

THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXIII.—No. 5.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1903.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

I know of no disease of the soul but ignorance ; not of the arts and sciences, but of itself ; yet relating to these it is a pernicious evil—the darkener of man's life, the disturber of his reason, and the common confounder of truth, with which a man goes groping in the dark, no otherwise than if he were blind—great understandings are most racked and troubled with it ; nay, sometimes they would rather choose to die than not to know the thing they study for. Think, then, what an evil it is, and what good the contrary.—BEN JONSON,

What Does Mr. Fletcher Mean ?

SOME of my readers may think that I am giving this matter too much importance, and in one sense perhaps I am, but there is another sense in which it becomes so extremely significant that it really calls for an exceptional amount of attention. Psychology is always interesting, and the turnings and twistings of the Christian mind have something in them to arrest the scientific curiosity even of Freethinkers.

Mr. A. E. Fletcher has not returned to the subject of Shelley's Christianity in *Reynolds'*. He appears to think it sufficient in that journal to swamp me with a few buckets of misrepresentation, which always succeeds with ignorant and one-sided readers, and to let the actual points at issue between us drop entirely out of sight. A very different line of policy is pursued in the *Freethinker*, where I printed the whole of Mr. Fletcher's letter in *Reynolds'* as well as my reply. But the *Freethinker*, of course, has a much smaller circulation than *Reynolds'*, and it seems that Mr. Fletcher would rather be knocked to pieces, intellectually speaking, in the one journal than let it be seen that he was so much as touched in the other.

To a certain extent Mr. Fletcher has changed the venue of controversy. He has sent me a letter which I shall print in full, more for the sake of abstract than of concrete justice. It is as follows :—

6 Flodden-road, Camberwell, S.E.

Jan. 22, 1903.

To the Editor of the "*Freethinker*."

SIR,—In your reference to my letter in reply to your recent article on "*Reynolds'* and Shelley" you state that "enough was said to show that Mr. Fletcher was very much annoyed." I can assure you that you are quite mistaken. Your article greatly interested, and even amused me, but certainly gave me no annoyance, and I thought that you would have taken my letter, especially the last part of it, for what I intended it to be, a little good-natured "chaff." I must apologise for having expressed myself so clumsily, but you took me quite seriously. I can well understand your objection to my calling Shelley a Christian, because the churches have brought Christianity into contempt, but I used the word in the Tolstoyan sense.—Faithfully yours,

A. E. FLETCHER.

Now the first observation I have to make on this letter is that the editor of *Reynolds'* should plainly state that his valued contributor "A. E. F." is not a matter-of-fact advocate of high-flown principles, but a sly and subtle humorist ; so much so, indeed, that to take him as meaning what he says is sometimes to believe the very opposite of what he means—

No. 1,123

especially on controverted points, with respect to which he stands a chance of being brought to book.

There is something intensely humorous in Mr. Fletcher's reference to his "letter in reply" to my recent article. I pointed out in my second article (last week's) that he had replied to nothing that I had said ; in fact, he gave the readers of *Reynolds'* no idea whatever of the nature of my criticism. Like every other article that ever was written, mine contained some incidental observations ; but the substance of it was clear and plain enough. I showed the absurdity of Mr. Fletcher's argument that Shelley was a Christian, and the misreading of Shelley that was displayed in his quotations. I also advanced other arguments and quotations to prove—I do not say to *show*, but to *prove*—that Shelley was not a Christian. All this, which was the real matter in dispute—for what is "A. E. F." and what am I in comparison with the great and glorious poet of the *Prometheus Unbound*?—all this, I say was dropped out of sight, and Mr. Fletcher simply indulged in what he calls "good-natured chaff"—presumably at my expense. Well now, I have no objection to chaff ; I do a little in that line myself occasionally. But I never regarded chaff as a substitute for grain. Nor am I quite able to see the "good-nature" of the "chaff" when you suggest what you know to be untrue. For I am quite certain that Mr. Fletcher did not believe that I was puzzled by that arithmetical "fish" problem. He thought, however, or at least he says so, that it was only "chaff," and "good-natured" chaff too, to suggest almost to the point of a positive declaration, that the editor of the *Freethinker*, who had dared to quarrel with him over Shelley's Christianity, was not a person to be "taken seriously" because he was so silly as not to see that if a fish weighed seven pounds *plus* half its own weight its total weight was fourteen pounds. No man not an imbecile could have read the *Freethinker* paragraph and concluded that this "problem" puzzled me. But it was "chaff," and "good-natured" chaff, to lead the readers of *Reynolds'* to believe that it *did* puzzle me. Well, if this is chaff, I confess that I do not indulge in it, and I hope I never shall. I am bound to say it reminds me too much of Joseph Surface's "morality."

Mr. Fletcher apologises to me for having expressed himself "so clumsily," and complains that I took him "quite seriously." Well, I apologise for that. I thought he meant what he said. It appears, however, that I was mistaken. Henceforth I must make allowance for his humor. When he writes anything that *looks* discreditable, I must excuse him by saying "It is only his funny way."

But let us recur to Shelley ; for all the rest is by the way. Mr. Fletcher says he understands my objection to his calling Shelley a Christian. He thinks my objection arises from the fact that the churches have brought Christianity into contempt. And he explains that he used the word Christianity in a Tolstoyan sense.

This is quite a cluster of blunders and absurdities. Even if Mr. Fletcher had read nothing of mine but the two former articles on this subject, he might have seen that whether the churches have or have not brought it into contempt has nothing to do with my objection to Christianity. Similar nonsense, if I may say so, has been talked about the late Charles

Bradlaugh. It has been said that he would never have become a Freethinker if he had not been treated ungenerously in his youthful days by a Christian clergyman. What a view this involves of his character and intelligence! Bradlaugh had far other objections to Christianity than those that happened to be associated with his personal experience. So had Shelley before him. And so have I in my humbler way since. I am not at all sure that the churches *can* bring Christianity into contempt. I was accused of bringing it into contempt myself in my old indictment for blasphemy. I replied that it brought itself into contempt. Nobody had any contempt for the multiplication table. Why? Because it was true. But many had contempt for Christianity. Why? Because it was false. That was the beginning and the end of the dispute. If it was true, nothing could be said against it worth listening to; if it was false, there could be no use in listening to anything in its favor. I know that the churches have fattened upon it. But that only proves what a rank imposture it is. From one point of view, indeed, the worse the churches are the better. Gibbon was never more sagacious than when he said that, to a philosophic eye, the virtues of the clergy were even more dangerous than their vices.

With regard to Shelley, it is now admitted by Mr. Fletcher that he had no right to call him a Christian except in a "Tolstoyan sense." Now this is humor. We must go back, to find a parallel to it, to the immortal masterpiece in which the genius of Dickens first found its triumphant way to the heart of the world. The quarrel between Mr. Blotton and Mr. Pickwick was ended by the former explaining that he had called the latter "a humbug" in a Pickwickian sense, and the latter explaining that his provocative observations on the former had been "merely intended to bear a Pickwickian construction." In a similar way Mr. Fletcher called Shelley a Christian; which, considering what the poet's views of Christianity were, was a shocking insult; but he hastens to explain that he used the word in a Pickwickian sense. The term he uses is "Tolstoyan," but that is only his humor; he means "Pickwickian" all the time. Here then we will shake hands. Shelley was a Christian—in the Pickwickian sense of the word.

G. W. FOOTE.

Our Empty Churches.

SEVERAL of the daily papers have been much concerned recently over the small number of people who attend church and chapel. Small, that is, in relation to population, for the gross number is still large. Still there is, from the religious standpoint, much cause for disquietude and inquiry. The Church census now being taken shows that about one out of ten or twelve attend a place of worship, and this, reckoning casual visitors, children who are sent to get them out of the way, people who go because their wives take them, people who are taken by other people's wives, and people who go in the hope of getting a wife to take. If we only counted the people who go to church from a sense of conviction, the ratio to population would probably be about one in forty.

What causes people to attend church, does not, I imagine, trouble the clergy much. Their chief interest is to get the people there, and so long as this is done all else is a matter of quite subordinate importance. And after all it is only the clergy who are really interested. The average layman is not much concerned whether people attend church or stay away. The only one to whom it is a matter of importance is the parson. Someone has called the clergy the "doctors of the soul," and described them as ministering to the diseases of the soul as the medical practitioner ministers to the diseases of the body. The analogy does not strike one as very apt. The medical man gets a reputation by his

cures, his fame is built up by those who are able to do without him. The parson lives not by those he cures, but by those he keeps under treatment, rendered chronic invalids by following his prescription. The last thing a parson wishes to hear is that the patient is well enough to do without him, and never does the patient hear, "Well, I do not think you will need me any more." The rule of the parson is, when a man is spiritually sick, keep him so; the worse he is, the longer he is ill, the better for me. Non-attendance at church is a serious question for the clergy, but for no one else.

But why are the churches empty? Those who have taken part in the discussion give a number of reasons—all, with rare exceptions, wide of the mark. One thinks there is not enough of the Bible, another too much. Another thinks the service needs to be more musical; another that music should be abolished altogether. Mr. Charrington—not the brewer, but his brother, who is in another department of the spirit business—thinks it is easier for people to attend church in the East than in the West-end, because, "being less educated than their fellows, their faith is more of the unquestioning and child-like character." Without conceding that the people of the East-end are less *intelligent* than those living in the West, I am prepared to admit that the less educated a man is, the more chance there is of him sticking to church or chapel; only this is a curious admission for a professional evangelist to make. Finally, a large majority of the contributors agree that if people could get better music, better singing, better oratory, and a more lively entertainment generally, then they would come to church. Again, I do not question that you could fill the churches on a Sunday evening by turning them into concert-halls. Non-clerical managers accomplish the feat of filling a hall during the week by this method; and I do not see why, if the churches were converted into music-halls, they should not be filled on Sunday.

A writer in the *Christian World* of January 22 suggests that the falling-off in church attendance is entirely the fault of the clergy. They have neglected their business; because, "When a business is decaying it is the first duty of its conductors to discover the causes, and to adapt it to the new conditions." Quite so—when a *business* is decaying. But Christianity is upon a different footing from an ordinary business—so its defenders say. You cannot openly remodel a divinely-ordained religion as one would reconstruct a business without losing credit in the process. A religion that has to be remodelled every now and again in order to harmonise with our notions of what should be, admits its purely human origin, and confesses that all the talk of divine origin and supernatural inspiration is so much empty verbiage fashioned by knaves to impose upon fools.

Why is it, then, that people are ceasing to go to Church? The best way of answering the question is to do it Scotch fashion, by asking another. Why is it that people ever went to Church? Why did they ever pay special deference to a priest? There is only one reason; and that is, because the priest was believed to be either endowed with supernatural power, or on terms of close intimacy with supernatural powers; and it was believed that by his agency alone these dreaded beings could be placated. Take any religion you like, ancient or modern, savage or civilised—if there is such a thing as a civilised religion—and you will find this to be true. It is the belief that the priest is the possessor of supernatural powers that gives him importance, and his influence decreases just in proportion as the belief in this supernatural power vanishes.

This is the reason why the power of the medicine-man is so great and so dreaded among savages. Next to this comes the Roman Catholic priest, who, with his power to bind and loose, is naturally looked upon as indispensable. The Protestant ministry, by letting go the function of interviewing and controlling the supernatural generally, inevitably weakened their own influence, although, for a time, the habits of obedience to the spiritual head, de-

veloped by the Roman Church, served Protestant ministers likewise.

This, however, by the way. The essential fact is that the habit of looking to the clergy for guidance is one that belongs to an undeveloped, semi-civilised stage of human society. It is accordingly one that social development cannot but weaken and destroy. The presence of disease no longer drives educated people to the parson, but to the doctor. Bad agricultural conditions no longer send men to church for prayers; they show a far greater tendency to approach the legislature. One who is to go a voyage no longer consults the oracles; he looks out the fastest, safest line, with the lowest rates. The priest, if we except the Roman Catholic, no longer even *pretends* to supernatural power. He perforce poses as a teacher of social and ethical doctrines, and in this capacity he is out-distanced by the laymen. There is not in any of the churches or chapels to-day any who can compete with the best lay teachers on social or ethical subjects. At most, the parson can only re-echo their teachings, tacking on to them as much religion as the patience or ignorance of his audience will enable them to bear.

