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PRICE TWOPENCE.

Zola.

THE death of Zola comes as a shock. It is so sudden—and so ridiculous. One is irresistibly reminded of Heine's witticism about the Aristophanes of the Universe. The jokes and sarcasms of man are as nothing to the jokes and sarcasms of nature. She never troubles about dignity in her dealings with him. All sorts of paltry ignominious endings await even the career of genius. In this case a great writer, one of the first in France, goes to bed in his city residence after a three months' holiday in the country, and is suffocated in the night by the fumes of a fire that never should have been kindled, since the flue was apparently well-known to be defective. One can only shrug one's shoulders and quote "the wise king." For they have all one breath! Yes, not only men and animals, but fools and philosophers. There is but a single way of coming into the world, yet a thousand ways of going out of it, and very few of them with the least tincture of ideality.

It will be a terrible blow to Madame Zola, if indeed she survives, when she learns that her husband is dead. She can hardly help thinking it an absurd tragedy. It would have been so much finer, and so much more satisfying, if he had fallen in "one last charge, gentlemen," against the enemies of liberty and progress. But who can control his fate? Shakespeare put that question into the mouth of the foiled and disgraced, though valiant, Mark Anthony. It is a question that admits of but one answer.

Zola is dead. There is no doubt about that. And he believed, as he told Mr. Vizetelly, that when he died it would be for ever. "He did not believe," his English friend says, "in the immortality of the soul." He was emancipated from all superstition—even from the last pathetic weakness of human vanity. He had imbibed the Positive spirit. Science was to him the only source of truth. Fact and not fancy should govern man's convictions. Our wishes are no criterion of reality. What is, and what will be will be, whether we like it or not. Man's dreams keep him in a vicious circle. Thought and action are his emancipators. But nothing can emancipate him from the fundamental laws of his existence. Zola knew this. He pursued his studies and his life-work in a scientific spirit. Consequently, with all their faults and defects, his novels have an uncommon strength and solidity. There is a colossal purpose in them, and a stern determination to have done with falsehood and sentimentalism. Let us have the facts, whatever they are, even if they appal us. The most terrible truth is infinitely better than the sweetest lie. Weak, cowardly people—and there are so many of

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them!—do not see this. They cry out that a relentless prober of the human life around him is unclean. Do they fancy he loves the maladies he tracks and exposes? Is it not certain that diagnosis must precede a cure? Coleridge was once asked if *Tom Jones* was calculated to corrupt a young man, and his answer was "Not unless he is hopelessly corrupt already." Will the horrors of *L'Assommoir* give any man a taste for drunkenness? Will the horrors of *Nana* give any woman a taste for the life of a courtesan? Pope said that

Vice is a monster of such hideous mien
As to be hated needs but to be seen.

But a good many poor critics of the present age seem to think otherwise. They make the mistake of the religionist and the false moralist. They suppose that ignorance is innocence. And presently (too often) comes the awful undeception after the fatal undoing.

This is not the time to appraise Zola as an artist and a man of letters. That he was a great writer is beyond question. What position he is to occupy on the muster-roll of French genius is a question that need not be discussed over his unburied body. Time will bring its verdict in any case, and meanwhile we may truly say that the world is poorer by the loss of a great talent and a noble personality.

This last consideration is the one of principal interest in the very presence of death. Zola's was a noble personality. His private life was sane, orderly, and human. His devotion to his work was in the highest degree admirable. But that is not all. Something vastly more important remains. The final judgment upon a man must be pronounced in view of his supreme moments, because it is they alone that show the possibilities of his character. Zola rose to the level of a magnificent opportunity. He had the genius by nature, he had the reputation by work; but had he the courage when a man of both genius and reputation was wanted to speak a mighty word of warning to a whole people? The event proved that he *had* the courage. There was something sublime in the way in which he addressed himself to the greatest task of his life. An innocent man was vilely tortured in the person of Captain Dreyfus; but behind that infamous spectacle there was a tremendous conspiracy against the honor and the future of France. Zola acted at the critical moment. He threw his pen into the scale and turned the balance. All that France owes to him for his heroism will be known some day; and what he risked will be recognised too. He had not Voltaire's magical gift, but he had Voltaire's love of justice. And as Voltaire was hailed as "the savior of Calas," it may be that Zola will be most honored for his part in the great "Affaire."

G. W. FOOTE.

Science, Religion, and Social Reform.

IN 1873 the British Association met for its annual gathering in the City of Belfast, and its meeting was made memorable by the celebrated address there given by its President, Professor Tyndall. The battle over the doctrine of evolution was still being fought, and, although the more far-seeing and unprejudiced scientists were by that time convinced, some hard fighting still had to be done. Tyndall's address fell like a bombshell in the already demoralised theological camp. Its principal note was the adequacy of natural forces to produce all the phenomena around us, including that of life and consciousness, and the ability of science, given time and fair play, to make plain the whole sequence of events, from the primitive fire-mist up to the exhalations of a Shakespeare. And, coupled with this, there went, as a kind of after-echo of Lucretius, whose great poem formed one of the texts of his address, the declaration that science claimed, and would wrest, from theology the whole domain of cosmological theory.

Scarce a generation has passed since this claim was made—a mere yesterday, historically—and yet how great the change! The evolutionary hypothesis is now accepted by all who are competent to express an opinion on the subject. There are still discussions as to the validity or strength of various factors; but in its main outlines evolution has taken its place alongside the theory of gravitation and the nebular hypothesis. Theology no longer, so far as its leading men are concerned, attempts to dictate to scientific workers either the methods of their working or the statement of their conclusions. The frenzied cry of certain leading religious papers of the early 'sixties, "Who is on the Lord's side, and who is on the side of the Devil and the monkeys?" now reads like a burlesque or a clipping from some book excoGITATED during the Dark Ages. Theology has been driven from the domain of cosmological theory; expelled with all the contempt that is the fitting reward of imposture and ignorance. And one may safely conclude that the expulsion of theology from the domain of physics is only the prelude to its expulsion from morals and sociology.

This year the British Association again met at Belfast, and the presidential address of Professor Dewar, quite apart from its purely scientific value, contained much that is of interest to the student of social reforms, and many things that in a way serve as an addendum to Tyndall's pronouncement of twenty-nine years earlier. Tyndall's main thesis was the ability and right of science to deal with all the problems that confronts us, without being deterred by theological fears or fancies. Professor Dewar's main thesis was the urgency of awakening in the people of Great Britain a due sense of the importance of scientific research, and of the value as a national asset of a populace familiar with scientific methods of thought. He finds that, with all our wealth and strength and opportunities, we are yet being left behind by other countries in scientific attainments; and he rightly finds in the lack of attention paid to scientific research evidence that there is not at hand a public opinion educated sufficiently for the scientist to appeal to with success.

In Germany, for instance, Professor Dewar finds there are employed in various manufactories no less than 4,500 trained chemists. Here, in Great Britain, we have employed about 1,500. And we are as backward in quality as we are in quantity. The German chemist is better educated, better trained, and better able to deal with fresh problems that may arise in laboratory practice. To use Professor Dewar's words, our chemists are "chock full of formula; they can recite theories, and they know text-books by heart; but put them to solve a fresh problem, newly arisen in the laboratory, and you will find that their learning is dead. It has not become a part of their mental equipment, and they are floored by the first emergence of the unexpected."

Nor is this fault confined to the scientific class proper. The German population are as superior in general education to our own, as their scientific teachers are to ours. "The really appalling thing," says Professor Dewar, "is not that the Germans have seized this or that industry.....It is that the German population has reached a point of general training and specialised equipment which it will take us two generations of hard and intelligently-directed work to attain." This is a pleasant picture for those who are shrieking so loudly about the greatness of the British Empire; pleasant to hear that, while we are great in the sense of being able to "lick" some other nation in an exhibition of pugilistic genius, in all that makes a nation really great and enduring, in intellectual attainments, we are being left in the rear.

And it is pleasant also to learn that our Governments have, during the past hundred years, devoted to scientific research the average amount of £1,200 annually! Think of it! A million sterling is wasted on a battleship that in a few years resembles so much scrap iron and waste material. Thousands of pounds are squandered upon senseless royal processions, in the hopes of encouraging what is essentially a remnant of savagery; millions are spent annually upon the upkeep of religious organisations throughout the country; and for scientific research, which at bottom does more for man's physical, mental, and moral betterment than all other causes combined, we can spend the colossal sum of £1,200 annually! To a man like Michael Faraday, whose education Huxley once declared would have been cheap had it cost the nation a million, the nation paid £300 a year. To a man like the Bishop of London it pays £10,000. We are a great people; only, as Dooley remarks, other people are not so ready to recognise the fact as we are ourselves.

Professor Dewar asks what is the explanation of the state of things he describes, and he finds it in our want of education. Exactly; only this sounds very much like saying the same thing over again. People are not educated enough to appreciate the benefits of science because—they are not educated. The important point is to go deeper still and ask why it is that they are not educated. Now I am not, I hope, fanatic enough to deny that the causes that prevent education being what it ought to be, and what it might be, are very numerous and very complex; but it is plain, nevertheless, that religious beliefs and religious organisations are now, as they ever have been, the most powerful agencies for the maintenance of retrogressive agencies, and the greatest obstacles towards the development of scientific habits of thought among the mass of the people.

Let any thoughtful person sit down and ask himself or herself two questions. First, what is the amount of the influence of religious organisations in Great Britain, and second, what is their value? There is little fear of any one underating the amount of influence. Any organisation that could command the revenues enjoyed by the churches would be a serious power to reckon with, but when to this we add the influence possessed by them in virtue of the religious atmosphere in which people have lived and moved for so many generations, and the existence of a type of mind favorable to religious beliefs because of the process of selection that has been going on during all this time, it is worse than stupid to question that for good or evil Church and chapel wield a tremendous power over our national existence.

It is when we come to estimate the moral or intellectual value—they are really one at bottom—of religion that the issue is joined. But let us look at a few simple facts. At present we are in the midst of a quarrel over the subject of education. Free Church ministers are stumping the country declaring that some great principle is at stake, and that our national welfare is in danger. The Ministers of the Church established by law are equally convinced that the government measure is designed in a spirit of wisdom and magnanimity, and that under

its jurisdiction the schools of the country will flourish as they never have flourished before. Well, what is the quarrel about at bottom? Not secular or scientific education. There are hardly two opinions about that, and if there were the discussion would go on with about one tenth of the noise and a million times more common sense. The whole dispute is about *religion*, whose doctrines shall be taught, how they shall be taught, and who shall pay for the teaching. These doctrines give us no information about man or the world in which he lives, they do not add to the strength of the human mind, they leave all our problems precisely as they were, yet *because* of their presence the scientific education of the people drops into the background, and the intrinsically absurd doctrines of religion are at the forefront.

