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*Religion, when it can no longer burn us alive, comes to us begging.*—HEINE.

## Sir George Stokes.

SIR GEORGE GABRIEL STOKES died on Sunday after a few days' illness. As he was born in 1819 he enjoyed a pretty long life. Even his relatives and friends can hardly feel any bitter grief at his "emigrating"—for that is how the Christians consider it—at the age of eighty-four. Besides, he was a fairly successful man, his lines were cast in rather pleasant places, and we imagine he had very little cause of complaint of any kind against dame Fortune.

As one of the foremost mathematicians of the day, it was natural that Sir George Stokes should be made the most of by the champions of Christianity; for he professed their faith, and even went to the length of defending it. The *Times* does not forget to say that "no account of his life would be complete without a reference to its religious side. To many he was one of the prominent instances of the possibility of combining scientific research with the maintenance of Christian convictions." And then the dear old *Times*—the "bloody old *Times*" William Cobbett used to call it—dragged in head over heels "his famous predecessor, Sir Isaac Newton."

When will "respectable" journals cease pandering to the ignorant credulity of the religious world? Probably when it ceases to pay. But how, in the meantime, some of the literary panders must laugh to themselves as they tickle the fatuous bigotry of their clients. Some of them, at least, know very well that a man may be great in one direction and a perfect fool in another; and that a great specialist is often the easiest person in the world to be taken in "off his own beat." But they know that the world at large has no appreciation of this fact; and so they roll off a list of eminent men of science who have also been professed Christians, and they rejoice when the delighted superstitionists purr like well-stroked cats.

Sir Isaac Newton was a very great scientist, but he wrote the greatest trash in the world about the Bible; and the proof of it is that the Christian apologists who boast of him take precious good care never to say too much about his religious writings. Faraday belonged all his life to one of the paltriest little Christian sects; and he did so, on his own confession, because it was a fatal thing to let reason play upon the dogmas of faith. I could run over a long roll of such writings, but these must suffice. Besides, I want to get on the track of Sir George Stokes; and I am prepared to say that he talked any amount of trash on the subject of religion. It is almost enough to state that he was a friend of the Christian Evidence Society. But I will go beyond that. I have read his religious writings, I have heard him speak on religious subjects, and I know what I am talking about; which is a great deal more, I suspect, than can be said of the scribes who were responsible for his "obituaries" in the newspapers.

Sir George Stokes delivered a lecture a good many years ago at the Finsbury Polytechnic on

the Immortality of the Soul. It was published in pamphlet form under the title of "I." He might as well have called it "All my I." He began by speaking like a scientist, but he soon gave that up and let his audience see that it was no use trusting to science in the matter. He told them that the "body and soul" theory was "open to very grave objections," and that the real truth on the subject must be learnt from Scripture. All the rest of the lecture was simple Bible exegesis—at which any Methodist minister is as good a hand *per se* as the President of the Royal Society. Why on earth should anybody go to a mathematician, a physicist, a chemist, or a biologist, to tell him what the Bible teaches? Cannot he read the Bible for himself? And if he is puzzled, as is very likely, why not ask assistance from a specialist in that line? There is the Roman Catholic Church, for instance, which actually professes to be inspired by God to help people out of such difficulties.

A more important publication of Sir George Stokes's, at least from the point of view of size, was the course of "Gifford Lectures" he delivered at Edinburgh in 1891. He chose the title of "Natural Theology." But the gist of his lectures was that there was nothing natural about Theology at all. His book was the very weakest issued by the Gifford Trustees. He did not seem to understand the scope of the theory of Evolution, and where he caught glimpses of it he tried to set up a middle way between Evolution and Design. Where he was positive was in his *dislike* of Evolution. He felt its danger instinctively. He preferred to follow Paley and talk about the wonders of the human eye. But he could not help giving himself away, for he was by no means a subtle apologist. He admitted that the eye, "regarded as a mere optical instrument destined to throw an image on a screen is subject to some minor imperfections which may be corrected in the work of the optician." It did not occur to him how exquisitely funny was the idea of an optician sitting down to correct some minor imperfections in the work of Omniscience.