Can one really imagine educated men and women going to church or chapel nowadays for guidance or instruction? They may go to listen to a pleasant musical service, or to listen to pure oratory, or for some other reason of a similar character, but do they go for instruction on any of the important affairs of life? All of them are well aware that for knowledge in art, science, literature, or sociology, it is useless going to church. Even the truth about religion is not to be learned in church. This has been developed outside the churches, and in the teeth of clerical opposition.

The real reason, then, why people do not attend church is because Freethought and common sense is growing. This is the simplest and the only complete explanation. "Let us be candid," says one of the minor deities to the chief God in one of Lucien's dialogues; "all that we have really cared for has been a steady altar service. Everything else has been left to chance. And now men are opening their eyes. They perceive that whether they pray or don't pray, go to church or don't go to church, makes no difference to them. And we are receiving our deserts. Our advocates are silenced. If you wish mankind to reverence you again you must remove the cause of their disbelief."

This is the present case in a nutshell. People are finding out that whether they go to church or stop away makes no difference whatever—except to the collection. They find that their real interests lie outside the churches; that the real work of the world is done outside; and the question gets asked whether these churches and chapels, parsons and preachers, are giving value for money. Is there any adequate return in the services of the clergy for all the money spent on their maintenance? Is there any other body of educated men in the country, of equal numbers, who display, on the whole, such a low level of intelligence? To the intellectual life of the nation the clergy acts as a drag, to its social development they serve as an obstruction; they are to the body politic what the rudimentary ear muscles are to the human organism, a useless appendage, reminding us of an earlier stage of our evolution.

"If you wish mankind to reverence you again you must remove the cause of their disbelief." Again, the case in a sentence. Can it be done? One might as well try to stop the earth in its revolution. Unbelief is no longer confined to a few individuals whom a strenuous persecution might stamp out. It is in all our literature; it permeates all our education; it is in the very air we breathe. Fantastic evangelical preachers may still secure audiences—of a class; good music or good speakers may still attract a respectable gathering; but the doctrines of the Churches no longer interest. The educated world is already forsaking them; and where the educated world is to-day the uneducated will be to-morrow.

C. COHEN.

The Primitive Christian Martyrs.

(Continued from page 54.)

IT must be admitted that the Romans had good grounds for their detestation of the primitive Christians. Their disgust was mingled with apprehension, as Lecky points out:—

"The Church constituted a vast, highly organised, and, in many respects, secret society, and as such was not only distinctly illegal, but was also in the very highest degree calculated to excite the apprehensions of the Government. There was no principle in the Imperial policy more stubbornly upheld than the suppression of all corporations that might be made the nuclei of revolt. The extent to which this policy was carried is strikingly evinced by a letter from Trajan to Pliny, in which the emperor forbade the formation even of a guild of firemen, on the ground that they would constitute an association and hold meetings. In such a state of feeling, the existence of a vast association, governed by countless functionaries, shrouding its meetings and some of its doctrines in impenetrable obscurity, evoking a degree of attachment and devotion greater than could be elicited by the State, ramifying through the whole extent of the empire, and restlessly extending its influence, would naturally arouse the strongest apprehension."

To hear the modern representatives of Christianity, one would suppose the mission of Christianity was to reform the world, to make it a better place to live in, to raise the masses, to inaugurate the reign of love, the brotherhood of man, the Fatherhood of God, and all the other cant phrases we are dosed with *ad nauseum*. Nothing could be more false. The fact is the basis of Christianity has been changed. The thought of modern Christianity is centred on this world; the thought of the primitive Christians was centred on the next world. The early Christians did not want to make the world a better place; they wanted to escape from it as soon as possible. "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me,"† says Christ; and Paul roundly declares that he has determined to know nothing "save Jesus Christ and him crucified." The wisdom we teach, he asserts, is "not the wisdom of this world."‡ Christ withdrew the veil from the other world, and revealed the yawning gulfs of eternal flame, peopled with monstrous and horrifying devils, whose duty and pleasure consisted in tormenting unbelievers after their life in this world was ended. The early converts were struck with terror; no men were ever more panic-stricken at the shout of "Fire!" in a crowded assembly than were the primitive Christians when they had assimilated this belief. The "belief in hell-fire," says Mr. Conybeare, who is a scholar and a Christian, was "the fulcrum of early Christianity"; and he declares that "In the dread of death and in the belief in the eternal fire of hell, which pervaded men's minds, a few philosophers excepted, Christianity had a *point d'appui*, without availing itself of which it would not have made a single step towards the conquest of men's minds."§ This was another offence to the Pagans, for—

"To agitate the minds of men with religious terrorism, to fill the unknown world with hideous images of suffering, to govern the reason by alarming the imagination, was, in the eyes of the pagan world, one of the most heinous of crimes. These fears were to the ancients the very definition of superstition, and their destruction was a main object both of the Epicurean and of the Stoic. To men holding such sentiments, it is easy to perceive how obnoxious must have appeared religious teachers who maintained that an eternity of torture was reserved for the entire human race then existing in the world, beyond the range of their own community, and who made the assertion of this doctrine one of their main instruments of success."

In addition to this, and the greatest aggravation of all, was the intolerance of the primitive Christians; the other religions were content to live and

* Lecky, *History of European Morals*, vol. 1, pp. 412-13.

† John xiv. 30.

‡ *Monuments of Early Christianity*, p. 17.

§ Lecky, *History of European Morals*, vol. i., pp. 420-1.

1 Cor. ii. 2-6.

let live, and, as we have seen, the Government tolerated all religions that conformed to the laws of the Empire. The Christians, on the other hand, denounced all the other religions as inventions of the Devil, and their worshippers as doomed to hell. Iconoclasm, says Mr. Conybeare, was "another general characteristic of the early Christians, and, as he points out:—

"The obvious way of scotching a foul demon was to smash his idols; and we find that an enormous number of martyrs earned their crown in this manner."

This increased to such an extent that, at the Synod of Elvira, held A.D. 305, the Church was obliged to intervene, and a canon was passed denying to those who in future resorted to it the honors of martyrdom. "But in spite of this," says Mr. Conybeare,

"the most popular of the saints were those who had resorted to such violence and earned their death by it; and, as soon as Christianity fairly got the upper hand in the fourth century, the wrecking of temples and the smashing of the idols of the demons became a most popular amusement with which to grace a Christian festival. As we turn over the pages of the martyrologies, we wonder that any ancient statues at all escaped those senseless outbursts of zealotry."*

Amidst the calamities falling upon the Empire, the Romans believed the gods were angry, and redoubled their devotion. But, says Renan:—

"The attitude of the Christians, in the midst of all this, remained obstinately disdainful, or even provocative. Often they received their condemnation with an insult to the judge. Before a temple or an idol they breathed hard, as if to repulse an impure thing, or made the sign of the Cross. It was not rare to see a Christian stop before a statue of Jupiter or Apollo, and say to it as he struck it with his staff, 'Ah, well; you see, your god does not avenge you!' The temptation was strong in such a case to arrest the sacrilegious one and to crucify him, saying, 'And does your god avenge you?'"†

Lecky says, undoubtedly a chief cause of the hostility felt against the early Christians was their bitter intolerance.

"Proselytising with an untiring energy, pouring a fierce stream of invective and ridicule upon the gods on whose favor the multitude believed all national prosperity to depend, not infrequently insulting the worshippers, and defacing the idols, they soon stung the pagan devotees to madness, and convinced them that every calamity that fell upon the empire was the righteous vengeance of the gods. Nor was the sceptical politician more likely to regard with favor a religion whose development was plainly incompatible with the whole religious policy of the empire. The new Church, as it was then organised, must have appeared to him essentially, fundamentally, necessarily intolerant. To permit it to triumph was to permit the extinction of religious liberty in an empire which comprised all the leading nations of the world, and tolerated all their creeds."‡

Christianity was an intolerant religion from the very first, and history attests that it has always persecuted to the extent of its power, but of course they could not expect to attack all the other religions without being attacked in return. The Government of that day could not allow it, any more than the Government of our day could.

As we have seen, the Romans had good cause for their hatred of the Christians; they believed them upon their own accusations against one another, and the open confession of their leaders, to be given to immoral practices. They were known to hold secret meetings contrary to the law of the State. They filled the minds of men with religious terror by their teachings about Hell and the Judgment day, which they declared to be close at hand. They attacked all other religions with the utmost violence, and assigned all their votaries to everlasting torment.

Still another cause of aversion was the repudiation by the Christians of all their duties as citizens of the Empire, as Gibbon remarks: "The Christians were not less averse to the business than to the pleasures of this world."§

Their home and their interests were in another world, and, as Lecky points out, "It was at once their confession and their boast that no interests were more indifferent to them than those of their country."* And, as he remarks further on, "the Pagans were not altogether wrong in regarding the new association as fatal to the greatness of the Empire. It consisted of men who regarded the Roman Empire as a manifestation of Antichrist, and who looked forward with passionate longing to its destruction." No wonder, then, that:—

"The greatest and best of the Pagans spoke of it as a hateful superstition, and the phrase they most frequently reiterated, when speaking of its members, 'was enemies' or haters of the human race.....When the Roman learnt what fate the Christian assigned to the heroes and sages of his nation, and to the immense mass of his living fellow-countrymen, when he was told that the destruction of the once glorious Empire to which he belonged was one of the most fervent aspirations of the Church, his feelings were very likely to clothe themselves in such language as I have cited."†

We have shown why the more cultured among the Romans regarded the primitive Christians with such horror and disgust. The first converts, as historians admit, were drawn from the uneducated, the superstitious, the ignorant, the servant, and the slave.

"But," it may be asked, "Do you think that if the Early Christians were really bad men, that they would have been so ready to lay down their lives for their religion as they undoubtedly did?" The old fallacy appears here, that a really religious man cannot remain a criminal.

It has been shown in these pages‡ that there is no incompatibility between religion and crime; in another article I shall deal with this matter in connection with the primitive Christians.

WALTER MANN.

The Christian Sabbath.

ONE of the most important of the institutions of the Christians—to wit, the Lord's Day, or Christian sabbath—receives no countenance or sanction from the New Testament. This day is mentioned in the Bible only once (Rev. i. 10); but no intimation is there given that in later times the day was to be observed as a sabbath or holy day by Christians. In this passage the writer says that he was "in the spirit on the Lord's day," and that while in that ecstatic condition he saw all the nonsensical visions recorded in the book of Revelation. The latter statement appears to be not in harmony with fact, for according to the latest rational criticism the first three chapters of that remarkable book are a later addition, made by an unknown Jewish Christian, to a purely Jewish apocalypse. There is, in any case, no evidence that the Lord's day was kept as a sabbath as early as the date assigned to the book of Revelation, or during, say, the last quarter of the first century.

In one of his epistles the apostle Paul (or some Christian who wrote in his name) says: "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let each man be firmly assured in his own mind" (Rom. xiv. 10). Whether this passage was penned by Paul or not, it is certain that at the time it was written the "Lord's day" was not observed as a holy day by Christians. The same writer says in another epistle: "Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years. I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain" (Gal. iv. 10-11). The reference in this second passage is, no doubt, to Pagan festivals, among which was the day anciently devoted to the worship of the sun, which in later times became the "Lord's day."

The primitive Christians, soon after the formation of the sect, would naturally hold meetings at stated

* *Monuments of Early Christianity*, p. 13.

† *Marcus Aurelius*, p. 35.

‡ *Lecky, European Morals*, vol. i., p. 423.

§ *Decline and Fall*, ch. xv.

* *European Morals*, vol. II., p. 206.

† *European Morals*, p. 413.

‡ "God and Crime," *Freethinker*, May 11, 1902.

times for instruction in the articles of the Christian faith and for social intercourse. As early as Paul's time they were accustomed to meet together on certain days to "break bread"—that is, to celebrate the "Lord's Supper" (1 Cor. 14-17; 20-21; xi. 18-21; 33-34). This rite appears to have been borrowed from the worship of Mithras. The day of meeting, according to one passage (1 Cor. xvi. 2) is implied to be "the first day of the week"; but this day does not appear to have been regarded as a sabbath, neither had it yet received the designation of the "Lord's day." The compiler of the "Acts," who wrote some generations after the time of Paul, says: "Upon the first day of the week when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them," etc. (Acts xx. 7). Here, again, no sacredness seems to be attached to the day, nor is the appellation "Lord's day" employed.