The root of the mischief, says Professor Dewar, "is in the want of education among the so-called educated classes, and secondarily among the workmen on whom these depend.....Let no one imagine for a moment that this deficiency can be remedied by any amount of technical training.....*mental habits* are formed for good or evil long before men go to the technical schools. We have to begin at the beginning; we have to teach the population to think correctly and logically, to deal at first hand with facts, and evolve, each one for himself, the solution of a problem put before him, instead of learning by rote the solution given by somebody else."

Precisely so. This is our real need, and this is the object of all genuine education. Now will anyone say that a religious training does this? We are to teach children *how* to think; theology teaches them *what* to think. Science stimulates the brain to fresh exertion; theology gives it conclusions already formed, and so renders it all the less ready for further exertion. In science the inquiring student, ever critical of old conclusions, and ever on the lookout for new facts and fresh theories, is a desideratum; in theology he is anathema. In science, like Burke, we call in the new to redress the balance of the old; in theology we enshrine the old in order to check and crush the aspirations of the new. We must teach one to evolve for himself a solution to the problem before him, instead of learning by rote the solution given by somebody else. Why, if Professor Dewar had mentioned theology by name in contrast with the scientific method, he could not have brought out the differences in a clearer manner. Yes, it is religion, more than anything else, that stands in the way of the much-needed improvement and perfecting of our system of national education.

So much for elementary instruction. Take, now, as a further instance in the same direction, the influence of religion on general social life. Dr. Clifford, Dr. Horton, Canon Knox-Little, and others of the same class are loud in their shriekings of the value of citizenship, and what the Churches ought to be doing to encourage its development. Well, what are they doing? According to Dr. Clifford, a large section of the English Church is bent upon handing England over to Rome; and submission to Rome, he declares, spells national decay. Lord Halifax and others are quite convinced that if England were truly Catholic its evils and miseries would disappear, and that Nonconformist heresy blocks the way to such a happy consummation. Both cannot be right, although both may be wrong. Any way, here is a plain case where religion, on one side or the other, prevents people taking a sane and impartial view of the *facts* of social life. Instead of judging each other from the ground of a common citizenship and common needs, people are measured by the standard of various religious dogmas, which lumped together represent to the sane social student only different degrees of foolishness.

A little while ago Lord Rosebery declared that, "There were few things the nation required more than independant thought." This, again, hit the nail on the head. It is not more religion we need, not more of high church, low church, or any other variety of chusch that the nation needs. It is inde-

pendant thinking that we are most in need of. There is no tyranny, no superstition, no injustice that can exist long in the presence of this. There is no injustice, or despotism, or fraud, that will not flourish in its absence. And how do any of the Churches encourage this? Why, none of them really understand what is meant by it, or, at least, none of them appreciate it enough to practice it. What religious people have always understood by the phrase has been liberty to think within certain limits. The limits may have been more restricted with some churches than others, but overstep the limits assigned, and all alike show what a community of spirit there is beneath all their differences. And there is really no substantial difference in the social value of the man who damns you because you reject the Mother of God, and the man who hails you as a fearless thinker for doing this, but sends you to perdition for rejecting the rest of the family. Real independence of thought, and genuine liberality of sentiment are developed by forces and conditions that lie right outside religion, although they may be, and sometimes have been, temporarily associated with it.

Professor Dewar was also well advised in pointing out that the amount of good the scientific thinker would confer upon society depended upon the amount of scientific thinking current in the community. It was a golden saying, and one well worth taking to heart. Exceptional men may generate the ideas, but unless the mass of men can appreciate their value, the exceptional man is wasted. But it is here that the theologian hits the scientist hard. Of old the Church burned the scientist, later it boycotted him, and now that it cannot burn and does not pay to boycott, there is still the chance of robbing him of an audience to which he can appeal with profit. The energy and time which should be spent in acquiring the knowledge necessary for understanding scientific teachings, are frittered away on religious teaching, the assimilation of which is a fair check to the scientific teacher. Now, as ever, it is theology that has to be crushed if national development is to pursue an orderly and profitable course. And if Professor Dewar's address has made the issue clear to those who read it, it will not have been delivered in vain.

C. COHEN.

On the Ethics and Consequences of Vivisection.

By Dy. Surgeon-General J. H. THORNTON, C.B., M.B., B.A., Fellow of King's College, London.

WHEN I was a medical student, fifty years ago, the method of research by experiments on living creatures, commonly called vivisection, was little known in Britain, and hardly mentioned in our medical schools, except with reprobation. But since that time, and particularly during the last twenty-five or thirty years, it has increased to such an extent in Europe and America, that public interest has been greatly aroused, and the question continues to be discussed on public platforms and in the Press from every point of view. So far as I can see, vivisection can only be defended by purely Utilitarian and Materialistic arguments, by appeals to cowardice and selfishness, and by specious, but illusory promises of future benefits. I do not propose to discuss here the various unfounded, or much exaggerated, claims which have been put forward by the advocates of this method. It is sufficient to point out that though vivisection has been going on for more than two thousand years, the beneficial results are infinitesimal in comparison with the physical suffering and moral evil which have thus been caused. As Dr. George Wilson declares, in his *Handbook of Hygiene and Sanitary Science*, there are not a few who doubt whether all the agonies inflicted on animals sacrificed in the laboratories of continental workers in bacteriological research, or even in those at home where the use of anæsthetics is enjoined, have saved one single human life, or

lessened in any appreciable degree the load of human suffering. But were this method of research as useful as its warmest admirers assert, I would still condemn it, since assuredly no material benefits can compensate for moral evil, nor can it ever be right to do evil that good may come, a principle which undermines morality itself, and which has been used in past times for the defence and justification of every kind of cruelty.

It is hardly necessary to adduce evidence of the cruelty of vivisection, for this is self-evident, and is admitted by most of the experimenters themselves, one of whom (Dr. Klein) openly declared in his evidence before the Royal Commission on Vivisection in 1876, that he had no regard at all to the sufferings of the animals (Q. 6539, 40, Minutes of Evidence Royal Commission, London, 1876). Innumerable animals of all kinds, chiefly dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea-pigs, and frogs, have been subjected to excruciating torture by cutting, scalding, burning, baking, flaying, electrifying, and, in short, by every device that could be invented by the exercise of the most devilish ingenuity, prompted chiefly by morbid curiosity, a passion for experimental research, and a desire to gain fame and wealth by scientific discoveries. It is often urged that the cruelty of this method is minimised (in England at least) by the use of anæsthetics, and the Vivisection Act does certainly enjoin the use of anæsthetics in experiments on living animals. But it permits these agents to be dispensed with whenever the vivisector considers that their use might interfere with the object of the experiment. This proviso obviously destroys all certainty regarding the use of anæsthetics, and opens the door for any amount of cruelty. Even when anæsthetics are used, the animals must, in many cases, suffer great pain subsequently, unless killed before regaining consciousness, which the Act indeed directs, but, by a proviso, leaves to the discretion of the experimenter. It should here be stated that special certificates sanctioning these omissions must previously be obtained.

Ample evidence as to the cruelty of vivisection may be found in the Report of the Royal Commission on Vivisection in 1876, where the Commissioners say plainly, "It is manifest that the practice is, from its very nature, liable to great abuse. It is not to be doubted that inhumanity may be found in persons of very high position as physiologists. We have had some evidence that cases have arisen in which the unpractised student has taken upon himself, without guidance, in his private lodgings to expose animals to torture without anæsthetics, for no purpose which could merit the name of legitimate scientific research." The Commissioners evidently concurred in the opinion of Dr. Haughton, whose evidence was as follows: "I would shrink with horror from accustoming large classes of young men to the sight of animals under vivisection. I believe that many of them would become cruel and hardened, and would go away and repeat those experiments recklessly. Science would gain nothing, and the world would have let loose upon it a set of young devils." (Q. 1888. Minutes of Evidence, Royal Commission on Vivisection, London, 1876).

It may be noted here that much of the evidence given in favor of vivisection before the Royal Commission was shuffling and evasive in the highest degree. The most extravagant and unfounded claims were put forward on behalf of vivisection, but whenever inconvenient questions were asked, the witnesses shirked them and took refuge in vague generalities.

It is universally admitted that the habitual performance of cruel acts cannot fail, sooner or later, to render the performers of such acts callous and cruel, to brutalise their natures, and to destroy their sense of mercy and humanity. Some experimenters have absurdly declared that their proceedings are not cruel, as they are done for the advancement of science and for the benefit of humanity. They apparently regard no action as cruel unless done expressly for the gratification of cruelty; a view which, if admitted, would render it impossible to prove cruelty

under any circumstances, since it could always be pleaded that there was no intention to be cruel. But there can be no doubt that vivisection is an evil and dangerous method, causing moral deterioration in those who habitually practise or witness it. The cure of disease, the relief of pain, and the prolongation of life, are of less importance to the human race than the cultivation of justice, mercy, and humanity, and these principles are, I consider, absolutely incompatible with vivisection, the increasing prevalence of which has already undermined them considerably.

In proof of this assertion I may state the following facts: Some years ago Professor Dubois Reymond, of Berlin, became aware that a great laxity of morals was developing among his students, and he openly lamented the growing depravity which he was quite unable to account for. Professor Zollner, of Leipzig, however, declared the mischief was due to the very general practice of experimenting on living animals, and he called on the German Government to prohibit vivisection. His appeal, however, passed unnoticed, and nothing was done. Some years later, in Edinburgh, a student in the class of the late Professor Rutherford, raised the same complaint. He addressed a letter, dated January 27, 1890, to the *Scottish Leader*, appealing to the public, and declaring that by seeing frequent experiments of one kind and another on living animals, the students tended to become brutalised and degraded, callous and indifferent to death or pain in others, and unfitted for their present work in the infirmary, and for future private practice. It might have been expected that such an impressive appeal would secure attention, but unfortunately it remained unheeded. The public was not roused, and did not trouble itself about the students. Ample evidence of the demoralising effects of vivisection upon those who practice and witness it, is to be found in the Report of the Royal Commission on Vivisection in 1876, and this evidence has never been disputed.

The force of habit is so powerful as to accustom people almost to anything. Hence it is not at all surprising that vivisectors become callous and indifferent to suffering, as they have themselves sometimes acknowledged. But it is truly astonishing to find that what may be termed the vivisectional sentiment (that is, a general approval of vivisection on account of its alleged utility) has grown up among the cultured and the wealthy classes of society in Europe and America. Among these people the moral aspect of the question is entirely ignored, and nothing is deemed worthy of consideration but the benefits which, it is asserted, have been, and will be, conferred upon the human race by the vivisectional method. That such opinions should be current among ordinary persons of kind disposition and average conscience is a most alarming feature, as it demonstrates that their standard of right and wrong has been seriously lowered, owing in great measure to a bad idea powerfully urged by influential men, and assisted by legal sanction.

