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*Understand that well, it is the deep commandment, dimmer or clearer, of our whole being, to be FREE. Freedom is the one purport, wisely aimed at, or unwisely, of all man's struggles, toilings, and sufferings, in this Earth.*—CARLYLE.

## Hume and the Puritans.

WE have now to see what Hume really said about the Puritans. Dr. Clifford was good enough (to his own party) to represent the historian as declaring that "It is to the Puritans the English owe their liberties." Being asked to state *where* he declares so, Dr. Clifford gives no answer. A Presbyterian minister called Woffendale, rushing in to the Free Church champion's assistance, offers a quotation from Hume, which he mutilates in the quoting. The following is the passage in question, and the words printed in italics are those that were omitted:—

"So absolute, indeed, was the authority of the crown, that the precious spark of liberty had been kindled, and was preserved, by the puritans alone; and it was to this sect, *whose principles appear so frivolous, and habits so ridiculous*, that the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution.

It is easy to understand why these words in italics were left out of the quotation. Their appearance might have suggested a doubt in thinking minds as to whether Hume meant that a sect which merited such a description was deliberately, and not accidentally, the author of any liberty whatever.

Pope said that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. It has been replied that a little knowledge is better than none at all. But this is no answer. Pope was right. A little knowledge *is* a dangerous thing. There is always the peril of its being made to do duty for more. It may tempt impudence into lifting its head too haughtily—until someone comes along with greater knowledge and takes down the pride of the sciolist.

Hume refers to the Puritans in many other places. This is one of his earliest references to them, and the date counts for a great deal. An historical argument must not be carried on, as the Chinese paint pictures, without perspective. It is in Hume's fortieth chapter, dealing with the reign of Elizabeth, and under the date of 1571, that this passage occurs. Now it must be observed, in the first place, that Hume does not use the plural term "liberties." He uses the singular "liberty," and the liberty he means is narrowed down to the "freedom of the constitution." That is to say, as anyone may find who takes the trouble to read Hume, the Puritans, in the early years of the reign of Elizabeth, began to criticise and somewhat to oppose the royal prerogative; not because they objected to any exercise of power when it was in harmony with their own opinions and wishes, but because the Queen was half a Catholic and was a firm upholder of Episcopacy and all that it involved in the discipline of the Church of England. Hume points out again and again that the quarrel between the throne and the parliament, from the accession of Elizabeth to the execution of Charles the First, was primarily *theo-*

*logical*; and only expressed itself *politically* because the victory was to be decided by the possession of the temporal power. Even after the first open rupture between Charles and the Parliament, it is perfectly clear, and the truth is emphasised by Hume, that if the King had put himself at the head of the Puritan party, instead of at the head of the Episcopal party, he would have extinguished (at least for the time) the whole dispute over the royal prerogative.

This is, indeed, a point that has not received sufficient attention. I will therefore give Hume's opinion in his own words. The famous Long Parliament had met; had impeached, tried, and executed Strafford; had engaged in a constitutional struggle with the King, and had taken solid precautions against his tyrannical temper, by obtaining firm control over the revenue and the military power. Charles spoke more humbly than of old, and the course of events might have been quiet and peaceful if it had not been for the *religious* quarrel which was still undecided.

"So obvious indeed was the king's present inability to invade the constitution, that the fears and jealousies which operated on the people, and pushed them so furiously to arms, were undoubtedly not of a civil, but of a religious nature. The distempered imaginations of men were agitated with a continual dread of popery, with a horror against prelacy, with an antipathy to ceremonies and the liturgy, and with a violent affection for whatever was most opposite to these objects of aversion. The fanatical spirit let loose, confounded all regard to ease, safety, interest; and dissolved every moral and civil obligation" (chap. 55).

Six years afterwards, in 1648, when Charles had fallen into the hands of the parliament, but before there was any idea of his trial at Westminster and his execution at Whitehall, a long consultation took place between both sides at Newport, in the Isle of Wight. "The Parliament," Hume says, "insisted on the establishment of presbytery, the sale of the chapter lands, the abolition of all forms of prayer, and strict laws against Catholics." They even refused to allow the King the liberty of using a liturgy in his own chapel. Two of their theologians—for the Parliament kept quite a kennel of such animals—were ordered to tell him that if he did not consent to the utter abolition of episcopacy he would be damned! Even the Queen and her family were not to be exempted from the terrible penalties "to be enacted against the exercise of the mass." "So great was the bigotry on both sides," Hume says, "that they were willing to sacrifice the greatest civil interests, rather than relinquish the most minute of their theological contentions." But the Parliament had the upper hand, and was resolved to keep it; and, as money was necessary to this object, *forced loans* were raised all over the country from the "ungodly." This was bettering the bad example of Charles between 1628 and 1640. "Never, in this island," Hume says, "was known a more severe and arbitrary government than was generally exercised by the patrons of liberty in both kingdoms."

Of course the dispute over the royal prerogative would have revived, even if it had been extinguished, for the Puritan party in the House of Commons comprised men who were not Puritans in the common sense of the word. Let us hear Hume on this point,

In chapter fifty-one, under the date of 1629, he says:—

Amidst that complication of disputes in which men were then involved, we may observe that the appellation *puritan* stood for three parties, which, though commonly united, were yet actuated by very different views and motives. There were the political puritans, who maintained the highest principles of civil liberty; the puritans in discipline, who were averse to the ceremonies and episcopal government of the church; and the doctrinal puritans, who rigidly defended the speculative system of the first reformers.

Those "political puritans" have lent a fictitious lustre to the Puritan party. "King Pym," as the Royalists styled him, was first and last a political reformer; nearly as much may be said of John Hampden; a man like Sir Harry Vane looked down upon the ordinary Puritans, and the wise and witty Harry Marten must have looked upon them as considerable curiosities.

Now it must also be observed, in the second place, that the original Puritans were anything but Free Churchmen. Dr. Clifford assumed that they were so, but they were nothing of the kind. Nonconformity was a thing of a much later date. Let us hear Hume again, as the appeal is to him. I quote from his Appendix to the reign of James the First.

"The puritans formed a sect which secretly lurked in the church, but pretended not to any separate worship or discipline. An attempt of that kind would have been universally regarded as the most unpardonable enormity. And had the king been disposed to grant the puritans a full toleration for a separate exercise of their religion, it is certain, from the spirit of the times, that this sect itself would have despised and hated him for it, and would have reproached him with lukewarmness and indifference in the cause of religion. They maintained that they themselves were the only pure church; that their principles and practices ought to be established by law; and that no others ought to be tolerated.

What a surprising party to achieve the liberties of the English!

When the Puritans rose to absolute power, after the execution of Charles, and the abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords, it is curious how they respected other people's liberties. It is a mistake to suppose that they abolished the Church of England. They simply abolished the Bishops. For the rest, they saw to the appointment of a "godly" preacher in every parish; that is, they turned out a host of the old clergy and put in their own nominees. A great effort was made to import Presbyterianism from Scotland and fasten it upon the neck of England. And the scheme was succeeding admirably until the Independents gained the control of the Army under Cromwell. Preston, Dunbar, and Worcester settled the hash of that spiritual enterprise. The Puritans boast of Cromwell as their man, but it was being something more (and other) than a Puritan that won him his great place in English history. He was two hundred years ahead of his time in the matter of religious toleration; and, although he could pray and preach, and wrestle with the Lord, as well as any of the empty-headed fanatics, he always brought a large secular common sense to the treatment of public questions. This much at least must be said of him, that he loved liberty in his heart of hearts; and, when the hour sounded, he wielded his invincible sword as resolutely against the Presbyterian despotism as he had wielded it against the despotism of Charles Stuart.

What the Presbyterian despotism was we know from the history of Scotland. It was Puritanism in excelsis. Buckle's picture of it is famous. But for the present we must keep to Hume, and here is *his* picture:—

"The ecclesiastical courts possessed the power of pronouncing excommunication; and that sentence, besides the spiritual consequences supposed to follow from it, was attended with immediate effects of the most important nature. The person excommunicated was shunned by everyone as profane and impious; and his whole estate, during his lifetime, and all his moveables,

for ever, were forfeited to the crown. Nor were the previous steps, requisite before pronouncing this sentence, formal or regular, in proportion to the weight of it. Without accuser, without summons, without trial, any ecclesiastical court, however inferior, sometimes pretended in a summary manner to denounce excommunication for any cause, and against any person, even though he lived not within the bounds of their jurisdiction. And by this means the whole tyranny of the inquisition, without its order, was introduced into the kingdom."

"Scarcely," says Hume, "even during the darkest night of papal superstition, are there found such instances of priestly encroachments as the annals of Scotland present to us during that period." Hume was a Scotchman, but he was also a philosopher, as well as an historian, and he preferred to tell the truth, even at the expense of his own countrymen. In less than a hundred years the Puritanism of John Knox worked out in practice as about the most odious and despicable tyranny that ever cursed and disgraced the world.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

### The Wesleyan Pastoral and Materialism.

IN one of his replies to a critic of Utilitarianism John Stuart Mill dwelt very forcibly, and very properly, upon the prejudice exerted by a careful selection of words. All the more important words we use are, what Oliver Wendell Holmes called, polarised—they have more or less definite connotations, and their use is bound to suggest associations more or less agreeable. Keep on asserting that an opponent's views are "degrading" and that your own views are "lofty," and, as all like the latter class and none the former, a certain prejudice is excited among the unthinking, without their first determining whether these particular epithets ought not in reality to change places. Consider how much prejudice has been excited in favor of the doctrine of free will by the use of the word "free," or the prejudice roused against determinism by the use of the word "necessity." Here the social significance of the phrases have been surreptitiously appealed to, and a verdict obtained without the jury ever having considered the points at issue. The popular adage, "Give a dog a bad name and you may as well hang him at once," receives a certain warranty from a scientific psychology.

Perhaps there are few who understand and apply this method so well as preachers and writers on religion. Anyhow, the just issued "Pastoral" of the Wesleyan Methodist Church contains a fine specimen of this abuse of language, and one which may well serve to point a moral in the present instance. The "Pastoral," as is only to be expected from those issued on previous occasions, laments the spread of Materialism, which can only be exorcised by "Righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost"—whatever that may mean, and declares the nation's pressing need of an evangelical Christianity, which, I presume, means Christianity as expounded by the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The prevalence of Materialism—used as a synonym for all that is vicious and degraded, and the necessity for religion—which, again, stands for the incarnation of all that is beautiful and elevating, is the main note of this year's "Pastoral"; and without discussing whether one is prevalent or the other necessary, it may be at least instructive to discuss the sense in which these words are used, particularly as both words represent more or less a party badge.

