches paid the same attention to the organisation of society on a rationalistic basis that they have to the elaboration of their creeds and rituals, the necessity for charity might have by now been considerably diminished—perhaps have disappeared.

Moreover, I, for one, do not hesitate to say that the motives underlying *Christian* charities are often more of an interested than of a philanthropic character. Charities are utilised, as education has been utilised, as a means of promoting the interests of church or chapel rather than with a sincere desire to relieve and diminish distress. Charities that are not sectarian do not receive near the support given to those that are. It is the charities that are labelled Wesleyan, Methodist, Baptist, Roman Catholic, or Episcopalian, or wear some such sectarian badge, that are most lavishly supported. Why is this? The plain truth is that these charities are used as so many means of buying and bribing supporters. Just as in the earlier portion of the nineteenth century church and chapel went on improving the schools under their respective control in the hopes of attracting clients from a rival religious establishment, so charities are used to-day. There is but one monk in the history of Christianity who is said to have sacrificed himself for a purely humanitarian object—Telemachus—and he has neither received the honor of canonisation nor had monuments raised to his memory.

And this use of charity by the Churches has not been without its demoralising results. Dissenters complain that in the villages poor Nonconformists are afraid to speak out for fear of losing their portion of the village charities that are under the control of the Church. At a Church congress, held a couple of years ago, a religious dignitary informed his audience that in South London the people were too poor to become Dissenters. And while the charities controlled by the Church thus act in the direction of bribing people to sell their independence of thought and speech, the charities controlled by the chapels act in a precisely similar manner. Anyone who knows East London intimately knows how powerfully the charities of church and chapel operate in bringing the poor to religious services. And thus, while we have a bribe operating in the direction of robbing people of their personal independence and personal dignity, we have the same thing operating to keep them in a spirit of contentment and apathy to all real and permanent social reform. Those who support religious charities are not blind to the purpose for which they are maintained, and there are probably few investments which pay the interested classes better than their donations to the charities of church and chapel.

The hopeful feature of it all is that the clear-sighted among the democracy are beginning to realise this, and more than this. A large proportion of the eighty per cent. who, according to Dean Farrar, are outside the influence of Christianity, are beginning to feel that the real concerns of democracy are with neither church nor chapel, nor with any of the things that are of vital interest to them. The whole of the modern democratic and labor movement, although associated at various points with certain religious organisations, has in all its essentials grown up outside and independent of them. The fight for trade unionism, the various extensions of the franchise, the struggle for a national system of elementary education, the fight for a rational Sunday,

none of them have been dependent upon religious belief. Even the temperance movement was banned at first by the Churches, and only adopted when it could be used as an ally. What possible help can democracy derive from a gospel of non-resistance to evil, an exhortation to render obedience to the powers that be on the penalty of damnation for disobedience, a command to obey masters, either good or bad, with fear and trembling, or a teaching that puts a padlock on the mouth of every woman, and orders wives to be in complete submission to their husbands?

The essential problem confronting a democracy, difficult as it may be to solve, is not at all difficult to formulate. It is, in a word, how to so economise our energies and to organise our materials that a decent, cleanly livelihood at least may be within reach of all who care to earn it by industry and sobriety. Our task is to equip men and women for a flesh-and-blood existence here on earth, not to prepare them for a citizenship in the New Jerusalem. And to the complete carrying out of this task the questions with which the Churches are vitally concerned are of no importance whatever. We can see that our water supply is pure whether we are going to drink at the crystal stream in the Christian heaven or not. We can place good music within the reach of all, even though we dismiss the hopes of hearing the "song of the Lamb" as a fantastic dream. We can see that our houses are solidly built and decently constructed, without troubling about mansions in the sky; and, whether there be a life beyond the tomb or not, and whether there exists a God or not, the work of educating and humanising men and women may still go forward. If there is a God worthy of worship, these tasks would earn his approval; and, if they would not earn his approval, then he is not worth our troubling about.

The real, the vital, the essential issues of life all lie outside the sphere of theology. Yet millions of money are spent annually upon religion, the labor of thousands of men is withdrawn from productive pursuits, and their maintenance saddled upon the remainder of the community; and for this huge drain no one can point to a single invention in any of the arts or sciences, or to a single improvement in social life, as being due to their labors as theologians. Whatever good they have done, they have done in their capacity as citizens, not in their capacity as priests. The task of democracy is, then, clear. It is to conserve and economise our energies—to attack the vital problems first, and leave others for later consideration. Let us take the money and energy and time now spent upon religion, and devote them to purely social purposes, instead of to the support of armies of men who waste time discussing such inherently absurd questions as the proper burning of lights or of incense, the proper wearing of millinery or decoration of churches; instead of wasting time discussing whether two or three or four hands penned the first five books of the Bible, or the proper attitude to be taken up in saying prayers, let us utilise our energies in studying and developing schemes of social application and immediate importance, and we may in this way make earth brighter and better, even though we remain in doubt concerning the position of paradise or the constitution of the heavenly kingdom.

Of course, all this misdirection of human energies serves well enough the interests of a class—and well enough does this class know it. It is much better for them that young men should spend their time studying the constitution of the New Jerusalem or the condition of the ancient Jews than that they should be studying the conditions of life in our modern cities, and the best way of removing the evils that exist therein. The interests of a class are served much better when young men and women meet at street-corners or in Sunday-school, and sing hymns, than when they discuss the conditions of land tenure and the best methods of improving it. The chief source of the strength of the few is the apathy of the many, and one of the best methods of keeping the many apathetic or indifferent to all that should concern them is to keep them employed in theological speculations or under the control of the priest.

It is this enormous waste of human energies on non-important matters that makes religion such a deadly enemy to the welfare of a democracy. The powers of a democracy for good are great; but so, too, are its

capacities for evil. And, in final analysis, the only security for the right acting of a democracy, the only way to protect it against itself and against the cupidity and craft of others, is to see that it is composed of clear thinking, independent spirited men and women, who are keenly alive to the essential issues of life and on their guard against all imposition. And this condition of things can never obtain while we have an army of men, fifty thousand strong, who, from the position given them by custom and law, are peculiarly able to divert the attention of the people from the essential to the non-essential issues of life.

It is not without reason that in the history of the world Church and Throne, the Sceptre and the Mitre, have always been in close alliance. Nor is it without reason that, while there are tyrants who have been Atheists in conviction, they have always counselled religion to their subjects. *They*, at least, have recognised in which direction their true interest lay. They have seen and recognised the truth that men have only a limited amount of energy at their disposal, and that the energy expended on religion cannot be expended on the consideration of social problems. They have seen that the only permanent guarantee of physical servitude is mental slavery, and that to this end the most powerful agency they could employ was theology. The world's best and most fruitful thought has always sprung from those who have been strong enough to resist the prevailing theology, and such will always be the case. The realisation of the "Rights of Man" rests ultimately upon our ability to inaugurate the "Age of Reason."

C. COHEN.

Man's Highest Duty.

THE philosophy of Secularism teaches that man's highest duty is to so regulate his conduct that the better part of his nature shall be paramount, and that his influence shall tend to elevate the character of the general community. The idea of duty has reference to conduct which grows out of our relations to each other. It includes our obligation to parents, family, and the State, to whom, and to which, we are individually indebted for benefits received. Our only concern is with this world and its inhabitants, for beyond these we recognise no moral duty or responsibility. The incentive to the performance of duty from a Secular standpoint is the desire to maintain social affinity, and to raise the standard of ethical culture and general intelligence by the example of right-doing—a term which should be understood to mean the performance of acts that are beneficial both to the individual and to society in general. Of course, it may be urged that this view of duty makes morality a personal advantage. That is so; and herein lies the excellence of the Secular method, inasmuch as the general good is the result of personal action. It is a mistake to suppose that perfect individual happiness is possible while we are surrounded with ignorance and vice; therefore Secularists contend that their neighbors should be well instructed in order that each and all may share the highest good.

It may be taken as a fundamental teaching of Secularism that the principal duty of man is to accept as the basis of his conduct the general maxim laid down in the Roman law of the Twelve Tables—namely, that "the well-being of the people is the supreme law." In order to secure this result, two prominent forces have for ages been more or less in operation. These forces are known by the terms "Ethics" and "Religion." In former times it was supposed that they were necessarily allied, but it is now acknowledged that frequently they are in no way associated. They were distinct in their origin, separate in their development, and to-day the one is often in force where the other is entirely absent. It should be observed that the alleged supernatural religions are here referred to. Such religions originated in fear and ignorance, while morality was born of experience and knowledge. In the growth of the two the one has been often separate from the other. For instance, the Mexicans, and certain Indian tribes, were noted for their religious aspirations, but morality amongst them was almost an unknown quantity. The Hebrews were a religious

people; the morality, however, of their leading heroes was decidedly of a very low order. And most Christians, while claiming to be devoutly religious, have not manifested high ethical conduct, as their apathy to social questions, their opposition to progressive measures, their bitter persecution of those who differed from them, and their support of reckless wars too clearly indicate. Where the conduct of religionists has improved it has been in consequence of ethical culture influencing their conduct. In fact, it is morality that has purified religion, not religion that has purified morality. It has been aptly said that "it was religion that gave the hemlock to Socrates. If the record be true, it was religion that hounded Jesus to his death, for no other reason than that he was a blasphemer; and, when afterwards his religion partially triumphed, it was the cruelest conqueror of all. It was religion that hurled the wild monks of Africa upon the beautiful naked body of Hypatia, and the rude multitude tore her to pieces with the fury of mad beasts, because she represented that philosophy which is the eternal opponent of religion. Religion destroyed the magnificent library of Alexandria, for books laden with the treasures of human thought are the destroyers of religion. Religion poured a million people upon devoted Palestine, who perished for the sake of heaven, and not for the benefit of humanity. In their eyes, the victorious Cross was the symbol of eternal happiness. Religion invented the ghastly Spanish Inquisition. Was it not better to torture men to death than suffer a soul to be lost? The horrors of the French Revolution were the result of religion, for did not Robespierre say that if 'there were not a God it would be necessary to make one'?"

Neither should it be thought that religion and morality are alike in their nature. The former refers to what is termed man and his relations to his gods, and the latter to man and his relations with his fellow-men. The first form of religious worship was fetish, the object of adoration being a stick or a stone or a reptile. Of course, there was nothing ethical about this religious prostration. Moreover, whatever consolation may be derived by some from religion, it is not indispensable to the performance of man's highest duty. All the noblest virtues which exalt human character can be practised apart from religion. But morality is absolutely essential to a properly-organised state of society. Upon prudence, truth, courage, honesty, and temperance is based the whole edifice of modern civilisation. Without them we could not exist, except as barbarians; they must always be the very corner-stones of societary morality. Such a condition of society depends upon no belief in God or in a future life, but rather upon the natural requirements of the human race, and the ability of man to secure what is necessary to satisfy those requirements. The moral law stands by virtue of its own right, and will continue to exert itself if all the speculations about religion were to cease to-morrow. The source of ethical obligation is in human nature; its sanction is personal and societary protection; and its incentive is the promotion of the "true happiness of man, woman, and child." A moral man is one who does his best to produce and maintain a well-organised condition of society; and experience teaches that this can be secured by natural means, without priests, creeds, dogmas, or any speculations about the so-called supernatural. The test of ethical efficiency is twofold—internal, the power of self-improvement; and external, the beneficial influence upon the welfare of others. Its justification is its good result on earth, not the hope of reward in heaven. Ethical science teaches that the performance of man's highest duty is the basis of all true happiness, for the reason that it ennobles character, inspires confidence, wins respect, and imparts a real consolation. Ethical science further teaches that upright conduct enables a man to succeed in the struggle for existence. Immorality not only emaciates the body, but it debases the mind, and thereby reduces the power and the desire of the man who is non-ethical to win in the great battle of life. The person who continues to violate the physical and moral laws of his nature becomes diseased and indifferent to the duties of existence. He grows decrepit, physically; lazy, intellectually; and impotent, morally. Life to him has no charm, duty no active meaning, and domestic and social obligations have no inducements.