The earliest Christian writer who speaks explicitly respecting the weekly meetings of the early Christians is Justin Martyr (A.D. 140). This apologist, towards the end of his first *Apology*, says:—

"And upon the day of the sun all that live either in city or country meet together at the same place, where the memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the prophets are read, as much as time will allow..... Upon the day of the sun we all assemble, that being the first day in which God set himself to work upon the dark void, in order to make the world, and in which Jesus Christ our Savior rose again from the dead."

It will be noticed that Justin does not call the first day of the week the Lord's day, nor does he say that the sun-day was observed as a sabbath; he only says that it was the custom in his time for members of the Christian sect to meet together on that day, probably because they found it the most convenient day of the week on which to assemble.

The chief reason assigned by the Christian Church for keeping the first day of the week as a day of rest, instead of the Jewish seventh day, agrees with the statement made by Justin. On this day, it is said, the Savior of mankind rose from the dead. On the first day of the week, nearly 1,900 years ago, the "Light of the world" burst forth from the darkness of the tomb. This day, therefore, became the Christian Sabbath, and at some later time received the designation of the "Lord's day." In the early part of the fourth century, when the Christians were taken under the protection of Constantine the Great, that notorious emperor published an edict commanding all not engaged in agriculture to keep the Christian Sabbath. This imperial order read as follows: "Let all judges, inhabitants of the cities, and artificers, rest on the venerable day of the sun. But husbandmen may freely and at their pleasure apply to the business of agriculture."

It is the teaching of every denomination of Christians that the commands in the Decalogue, though originally given to the Jews, were intended for the observance of all mankind. These commands, it is said, are fundamental rules of divine law which existed prior to the delivery of the other Mosaic laws, and are independent of the Jewish ceremonial laws, and this being the case, they were intended to continue in force after the latter were abolished. It is further asserted that none of the ten commandments originate any duty, but are merely enforcements of duties that were always acknowledged to be binding on mankind, and consequently can never be abolished. This reasoning may, perhaps, be admitted as in one sense correct—at least as far as the last six commandments (man's duty to man) are concerned. Ages before the time of Moses the people of every Gentile nation knew perfectly well that to kill, to commit adultery, to steal, to bear false witness, and to dishonor parents, were immoral acts, and as such deserved punishment. So did the Jews who lived in patriarchal and pre-Mosaic times. There could therefore have been no necessity for the delivery of the commands at all.

As regards the first four commandments of the Decalogue (man's duty to Yahveh) the apologetic contention fails altogether. These commands might

be issued—and probably were—in the names of all the gods of ancient times. Merodach, Assur, Osiris, Chemosh, Moloch, the Tyrian Baal, or any other deity, had each and all as much right to give the same commands to their worshippers as Yahveh. Though we have no record of the fact, it can scarcely be doubted that Chemosh, for instance, had given all these commands to his chosen people, the Moabites. In the latter case these would read: "I am Chemosh thy god; thou shalt have none other gods before me..... Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them, for I, Chemosh, thy god, am a jealous god..... Thou shalt not take the name of Chemosh thy god in vain..... The seventh day is the Sabbath of Chemosh thy god," etc. Thus the Christian argument respecting the first four commandments of the Decalogue being binding on all mankind is pure nonsense. The mythical deity Yahveh—translated "the Lord"—was merely the god of one small nation, and exercised no authority over any other nation.

With regard to the fact that the Christian Sabbath is not the seventh day—the day originally appointed to be observed—it is further asserted that the command given to the Jews refers, not to one particular day, but to a seventh portion of time; consequently, all the injunctions concerning the keeping of the Jewish Sabbath are said to be transferred to the Christian Lord's day, and the observance of the latter as a day of rest is declared to be virtually keeping the Sabbath which the Lord originally instituted.

There is, however, one Christian minister of God—the Rev. Brewin Grant—who in a prize essay on the Sabbath has been pleased to assert that the Christian "Lord's day" is the seventh day, the day on which God rested from his work of creation, and that the Jews kept the wrong day. In order to make his case good this rev. gentleman represents God as commencing work on Monday and finishing on Saturday, and then as resting on the Sunday. He gives, of course, no authority for his statements. This writer, further on, says (p. 102): "The Jewish misinterpretation of the seventh day arose from verbal confusion, so that while clinging to the letter of the seventh day, they missed its spirit and meaning; and consistently with this tendency towards self righteousness, took the Sabbath for the seventh day of their week instead of the seventh in God's week, which is the first of man's, as restored in the Christian system." The Rev. Grant does not say how he had discovered that the first day of our week was the seventh of "God's week." This omission is the more inexcusable since in the Bible account of the Creation nothing is said as to which day was the first of "God's week," it being merely stated that God worked on six consecutive days and rested on the day following. But supposing (as can be fully proved) that the Bible Creation story is an ancient fiction. How does the rev. gentleman's alleged identification of "God's week" stand then? In any case this Christian apologist is more ingenious than ingenious. If we assume the accounts in the Old Testament to be historical (as the Rev. Grant must be supposed to have done), then beyond the shadow of a doubt the Jews observed the day originally appointed. This is evident, for, when instituting the Sabbath, "the Lord" speaking to each individual Jew said: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy..... the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." The week here referred to was, of course, the Jewish week, the seventh day of which was to be kept as the Sabbath. The Lord would surely not mislead his chosen people in such an important matter as the proper day to observe.

In the Gospels Jesus, upon several occasions, is represented as selecting the Jewish sabbath for working miracles, apparently for no other reason than to show that that day was not regarded as sacred by him, and, consequently, need not be so regarded by his followers. This course of action was in keeping with the opinions and practice of the Gentile Christians at the time the Gospels were

compiled (*i.e.*, during the first half of the second century)—which Christians, without exception, held the Jewish sabbath to have been abolished by Jesus Christ. On one occasion Jesus is stated to have attempted to justify his action by saying: "The sabbath was made on account of man, not man on account of the sabbath; so then the Son of Man is lord also of the sabbath" (Mark ii., 27, 28). Whatever this wonderful statement may mean, one thing is at least certain: the conclusion deduced by Jesus does not follow from the premises.

In the so-called "Sermon on the Mount" (Matt. v., vi., vii.) Jesus is represented as saying that he "came not to destroy," but "to fulfil," the Mosaic law. But this "Sermon"—which even in the Gospels can be shown to have *not* been delivered upon the occasion stated in the First Gospel—is a complete code of ethics in itself, and has no relation to Christ at all. It is a purely literary composition (probably a code drawn up by a section of the Essenes for their own use and guidance) and is clearly an addition to the Gospel of Matthew, which has been inserted in the traditional history of Jesus between Mark i. 39 and i. 40. In the opinion of the early Christians Christ *did* come to "destroy" all the Jewish laws and institutions, the sabbath included. In accordance with this belief the writer of the Epistle to the Colossians says (ii., 16): "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: which are a shadow of things to come." That is to say, it was the opinion of the Gentile Christians of the first and second centuries that all the Jewish rites, ceremonies, and festivals had been abolished, and that the regulations in the Old Testament respecting them were in their days regarded merely as types or prefigurations of Christ or his new kingdom. Overwhelming evidence of this interpretation is furnished by the writings of the early "Fathers." Justin, for instance, says (Dial. 23): "For if there was no need of circumcision before Abraham, or of the observance of sabbaths and feasts and sacrifices before Moses, no more need is there of them now," etc. The great Christian teacher, Clement of Alexandria, says (Strom. v., 6): "It were tedious to go over all the Prophets and the Law, specifying what is spoken in enigmas; for almost the whole scripture gives its utterance in this way. It may suffice, I think, for any one possessed of intelligence, for the proof of the point in hand, to select a few examples." Clement then takes the long and detailed description of the tabernacle and its various articles of furniture (Exod. xxv.-xxxix.), and gives a mystical meaning to each—all drawn apparently out of his own head. Among the early Christians a person "possessed of intelligence" was one who interpreted everything recorded in the Old Testament as written concerning Christ. The lamb killed at the Jewish Passover represented the Crucifixion of Jesus, the scape goat led into the wilderness signified Christ's atonement for sins, the Jewish high priest represented Christ as mediator, etc., etc.

ABRACADABRA.

(To be concluded.)

The New Thought.

Across the moorlands of the Not
We chase the gruesome When;
And hunt the Itness of the What
Through forests of the Then.
Into the Inner Consciousness
We track the crafty Where;
We spear the Ego tough, and beard
The Selfhood in his lair.

With lassos of the brain we catch
The Isness of the Was;
And in the copses of the Whence
We hear the think bees buzz.
We climb the slippery Whichbark tree;
To watch the Thusness roll;
And pause betimes in gnostic rimes
To woo the Over Soul.

—Anonymous

Acid Drops.

We have been reading one of the funniest letters in the world. It was sent by a Woking newsagent who explained to a customer—after the said customer had stopped his orders for all papers at the shop—what difficulty he had in obtaining the *Pioneer*. Somehow or other, he managed to get it when his customer bristled up; but when he found that he had overreached himself he spat forth his hoarded venom against the paper, which he evidently knew more about than he pretended. He called it a "vile production," and said he would "on no account have it in the shop," as he had a "lot of young people" in his employ. So the *Pioneer*, is a "vile production," is it? What on earth, or in the place under it, would this man think of the *Freethinker*? We suppose it would kill him on the spot.

"Any creed which enlists an overwhelming numerical majority of dullards is potentially done for." So says "Merlin" in the *Referee*. We continually find that the most damaging criticism of the Christian Church comes from orthodox or semi-orthodox quarters. The logical conclusion of all the discussion lately appearing in the columns of the *Referee* would be the rejection of Christianity altogether. Its moribund condition is openly admitted, but some people still cling to the hope of galvanising it into a semblance of life.

Mark Twain contributes to the *North American Review* an essay on Christian Science. This latest rival of Christianity is only five years old, and yet has 500 churches and 1,000,000 members in America. He considers that it has all the necessary equipments for the successful running of a new religion—that is, it is not a mere philosophy, but appeals mainly to the emotional side of people; it does not claim too much originality, but sets up, like Christianity did, as an improvement upon preceding religions. It has any amount of wealth at its command, and in Mrs. Eddy it has a personality to worship. At the very outset we can see that it goes one better than Christianity, which offered the believers bliss in another world. If we join the latest church we get, in addition to everlasting happiness in heaven, the promise of health and a cheerful mind here on earth.

After describing a number of cures of the "faith" variety, Mr. Twain tells us that someone told him of a case in which a fatally injured horse was restored to health in a single night. "I can stand a good deal," says Mark, "but I recognise that the ice is getting thin here. Let us draw the line at horses." As with most religious systems, even that of the crucified carpenter, the appeal is to the pockets of its worshippers, and there is certainly no blushing about it, no hesitating demand for the almighty dollar. Mark Twain's comment on this aspect of the new creed is worth reproducing: "The Boston Christian Science Trust gives nothing away; everything it has is for sale, and the terms are cash, and not cash only but cash in advance. It's god is Mrs. Eddy first, then the Dollar. Not a spiritual Dollar, but a real one. From end to end of the Christian Science literature not a single (material) thing in the world is conceded to be real, except the Dollar.....The Dollar is hunted down in all sorts of ways; the Christian-Science-Mother-Church and Bargain-Counter in Boston peddles all kinds of spiritual wares for the faithful, always at extravagant prices and always on the one condition—*cash*, cash in advance."

Dr. Sheepshanks, the Bishop of Norwich, speaking on "Happiness" to a meeting of men, told his audience that money was not the most desirable thing in the world. He went on to say that they might object that, considering his stipend as a bishop, he was not entitled to speak with much authority on such a subject as poverty. But they were wrong in their assumption. He had many times slept on the bare ground, with only a blanket to cover him. He had had to go for weeks without fresh meat, and had had to mend his own clothes and boots. The good bishop was careful not to say that these hardships were fairly uncommon incidents in the life of any man who boasts of having tramped over a great part of Asia. There is a distinct want of candor in making capital out of such an experience. One can only ask, What can he know about poverty?