There are two senses in which the word "Materialism" is habitually used. On the one hand it connotes those who hold a specific view of the universe, believing that its phenomena is ultimately explainable in terms of matter and motion. The opposite to this is philosophic spiritualism. And on the other hand it does, in popular language, connote one who takes a low and sordid view of life and its duties, and who prefers the lower to the higher pleasures of life. Now, if the religionist meant by

the word *either* of these things there would be no room for fault finding; but the fact is that he means *both*, using the two meanings as interchangeable and in such a manner as suggests that the one who is a Materialist in the first sense, is necessarily so in the second, and that our beliefs as to the nature of matter or energy must affect our opinions as to the legitimacy of adultery or the advisability of manslaughter. The result of this abuse of language by the pulpit and the religious press is that in the popular imagination the man who calls himself a Materialist is pictured as a man of low ideals, or of no ideals at all, and whose highest aim in life is to get money by any means that lie within his reach, and afterwards to squander it on the most debasing pursuits.

Now, it is quite a legitimate reply to make to this position that historically the most dangerous and demoralising philosophy has, as a matter of fact, been the spiritualistic. In antiquity one of the most potent factors in the dissolution of the Roman Empire was the introduction of the Asiatic mystical religious cults, and one can trace step by step with their spread a decay of all that was best and noblest in the Roman character. The sexual extravagances of the early Christian Churches, the asceticism of the fourth century, the Anabaptists and pre-Adamites of Reformation times, all help to prove the truth of Ruskin's saying, that man is never so near being a beast as when he imagines himself a god. The sexual eccentricities of Swami, Prince, and Pigott are no new features in the history of religion, they are rather the normal expression of the absence of that Materialism without which science is an impossibility and social life a nightmare.

But, even if we take Materialism in its worst sense—that of embodying low ideals—even here the religious world, on the whole, would rank as the greater offender. It comes curiously enough from the Wesleyan Methodist Church, after its wild scramble for a million guineas, to protest against the spirit of worldliness. Nor is an absence of "worldliness" at all a marked characteristic of Dissenters in general. They probably muster a larger element of the shopkeeping class than other sections of the community, and shopkeeping in its worst aspect at that. The "Pastoral" protests that "commercial enterprise may very well, unless we are most watchful, become so absorbing as to destroy the higher ideals and finer temper of a Christian life"; and if that, indeed, be a danger, it is well to note, first, that the shadiest side of commercial enterprise—including our modern financial military campaigns—is well supported by the religious world; and, second, that the healthy note of protest against all that was degrading in modern industry and commerce, came from those who took a Materialistic view of human nature and history.

It is one of the common charges brought by Christians against a Materialistic philosophy that it affords no basis for morality and no incentive to nobility of action. The ground of this objection is that the mere association of human beings, the observed consequences of actions, the feeling of satisfaction on doing the right or of remorse on doing evil, are alone neither strong enough to inspire nor to restrain. Man needs, in addition, some supernatural restraint—a belief in God, a future life, a heaven or a hell; for, if there be no resurrection from the dead, "then let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die." Well, for the moment we need not discuss the truth of these respective views; there may be different opinions on that head, but there can hardly be a difference of opinion as to which is the nobler ideal of the two. It is surely a nobler view of human nature to maintain that, self-contained, it possesses all that is essential to its well-being, and that, properly guided, human beings may act with a due regard to their own and other people's welfare, than to teach that nothing but the belief in some external power—in some kind of almighty policeman and executioner combined—can keep men decent in action, even while leaving them indecent

in intent. The one treats man as a conscious, responsible being, capable of realising his own capabilities and the claims of those around him; the other treats man as a confirmed criminal, to be kept within the bounds of decency by eternal watchfulness, or taught to bridle his desires here in order to gratify them more fully hereafter. Yet it is the former view that is called Materialistic and degrading, the latter spiritualised and elevating!

It would be foolish to deny that there are in the religious world men of lofty ideals—in the best sense of the word. But it would also be stupid to question that these have been fully paralleled by others whose views of religion were diametrically opposed. In the religious sense of the word men like Robert Owen, Thomas Paine, Karl Marx, John Stuart Mill, Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer, and many another half dozen that might be named were all Materialists; and it may safely be said that no group of religious men have held nobler or more serviceable ideals before their fellows. And let it be noted that, in their devotion to an ideal, these men had none of that artificial stimulation always possessed by religious people. The religious leader has always the artificial stimulus that comes from the applause of the crowd; or, if not that, then the stimulus of the fanatic who feels himself in actual contact with the Deity, and sustained by him at every step. But the purely social or scientific worker is without these artificial incentives. Supernatural stimuli are, of course, beyond him, and that of the crowd also, for the reason that his work is nearly always above its mental grasp. He is content to pursue his work in quietude—content if he manages to complete it, and for after-ages to recognise its worth. And here, again, we have a nobler ideal, and, on the whole, a nobler character formed, than that possessed or shaped by religion.

The sober truth is that all good and useful work must possess the qualities of both worldliness and Materialism. Not the worldliness or Materialism of the religious imagination, but that which comes of the recognition that all genuine effort must be judged by its effects here, and all effort to be useful must be based upon the recognition that our highest ideals and noblest imagining have their roots in the physical nature of man and of the world he inhabits. The imagination of a Shakespeare or the senseless babbling of an idiot are alike the expression of a physical organisation. Alter the one and you modify the other. It is the growing recognition of this fact in sociology, in ethics, in medical science, that gives modern effort a superiority over that that has gone before. And this Materialistic view of life has not only opened up the way to a radical improvement, it has also given rise to a boundless compassion and sympathy. The philosophy which taught that man was a "spiritual" entity living in a material body, provided a groundwork for the brutality of past ages in their treatment of the insane, the criminal, and the morally debased. The philosophy which teaches that man is the expression of a material body, and that this again is the joint expression of heredity and environment, kills a foolish resentment, and at the same time points out a rational way of improvement. Philosophic Materialism alone makes history rational and human nature understandable and improvable.

But there is one quality of the Wesleyan "Pastoral" that is tolerably common to all such productions. It suggests far more doubts than its allays. Instead of impressing the candid reader with the value of Christian teaching, it is better calculated to impress one with its inefficiency, and probably with its injurious character. For, after all, it is the Christian Churches of one kind or another that have had a very large voice in the management of society during the past fifteen centuries. Society has been largely governed with a view to its Christianisation; people have been elected to, or excluded from, public offices as they believed or disbelieved in Christian doctrines. The force of money, society prestige, and the power of tradition, have all been enlisted on

behalf of Christianity. The Churches have bought scholarships—sometimes for use, but more often for the same reason that the holders of certain patents buy up new inventions that threaten competition—and if with all these aids and in spite of all that Christianity can do, we are threatened with an overflow of “worldliness” and “Materialism”—in the worst sense of these much-abused words—surely it is not inapt to reflect that probably a change of method may be beneficial. Having done so little *with* Christianity, why not try what can be done without? We may, it is true, experience failure again, but at all events it will show more common sense to fail in applying a fresh rule, than to fail in the reapplication of one that has already demonstrated its worthlessness.

In all probability it is the tendency of present-day social reformers to adopt this principle of action that inspires the Wesleyan body to lament the spread of Materialism. Supernaturalism they realise has quite lost its influence in the world of physical science, and the shrewdest among them realise that sooner or later sociology, the youngest of the sciences, will also shake it off. The end may be deferred for a time, but it is bound to come all the same. You may, said Abraham Lincoln, fool all the people some of the time, you may even fool some of the people *all* the time, but you can't fool all the people *all* the time. Of late years the Churches have been *forced* to take an increasing interest in social subjects, and while on the one side they have been hotly denouncing Materialism as a philosophy, on the other they have been forced into a half-and-half consent to its teachings as regards methods of social betterment. The mass of the people may be gulled into supporting the Churches for a little while longer by the power of the religious phrases they have been so long used to hearing, but one day they are bound to realise the uselessness of phrases that either conceal ignorance or shelter duplicity. The clergy feel this, and express their fears in these lamentations at the spread of Materialism. And their alarm is not ill-founded.

C. COHEN.

### The Wherefore of the Wye.

“WHENEVER I look forward into the untrodden paths of the past, I can trace the footprints of an Almighty hand,” said an eloquent parson of Hibernian extraction, who had never realised how well the past got on without either feet or hands.

We are standing at Wye Head, just outside Burton. A little water is welling up among loose stones, and running away to join the Derwent at Rowsley. But though this is called Wye Head, it is not the source of the stream. The Wye really rises two miles off, upon Axe Edge; and between us and Axe Edge there is Grinlow Hill, towering up five hundred feet.

Now, rivers are the most permanent features of a country. Hills may come and hills may go, but streams flow on for ever. And in their endeavor to keep flowing we occasionally find the stream putting itself to a lot of apparently unnecessary trouble. Sometimes it has cut itself a passage through hard rock, when it could easily have found softer beds at a little distance. It will cut across layers of rock, and across hills, instead of flowing alongside them, as one would have expected from the known nature and habits of water. Of course it is easy to see how they did this, when you come to look at it. The surface of the earth wrinkles from various causes, and so folds are thrown up. But as the formation of these folds and wrinkles is a very slow process, the stream has ample time to wear down its bed as the land rises. Hills and mountains do not usually pop up in a night. We have heard of wonderful men who had such an amount of faith that they could remove mountains (if I remember rightly, they used to throw them into the sea afterwards, which was a great waste of labor), but there is no record of any English landscape having been altered in that

way. The older geologists used to talk a great deal about volcanoes and earthquakes, but the modern geologist pooh-poohs these disturbances, unless he happens to live in the West Indies; for all the great facts of earth-sculpture are now recognised as having been due to slow movements of the earth's crust.

But the Wye seems at first sight to be an exception to the general order of things. It rises on Axe Edge—probably it rose for ages upon Axe Edge, or upon the high ground that has always occupied that position during later geological time. How, then, has it permitted Grinlow Hill to rise five hundred feet between its source and Wye Head? The explanation is, that it flows *under* Grinlow Hill. All the time this hill was rising, the Wye found its way through the limestone rocks. Its latest channel is called Poole's Cavern, and may be visited for a charge of 6d. But the visitor inside Poole's Cavern will see above his head the mouths of higher and older caverns, through which the river found its way at earlier periods, while the hill was still rising. As, therefore, the stream found an agreeable passage through the rock, the hill was not worn down into a channel as it rose, but was allowed to retain its present elevation. The theologian, poor man, never dreamed of all this. He imagined that Poole's Cavern was arbitrarily created, as it stands, three days before the appearance of Adam and Eve; and that the upper channels were placed there to puzzle excursionists.

It is chiefly in limestone districts that rivers play these strange pranks of sinking out of sight, and then coming out into the open air again; and it is the constitution of the stone which enables them to do this. Most of Derbyshire is occupied by what is called the carboniferous limestone—very ancient in geological time, for it was deposited many æons ago, when the most highly-organised inhabitants of the earth were frogs and lizards, and before the appearance of those fearful and wonderful creatures, the plesiosaurs and ichthyosaurs, which figure so largely in elementary manuals. In the early part of the Carboniferous period Derbyshire lay for many ages at the bottom of a deep sea. During all that time corals, shells, etc., were falling upon the ocean bed, until the limestone, made up of their remains, is now four thousand feet in thickness. Chemists tell us that this stone is composed of carbonate of lime. Rain, or other water, charged with carbonic acid (derived from the soil, or from vegetable matter), passing over limestone, changes the surface into bicarbonate of lime, which is soluble, and is therefore washed away, and thus channels are made through the most solid rocks. But the water thus charged with lime is apt to be evaporated, and, as it goes off in vapor, it leaves behind it its mineral contents as stalactite or stalagmite. Therefore, in the ordinary way of things, water falling upon Axe Edge runs down into Poole's Cavern by the force of gravity. And it has carved itself out channels by known chemical action—all according to the course and constitution of nature. The “Hand” imagined by the theologian is conspicuous by its absence; and it would have made no difference if it *had* been there.