Personally, I prefer not to use the word "religion" in reference to the regulation of human conduct. The term "ethical" or "moral" represents the useful in all religious systems, without being associated with that which is mystical, perplexing, and impracticable. Still, if the word is retained, the only religion that is compatible with the genius of the age is that of duty. The only religion which will be worthy of the name as a binding system will be one in which the good of all faiths shall be retained, and from which their errors shall be eliminated—a religion based not upon supernatural figments, uncertain traditions, imaginary narratives, and lifeless ceremonies, but upon the eternal laws of nature, and the laws of that great kingdom of human nature whose monarch is man. He it is who must be regarded as first and foremost in the great drama of life.

In the religion of duty reflection will take the place of impulsive action, and reasonable consideration will be preferred to sudden emotional gratification. The intellect will rule the heart, not the heart the intellect. Love, not fear; justice, not passion; and self-reliance, not dependence upon priests, will be the result of obeying the dictates of the highest duty of man. The Roman philosopher, Seneca, indicated the noblest conduct possible when he said: "It is my custom every night, so soon as the candle is out, to run all over the words and actions of the past day, and I let nothing escape me; for why should I fear the sight of my errors when I can admonish and forgive myself? I was a little too hot in such a dispute; my opinion might have been as well spared, for it gave offence and did no good at all. The thing was true; but all truths are not to be spoken at all times. I would I had held my tongue, for there is no contending either with fools or our superiors. I have done ill, but it shall be so no more. If every man would but thus look into himself, it would be the better for us all. What can be more reasonable than this daily review of a life that we cannot warrant for a moment? Our fate is set, and the first breath we draw is only the first motion towards our last. There is a great variety in our lives, but all tends to the same issue. We are born to love and to perish, and to hope and to fear, to vex ourselves and others, and there is no antidote against a common calamity but virtue; for the foundation of true joy is in the conscience." This is that religion described by Huxley as "The reverence and love for the ethical ideal, and the desire to realise that ideal in life."

The performance of the highest duty of man necessitates useful deeds, not absurd creeds; works, not blind faith; sincerity of belief, not mere profession. As Ingersoll said: "A new religion sheds its glory on mankind. It is the gospel of this world—the religion of the body, of the heart and brain, the evangel of health and joy." Possibly, in the performance of our duty we may sometimes be misunderstood and even misrepresented. But this ought not to deter us from doing what our reason assures us is right. Let us be content to say, in the words of Henry Fielding:—

"When I am not thanked at all, I am thanked enough,
I've done my duty, and I've done no more."

CHARLES WATTS.

Spurgeon.

"Of all the dull, stagnant, unedifying *entourages*, that of middle-class Dissent.....seems to me the stupidest."—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

SPURGEON was the last of the Calvinists. During his lifetime he preached, at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, to the largest congregation in the world. That building—probably the ugliest ever raised by the hand of man—was capable of holding over five thousand persons. Spurgeon was, in addition, a copious writer. To say nothing of *The Treasury of David*, which consisted of seven volumes of five hundred pages each, he published a sermon a week without a break for over a generation, and edited a magazine, *The Sword and Trowel*. Spurgeon's rise was rapid. At sixteen he preached "with much acceptance"; at eighteen he was a professional sky-pilot; at twenty he was exceedingly popular; at twenty-seven the Newington Tabernacle had risen

about him "like an exhalation," and he was nearing the meridian of his splendor.

To win and keep such a position the man must have had peculiar claims to attention. He was narrow, bigoted, ignorant; but it was precisely because breadth, tolerance, and learning would have been "cavaire to the general" rank and file of his following. The central fact in his career, the corner-stone of his fortunes, was that his utterances reflected the thick ideas of the lower middle class. He was plain John Blunt, saying a thing straight out, and occasionally Jack Pudding, recking no jot or tittle for raising a laugh. The very names of his books show this—witness *The Cheque Book on the Bank of Faith*, *A Double Knock at the Door of the Young*, *The Spare Half-Hour*, and *The Salt-Cellars*, all in the good tradition of Nonconformity.

Are his writings literature? The answer must be in the negative. Of the higher and deeper elements of the English language he had no suspicion. Not for him were the rolling harmonies of Jeremy Taylor, the subtle cadences of Milton, the chastened utterances of Newman. He could not even give an echo of Baxter or Bunyan. His language was simply the speech of the middle class, purged of its slang.

His was the ignorance of those who do not choose to learn. "I have all along had an aversion to college," he once said, with less grammar than usual. The confession was significant as frank. To him the magic of bygone things, the necromancy of learning, and art and literature, save as some touch may have entered into the narrow circle of his Baptist creed, were obnoxious and repellent. Like a fanatical Mohammedan, he would have destroyed all literature but the sacred volume. He was the most perfect example of the Philistine, whom Matthew Arnold loved to banter, and who excited the derision of all cultured foreigners.

Spurgeon's ideas were as shallow as narrow. He had the true priestly temperament, with its sense of personal importance, its thin unction, its private leanings to the stake and the cord. He had, moreover, one of those deplorable natures that seem as if they had never in their lives known the careless joy of a springtime.

Not only was he intolerant, but he was also infallible. A thing was right because he wanted to do it. For instance, he was a smoker and a teetotaler. He defended the use of tobacco in passages remarkable for humor and common sense, and even talked of "smoking to the glory of God." The gentlest alcoholic stimulants, Shakespeare's "pot of small ale," the "tipenny" of Burns, moved him to furies of derision. The tankard, in moderation, is as useful and as defensible as the pipe. But Spurgeon's disinterestedness was controlled by his appetite. He wants to smoke, so he blesses tobacco. He does not want to drink, so he curses liquor. He would have sympathized with the teetotal fanatic who explained that Timothy's plea for a "little wine for his stomach's sake" was intended for external application. His position in the "Down Grade" controversy proves something other than his honesty, for he confessedly left the Baptist Union because it was infected by a certain modest sense of toleration. His verbal knowledge of the Bible was nearly perfect; but what he apprehended was merely a stunted and dwarfed conception of what was written. The literature of Israel is intensely Oriental. There are passages wherein the perfumes of Sharon and Lebanon, the beauty of the hills about Jerusalem, the loveliness of the Jewish maidens, are so enshrined that they affect the reader in a distant age, an alien speech, a strange land. But Spurgeon was as unaware of this as a Gold Coast nigger. He treated the Bible as if the words were of yesterday and the facts modern journalism. Hence his success with Mr. John Smith, Nonconformist and cheesemonger—and his enormous limitations.

Spurgeon was the last preacher of any eminence who taught the fiendish dogma of eternal torment. But, while his theology abounded in darkness, as of blackest midnight, his utterances thereupon were characteristically cheering enough. Like others before him, he expressed the usual hypocritical sorrow for the sinner, but he contemplated the everlasting damnation of the bulk of the human race with singular and touching equanimity. For, in truth, he had no patience with scepticism, no

interest in any point of view but his own. He never tried to understand the meaning of Freethought. He had no time, he jovially explained, "to play tomfool with Socinians, Rationalists, and such-like people." He could neither have grown nor thriven outside the British Isles. His personality is the oddest blend imaginable, for it includes a good deal of Stiggins and a touch of Pecksniff, and a suggestion of Calvin, with an arrogant want of breadth of mind impossible to parallel outside our own insular Nonconformity. We have hinted at his inconsistency. In early life he shrieked against the iniquity of Sunday travelling. In middle age he risked his immortal soul by driving to church like any episcopal criminal. Tartuffe could not have done more. At the close of his life Spurgeon was even more notorious than famous. It may truly be said of him that he worked for notoriety as others are content to work for fame. He was a type of the Nonconformists it was his pride to believe he represented.

He was as incapable of understanding the past, and as blind to the future, as the stupidest of his congregation, who cut cheese with a wire for a living. The pity of it was that he firmly believed the imperfect, one-sided theology which he expounded sufficient for everything. The folly of it all! No one can rely on the justice of a man who fashions and worships an unjust god, nor on his humanity so long as he incorporates fiendish motives in his most sacred dogmas, nor on his reasonableness whilst he derides reason as a test of truth. Because he was considered a Light in Philistia, Spurgeon believed himself the heir and successor of the Apostles. He was, in reality, the last of the Calvinists. For which "crowning mercy" we are devoutly thankful.

MIMNERMUS.

The Lord's Anointed.

COLLOQUIES ON THE COMING CORONATION.

SCENE: *A London tramcar well filled with talkative people, some of whom are exchanging views on the Imperial fixture for June.*

REV. CHASUBLE (*to Miss Georgina Genuflex*): Do you know, I like tramcar travelling. Sometimes I compose my sermons on tramcars, like our Ven. Archdeacon Sinclair—or is it Dr. Ingram? (*A pause.*) By the way, it is really very provoking, but things do happen most awkwardly at times. Now I have been looking through the calendar for June, and I find that the 27th will be a Friday, and the 28th will be the Vigil of St. Peter. The Coronation festivities are sure to be carried over those two days. And so arises a most important question—What are we loyal Church of England folks to do?

MISS GENUFLEX (*much alarmed*): Friday and the Vigil of St. Peter! Of course, there must be abstinence from feasting on those days. That is clear—quite clear. But what a number of our Church people may forget! I positively tremble to think of it—

REV. CHASUBLE (*gravely*): Yes; but we must face the possibility, however appalling it may be. We owe—

CONDUCTOR: Fares, please.

REV. CHASUBLE: Two; all the way. Yes, it's a florin. We owe it to our Church and our dear Lord and Master. Thank you.

MISS GENUFLEX: But only to think how many, in the general excitement, may be led by forgetfulness or oversight into wrong-doing on those two days, which, undoubtedly, should be properly observed.

REV. CHASUBLE: It is, indeed, a most perplexing dilemma. I have given it much anxious thought. There is but one way out of the difficulty that I can see. Our bishops may come to the rescue and give a general dispensation, as I see the Pope has done in regard to members of the Church of Rome.

MISS GENUFLEX: Do you really think they would? The dear bishops! Oh, wouldn't that be kind and thoughtful of them? I should be in ecstasies—positively in ecstasies. Oh, do, Mr. Chasuble, use your great influence with them. Will you not?

REV. CHASUBLE (*graciously*): Yes, I will see what I can do.

MISS GENUFLEX: Thanks. You have taken quite a load off my mind. I should have worried so much about the point that it would have spoiled all my anticipations of the great event itself—which, to be sure, does not happen on either of the days we have been talking about.

MRS. BLOGGS (*to her husband*): And wot will they do when he's got to Westminster Abbey? Put the crown on his 'ead, I s'pose.

MR. BLOGGS (*growling*): Yes; where else do yer think they'd put it? On his foot? Wish they'd put a crown—or even 'arf-a-dollar—in my pocket; that'd be more to the pint.

MRS. BLOGGS (*significantly*): Yes; a tidy few pints. But wot's all this 'ere about anointing? Is it the same as the Peculiar do to kill their babies?

MR. BLOGGS: Garn. Wot they do is this. They pour ile on his 'ead. Ile on the troubled waters of his 'ead. Sort of Tatcho, because they think he wants it.

REV. CHASUBLE: Pardon me, my good man —

MRS. BLOGGS: He ain't your good man. He's mine.

REV. CHASUBLE: No offence, my dear madam. I merely wished to point out very respectfully that your husband somewhat misapprehends the nature of the solemn ceremony which is to take place. The "sacring" of the King —

MR. BLOGGS: Why, that's French swearing. Blow me, if it ain't.

REV. CHASUBLE: No, I assure you it is not. Allow me to explain. What you were evidently conversing about was the consecration and hallowing of the King —

MR. BLOGGS: Yes, halloing is right. There'll be plenty of that—same as on Mafficking night.