The following advertisement from the *Exchange, Bazaar and Mart* is an example of Protestant irreverence as delightful and refreshing as it is in all probability unconscious:—

CLERICAL AND COLLEGIATE.

Various. Wanted to exchange pocket communion set, solid silver, inlaid with gold, for two Newfoundland puppies, dog and bitch.

We presume some reverend gentleman is giving up religion and is starting life again as a dog fancier.

A writer in the *Catholic Times* is much troubled in his mind as to the Kaiser's patronage of rationalistic Biblical criticism in the person of Professor Delitzsch. The question presents itself to him in this way. In Germany, as we all know, there are a number of subjects safeguarded by law. Any criticism not friendly disposed is warned off. For instance, the editor of the *Preussische Zeitung* was, a few days ago, sentenced to thirty days' imprisonment or a fine of £15 for questioning the Government's Polish policy. We know that any German reckless enough to assert openly that the Emperor cut but a poor figure as general, statesman, artist, or musician would very soon find himself an inmate of one of those picturesque strongholds on the Rhine. Now that his Majesty has taken the "Higher Criticism" under his wing the *Catholic Times* is inclined to think the Rationalists will have all the fun to themselves.

After all, we agree with the *Catholic Times* that to put a veto on the hostile criticism of the latest Biblical research is absurd; but we should have thought that a member of the Catholic Church would have been the last to find fault with such a high-handed method. The Kaiser tells his people that they must not question certain things; the Catholic Church, with the same assumption of authority, tells her adherents that on all points of doctrine and on many social questions her decision is final. Her attitude towards Socialism is sufficient to prove this. If she were in the position to be as autocratic as the Kaiser, many a thinker would be treated like Galileo, and made to deny what he knew to be true.

In a recent examination, a question as to the achievements of Lord Lister elicited the information that he was the man who invented the *anti-septic* cure.

Dealing with the recent death of Mr. Augustus Hare and his work, *The Story of My Life*, the *Daily Telegraph* gives an account of the author's aunt Esther, whose rigid piety caused the sensitive boy much misery. "She was one of those rigid Protestants who think that every amusement is wrong, and that children should be brought up on the strictest discipline. Like many others of her class, she was hard and cruel—always, of course, from the highest motives. There is a terrible story told of young Hare's fondness for a cat, and its melancholy sequel. Aunt Esther discovered the perilous intimacy, and promptly hanged the little playmate which had solaced so many of her nephew's solitary hours. She did more than this; she forced the shuddering boy to go and look upon the cat's quivering body, in order to teach him 'moral' lessons of pain and death. The wonder is that Mrs. Hare ever permitted such torture to be exercised before her very eyes. But she, too, probably was under a Puritanical influence in these early days. Later on, her sister, Mrs. Stanley, mother of Arthur Stanley, did much to enlighten her eyes, while foreign travel completed the humanitarian conversion."

Dr. Parker, of the City Temple, has left behind him property valued at £23,623 net. As the Gospel which he preached forbids the laying up of treasure on earth, and declares that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven, Dr. Parker's friends may feel anxious as to his fate in the next world. As, however, they confidently say that he "ascended," they evidently believe that the Gospel precepts may safely be disobeyed by those who preach them as divine commands. In this respect they are in perfect agreement with the Church dignitaries who so commonly leave accumulated fortunes when they reluctantly depart to a better world.

The European drill-sergeants engaged by the Sultan of Morocco found it impossible to make good gunners of the troops. "When firing practice was begun, and the Moors felt the kick of the lever and recoil of the gun, they simply turned their backs on the Satanic instrument, and spreading their mats, said their prayers." This substitution of religion for discipline doubtless co-operated with the observance of the Ramazan fast in bringing about the rout of the Sultan's forces.

A medical contemporary asserts that the fatal "sleeping sickness" is quite peculiar to Africa. We were always under the impression that a mild form of it had long been known to flourish in churches.

Providence has been managing the weather so well this winter that in Austria many people have been frozen to death. The newspapers also tell us of people perishing of cold in Bulgaria.

According to the *Truthseeker*, at a Methodist preachers' meeting recently held in New York, Prof. John Duncan

Quackenboss lectured to the members on the value of hypnotic suggestion in the ministry. He said that it had a great value, and that the pastor could accomplish much that would otherwise be impossible in his flock by employing hypnotism. The Rev. W. H. Lawrence, a member of the meeting, said that Methodists have not been unaware that many of the so-called revivalists possess powers of hypnotism, and that as a result their converts have been able to speak better and truer than under ordinary circumstances. Commenting on the above, the *Truthseeker* recalls the fact that one of the most effective evangelists the Methodist Church ever had was Laroy Sunderland, who could bring a whole congregation under the "power" at will, and who had hundreds of conversions to his credit after he had ceased to believe in Christianity and depended wholly upon mesmerizing his audiences. And yet the revivalists talk about "conversion," and attribute the effects produced on excitable natures at their meetings to the operation of the "Holy Spirit."

A Methodist minister of Salem, Mass., sent out a circular some time ago headed "Objections to Christianity." The circular read as follows:—"The receiver is requested to state on this slip his, or her, three first and strongest objections to Christianity, or reasons for rejecting the religion of Jesus Christ. Please state them clearly and as concisely as possible. Please let the objections be your own and not second hand, or given simply for argument. If you will respond with your honest convictions on this subject, we promise to carefully consider each objection, and in a public address to be announced later give an answer to every one, or confess that we have no answer. Honor bright—we make this request and give this pledge in good faith, and promise that every objector shall have fair treatment. In the interest of truth we invite you to respond in equal good faith." What a splendid example for our own archbishop and bishops, as heads of the Church, to follow?

A coat of whitewash has refitted the Rev. Merton C. Andrews of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Oshkosh, Wis., for the pulpit. He was charged with consorting with immoral women and acting scandalously with a female member of his flock.

A new religious sect has been registered in the county clerk's office at Oakland, Cal. Its name is the Forward Movement, and the incorporators are Thaddeus Sheridan Fritz and Margaret Brannon Sheehan, who assert that they have been directly commanded by God to take up the work of Jesus Christ. Fritz claims to have received through the mediumship of Margaret Brannon Sheehan revelations during the past three years, and these have been compiled as the *Sacred Records*, or *Book of Consecration*. The filing also sets forth that Fritz and his fellow worker shall have full control of all moneys and property which may come into possession of the sect. To join the inner group members must imitate the early Christians, and give all they have to Fritz, as Peter commanded that his converts must lay everything at the feet of the apostles, who, having nothing themselves, as Ingersoll said, favored a division of property.

A singular item of news comes from Pottsville, Pa.:—"Crazed over his too close application to the study of Darwin's evolution theory, the Rev. S. B. Wongert, pastor of the United Brethren Church of Schuylkill Haven, has gone insane. He had been a close student of Darwin's teachings. He is confined to a room in the parsonage with a guard." Says the *Truthseeker*, *apropos* of the above, "the disaster that has overtaken the Rev. Mr. Wongert should be a warning to clergymen to let Darwin alone. Nearly all of them who have dealt with him in their discourses have shown signs of either insanity or imbecility. Some of them get the rabies whenever he is mentioned in their hearing."

The Rev. Francis E. Clark, the founder of the Christian Endeavor Movement, recently had an interview with President Roosevelt. "There is one word that sums up Theodore Roosevelt's character and manner," says Dr. Clark, describing his interview. "He is an 'American'—not a boastful, loud-mouthed, nasal-tongued, illiterate braggart, as European caricaturists usually paint Uncle Sam, but a sensible, cultured, vigorous, optimistic man of the people, who brings things to pass." The President believes in Christian Endeavor, regarding its work as "more important than the tariff or the trusts; for everything that promotes character and manhood lies at the very roots of national prosperity." We wonder how much of Mr. Clark's encomiums on President Roosevelt was passed on the principle of "You claw my back and I'll claw yours," as the Scotsman said.

We have often wondered just what people had in their minds when they were expressing a belief in the "Fatherhood of God." A religious writer, J. Scott Lidgett, is good enough to enlighten us with a definition. Here it is: "The Fatherhood of God necessitates our conceiving of the creation of mankind as calling into existence by God, out of His own life, of beings at once kindred with Himself, and having a distinct individuality of their own. But this, so far from exhausting what is meant by Fatherhood, touches only its surface. The calling into existence of such beings—kindred with Himself, yet having personal independence—is motivated by the love of God; introduces them into a world, a home, of love, which environs their whole life; and has as its end that fellowship of mutual giving and receiving, that most intimate communion, which can only be between those who are spiritually akin, a fellowship which it is the object of fatherly education to perfect. The motive as love, the end as fellowship, the method as the education of the home—all these are set forth when we speak of the Fatherhood of God." It is all clear now, although, until we noticed the price of the volume (8s. net), we thought it might have been a kind of missing word competition. Eight shillings a volume, however, is rather too dear for this kind of humor.

It reminds one of a story of Charles Lamb. Coleridge had inflicted upon someone a very long and very tedious disquisition on German metaphysics. The victim appealed to Lamb for sympathy. "Oh," said Lamb, in his quaint manner, "he has *such* a fund of humor."

Bret Harte, we see, has left an estate of rather less than £400. It is true that he was one of the best writers of the short story in English; but then he never soared to the giddy heights of *The Christian* and *The Master Christian*. Otherwise the £400 might have been £40,000.

A rival of Jesus Christ as a dead-raiser has arisen—needless to say, in America. It is stated that an American doctor named George Crile has restored to life a dog which had been killed by electricity. The dog had been dead for fifteen minutes, when by injecting adrenalin, a fluid from a gland near the kidneys, it was revived. The doctor says the same method of cure will apply to human beings. Was it the adrenalin dodge then, that J. C. tried on in the case of Lazarus?

Martin J. Cass has asked for the protection of the American Courts against Miss Ormond, who, he alleges holds a hypnotic spell over him; an application which suggests wide possibilities. Could the Courts of this country, for instance, do anything for the multitude—especially of women—still under the spell of the parson and the priest; or the still larger number still obsessed by the monarchical superstition?

Two sudden deaths during religious services are reported from America. In the first case, during the holding of a revival service at North Attleboro', Mass, Miss Maud Reid was overcome by the power of the Holy Spirit, and dropped dead. In the other, the Rev. Dr. McMichael, United Presbyterian minister of Xenia, Ohio, expired at the beginning of service in the Sugar Creek Church on New Year's Eve. More instances of the visitation—or is it the judgment?—of God.

For unmitigated cheek and unlimited assurance commend us to the average bishop or other dignitary of the Christian Church. At the annual meeting of the Hostel of St. Luke the other day, the Archbishop of York, who presided, explained that the Hostel was a house close to the great doctors' neighbourhood, where clergy from all parts of England needing medical advice and nursing care, unprocurable for any reason in their own parishes, might come—indeed, were invited to come—for treatment. The Archbishop, we are further assured, paid a warm tribute to the medical profession, who, as often as not, gave their services to inmates for nothing. But we are not told that the Archbishop offered to forego any of his own enormous salary of £10,000 a year for any such purpose.

A Scotch clergyman, Dr. Kerr, in a pamphlet just issued, summarises the results of recent criticism of the Bible in the *Encyclopedia Biblica*, and elsewhere, as follows: "The first eight Books of the Bible are wholly unreliable; the first eleven chapters of Genesis are full of legends; the Bible account of creation is a myth; the Bible story of Adam and Eve is a fable; the Bible story of the Fall of Man is a fiction; the Bible narrative of the first promise is imaginary; the Bible story of Cain and Abel is a dream; the Bible story of Noah and the Flood is an invention; the Bible stories of the Patriarchs are fancies; the Bible stories of Moses are a

fraud; the Bible stories of Elijah and Elisha are superstitious; the Bible story of Jonah is a nursery-rhyme; the Bible story of Nineveh's repentance is a parable; the Books of Samuel and the Kings are untrustworthy; the Books of the Chronicles are very 'precarious'; the Prophetic Books have alterations to suit the times; the God of the Bible was originally 'a tribal God.' This is not quite a complete statement, as many critics go further still; but it is fatal enough, and Dr. Kerr's pamphlet will hardly arrest the tide of common sense.