It is easy enough nowadays to go through Poole's Cavern, and see for one's self what water can do. Unlike most caverns of its kind, it is fairly horizontal, and an enterprising proprietor has laid down a pathway nearly half a mile in length, and lighted up the place with gas. The stalactites and stalagmites are larger and finer than anything else in Derbyshire, and they form a rough index of the age of the cave. As the lime-charged water falls, in drops, it leaves a film of mineral matter behind it, and this film is gradually increased; but so slow is the action that it takes a thousand years to deposit a layer an inch thick. The largest stalactite of all is, curiously, called the “Flitch of Bacon”—apparently because it bears no resemblance whatever to that object. The Flitch was originally eleven feet long; but part of it was wantonly broken off about fifty years ago by that destructive animal known as the “tripper.” Attila used to boast that the grass never grew where

the foot of his horse had trod; and, in like manner, beauty never remains where the hoof of the tripper has trod. Seeing that the stalactite in question was eleven feet long, a very simple calculation will show that it occupied no less than 132,000 years in its formation. So that Poole's Cavern, as it now exists, is more than 132,000 years old; and we are left to wonder how much older the hill and the river must be.

Other limestone caverns have told us more than this one; for they have preserved relics which go to prove the great antiquity of the human race, and to show how our remote ancestors maintained the struggle for existence against ferocious animals which are now, happily, extinct. Poole's cavern, however, has not afforded us any such relics. Possibly the interior was inaccessible until what a geologist would call a recent period. The skeleton of an individual of the later Stone Age was found crouched between some rocks, with his food-vessel by his side, as he had been laid by his sorrowing relatives many, many centuries ago. But the most striking connection of the cavern with man is attributable to the Roman period. The Romans did an enormous amount of work in Derbyshire, especially in lead mining. But they were most attracted by the hot, medicinal springs at Buxton, which are still running, and still famous. The Romans were very fond of washing themselves—very unlike their successors of the Middle Ages, who looked upon cleanliness as a crime; and they accordingly established baths at Buxton, and built a town there. They were not greatly interested in caverns, however, and so they merely looked upon Poole's Cavern as a convenient receptacle for the bodies of slaves. The servile corpse was carried into the cave, and rubbish from the nearest dust-heap piled over it. The consequence is that, under two inches of stalagmite, we now find bones of human beings and domesticated animals, mingled with cinders, potsherds, coins, pins, brooches, and other remains of the Roman time. The Anglo-Saxons had a superstitious dread of caverns, and so they left them severely alone. And, in the Middle Ages, tradition only remembers that our cavern formed the refuge of an outlaw named Poole, in the reign of Henry IV. or Henry VI., authorities are not certain which.

And so we see the water, bubbling up among these stones, at Wye Head. It looks a feeble fluid, yet it has built up the landscape around us. We speak of it as springing up fresh and new, and yet it is the oldest thing on earth—the destroyer and preserver and maker of all things.

CHILPERIC.

### “Under which King, Benzonian?”

WITH no irreverent purpose, but solely in the interests of absolute truth, may we not venture to suggest a parallel between the Nazarene and the pseudo-Messianic claim, and whose miraculous pretensions have recently been aired at Clapton?

Both assert divinity, and both claim to be Messiahs. “Do the rulers know, indeed, that this is the very Christ?” may be the question appropriate for both. Neither have substantiated their claims. Christ was crucified and perished. The Clapton humbug will make his brief sensation and be forgotten. The “twelve legions of angels” never came to the rescue of Jesus of Nazareth, and we know that not one solitary angel will fly over to Clapton to save “the claimant.”

Both announce a message of love, the latter borrowing terms and ideas from the former. “Mighty works” were claimed as shown forth in one, and it is not unreasonable that they will be declared for the other. Benevolent sentiments and humane teachings, interjected with wrathful denunciations, emanated from the one, as they will be copied, doubtless, by the other. The making of disciples, the persuasion that they too shall do “greater works

than these,” the breathing on them and giving them a “Holy Ghost,” the disappearance into an imaginary heaven, like the disappearance of Mokanna, Moore's “Veiled Prophet,” all these elements of delusion are capable of repetition.

The pity of it is that so many men and women are to be cajoled and misled, and come to pin their faith on utterances that are spurious, or interpolated and manufactured sayings, doctrines, parables, and citation of impossible miracles, cunningly woven together with divine claims. Where there are truly human sentiments expressed, they are worthy of acceptance, no matter who utters them. But to assert divinity or any approach to it, even in so-called “Sonship,” peculiar and exclusive, and the futile promise to come again “with all the holy angels” to judge the world, reward the righteous, and condemn the evil, this cannot be tolerated among intelligent beings, who know how false, how delusive it all is.

Whether in the Temple at Jerusalem or in the “Ark” at Clapton, any enthusiast can stand and proclaim himself a Messiah. But can he demonstrate it? He may secure followers who will perpetuate his claims and delusions. A mighty fabric of fraud may be built thereupon. A great hierarchy may serve it, and constantly advance its pretensions. Its missionaries may visit every known land and seek for proselytes. At home, meanwhile, at the centre, the heart of the vast imposition, the canker of falsity may be eating its way slowly but surely. The exterior may be fair, but within there may be corruption and decay, the presage of a fall. And great shall be the fall of it.

GERALD GREY.

### The Reserved Section.

[“The rights and interests of the laboring man will be protected and cared for, not by labor agitators, but by the Christian men to whom God, in his infinite wisdom, has given control of the property interests of the country.”—MR. BAER.]

In the prehistoric ages, when the world was a ball of mist—  
A seething swirl of something unknown in the planet's list;  
When the earth was vague with vapor, and formless and  
dark and void—

The sport of the wayward comet—the jibe of the asteroid—  
Then the singing stars of morning chanted soft: “Keep out  
of there!

Keep off that spot which is sizzling hot—it is making coal  
for Baer.”

When the pterodactyl ambled, or fluttered, or swam, or  
jumped,  
And the plesiosaurus rambled, all careless of what he  
bumped,

And the other old-time monsters that thrived on the land  
and sea,

And didn't know what their names were any more than to-  
day do we—

Wherever they went they heard it: “You fellows keep out  
of there—

That place which shakes and quivers and quakes—it is  
making coal for Baer.”

The carboniferous era consumed but a million years;  
It started when earth was shedding the last of her baby tears,  
When still she was swaddled softly in clumsily tied-on  
clouds,

When stars from the shops of nature were being turned out  
in crowds;

But high o'er the favored section this sign said to all:  
“Beware!

Stay back of the ropes that surround these slopes—they are  
making coal for Baer!”

We ought to be glad and joyous, we ought to be filled with  
glee;

That aeons ago the placard was nailed to the ancient tree,  
That millions and millions of ages—back farther than Adam  
and Eve—

The ichthyosaurus halted, and speedily took his leave.

And so it was all saved for us, the spot with the sign,  
“Beware!

This plant is run by the earth and sun and is making coal  
for Baer!”

W. D. NESBIT.

—Baltimore American.

## Acid Drops.

DR. MACNAMARA, M.P., says that "secular education" is not practical politics. Perhaps not, just at present; but it might have been if the Nonconformists had not ratted from their principles in 1870. They, who opposed State religion in established churches, welcomed it in established schools. The result is that the people have got used to religious instruction in these institutions, and the power of habit now stands in the way of a change for the better. Not that the people really care much about religious instruction; but they just care enough for it to make them an easy prey to the men of God who appeal to their prejudices. Then there are the teachers, who are organised into a Trade Union, and are willing to sink everything else for the sake of their own special advantages. They are represented by Mr. Macnamara. He is their mouthpiece. And therefore he says that "secular education" is not practical politics. What he does not do is to state how he thinks the matter should be settled *on principle*. Indeed, we do not see the slightest reference to principle of any kind in Dr. Macnamara's recent press letter, or manifesto, on this subject. Dr. Clifford does at least affect to be fighting for a principle—though the Lord only knows what it is.

Dr. Clifford has not yet stated where it is that Hume says that "It is to the Puritans the English owe their liberties." He is evidently too busy to justify his professed quotations, and his ingenious friend, the editor of the *Daily News*, is at hand to shield his weakness from over-publicity. It was impossible, however, to shield him quite as successfully against the demand of Lord Halifax. Dr. Clifford declared that Lord Halifax had said that "there never could be peace and concord until the occupant of the Chair of St. Augustine sat at the feet of the occupant of the Chair of St. Peter"—that is, until the Archbishop of Canterbury grovelled before the Pope of Rome. Being asked where Lord Halifax had uttered those words, Dr. Clifford replied that he did not know; but, instead of retracting his declaration, he proceeded to bolster it up by a long letter of argument. But argument is not evidence; it may be based upon evidence, but the evidence must come first. Dr. Clifford argued that Lord Halifax has often wished for reunion with the Romish Church—just as, by the way, he has often wished for reunion with the Greek Church. But, says Dr. Clifford, there can be no union with Rome except on the condition of *submission* to Rome; consequently Lord Halifax does want Dr. Temple to sit at the feet of Pope Pecci. A moment's reflection, however, ought to show Dr. Clifford that this is a fallacious argument. Lord Halifax *is* responsible for his own statements, but he is not responsible for his own statements *plus* Dr. Clifford's opinions. Not to put too fine a point upon it, Dr. Clifford has yet to learn that whoever gives apparent quotations should always be ready to produce the originals.

That little trick, by the way, of coupling your opponent's statements with your own opinions, and making him responsible for both, is a very ancient one, particularly in religious controversy. An orthodox Christian, for instance, often delivers himself in this wise: "You, Mr. Atheist, say there is no such thing as free will; but, without free will, there is no moral responsibility; and therefore Atheism teaches unlimited license of conduct." This is saddling the Atheist with the orthodox Christian's opinion that moral responsibility is impossible *without* free will; whereas the Atheist holds that moral responsibility is incompatible *with* free will. But he does not imitate the orthodox Christian's bigotry, and go on to accuse him of wickedness; for the Atheist knows that this is both bad reasoning and bad manners.

Dr. Clifford has since found the text he wants. It appeared in a weekly religious journal for April 20, 1899. The name of the paper is the *Methodist Times*! Prebendary Webb-Peploe is there reported as saying what Dr. Clifford stated he did say. Of course Dr. Clifford chortles. It doesn't occur to him that the *Methodist Times* report may be inaccurate. Nor does he perceive that what Mr. Price Hughes's organ says that Prebendary Webb-Peploe says that Lord Halifax said is not exactly the best sort of evidence against Lord Halifax. We fear Dr. Clifford has a good deal to learn yet in the art of rational controversy,

Lord Halifax has shown himself something more ingenuous than Dr. Clifford in relation to this matter. On learning of the report in the *Methodist Times* he frankly apologised for saying he did not believe Prebendary Webb-Peploe made the statement referred to. "The statement is untrue," his lordship added, "but the blame for it rests on Prebendary Webb-Peploe, and not on you."