(To be concluded.)

Preacher's Headache.

THE Rev. Mr. Bobbett had returned to the little Southern town where he had started in the preaching business many years before, and was amazed to find the same old darkey acting as sexton who had filled the office during his incumbency before the war.

"Well, Uncle Pete," he asked, "are you still alive?"

"Jes so-so, Mars' Bobbett. I'm powerfu' troubled wid de rheumatiz, but, thank de Lo'd, I can still hold my ha'nd up, an' my limbs ain't gone back on me yit. But, Mars' Bobbett, how is yo'? I don't think you look as peart as you used to do."

Bobbett shook his head. "I suffer a good deal with my head, Uncle Pete," he answered. "Sometimes it feels like it would set me crazy."

Old Pete nodded sympathetically.

"Dat's jes' so, Mars' Bobbett. I allus have said dat sickness takes a man in his weakest spot. 'Deed, Mars' Bobbett, it's a fac'."

The Book of Job.

THE Book of Job is, to my mind, one of the most interesting and remarkable books of the Bible. It is one of those books which can be, and are, read in two senses, according to the point of view from which people regard Scripture. If we take it as an allegorical legend, an Eastern fable, it may be regarded as a specimen of ancient Oriental poetry; but viewed as a narration of absolute fact, as indisputable sacred history, inspired and recorded by the Almighty himself, it becomes utterly ridiculous. Like most of the books of the Bible, and like Scandinavian sage, as all other fable and fairy tales, this narrative is fond of the sacred numbers—seven, five and three. But being of Oriental origin, it is somewhat more dramatic in its essence, and the flowery, symbolic language of the East is, of course, employed. This narrative begins by telling us that—

“There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil.”

And yet God, “the all-good,” “the merciful,” “the all-wise,” at his own instigation, and, as he himself describes it, absolutely “without cause,” commands, or at least permits, this “perfect and upright man” to be smitten with boils from head to foot, and to be bereaved of all his offspring and all his possessions. This man had, of course, seven sons, and equally, of course, three daughters. Naturally, he had also seven thousand sheep and three thousand camels, and just one thousand oxen and asses, *five* hundred of each.

I believe there are more than seven millions of Christians in this country alone, who are born and die without being aware, and who would not believe if they were told, that in “the Word of God” there is this remarkable passage:—

“Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.”

Yet here in the Book of Job it may be found. This is not the first time we hear of the sons of God in this “inspired volume.” In the first five verses of the sixth chapter of Genesis we are told that “the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose;” and immediately after that “there were giants in the earth in those days,” who presumably were the offspring of these marriages; after which we are informed that “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thought of his heart was only evil continually.” And how can we wonder at it, if the sons of God at all resembled their “pa,” and were thus allowed to corrupt the human race with their poisonous offspring? But poor humanity had to suffer for it, for thus the flood resulted.

In the Book of Job we learn more of these “sons of God.” It seems that they periodically “presented themselves before the Lord” to give an account of themselves, presumably as a consequence of a distrust conceived to them by the father for the reason indicated in Genesis. When the turn comes to Satan, who is apparently also one of the sons, to answer the query, “Whence comest thou?” he evasively tells his sire that he comes “from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.” Whereupon God asked the “Evil One” whether he had considered his servant Job, “a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth all evil.” The Devil answered him to the effect that well might Job do right and be a God-fearing man, seeing that God had caused him to prosper; that he was not pious for nothing; but “put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.” And like a sportsman-like lad, who is challenged to a competition, the Almighty, the Omniscient Ruler of the universe, “takes him on,” and gives Satan power over all that poor old Job possessed, on the condition that he was not to touch his person. And then, as a

fell stroke of lightning from the blue, the most terrible fate which can befall a mortal befell poor Job. A servant comes and relates to him that all his oxen and asses and servants have been slain, and that he only has escaped. “While he is yet speaking” another comes and reports that all his sheep and servants have been destroyed by fire, and that *he* only has escaped. “While *he* yet was speaking,” yet another arrives with the message that all his camels have been carried away and the servants killed, *he* being the only survivor. And “while *he* was yet speaking,” still another messenger comes on the scene with the information that the house had tumbled down and buried all his children. Thus not one of the servants could get finished speaking before another arrived, like the character of a drama on the stage. Whereupon, to complete the work of destruction, “Job arose and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground and worshipped,” declaring that as he had come into the world in a nude condition, so he would make his exit in the same way. But the Lord was not yet ashamed of himself, neither was he satisfied with having humbled his faithful servant. Job’s heart was yet to be hardened. And, as in all fairy tales, the performance is repeated. Again the sons of God present themselves before the Lord; again “Satan comes also among them to present himself before the Lord.” God asks the same question as before, and receives the same answer. The same conversation is repeated over again, with the addition and still he (Job) holdeth fast his integrity, although *thou movedst me against him to destroy him without cause*; and, further, that Satan hints that it was as yet only Job’s cattle which had suffered, and not his person. Thus, being prodded by Satan, the Lord is not to be beaten, but gives the Evil One power over Job himself, with the reservation that he is to “save his life.” And so “went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown;” whereupon the poor afflicted man sat down among the ashes, scraping his sores with a potsherd. His wife loses her faith, and requests him to “curse God and die;” but Job reprimands her, and then enter his friends, of course, three in number, who sit with him for “seven days and seven nights,” without speaking a word. Then Job “lifts up his voice,” and makes a speech referring to his past prosperity, and bemoaning his present visitation. Then his friends make speeches in rotation, friends number one and two making three speeches each, and number three but two. All these discourses seek to justify God’s action, and hint that Job is not punished for nothing. Each of them is plainer and harsher than the preceding one, but Job replies to each, steadily maintaining his view that he has done no wrong to suffer life this, and he holds the field of argument, for when it is the third friend’s third turn to reply, he holds his peace, and thus is Job so far the victor. The principal argument of each of these harangues is Job’s ignorance of the ways of God, and his presumptuousness in essaying to establish his own integrity. But now is introduced a new character. Whence, when, or how he came, whether he had been there all the time, or he only just arrived in time to hear the addresses, is not stated, but when his turn comes he is there, and “he is *all* there.” He first apologises for being young, but says that he patiently waited to see Job beaten in argument, and that being disappointed, he at last feels called upon to take up the cudgels on behalf of the Lord. And he does, but in exactly the same vein as the three friends, only still more severely than the severest of them; and then, without giving the unfortunate Job breathing time, no less a personage than the Lord himself takes up the line of argument, and so thoroughly knocks the already battered and beaten man into a cocked hat that he acknowledges himself defeated. The Lord speaks out of the whirlwind; but his speech goes in the same beaten track, in which all the others have gone before, only employing a new phraseology. Throughout four chapters he staggers

poor innocent Job with countless conundrums relating to the origin and arrangement of the universe; by a multiplicity of illustrations taken from elementary Physics, Physiology, and Natural History, he shows Job's ignorance and his own scientific knowledge. Like an overgrown schoolboy, he says in effect: Look what an ignoramus you are, and look how clever I am. And thus he justifies his own unreasoning malice to a poor, ignorant, helpless mortal! Much of what the Lord teaches his victim may be ancient Asiatic poetry. It has certainly been proved wrong by modern European science, as all who run may read for themselves. He winds up by eulogising Job, although he had just been scolding him, reproving the three friends for their failure to conquer him, and enjoining upon them to make a burnt offering as an atonement. *He* had spoken of God the thing which was right, *they* had not, in spite of the fact that they had defended the Lord against Job. The sum total of their speeches had also been the same as that of the Lord's. The latter's harangue had only been a trifle more monotonous and absurd than that of the others. "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the world?" "Who has laid the measures thereof, or who has stretched the line upon it?" "Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened, or who laid the corner stone thereof?" "When the morning stars sang together, all the sons of God shouted for joy?" "Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?" "Have you entered into the treasures of the snow, or have you seen the treasure of the hail?" "Out of whose womb came the ice?" "Has the rain a father, or who has begotten the drops of dew?" "Do you cause the trees to bud?" "Do you know the time the wild goats bring forth?" and so on.

However, all is well that ends well. Fables generally do, and so this. God gave Job exactly twice as many animals of each kind as he had had before. He got seven new sons and three new daughters in place of those whom the Lord had destroyed, though how this could compensate poor Job for the loss of his beloved children is difficult to see. The wonder is that he was not blessed with twice the number by way of a thorough compensation; but even the author of this "inspired" narrative apparently draws the line at certain absurdities. All those—Christians and Freethinkers alike—who have not yet read the Book of Job, I recommend to read it now. As a poetic fable conceived by semi-savage people it is interesting reading. As history inspired by the ruler of the universe it is ridiculous in the extreme.

J. K. MAAGAARD.

Revising the Family Bible.

"HAVE you a revised copy of the New Testament in the library, Miss Reid?" asked the young man who was making an evening call.

"No, Mr. Slow, she replied, "I regret to say we haven't."

"What's a revised copy?" asked Bobby, who had been permitted to sit up later than usual.

"You are rather young yet, Bobby, to understand such matters," said his sister, kindly. "A revised copy means that certain changes have been made in the Bible which were considered necessary to a better understanding of the text. Now, you had better run off to bed; there's a good boy."

The young man could scarcely conceal his admiration.

"Well, if that's what it is," said Bobby, "our family Bible is revised, 'cause pa changed it the other day. He scratched out the date of your birth, and made it three years later. He told ma something about you and Mr. Slow, and said that it wouldn't do any harm nohow, and if Mr. Slow wanted to look at it, it might do a deal of good."

Presently the young man went away, and a family consultation was held. It resulted in Bobby's passing a sleepless night.

—*Stray Stories.*

Religion Gone Mad.

A BIBLE IN ONE HAND, AND A RAZOR IN THE OTHER.

NEVER in the history of Southern West Virginia has this section of Wayne County, the border county between West Virginia and Kentucky, been so thoroughly stirred by a tragedy as it is now.

Shortly before daylight, September 6, Rev. Morris Wilson, whose head the snows of eighty winters have whitened, killed his aged wife by drawing the keen blade of a razor across her throat several times from ear to ear. The revolting tragedy was no doubt enacted while the aged woman slept, but this will never be known for a certainty, as no one was in the house at the time save a servant-girl who was asleep in an adjoining room. She says she heard no struggling, but was awakened by demon-like intonations at that unusual hour made by the aged parson who was reading from his Bible. A dim light was burning, and, peeping from her room through a door, partly ajar, she witnessed the old minister reading from the holy book, while in the other hand he held his razor tightly clinched, blood even yet dropping from the weapon of death.