In the Peasenhall murder case part of the evidence offered by the prosecution was an alleged conversation between Gardiner and the murdered woman, during which a certain chapter in Genesis was either read or referred to. The chapter mentioned was the thirty-eighth, one of the filthiest in "God's Word." All the papers we have seen, with one exception, gave the reference. The exception was the pious *Daily News*, the organ of the Nonconformist Conscience. Probably it thought that giving the text would discredit Christianity, at all events, it would hardly help the Nonconformists in their endeavor to retain the Bible in the public schools. Hence the use of the favorite religious weapon of suppression.

The Artist's Revenge.

LAST week *L'Asino* invited the people of Rome to St. Peter's to see the Papal canopy. This is the masterpiece of Bernini, constructed for Pope Urban VIII., the holy scoundrel who figured in the process against Galileo; and of whom Pasquino wrote

Quod non fecerunt barbari
Fecerunt Barbieri.

The influential *Acino* has collected documentary and photographic evidence in this connection which should expose at a stroke the immorality of popes; and the impeccability of these men is as necessary a dogma of the mother church as Biblical infallibility is of her Protestant offspring.

At the time when Bernini was engaged upon the canopy, Pope Urban's nephew became enamored of the sister of one of the artist's pupils, but deserted her after having rendered her a mother. The brother implored the master sculptor to intercede with his holiness for his sister's right and the family honor. But Urban ridiculed the idea of such an "unequal union," ordering him to see to it that his nephew should be "no more importuned by that vile woman." Whereupon Bernini swore a vendetta against the Pope. "All his life long he shall have the innocent victims before his eyes; the mother and child in the very act of their martyrdom." Under the potent scalpel of his genius, the episodes of the seduction, parturition, maternity, and abandonment of the unhappy girl live in marble, even in the shields and helmets of the Pope's escutcheon, and the canopy, after three centuries carries an eternal protest in sculpture against the immorality of the Roman Popes. *L'Asino* this week reproduces eight photos of the famous canopy of St. Peter's, Rome, illustrating Bernini's revenge.

The Question Whither.

When we have thrown off this old suit,
So much in need of mending,
To sink among the naked mute,
Is that, think you, our ending?
We follow many, more we lead,
And you who sadly turf us,
Believe not that all living seed
Must flower above the surface.

Sensation is a precious gift,
But were it cramped to station,
The prayer to have it cast adrift.
Would spout from all sensation.
Enough if we have winked to sun,
Have sped the plough a season;
There is a soul for labor done,
Endureth fixed as reason.

Then let our trust be firm in Good,
Though we be of the fasting;
Our questions are a mortal brood,
Our work is everlasting.
We children of Beneficence
Are in its being sharers;
And Whither vainer sounds than Whence,
For word with such wayfarers.

—George Meredith, "A Reading of Earth."

Important.

WE have to apologise to some of our subscribers for an unfortunate error in the printing of last week's *Freethinker*. The machining of the *Freethinker*, the actual printing that is, is not done on the premises at Newcastle-street. The matter is set up there, and leaves the offices ready for the machine. We offer this explanation in order to absolve all who are under the direct control of the Freethought Publishing Company of all responsibility. By some unfortunate blunder, however, the formes were disturbed during the printing of the paper, with the result that in a number of copies four pages were duplicated and four other pages left out. The error was rectified as soon as it was discovered, but by that time some of the imperfect copies were in the hands of one of the wholesale agents, and so were beyond recall. If those who purchased imperfect copies will be good enough to return them, in a half-penny wrapper, we shall be pleased to send on others free of charge, if they will also furnish us with their names and addresses. This is all that can now be done to right the matter. The rest we must leave to the good nature of our readers.

To Correspondents.

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

Sunday, February 1, Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road: 7.30, "Ancient Heresy and Modern Science: An Evening with Lucretius"; 8, Birmingham.

T. J. THOMAS.—Glad to hear you were so pleased with our reply to Mr. A. E. Fletcher; also that you were pleased to see "that Mr. Cohen had begun to do some of the plain talking that is so necessary." We note the kind things you say about us, though we should not like to print them.

E. G. B.—We have already explained that we cannot specially allot subscriptions. Subscribers must do that. We have placed your donation in the general list.

A. WEBBER.—All's well that ends well, though it has cost you a little more. We are much obliged to you for circulating so many copies of the *Pioneer*. Thanks for particulars of the Ingersoll story told by the Rev. Mr. Paynter. It was that very "crutch" story that both Ingersoll and Beecher denied. It was silly on the face of it, for it implied that every Christian was a cripple, and Beecher was hardly fool enough to slip into such an obvious trap as that.

A. HOCKMOUTH.—We have none of the circulars referred to in *Reynolds'* at this office. We have applied for a copy, but were unable to get one. Others seem more fortunate.

J. GRANT.—You have somewhat misunderstood Mr. Cohen's position in reference to Professor Oliver Lodge. He has the very highest opinion of Professor Lodge's abilities as a scientist. The lecture of Sunday last was concerned with him as a defender of theism, and in that respect his scientific attainments are more of a hindrance than a help. His knowledge of science prevents him falling into many of the errors that many theists seem to revel in, while their parade of false science gives them an appearance of strength to the unscientific. A fool will defend a belief like theism with a confidence that a wise man would never dream of.

"A FRIEND," sending a second donation of £5 to Shilling Month, says: "I trust sincerely that donations will flow in to your entire satisfaction. I feel deeply interested in the results." Such a note as this, from such a generous subscriber, ought to stimulate the financial zeal of all who profess and call themselves Freethinkers.

N. T. BARCLAY.—Mr. Foote is progressing towards recovery, but too slowly. The weather is against him, and would be so just now even at the seaside.

G. NEWMAN.—Thanks for your good wishes. If they could restore a man, our Editor would soon be in the finest fighting form.

J. G.—Pleased to hear from you. May your hopes for Mr. Foote's personal welfare be fulfilled.

J. BEVINS.—We understand that your order was dispatched, but was apparently delayed in transit, and that it has since reached you. If there is still any mistake, kindly let us know, and we will look into the matter again.

M. M. DANSON MARTINEZ.—Thanks for your kind and encouraging letter.

T. MORGAN.—Your advice is sound enough, and we shall try to act upon it.

TWO BEES.—Your good wishes are appreciated.

D. G. CURRIE.—There is nothing to prevent your sending again, if you wish to.

JAX.—Received. We share your regret at your contribution not being larger, more for your sake than our own. Still, if all did their duty in the matter, there would be no need for regrets on either side as far as the movement is concerned.

R. B. HEATHER.—Thanks. We have made it the subject of a paragraph. Sec "Acid Drops."

R. SLACK.—Printers, like other persons, will do imbecile things at times. Our printer worked off a few imperfect copies of the *Freethinker* last week. A desperate effort was made to stop them from circulating, but some copies got out nevertheless, and one of them fell into your hands. A proper copy has been sent you, as desired, and will also be sent to anyone else who was similarly unfortunate.

JAS. NEATE.—Pleased to have your inspiring letter.

T. E.—The matter shall be looked into.

W. PALMER.—History repeats itself, as you say; but traitors and humbugs will never pull us down.

T. RICH.—Thanks for your good wishes. We dare say your part of the country is "drowsy" enough. Something might be done to wake it up if Freethinkers were more liberal in their financial contributions.

A. POPE.—If you have any friend at hand that you could rely upon, you could leave instructions as to your being buried without Christian ceremonies. Apply to the N. S. S. Secretary (Miss Vance) for a printed form to fill up. Address—2 Newcastle-street, London, E.C.

GLASGOW FRIEND.—Thanks. The cheque is all right. Mr. Foote is improving, and hopes to be himself again after a brief stay at the seaside. He expects to lecture at Glasgow the last Sunday in February. There is truth in what you say about enemies. A man of any positive quality finds them, if he makes any friends. It is a question of polarity.

PERSONS remitting for literature by stamps are specially requested to send *halfpenny stamps*, which are most useful in the Freethought Publishing Company's business.

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.

THE *Freethinker* will be forwarded direct from the publishing office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One year, 10s. 6d.; half year, 5s. 3d.; three months, 2s. 8d.

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

A Word from Mr. Foote.

MY DEAR MR. COHEN,—

You were in charge of the *Freethinker*, owing to my illness, when the difficulty arose with regard to a certain paragraph in *Reynolds's Newspaper*. Miss Vance, as Secretary of the N. S. S., called a special Executive meeting, and you and she together did what you thought advisable in the circumstances. It was necessary that something should be done, and you both acted according to your best judgment. It would, therefore, be foolish and ungrateful on my part to offer suggestions after the event; seeing that I was physically unable to intervene in any way at the time. Instead of criticising, which would only be carping, I thank you both for your zealous service to the N. S. S. at a moment of real necessity. As far as I am personally concerned, I don't think I shall ever fall a prey to rats, at least before I am dead; yet, as far as you were concerned to defend me, I return you both my best thanks for your generous intention.

What you said, and said well, in the *Freethinker* on the general subject raised by the *Reynolds'* paragraph, shows how much I left unsaid some months ago. You hint even now, and quite rightly, that there is far more to be said if necessary. Personally I hope it will *not* be necessary; but the plain-speaking you have begun may be continued if we are forced into it. For the sake of peace and quietness, after getting rid of an undesirable "friend" and colleague, I have kept back several expressions of opinion in

Freethought journals abroad—notably that of Mr. Joseph Symes in his *Liberator*. But if the N. S. S. and its President are persistently attacked through the medium of outside journals—even Christian Evidence papers being enlisted in the “honorable” campaign—I may be tempted to write a full and final history of certain persons and certain matters, which would put an end to all serious controversy at once and for ever.

Of course I am not responsible for what you wrote. I knew nothing about it beforehand, and was rather surprised when I read it in the *Freethinker*. Neither is there any need for me to assume responsibility. You stated (as you said) what you and others *knew*; and, having decided to say it, you did so with firmness and discretion. For the rest, I have no doubt that you will be quite able to take care of yourself if you are attacked; which is the form invariably taken by some persons’ “replies.”

Your appeal in “Sugar Plums” on behalf of Shilling Month has not brought in a crowd of subscriptions. You will have to remind our readers again that the Shilling Month ends on February 11, and that hundreds of subscribers should have sent in their contributions by that time. The number of subscribers up to the present is monstrously small, if I may use an Hibernicism. Pray ask the readers of the *Freethinker* to wake up. We cannot frighten them with hell, neither can we offer them booked seats in heaven. We can only appeal to their disinterested emotions. But even such an appeal ought not to be in vain.

Perhaps I may be pardoned a word or two about myself. I am gradually getting rid of the throat and chest trouble, but the upset has brought on a bad recurrence of the insomnia from which I suffered a year ago. This is my worst enemy, and I shall have to pay a brief visit to the seaside to shake it off. This I shall do at the earliest possible moment.

And now, my dear Mr. Cohen, I have to thank you warmly for taking editorial charge of this journal during my illness, and to remain

Yours sincerely,

G. W. FOOTE.

Sugar Plums.

The weather in London still continues vile, and the audience at the Athenæum Hall on Sunday was not, therefore, so large as it might have been. There was a good attendance, nevertheless, and Mr. Cohen’s criticism of Sir Oliver Lodge’s “Reconciliation of Science and Faith” was followed with the closest attention. Contrary to custom, there were two opponents at the end of the lecture. One got very wide of the mark, but the other did his best to keep close to the subject, and succeeded in a most praiseworthy manner. Mr. Cohen again lectures from the same platform this evening (Feb. 1), his subject being “Ancient Heresy and Modern Science: An Evening with Lucretius.”