The Nonconformist "stern resolution" not to pay taxes if

the Education Bill becomes law, is pretty sure to end in a fizzle. It is already opposed by the *Methodist Recorder*, which says that it would not object to see "a number of wealthy men and highly-placed ministers sent to prison for conscience sake," but would object "to the entanglement of a vast number of people in such sufferings." But there is a still more serious aspect of this "no taxes" policy. Suppose Nonconformists acted upon it now; what is there to prevent Churchmen from following suit when they are the defeated minority? What is there, indeed, to prevent *every* section of the community from taking a hand in the same game? And is it not obvious that, if the game were played all round, there would soon be an end to civil government—without the reasoned "Anarchism" of (say) Mr. Anderson Herbert to take its place?

While Church and chapel are fighting over the schools, or rather over the children in them—not really for the good of the victims, but for the benefit of the combatants—it is not surprising to read of a still more exciting sort of fight which recently came off at Bilston, near Wolverhampton. A number of men crowded into a bedroom in the house of John Bellingham, a locksmith, where they made a ring with five orange boxes, and set two bull-terriers fighting. The combat lasted nearly two hours, during which time the spectators enjoyed themselves amazingly. When the police got wind of the affair one dog was dead and the other was dying. John Bellingham was fined £6, and as the sum was probably shared by his friends, it did not make the dog-fight a very expensive luxury. Fancy two hours' of gratified lust of cruelty for a few shillings! Yes, there is something to boast of in Christian England after all.

A new French Messiah has turned up. He appeared, wearing a long robe, haranguing a crowd in the main street at Fontenay, near Paris, and declaring that the new English Messiah was an impostor. When arrested by two policemen he exclaimed, "Soldiers of Pilate, do your duty." They did. They took him to a lunatic asylum.

Mr. Pigott has been interviewed. He didn't say much. He stated that he was Jesus Christ and that he was full of love—which we can well believe. But what a fine thing it would have been if the original Messiah, Jesus Christ himself, could have been interviewed. Better still, if Joseph and Mary could have been interviewed—especially Joseph. In that case, we venture to think, the Incarnation would not have been taught to children in public schools two thousand years afterwards.

Mrs. Pigott says she feels sure her husband is what he claims to be, but declines to give a reason for her conviction. There is something very curious in the way in which these Messiahs, and other religious pretenders, manage to impose upon those who are near to them. But some cynics will perhaps sneer that a wife is of all human beings the most easily deceived by her husband.

The coachman of a brougham at Dalston Station facetiously said he was waiting for "Mr. Smyth Pigott." People heard of it and a crowd began to assemble. Presently its dimensions were such that the police had all their work to do to keep it in any sort of order. Cries were raised for the blood of the "impostor." Such is the temper of a Christian mob after nearly two thousand years of the "religion of love."

Clericals sometimes tell the truth. The Rev. J. C. Carlile, of Folkestone, speaking on "Revivals and Missions" at the Ministers' Holiday Conference at Oxford, said there were some evangelists who worked on the emotions of people as a butcher on sheep. He had himself called on fourteen persons who had professed conversion under a well-known evangelist, and he was surprised to find how many of them needed a further revival.

The Catholic Cathedral now being built at Westminster, and rapidly approaching completion, is claimed to be the largest building erected in England since the time of Sir Christopher Wren. The tower is 30 feet square and is to be 280 feet high. The architecture is Byzantine. The decorations are to be magnificent. And the cost is—well, nobody knows *what* it will be. Hundreds of thousands of pounds, at least, and as much more as the Catholic Church can get together. Evidently, if there is no life left in religion, there is plenty of money in it still. This is a fact that Freethinkers would do well to note.

Parson Rock, beyond Exmouth, is the subject of superstitious stories. The rock really looks like a mutilated Sphinx leaning on the headland, and attended by a smaller rock, slim and solitary in the water. A vicar of Dawlish, so

the legend runs, attended by his clerk, once rode into Teignmouth to collect tithes. Returning in the dark they lost their way, and the parson wished for a guide, "even if it were the Devil himself." His Satanic Majesty is reputed to have appeared, and enticed the worthy parson into many unseemly capers, finally leading him and the clerk into the sea and transforming them into rocks.

Mr. Campbell Moody gives an account of his experiences as a street evangelist in Singapore. People who listened asked him questions, and he says he took them in good part, but we fancy he is somewhat mistaken on this point. We quote the following from the *Monthly Messenger*:—"By far my fiercest encounter on the street was one afternoon lately. My opponent (for his express purpose was to annoy) was dressed in fine purple, and had the long, uncut finger-nails of the would-be literary man. He began by asking about God. Had He a white, or a yellow, or a black face? He then asked where hell and heaven were. I said I did not know. Why, then, do you speak of things that you do not know about? He professed his disbelief in all the heathen gods, and in the existence of the soul. Only things that were visible should be talked about. I asked him about the wind. He first professed to disbelieve in its existence; but, seeing that this carried him too far, he said that the existence of wind was provable, of spirits and devils unprovable. He asked whether the voice of God had ever been heard. I said that while He was on earth it had often been heard. I proceeded to tell a little about the life and death of Jesus. He asked what became of Jesus after the Resurrection. I spoke of the Ascension. He said, in this matter you are just on a level with idolators, who talk of spirits riding upon clouds. On many points what you say is most unsatisfactory. You should consult your books as to heaven and hell and such matters; or confine yourself to exhorting men to abstain from opium and gambling, and other evils. I told him that such exhortations were of no value, but that Christ was able to save; and that as in the case of sickness it was not necessary to know all about medicine, but simply that such and such a doctor and remedy were efficacious, so also in religion, while many things were obscure, enough was known. I gave him instances of the power of Christ to change Scotch and Chinese. He would have nothing to do with such explanations; their good resolutions had saved the persons in question. I said that I would pray that he also might approach the Physician. He bade me spare my pains. And, again urging me to inform myself better before attempting to speak on such matters, he reminded me that it was getting dark, and I had better go home for supper. Of course, I knew that he wished to be left a conqueror on the field, so I told him that if he pleased he might go, but that I had still some things to say to the people who were silently thronging us. In the end, after disputing with me for an hour, or an hour and a half, he took himself away. But I never had such a long discussion with one man."

Note the bias of this account. The "express purpose" of Mr. Moody's opponent was "to annoy." No doubt he finds all discussion annoying, but that was not the Chinaman's fault. Certainly the Celestial, according to the missionary's own report, said nothing to cause annoyance to anyone but a bigot. His questions were to the point, and that was their only offensiveness. Mr. Moody's answers were, for the most part, mere confessions of ignorance. When he became positive he talked very great nonsense. It was no reply to the Chinaman's objection, that invisible things should not be spoken of, to "ask him about the wind." Wind is only air in motion, and if it cannot be seen it can be felt—that is, it can be sensed, which is probably what the Chinaman meant. Nothing is more common than to use "visible" as covering the whole field of sensation. It was obviously used in that sense by Paul when he said that "the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

The great John Wesley, in his sermon on "God's Omnipresence," introduced this illustration of the wind, but he did not use it foolishly like Mr. Moody. Wesley was addressing persons who believed they had souls, yet doubted the omnipresence of God because they could not see him. "Can you see the wind?" he asked. "You cannot," he continued, "but do you, therefore, deny its existence or its presence? You say, No; for I can perceive it by my other senses. But by which of your senses do you perceive your soul. Surely you do not deny either the existence or the presence of this! And yet it is not the object of your sight, or of any of your other senses. Suffice it then to consider that God is a spirit, as is your soul also." This was an unanswerable reply to the objectors to whom Wesley was addressing himself. But he knew very well it would be no sort of reply to those who had no belief in a soul to start with. Nor did he treat sight as if it were the

only sense man possesses. It is perhaps the most important, but it is only one of several, and all of them bring us into relationship with, and therefore into knowledge of, the world of matter.

We almost owe an apology to John Wesley for having mentioned him in the same breath (as it were) with Mr. Campbell Moody. All the really great Christians died long ago—with the single exception of Cardinal Newman, whose great age carried him into a generation to which he did not belong. He was bred and taught, and he did his principal work, before the Darwinian Flood. There will never be a great Christian again. That is to say, there will never be a sane man of genius who will preach orthodox Christianity.

A London evangelist refers to artisans as "carrying away the poison of unbelief to the serious injury of the morals of great districts." We withhold the name of the author of this impertinence. Mr. Herbert Spencer would call it an instance of the professional bias.

Some anonymous person, who doubtless means well, though he (or perhaps she) is not very courageous, sends us a tract containing an account of a conversation between the Rev. Dr. Pentecost and a "poor ragged little Scotch girl," every word of which we most completely disbelieve. There never was a more transparent "fake." But to the tract itself, which is really contemptible, the sender adds some words of his own. He hopes the wretched thing will be blessed to our soul's welfare. Well, we thank him for his good wishes, but we hope our "soul" is not in want of such crude medicine. Our unknown friend wishes us to have "the childlike heart and childlike mind." He certainly seems himself to possess the latter. Nevertheless he is not quite as harmless as he would appear, for he refers to "the Father's" hiding himself from "those that consider themselves wise and prudent." This is a not too charitable stretching of the Scripture text, and is doubtless meant for personal application. But we were never foolish enough to consider ourselves wise, and our enemies will stand up at any time and deny that we are prudent; and we are bound to admit that some of them have very good reason for the denial. On the whole, we fancy our unknown friend has sent his communication to the wrong quarter.

The United States Government protests against the treatment of the Jews in Roumania, which forces so many of them to flock helpless and penniless to America. "The Jews of Roumania," this document says, "are excluded from the public service and the learned professions. They are prohibited from owning or even cultivating it as common laborers. They are debarred from residing in the rural districts. Shut out from nearly every avenue of support, they are incapable of lifting themselves from enforced degradation; they endure, and they have no alternative but flight to other lands." For these reasons the U. S. Government calls upon the European Powers to take steps to have the conditions of the Berlin Treaty of 1878 carried out. That treaty stipulated that there should be no discrimination against any resident in Roumania on account of religious belief.

"The teachings of history," the U. S. Government is careful to add, "and the experience of our nation show that the Jews possess in a high degree the mental and moral qualifications for citizenship, and no class is more welcome here when coming equipped in mind and body for citizenship." This is not too elegant or lucid, but its substantial meaning is obvious enough. As a matter of fact, the Jews are more sober, industrious, and thrifty than the Christians. They are also superior in domestic virtues.

Shrewd, honest, plain-spoken Lady Charlotte Eglott, in Mr. George Meredith's *Lord Ormont and His Amentia*, lets out on this subject of the Jews. "As for the Jews," she says, "I don't go by their history, but now they're down I don't side with the Philistines, or Christians. They're good citizens, and they've got Samson in the brain, too. That comes of persecution, a hard education. They beat the world by counting in the head. That's because they've learnt the value of fractions. Napoleon knew it in war, when he looked to the boots and great-coats of his men; these were his fractions." By the way, Lady Charlotte Eglott (in other words Mr. George Meredith) is far better reading than a United States Secretary. She puts the whole philosophy of the matter in a few vivid sentences.