REV. CHASUBLE: I wish, if you will permit me, to explain that, from the earliest ages, the King has been invested with deaconal, priestly, and episcopal powers. Most of us who are loyal Englishmen, and especially those who belong to the Church of England, hold that

Kings are by God appointed,
And lost are those who dare resist
Or touch the Lord's anointed.

By consecration, the Sovereign of the realm becomes the head of the Church, and the consecration ceremony —

MRS. BLOGGS: You'll excuse me, sir. But you said "the 'ead of the Church."

MISS GENUFLEX (*sotto voce*): I don't think he did.

MRS. BLOGGS: I thought the 'ead of the Church was that very old gent., the Archbishop of Canterbury. That reminds me. I saw 'im once ridin' in a open kerridge over Westminster Bridge. I shouldn't 'ave known 'im from the man in the moon if it 'adn't been for a lady friend that was with me sayin': "There's the Archbishop of Canterbury!" I just tikes a look at 'im, and I outs with: "O Lor', what a mouth he's got!" without thinkin' for a minute what I was a-sayin' of. It was, as you may say, quite instanter. The Lord forgive me.

MR. BLOGGS: Amen. But the tater trap is orl right. Needs no apology. That's goin' to himprint a lovin' kiss on Hedward's dial. That's the Archbishop's perkisit. *Deu et mong Dwor*. No; that ain't it. I mean *Honey swor*—Blow it, I'm gettin' mixed. Never was much good at foring langwidges.

MISS GENUFLEX (*whispering to the Rev. Chasuble*): Did you ever hear such dreadful talk? So vulgar and ridiculous. That is why I really do detest having to mix with these low people. District visiting is, indeed, a penance which only the love of our blessed Savior enables one to perform.

REV. CHASUBLE: Ah, there is much in what you say—sadly too much. Thank God, there is one Bishop—Dr. Ingram, who can talk to these people. He knows them, and they know him. (*Aloud to Mr. Bloggs*) You know the Bishop of London, of course?

MR. BLOGGS: Never set eyes on 'im as I know of. Wot's more—I don't perticklarly want to.

REV. CHASUBLE: Oh, come now. You don't mean that. The Bishop of London is going to preach the sermon at the Coronation service we have been talking about.

MR. BLOGGS: Then I shan't be there to 'ear him. You can bet yer bottom dollar on that.

[Rev. gent sorrowfully gives up BLOGGS as hopeless.]

REV. CHASUBLE: By the way, an excellent proposal has been made. It is this: at the time when the crown is placed on the Sovereign's head (and the time can surely be approximately known) the people should be assembled in the various churches and unite in one prayer for a blessing on their King.

INTERESTED LISTENER: But may I ask why a blessing should be specially asked on him? Is he not sufficiently blessed already?

REV. CHASUBLE: We are none so blest, my friend, that we are independent of Divine favor.

I. L.: But are not the vast bulk of the people much more in need of heavenly favors—if any are to be sought and obtained—than the unit who is but nominally the ruler, being a mere gilded figure-head? Take, for instance, the half million of people who will crowd in to the free Coronation dinner—for perhaps the only square meal they will have in the year.

REV. CHASUBLE: The poor we have with us always. It is the will of the Lord. We pray for them constantly.

I. L.: But of what use is prayer?

REV. CHASUBLE: Ah, that is an Atheistic question. I very much regret to hear it from an apparently intelligent person. I—I think, Miss Genuflex, we will alight. We can easily walk the remainder of the distance. Conductor, please stop.

MR. BLOGGS (*as they leave*): Good day, sir. Mind the step!

FRANCIS NEALE.

A "Heathen" Emperor.

THE party ascended the winding way that leads from the Forum to the Piazza of the Campidoglio on the summit of the Capitoline Hill. They stood awhile to contemplate the bronze equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius. The moonlight glistened upon the traces of the gilding which had once covered both rider and steed; these were almost gone, but the aspect of dignity was still perfect, clothing the figure as it were with an imperial robe of light. It is the most majestic representation of the kingly character that the world has ever seen. A sight of the old heathen Emperor is enough to create an evanescent sentiment of loyalty even in a democratic bosom, so august does he look, so fit to rule, so worthy of man's profoundest homage and obedience, so inevitably attractive of his love. He stretches forth his hand with an air of grand beneficence and unlimited authority, as if uttering a decree from which no appeal was permissible, but in which the obedient subject would find his highest interests consulted; a command that was in itself a benediction.

—*Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Transformation."*

Mr. Keir Hardie's Bereavement.

TENNYSON, in one of his beautiful and finished early poems, *The Miller's Daughter*, makes the hero of it exclaim:—

Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,
That we may die the self-same day.

Such a lot as this seldom happens to husband and wife. But it does sometimes. It happened in the case of the parents of Mr. Keir Hardie, the well-known labor leader, who died within an hour of each other on Wednesday afternoon (April 23). Mr. Hardie, senior, was born in 1824, and his wife in 1831, and they had been married forty-six years. Their days had been long in the land, and their end was ideal. Consequently there is no room for any poignant grief. Yet the death of parents, however old, is in a certain sense a loss; and we beg to extend our sympathy to Mr. Keir Hardie, and the rest of the family, in their bereavement. We understand that the aged couple desired their remains to be cremated, and that their wish has been fulfilled. Both of them were familiar figures at the meetings of the Glasgow Secular Society. They were Secularists themselves. This fact, of course, is not referred to in the newspapers; we therefore take the precaution of recording it in these columns.

No very studious man was ever very cruel; no two things in nature have less affinity than violence and reflection.—*Landor.*

Acid Drops.

"MERLIN," of the *Referee*, seems anxious to be regarded as the man with the golden key in spiritual philosophy. At the centre of all problems sits Truth, and "Merlin" sits with her. When you meet *him* you know where you are. But whether "Merlin" knows where *he* is may at least be doubted. "I have never assumed," he wrote last week, "that science and revelation are necessarily opposed to each other. It has been, on the contrary, the effort of my thinking lifetime to reconcile one with the other, and to resist a tyranny on either side." Well, if that is the great object of "Merlin's" life we believe he has lived in vain—unless he defines science and revelation so that they no longer oppose each other; in which case, of course, the trick is done, but then it is *only* a trick. As the word revelation is commonly understood it involves the miraculous, which is totally foreign to the conception of science. What man learns by his own inquiry is natural knowledge. That is science. What man learns by a message from God is supernatural knowledge. That is revelation. And the two things are as contradictory in theory as they have ever been conflicting in practice. Cardinal Vaughan sneers at science, and "Merlin" rebukes him in the interest of revelation. But we venture to think that the Cardinal knows his own business best. He is probably well aware, though "Merlin" is not, that when science and revelation finally lie down together one of them will be *inside*.

We quite agree with "Merlin" when he says that "Faith and Material Fact have nothing to do with each other." Faith and Fact never had anything to do with each other—at least in the way of friendship. Fact has fought Faith because it saw that Faith was wrong, and Faith has fought Fact because it feared that Fact was right. But we part company with "Merlin" when he asserts that "a solution of the mystery of our being is not to be arrived at on material grounds." What other grounds does he *know* anything about? And what is the mystery of *his* being any more than the mystery of the being of a cockroach? All this talk of mystery in relation to our noble selves is but the voice of our egotism. And, after all, what *is* mystery? If it is only ignorance, call it so plainly, and have done with metaphysical humbug. If it is *not* ignorance, what is it in that case but a contradiction between what we know and what we want to believe? Is a mystery, in short, anything but the hopeless discord between Faith and Fact; or, to vary the metaphor, is it anything but the inky confusion created by Faith to escape the pursuit of Fact? "Merlin" might try to explain.

The *Academy* was ill-advised to tell the world that it had so many foolish readers. Our contemporary offered a prize of one guinea for a versified answer to the question, "Who is now Britain's foremost son, or greatest living representative man, be he statesman, orator, scholar, theologian, or any other character?" Only fifty readers—but that's enough!—took part in this competition, and thirteen of them selected Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. Their verses are too "uniformly poor" to be printed—as we should imagine. The other votes were cast as follows: Lord Salisbury, 8; Lord Rosebery, 8; Archbishop Temple, 4; Herbert Spencer, 3; A. C. Swinburne, 2; King Edward the Seventh, 2; Lord Cromer, 2; Lord Roberts, 1; Lord Kitchener, 1; Lord Curzon, 1; John Morley, 1; George Meredith, 1; Stephen Phillips, 1; Benjamin Kidd, 1. The consolatory feature of this list is that only one of the fifty was foolish enough to think Mr. Benjamin Kidd a great man. One competitor voted for Tolstoy! Such is the danger of translations.

Is it true, as we have seen it stated, that the *Academy* is being run (indirectly) in the interest of Roman Catholicism? In the last number there is a review of the new volume of the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, which certainly seems to be written by a Catholic. The writer is particularly angry with Professor Schmiedel on account of his article on "Mary." This article maintains that Jesus was in a natural way the son of Joseph. It has also the "taste," as the reviewer complains, to refer to "the Jewish calumny first mentioned by Origen, that Jesus was the child of the adulterous intercourse of Mary with a soldier Stada or Pandera." Of course the reviewer is wrong in saying that this "calumny" was first mentioned by Origen. It was raised by Celsus in the previous century. Calumny or no calumny, however, it is necessarily included in a scientific article on the birth-stories of Jesus. So much for the matter of "taste." Finally, the reviewer thinks it better to trust to the knowledge and honesty of those who devised "the very masterpiece of human wisdom"—the Catholic Church, to wit—than to the "crudities" of writers like Professor Schmiedel. Very likely. But criticism is criticism, and authority is authority; and to prefer the latter—for that is what the reviewer's position comes to—is simply an act of faith.

This new (third) volume of the *Encyclopædia Biblica* has also upset the editor of the *British Weekly*, who prints the

heading of his review of it right across the top of his journal over the very title. "THE BIBLE IN TATTERS" looks sufficiently striking in that conspicuous position. It is upon the principal editor, Dr. Cheyne, that the editor pours forth his wrath. "Dr. Cheyne is now," he says, "as regards the Christian religion and its documents, practically a nihilist, and if he is to give us a fresh sensation in his next volume, as he probably will, we see nothing for it but that he should disavow theism—a short and simple step." In other words, Dr. Cheyne has really given up the Bible, and now he may just as well give up God.

Dr. Cheyne is a Doctor of Divinity and a Canon of the Established Church, though his criticism of the Bible documents in regard to their authorship and the historicity of their contents is of the most damning and destructive character. Having gone so far, it would not be so great an advance for him to institute a criticism of the foundations of Theistic belief. Still, as the *British Weekly* points out, there is something extremely inconsistent in "a man who has been forced by the evidence to deny the deity of Christ, his virgin birth, his miracles, his resurrection, and who has practically found no sure record of his earthly history," actually spending three months of every year in "solemn daily recital of the creeds and prayers of the Christian Church." Canon Cheyne ought, at any rate, to attempt some sort of justification of his position, which hardly seems, on the face of it, fair and square.

Professor Schmiedel was bad enough, but Dr. Van Nanen, of Leyden, is still worse. In the new volume of the *Encyclopædia Biblica* he goes for Paul baldheaded. Following the lead of Bauer and Loman, he rejects even the four epistles that are generally considered as indubitably Paul's. That the Church will fight hard for these epistles goes without saying. "It is plain," the editor of the *British Weekly* says, "that neither Christ nor Christianity can be obliterated so long as the great Epistles remain, and are assigned to St. Paul." The Church has come to rely more upon the four "genuine" epistles of Paul—Galatians, Corinthians, and Romans—than upon the Gospels; and if these epistles have to go the last state of the Church will be worse than the first. Hence these tears.