On the bed, her face covered with blood, lay the prostrate form of the aged parson's wife, her head almost severed from the body. The old minister was reading from the ninth chapter of Hebrews, as follows:—

"19. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people.

"20. Saying, This is the blood of the Testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

"21. Moreover, he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

"22. And almost all things are by law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."

The last sentence of the quotation the snowy-haired divine repeated time and again in a deep voice, that reminded one of the ravings of the great tragedian McCullough when he was dying of paresis in the madhouse, and, as he raised his hands, as in supplication to heaven, his hair became dishevelled.

For a time in the dim yellow rays of the lamp he presented the appearance of an ancient Druid priest performing his strange and gory rites in the dark nooks and recesses of Stonehenge as it stood in the days of Julius Cæsar.

The sight was enough to send a chill into the heart of the bravest cavalier, and that the girl was frightened is merely stating the case mildly. With a scream she bounded out of doors and ran in her nightclothes to the home of a neighbor and gave the alarm. Soon twenty or more people of the quiet little village had gathered, and the scene was one awful to behold. The old man walked calmly from the room, repeating as he departed: "The Lord's will be done; blessed be the name of the Lord."

So dumbfounded were those assembled that they noticed not the aged person's departure from the building, and a few minutes later, when search for him was begun, he could not be found. He probably went to the heavy woodland just in the rear of the little town, and is no doubt in hiding; but all realise that he must soon surrender, as he is so feeble that escape is next to impossible.

Rev. Mr. Wilson was for years a leading minister of the Baptist Church in this region, and has frequently filled some of the leading pulpits of the State. For years, though, he and his aged wife have been living a retired life here, and were the most highly respected residents of the community. A great religious fever has been sweeping through this community of late, and Rev. Mr. Wilson has taken a deep interest in the progress of the work. It is believed that his constant reading of the Bible at an age so advanced caused a derangement of his mind, and the crime of this morning was no doubt committed in a fit of religious frenzy. He had three times been married, but life with his last wife was seemingly never clouded.

—*Progressive Thinker* (America).

Business is Business.

The missionary was kindly but firm.

"I cannot permit you to abduct me," she said, "until you bring credentials from Major Pond. How do I know that you do not represent some other lecture bureau?"

The Bulgarian bandits were inclined to take this rather hardy at first, but they were finally made to see that business is business, and went away in quite a cheerful mood.

Acid Drops.

THE Kensits are not doing well in the Liverpool district. The son is still locked up in prison, and the father is suffering from the effects of a shocking assault. Some enthusiastic Christian who differed from Mr. Kensit—probably a Roman Catholic—hurled a file at him with great force; and, as it weighed over a pound, and tapered at both ends, it inflicted a very nasty wound over the left eye. Mr. Kensit is reported to have thanked God that he was counted worthy to suffer for Protestantism. We hope this will not lead to an assault on his right eye.

It must be admitted, in all seriousness, that the bitter spirit which prevails between Protestants and Catholics in Liverpool and Birkenhead is a curious illustration of how much the "religion of love" has done to soften and sweeten the temper of its devotees. "Love your enemies," said Jesus Christ. Nearly two thousand years have rolled by since he said it. And what is the result? "Here's a stone for Pigott," cries a Christian mob in London. "Here's a head-smasher for Kensit," cries a Christian mob in South Lancashire. How they love one another!

"General" Booth, the boss of the Salvation Army, and the owner of all its property, is off on another tour in Canada and the United States. He is now seventy-three, and we are told that he never takes a holiday. But this is sheer nonsense. What is a trip across the Atlantic but a holiday? Besides, it is well known that Booth always travels in the very first style; and that is a recreation in some conditions, which might be very hard work in others. Globe-trotting, for a single man or a widower, is generally conducive to health and high spirits. Satan is believed to be no fool, and, if the Book of Job is to be relied on, he is in perpetual movement, going to and fro on the earth and up and down in it—no doubt for the good of his constitution.

The *Daily News*, which doesn't think the opinions of David Hume of much importance—although, according to Huxley, he was the greatest thinker of the eighteenth century—devoted a lot of space to Booth's latest "farewell meeting" at Exeter Hall. Part of the report reads more like an advertisement. Look at the following puff:—"He is like an advertisement. Look at the following puff:—"He is to visit twenty-five towns in the United States and eleven in Canada, travelling 25,000 miles, and addressing 110 meetings in the former country and forty-nine in the latter, to say nothing of public welcomes and receptions. He will confer with 2,000 Salvation Army officers at six centres in the States, and about 3,000 at three centres in the Dominion, each council entailing seven sittings. Among his chairmen in the States are to be Senator Hanna, Colonel Herrick, and the Governors of Ohio, Minnesota, Massachusetts, and Chicago. Those in Canada will include the Premier of New Brunswick and the Lieutenant-Governors of Manitoba and Nova Scotia. All the railway companies in the States and the Dominion have promised free transport to him and his party, which sometimes may be greatly swollen by local sympathisers. Finally, fourteen steamers are being chartered to carry people who will welcome him in New York Harbor."

The man who wrote that puff ought to make a fortune on auctioneer's catalogues. It would pay Booth to take him round the world.

"General" Booth, in his farewell address to the Salvation Army prior to his tour, compared himself to Moses. There is a resemblance, certainly, but it is to the Moses of Houndsditch, and not to the Moses of history.

Ordinary crime appears to be diminishing in Ireland, but there is a startling increase in lunacy. We wonder if this is owing to the priests having got complete control of everything, including politics, since the death of Parnell. Whatever may be the explanation, the fact is indubitable. On January 1 this year there were 11,217 insane males, and 10,413 insane females, under detention in Ireland—a total of 21,169, being an increase of 461 during the preceding year. In 1851 the lunatics were 1 in 657 of the general population. In 1880 they were 1 in 400. Now they are 1 in 170. At this rate Ireland will soon be full of priests and maniacs.

There is a sort of half Messiah at Farnworth, in Lancashire—at least according to the newspaper reports. He is the pastor of the New Jerusalem Church, and is known as the Rev. Hector Ferguson. He is said to do wonders of healing by "personal magnetism." Rheumy, toothache, and blindness, not to mention other troubles, have yielded to his magical power. No wonder his performances are "exciting" no little interest among the local medical fraternity." We

don't suppose, though, that they are trembling for the safety of their profession.

Among the many subjects discussed at the Congregational Unions Assembly in Glasgow was "Biblical Criticism and the Young." The Rev. W. Selbie, of Cambridge, who opened the discussion, said: "A point they had to face was that their young people were fast becoming acquainted, at second hand, with what recent scholarship had done, and it depended on the Church, and largely on their ministers, as to whether the new knowledge should or should not be destructive to their faith." Now what is the meaning of this? On the face of it, it means that the ministers have done their best to keep the young people in ignorance, but that the young people have found out a thing or two in spite of them, and that the ministers must now see that it is prevented, somehow or other, from having its natural effect upon their minds. We might put it in another way, and say that the ministers play a double part towards knowledge—before birth and after; first, as abortionists, and secondly, as baby-farmers.

Mr. Selbie showed, at the close of his address, that he was anxious about "attacks on the Bible of the Ingersoll type." That these attacks can be met by "faking" the Higher Criticism is a very foolish dream. Mr. Selbie may indulge in it as long as he pleases; it will do no harm, except perhaps to Christianity itself. Meanwhile we note that the attacks are telling.

The dear *Daily News* takes the Boer Generals' loose statement, that thirty thousand dwellings have been destroyed by the British in South Africa, as gospel. Other horrors are added to the list, and then our contemporary exclaims—"Yet this is what is possible to tell of England twenty hundred years after the birth of Christ." Well, why not? It has yet to be shown that the birth of Christ did anything to promote the world's civilisation. There is something very naive, and even silly, in our contemporary's astonishment. What on earth did it expect when Christians took to fighting each other?

Dr. Chevasse, Bishop of Liverpool, preaching an ordination sermon at St. Andrew's Church, Southport, complained of the dearth of curates. In his own diocese alone there were at least twenty clergymen who were crying out for curates and could not get any. His lordship said that Non-conformist and Roman Catholic Churches were suffering in the same way. We are glad to hear it.

The *Times* contributor, who has been writing up the horrors of Municipal Socialism, says that the beginning of the end of the Labor party on the West Ham Council was its standing up for the right of the *Freethinker* to be placed like other journals upon the Free Library table. We do not believe this; but if it be true the Labor party could hardly fall in a better cause. Whether the *Freethinker* lives or dies may be a trivial matter, but whether liberty lives or dies is a matter of the most vital importance. Take away liberty, as Ingersoll said, and every other word in the political, social, and ethical dictionary becomes meaningless. Whoever fights for liberty fights for one of the highest interests (if not the very highest) of the human race; and, after all, the chief way of fighting for liberty is defending it when it is attacked. Its enemies always choose the *point of attack*; all its friends have to do is rally there in its defence.

Another fat log has dropped into hell. The Rev. Samuel Hopper Powell, of Sharrow Lodge, Ripon, dying at the great age of ninety-seven, has left £222,615 19s. 2d. net behind him. It was impossible to take the money with him. Even if he could have taken it, it would have melted. We mean, of course, if Christianity be true. "And in hell he lifted up his eyes," was said of Dives because he was rich. That one fault was enough to sink him to the pit. And we presume it has served the deceased Yorkshire parson in the same way. He has our sympathy.

Not a penny of Parson Powell's money was left for charitable purposes. We suppose he had made up his mind for the worst, and saw no use in hedging.

The Pope having disavowed the movement known as the "Christian Democracy" in Italy, the Christian Democracy has disavowed him. It is a pretty quarrel as it stands, and we have no wish to spoil it. "Whether he kill, Cassio or Cassio kill him."

Dr. Parker has returned to the City Temple after an absence of three months through illness. We congratulate him on his restoration to health and activity. Long may he wave! He has his good points. He is something more

sensible, candid, and tolerant than the general run of Dissenting preachers.

Cassell & Co., the enterprising publishers, have seized the psychological moment for launching a Life of Dr. Parker, written by Dr. William Anderson. It was thought advisable to include some of the famous preacher's "flashes." One of these is hardly worthy of him. "Agnosticism," so it runs, "disennobles and destroys all the higher sentiments of human thought." Stuff and nonsense! Dr. Parker would not say this to Mr. G. J. Holyoake's face. He works it off on a Christian audience. He knows their level.

We mention Mr. Holyoake in this connection because Dr. Parker and he have exchanged compliments in public. Both of them have edited the *Sun* for a week. Mr. Bottomley, the proprietor, like the wag he is, followed them up with Dan Leno. Dan, however, only edited the *Sun* for a day. The date chosen was the first of April.