The dear *Daily News* lets a reviewer indulge in a little audacity now and then. Reference was made in a recent review in its pages to "the superstitious reference which was attached to every jot and tittle of the scriptural record" among the Jews. But the priests, who fostered this rever-

nce, were not overloaded with it themselves. "The freedom they took when it served their own purpose," the reviewer said, "shows that with the priests and scribes the reverence they professed was mostly mechanical, a piece of policy by which to invest their own case with greater authority." What a pleasant, circuitous way of calling these ancient gentlemen liars and knaves!

If it be true that Mr. John Kensit, junior, is doing three months' imprisonment, under the sentence of a Roman Catholic magistrate, for reading out in public the description of the Catholic mass which appears in the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, it is high time that we knew "where we are." Those Articles are the Articles of the State Church, King Edward has sworn to uphold them, and Mr. John Kensit, junior, is sent to prison for reading them. If this sort of thing can go on with impunity, so soon after the Church-and-State ceremony at Westminster Abbey, the King ought to ask to be released from his Coronation Oath before he undertakes that October Thanksgiving.

Catholics and Kensitites, alias Wickliffeites, fell foul of each other at Birkenhead on Sunday, and the death rate of the borough would probably have been considerably increased for that week if a large posse of police had not intervened to keep the peace. There was a pretty free use of sticks, stones, and staves, as it was, and two enthusiastic Christians were taken to the lock-up.

Just as Mr. Foote was finishing his afternoon lecture at Liverpool on Sunday, there was a great noise outside, in which were mingled human shouts and the sound of running feet. It was nothing very serious, however; in fact it was only the break-up of Mr. George Wise's orange-bitters procession. The square in front of the Secular hall is very convenient for open-air gatherings, and Mr. Wise seems to have been working it for all it is worth lately. We understand that the police have waited evening after evening on the Secular premises, in readiness to sally out and keep the Catholics and Protestants from murdering each other. Of course the Secularists rather enjoy the joke.

Mr. George Wise, we hear, gives out that he has debated with all the leading Secularists, including Mr. Foote. In the ordinary sense of the word this is not true. Mr. Wise has never held a set debate with Mr. Foote. Two or three times he has taken advantage of a public invitation to oppose Mr. Foote for ten minutes after one of his lectures. The great Harry Long, of Glasgow, had the same sort of basis for his boast of having "met Bradlaugh in debate."

Fifteen hundred negro delegates were assembled at a Baptist convention in Shiloh Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama. A row arose about some seats, and Mr. Booker Washington, the famous negro leader, cried out "Quiet, quiet!" This was mistaken for a cry of "Fire," and in a moment the Baptist convention was turned into a pandemonium. A free fight raged for the doorway; women were trampled under foot, and then the men trampled on each other. Some actually tried to walk on the heads of the others towards the only means of escape. Mr. Washington got the choir to start singing, but it was all no use; the panic had to run its course. One hundred and fifteen were killed, and many more were seriously injured.

Could a Secular convention possibly have shown more stupid fear and want of self-control? Surely a Baptist convention, on the Lord's business, ought to feel pretty sure of heaven if their lives were suddenly terminated. Death in such circumstances should be a clear call home. But these Christian negroes did not want to go home. They preferred earth to heaven. "We'se gwain t' meet de Lord" sounds all right in the hymn, but there's a big stampede when there's a chance of reducing it to practice.

New York is excited over the murder of a handsome woman by William Hooper Young, a grandson of Brigham Young, the famous Mormon. Young is supposed to have been a religious maniac, full of the idea of blood atonement. It is supposed that he killed the woman to settle up for his own sins.

Volcanic eruptions are no respecters of persons. The curé of Morne Rouge, on the unfortunate island of Martinique, was "enveloped in a cloud of fire as he was proceeding to his church," and died afterwards in the military hospital. This was during the disaster of August 30.

The Boxers are active again in China. It is reported that "from 300 to 1,000" native Christians have been killed at

Chentu. But so many lies reach Europe from that direction, and figures are always open to suspicion.

Mr. John Burns has been interviewed on the subject of Sunday trading. He is against it, and so are we—up to a point. But there must be *some* business done on Sunday. Mr. Burns admits this, but he appears to want to draw the line himself. Travelling, for instance, must go on, if the Sunday is to be of much use to those who knock off work then. The member for Battersea admits this. But he is down on Sunday shaving. Why, he asks, can't men get shaved on Saturday? Mr. Burns doesn't shave, we believe, or he would hardly ask such a question. When he suggests that the law should stop shaving on Sunday he is a bit old-fashioned. He forgets that there is such a thing as liberty. It lived before Mr. Burns and will survive him.

There is a "rebel" called Rios in the Philippines. His followers say he is a direct descendent of God, and that it is beyond the power of man to injure him. But the constabulary are on his track, and it may soon be seen whether he is bullet-proof.

Battleships are generally christened in this country with champagne. But they do these things better in France. The new French cruiser, *Kleber*, launched on Saturday, September 20, at Bordeaux, was blessed and spinkled with holy water. That ought to ensure her safety if she ever goes into battle.

### "Is the Holy Bible 'Improper Literature'?"

THIS is the heading of a news item from Chicago that appeared in the *Montreal Star* of Saturday last. We learn from the item that Mr. Hodge, editor of the *Independent*, of Assumption, Ill., has conceived the scheme of printing the Bible as a serial in his newspaper, one chapter appearing each week. When all of the book of Genesis but the last chapter had appeared, Mr. Hodge received a letter from an official of a bank at South Bend, Ind., threatening to prosecute him for publishing such matter in a newspaper, this being contrary to law. Mr. Hodge proposes to continue the issue of his sacred serial despite the bank official's threat, and it will be interesting if the matter reaches the stage of a legal trial. If there is a law in the States against the piecemeal publication of the Bible, it will be a good thing to have the grounds upon which the law is based thoroughly argued and officially declared. The objecting bank man, in his letter to Mr. Hodge, says there are parts of the Bible not fit to be put before the public, and that is why he protests against their publication. He does not appear to see that he is presuming to know better than God Almighty what it is necessary that men should know. Certainly, Ezra tells us that some of the books he wrote were intended for the inner temple and the others to be read to the people. Is the bank man one of the favored ones who are entitled to dictate what portion of God's truth shall be learnt by other men? If God has allowed all of the "sacred" writings to be jumbled up into one book, so that the filthy portions intended for the perusal of the holy attendants of the inner temple cannot be separated from the other parts without destroying the authority of the whole, well, by what right does a private bank man, or even the United States Government, presume to draw the line? Nothing would please us better than to see Mr. Hodge prosecuted and the Bible judicially declared to be unfit for public perusal. It would be a blow at the supernatural claims of the Bible that all men could understand. We hope Mr. Hodge will have the courage to resist his persecutor, and will get the necessary financial support. While the Bible is only printed in a volume, or in selected portions, its immoral and filthy parts are practically hidden; its publication in serial form would expose them to the horrified gaze of many unsuspecting Christians.

—*Secular Thought* (Toronto).

### Man and Nature.

Streams will not curb their pride  
The just man not to entomb,  
Nor lightnings go aside  
To give his virtues room;  
Nor is that wind less rough which blows a good man's barge.  
Nature, with equal mind,  
Sees all her sons at play;  
Sees man control the wind,  
The wind sweep man away;  
Allows the proudly-riding and the foundering bark.

—*Matthew Arnold*, "*Empedocles on Etna*."



### Mr. Foote's Lecturing Engagements.

Sunday, September 28, Town Hall, Birmingham: 3, "Marie Corelli's Miraculous Masterpiece"; 7, "Beyond the Grave." Organ Recital at 6.15.

October 5, Glasgow; 12 and 19, Athenæum Hall; 26, Manchester; November 9, Camberwell; 30, South Shields. December 14, Leicester.

### To Correspondents.

C. COHEN'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—September 28, a., Victoria Park; e., Athenæum Hall. October 5, Birmingham; 12, Glasgow; 19, a., Brockwell Park; c., Camberwell; 26, Athenæum. November 2, Athenæum; 9, Birmingham; 16, Leicester; 23, Liverpool.—Address, 241 High-road, Leyton.

M. SILVERSTONE.—There is no need to send a letter with your Lecture Notice.

W. P. BALL.—Thanks for your ever-welcome cuttings.

JOHN MORTON.—There does not seem to be any special call for reproducing that particular letter in the *Freethinker*.

G. BARRETT.—You will see the time of the Birmingham meetings to-day (Sept. 28) at the top of this column.

H. E. DONSON.—Thanks. See paragraph. It was hardly worth while dilating on the previous Sunday's performance.

A. E. ELDERKIN.—Meredith's *Prophet of Nazareth* is still obtainable. It can be ordered from our publishing office. Yes, we do think it a very good book in its way, but criticism has gone far since it was published, some forty years ago.

E. A. CHAPMAN.—Date booked as desired.

T. ROBERTSON.—Particulars received and booked.

GERALD GREY.—Thanks for the photograph.

MAX BLAKE.—The public interest in the matter is dying out. Pigott will soon be forgotten. Otherwise we should have inserted your verses.

A. T. SMITH.—Chambers's new English Dictionary, published at 12s. 6d. in cloth and 18s. in half-morocco, is one of the best we know in a single volume. It is quite up to date, too. The "Dresden" Ingersoll is handsomely bound in cloth.

OLD ADMIRER.—We regret to say that Mr. Neale is incapacitated from work again. We are thus without assistance at present in the editorial part of this paper.

T. W. SHIRLEY.—Without knowing what were the words complained of it is difficult to form a judgment. Mr. Legget is a man whose indignation is perhaps too easily worked upon by Christian Evidence rowdies.

CAMBERWELL SECULAR HALL FUND.—W. H. Herbert, £1; F. C., 10s.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Western Gazette—Stratford Express—Oxford Times—Newtownards Chronicle—Edinburgh Evening News—Truthseeker (New York)—Torch of Reason—Liberator—Leeds Mercury—Dumfries Standard—Science Siftings—Boston Investigator—New Century—Blue Grass Blade—Two Worlds—Huddersfield Chronicle—Freidenker—Crescent.

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.

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### Sugar Plums.

MR. FOOTE delivered two lectures at Liverpool on Sunday. The first audience was exceptionally good for an afternoon, and the hall was crowded in the evening. Mr. Hammond presided on both occasions. Mr. Foote's lectures were evidently much appreciated, and each was followed by a number of questions, which were suitably answered. An agreeable feature of the evening meeting was the presence of a considerable number of ladies.

Mr. Foote delivers two lectures to-day (Sept. 28) in the famous and magnificent Birmingham Town Hall, which has been let for the occasion to the local Branch of the National

Secular Society. It is to be hoped that the weather will be better than he is generally favored with in the Midlands capital. Should it be tolerable this time, the subjects are calculated to draw good audiences. Mr. Foote speaks in the afternoon on "Marie Corelli's Miraculous Masterpiece," and in the evening on "Beyond the Grave."