Mr. Somervell, in the *Pilot*, suggests that "we should lead men to see that, the Old Testament being primarily a book neither of natural science nor of history, we are not required to accept its statements as historical in the ordinary sense." Rev. Frank Ballard, commenting on this in the *Methodist Times*, observes that it is unquestionably a difficult theme to expound to the Evangelical Churches. "We can understand how, at such a suggestion, floods of questions and protests will pour in; but, as regards many details and some few stories of the ancient Scriptures, there can be no doubt either that such an estimate is true, or that it is the conclusion to which our Christian children will have to come."

According to the writer of an article on "Some Tendencies of Modern Nonconformity," in the *Church Quarterly Review*, "the virgin birth, the miracles, and even the resurrection, are treated as quite open to discussion *de novo*." He fears that there is "an awful mystery surrounding the future of the Christian religion."

If we may believe Pastor Sylvia, once a priest in the Church of Rome, now a pastor in the Waldensian Church, Italy, the ignorance of Italian priests is something more than a trifle dense. One of them, he says, told him that he could not understand how Protestants could believe in the Trinity and not worship the Virgin Mary, "for the Holy Trinity consists of the Father, the Son, and the Virgin Mary!" After all, this seems a more reasonable Trinity—if there can be anything reasonable about such a confusing conjunction—than that which includes the mysterious being called the Holy Ghost, who appears to be a quite superfluous introduction.

In a note on Dr. Alexander's book, *Demonic Possession*, the *Christian* laments that during late years there has been an "unmistakable tendency on the part of higher critics and others to eliminate the supernatural element from the Gospels." The cases of demonic possession recorded in the Gospels have been, it says, reduced to cases of epilepsy, and the whole subject has been relegated to the domain of pathology. The *Christian*, therefore, welcomes Dr. Alexander's book, in which it is argued that, when science has said its last word upon the cases of possession in the Gospels, there is a serious element of the supernatural left. That is so; there remains an element of fiction which the theory quite fails to cover.

But what does the *Christian* think of the miracle of casting out a devil, reported from St. Petersburg as having been worked by Father John, of Cronstadt, on March 27? A peasant woman, aged twenty-four years, could not bear to hear the church bells being rung; she was wont to scream horribly, and to fall into convulsions accompanied by great perspiration. The same thing happened if she saw a church

procession pass through the streets, or whenever she set her foot inside a church. Father John was summoned to her. He laid his hand upon her head, looked fixedly at her, and said in a loud voice: "In the name of Jesus, I order you, Satan, to come forth." The supposed "evil spirit" kept on saying "I am coming out at once." Then the woman collapsed and shut her eyes. Three times Father John called out, "Open your eyes." She opened her eyes, crossed herself at first slowly and then with rapidity, and Father John declared the devil had been cast out. This is as good a story as any of a similar kind in the New Testament—just as credible, and with the advantage of being of recent date.

"It is a popular mistake," says the *Christian Commonwealth*, "to imagine that what is called 'modern criticism' is in reality modern at all, for it is very ancient indeed." This is but partially true. The writer of this oracular announcement goes back to Celsus, who, in the second or third century, wrote a book against the Christians which has perished, but has been in part rescued from oblivion by Origen's treatise, *Contra Celsum*. Celsus treated the early chapters of Genesis with derision. In his view, the story of the Tower of Babel was merely an altered form of the Homeric fable of the wars of the gods. The books of Daniel and Jonah provided him with exhaustless amusement as merry tales. But, while the same results are arrived at, criticism has progressed vastly in various new directions since the days of Celsus or the Deists of the eighteenth century. There is now an augmented armory of the most formidable weapons against the old Bible-fetish. The *Christian Commonwealth* is, therefore, indulging in a false sense of security when it suggests that there should be "less alarm in some quarters."

Poor little Willie Llewellyn, the missing Welsh boy, has at last been found dead from exposure on Blaenrhondda Mountain. Thousands of people had been searching for him from April 11, the day of his disappearance, to April 26, the day of his discovery. The child's dead body was found quite accidentally by a doctor out hunting. It had escaped the vigilance of all the searchers. Even the occult folk were unable to throw a gleam of light on its whereabouts. Astrologers, diviners, thought-readers, and even "mediums" who affect to receive information from know-all spirits, were quite baffled. They had a splendid opportunity to distinguish themselves, but the result only proved the absurdity of their pretensions. They pretend to see wonders, but they never see anything useful.

The clairvoyants and astrologers declared: 1. That he was alive. 2. That he was not alive. 3. That he would be found (a) in a pond; (b) in a secret cave; (c) in a prominent place. 4. That his abductor was (a) a gipsy woman of repulsive appearance; (b) an Irish tramp; (c) a beautiful but insane lady. 5. That he will be found (a) at once; (b) in ten days' time; (c) never. As a matter of fact, the body of the poor little fellow has been discovered on the highest mountain in Glamorgan, where, apparently, he died of exhaustion.

A good story is told of the Archbishop of Canterbury. His Grace is not a High Churchman, and presumably has no great affection for cassocks. A candidate for ordination waited upon the Bishop (Dr. Temple was at that time Bishop of London), and thought it a proper thing to wear a cassock on the occasion of the interview, the young man being at the time a lay-reader. "What do you want?" asked the Bishop with his wonted brusqueness. "I wish to become a candidate for ordination, my lord," was the meek reply. "We don't ordain women. Good morning."

The latest reply to the Bishop of Manchester's defence of smoking comes in the shape of a letter from a correspondent who wrathfully propounds to his ecclesiastical lordship the query: "May I ask if you ever heard of the Twelve Apostles smoking short clay pipes?" No doubt they were innocent of that iniquity, as well as of playing Ping-Pong or writing absurd letters to newspapers.

The Lord, having struck with lightning and burnt down the Wesleyan chapel at Bradley, near Bilston, two years ago, has moved his worshippers to lay the foundation-stones of another structure in its place. It remains to be seen whether he will be better pleased with the new than with the old building. At the same time, there seems to have been rather a waste of material in the destruction of the original edifice.

A policeman has committed suicide by hanging himself from a railing leading to the stokehole of St. Clement's Church, Dulwich. And now the Bishop has to be consulted upon the supremely important question whether it is necessary for the church to be reconsecrated. But why not simply remove that stokehole-railing, which has now lost its subtle sacred essence?

More "Providence" in Guatemala. The whole country has been shaken by earthquakes. Some towns have been

destroyed, and many others badly damaged. Over two hundred persons were killed in the single town of Quezaltenango.

"Providence" is allowing Transylvania to be afflicted with famine after a bad harvest. In some parts the schools have had to be closed because the children fainted with hunger. Old men and women are found lying insensible on the roads, having eaten nothing but roots for weeks.

A suit of clothes was picked up on the shore near Portobello, N.B., in one of the pockets of which was found a letter stating that their owner had "started to swim to America with nothing in his possession but a well-filled pipe, a Yankee hat, and a pencil in his ear. He had confidence in God alone that he would soon be picked up." The police are of opinion that the man was mad. Was it because he had confidence in God, we wonder?

Carried away by its pious excitement over a possible change in the marriage laws, the *Church Times* prints the following intelligible sentence: "Marriage with a deceased wife's sister rests on the same moral plane as marriage with a deceased brother's husband."

On one point Bishop Thornton is distinctly *not* open to conviction. He told a meeting of the Manchester Church Reform League that the present system of patronage in the Church of England in this country is "an abomination." Anybody could talk to him till they were "black in the face" without causing him to alter his opinion.

On the subject of the alleged poverty of the clergy the *Church Times* observes that the clergy are, after all, "servants of One who chose for Himself poverty." This "seems to show, at all events, that poverty is not a condition altogether out of harmony with the clerical character." Clerical readers will not thank the *C. T.* for this much too frank admission.

When Cecil Rhodes was escorting a certain High Church dignitary through the splendid grounds of Groot Schuur, a gorgeous patch of wild flowers, crowning a knoll, and thrown out against the deep blue sky, made them both pause in admiration. "Ah," said the Canon, a little unctuously, "I feel that the very angels of heaven must gaze with delight upon such a sight as this!" "Humph," said Rhodes, gruffly, "I don't know about the angels; if it pleases some poor devils of colonials that's good enough for me!"

There is a Commercial Travellers' Christian Association, numbering 2,500 members out of the 70,000 commercial travellers in Great Britain. If the 2,500 are real Christians this is a very large percentage of the profession. Anyhow, they have just held their annual meeting at Exeter Hall, and one of the speakers on that occasion was Mr. R. W. Perks, M.P. This gentleman perorated thusly:—"Let them preach commercially a gospel of temperance, thrift, industry, hard work, and reasonable commercial adventure on Christian lines (loud applause)." No doubt the advice is sound enough up to a point. What we want to know is how it runs on "Christian lines." Mr. Perks could hardly be referring to such texts as "Take no thought for the morrow" and "Labor not for the meat that perisheth." Will he kindly tell us what text he did refer to? We assure him that we are asking quite seriously.

The Cartwright case has done more than anything else to show the utter hopelessness of the Cecil government at Westminster, although it is not surprising after their attempt to hand over the whole of elementary education in this country to the parsons. Mr. Cartwright is kept in South Africa under military law—which, of course, is no law at all—in order that he may not come to England and oppose the Cecil government policy here. Was there ever before an English government that made such an imbecile avowal? To detain Mr. Cartwright is an outrage on common liberty. To assign such a reason for it is an outrage on common sense.

The British and Foreign Bible Society was to have presented King Edward with the Bible to be used at the Coronation. But the Archbishop of Canterbury, who is to do the anointing business on that occasion, came along and declared that the Bible would have to be a "full" one, including the Apocrypha. Such a Bible, however, the B. F. B. S. cannot, and will not, provide. So the Coronation Bible will have to come from another quarter after all.

The Paris correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* gave an account of the "startling communication" from Professor Yves Delage to the French Academy of Science respecting the relic called "The Holy Shroud of Turin," which is said to bear a natural photograph of the dead Christ. Was it conscious or unconscious satire on the part of this correspondent to begin his very next paragraph with the statement that "A silly servant-girl has just brought mischief on herself and her master by her faith in an alleged witch"? To

common sense the Holy Shroud and the witch are on the same level.

A friend of mine, says a gossip in the *Midland Dispatch*, was unexpectedly called upon to assist in taking the bag round for the collection in church last Sunday in the absence of one of the regular collectors. The contents of the bag were interesting, if not instructive. They included 7s. 1½d., three bone buttons, four brass buttons, a piece of dog-biscuit, and a slip of paper on which was written "City and Suburban Cert. First Principal." This "tip" for a "cert." from the pew looks something like a set-off to the dogmatic prevision of the pulpit.

The Bishop of London finds in the West-end a growing perplexity among Church people as to Sunday observance. The head of the family, who formerly attended church regularly, is now often seen on the golf links instead. Ladies, too, are showing a desire to make Sunday a great day of social entertainment.

The Dunoon Sabbatarians have struck their flag and surrendered to the powers of evil. For years they have fought against the landing of the Sunday tripper, and in the process have provoked more Sabbath desecration than whole fleets of excursion steamers could have produced. But though the Town Councillors of Dunoon have maintained such a fierce opposition to the toil-worn city man breathing the sea air from their pierhead on the Sabbath, now that they have yielded the point they will see to it that he shall not have the privilege for nothing. Twopence a head is the price that Sunday sailors must disgorge as the penalty of violating the conscience of a Dunoon Town Councillor, who, whatever tenderness he may have on the matter of Sunday sailing, seems to have none on the question of Sunday trading.