We have just received a very welcome and most pleasant letter from our old friend Captain Otto Thomson, of Stockholm, who is now seventy years of age. Captain Thomson opens his letter with a full heart. He expresses the utmost disgust at the persecution directed against us for some years past by so-called Freethinkers; he bluntly calls the richest of them a very “mean fellow,” and speaks of his accomplices as “envious” and “worshippers of the golden calf.” In Sweden, Captain Thomson says, Freethought is progressing, though slowly. He begs to send, through us, his greetings to “all honest Freethinkers in England.” Metaphorically, yet very earnestly, we give this gallant old Swedish Freethinker our hand with our heart in it. Men of his stamp, disinterested servants of Freethought, and true to the cause in every phase of its fortune, cautious when skies are sunny and hopeful when they are black—such men, we say, are the salt of the Freethought world. So here’s a

health to you, Captain Thomson—though we can only drink it just now in milk and soda. You were a man when you steered your good ship on the roaring seas; you were a man when you showed younger men how to start and conduct a Freethought propaganda; you were a man when adversity fell upon the cause, and some trembled, but you proudly held up your grey head, and looked boldly out of those honest Norse eyes that had fronted death a hundred times without quailing; and you are a man still, and you will die the death of a man, though we hope it may not be for a long while yet; and on the stone over your grave the words may be carved “Here lies a man!” Not a painted imitation, but a real man; and that is one of the rarest things on earth.

The second consignment of the Dresden Edition of Ingersoll’s Works is expected at this office in the course of a few days. We are still receiving orders for the sets, but not so rapidly as we ought. We would remind our readers that the Freethought Publishing Company is the sole English agent for this edition; and if a single set is required after our subscription offer is withdrawn, the price will be £6, and the cost of carriage from America. The sets are delivered free on receipt of an initial payment of ten shillings, with subsequent monthly payments of a similar sum. The set of twelve large octavo volumes form both a handsome ornament and a constant supply of healthy, stimulative reading. Prospectus and full particulars may be had on application.

We still continue to receive enquiries as to where *The Pioneer* can be obtained. The full address of the publishing office is “The Pioneer Press, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C. But what is specially desired is that it should be obtained through newsagents. As will be seen in “Acid Drops,” there is the same attempt to boycott *The Pioneer* as with this journal. There is really no excuse for anyone refusing to supply the paper. No one but a bigot of the most virulent type could take exception to its contents or style. There is, of course, much room for *intellectual* disagreement, but this is all. We hope that all our friends will do what they can to counteract the efforts being made to injure the new venture.

The first number of the *Pioneer* has been, for such a paper, a great success. The number of copies sold over the counter to the trade has been extremely gratifying, and about an equal number has been distributed by our friends on the reduced conditions. These conditions will be continued for the present. That is to say, we will send six copies post free for threepence, twelve copies post free for fivepence, and twenty-four copies post free for ninepence, to any friends up and down the country who will be good enough to assist in this way to circulate the new paper. The February number is on the stocks (as we write), and will be ready for sale on February 1; or rather, as February 1 happens to be Sunday, on January 31. We bespeak for it the hearty support of the “saints” in Great Britain.

The Glasgow Branch is having a concert of instrumental and vocal music on Sunday at 6.30 p.m. A large and varied programme of high class music will be given under the direction of Mr. J. F. Turnbull, assisted by several well known local musicians. The proceeds are in aid of the musical department of the Glasgow Branch. We hope there will be a good attendance.

Mr. Francis Haydon Williams, minister of Flowergate Old Chapel, Whitby, must be a peculiar kind of minister to a very unusual “chapel” congregation. We have received the report of one of his sermons, in which he sets out to prove that there “is no intellectual basis for Theism.” With this we quite agree, as well as with many other things in the address, not the least of which is the assertion that “The myths of a personal God, an incarnation of God, and all the associated impossibilities, will be received in the future ages as archaic types of thought.” Again we say, Mr. Williams is a peculiar minister with a peculiar congregation.

The current number of the *Humane Review* is, as usual, full of good matter. Mrs. Honnor Morton has a timely article on “The Second Slavery,” and pronounces a well-merited condemnation of the treatment of the Negro in the United States. Mr. G. K. Chesterton puts in a plea for moderation under the title of “Humanitarianism: True and False”; and Mr. J. H. Levy, who under the signature of “D.” is well known to older members of the Freethought party, and whose vigorous pen we should like to see more often at work, writes on “The Bird that Laid the Resurrection Egg.” The *Humane Review* is a quarterly, one shilling net.

Mr. Joseph Symes reprints in the *Liberator* Guardabosco's lengthy poem on "San Genara," which appeared originally in these columns.

A new branch of the N. S. S. has just been constituted at Kingsland, N. For some time Sunday morning meetings have been carried on there by a few energetic workers, and permission has now been applied for, and received, to form a regular branch. All those in the neighborhood who are willing to assist are asked to communicate with the secretary, Mr. F. Hillier, 22 Peech-street, Shacklewel-lane, Kingsland, N.E. The meetings are held at Ridley-road, Dalston-
junction, every Sunday morning.

We must once more call attention to the fact that January is Shilling Month. We have no doubt that bad times have kept many from subscribing as liberally as they might have done, and others perhaps from subscribing at all. Still, we cannot help thinking that all has not been done that could be done, and we earnestly ask those who have not yet helped, but intend, to do so *at once*. Begging is not easy or palatable work, but in a cause like that of Freethought it must be done; and, after all, we are only asking others to bear some share in the common burden.

Shilling Month.

GENERAL

(For division between the National Secular Society and the maintenance of the Sunday Freethought Platform at the Athenæum Hall).

The figure after subscribers' names represents the number of shillings they have forwarded to the fund.

W. B. Murray, 2; J. Robinson, 1; E. G. B., 5; A. Webber, 2; T. J. Thomas, 5; Two Bees, 5; Nemo, 1; T. Morgan, 2; M. M. Danson Martinez, 10; J. G., 10; M. Brown, 1; G. Newman, 5; J. C. B., 2; Nellie T. Barclay, 5; A Friend (second subscription), 100; J. Beazer, 2; T. E., 1; W. Palmer, 2; T. Rich, 2; A. Pope, 2½.

Per Miss Vance: Miss T., 1; J. Bevins, 5; Mrs. D. Baker, 20; F. Rogers, 5; M. Metcalf, 2; H. Harrington, 1; T. Penney, 1; R. L. Maitland, 5; A. R. Brown, 1; F. J. H., 5; E. Jones, 2; Mrs. Neate, 5; J. Neate, 5; J. Baker, 1; T. How, 2½; W. Mack, 1; W. P. Sutcliffe, 20; F. D., 2; J. R. Webley, 2; W. Mann, 1; L. D. Hewitt, 2; L. D. S., 5; C. McG., 1; J. Kemp, 2; F. G. (Dumfries), 5; Kingsland Branch, 6; W. H. West, 1; R. Axellby, 2; J. M. Day, 1½; Mrs. Dye, 1½; G. B. H. McC., 10; J. G. Dobson, 2; J. S. Norman, 5; Jax, 1; F. Goldthorp, 2½.—Total to date, £28 18s. 6d.

SPECIAL

(For Maintaining the Sunday Freethought Lectures at the Athenæum Hall).

D. G. Currie, 2; A Glasgow Friend, 100.—Total to date, £16 7s. 6d.

SPECIAL

(For N. S. S. General Fund).

Per Miss Vance: G. E., 20; C. Bowman, 10; Burnley, 1; W. Allfry, 2; J. Roberts, 3; R. Goodwin, 10; F. J. and J. N., 8.—Total to date, £7 8s. 6d.

How Father Rocco Did the Brigands.

(The "plot" of the following story is derived from an entertaining narrative, entitled "Perché Musolino fu tanto devoto di S. Giuseppe," which recently appeared in *L'Asino*.)

SOME time ago the world was much exercised over the capture of the Italian brigand, Musolino. When I say the world, I mean that portion of its inhabitants which reads the newspapers, and constitutes the audience of a realistic drama in which the most popular "stars" are generally malefactors. But, while the veritable histrion is complimented by those whom he amuses, the unfortunates who entertain us so immensely through the newspapers receive nothing but execration from the very public they delight. Take away the murders and divorces, the Hartopps and the Humberts from the stage of life, and three-parts of the audience would begin to yawn.

So the world enjoyed Musolino, and abused him. With the world's inconsequence, it marvelled that such a wretch could be so pious. All criminals are pious—always have been and always will be pious; but the stupid world continues to wag its stupid head and perceive an inconsistency therein.

Now, Musolino was no fool. A man who could defy a brigade of Italian infantry for three years was

not made to run a wheel-stall. It can, therefore, be easily understood why Musolino was so particular in religious matters. No ordinary saint would do for him; he chose the pick of the bunch for patron saint, and elected to burn his spare candles at the shrine of St. Joseph himself. And when you have read what follows you will see how extremely cute was Musolino in this, as in most other matters.

Why is vice so picturesque, and virtue so mixed up with the banalities of tea and toast? Naples, the dream-city, backed by the flames of Vesuvius and the mysteries of Pompeii and Herculaneum, probably contains more poverty and dirt and crime than any modern town of its dimensions. There was a time when no lights were seen in the worst quarters of that worst of cities, because the residents (anticipating the theory of Local Option) strongly objected to flaunting the will of God with a gas-jet. Besides, too many luminants made it bad for business. It thus happened that, when the authorities erected them, the inhabitants pulled them down, *tout simple-ment*.

Padre Rocco was a great favorite among these thieves, who were all convinced Christians. He laid stress in his sermons upon the facility of repentance at the eleventh hour, and there was not a cut-throat bandit in his congregation who wasn't as sure of paradise as the *padre* himself. The worthy father showed with perfect clearness that everyone must repent; but how could people repent if they had not first sinned? The syllogism was obvious, and his flock of goats at once saw the logic of the situation, and acted accordingly. They knew that if only they followed the priest's instructions, and looked after San Giuseppe, San Giuseppe would look after them.

Well, the authorities appealed to the *padre* to exert his influence in the matter of the lamps, and the *padre* consented. By way of commencement he had little images of St. Joseph placed in the niches of the walls, with candles to match. Of course, these tapers did not emit sufficient light to spoil the local brigandage, and the night-birds left them undisturbed. But after a while, Father Rocco removed the candles, and substituted gas. To this the residents strongly objected; and, by way of expressing their dissent, smashed every gas-lamp to atoms.

Next Sunday the *padre* gave his flock a special exhortation. It would be a pleasure for me to reproduce it here verbatim; but the holy man was obliged to deliver his sermons in *napolitano*—a dialect quite incomprehensible to those knowing only Italian. I will not insult the highly-cultivated readers of this journal by expecting them to be acquainted with the *gergo* of the ice-cream man.

The *padre* told his hearers an interesting story, which, for the sake of convenience, I append in the form of a dialogue. The scene is the Gate of Paradise, and the *dramatis persone* are Mastrillo (a deceased brigand) and several well-known Bible characters.

Mas. (rings the bell violently): Hullo there!

Peter (looking through the keyhole): What's the matter?

Mas.: Matter, indeed! Here I've been ringing this blessed bell for a holy hour, and you ask what's the matter! You're a nice man to keep doors of places, you are! I'm Mastrillo, the brigand, and I want to come in.

Peter (sarcastically): Oh, you want to come in, do you? And you think you're the proper sort of person to go to Heaven, do you?

Mas.: Don't sauce me, Peter. At your time of life, too. If you want to know my credentials, ask Joseph.

Peter: Which Joseph? If you mean him of Birmingham, I'm afraid you'll have to call at the other

Mas.: No, no. I mean *my* Joseph, my patron saint, the ever-blessed father of Our Blessed—

Peter: Sh—sh! The Ghost might hear you!

Mas.: Well, call Joseph.

Peter: But you are a brigand, a murderer, a thief,

Mas.: Shut up, will you! I'll pull your Jewish nose for you, you wicked old calumniator! After the candles I've burnt, too.

Peter: It's no good talking. You can't come in; that's flat.

Mas.: Can't I? Then I'll call Joseph myself. (Calls aloud.) San Giuseppe!

Joseph: Who calls me?

Mas.: I, Mastrillo. He won't let me in.

Jos. (to Peter): How's this? My most devoted Mastrillo? And you won't let him in?

Peter: Certainly not. He's a notorious criminal.

Jos.: Nonsense! He has burnt thousands of candles at my shrine, and he always prayed for forgiveness after he had cut someone's throat and secured the booty! Let him in.