Mr. Cohen had a good audience at the Athenæum Hall on Sunday evening, and his lecture was much enjoyed. He lectures from the same platform again this evening (Sept. 28). The subject has been forwarded to us, but has gone astray. We are therefore unable to announce it; which is a pity, as we know it was something interesting. Our readers will be able to see it by looking at the ordinary weekly newspapers like *Reynolds*'.

The Secular Society, Limited, has just received a legacy of £100 under the will of the late Mr. James Fulton, of Greenock. Mr. Fulton was a member of the Society from the time of its establishment in 1898. He was a veteran Freethinker, over eighty years of age at the time of his decease a few months ago. His name appeared in most subscription lists in the *Freethinker* since Mr. Foote succeeded Mr. Bradlaugh in the presidency of the National Secular Society. Mr. Fulton was a man of shrewd intelligence and sterling character.

For the sake of Freethinkers who may be disposed to imitate Mr. Fulton's example in the matter of this legacy, we give the words of a clause they might insert in their wills, with the perfect assurance of its legality:—"I give and bequeath to the Secular Society, Limited, of London, the sum of £—free from Legacy Duty, and I direct that a receipt signed by two members of the Board of the said Society and the Secretary thereof shall be a good discharge to my Executors for the said Legacy."

There are a few Christians who hold sensible views on the Education question. The Rev. John Watson, D.D., of Liverpool, better known perhaps as "Ian Maclaren," has written the following letter to a correspondent who requested his opinion on the Education Bill:—"17 Croxteth-road, Liverpool, Sept 18, 1902. Dear Sir,—It would require more time than I can secure at present from other duties at the beginning of the winter's work to offer a balanced criticism on the Education Bill, but I take the opportunity of recording my conviction, which has been deepened by the present controversy, that the only solution of the educational question in England is to separate secular from religious instruction, placing the former under the absolute control of the State, and leaving the latter to the various branches of the Christian Church. Under such an arrangement there would be no religious tests for teachers in the primary schools any more than for professors in the Universities, and every religious denomination would look after its own children by means of teachers who have professed the Christian faith and have been specially trained for teaching it.—Yours faithfully, JOHN WATSON."

The Camberwell Branch's meeting in Brockwell Park passed off very quietly on Sunday. The Rev. A. J. Waldron, who caused a disturbance on the previous Sunday, was once more in attendance, but he was warned by the police that a repetition of his former tactics would not be permitted. This had a subduing effect on the reverend gentleman's courage; and, as discretion was the better part of his valor, he withdrew. Mr. Ramsey lectured and Mr. Rowney occupied the chair.

The "Dresden" Ingersoll, in twelve handsome volumes, bound in cloth, is still obtainable at our publishing office. Now that the holiday season is drawing to a close there ought to be a number of fresh orders for this beautiful collection of the writings, speeches, lectures, and addresses of the greatest modern Freethought orator. A remittance of ten shillings will bring the whole set along, carriage paid to the subscriber's door. Ten subsequent payments of ten shillings monthly will make it the subscriber's property for ever. Those who want to save ten shillings can do so by paying five pounds down with their order. Every Freethinker who can scrape the money together, without positive injury to himself or his family, should invest in a copy of this "Dresden" edition. It is a splendid thing to stand upon a bookshelf, and it contains the best of reading for the young folk as well as for their elders.

The Freethought Publishing Company has a new venture upon the stocks. We expected to be able to make a definite announcement of it before this, but we have no doubt we shall be able to do so in our next issue.

### “Julian the Apostate.”

IN the year 331, Constantine, the Roman Emperor, established Christianity as the official religion of the Roman State. The Church had struggled against the State for 300 years, and had won the battle. But, alas, no sooner were the Christians released from persecution, than they themselves began to use the arm of the State to persecute heretics and pagans. The Emperor Constantine had become orthodox in doctrine, but Christian leaders made no attempt to make him a good man in daily conduct. His character was stained by murders and adulteries, and he delayed his baptism till his death-bed, in order that he might have no time left in which he might sin away that magical redemptive grace which should float his soul into heaven. The chief interest of the Christians of this time was in the quarrel between Athanasians and Arians, the former holding that Christ was of the same, the latter that he was of similar substance with God the Father. Constantine favored the Athanasians; Constantius, his successor, the Arians; but their conduct was equally barbarous under either creed. Constantius murdered most of his relations, save two cousins, Gallus and Julian, who were sent to be educated in Cappadocia. They were brought up as Christians, took minor orders, and read the lessons in church. They used their pocket-money in rebuilding a ruined shrine over the grave of an obscure martyr called Mamma or Mamas, but while Gallus' side of the shrine was speedily finished, Julian's stones and bricks are said to have been constantly knocked down by some interfering Christian ghost. Julian was then allowed to go to the University of Athens, and afterwards to Nicomedia, where he came under the influence of a clever spiritualistic prophet, called Maximus. Constantius had meanwhile put Gallus to death, and now sent Julian to command the Roman armies against some German rebels, hoping that he would be killed at the front, or at least be defeated, and therefore despised by the people. Julian, however, was victorious in the German war, and was proclaimed Emperor by the army, at the news of which treason Constantius died of fright.

Julian, now become emperor, apostatised from Christianity, and entered upon an attempt to undermine its power. What were the reasons for this change of front? First of all, Julian was a prig of the first water. He had been flattered by courtiers, and watched and suspected by his royal uncle and his spies. He was self-conscious, fantastic, and conceited, and vastly over-rated his own abilities. He craved for glory and appreciation, and imagined himself to be a knight of the Holy Spirit, called by the prophet Maximus and his mysterious ghosts to the rôle of a new world-redeemer. He was a theatrical *poseur*, a restless egoist with a bee in the bonnet, who imagined that it was his mission to rehabilitate the old Roman simplicity of manners and prehistoric valour and virtue. He affected the austerity of republican Cato, walked about in a philosopher's ragged cloak, dismissed the Court barber, wore a long and dirty beard, and inked his fingers with the composition of verbose treatises, in which he sought to justify himself and defend his various views and habits. He was intensely credulous and superstitious, prying into the entrails of animals or the stations of the stars, to discover omens and prodigies; striving to allegorise and find a meaning in all sorts of ancient follies; trying to get intuition of supernatural mysteries by ritualistic ceremonies, fastings, and sacrifices to gods and ghosts. Thus he seemed to himself, like the present German Emperor, an Admirable Crichton, a national archangel, called by Divine right to maintain all ancient beliefs and customs, and to defend the empire against outward foes, and, above all, against the emotional Christian spirit of the lower classes. But, again, we must remember that Julian's experience of Christianity had not been calculated to develop a reverence for

that religion in his imagination. He had seen obsequious jobbing courtiers mouthing Christian platitudes in order to get place and money from the emperors and their womenkind; he had seen bishops fawning upon tyrants, and struggling for the richest posts; he had seen mob violence overthrowing and burning temples, libraries, and works of pagan art; he had seen the most bitter squabbles, accompanied by devilish craft and noisy riots, over absurdly insignificant points of doctrine; he had seen Christian students, while inveighing against Pagan culture, using Greek books and logical and metaphysical arguments to buttress up the Catholic faith.

So Julian entered into a campaign for Paganism against Christianity. He refused to persecute Christians as Christians, but merely punished those primitive believers who refused to pay taxes or to serve in the army, or who destroyed Pagan temples or statuary. He attempted to rebuild the Jewish temple at Jerusalem; but a miraculous fire is said to have leapt forth from the ruins, and so alarmed the workmen that they refused to continue the attempt. This holy fire was probably manufactured by the same methods as those which bring about the yearly miracle of the descent of the holy Easter fire at Jerusalem to-day. But it made a great impression upon the credulous public mind. Julian also forbade the Christians to make use of the schools at Athens. He ordered the Pagan priests to resume their rites, and to organise public charities; while the Christian bishops were told to refund any monies that they had taken from the Pagan temples. These measures excited the utmost anger among the Christians, who were now getting used to their new and more comfortable way of making the best of both worlds. Athanasius returned from his hiding-place in the desert to Alexandria, and the orthodox Christians of that town rose in riot, murdered the Arian bishop in the streets, and burned the library and museum of the Pagan temple of the Serapeion. Risings occurred in various parts of the empire; and, while Julian was fighting in battle against the Persians, a Christian enthusiast managed to give him his death-blow, an act which the Christian historian, Sozomen, condones in the following words:—

“The ancient slayers of tyrants, who exposed themselves to death in the cause of liberty, and fought in defence of their country, their families, and friends, are held in universal admiration. Still less is he deserving of blame who, for the sake of God and religion, performed so bold a deed.”

Can we see why it was that the attempt of Julian against Christianity ended in such an utter failure?

First of all, Christianity was somewhat superior to popular Paganism. Sensible Pagans made fun of the follies of their myths and their Polytheism. The Christians were more in earnest, more absolutely convinced than the Pagans, and, therefore, used more keenly all weapons of craft, force, and endurance on behalf of their creed. Moreover, if the Christian Churches and Bibles contained many flagrant absurdities, the old Pagan Polytheism was more immoral and equally absurd. If Julian believed in omens, ghosts, competing gods, and miracles, the Christians believed in the same things, but their ghosts and miracles were more numerous and less immoral and absurd. The Christian spirit had cast an emotional spell over the minds of the lower classes of the empire, and against this spell it was impossible to move. The Greco-roman cycle or æon was approaching its decrepitude, its old age. Rational culture had almost died out. Politically and socially there was general corruption, tyrants at one end of the social scale, mob at the other; mentally there was general credulity, imbecility, and feebleness of brain. Empire and plutocracy had stifled freedom.

In such a decadent, enslaved, and ignorant empire the Christianity of the Catholic Church, with all its absurdities, and with its salt of goodness, its mixture of alloy and gold, found a fitting milieu. Julian, the donnish Ritualist, the Don Quixote of old Roman chivalry, trying to enthuse over outworn Pagan myths and Polytheistic cults, the inflated essay-

writer and austere *poseur*, was a mere hero of straw against the wave of frantic feeling, against the blind push of obstinate emotion of the advancing Catholic Church. Julian's fate was like that of the cow that got into the way of Stephenson's steam-engine. It was the worse for the cow. This Christianity of the fourth century, with its inspired Bible, its slavish atonements, its magical sacraments, its other-worldly promises of heaven or hell, its legends and miracles, its doctrinal squabbles, its martyrdoms, its ascetics, and its charity, was relatively suited to the needs of that time and of that place, and therefore it won the day. It was a comforting opiate for sick and slavish souls.

The Christian Bishop in Constantinople, like the corrupt Alderman of Chicago, met the demand of the submerged classes, as they cried, "Let me off," "Pay my Debts," "Get me a job," "Give my child a garish funeral," "Stand me a holiday," "Save my Soul from the Devils."