What he had to say on the subject of Free Will was really pitiable. The wonder is that a metaphysical Scotch audience heard him without roars of laughter. He thought he was saying something to the purpose when he stated that he had "the option" of moving his hand to the left or the right. Of course he had that *option* while he had two hands and neither of them was tied up or paralysed. He did not see that the real question at issue is, What determines the option? Is it a whim, a caprice, a thing uncaused and therefore incalculable? Or is it something as natural and necessary as the fall of a stone or the motion of a plant, and as calculable as as anything else as far as we know its conditions? The word "option" simply expresses the fact that several ways are *open*. Four cross roads are all open, but a man goes down one instead of the others from a *motive*; and that motive is an integral part of all *his* past, of all the past of all his *kind*, and indeed of all the past of the whole *universe*. A great mathematician did not see this! And he was invited to deliver a course of Gifford Lectures! It was really enough to make Lord Gifford turn in his grave.

G. W. FOOTE



## Literature and the Bible.

It is only natural that a great deal of praise should be showered upon the Bible. It is the official foundation of the current religion of nearly the whole of Europe, to say nothing of other parts of the world, and an enormous number of men and women are committed by interest and custom to its support. Moreover, it is a perfectly *safe* book to praise, in a Christian country. Anyone who speaks of its literary beauty and moral value is fairly sure to have the sympathies of the majority of his hearers, and the rendering of common platitudes is about all that most people understand by criticism. It is, too, fairly safe to assert that a large number of those who talk glibly about the literary beauties of the Bible would find themselves at a loss if called upon to indicate their whereabouts. Not that these are not to be found. They *are* there, and bearing all things in mind, it would be wonderful were they absent, but they are not always there for those who assert their presence. Once in a spirit of curiosity I did ask someone, on the platform, to tell me what parts of the Bible he had in mind. He referred me to the Ten Commandments!

The other day Miss Corelli was lecturing near Manchester on "Literature," a report of the address appearing in the *Cheshire Echo*. To say that Miss Corelli lectured on literature is to say that she had a great deal to say about critics. She pointed out that these gentlemen had condemned many a great writer, and, although it was not said, it was evidently assumed, that as some critics—not all, we are sorry to say—had condemned Miss Corelli's literary performances, she was therefore elevated to the rank of Shelley, Tennyson, Carlyle, and Ruskin. It is, of course, regrettable that all should not immediately have recognised the greatness of everything that Byron, and Scott, and Keats wrote, although in justice it must be said that many critics *did* appreciate the work of these men, and that even critics may be permitted the luxury of a mistake. Moreover, let it also be said that some of the ill words said of some of our great writers was due to the influence of the general public to which Miss Corelli appeals—we had almost said panders. The verdict on writers is too often directed by the policy of a paper, and this in turn is controlled by sales. A new and unconventional writer is, therefore, often damned, not because the critic is personally wishful to condemn him, but chiefly because the stupid conservatism of the general public will not submit to new, unconventional, or heretical views being thrust upon it.

But this by the way. Miss Corelli, in the course of her address, took occasion to refer to the Bible. Needless to say, she praised it. The authoress of *The Master Christian* could hardly do less. "The Bible," she declared, "was the grandest literature extant, and all our greatest authors have drawn deep draughts of inspiration from that sacred fount." The reporter, in his description of the speech, goes one better, and credits her with saying that "*All literature owed its inspiration to the Bible*"—a rendering which throws a strong sidelight upon the calibre of some of her hearers. However, we are content to take the more rational version of the two, and see what it is worth; particularly as pretty much the same expression was used the other day by the Rev. Guinness Rogers.

Now what, precisely, is meant by the praise of the Bible as literature? That the authorised version contains much fine writing no one denies who has any ear at all for directness and grace of expression. That it is valuable in either English or Hebrew, so far as it helps to realise the intellectual condition of our remote ancestors, no student of historic development will deny either. And, if either or both of these things were meant by the majority of those who praise the Bible, I do not think that anyone would find cause for quarrel. But the truth is, that they really mean something quite different, and their

hearers understand something quite different. Their praise of the Bible involves, and is meant to involve, the assertion that the literary excellence of the Bible is due to its character as a *religious* book, as a divine inspiration; and the statement that great writers have "drawn deep draughts of inspiration" from its pages also carries with it the belief that this, too, is due to its being the Christian Bible. Neither of these positions will stand critical examination, the truth being that both the literary excellence of the Bible, and its influence on writers and others, are due to purely accidental and extraneous circumstances, and not to its intrinsic merits.