It was natural that the dear *Daily News*—with Quaker Cadbury and the Nonconformist Conscience behind it—should take advantage of Mr. John Burns's latest pronouncement on the Sunday question. "A Sunday," it observes, "without the 'breathing balm' of religious consecration would soon lose all its other advantages, all its rest, and all its sweetness." Surely this must be a very pretty joke to the majority of the people of this country who never go to church or chapel, and get their "breathing balm" from walking, cycling, excursions by train, listening to lectures or music, and visiting their friends and relations. And what a contention it is, in the light of history, that the Sunday could never have "taken root in Christendom had it not been first of all a religious institution." Nothing is clearer than that Christendom inherited the Sunday from the pagan Roman Empire. Its very name betrays its heathen origin. Attempts have been made by the Puritans to christen it the Sabbath and the Lord's Day, but the good old name of Sunday sticks to it still. And Sunday is still the Sun's Day—that is, the day dedicated to the sun. On that day the slaves and working population of Rome enjoyed an interval of rest. It was not a time of gloom, but a festival. They visited the temples of the gods, and spent the rest of the day in recreation. Christianity borrowed the Sunday (among other things) from Paganism; and it was observed by Christians, even in England, very much as the Pagans had observed it, until the sour temper of Puritanism turned it into a day of gloom, in which miserable people went to the house of God to hear how much more miserable they would be in the world to come.

Mr. Hall Caine's flunkey proposal has "caught on." A strong committee has been appointed to devise a scheme for erecting a permanent memorial of King Edward's recent visit to Ramsey. Where a King sets his foot is a sort of holy ground. Christian Socialist Caine evidently thinks so, at any rate; and the pious Manxmen seem to share his opinion.

"Providence" has been visiting Sicily. The cyclone destroyed hundreds of houses at Modica, and killed some three hundred people. Much mischief was wrought in other parts of the island.

Norwich Corporation has decided to dispense with the word "unconsecrated" in its cemeteries as unnecessarily offensive to Dissenters. After two thousand years of the "Religion of Love" Christians are actually becoming courteous to one another.

The latest Messiah is a kid-glove Savior. Besides rejoicing in a compound stylish name like Smyth-Pigott, he rides in a carriage and officiates in a tabernacle with "Walter Crane" windows. We shall never hear tirades against wealth and eulogies of the blessings of poverty from his dainty lips.

The religion of the merciful, great God is being gradually shorn of some of its savage features. On opening the *Nuttall Encyclopædia* we were delighted to find that the reverend editor had defined "hell fire" as "the infinite terror to a true man, the infinite misery which he never fails to realise must befall him if he comes short of his loyalty to truth and duty." What means this? There isn't enough heat in this sort of a hell to boil an egg.

"The old order changes." A little book has been issued by Grant Richards, entitled *The Teaching of Jesus To-Day*, by E. H. Miles. It is an attempt to render the Sermon on the Mount into modern English. As might well be expected, the result is disastrous. The absurdities and anachronisms of the original are less apparent in obsolete English as the clergy well realise. This may account, in a large measure, for their aversion to the Revised Version of the Bible.

At a recent meeting of the Society for the Abolition of Capital Punishment, Dr. Oldfield said that he had written to all the Bishops of the Anglican Church and everyone had replied that he was wholly in favor of capital punishment being perpetuated. Dr. Oldfield must be a very sanguine man if he expected anything else from these lordly followers of the Poor Carpenter of Nazareth. Their predecessors opposed the abolition of capital punishment for stealing from shops property of the value of five shillings. The reluctance of juries to value property above that sum led to the repeal of the act, and not the humanity of these right-reverend "Fathers-in-God."

As the boycott of our paper by the wholesale newsagents still continues, our readers will do us a service by insisting on the supply of the *Freethinker*. Periodicals of a religious and "soppy" character are displayed at every newspaper shop and bookstall. It is well that the antidote should be readily procurable.

One feature of the Anti-Jewish riots in Poland is worthy of special notice. The Christian crowd attacked the houses and shops belonging to the Jews and *plundered them*. A good old game. Bigotry and greed romping hand in hand.

The *Christian World* prints a curious article by "A. P." on Jesus and the Gospels. This writer is a master of euphemism. Instead of saying that the Gospels really tell us very little about Jesus, he says that the evangelists were admirable in "their fine employment of silence and reserve." There is plenty of information in the Gospel, however, if we only "read between the lines, use our imagination, and draw our inferences." Precisely so. If we only use our imagination enough we can eke out the deficiencies of any book. And this is what the Christians have been doing all along. The orthodox conception of Jesus varies from age to age, though the written record remains unchanged. This is because the faithful demand a fancy picture. An absolutely new one cannot be painted now, but a considerable change is effected by exaggerating one feature and subordinating another.

Mr. Joseph Edwards, of Plasmarl, one of the Guardians of the Poor for the Landore district, died with what the *Cambria Daily Leader* calls "awful suddenness." He fell down dead immediately after praying to the Lord in Hermon Chapel. Who shall say after this that prayers are not answered?

The Stockport magistrates have had to deal with "a painful case." John Frith, a well-known Wesleyan, was summoned by John Rothwell, a local Wesleyan preacher, for assault. The quarrel arose out of the failure of defendant's son as a candidate for the Wesleyan ministry. We need not trouble our readers with the particulars. The result was a damaged mouth on one side and a fine of twenty shillings and costs on the other.

Charles Plant, cashier of the well-known firm of Moorhouse & Co., Limited, brass-founders, of Stalybridge, disappeared and was "wanted." After three months' search the police found him in London. He belonged to the Methodist New Connexion.

The Rector of Grappenhall, near Warrington, is a very fastidious gentleman. He votes a harmless verse from Mrs. Hemans, intended for a tombstone, as "ridiculous and inappropriate." It is not over a grave that anyone of decent sensibility would use the word "ridiculous." But who can knock common sense into the heads, or common feeling into the hearts, of these little amateur God Almighty's?

Dr. Marcus Dods, discoursing at Rochdale, with a view to sustaining special interest in "the teaching of Jesus," had at least one lucid interval. He confessed that "the teaching of morality was not the important part of Christ's teaching." We quite agree with him. Jesus, if he ever lived, was not an ethical but a religious teacher. From the point of view of what Dr. Dods incautiously calls "mere morality," it is absurd to place Jesus beside Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Confucius, Marcus Aurelius, and Epictetus.

The *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch* notes that the godly, who opposed the running of Sunday tramcars, are "making full use of them." They find it easier to go to kirk that way

Prejudice against Freethinkers dies hard. In the *Annals of a Publishing House: John Blackwood and His Sons*, vol. iii., p. 275, Voltaire is referred to as this "indecent old villain," presumably by a Christian and a gentleman.

Mr. Foote's Lecturing Engagements.

Sunday, October 5, Secular Hall, Brunswick-street, Glasgow: 12, "Beyond the Grave"; 6.30, "Marie Corelli's Miraculous Masterpiece."

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

To Correspondents.

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

JAMES NEATE.—Perhaps there was a delay in the post; anyhow, your letter did not reach us till Wednesday last week.

W. B.—(1) The subscription we are raising is for the Camberwell Branch of the N. S. S., not for the Hall Company, and will be strictly applied to the real work of the movement. Pleased to have your tribute as "an observer" to the "unselfish, steady work" of this Branch. (2) The Shelley Memorial at Christchurch has not yet been the subject of an article in the *Freethinker*. We shall be pleased if you think of writing on the subject.

OLD SUBSCRIBER.—Mr. Foote is feeling well and strong at present, and his friends say he looks it. As far as possible he will "husband his strength" as you advise, though he will never be a dawdler. Thanks for your appreciation and good wishes.

W. A. VAUGHAN, forwarding ten shillings to the Camberwell Fund, hopes that our efforts will be rewarded by a similar amount (at least) being received from every Freethinker who has had a copy of our circular.

B. L. COLEMAN, sending a subscription to the Camberwell Fund, says he will send the same amount again if we find any difficulty in raising the £50.

J. R. WEBLEY.—Thanks for your second subscription to the Camberwell Fund. Your comments are severe, but not uncalled for, on the indifference of so many Freethinkers.

W. H. MORRISH (the Bristol veteran) says: "I know nothing of the Camberwell Branch except what I read in the *Freethinker* (I take two copies every week), but from what you say they are 'bricks' and deserve support, and I have pleasure in enclosing one pound for them. I hope there will be a generous response to your appeal."

JAMES H. WATERS.—Shall appear.

F. J. PIENELL.—Christian Evidence scandal-mongers are hardly worth so much attention. The N. S. S. Conference has never held secret sittings. There were press reporters at the Birmingham Conference to which you refer. In any case, a report of the Conference proceedings has always appeared in the *Freethinker*—or formerly in the *National Reformer*; and the balance-sheet is printed annually. There is really nothing to conceal, and nothing is concealed. By the way, the ex-convict, whose name is on the handbill you send us, might try his hand at a balance-sheet himself. We are not aware that he has ever printed one, even for private circulation, and he has been begging (and obtaining) money for a good many years.

H. T.—We have forwarded your letter to "Abracadabra."

WALTER MANN.—Too late for this week's issue; shall appear in our next.

W. W. WARDLE asks whether it is true that the Rev. Dr. McCann, of Birmingham, converted Charles Bradlaugh to Christianity on his death-bed. Well, it is about as true as the Christians generally get in talking of "infidels"; indeed, it is as true as Gospel; that is to say, it is unadulterated fiction. Mrs. Bonner's *Did Charles Bradlaugh Die An Atheist?* will inform this correspondent as to the real facts of the great "Iconoclast's" last hours. Mrs. Bonner is Charles Bradlaugh's daughter, and she was with him in his last illness.

J. HERRINGTON.—Your pamphlet on Betting to hand. The subject is beyond our province.

CAMBERWELL SECULAR HALL FUND.—Anonymous, £5; W. B., £1; Old Subscriber, 2s. 6d.; W. A. Vaughan, 10s.; B. L. Coleman, 10s.; J. R. Webley (second sub.), 2s. 6d.; E. Wilson, 5s.; M. Christopher, 5s.; F. D., 5s.; W. H. Morrish, £1; C. C., £2; Two B.'s, 10s.; F. J. Voisey, 10s. 6d.; Manchester Rubber Stamp Co., £1; Rank and Filer, 2s. 6d.; C. J. Peacock, £1 1s.; John Proctor, £1.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Edinburgh Kvening Dispatch—Advocate of India—Freidenker—Truthseeker (New York)—Crescent—Newtownards Chronicle—Edinburgh Evening News—Torch of Reason—Perth Morning Herald—Lucifer—Daily Dispatch—Manchester Evening Chronicle—Railway Times—Liberator—Northampton Daily Reporter—Cambria Daily Leader—Yorkshire Post—El Libre Pensamiento—Two Worlds—Morning Leader—Huddersfield Chronicle—Progressive Thinker.