The humane spirit, which knits men together and palliates their troubles, was furthered at that time by the Christian Church. Julian displayed a striking consciousness of this fact, when he wrote to the High Priest of Galatia, exhorting him to try and force Pagan priests to give up drinking and immorality and to found hospitals and educate the young. "Ought we not," he wrote, "to consider that the progress of Christianity has been principally owing to the humanity, evinced by Christians towards strangers, to the reverence they have manifested towards the dead, and to the delusive gravity which they have assumed in their conduct and deportment?" The human heart was appealed to by the story of Jesus; the home, charity, pity, and sympathy felt new powers of tenderness within them. Chivalry towards the weak and feeble was seen by some to be the example of Jesus. In another way Julian had failed by missing the true inwardness of Greek culture, which did not consist in the prying after ghosts and omens and the worship of many gods, but rather in the spirit of inductive science, of municipal politics, and poetry and art. The Christians felt a dim inkling of this when they commissioned Apollinarius to rewrite the whole of Greek literature on Christian lines. This was an absurdity, an impossibility. The two forces would not so easily coalesce. The thrilling victory of the Christian heart involved the further paralysing of the Greek brain. This brain has re-awakened since the Renaissance, and we Europeans of to-day are under the dominion of both humane heart and truth-seeking brain, though the two are not wholly at peace. But the end is not yet. And the mission of the ensuing ages is to yoke these two forces together, without unfairness to either, and to make every citizen of modern states a capable sharer in the wealth of both scientific and emotional culture.

ARTHUR FALLOWS, M.A.

### Praise God.

"PRAISE God from whom all blessings flow,"  
Sang the crowd at the head of the mine,  
As the cage came up from the depths below,  
Up to the warm sunshine;  
Bringing the miners back to life,  
Back to the child and back to the wife.

Did the widows and orphans praise God too  
For the dear one who wasn't spared?  
Did they praise God, who had the power  
To save them all, had he cared?  
Did they praise for the mangled lump of clay  
Who was husband and father yesterday?

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise him, and humbly kneel;  
Praise him for misery, want, and woe,  
And the right to starve or steal;  
Praise him for earthquakes, storms at sea,  
For parsons precious and gallows-tree.

WHITMORE LEDGER.

## Charles Bradlaugh and Cardinal Wiseman.

### A FOOTNOTE TO THE HISTORY OF SECULARISM.

THE younger recruits of the Army of Human Liberation can have little conception of the intense hatred and antagonism which the Old Guard of Freethought roused in the Christian camp. To-day, if there be not a greater tolerance, there is at least less bitterness, perhaps, due as much to increasing religious indifference as to more polished manners. It is interesting, therefore, to cull a few pages from a book of reminiscences, *Social Hours with Celebrities*, by Mrs. W. Pitt Byrne (Ward & Downey, 1898), in which is related with a delightful piquancy the share the author had in the preparation of some lectures delivered by Cardinal Wiseman on Modern Unbelief, being in substance a reply to one of Charles Bradlaugh's early lectures. It is of interest, not only as showing the venom with which Freethought was opposed by the classes, as in indicating the widespread attention which the early propaganda of Secularism claimed amongst the most exalted dignitaries of the religious world.

Mrs. Pitt Byrne opens her narrative as follows:—

"One day during the spring of 1858 His Eminence (Cardinal Wiseman) called upon me for the purpose of referring to a conversation of previous day, in which he had remarked that the open advocacy of Atheism, by propagandists, among the lower orders, was becoming matter for serious concern. He told me that, during the drive from his house to mine, he had observed in Portman-square large, flaring posting bills, publicly announcing a lecture of apparently blasphemous character, to be delivered that evening at a low hall in the slums. His Eminence expressed the interest he felt in knowing the substance of this lecture, and the mode in which the subject would be presented; and, as it would necessarily not be within his competency to appear at this place, he wished me to attend, and to furnish him with a report of the proceedings.

"I accordingly sent for a bill of the performance, which ran as follows:—

THE WEST END SECULAR SOCIETY,  
Hope Temperance Hall, Bell-street.  
February 21st.

A Lecture will be delivered  
by

ICONOCLAST.

Subject—"The Bible not a Revelation; not Reliable, neither True nor Useful."

Doors open at 7.30. Lecture to Commence at 8.  
Admission 2d.

Open to Discussion at the close.

"I was punctual to the hour. The audience was composed of counter skippers and boys from inferior shops, women and children. The hall would hold about three hundred, the benches were rough, dingy, and had no backs, and the floor was dirty. The chair was occupied by a course-looking man, with a florid face, encased by bushy, black hair and whiskers, and on either side of the chairman sat several common fellows, with women tawdrily dressed."

This is Mrs. Pitt Byrne's jaundiced caricature of Charles Bradlaugh:—

"He wore a black morning suit, and threw himself into a commanding attitude as he surveyed the rough and ill-clad audience before him. His countenance was very marked, and the form of face and features unquestionably peculiar, decidedly the reverse of handsome, though indicative of intelligence and shrewdness; but I observed during the lecture that they occasionally became distorted with a revengeful and fiendish expression which made his face altogether repulsive.

"A curiously long upper lip and prominent teeth beneath the upturned nostrils and small eyes suggested the caricature of a human countenance. His age might be eight-and-twenty. As soon as the man began to speak he showed, together with a wonderful degree of fluency and command of language, unmistakable evidences of insufficient education, an illiterate mind, and a vulgar intonation; besides clipping the Queen's English after a most unorthodox fashion, he employed words which, although correctly applied, he had never learned to pronounce, while that significant *pons asinorum*—the letter 'h' was everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Of general, or indeed of any kind of read

ing, there was no manifestation, and I thought it not impossible that he might have committed to memory a translation of selected passages from Diderot and Voltaire, put together for him by the association to which he belonged, with the addition of very little additional matter."

This courteous Christian lady then adds that his discourse "was richly interlarded with those clap-trap phrases which delight the mob."

As an example of Bradlaugh's style she gives what she purports to be a fair sample of his eloquence. There are four and a-half pages of outrageous burlesque, from which we quote the peroration:—

"Let us then, my friends, be up and doin'—doin' 'as more to show for it than bleevin'. Hours is the day for haction, not for bleef. What do I say?—bleef! Rather let me call it by it's right name—credoolity! the credoolity of old women and hinfants. This is not the mood of *men*, my friends, of men like you and me. Leave bleef to cripples hunfit for haction. Yes, you may bleeve, you must bleeve, but not in a god that neither you nor hanyone else, ever saw or knows hanythink about! Bleeve in yerselves, my men. Be manly, be self-reliant and be prosperous and 'appy 'ere. Leave 'ereafter to take care of hitself. Oo knows anythink about 'ereafter. (Cheers). Hif a 'ereafter *should* turn hup, well and good; hif not, wly then, we shall have the satisfacion of knowin' we weren't made fools of by the hartifices of priestcraft."

The Cardinal's jackal obediently presented to His Eminence her imaginative account of her visit to the Bell Street Hall. Wiseman's rejoinder took the form of four lectures at St. Mary's, Moorfields, on Modern Unbelief, which discourses were subsequently incorporated among his collected works.

MIMNERMUS.

### Manufacturing Saints.

AN account of the saint-making trade of Paris, whence thousands of images are sent abroad monthly, is given by Mr. Robert Sherard in *Pearson's Magazine*. The firm of Raff alone sends out 50,000 statues every year. Some time ago (the manager informed the writer) we received from a priest in the South of France an order for a statue of St. Fris. I had never heard of such a saint, nor does he figure in our catalogue, though that massive volume contains over 180 closely-printed pages of the names of saints. We applied to a priest who is a great authority on this subject, and we learned that St. Fris was a captain of barbarians under the Roman domination, and that he was martyred at the age of twenty. This gave us the period, and the rest was easy.

Again, on another occasion, we were asked to make a statue of Ste. Ame, of whom we knew nothing but that she was a widow. We had to find out everything else about her. But once we know the period our task becomes easier. The period indicates the costume. Thus recently we had to make a St. Maurice. We knew that he was a captain, that he was a Roman, and we dressed him with the breastplate and the helmet of a Roman captain. The models from which the statues are made are designed by artists who have lived in the trade all their lives, whose speciality is this kind of work. There are numerous such artists employed by Monsieur Pacheu and his partner, most of whom have passed through the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Several of the best earn regular annual incomes of as much as £400.

### Anna Nias.

In the Pennsylvania hill country where such first names as Noah, Cain, Absalom, Judas, etc., are common, a clergyman was called a few days ago to officiate at a christening. When he arrived at the woodman's cabin the wife seemed to be in charge of affairs. The baby was in white, and a few of the neighbors, members of the same congregation, had been invited, and were seated under the trees. When the babe was brought out by the parents the clergyman asked:—

"With what name shall I christen the child?"

"Nias," promptly answered the wife.

"Nias?" repeated the minister, slightly bothered. "Where did you find such a name?"

"In the Bible," said the wife.

"I guess not," said the preacher mildly.

"Oh, yes, it's in the Bible," coolly answered the wife.

"Ananias is in the Bible. This is a little boy, and we only want to call him Nias, without the Anna."

—*N. Y. Times*.

## Correspondence.

### A PLEA FOR A LONG WALK.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

DEAR SIR,—In these days of increasing rapid artificial locomotion may I be permitted to say a word in favor of a very worthy and valuable old friend of mine, Mr. Long-Walk.

I am afraid that this good gentleman is in danger of getting neglected, if not forgotten. We live in days of water trips and land trips, excursions by sea, road, and rail—bicycles and tricycles, tram-cars and motor cars, Hansom cabs and ugly cabs, but in my humble opinion good honest walking exercise for health beats all other kind of locomotion into a cocked hat. In rapid travelling all the finer nerves, senses, and vessels are "rushed" and unduly excited, but in walking every part of the human frame and even the moral faculties are evenly and naturally brought into exercise; it is the best discipline and physical and mental tonic in the world—limbs, body, muscles, lungs, chest, heart, digestion, breathing, are healthily brought into normal operation, whilst, especially in a long-distance walk, the exercise of patience, perseverance, industry, energy, perception, and reflection, and indeed all the senses and moral faculties are elevated and cultivated healthfully and naturally; many never know the beauty of it, because they never go far enough. Exercise and hard work should never be relinquished at any age or by either sex. Heart disease, faintness, and sudden death, and even crime, are far more due to the absence of wholesome normal exercise and taste than to anything else, to enervating luxuries rather than to hill climbing.

I usually give myself a holiday on a birthday, and as I lately reached my sixty-third, I determined to give myself a day with my old friend, Mr. Long-Walk, and decided to tramp to the City of Wells and back for my birthday holiday, a distance of about forty-two miles. Fortune favors the brave, and thanks to a mosquito that pitched on my nose and was just commencing operations, I woke very early in the morning. It is an ill wind that blows no one any good. Mosquitos are early birds, but I stole a march on them. But to my journey. I started at about 5 a.m., and proceeding via Dundry and Chew Stoko, reached Wells soon after 10 a.m. After attending the Cathedral, I pursued my walk homeward via a different route via Chewton Mendip, Farrington, Temple Cloud, Clutton, and Pensford.