Dr. Macnamara, editor of the *Schoolmaster*, has the following timely comments on the educational situation:—"The Education Bill is just a month old, and the fight is already furiously hot. Mere education dropped ignominiously into the background before the first week of its existence had passed. The simple child, to-morrow's citizen, the heritor of Britain's greatness, was forgotten before the moon's first quarter. The theologian promptly and raucously filled the Bill. As it was in the beginning, is now, and, apparently ever shall be. Take 1870. The Second Reading of the Bill turned entirely upon whether the nature and extent of the religious instruction to be given in the rate-aided schools should be left to the localities themselves or be settled by Imperial Statute. On going into Committee there was another four nights' furious wrangle as to whether religious instruction ought or ought not to be left to the volunteer efforts of the Churches, the State confining its responsibility to secular education. And when the Bill got into Committee it is quite safe to say that seventy-five per cent. of the weary weeks occupied and of the wearier speeches made were devoted to the interminable 'religious difficulty'—the clamor concerning which out of doors is only exceeded by the failure to find any trace of it in the schools themselves. As in 1870 so in 1902. Parsons meet; pastors meet. The drum ecclesiastic is beaten on both sides in a style that easily puts the vigor of thirty years ago into the shade. But when, we should like to ask, will there be a mass meeting of parents demanding that the education of the children shall not be obstructed by these noisy and turbulent disputants?"

When, indeed! It is a pity that Dr. Macnamara has not wisdom enough to see, or courage enough to point out, that the only way to terminate this condition of things is to make our educational system completely secular. It will then be beyond the power of parson and pastor to hinder the perfecting of our educational system.

Some of Joseph Chamberlain's utterances on education in the early 'seventies are now being raked up against him. One is worth reproducing for its intrinsic truth: "The history of this country bears one unbroken testimony to the evils caused by the attempt to maintain any kind of priestly supremacy within its borders. It is true now as it was nearly two centuries ago that—

Of all the plagues with which mankind is cursed
Ecclesiastic tyranny's the worst."

And in the same speech Mr. Chamberlain quoted with approval the words of John Bright: "Nothing tends more to impede the progress of liberty, nothing is more fatal to independence of spirit in the public, than to add to the powers of the priesthood in the matter of education."

A boy preacher, rejoicing in the name of Master Jack Cooke, is the latest atrocity in the religious world. He has just concluded a mission at Limehouse, and, after a starring engagement at Westbourne Grove Baptist Church, it is announced that he is to commence an extended tour of the provinces. It is to be hoped that he has no intention of including Scotland in the program. We suffer enough as it

is from the crudeness of grown-up ministers. We have no taste for boy theology.—*Edinburgh Evening News*.

The paternal interest of the War Office in the religion of the troops is illustrated in the following story told by Bennet Burleigh, who relates it, however, for the purpose of showing how ridiculously generals in the field have been handicapped by the Department at home. On one occasion the garrison in Vryheid had been cut off from communication with the outside world for five weeks. Then the rain, which had been continuous for that period, ceased, and with the first glint of sunshine the heliograph was got to work. All the garrison gathered to hear the news which was being flashed from afar. The message was deciphered, and this was the text: "Send at once a return of the number of Roman Catholic soldiers in the South Lancashire Regiment."

General Booth's Salvation Army found an imitator in the Rev. W. Carlile's Church Army. This latter organisation celebrated its twenty-first anniversary recently. It was quite a swell affair. The meeting took place at Grosvenor House, and the Duke of Marlborough was in the chair. Among the speakers was Sir F. Milner, M.P. This gentleman put in a word for short speeches, and his own was the longest of the occasion. He went out of his way to insult those who did not hold his views, or anything like them, on the subject of religion. He commended the Church Army for doing so much for "the reduction of vagrants and irreligion." Why not "tramps and infidels" right out? But even with respect to the matter of fact this polite orator is mistaken. The Church Army has never professed to be an "anti-infidel" society. It was, therefore, quite gratuitous on his part to talk in the same breath of vagrants and irreligion.

The dear old Pope has come to the relief of British Catholics who want to join in the Coronation festivities. June 27 and 28 are fast days. Catholics ought to be keeping then the vigil of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. These are the two first saints in the calendar, and one would think it was dangerous to interfere with their celebrations. But the dear old Pope knows very well that they will keep quiet enough. They are in heaven, which is a long way off, and he is God's vicegerent on earth. So he does as he pleases, and never asks their permission. And his pleasure is that British Catholics shall eat and drink galore at the Coronation of Edward the Seventh of England, with whom His Holiness wishes to stand well—at least in this world.

Christians have always been fond of relics. The Bishop of New Guinea, the other day, at Exeter Hall, produced the jawbone of a boy who was killed and eaten within three miles of the coast, where the missionaries were at work. No doubt it was an interesting piece of osteology. But it would be far more interesting if the Bishop could produce the jawbone with which Samson slew a thousand Philistines. We know it was the jawbone of a jackass, but it should be the more easily found (by a Christian) on that account.

Mr. F. Marion Crawford, the novelist, contributes to a religious weekly an article on "The Collapse of Atheism." As he does not appear to understand what Atheism is, it is hardly worth while discussing his assertion that it has collapsed. He seems to think that Atheists undertake to give a scientific explanation of the existence of the universe—the whence and how. But, of course, they do not undertake to do so. They don't know, and they say so; the Theist doesn't know, but will not own his ignorance. He thinks it imperatively necessary that he should have a theory, and that any theory is better than none at all, which is a sort of thing that may be said of an old coat, but is inapplicable to speculations on the unknowable.

Mr. Crawford says that a man, who is now a leader in scientific discovery, once told him that Helmholtz was much given to explaining a vast number of phenomena by the theory of the "vortex." "But," his assistant asked him one day, "what made the vortex?" The man of genius looked at his young companion for a moment. "God made the vortex," he answered gravely. Here the story ends, but it should have been carried a little farther. The assistant might well have asked, "Who made God?"

Prison Reform on the Stage.

The Humanitarian League, which advocates the reform of the Criminal Law and Prison System, is venturing on the novelty of a short Prison Play, entitled "The Home Secretary's Holiday," which is to be performed at the Victoria Hall, Archer Street, Bayswater, on May 7, the occasion of the annual Conversation of the League. The scene is laid in a cell in one of His Majesty's prisons, where, in the course of half-an-hour, events take place that are enough to "stagger humanity"—the humanity, that is, of the Home Office and the Prisons Board.

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.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, May 4, Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, London, W.: 7.30. "The Bible Millstone on the Neck of Education."

May 11, Athenæum Hall.

May 18, N. S. S. Conference.

To Correspondents.

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

C. COHEN'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—Address, 241 High-road, Leyton.

J. G. FINLAY.—Miss Vance has handed us your letter and enclosure. We shall be very happy to see you if you should be visiting England again after the South African trouble is over.

REV. U. DHAMMALOKA, Buddhist priest, of the Rangoon Society for Promoting Buddhism, writes: "Will you kindly contradict a statement that has been spread by the paid Christian missionaries that Buddhism has prayers? It is one of their many lies that they are paid to tell. We have no prayers, as we believe in no supernatural being, only in natural laws. We don't condemn anyone to everlasting hell, or everlasting heaven. We don't preach anything to make people fear us. Buddhism is a religion of enlightenment, and allows every man to believe what he likes. I hope you will insert this in the *Freethinker*. We help to spread Freethought tracts here and papers."

R. E. HOLDING.—Thanks for the enclosure, stupid as it is. Prophet Baxter has found the truth of Heine's saying that the fool-crop is perennial. After prophesying the second coming of Christ several times in vain, he is now shoving the date forward to the safer distance of "1917 or 1929." He doesn't know which, and either will do, if the bump of wonder holds out in the Christian mob.

M. L. B.—Miss Vance thanks you for copies of *Freethinker*.

E. SELF.—Our business premises close at 2 o'clock on Saturdays, but someone is usually in attendance later.

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

T. HARRIS.—We can best answer your question in the words of Gibbon: "In the West the Christian era was first invented in the sixth century, it was propagated in the eighth by the authority and writings of venerable Bede; but it was not till the tenth century that the use became legal and popular."

A. W. WALLIS.—(1) Mr. Reader Harris, K.C., is a bit of a *farceur*. We have taken him to task before on account of his professions of personal intimacy with the late Charles Bradlaugh. We have invited him to state when and where he was a Freethinker, and known as such to any other Freethinker. This trick of "I was once an infidel" is like the trick of "I was once a drunkard," etc., etc. The notion behind it is, the bigger the sinner the better the saint. (2) We agree with you that Freethought organisation in London is very far from what it should be. Still, there are special and grave difficulties in the case. London is so vast, and the Freethinkers are so scattered; then there is the question of buildings, for it is impossible to organise anything merely by Sunday meetings. If somebody would put down (say) £15,000, instead of promising it on obviously impossible conditions, the problem would begin to approach a solution. We have sometimes thought of concentrating our efforts entirely upon London for a while, but the first condition of such an enterprise is the use of suitable and accessible premises. (3) Thanks for your kind consideration personally.

J. JONES.—Thanks for a sight of the letters, which shall be returned in the way you desire. Your suggestion as to bodily exercise is a good one, but it is not necessary in Mr. Foote's case. He walks a good deal in the open air and takes daily athletic exercise indoors. The latter had to be suspended, of course, while he was very ill, but it has been resumed.

FRANCIS NEALE writes: "I am glad to say that I am keeping fairly well, though a little extra exertion yesterday has had its ill effects to-day. I hope you are progressing."

D. FRANKEL.—We regret that you are leaving England, but hope the change will be for your betterment. East London Freethinkers should be grateful to you for your efforts in the cause.

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 (eighth list) have been received:—J. G. Finlay, 10s.; E. Self, 2s. 6d.; A. W. Wallis, £1; R. W. Collier, 5s.; J. G. Dobson, 5s.

J. G. DOBSON.—Pleased to have your sympathy and good wishes.

A. BROCK.—Thanks for cutting, which will be dealt with in our next.

F. J. GOULD.—Received with thanks. We, too, regret that you appear so seldom in our pages, and so, we feel assured, do our readers. However, we cannot all do as we wish, and must be content to do what we can.

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.

My friends, and I dare say most of the readers of this journal, will be pleased to hear that I am making steady if slow progress towards recovery. I am gradually getting the better of the insomnia, which has been the worst of my troubles. When I have completely conquered that enemy I shall look forward with great confidence to a fresh period of fruitful activity.

The announcement that I shall lecture at the Athenæum Hall on the first two Sundays in May still stands. I hope to meet a good rally of my old auditors on both occasions.

I have received a letter from Mr. Charles Watts for insertion in the *Freethinker*. It did not reach me until Monday, when I was as usual in the thick of other business, and too much occupied to pen a reply. Mr. Watts's letter will therefore be held over for a week. This will be no loss to him or anyone else, as the only piece of information in it is the fact that Mr. Ellis, of *Secular Thought* (Toronto), is a recipient of the *Freethinker*—a fact, by the way, which I had already stated in saying that his paper was one of my exchanges. It would have been better, I think, if Mr. Watts had accepted my invitation to explain what he meant in his previous letter by "studied slights" and "supersession" and "the mischievous influences of late directed against" him. I repeat that invitation. Such vague accusations against persons unnamed, but presumably within the circle of supposed colleagues, should be withdrawn or substantiated. But whether Mr. Watts accepts my repeated invitation or not, I shall not gratuitously delay what he invited me to do. Meanwhile I must observe that this is not a merely personal matter. Had it been so it would never have been introduced in these columns. I think it will be found that far other considerations are involved.

G. W. FOOTE.

Sugar Plums.

LONDON readers of the *Freethinker* are requested to note that Mr. Foote's first lecture, after an absence of three months from the platform through illness, will be delivered this evening (May 4) at the Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, London, W. His subject will be "The Bible Millstone on the Neck of Education."

Those provincial friends who intend visiting London for the National Secular Society's Conference, and who are desirous of securing apartments during their visit, will please communicate with Miss Vance, stating the class of apartments they require, and the duration of their stay. She will be glad to render them any assistance in this direction that lies within her power; but the applications should be sent in as early as possible. These matters can hardly be arranged with comfort if they are delayed till the last moment.

A luncheon will also be provided for delegates and visitors on Conference Sunday at the Bedford Hotel, Tottenham Court-road, at 2s. 6d. per head. This hotel is but a few

minutes' walk from the meeting-place of the Conference, and is the same at which the luncheon was served two years ago. General satisfaction was given then, and we have no doubt will be again. Those who wish to partake of this should also send on their names as early as possible. A fuller statement will be made in next week's *Freethinker*.