Two B.'s.—We wish all the B.'s in the Freethought Directory were as busy as you are in the matter of subscribing. It would do no harm if the infection spread to the other letters.

S. P. (Manchester)—We hope the acknowledgment is as you desired.

E. WATKINS suggests that, as many Freethinkers, like himself, cannot afford to pay £5 for Ingersoll's works, even in monthly instalments, we should issue them from our publishing office in weekly parts. This would involve a huge outlay of capital, with a very questionable return. Those who want to read Ingersoll's best things in a cheap form can procure them now from the Freethought Publishing Company. A list of all the Company's books and pamphlets will be sent post free to any address on application.

RANK AND FILER.—Thanks for your good wishes.

J. PARTRIDGE, secretary of the Birmingham Branch, writes: "We had a good time with the literature on Sunday. We sold out all we had of the *Freethinker*—nearly 200 copies, and there was a big demand for the *Age of Reason*."

F. J. VOISEY.—You are quite right. That £50 for the Camberwell Branch ought to have been raised easily in so vast a city as London. On the other hand, the very vastness of London makes it so difficult to work. The Freethinkers in it are scattered over such a tremendous area that it is difficult to bring them together and induce them to co-operate.

T. ROBERTSON (Glasgow)—We feel profound sympathy with the Turnbull family in their bereavement. Men and women of such sterling character throw a lustre on the movement. They are too intelligent to need the sickly consolations of religion in their hour of trial. Perhaps they will appreciate our few words, and an outstretched hand with the heart in it.

E. R. WOODWARD.—We note that the Brockwell Park evening meetings on Sunpay have perforce to be dropped now, and that the other outdoor meetings of the Camberwell Branch will be continued till the end of October.

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.

THE SECULAR SOCIETY, LIMITED, office is at 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

LECTURE NOTICES must reach 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

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

ORDERS for literature should be sent to the Freethought Publishing Company, Limited, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., and not to the Editor.

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SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS: Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—One inch, 4s. 6d.; half column, £1 2s. 6d.; column £2 5s. Special terms for repetitions

Sugar Plums.

MR. FOOTE lectures to-day (October 5) in the Secular Hall, Brunswick-street, Glasgow. For the present, at least, he is delivering two lectures out of London on Sunday, instead of three as heretofore. The local "saints" will please note this fact. The first lecture will be at 12 noon—which is the godly hour for morning kirk in Scotland, and the second at 6.30 in the evening. There ought to be a full assembly on both occasions.

Birmingham Town Hall is one of the most famous buildings in England. John Bright held many an important meeting there, and it has been the scene of some of Joseph Chamberlain's oratorical triumphs. Once a year, by courtesy of the Mayor, the use of it is enjoyed by the local Branch of the National Secular Society. That is why Mr. Foote was able to speak there on Sunday. He had an excellent audience in the afternoon for his lecture on "Marie Corelli's Miraculous Masterpiece"—*Temporal Power*, to wit. The evening audience for the lecture on "Beyond the Grave" was a grand one—the finest the Freethought party has ever assembled under that roof, at least for a great many years. A more respectable crowd, in the best sense of the word, could not be wished for. It included a large proportion of ladies, who displayed a gratifying interest and appreciation. Not a single interruption, not a sign of dissent, was heard from beginning to end; and the applause and laughter (on due occasion) were quite refreshing. Everybody seemed to join in the cheering at the close. It was a splendid spectacle from the platform; one that gave the lie direct to the common orthodox nonsense about "the decay of Secularism." We are glad, too, to hear that the collections were exceptionally good, and that Mr. Partridge disposed of a considerable quantity of literature at the bookstall. Nor must a reference be omitted to the City Organist, who discoursed most eloquent music on the noble instrument at which he presides.

Birmingham "saints" will please note that Mr. Cohen is in their city to-day (Oct. 5). He lectures in the afternoon at

the Prince of Wales Assembly Room for the N. S. S. Branch, and in the evening at the Bristol-street Board-School for the Labor Church.

Mr. Cohen has held some very successful open-air meetings in Victoria Park this summer. Last Sunday afternoon he closed the Bethnal Green Branch's season's work there. Mr. Neate, the ever-zealous and (what is more) ever-attentive secretary, informs us that the audiences throughout the summer have been large and orderly and the collections have been better than usual. The sum of £1 12s. was taken up a fortnight ago for one of the founders of the Branch, who is now nearly eighty years old, and alas! nearly blind.

The Athenæum Hall platform will be occupied this evening (Oct. 5) for the first time by Mr. F. A. Davies, of the Camberwell Branch, who is popular as an open-air speaker in South London. Those who were present at the Queen's Hall meeting, after the N. S. S. Conference in May, will remember him as one of the speakers on that occasion. We hope Mr. Davies will have a good audience and a cordial welcome. He will lecture on "What do we know about Jesus?" A very interesting question.

As the Camberwell Fund was hanging fire, Mr. Foote drafted a brief circular and had it printed and posted to Freethinkers in various parts of the country. Almost by return of post he received £5 from "Anonymous," and several other donations came in by succeeding posts. Perhaps it is owing to the unfavorable time of the year for such appeals, but this particular one has needed a good deal of pressing. The fact involves extra trouble to Mr. Foote, but he promised to raise £50 for the Camberwell Branch if he could, and nobody has ever accused him of failing for want of trying. Besides, there never was a more deserving case than the present one. The committee for whom the £50 is being raised are all gratuitous workers for Freethought. The only reward they look for is being able to continue.

The Camberwell Branch begins its indoor season this evening (Oct. 5) with a *Conversazione*. Members are all requested to come and spend a pleasant evening. On the following Sunday the lectures will commence. Mr. Joseph McCabe, the ex-Catholic priest, opens with a discourse on "The Unknown God." Other lecturers follow, and Mr. Foote occupies the platform on the second Sunday in November.

The *Torch of Reason* (Silverton, Oregon) reproduces "Chilperic's" article on "Is Pleasure the End?" from our columns. It shines in its new setting.

The *Advocate of India* (Bombay) reproduces a large part of Mr. Foote's criticism of Hall Caine's *Eternal City* under the heading of "Idiosyncrasy of Authors."

Fresh orders are coming in for the Dresden Edition of Ingersoll advertised by the Freethought Publishing Company. A few sets still remain on hand. Those who wish to secure one should hurry up.

We intend—of course through the Freethought Publishing Company, whose Directors endorse the project—to issue very shortly a penny monthly Freethought paper. The title is a secret for the present. It will be revealed in due course. The paper itself is meant to be a sort of "advance agent" to the *Freethinker*. Its neutral name will excite less bigotry amongst newsagents, and other persons afflicted with the disease of superstition; while its price will make it easier to push into general circulation. There is no intention of giving Freethought news in this fresh venture. It is to be a propagandist organ pure and simple. Of course we shall have to ask our friends to do their best to circulate it amongst their acquaintances, and even in other directions.

Charles Bradlaugh's old admirers at Northampton do not forget him. A number of them foregathered to celebrate the anniversary of his birthday (Sept. 26). Between sixty and seventy sat down to tea at Messrs. Adams Brothers' Refreshment Rooms. Amongst those present was Dr. G. J. Shipman, M.P., who delivered an interesting speech, full of discriminating eulogy. Dr. Shipman said that England needed Charles Bradlaugh to-day—a statement that was loudly and justly applauded.

Mr. Joseph Symes wrote as follows in his *Liberator* (Melbourne) dated August 23:—"I am sorry to learn from the *Freethinker*, Mr. Foote's journal, that he has been compelled to drop lecturing for a time on account of continued illness. I sincerely hope this will not last long. Mr. Foote is comparatively but a young man, almost ten years my

junior; and I hope there are many years good platform and literary work in him yet. His position must be a very worrying one; and his enemies are many, nor are false friends absent from his sphere. Still, I hope he may pull through and flourish for many years to come. Fortunately, Mr. Foote is better off than myself, for he has a small army of helpers or of men who can take his platform or write for and edit his paper—luxuries I have longed for, but never enjoyed. I am so used to lone work that I am not sure I feel it now. I see nothing before me but continuous activity till the final rest shall come, when even my worst foes will possibly excuse me for not working any more."

Of course it takes weeks for the *Freethinker* to reach Melbourne, and as many weeks for the *Liberator* to reach London. Mr. Symes is, therefore, inevitably a bit behind with the English Freethought news. Mr. Foote is himself again now. Still, he values Mr. Symes's good wishes, and heartily reciprocates them.

We are delighted to see that Messrs. Swan Sonnenschein & Co. have published yet another edition of Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, translated by "George Eliot." Despite the sneers of the orthodox, Strauss is by no means obsolete. His book still remains the most convincing criticism of the Gospel fables.

A new and cheap edition of Buckle's *History of Civilisation* has been issued. This magnificent work should have a new lease of life in its new form.

The students of Glasgow University have too rival candidates for the Lord Rectorship. Mr. John Morley is nominated by the Liberals and Mr. George Wyndham by the Conservatives. The Liberal students have made a new departure in electioneering. They have issued a manifesto setting forth the acknowledged eminence of Mr. Morley as a man of letters, a statesman, and an orator. This would have been sufficient; but a good thing is rather spoiled by reference to the honor conferred upon Mr. Morley by King Edward in selecting him for the Order of Merit. The patronage of a King is no real addition to Mr. Morley's renown.

Hume and the Puritans.—II.

HUME tells us again and again that none of the sects had any idea of toleration. All alike were animated by the spirit of bigotry. It was the same in France as in Great Britain.

"Wherever the Huguenots prevailed, the images were broken, the altars pillaged, the churches demolished, the monasteries consumed with fire: where success attended the Catholics, they burned the bibles, rebaptised the infants, constrained married persons to pass anew through the nuptial ceremony: and plunder, desolation, and bloodshed, attended equally the triumph of both parties."

To say that it is to the Puritans the English owe their liberties, in the broad and general sense of the word, is the greatest absurdity, and one of which Hume was quite incapable. The truth is that the Puritans were bitterly malignant against all who differed from them, and especially against the Catholics. It is pretended by their apologists that the very existence of the Catholics involved a political danger in England. Hume observes, however, that they were really an insignificant minority of the nation during the reigns of James and Charles. He says it is "certain" that they "did not amount to the fortieth part of the nation." And he argues that "the frequent panics to which men, during this period, were so subject on account of the Catholics, were less the effects of fear, than of extreme rage and aversion entertained against them."

Even during the reign of Elizabeth, after the Puritans had obtained the predominance in parliament, they took every opportunity of oppressing the Catholics. Early in 1851 she assembled a parliament in order to procure a vote of money. And with what result? Let us hear Hume.