To make a walk successful mind and body should be free of burden. I never carry a stick on a long walk, but prefer to be perfectly free, giving Nature's balancing poles, the pendulum arms, complete swing and absolute liberty. Walking exercise, together with a well-educated palate, are the greatest physicians in the world; no disease can withstand them. I returned from my forty-two miles' tramp with birthday honors and reward. I had no headache on the following morning, but was up early in good form, fresh and ready for work. Forty-two miles may be too strong a dose for many, but I cannot too strongly recommend for a day's companionship the society of my old and well-tryed friend, Mr. Long-Walk.

T. THATCHER.

### JOSEPHUS, Etc.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Enough has, I think, been said respecting the paragraph in Josephus concerning John the Baptist. It can serve no good purpose to keep on ringing the changes and going over the same ground again. Mr. Stevens has his own opinion on the matter, and will doubtless continue to hold it. I am quite aware that many rational critics consider the passage a Christian interpolation, but they do so, I think, on insufficient grounds.

Between the Essene teacher, Banus, with whom the Jewish historian lived for a short time, and the Baptist, there are, no doubt, some points of similarity; but I see nothing to warrant the identification of one with the other. Had Mr. Stevens suggested that the "Jesus a plebian," who went about predicting "woe to Jerusalem" (*Wars*, vi. v. 3) was the original from which the Gospel Jesus had been evolved, I should be compelled to admit that I thought it highly probable. No change of name would in that case be necessary. That this fanatic did not live in the time of Pilate, nor go about teaching and working miracles, would not affect the identity, that is, admitting the Gospel accounts to be fictitious. Could this be established, it would then be a fact that Josephus had not omitted the historical Jesus, and also that the Baptist was in no way connected with that individual.

The origin of the New Testament story of a forerunner of Jesus is clearly indicated in the Gospels. This is not to be looked for, as Mr. Stephens suggests, in astronomical

phenomena, but in the Hebrew Scriptures. The early Jewish Christians twisted every conceivable passage in those writings into prophecies relative to Christ, concerning whom, at the time the first Gospels were written, nothing with certainty was known. It was not until half a century or so after his death that his history came to be written. The chief events were then suggested by, and were represented as a fulfilment of, prophecy. The reasoning was simple: If the passages in the Old Testament were predictions relating to Christ, then everything so predicted must certainly have occurred; consequently the Gospel-makers might truthfully say that such things had occurred (Luke xx, v. 44). Isaiah, for instance, had foretold a forerunner—"The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord," etc. (xl, 3). Malachi had made a similar prediction—"Behold, I send forth my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me," etc. (iii, 1). These passages were written concerning Christ; Christ must therefore have had a forerunner to herald his arrival and make known his divine mission. A precursor had consequently to be found, and the Baptist, a historical figure still spoken of by many, was selected and, without the smallest compunction, was represented as the harbinger of the Savior (see Matt, iii, 3; xl, 10; Mark i, 3; Luke i, 76; John i, 23). The concoctors of the first Gospel history were Jews who knew nothing of Pagan myths or astronomical matters; they were, however, perfectly well acquainted with their own Scriptures. If we admit the argument from silence—and we are constrained to do so in many cases—neither Paul nor the author of the Apocalypse (the two earliest of the New Testament writers) knew anything of a forerunner, or of any of the events related of Christ in the Gospels, save only the crucifixion and alleged resurrection of Jesus—and even in these the details afterwards recorded in the Gospels were to them unknown.

In reply to "An Old Subscriber," I regret to say that I cannot call to mind any books worth recommending. I do not remember to have seen either of the works he names. In nearly all the books of this character too much of the Gospel "history" is assumed to be historical. In my opinion the whole is pure fiction. I consider the four canonical Gospels to be as much fabrications as those styled apocryphal; but no writer that I know of seems to share this view. I had in my hands, a short time ago, a book entitled *The Four Gospels as Historical Records* (Williams & Norgate). I cannot say the price. The writer examines the whole of the so-called Gospel history (as well as the external evidence bearing upon it) carefully and impartially, and is obliged to reject a very large proportion of the narratives; but he does so in what he calls a "reverent and temperate spirit." The book is better in many respects than *Supernatural Religion*. A good English translation of the writings of the early Christian Fathers is given in the twenty-three volumes known as the *Ante-Nicene Christian Library* (T. & T. Clark).

I come now to the inquiry of Mr. H. Fletcher, to whom I have to apologise for giving incorrect references to the Letters of Theophilus of Antioch. Before commencing my article I had jotted down on a loose sheet of paper all the references and quotations I thought might be needed. In the case of Theophilus these read: "Matter derived from Josephus—iii., xx., xxi., xxii.; Josephus named—iii., xxiii." Afterwards, in the article, I took these to be all chapters; but the correct reading is: "Book iii., chaps. xx., xxi., and xxii.; book iii., chap. xxiii." In the first three of the chapters named I had recognised matter from Josephus; this view I found confirmed when, in the next chapter, that historian was named. In chap. xxiii. Theophilus says: "So, then, let what has been said suffice for the testimony of the Phœnicians and Egyptians.....and also Josephus, who wrote the Jewish war, which they waged with the Romans, etc. ....Or, if you mention the lawgivers, Lyeurgus or Draco or Minos, Josephus tells us in his writings that the [Hebrew] sacred books take precedence of them in antiquity," etc.

Theophilus was thus acquainted with "the writings" of Josephus; but he carefully abstained from quoting the testimony borne by that historian to "Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man," lest by so-doing his friend Autolytus might be converted to Christianity. The conversion of this friend, it is true, was the sole object of his series of Letters; but he had an invincible repugnance to produce testimony that might effect that object. This is, as Mr. Fletcher reminds me, the argument drawn from silence, and it has even greater cogency in the case of Origen, who with the eighteenth book of the *Antiquities* open before him, refrained from quoting the interpolated passage, though he knew if he did so that it would completely annihilate the sceptical objections of Celsus.

Lastly, I stated in the same unfortunate article that Irenæus had mentioned Josephus and had "quoted matter from his *Antiquities*"—without given references.

Mr. Fletcher doubtless knows that the work of Irenæus

on Heresies is no longer extant in the original Greek, and that it has come down to us only in an ancient Latin version, incomplete and, in some places, almost unintelligible. Much, however, of the original work has been preserved in lengthy quotations made from it by later writers. These have been employed in many instances to correct the reading of the Latin version, and in some cases have been inserted in their proper places in the work, though many fragments remain unplaced, and are usually given at the end of the book. It is one of the last-named (Fragment 32) Irenæus quotes matter from the *Antiquities*. Here is what he says: "Josephus states that when Moses had been brought up in the royal palaces, he was chosen as general against the Ethiopians; and, having proved victorious, obtained in marriage the daughter of that king, since indeed, out of her affection for him, she delivered the city up to him."

If Mr. Fletcher will turn to *Antiq.* ii. x. he will find a full and particular account of this matter, including the name of the lady who fell in love with Moses. This chapter in the history of the great law-giver is not found in the Old Testament, though mention is made of his Ethiopian wife (Num. xii. 1). I have not the slightest doubt, however, that the story is quite as true as anything related of Moses in the Pentateuch. ABRACADABRA.

### The Woman Who Stands at the Tub.

You will read of the heroes of life  
And the valorous deeds they have done,  
For the world is aflame with the light of the name  
Of a man who is back of the gun;  
But give me the pen that can write  
Of the soil that gives life to the rose;  
Of the woman whose realm is to stand at the helm  
Though her ship's but a basket of clothes;  
Wash and rinse and wring,  
Soap and soak and rub;  
Oh, give me words that may fittingly sing  
Of the woman who stands at the tub.

Not she who is gifted and great,  
Surrounded by honor and friends,  
Has need of my praise, for the trend of her ways  
Leads forward to prosperous ends;  
But the one who is drifting through life  
In a bark that is meagre and mean;  
Who stands in her place with a smile on her face  
And is keeping her little world clean;  
Toil in cold and heat,  
Soap and soak and rub;  
Oh, give me a tribute to lay at the feet  
Of the woman who stands at the tub.

—*Florence Josephine Boyce in "Good Housekeeping."*

### Ingersoll.

I hold in homage due the one  
Who, with a mind of subtlest thought,  
And tongue of fearless utterance, sought  
By Truth—not statements fiction-spun—

To free a purblind class, enslaved  
By Churchdom—he who pitying trod  
Their imbecile beliefs, rough-shod,  
And their mendacious anger braved.

Thy work on earth I hold divine,  
Thou gentlest, noblest man of men!  
My soul is with thee now as then;  
And loving hands stretched forth for thine.

—*L'Envoi to Henry Bedlow's "War and Worship."*

### Terror of Ideas.

IDEAS, new-born and naked original ideas, are acceptable at no time to the humanity they visit to help uplift it from the state of the beast. In England of that period original or unknown ideas were a smoking brimstone to the nose, dread Arabian afrites, invisible in the air, jumping out of vases, armed for the slaughter of the venerable and the cherished, the ivy-clad and celestially haloed. They carried the dishevelled Mænad's torch. A step with them, and we were on the Phlegthon waters of the French Revolution. For a publication of simple ideas men were seized, tried at law, mulcted, imprisoned, and not pardoned after the term of punishment; their names were branded; the horned elect butted at them; he who breathed them offered them up, willingly or not, to be damned in the nose of the public for an execrable brimstone stench.

—*George Meredith, "Lord Ormont and His Aminta."*

**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 ATHENEUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30, Mr. C. Cohen.

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

BROCKWELL PARK: 3.15, F. A. Davies; 6, F. A. Davies.

CLERKENWELL GREEN (Finsbury Branch N. S. S.): 11.30, R. P. Edwards.

HAMMERSMITH BROADWAY (West London Branch N. S. S.): 7.30, A lecture.

HYDE PARK, near Marble Arch (West London Branch N. S. S.). Freethought literature on sale at all meetings. 11.30, A lecture. 7, R. P. Edwards.

KINGSLAND (Ridley-road): 11.30, A lecture.

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

STRATFORD (The Grove): 7 p.m., E. Pack.

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

VICTORIA PARK (Bethnal Green Branch N. S. S.): 3.15, C. Cohen.

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall, High-street): 11.15, Gustav Spiller, "Does Virtue Pay?"

**COUNTRY.**

BELFAST ETHICAL SOCIETY (69 York-street): 3.45, A lecture.

BIRMINGHAM (Town Hall): G. W. Foote; 3, "Marie Corelli's Miraculous Masterpiece"; 7, "Beyond the Grave." Organ Recital at 6.15.

CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 7, A lecture.

LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, S. Reeves, "Corpses."

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, W. Simpson, "Government, Soldiers, and Slavery."

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): H. Percy Ward; 3, "The Holy Bible: Divine Revelation or Human Invention?" 7, "The Dream of Immortality."

**LECTURER'S ENGAGEMENTS.**

H. PERCY WARD, 51 Longside-lane, Bradford.—September 28, Sheffield. October 12, Birmingham. November 13 and 14, Liverpool. Debate with Mr. G. H. Bibbings; 16, Liverpool. December 7, Failsworth; 21, Glasgow.

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