Arrangements had been made for holding the Annual General Meetings of the Freethought Publishing Company, Limited, and the Secular Society, Limited, when Mr. Foote was taken seriously ill. This misfortune, of course, necessitated an indefinite postponement. Happily it has been found possible to make another fixture. Formal notices will be sent out in due course, but meanwhile the Shareholders in the Company, and the Members of the Society, are requested to note that the Annual General Meeting of both bodies will be held on Friday, May 30, at the new premises, No. 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

There are some notable passages in Mr. Chamberlain's reply to Mr. James Grey Glover. Mr. Chamberlain defends the Education Bill against that gentleman's strictures. At the same time he adheres to his old view that the State should only teach secular subjects in the elementary schools. He goes back to the early days of the Birmingham School Board and relates what he and his friends attempted to do. We venture to quote the following passage *in extenso*: "At that time we put forward as the only absolutely fair and logical system the entire separation between religious and secular education. We argued that the State should secure the latter, while leaving the former to be provided by the religious organisations at their sole cost and responsibility. According to this view the Voluntary schools would have become in fact Board schools, or, if they were closed, other schools would have been provided by the Board in their place. The local authority would have controlled the secular teaching, while making arrangements under which every religious organisation desiring it would have an opportunity of teaching its own tenets to such of the children as were allowed by their parents to receive it. This was the theory, and the second School Board of Birmingham, of which I was chairman, endeavored to put it into practice. The system did not succeed, and was ultimately abandoned, against the advice of Dr. Dale and others, owing to the overwhelming pressure of the Nonconformists themselves, who refused to accept an entirely secular system."

That last sentence is a dreadful slap at the Nonconformists, who have for thirty years betrayed their own principles, and, having sown the wind, are now reaping the whirlwind. Instead of blaming the Tory government, which is only acting after its kind, they should curse their fatal recreancy.

Mr. Chamberlain goes on to say that he still considers the old plan of secular education to be "just and logical," though it has no better chance now than it had thirty years ago.

Mr. Herbert Spencer was eighty-two last Sunday. He has long been an invalid, but he is still able to do some work, mostly in the way of revision. Few men have ever done such a quantity of intellectual labor in the world. There is something gigantic in the task which Mr. Spencer set himself, to which he devoted his life, and which he has practically succeeded in achieving. It was nothing less than to follow the law of Evolution over the whole range of existence—physical, intellectual, moral, and social. Naturally he stands outside all the creeds. None of them is big enough to fit him. Perhaps the most curious thing is that this great philosopher of Evolution was the son of a clergyman. According to the proverb, it is a wise child that knows its own father; according to experience, it is often a wise father that knows his own child.

The Humanitarian League holds a *Conversazione* at Victoria Hall, Archer-street, Westbourne-grove, London, W., on Wednesday, May 7, from 8 to 11 p.m. There will be a short musical program, and (at 9.30) a performance of a one-act play, by Mr. H. Stephens, entitled *The Home Secretary's Holiday*. Tickets, two shillings each, can be obtained at the League office, 53 Chancery-lane, W.C. Victoria Hall is about five minutes' walk from either Notting Hill Gate or Notting Hill Station.

Mr. J. F. Haines, of Mile End-road, E., has written a very forcible anti-vaccination pamphlet in reply to a circular issued by the Rev. Harry Wilson, an East-end clergyman. Mr. Wilson fares but badly at the hands of his critic, who examines the circular sentence by sentence, with results not very flattering to the author. If Mr. Wilson is no better as a theologian than he is as a defender of inoculation, his religious friends must be pleased that he has turned his attention to this subject, and his friends in that cause will doubtless be equally wishful that he had confined his attention to theology. The pamphlet is published at the nominal price of one half-penny.

A members' meeting of the East London Branch will be

held at the Stanley Temperance Bar, 7 High-street, Stepney, to-day (May 4), at 3.30. It is hoped that all members will do their best to attend.

National Secular Society's Annual Conference.

ATHENÆUM HALL, TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, LONDON.

WHIT-SUNDAY, MAY 18, 1902.

AGENDA.

1. Minutes of last Conference.
2. Executive's Annual Report. By PRESIDENT.
3. Reception of Report.
4. Financial Report. By SECRETARY.
5. Election of President.

Motion by Finsbury Branch: "That Mr. G. W. Foote be re-elected President."
6. Election of Vice-Presidents.

(a) The following are nominated by the Executive for re-election: E. Bater, Donald Black, Victor Charbonnel, C. Cohen, W. W. Collins, J. F. Dewar, Léon Furnémont, T. Gorniot, John Grange, W. Heaford, Arthur B. Moss, J. Neate, J. Partridge, S. M. Peacock, C. Pegg, William Pratt, E. W. Quay, J. H. Ridgway, Thomas Robertson, Victor Roger, F. Schaller, W. H. Spivey, H. J. Stace, Charles Steptoe, Joseph Symes, W. B. Thompson, S. R. Thomson, T. J. Thurlow, John F. Turnbull, J. Umpleby, Miss E. M. Vance, G. J. Warren, Charles Watts, Frederick Wood, W. H. Wood.

(b) Motion by Bethnal Green Branch: "That Mr. C. G. Quinton be elected a Vice-President."
7. Election of Auditors.
8. (a) Motion by the Executive:—

"That the N.S.S. issue and circulate as widely as possible a manifesto on the subject of religious education in public elementary schools, with special reference to the new Education Bill, and particularly showing how the present difficulty has been chiefly caused by the recreancy of Nonconformists to their professed principle of the complete separation of the State from religion."

(b) Motion by Mr. C. Cohen:—

"That this Conference is of opinion that the only wise and practical solution of the Education problem is to be found in the following four principles: namely, (1) Universal School Boards, (2) Free Education, (3) Secular Education, and (4) Payment of cost exclusively from the national exchequer."
9. Report of Executive Sub-Committee, in pursuance of resolution passed at last Conference—"upon the whole question of Branches, subscriptions, and membership, with a view to securing an increased revenue and a more satisfactory list of adherents."

(1) That personal or individual membership of the National Secular Society should be through the Central Executive.

(2) That the minimum subscription for such members should be 2s. 6d. per year, payable direct to the General Secretary in London.

(3) That Branches, or local Secular Societies, should be affiliated to the N. S. S. on the following conditions:—

(a) There should be no specific payment per Branch or member for affiliation—but

(b) Each branch, or other affiliated body, should make two collections—as fair and even generous as possible—annually; one for the N. S. S. Fund, and the other for the Benevolent Fund: each collection to be forwarded to the General Secretary in London within one week of its being taken up.

(c) Each Branch, or other affiliated body, should furnish the General Secretary with a complete list of its members, with full names and addresses.

(4) Every personal or individual member of the N. S. S. should be free to attend the Annual Conference and cast one vote.

(5) Branches, or other affiliated bodies, should be free to send one delegate each to the Annual Conference, with power to cast one vote.

(6) The Central Executive should consist of the President, Vice-Presidents, and one representative from each Branch or affiliated body.

(7) Every representative of a Branch or other affiliated body on the Executive should be a *bonâ fide* member of the Branch or affiliated body he represents.
10. Motion by Glasgow Branch:—

"That, in order to encourage small and struggling Freethought societies to affiliate with the N. S. S., and also to relieve, to some extent, those who have a difficulty in maintaining themselves, the annual contribution from Branches be reduced to sixpence per member."

11. Motion by Battersea Branch:—

"That a delegate be appointed to represent the Freethinkers of Great Britain at the Geneva Freethought Congress, such delegate's expenses to be paid by the N. S. S."

The Conference will sit in the Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, London, W.; the morning session lasting from 10.30 to 12.30, and the afternoon session from 2.30 to 4.30. Both are business meetings for members of the N. S. S. A public meeting will be held in the evening at 7.30 at the (minor) Queen's Hall, Langham-place, W. The President of the N. S. S. will occupy the chair on each occasion.

Ethical "Religion."

ETHICIST.—Hurrah! We have just thought out a new definition of "religion."

SECULARIST.—Indeed! And does defining a word differently make any real difference in it?

ETH.—Of course it does! It conveys a new impression to the mind of the hearer.

SEC.—But when Dr. Johnson defined a fishing-rod as "A long slender pole with a worm at one end and a fool at the other," did that make the word convey any different impression?

ETH.—Decidedly! It gave the fisherman a very poor impression of the Doctor's knowledge of fishing. But your illustration misses the point. When new ideas arise, they can be best expressed by slight variations in the use of existing words. In fact, that is the process by which all language has been evolved.

SEC.—But why do you choose "religion" for your special variation in meaning? Surely the English language is sufficiently copious without trenching upon theological terms and phrases.

ETH.—But why should theology be allowed to claim all the best terms? You Secularists declaim against ecclesiastical bigotry, and then develop a bigotry of your own which sees nothing but evil in everything theological; and you would even reject its poor unoffending words. You are aware, now, that though the generality of people are indifferent to theology, and rather resent its being forced upon their attention, yet they associate the word "religion" with a dim sense of the beautiful, the consoling, the elevating, the ennobling, the sublime; while they condemn *irreligion* as being essentially base. There is not the slightest reason why the theologians should be allowed to monopolise the word "religion," with all its popular sentimental associations.

SEC.—But it seems to me that it is just as dishonest to rob the theologian of his *word* as to rob him of his *purse*. You imply that you wish to pilfer the word "religion," in order to curry favor with the multitude; and it is by no means certain that the multitude will be deceived by it. If I say to the Man in the Street, "Mr. Ethicist is a religious person," he will immediately reply: "That is impossible. Mr. Ethicist is *not* religious. He doesn't go to church; he doesn't believe the Bible; and he disagrees with the clergy. In fact, he is no more religious than you are."

ETH.—But all this arises from mistaken ideas of the meaning of "religion." There is no necessity to confine it to a theological sense. You have only to study its derivation to see that. Philologists are agreed that *religion* comes from the root *ligo*—that is, "to bind," which we find also in the words *Ligature*, and *Obligation*; so that *religion* originally meant something that was "binding."

SEC.—But if you only want a word to signify binding, why do you not take "ligature"? Why not talk of "Ethical ligature" instead of "Ethical religion"?

ETH.—You are only quibbling. The three words I mention have their definite shades of meaning. "Ligature" implies the binding of a material thing, while "religion" expresses the binding of an ideal thing.

SEC.—That is my point. "Religion" has its own definite meaning. It denotes theological binding and theological obligation. How else can you define it?

ETH.—If you look at the first page of our journal, you will see how we define it. We say "Religion is allegiance to an object to which supreme devotion is regarded as due."

SEC.—Such a definition excludes nearly all the religions of the earth.

ETH.—Impossible! Every religion in the world holds out a supreme object of devotion.

SEC.—What about Hinduism? It is the boast of Hindu hierologists that their pantheon embraces one million deities. According to your definition, therefore, Hinduism is not a religion, for it has not one supreme object, but a million objects, for devotion. The only religions which your definition will cover are Judaism and Islamism. All the others are left out. Christianity cannot be a religion according to you, for it has several objects of supreme devotion, such as God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost, and the Virgin Mary.

ETH.—Well, as far as Christianity is concerned, all these objects resolve themselves into one. In the words of the Athanasian Creed there is "The Father Incomprehensible, the Son Incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost Incomprehensible; but these are not three Incomprehensibles, but one Incomprehensible." But if you deny that my definition describes religion, what does it describe? What would *you* call a man who professed allegiance to an object to which he regarded supreme devotion as being due?