"The Parliament, besides granting her a supply of one subsidy and two fifteenths, enacted some statutes for the security of her government, chiefly against the attempts of the Catholics. Whoever, in any way, reconciled any one to the church of Rome, or was himself reconciled, was declared to be guilty of treason; to

say mass was subjected to the penalty of a year's imprisonment, and a fine of two hundred marks; a fine of twenty pounds a month was imposed on every one who continued, during that time, absent from church."

Frequently the parliament called upon the sovereign to treat the "Papists" without lenity. In 1624 an address was presented to James "craving the severe execution of the laws against Catholics." Nearly every time the monarch was addressed he received a similar request. In 1625 the Commons remonstrated against "some late pardons granted the priests." "They attacked Montague, one of the King's chaplains," Hume says, "on account of a moderate book which he had lately published, and which, to their great disgust, saved virtuous Catholics, as well as other Christians, from eternal torments." In 1626 they complained that the Duke of Buckingham's mother was a Catholic. "So violent was the bigotry of the times," we read, "that it was thought a sufficient reason for disqualifying any one from holding an office, that his wife, or relations, or companions were papists, though he himself was a conformist." In 1628 the King was told that "the compositions with Catholics amounted to no less than a toleration, hateful to God, full of dishonor and disprofit to his majesty, and of extreme scandal and grief to his good people." Even when the Grand Remonstrance was passed, in the following year, while the Speaker was held in the chair, the Puritans did not forget to gratify their religious prejudices. "Papists and Arminians," Hume says, "were there declared capital enemies to the commonwealth." These lovers of "liberty" had, indeed, eight years previously, in the reign of James, begged that "the children of popish recusants should be taken from their parents, and be committed to the care of protestant teachers and schoolmasters." Yet it is to these child-stealers that England owes her freedom!

In his appendix to the reign of James I., dealing with the court of high commission, erected by Elizabeth in consequence of an act of parliament passed in the beginning of her reign, Hume writes as follows:—

"All the Catholics too were liable to be punished by this court, if they exercised any act of their religion, or sent abroad their children to other relations, to receive that education which they could not procure them in their own country. Popish priests were thrown into prison, and might be delivered over to the law, which punished them with death; though that severity had been sparingly exercised by Elizabeth, and never almost by James. In a word, that liberty of conscience, which we so highly and so justly value at present, was totally suppressed; and no exercise of any religion, but the established, was permitted throughout the kingdom."

No exercise of any religion but what was agreeable to the Puritans; the total suppression of liberty of conscience; these are the signs of the party to whom "the English owe their liberties." What a colossal joke!

Here is another extract from Hume, under the date of 1640, after the assembling of the famous Long Parliament.

"The laws, as they stood at present, protected the church, but they exposed the Catholics to the utmost rage of the puritans: and these unhappy religionists, so obnoxious to the prevailing sect, could not hope to remain long unmolested. The voluntary contribution which they had made, in order to assist the king, in his war against the Scottish covenanters, was inquired into, and represented as the greatest enormity. By an address from the Commons, all officers of that religion were removed from the army, and application was made to the King for seizing two-thirds of the lands of recusants; a proportion to which, by law, he was entitled, but which he had always allowed them to possess upon easy compositions. The execution of the severe and bloody laws against priests was insisted on; and one Goodman, a Jesuit, who was found in prison, was condemned to capital punishment. Charles, however, agreeably to his principles, scrupled to sign the warrant for his execution; and the Commons expressed great resentment on the occasion."

With all his faults, and they were many, Charles was more indulgent to religious differences than were the majority of his enemies. So far from standing up for liberty of conscience, the Puritans called it "a toleration for soul-murder."

James, soon after coming to the throne, being anxious to conciliate the Puritans, arranged a conference at Hampton Court between their representatives and those of the episcopal party in the Church. What subjects they found to discuss we read in Hume.

"The church of England had not yet abandoned the rigid doctrines of grace and predestination: the puritans had not yet separated themselves from the church, nor openly renounced episcopacy. Though the spirit of the parties was considerably different, the only appearing subjects of dispute were concerning the cross in baptism, the ring in marriage, the use of the surplice, and the bowing at the name of Jesus. These were the mighty questions which were solemnly agitated in the conference at Hampton-court between some bishops and dignified clergymen on the one hand, and some leaders of the puritanical party on the other; the king and his ministers being present."

James was inclined to a free observance of Sunday. In this he was opposed by the godly clergy of Scotland. Nor did he find things much better in the south.

"He had observed, in his progress through England, that a Judaical observance of the Sunday, chiefly by means of the puritans, was every day gaining ground throughout the kingdom, and that the people, under color of religion, were, contrary to former practice, debarred such sports and recreations as contributed both to their health and their amusement. Festivals, which, in other nations and ages, are partly dedicated to public worship, partly to mirth and society, were here totally appropriated to the offices of religion, and served to nourish those sullen and gloomy contemplations, to which the people were, of themselves, so unfortunately subject."

The Puritan party was perpetually trying to cast Sabbatarian chains over the English people. Hume relates how they acted in one of James's parliaments.

"To show how rigid the English, chiefly the puritans, were become in this particular, a bill was introduced into the House of Commons, in the eighteenth of the King, for the more strict observance of the Sunday, which they affected to call the Sabbath. One Shepherd opposed this bill, objected to the appellation of Sabbath as puritanical, defended dancing by the example of David, and seems even to have justified sports on that day. For this profaneness he was expelled the House."

When the Puritans got the complete upper-hand they "abolished all holidays, and severely prohibited all amusement on the sabbath." In response to the application of servants and apprentices, they appointed "the second Tuesday of every month for play and recreation." Christmas, as a festival, was suppressed. Prynne, the great Puritan champion, had called the playhouses "Satan's chapels," and complained that "plays sold better than the choicest sermons, and that they were frequently printed on better paper than the Bible itself." He lost his ears in the pillory, but he lived to see the theatres closed and the actors thrown into prison. It should also be noted that it was during the triumph of the Puritans that the worst outbreak of the witch-mania occurred in both England and Scotland, and that the harmless Quakers were whipped, imprisoned, and hunted from town to town.

On the whole, it is perfectly clear that the English do not owe their liberties to the Puritans. They hated the very name of liberty. It was merely an historical accident that they were associated with the opposition to the royal prerogative. They resisted James and Charles simply because those monarchs were Episcopalians. And this is the truth set forth in the philosophical pages of David Hume.

G. W. FOOTE.

Twenty volumes in folio never yet made a revolution. It is the portable little shilling books that are to be feared. If the Gospel cost twelve hundred sesterces, the Christian religion would never have been established.—*Voltaire*,

Angels.

AN AT-RANDOM ESSAY.

"Familiar to children, not unknown to youth, commended and even credited by old men, yet no more true than the miracles of Mahomet."—CERVANTES, *Don Quixote*.

"Gives to airy nothings
A local habitation and a name."—SHAKESPEARE.

MANKIND from the earliest ages seems to have believed as firmly in guardian spirits as in witchcraft. Such a view was held by Pythagoras and Plato, and many an ancient philosopher besides, and their faith was as earnest and robust as that of the Christian metaphysician, Sir Thomas Browne. Sir Thomas lays it down that angels have an "extemporary knowledge," and that upon "the first motion and reason," or as one may say at sight, do "what we cannot without study or deliberation." If that be so, indeed, then a woman is intellectually much on a par with the angels, for the fairer half of humanity usually arrives quickly at just conclusions by instinct. According to the Jesuit father, Lewis Henriquez, the angels have a habit of masquerading in the dress of ladies, with their hair curled, and wearing farthingales and the richest of lincen. So that, in the love of personal adornment the ladies and the celestial beings have much in common. Any one who wishes to know more of the learned and chivalrous father's views on this fascinating subject is recommended to consult his somewhat scarce book, *The Business of the Saints in Heaven*, published at Salamanca in 1631. In this secular and matter-of-fact generation the world has utterly lost that delightful simplicity of faith which took the old-world priest's pretty imaginings for granted—and without a smile. Father Henriquez sincerely believed that heaven was full of pleasant baths, where the dear saints swam about like fishes and sang "melodious madrigals." Let us not laugh too loudly at the good father's celestial aquarium. Did not Theophile Gautier when a child, in infantine simplicity, mentally arrange Paradises and Elysian fields for beasts that had been well-behaved? Stables of marble, with ivory mangers for overworked cab-horses. Well-warmed stalls, redolent of sweet hay, that in Bottom's asinine phrase, "hath no fellow," for overladen cattle and meek-browed beasts of burden. A pleasant departure, truly, from the boyish ideal of the anonymous pirate island,

"Yonder in the western deep,
Where the skies for ever smile,
And the blacks for ever weep."

In the Middle Ages a man might believe what he pleased in that regard, and no one say him nay. In the Campo Santo, at Pisa, Audrea Orcagna, in his fresco, "The Triumph of Death," painted some of his angels as dickey-birds, surmounted with the heads of ladies of his acquaintance, while his devils he made in the forms of beasts and reptiles. This idea of the angels taking the form of birds is, it may be remembered, made a point of in the old-fashioned story of "The Changeling," in which a little lass, who had never seen a place of worship, imagined that the sound of the church-going bell was made by the angels in the sky, much like the Shelleyian lark singing at Heaven's gate. Shakespeare himself, knowing what would please the crowd, makes Horatio say over the dead body of Hamlet:

Now cracks a noble heart.
Good night, sweet Prince,
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!

"Angels' visits are few and far between," says the proverb, with but slight regard to the truth. Yet they come when most needed: in pictures and stories and melodramas. Almost everyone has seen a picture of a poor sempstress fallen asleep in her garret over her work, where an extremely diaphanous angel finishes the task in her absence:

And holy hands take up the task;
Unseen the rock and spindle fly,
And do her earthy drudgery.

In real life, unfortunately, he "Song of the Shirt" is tragic, not farcical.

Shakespeare knew all about the angels. The speech of Lorenzo concerning the stars,

Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim,

may have been derived from his knowledge of the Nine Orders; that is to say, seraphims, cherubims, archangels, angels, thrones, principalities, powers, dominions, and virtues. But who made out the Orders no one knows, and Randal Holme emphatically declares that:

"God never erected any order, rule, or government, but the Devil did, and will, imitate him; for where God hath his church the Devil will have his synagogue."

This last occult remark is deuced hard on those sinners, the publicans. It must not be expected that we should launch out into the wide and fascinating consideration of the bibliography of these "spiritual essences." Nor can we so much as trace the origin of the angelic forms of early and mediæval Christian art to the Byzantine winged figure of Victory, or to the cognate conceptions of Greek genius borrowed from Assyrian predecessors. The cloven-footed Pan may have become the Devil of the Gothic fancy, and it is equally possible that the winged Eros might have some connection with the primitive angel of the pre-Renaissance period. We might speak also of the architectural angels scattered over the cathedrals of the world.