Peter (impatiently): Who's keeping this gate; you or I? He can't come in, I tell you.

Jos.: Very well. I'll appeal to the Ghost!

Jos. (kneeling before the Throne): There's Mastrillo, the most devoted of brigands, waiting at the gate, and Peter won't let him in.

Ghost (nervously): A brigand? Wants to come in here? Impossible!

Jos: But he has performed all his pious duties with the utmost fervor. When he died, three firms of candle-makers had to file their petitions!

Ghost: Yes, yes. But we can't have brigands in heaven, with so much property about. No one would be safe.

Jos: But if you don't let thieves in they won't burn any more candles to me, and half the churches will be shut up.

Ghost: Oh, we shan't be hard on ordinary thieves. of course. But we must draw the line somewhere. Mastrillo must go to hell.

Jos: Then I'll go there too! (Exit.)

Ghost (aside): I don't like that man. What mischief is he brewing now, I wonder? I hope he'll leave Jesus alone, anyhow. He has too much influence in that direction. Jesus follows him, the apostles follow Jesus, and half the angels are more or less disaffected. By the way, how empty the place looks! Is it possible my fears are justified? (aloud) Gabriel, tell Joseph I want him.

Gabriel: Joseph has gone to hell.

Ghost: Then tell Jesus.

Gabriel: Jesus has gone, too!

Ghost (turning pale): Jesus? Impossible! Send me one of the Apostles at once.

Gabriel: The Apostles are all gone as well.

Ghost: Then who is keeping the door?

Gabriel: No one. Consequently, the angels are all rushing out. In fact, there's a general emigration.

Ghost (turning paler): The devil! That accounts for the emptiness of the place! Why, soon we shall be left in solitude! Bring 'em back, somebody! Quick!

Gabriel: Shall I say the brigand may come in?

Ghost: Yes, yes; anything. Only bring 'em back before they reach hell! (sotto voce) If once they get in, I may say good-bye to the lot!

"And so," concluded the worthy Father Rocco, "they all returned to Paradise, and Mastrillo with them. From that time no brigand who made due offering to San Giuseppe was ever refused admission; and you, my brethren, through the good offices of our blessed Joseph, may also surely enter the portals of heaven; provided only that you make proper offerings at his shrine. And I have thought it fitting to mark our sense of gratefulness to him by placing a special lamp before his image. But, of course, if you think otherwise—if you think the services of the ever-blessed Joseph are fitly requited with a wax taper —"

The murmurs of the congregation at this point were music in the ears of the astute priest. To-day there is gas everywhere—except where there is electricity—yes, even in the remote by-ways, where the devotees of Giuseppe hold nightly prowl.

E. R. WOODWARD.

Book Chat.

THE inimitable Mr. Dooley is with us again. Mr. Heinemann has just issued another volume of remarks on things in general, under the title of *Observations by Mr. Dooley*. The observations cover a wide range of subjects—from the German Emperor to polygamy, from wireless telegraphy to swearing. The best way to appreciate the rare quality of this American humorist's talent is to let him speak for himself. Could anything be more acute or verisimilar than this character-sketch of the Kaiser:—

"His ideel is war, but he's a practical man. He has a season ticket to th' matches, but he niver will put on the gloves. He's in the spoortin' goods business, an' he usu'ly gots a percentage iv th' gate receipts. If he sees two nations bellowin' at each other th' assurances iv their distinguished consid'ration, he says: 'Boys, get together. 'Tis a good match. Ye're both afraid. Go in, uncle: go in, Boer.' He is all around th' ring-side, encouragin' both sides. 'Stand up again' him there, Paul; rassle him to th' flure. Good f'r ye, uncle. A thrifle low, that wan; but all's fair in war. Defend ye're indipendence, noble sons iv Teutonic blood. Exercise ye're sov'reign rights, me English frinds.' If wan or th' other begins to weaken th' first bottle through th' ropes is Willum's. Whin annybody suggests a dhraw, he demands his money back. Nawthin' but a fight to a finish will do him. If ayether iv th' contestants is alive in th' ring at th' end, he congratulates him an' asks him if he heerd that German cheer in th' las' round."

One of the benefits of this method of criticising things social and personal is that it makes for amenity. It does not set people by the ears. The American or British patriot can see all his cherished ideals scattered into a thousand pieces by the impact of this sparkling wit and yet not feel very annoyed or very much injured. The exaggeration diminishes, or rather, disguises the seriousness, ferocity, and cynicism that underlie these humorous comments. As with Mark Twain, real brain-work is at the basis of all his writing, and like the older writer, there is not a dull line in him. What French maker of maxims could turn out better work than these detached remarks:—

"I don't think we injye other people's sufferin', Hinnessy. It isn't acshally injyement. But we feel betther f'r it.

"Wurruk is wurruk if ye're paid to do it, an' it's pleasure if ye pay to be allowed to do it."

Socrates and Milton have too often been pitied because their wives were not all those irritable gentlemen wished them to be. Mr. Dooley shows us the other side in so illuminating a way, that the dullest can see that what is called a genius may not be the most comfortable person to live with.

"Hogan says all janiusses was unhappily marrid. I guess that's thrue iv their wives, too."

His description of the Coronation is a gem of fun and acuteness. Of the American share in that great event, he tells us:—

"Ivrybody turned in to hilt our dependant cousins. Andrew Carnegie lint Westminster Abbey, which was superbly decorated with tapestries lint be T. Pierpoint Morgan; Yerkes lint thim th' streets: Frohman th' theatres; th' American Syndicate gave thim th' use ov th' river."

One of the most amusing things we have seen for a long while is Mr. Dooley's satirical appreciation of one branch of English fiction that enjoys a popularity nowadays out of all proportion to its merit. We mean the Sherlock Holmes detective story. A detective story, when it has some relation to literature, like Poe's *Murder in the Rue Morgue*, is something to be thankful for. The inanity of Sir Conan Doyle's method is brought out excellently, with certain touches that show the writer's utter contempt for such facile fiction:—

"Well suppose, Hinnessy, that I'm Sherlock Holmes. I'm sittin' here in me little parlor, wearin' a dressin'-gown, an' now an' thin pokin' mesilf full iv morpheen. Here we are. Ye come in. 'Good mornin', Watson!'"

"I ain't Watson," said Mr. Hennessy; "I'm Hinnessy."

"Ah!" said Mr. Dooley; "I thought I'd wring it from ye. Perhaps ye'd like to know how I guessed ye had come in. 'Tis very simple; on'y a matther iv observation. I heered yeer step; I seen yeer reflection in the lookin'-glass. Ye spoke to me. I put these things together with me thrained faculty for observation an' deduction, d'ye mind. Says I to mesilf: 'This must be Hinnessy.' But, mind ye, the chain iv circumstances is not complete. It might be someone disguised as ye. So says I to mesilf: 'I will throw this new-comer, whoever he is, off his guard by callin' him be a strange name!' Ye wuddn't feel complimented, Hinnessy, if ye knew who Watson is. Watson knows even less than you. He don't know annything, an' annything he knows is wrong. He has to look up his name in the parish ruygather before he can speak to himself. He's a gr-rat friend of Sherlock Holmes, and if Sherlock Holmes iver loses him he'll find him in the nearest asylum for the feeble-minded. But I sur-

prised yeer secret out iv ye. Thrown off yeer guard by me innocent question, ye popped out: 'I'm Hinmissy'; and in a flash I guessed who ye were. Be th' same process iv raisoinin' be deduction, I can tell ye that ye were home las' night in bed, that ye're on yeer way to wurruk, and that yeer salary is two dollars a day. I know ye were at home las' night because ye ar-re always at home between iliven and sivin, bar Pathrick's night, and ye're wife hasn't been lookin' for ye. I know ye're on yeer way to wurruk because I heered yeer dinner-pail jingle as ye stepped softly in. I know ye get two dollars a day because ye told me ye got three, an' I deducted thirty-three an' a half per cint. for poetic licence. 'Tis very simple. Ar're those shoes ye have on yeer feet? Be hiven's, I thought so!"

"Simple," said Mr. Hennessey, thoughtfully; "'tis foolish."

There are a number of us who feel disposed to agree with Mr. Hennessey's thoughtful remark.

With the January number the *Social Democrat* commences a new phase of its existence. It is much enlarged, and the price is now sixpence. Mr. E. B. Bax continues a discussion on the "Materialist Conception of History" in which he appears to make small wood of his opponent, Herr Kantsky. The controversy turns upon the relative value of different factors in the interpretation of history. M. Vandervelde, the Belgian Sociologist and Freethinker opens a symposium on Clericalism and Socialism. He puts the Rationalist position uncompromisingly.

"Colonel" Arthur Lynch who, at present, is the principal figure in an absurd and archaic trial, is a Freethinker of some distinction. We may be permitted to remind our readers that a little while back he published with Mr. Bertram Dobell a volume called *Human Documents*. It was made up of a number of character studies, brilliantly written and observed, of representative men and women: Zola, Herbert Spencer, Chamberlain, Sara Bernhardt and others. This is distinctly the best thing he has done. He has also a collection of literary sketches (*Modern Authors*, Downey & Co.), noticeable for its analytical method, in which he attempts to place the criticism of literature on something like a scientific basis.

F. W.

"Merlin" on the Church.

DEALING with the now much-discussed question as to why men do not go to Church, "Merlin" of the *Referee*, who "reveres" the Church of England with its saints and martyrs and "Litanies of beauty," makes on the other hand some severe remarks on the present somnolence of the Church and the imperfections of its preachers. He says:—

"Although I am by no means a regular church-goer, I have assisted at many exhibitions of gross incompetence, where the ear has been wounded by groping and impossible intervals, where the meaning of the beautiful words recited has been murderously maligned or totally obscured, where a man with no more intelligence for elocution than a goat, and no more voice than a raven, and no more apparent reverence than a coster displays in the hawking of his wares, has literally grated on every nerve of mind and body. The general run of church elocution is poor indeed, but when it grows ambitious and attempts, without voice, practice, or instruction, to wed itself to music it is often a burlesque, and if it were not for the sacred associations which protect it even whilst they are degraded by it would be most deservedly hissed for the insolent incompetence it truly is. The spirit of worship itself cannot sanctify so absurd a travesty of Art. A clergyman should study the business of voice-production. We do not ask for histrionics in the pulpit, or expect that every cleric should have the voice and style of Mr. Lewis Waller; but no man should be allowed to read the Lessons or the Litanies until he has secured a pass from a competent Board of Examiners, and the unqualified person who attempts to intone the service should be sternly and immediately inhibited by his Bishop.

"Then everybody knows that no church stands empty which boasts a really competent preacher. The Church has had orators of every kind—the logical, the emotional, the convincing, the hortatory. It has even had its humorists. No one of these with a real message to mankind and a real power in its delivery has ever wanted hearers. But it needs no courage to declare that the average sermon is a sore infliction to the man of average thought and culture. It has no pretence to any flavour of literature or learning. It is hatched without any heat of thought and delivered without

unction. It reveals no spiritual experience, and it touches none of the salient facts of active life. It is, in short, a boredom complete and unadorned. And you have but to figure to yourself for an instant the functions and the possibilities of the true preacher to see how horribly ill the Church provides for us in this respect. Unless a man does veritably believe in the deep core and soul of him that he has a message to deliver to a sinful mankind which is in real danger of eternal loss he has no business in the pulpit. The Creed of the Church is that Christ died that men believing upon Him should enter into life everlasting, and that a second death awaits the impenitent and the spiritual sloven who wastes his spiritual estate. And with such a motive and a cue for passion as man never had elsewhere in the world, the common sermonist speaks like John-a-Dreams, unpregnant of any earthly or heavenly cause, not talking like a dying man to dying men, but like a highly respectable automaton to a set of highly respectable automata. Bleat, bleat, bleat, on thy spirit wastes, O Sunday curate, and I would that my tongue could utter the thoughts that arise in me. On second thoughts I wish nothing of the kind. Bleat, my poor friend, and earn a part of your most exiguous income. Me, at least, you shall not bleat at. Why should I deliberately import a fruitless anger into my too-rare devotions?"

Correspondence.

VIVISECTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Mr. C. M. Mallet asserts that the yearly death-rate is not lower since vivisection has been practised. He also says that tuberculosis is on the increase. Both statements are the reverse of the truth. There has been a great and gradual reduction in the annual death-rate during the last century, and there has been a most remarkable diminution in the death-rate from tuberculosis, the terribly-destructive disease which so frequently manifests itself as pulmonary consumption. It is a pity that anti-vivisectionists, in their excessive zeal, should allow themselves to resort to gross inaccuracies, which may easily cause intelligent readers to attach little credence to other statements which may, after all, be perfectly true.

Some anti-vivisectionists also do harm to their cause by the superficial or child-like manner in which they deal with the moral problem. The assumptions on which they rely and which they expect us to accept as self-evident truisms, would logically lead to conclusions as mischievous as those that follow from the "pathetic exaggerations" of the Sermon on the Mount.

The appeal to kindly feelings and to fairly-stated facts will be more effective in the long-run than the appeal to false facts and exaggerated ideals of morality.

W. P. BALL.

"Blasphemy" in Berlin.

A CHARACTERISTIC blasphemy prosecution has just taken place at Berlin. In No. 39 of *Lustige Blätter*, 1902, afterwards confiscated, appeared some illustrated verses by Dr. Presber dealing with an episode in the life of David as set forth in the first chapter of the first Book of Kings: "Now King David was old and stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he got no heat," etc. This poem, together with the pictures (for which the Doctor was not responsible) constitutes the crime for which Dr. Presber has been prosecuted. He contended that he had no immoral purpose in writing the poem, and referred to his long and active literary career. The fact that the aged King David, feeling his growing weakness, allowed his son to succeed him upon the throne was used to illustrate the contention that those who are dominated by women should cease to rule over men. He had not treated the matter lightly in order to throw contempt upon the Bible. Dr. Ludwig Fulda confirmed this, and stated that Dr. Presber had an honorable reputation in literary circles. Certainly nothing was farther from his thoughts than to write anything immoral. He saw nothing morally objectionable in the poem. Sexual matters had their comic, as well as their tragic, side; and this was everywhere recognised among writers. The Attorney-General maintained that as matter had been taken from the Bible and treated with irreverence, the defendant had incurred a penalty of 300 marks. The Court, however, acquitted defendant and allowed costs.

—*Menschenhum*.

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, C. Cohen, "Ancient Heresy and Modern Science: An Evening with Lucretius."

CAMBERWELL SECULAR HALL (61 New Church Road, Camberwell): 7.30, Conversazione.

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road): 7. Keir Hardie, M.P., "A Standard of Conduct."

STREATHAM AND BRIXTON ETHICAL INSTITUTE (Carlton Hall, Tun-stall-road, Brixton): 7, G. F. Green, "Some Cruelties of Civilisation."

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall, High-street): 11.15, F. J. Gould, "The Ethics of the Novel."

COUNTRY.

CHATHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Queen's-road, New Brompton): 7.15, Rev. C. Lloyd Engstrom, M.A. (Boyle Lecturer, 1887-8-9), "Christ and Science."

GLASGOW (110 Brunswick-street): 12, Class. Open Discussion, "Individualism." 6.30, Concert of Instrumental Music; admission, 6d.

EDINBURGH SECULAR SOCIETY (Temperance Hall, 84 Leith-street): 6.30, Presidential address on "Ingersoll." Music from 6.15.

LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, A. V. Grayson, "Religion and Human Progress."

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, J. Mayoh, "The Food Supply."

NEWCASTLE DEBATING SOCIETY (Lockhart's Cathedral Café): Thursday, February 5, at 8, R. Mitchell, "The God Idea."

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 3, H. Percy Ward, "Morality Without Theology"; 7, "How Christians have Loved their Enemies." Tea at 5.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Victoria Hall, Fowler-street): 6, Committee Meeting; 7, James Reid, "Nietzsche and Christianity."

LECTURER'S ENGAGEMENTS.

H. PERCY WARD, 15 George-street, Great Driffield.—February 1, Sheffield.

WANTED.

GENERAL SERVANT, about 20. Only two in family; no washing; each Sunday and two week evenings free; comfortable home; suburbs.—Apply Office of this Paper.

CRIMES OF CHRISTIANITY.

By G. W. Foote & J. M. Wheeler.

Hundreds of References given to Standard Authorities. A complete, trustworthy, unanswerable Indictment of Christianity.

224 pages, cloth, 2s. 6d.

The Freethought Publishing Co. Ltd., London.

Pamphlets by C. COHEN.

An Outline of Evolutionary Ethics - 6d.

Foreign Missions: Their Dangers and Delusions. Full of Facts and Figures. A Complete Exposure of the Missionary Movement - 9d.

What is the Use of Prayer - 2d.

Evolution and Christianity - 2d.

Pain and Providence - 1d.

The Decay of Belief - 1d.

IS IMMORTALITY A FACT?

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION

OF THE THEORY OF

A SOUL AND A FUTURE LIFE.

By CHARLES WATTS.

PRICE FOURPENCE.

The Freethought Publishing Co., Ltd., 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

HELP!

Yourselves by securing a Splendid Bargain.
Me to Clear my Winter Stock.
The Tailors who are waiting for a job.

Stocktaking reveals the fact that I have a large quantity of Odd Lengths in SUITINGS which must be cleared before the Spring Season commences. I am prepared to sell even if I get only cost price. Tailors will do the making-up during the slack season at 25 per cent. less than during the summer months. Then if you are not a howling swell who must have the very latest design and coloring, but only an ordinary level-headed chap who wants something plain, smart, and lasting, if you buy NOW I can make it possible for you to save £1 in one suit, and I guarantee perfect satisfaction in every case.

MATERIALS. My stock consists of—(All pure wool) Black and Navy Twill Serges; Black and Navy Vicuna Cloth; Black and Navy Worsted Coatings; Grey and Brown Worsted Coatings; Brown, Grey, and Fawn Scotch Tweeds; Brown, Grey, and Fawn English Tweeds.

PRICE—

Lounge Suit to Measure, **27/6**

Many of these are worth fully 50/-.

FILL IN THESE MEASUREMENTS:

Length of Coat at back
Length from centre of back to end of sleeve
Round chest over vest
Round waist over vest
Round top of trousers
Length inside leg of trousers
Full length of trousers
State your height and weight

These measurements, carefully taken, will enable me to give you a perfect fit.

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

THE BEST BOOK

ON NEO-MALTHUSIANISM IS, I BELIEVE,

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

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

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

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

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

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

Orders should be sent to the author,

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

THE SAFEST AND MOST EFFECTUAL CURE FOR INFLAMMATION OF THE EYES.

Thwaites' Celandine Lotion.

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

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

G. THWAITES, HERBALIST, 2 CHURCH-ROW, STOCKTON-ON-TEES.

6d.

NOW READY.

6d.

THE SECULAR ANNUAL

(FORMERLY THE "SECULAR ALMANACK")

FOR 1903.

CONTENTS.

THE ORACLES OF GOD	G. W. Foote	CHRIST'S PROMISE OF ETERNAL LIFE .	<i>Abracadabra</i>
SHAKESPEARE THE SEMPITERNAL	<i>Chilperic</i>	GODLY GUILF	G. L. Mackenzie
"THE STORY OF MY HEART"	C. Cohen	HUMBOLDT'S CHAMELEON	F. J. Gould
THE AIM OF EDUCATION	Mary Lovell	A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH	N.B.
MATTHEW ARNOLD	<i>Minnermus</i>	SECULAR AND FREETHOUGHT BODIES AT HOME AND ABROAD	

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

THE BOOK OF GOD

IN THE LIGHT OF THE HIGHER CRITICISM.

CHIEFLY IN REPLY TO DEAN FARRAR.

By G. W. FOOTE.

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

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

Bound in Stout Paper Covers 1/-
Bound in Good Cloth 2/-

THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY, LTD.,
2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

New and Cheaper Editions

OF WORKS BY

COLONEL INGERSOLL.

What Must We Do To Be Saved ?	2d.
Defence of Freethought	4d.
<i>Five Hours' Address to the Jury at the Trial for Blasphemy of C. B. Reynolds.</i>	
Why Am I an Agnostic ?	2d.
What Is Religion ?	2d.
<i>HIS LAST LECTURE.</i>	
Take a Road of Your Own	1d.

THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY, LTD.,
2, Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

FLOWERS OF

FREETHOUGHT.

By G. W. FOOTE.

First Series, cloth 2s. 6d.
Second Series, cloth 2s. 6d.

Contains scores of entertaining and informing Essays and Articles on a great variety of Freethought topics.
The Freethought Publishing Co., Ltd., London,

READY VERY SHORTLY.

A NEW ISSUE OF

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY EDITION

OF

THE AGE OF REASON

BY

THOMAS PAINE.

Issued by the Secular Society, Limited.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY, LTD.,
2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

A Grand Purchase on Easy Terms !

THE "DRESDEN" EDITION OF
Colonel Ingersoll's Works

IN

TWELVE HANDSOME VOLUMES,

Beautifully Printed and elegantly Bound, with numerous Photogravures, Etchings, etc.; the literary matter covering more than 7,000 pages, and most of the contents being new to English readers;

Is offered on the

MONTHLY PAYMENT SYSTEM.

This Edition is sold for \$30 (about £8) in America, but by special arrangement the FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY is able to supply it in this country for

£5 10s., or cash £5,

Payable in Monthly Instalments of 10s.

The whole twelve Volumes will be forwarded, Carriage Paid, on receipt of the first instalment of 10s.

Write for Prospectus.

All communications to be addressed to
THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY, LTD.,
2 NEWCASTLE-STREET, FARRINGDON-STREET, LONDON, E.C.

Spiritualism and Secularism.

WHICH IS THE BETTER SYSTEM ?

A Written Debate between

MR. WILL PHILLIPS AND MR. PERCY WARD
(Editor, "The Two Worlds") (Secular Lecturer)

PRICE TWOPENCE.

The Freethought Publishing Co., Ltd., 2 Newcastle-street
Farringdon-street, E.C.

THE PIONEER.

A POPULAR PROPAGANDIST ORGAN.

Has won Golden Opinions from all sorts of People except Bigots and Scoundrels.

THE FEBRUARY NUMBER is in the Press and will be ready for sale on Saturday, January 31. A SPECIALLY GOOD NUMBER

PRICE ONE PENNY.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 2 NEWCASTLE STREET, FARRINGDON, STREET, LONDON, E.C.

FRESH FROM AMERICA.

(1) FACTS WORTH KNOWING.

A Handsome Pamphlet of Eighty Pages, containing valuable matter from the pens of leading American Freethinkers, including COLONEL INGERSOLL, L. K. WASHBURNE, H. O. PENTECOST, LOUIS MUELLER, and J. E. ROBERTS (Church of This World). Sent over for free distribution in this Country. A slight charge made to cover expenses. ONE SHILLING PER 100 COPIES; carriage Sixpence extra in London, One Shilling extra in the Provinces. Special Terms to N.S.S. Branches and other Societies.

(2) INGERSOLL GEMS.

(1) LIFE.

A beautiful Prose Poem, with a fine Portrait of Ingersoll and his infant Granddaughter.

(2) THE CREED OF SCIENCE.

A Summary of Ingersoll's Philosophy.

(3) THE DECLARATION OF THE FREE.

Ingersoll's noble Freethought Poem.

All three exquisitely printed on Cardboard for Framing, with beautiful lithographed border and mottoes, and a facsimile of Ingersoll's signature.

Price Sixpence each. Postage One Penny each.

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

NEW PUBLICATIONS BY G. W. FOOTE.

(1) DROPPING THE DEVIL:

AND OTHER FREE CHURCH PERFORMANCES.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

(2) THE PASSING OF JESUS.

THE LAST ADVENTURES OF THE FIRST MESSIAH.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

(3) WHAT IS AGNOSTICISM?

With Observations on Huxley, Bradlaugh, and Ingersoll, and a Reply to George Jacob Holyoake; also a Defence of Atheism.

PRICE THREEPENCE.

(4) THE MOTHER OF GOD.

(In the Press.)

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

Printed and Published by THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING CO., Limited, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, E.C.