SEC.—I would call him a "soldier." No one but a military man answers to such a description. What is the *devotion* of the ordinary religious person? He simply goes to church twice on Sunday, and forgets all about it the rest of the week. The clergyman's *devotion* consists in holding two or three services in a week, and then amusing himself by collecting coins, discussing literature, or writing commentaries upon the Greek and Roman classics. But, whether in peace or in war, the soldier never forgets to whom *his* devotion is due. In peace he wears the King's uniform, he salutes the King's colors, he reads the King's regulations. In war he endures hunger, thirst, wounds, and fatigue. He rushes without hesitation into the most obvious danger, and holds life cheap in carrying out the orders of his general. And all this to show his allegiance to the object to which he regards supreme devotion as due. The three hundred Spartans at Thermopylæ, the Swiss Guards at the Tuileries, cheerfully devoted themselves to death rather than swerve from their allegiance. What was it that rendered it possible for Cæsar to cross the Rubicon? The knowledge that there were three legions behind him, who regarded him as the object of their supreme devotion. What was it that took Alexander through the known world? The allegiance of his devoted soldiery. When that allegiance faltered, he halted powerless. It is the *soldier*, not the religionist, whom you describe.

ETH.—From that point of view you have a certain amount of ground; but when *we* speak of an "object of devotion" we do not intend to imply anything in the nature of a king or a general, but an *ideal* to which supreme devotion is due—some one idea which shall express our *whole* obligation.

SEC.—That is the exact basis of the military life. The soldier has *one* ideal, and that is *Duty*. Devotion to *Duty* is the mainspring of all military action. In difficulty and in danger there is one thing that the soldier keeps in view, and that is *Duty*. Has Ethicism any *higher* ideal?

ETH.—Well, perhaps there is something in that. Ethics investigates Human *Duty*; and *Duty* is the great military watchword. But militarism is distasteful to many people, and so we prefer to call our department a religion.

SEC.—But I have just been trying to prove to you that your department is not a "religion" if it answers to the terms in which you define it. I am always meeting people who tell me that they have given up *theology*, but still preserved *religion*; but directly they try to define their position it is clear that they do not mean religion at all, but something entirely different. I am opposed to religion: you come and say that religion is allegiance to a supreme object of devotion. So that you virtually accuse me of opposition to the principle that allegiance should be given to an object of supreme devotion.

ETH.—Not in the least. I fully recognise that you have your own objects to which you regard your devotion as due; and, after all, what does it really matter whether

you call this attitude of mind "religion" or "military virtue"?

SEC.—It matters a great deal. First, there is the question of accuracy. Your definition defines military virtue, and not religion. Secondly, religion has been identified with massacres, persecutions, vices, and crimes of every description, and one would imagine that any moral man would prefer to be dissociated from a name which has been the cause of nearly all the ills in history.

C. E.

Freethought and the Family.

A GENTLEMAN who has recently grown out of one of the denominations of the Protestant Church into the light and air of Freethought asked me what he should do with his children. Should he bring them out into the open or leave them in the Sunday-school?

This is a practical question, and I shall try to answer it; and, in order to satisfy at once any possible curiosity as to what my answer will be, I say: Bring them out into the open. Having answered the question thus, I shall give my reasons, and explain in what manner I met the question with my own children, after I left the Church, on the 31st day of December, 1887, a little more than fourteen years ago, when my older child was thirteen and a-half years old and my younger about five and a-half.

There are many men who are not members of the Church, or who are nominal members, who harbor the idea that the church is, nevertheless, a good place for women and children. They do not mean to be insulting to women and children; they are merely indifferent to the subject, or they have not thought carefully upon it. They probably do not know that they are historically in line with many philosophers and advanced thinkers on religious subjects in all ages, which leads me to announce as my first proposition—

1. *That most people think that truth is a dangerous thing for women and children, and for the common people in general.*

In all philosophies and religions, so far as I know, there is, to a greater or less extent, what is called esoteric and exoteric doctrine—the former for the learned, the latter for the unlearned. Thus we are told that Christ taught his twelve disciples some things that the multitude were not supposed to be able to understand, and Paul illustrated the point by saying that milk is for babes and strong meat for men.

On this principle Socrates was judicially slain as a corrupter of youth, not because he taught them falsehoods, but because he taught them truths that only older and learned men were supposed to be able to bear.

This well-nigh universal idea shows that people, as a rule, are more afraid of the truth than of anything else, the consequence of which is that generation after generation of the common people, and of nearly all women and children, are kept in the darkness of ignorance as long as possible.

I do not believe in this principle or practice. If we cannot trust the truth, what can we trust? The fear the priest and the politician have of teaching the truth to the common people is not that the common people may be injured, but that they themselves may lose place or power or liberty or life.

He is not a true teacher who considers the results of telling the truth.

If women are, indeed, inferior creatures to men in their capacity to understand the plain teachings of common sense; if they can be satisfied and made happy only by believing what barbarians believed before ever there was a biologist, a chemist, or an astronomer in the world—then by all means let them believe only what they can; but, considering their records in schools and colleges, whenever they come into competition with men, it is absurd to suppose that when a man comes out into intellectual sunshine his wife must be left behind in the dim religious light.

Concerning children, it is doubtless true that there are many things they cannot understand, by reason of the immaturity of their minds and of their lack of experience; but there is no reason to suppose that they can

understand things that are not true any better than they can understand things that are true; and there is still less reason to suppose that they will grow up better and happier on a mental diet of falsehood than on a mental diet of truth.

Let us look into this a little more closely.

First. Concerning the common people.

1. It is said that, if they are made to believe that they will be rich and comfortable in heaven, they will be more contented in poverty in this world. If this be so, it is precisely the reason why they should be told that we do not know whether there is any heaven or not. Perhaps, if we could fill their minds with uncertainty about heaven, they might be cured of that stupid, ox-like contentment which, more than anything else, keeps them in the bondage and degradation of poverty.

2. It is said that the fear of hell is necessary to keep them orderly and moral. I do not believe this; but if it is so it is a pity, for orderliness that is produced by fear is not true orderliness; it is paralysis, loss of manhood, lingering death. It is the orderliness of a prison or of an army or of slavery, and not that of a free society. And morality that is produced by fear is not morality; it is mere abstinence. He who is moral through fear of hell is in hell already—the hell of unsatisfied desire. There is only one true morality—that of him who prefers morality to immorality.

3. Happily, however, we have proof that these statements about the common people are not true, for they hope for heaven and fear hell less than ever before, and many of them are apparently as contented in poverty as of old, and they are more orderly and moral than ever before.

Second. Concerning women.

It is said that, because they are emotional creatures rather than logical, conventional religion is necessary to them. The answer to this is that thousands of women are free from the superstitions of religion, and this proves that conventional religion is not necessary to the normal life of women.

Supposing it be true that women are more emotional than men, there are plenty of things to become excited about besides God and Satan, or heaven or hell. There are children to love and men to hate, if somebody must be hated. There is plenty of room for emotion in this world, where a few have so much too much and many have so much too little, and where we haven't got done with fighting, and where we haven't yet learned to be quite kind even to those whom we think we love. There is much to hope for this side of the grave, much to give us joy. Why should we suppose that emotional people must necessarily believe in the Trinity, the vicarious atonement, the immaculate conception, and the infallibility of the Pope.

And, if women are illogical, there is enough to be illogical about without plunging into theology. My observation is that many persons have shaken the dust of the Church off their feet without perceptibly improving their logic. If a woman must be illogical, she can become an Atheist, and take to denying what she knows nothing about as earnestly as her Churchy sisters assert what they know nothing about.

Third. Concerning children.

People seem to think that children must be taught to pray, probably because there are so many pictures of children in their night-clothes, on their knees, and with their hands together lifted towards heaven. But why teach a child what it would never think of doing if left to itself?

"Who do you love best, my child?"

"Papa and mamma."

"Oh, no you don't. You love God best."

And so you teach the child to say what you know, and it knows, isn't true.

But what shall I say when the child asks troublesome questions, as, for example, "Who made the world?" Why not be truthful, and say you don't know?

Why fill your child's mind with ideas that are false, only to have him go through the agonies of doubt and superstitious fear in after years to get rid of them?

But children are so imaginative. Something must be told them to satisfy their imaginations. And so you tell them of God, whose great eye is always upon them, and of the Devil, with that pitchfork and forked tail, and those cloven hoofs; of ghosts, and fill their nights with

terror and make them afraid of the dark; of fairies which do not exist.

Is there any lack in nature to satisfy the imagination of the liveliest child? What about the ways of the flowers, the ants, the bees, the fairy-rings built by the mushrooms? Come with me some summer or fall morning, and let me show you a company of crickets taking breakfast from the under-side of a mushroom, the dewdrops shining on top of the breakfast-table. No fairy doings equal this or a hundred other things that you may see in the woods and fields in half a day.

Why not tell a child the story of the stars, the story of the sun and moon and milky way?—true nature stories; the stories that suggested the fairies to ignorant minds. But do you know these stories? Read them the fairy stories, but tell them they are not facts. Read them Kipling's "Jungle Books." Read them Ernest Thompson-Seton's animal stories and Hamilton Gibson's nature books. Read them the stories of Greek and Roman mythology. Read the Bible stories to them, and show them that they are the same sort of stories.

This is what I did with my children, neither of whom has, or ever had, any conventional religion that I know of.

Children take the simple truth very easily. Once give it to them, and no priest can ever convert them to the error of his ways. The Church knows the value of teaching its doctrines to the young. But she loses many of them when they mature. We should also teach our doctrines to the young from the very start. If we do, superstition will not claim them later in life.

Let us have done with the notion that free thought is for men and slave thought for women and children. What is good for me is good for my wife and child.

HUGH O. PENTECOST.

—*Truthseeker* (New York.)

Correspondence.

CECIL RHODES: HIS CHARACTER AND CREED.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—There is a word or two of criticism as to the character and creed of Cecil Rhodes which I would like to record, in view of Mr. Cohen's recent article. Of course, it should be said, in the first place, that it is particularly hard for the British public to get at the truth about the late Mr. Rhodes. Mr. Hobson has explained to us how the Rhodesian financiers captured virtually the entire press of South Africa; they also captured a large part of the home press. And when the war was being engineered, during the years 1897-1899, "Cecil Rhodes, the Empire-builder," was puffed like a patent medicine or a new bicycle-tyre. In addition to this newspaper puffery, every three months or so saw an "inspired" biography or a catchy novel booming the "greatness" and the "romance" of the "Empire-builder's" career, and amidst this tornado of finance-advertisement it is not very easy to get at the facts. But most disinterested accounts agree that Mr. Rhodes was in real life far from the being painted by the skilled artists of the *Daily Mail*, or even by the hysterical journalist of the *Review of Reviews*. A journalistic friend of mine, who spent several years in South Africa, writes thus of him:—"The nauseous deluge of journealese that has fallen upon us in Ireland and England anent the man's greatness and Imperialism is irritating to those who have known something of him and his work. A keen financier and a blundering politician.....The Imperialistic dreams and sentiments that are being credited to him never had existence. The man desired to unite the States of South Africa in one commonwealth, with himself at the helm—not that the Empire might be made the greater, but that Cecil Rhodes might be free to push his commercial schemes, increase his wealth, and augment his personal power."

In the *Freethinker* of April 13 Mr. Rhodes is spoken of as a "great" man, and Mr. Cohen seems to rate him rather highly. Now, Mr. Rhodes was found guilty by the South African Committee of having deceived those who trusted him, and of having deceived the High Commissioner. Mr. Rhodes organised the Raid, and thereby, more than any other single man, was responsible for the hideous conflict which, while he lay dying, swept the land which his "statesmanship" cursed. The Raid must rank as one of the "great" man's achievements—the Raid which, in addition to its criminality, was the most ludicrous *fasco* of modern times. It was Mr. Rhodes who thought that President Kruger, if sufficiently "bluffed," would yield to any British demand rather than fight—a miscalculation which reveals how far the Dutch conspiracy myth was believed in by the very authors of the war themselves. It was Mr. Rhodes who said the military power of the Boers was the greatest unpricked

bubble in the world. Now, if a man is to be accounted "great" in virtue of the magnitude of his political errors or his political crimes, Lord North and Louis Napoleon must henceforth rank as great men; and possibly the title should also be extended to the late Charles Peace, who, I believe, in his day, compassed the death of a good many men.