In the Saxon manuscripts the dear angels are dressed in shirt and undershirt. But, as it happened, the Saxon draughtsmen had little, if any, imagination, and clothed their angels in the fashion of the period. We prefer the angels of Fra Angelico to those of Botticelli, and for the excellent reason that, while the former depended on imagination, the latter drew from the living model. With Perugini, Luini, and Raffaello died the old simple and ascetic angelhood. Doubtless Angelica's angels were most elegant creatures; but probably Ary Scheffer could, had he tried, have done as well. After all, it comes to this: that artists have all along created angels as the character of their own minds suffered them to conceive creatures of a supposed heavenly sphere. The "messengers" from above really delivered a message from below; that is, from the inner consciousness of every individual limner. And, as in the bibliography of angels, so it has been with the prose writers and the poets. Dante deals with the subject in the truly Dantesque spirit, with a mixture of ideality with not a little worldly satire, and a Christian spirit of unforgiveness towards his contemporaries who he thought had done him ill turns.

Our Dante Gabriel Rossetti, confessedly copying his great Italian namesake, is really more ideal than his prototype. Thus, the "Blessed Damosel" is more of an angel, according to the modern imagination than he who lifted the veil from the great Florentine's brow and led him the rounds of purgatory:

The blessed damosel leaned out
From the golden bar of heaven.

Then we learn how she was dressed in a white robe:

Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

No one would for a moment confound the heavenly militia of Milton with the very popular angels of Longfellow. The first suggests Michael armed from head to foot, angry and defiant; the second summons to the mind the compassionate "Death Angel" in *The Legend of Rabbi Ben Levi*.

From the iconography, that is to say, the written or drawn images of angels, to their osteology is but a step. May it not be said the one narrow step which divides the sublime from the ridiculous? Perhaps it would be well to let the bony structure of angels alone. In the case of an artist like Michael Angelo the skeleton might be left to take its chance under the drapery. It cannot be denied that with a pair of wings fixed without relation to muscular and anatomical requirements the scapula is made to do double its appointed work. The point of juncture of

the wings with the body of an angel has always puzzled the artists, as well it might. Concerning the articulations necessary for a six-winged angel, like that figured on a stained-glass window at Merton College, Oxford, the least said the soonest mended. Such discussion is mere word-spinning, more or less resembling Charles Lamb's jocose question to the pious Coleridge of how many angels can rest on the point of a needle.

The fact remains that Christian theologians stole their angels, with so much else of their religion. Christian art is not entirely to blame for angelic construction. Some of the responsibility for the iconography of the angel must be thrown upon the Greeks, who, according to their own imperishable works, possess backs broad enough for the burden. The "Winged Victory" of the Greek is unquestionably more sublime than any feathered lady of the Christian imagination.

MIMNERMUS.

Two Great Men.

THE great scientific laws by which the worlds are governed and held together may, perhaps, have a wider application than we know. Goethe's scientific-philosophic novel, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (Elective Affinities), is based upon the notion that human beings may possibly have for one another mysterious attractions and repulsions similar to those possessed by chemical atoms; that such attractive and repulsive force is an inherent part of Nature's great system, and is at present, more or less, beyond human control.

Let the world contain at the same time two great minds of similar aims and sympathies; the possibilities are that such gifted spirits will, before their life's end, break through the isolation that separates them from the common run of humanity, and gain sight and speech of each other.

Very fateful to the world must often be the meetings—the friendships of rare, strong natures.

Milton, young, beautiful, full of the hopes and dreams of a poet's youth, visits, in sunny Italy, Galileo, old, blind, and imprisoned in his own house. Henceforward, among the poet's memories, there rises now and again the face, thought-worn, sorrow-stricken, of an old man, a great thinker and discoverer, who has suffered bitter things at the hands of tyranny. Two great spirits have met, and one of them, braver, stronger, more earnest, more thought-laden for the meeting, is henceforth to fight for liberty, much as the knight of old fought for his lady-love in peril.

From far-off America Emerson wanders, that he may at last hold converse, eye to eye, heart to heart, with one whose writings have long given him a keen delight. It is Emerson himself who says, "Nature never sends a great soul into the planet without confiding the secret to another soul." Lesser men than Emerson may carp and criticise, and delight their small souls by the discovery that Carlyle, the seeming philosopher, had, after all, some human faults that tend to bring him nearer to their own level; but the large heart of the great American could harbor no feelings other than those of profound and reverend admiration, warm, heartfelt sympathy for the man who was to him an intellectual brother. Nearly a hundred years before genius in the person of Emerson gravitated to the kindred human atom in that of Carlyle, two great men, Thomas Paine and Benjamin Franklin, born, like the sages of Chelsea and Concord, on opposite sides of the Atlantic, met on British soil and commenced a life-long friendship.

Said Franklin once, "Where liberty is, there is my country. "Where liberty is *not*, is mine," was Paine's reply. From this fragment of conversation may be gathered two facts: that the speakers belonged to no common order of men; that they had no ordinary love for liberty. With both men, indeed, liberty was a word of deepest, profoundest meaning, not a vague

idea to be treated sentimentally in poems and pictures and left out of real, practical, every-day human life. In the life-creed of both, a strong, fervent belief in freedom as an essential factor in human development and welfare was the chief article of faith. Such beliefs, when held by powerful, earnest natures, are contagious, and spread through the nations like a magnetic current—

Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not.

Few men have exerted a stronger or more healthful influence over the thought of their age than Paine and Franklin. Independently of the warm sympathies that made these two natures akin, there occur in their life-histories many points of similarity interesting to note. Paine, born in England, crossed the Atlantic, lived for many years, and at length died, in America. Franklin, born in America, also crossed the great ocean dividing England from the mother country, and lived for many years in England. Each was born poor, in a humble station of life, and each, in spite of many social disadvantages, climbed to a high rung of fame's ladder, and left a name never to be forgotten. A convincing proof, if proof were needed in these days of social progress, how independent is talent of most accidents of birth and of all accidents of station.

Both men possessed that rare form of patriotism that has always appeared to conservative thinkers a special form of madness; the patriotism that implies, not merely love for the particular race among whom one happens to be born, but for each and every nation under the sun, of whatever tongue or clime, color, race, or creed. Both took in science a deep and eager interest, an interest the natural sequence of their earnest practicality and deeply-rooted love for truth. Such natures are seldom content to take scientific truths at second-hand from others, but must, like inquiring Faust, themselves be often holding communion with the great "Erd-Geist," and winning from it some answer, be it ever so faint a whisper, as to nature's mighty secrets. Franklin, indeed, questioned the "Erd-Geist" to some purpose, and was hence able, as Burke declared, to "bring, like a modern Prometheus, the lightning down from heaven." Both hated war and all its attendant miseries with the twofold hatred of the philanthropist and of the philosopher. "There never was a good war or a bad peace," wrote Franklin. Yet, when liberty was at stake, each fought in the battlefield; Franklin for the land of his birth, and Paine for that of his adoption. They both took an important part in the foundation of the American Republic, in the framing of the American Constitution.

J. F. T.

(To be continued.)

Obituary.

It is with sincere regret that I have to announce the death of Mr. Robert Turnbull at his residence in Glasgow on Saturday, September 27, at the age of sixty years. Mr. Turnbull has been for many years an active member of the Glasgow Secular Society, and was known and universally respected as an upright and sterling man. He had been suffering for some time from valvular disease of the heart, and during his long and peculiarly painful illness he bore himself with great fortitude and courage. I visited him a few days before his death, and can speak of the fearlessness with which he faced the inevitable. His death, as well as his life, is an inspiration to all who knew him. Mr. Turnbull, during the whole course of his illness, never swerved from his Freethought principles, and only a day or two before he died, and when he felt the hand of death upon him, he stated to his wife that, while he would like to have lived longer, yet, when death came, he would meet it without fear. He died with quiet heroism. Robert Turnbull has not lived in vain; he has left a legacy of sons and daughters, who are an ornament to Freethought. They will carry on the duty their father has bequeathed to them—the duty of fidelity to truth and service to humanity. The heartfelt sympathy of the members of the Glasgow Secular Society goes out to Mrs. Turnbull, his devoted wife, as well as to all the members of his family.—T. ROBERTSON.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, etc.**LONDON.**

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

THE ATHENÆUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30,

F. A. Davies, "What do we know about Jesus?"

BATTERSEA PARK GATES: 11.30, F. Schaller.

BROCKWELL PARK: 3.15, E. B. Rose.

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

CAMBERWELL SECULAR HALL (61 New Church-road): 7, Conversation.

EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Bromley Vestry Hall, Bow, E.):

7, J. McCabe (late Father Antony), "The Work of Robert Owen."

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, Debate between Bruce Wallace, M.A., and W. J. Ramsey.

A meeting of Members of the New West London Branch will be held on Thursday, October 9, at "The Victory," Newnham-street, Edgware-road, at 8.30 p.m.

HAYFIELD HALL (160 Mile End-road): 8.30, Monthly Meeting of the East London Branch. Members and friends are requested to attend.

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

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

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

STRATFORD (The Grove): 7 p.m., W. J. Ramsey.

STREATHAM AND BRIXTON ETHICAL INSTITUTE (Carlton Hall, Tunstall-road, Brixton): 7, Mrs. Gilliland Husband, "Sentimentalism versus True Sentiment."

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

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall, High-street): 11.15, C. J. Whitby, M.A., "Aspects of the Ethical Ideal."

COUNTRY.

BELFAST ETHICAL SOCIETY (69 York-street): 3.45, J. H. Gilliland, "Land Social Problems."

BIRMINGHAM (Town Hall): C. Cohen: 3, "Life Problems from the Standpoint of Materialism."

BIRMINGHAM LABOR CHURCH (Bristol-street Schools): 6.30, C. Cohen, "Social Evolution and the Struggle for Existence."

CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY: 7, Lantern Lecture by R. P. Edwards, "A Visit to the British Museum." Illustrated by sixty oxy-hydrogen views.

LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, L. Bergmann, "Utilitarianism."

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, C. H. Spencer, "Garden Cities."

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Lockhart's Cafe, near General Post Office): Thursday, October 2, at 7.45, D. Adams, "The Oxford House Movement." Lantern illustrations.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, Market-place): 7, Arrangements for Mr. Foote's lectures.

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, Pleasant Sunday Evening. Musical and other Recitals, etc.

LECTURER'S ENGAGEMENTS.

H. PERCY WARD, 51 Longside-lane, Bradford.—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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