There remains the question of Mr. Rhodes's political and religious creed. As to his grandiose scheme of governing the whole world by a secret society of millionaires, and all the rest, Mr. Cohen thinks it could not have been entertained by "a little man." Well, all I can say is, that if the harboring of gigantic fancies of that kind indicates greatness of mind or character, Mr. Rhodes must stand down before half-a-dozen school-boys, picked at random from any school in the land, who have just made the acquaintance of Jules Verne. The whole thing is bottomless in its puerility, and casts a flood of light on the man and his mental outfit. For one thing, I see no inherent reason why the author of the trash Mr. Stead has published should not have been capable of entertaining any nonsense of a theological character. And as to his limited-liability theology, or his alleged Agnosticism, there is this in conclusion to be said:—If Mr. Rhodes really was an Agnostic—though that is exceedingly doubtful—it simply brings home to Freethinkers a fact the recognition of which is necessary, lest even they should grow conceited. The rejection of theology is not in itself an absolute guarantee of moral excellence, and men may be Agnostics and blackguards at the same time—blackguards, not because of their Agnosticism, but because of defective character. And certainly I must register a personal objection to the readiness with which some Freethinkers wish to claim as adherents people whose company is far from being unquestionable. If I heard that "Jack the Ripper" had doubts—or told somebody he had doubts—about the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, I confess I should not feel any thrill of pride, nor any impulse to proclaim the news. And, though I do not wish to compare Cecil Rhodes to the malefactor mentioned, I cannot say I feel flattered at finding that he called himself an Agnostic. In my humble judgment, at any rate, if Cecil Rhodes was an Agnostic, the best thing for Agnostics to do is to say as little about it as possible.

FREDERICK RYAN.

RE "THE NATURE OF CONSCIENCE."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—“Chilperic” seems to have as much difficulty in proving his case for a materialistic conscience as “Robert Reid” would have in proving conscience to be an “original power of the mind.”

The derivation of the word “conscience” may be accepted; but it may be ventured that the word itself, in common with many others in our language, utterly fails to express that which is accepted as its real meaning by a great majority of persons.

“Conscience” is undoubtedly an intuitive faculty, and cannot be quoted as analogous to the actions of the “skilled workman” or the “orator” instanced by “Chilperic.”

They are performing certain things which, by long personal experience, have become merely reflex actions. It cannot be imagined that either of them could perform such actions intuitively at the age of six or seven years, at which time the faculty of conscience is apparent.

Conscience is purely individualistic, and the term “the general conscience of a community” is an incorrect figure of speech. Conscience is a faculty common only to the individual—(1) in his actions relating to himself alone; (2) in his actions relating to individuals; (3) in his actions relating to the community.

It is quite possible that the individual conscience may be opposed to the “moral sense” of a community, particularly to the “moral sense” of the communities instanced by “Chilperic”—viz., “The Highlanders,” “New Zealanders,” and others. The term, “moral sense,” used here, is surely intended by “Chilperic” to mean “public opinion,” which is quite a different thing. By environment the conscience may become stilled; but it is possible that, if the conscience of the individuals forming these communities could have been analysed, a considerable number would have been found to condemn such actions as those stated. An analysis of the conscience of the “Frankish King” would also be interesting.

No conscientious man would claim to run the universe, or force any course of action upon a community, solely owing to the dictates of his own conscience. The latter is simply a law to himself, under the three headings above. All beyond that can only be regarded as individual opinion, conscientious or otherwise, and not binding upon any other individual or community.

To what extent conscience is intuitive by evolution, and to what extent it is intuitive as part of the original scheme of nature, it is impossible to say. Even if it be conceded that it is nine-tenths intuitive owing to the development of the sense of right and wrong, influenced by social laws in former generations, there is still no proof that the original fraction of intuitive conscience was not planted by a wise and beneficent “First Cause,” as part of man's natural equipment, and

to enable him to develop the "moral sense" necessary in his relations to himself, to individuals, and to communities throughout all the ages to come.

W. H. LEWIN.

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.): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "The Bible Millstone on the Neck of Education."

STATION ROAD (Camberwell): 11.30, E. Pack.

BROCKWELL PARK: 3.15, E. Pack.

MILE END WASTE: 11.30, W. J. Ramsey.

EAST LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Stanley Temperance Bar, 7 High-street, Stepney): 3.30, Branch Meeting—Mr. D. Frankel's last attendance.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 11.30, F. A. Davies, "Huxley."

HYDE PARK, near Marble Arch (West London Branch N. S. S.): Freethought literature on sale at all meetings. 11.30, R. P. Edwards.

HAMMERSMITH BROADWAY (West London Branch N. S. S.): 7.30, R. P. Edwards.

CLERKENWELL GREEN (Finsbury Branch N. S. S.): 11.30, A lecture.

EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Bromley Vestry Hall, Bow-road): 7, Stanton Coit, "Anarchy and Democracy."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Surrey Masonic Hall): 7, Aylmer Maude, "Life and Art."

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall, ante-room, first floor): 11.15, Gustav Spiller, "Spencer's Idea of Justice."

STREATHAM AND BRIXTON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Carlton Hall, Tunstall-road, Brixton-road): 7, T. G. Tibbey, B.A., "Habit."

COUNTRY.

BRADFORD (Open-air; Victoria-street, Morley-street): H. Percy Ward—3, "Why I Dare Not be a Christian"; 6.30, "Spiritualism: Is it True?"

CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 2.45, Sunday-school; 7, Dramatic Sketch, entitled "Single Life," by the Dramatic Class.

GLASGOW (110 Brunswick-street): 12, Discussion Class—Open Discussion; 6.30, J. S. Hill, "Anarchism Impracticable." Committee meets at 1 p.m.

LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): H. Percy Ward—"A Christian Ghost Story"; 3, "Why Christian Ministers Dare Not Defend the Bible God"; 7, "The Dream of Heaven and the Nightmare of Hell."

MANCHESTER (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road): 6.30, Mr. J. McLachlan, "Woman: The Hope of Democracy."

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): W. Heaford—11, "Holy Mysteries"; 3, "The Meaning of Freethought"; 7, "Religion Contrasted with Morality." Weather permitting, the first lecture will be given near the Monolith. Tea at 5.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Capt. Duncan's Navigation Schools, Market-place): 7, J. M. Peacock, "The New Education Bill."

In stout paper covers, 1s.; cloth, 2s.

THE BOOK OF GOD

In the Light of the Higher Criticism.

With Special Reference to DEAN FARRAR'S *New Apology*.

By G. W. FOOTE.

Contents:—Introduction—The Bible Canon—The Bible and Science—Miracles and Witchcraft—The Bible and Freethought—Morals and Manners—Political and Social Progress—Inspiration—The Testimony of Jesus—The Bible and the Church of England—An Oriental Book—Fictitious Supremacy.

"I have read with great pleasure your *Book of God*. You have shown with perfect clearness the absurdity of Dean Farrar's position. I congratulate you on your book. It will do great good, because it is filled with the best of sense expressed with force and beauty."—*Col. R. G. Ingersoll*.

"A volume we strongly recommend.....Ought to be in the hands of every earnest and sincere inquirer."—*Reynolds's Newspaper*.

London: The Freethought Publishing Company, Limited,
2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

WANTED, MEN AND WOMEN capable of making Sales amongst their friends and connections in every town in the United Kingdom. Splendid returns for proper ability.—Address, Manager, S. P. W. Co., South Farnborough, Hants.

Boots and Shoes
to suit everybody.
Exceptional value.

TO-DAY.
TO-DAY.
TO-DAY.
TO-DAY.
TO-DAY.
TO-DAY.
TO-DAY.
TO-DAY.
TO-DAY.

Dress Materials
in great variety
at reasonable prices.
Samples free.

A really good, strong, serviceable, smart, well-cut, well-made SUIT TO MEASURE for

30s.

(Send Post Card for samples.)

Thirty different Patterns to select from, including all the latest and most fashionable materials.

FREETHINKERS,

PATRONISE

A FREETHINKER,

Who guarantees satisfaction everywhere.

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

THE BEST BOOK

ON NEO-MALTHUSIANISM IS, I BELIEVE,

TRUE MORALITY, or THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF NEO-MALTHUSIANISM.

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

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

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

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

The Council of the Malthusian League, Dr. Drysdale, Dr. Allbutt, and others, have also spoken of it in very high terms.

Orders should be sent to the author,

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

The Safest and Most Effectual Cure for Inflammation of the Eyes is

Thwaites' Celandine Lotion.

Cures inflammation in a few hours. Neglected or badly doctored cases. 3 or 4 days is sufficient time to cure any case. For Sore and Inflamed Eyelids. Nothing to equal the Lotion for Dimness of Sight. Will remove Skin or Film that sometimes grows on the Eye. As the eye is one of the most sensitive organs of the body, it needs the most careful treatment.

Cullpeper says in his *Herbal Book* that it is the virtues of Celandine were generally known it would spoil the spectacle-makers' trade. 1s. 1½d. per bottle, with directions; by post 14 stamps.

G. THWAITES, Herbalist, 2 Church-row, Stockton-on-Tees

NOW READY.
 IS
 IMMORTALITY A FACT?

A Critical Examination

OF THE THEORY OF

A SOUL AND A FUTURE LIFE.

By CHARLES WATTS.

PRICE FOURPENCE.

THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING Co., LTD., 2 NEWCASTLE ST., FARRINGDON ST., E.C.

BIBLE ROMANCES.

By G. W. FOOTE.

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

THE SECOND (REVISED) EDITION COMPLETE.

160 Pages.

Bound in Cloth.

Price Two Shillings.

Free by Post at the Published Price.

THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING CO., LTD., 2 NEWCASTLE ST., FARRINGDON ST., E.C.

NOW READY.

FOREIGN MISSIONS:

THEIR DANGERS AND DELUSIONS.

By C. COHEN.

Contents :—General Considerations—Financial—India—China and Japan—Africa and Elsewhere—Converting the Jews—Conclusions.

Full of facts and figures. Ought to have a wide circulation.

Price Ninepence.

THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING CO., LTD., 2 NEWCASTLE ST., FARRINGDON ST., E.C.

The Twentieth Century Edition
OF THE
AGE OF REASON.
By THOMAS PAINE.
WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION & ANNOTATIONS
By G. W. FOOTE.
And a Beautiful Portrait of Paine.

ISSUED BY THE SECULAR SOCIETY, LIMITED.

Printed in fine New Type on Good Paper, and Published at the
Marvellously Low Price of Sixpence.

Postage of Single Copies, 2d.

THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING Co., LTD., 2 NEWCASTLE ST., FARRINGDON ST., E.C.

THE BIBLE HANDBOOK
FOR
FREETHINKERS AND INQUIRING CHRISTIANS.

Edited by G. W. FOOTE and W. P. BALL.

A NEW EDITION, REVISED, AND HANDSOMELY PRINTED.

Contents :—Part I. Bible Contradictions—Part II. Bible Absurdities—Part III. Bible Atrocities—
Part IV. Bible Inmoralities, Indecencies, Obscenities, Broken Promises, and Unfulfilled Prophecies.

Cheap Edition, in paper covers, 1s. 6d.; Best Edition, bound in cloth, 2s. 6d.

THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING Co., LTD., 2 NEWCASTLE ST., FARRINGDON ST., E.C.

THE SHADOW OF THE SWORD.

By G. W. FOOTE.

A MORAL AND STATISTICAL ESSAY ON WAR.

SHOULD BE IN THE HANDS OF ALL REFORMERS.

Price Twopence.

THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING Co., LTD., 2 NEWCASTLE ST., FARRINGDON ST., E.C.