Let us take, first of all, its literary excellence. When Mr. Wilson Barrett produced that absurdity, *The Daughters of Babylon*, his character's "Thee'd" and "Thou'd" each other in the style of our English Bible, and doubtless both Mr. Barrett and those who listened were under the impression that he was reproducing the style in which the ancient Jews commonly conversed. But, as every student of literature is aware, the language of the Bible is not that of Chaldea, or Babylon, or Egypt, or Judea, or even of Rome or Greece, but the language of Elizabethan England.\* The Bible had the good fortune to be translated at a time when the English language was, in all probability, at its best as a vehicle of literary expression. With language, as with human beings, it seems as though age serves to bring about a stiffness and slowness that robs the one of its grace as it deprives the other of a certain ease of locomotion. As Mr. Saintsbury puts it:—

"The fact (the literary beauty of the Bible) is less mysterious after a little examination.....The translators had.....matter of very high literary value in their originals. In the second place, they had, in the Septuagint and in the Vulgate, versions also of no small literary value to help them. In the third place, they had in the earlier English versions excellent quarries of suitable English terms.....They had (also) in the air around them an English purged of archaisms and uncouthnesses, fully adapted to every literary purpose, and yet still racy of the soil, and free from that burden of hackneyed and outworn literary platitudes and commonplaces with which centuries of voluminous literary production have vitiated and loaded the English of our day. They were not afraid of Latinising, but they had an ample stock of the pure vernacular to draw on.†

This does not by any means overstate the case, yet it serves as a complete explanation of the literary quality of the English Bible. Anyone at all conversant with Elizabethan literature knows that the qualities for which the Bible is admired are also to be found in the best writers of the period. Had the Bible been translated for the first time at any other time there would have been a corresponding difference in its literary flavor, although not, perhaps, in the talk concerning it. It is fair to assume that were a correct and literal translation of the Bible made into twentieth-century English, while there would still be retained the imagery which is a common feature of all Eastern writings, it would prove attractive to none but students of folklore and historians. It is for this reason that the attempts to put the Bible into the vernacular are so strenuously resisted. The "Twentieth Century New Testament" is quite as faithful to the original as the authorised version, and yet one finds people resisting the rendering on the grounds of "tampering with God's Word," as though the ancient Jews and God Almighty both spoke the language of Shakespeare.

As it is, the literary quality of the English Bible is quite as accidental as its influence. In admiring it we are really admiring the language of Shakespeare, Sidney, and Raleigh. Even the use of archaic terms lends to the Bible a dignity it would not otherwise possess. "Thou art a fool" sounds a *little* dignified; it suggests a "grave and reverend seigneur" lecturing a youngster. "You're a fool" is undoubtedly vulgar, and

\* Hardly that even, as a matter of fact, as the Bible contains a great many English words that were already obsolete at the date when the translation was made.

† *History of Elizabethan Literature*, pp. 215-16.



yet it is the twentieth-century equivalent of the sixteenth-century expression.

It may be granted, then, that our great modern English writers have admired the English Bible. They have done so as they have admired other pieces of classical English writing. It may be admitted, too, that Shakespeare used the Bible, used it as he did any other piece of writing that came in his way, although it must be remembered that much of Shakespeare's work was written by the time the Authorised Version was in general circulation. To suggest, however, that he drank "deep draughts of inspiration" from it is downright absurd. He, at least, did not need it for grace of expression. That was his already, as one of the men who were *making* the language in which it was translated. To suggest that he got the plots of his plays from the Bible is sheer lunacy; he was far more indebted to Boccaccio. Nor could he have obtained his rare power of psychological analysis from this source. That would be like sending Spencer to study at a penny reading. Later writers *have* used the Bible, but for exactly the same reason that they have used Shakespeare himself, although their training and education has often induced them to give a different reason.

A word on the general influence of the Bible, which has been quite as accidental as its literary dress. Readers of Green's *Short History* will remember the chapter on "Puritan England," in which he dwells at length on the influence of the Bible on the English people, in which he has been followed—as he was preceded—by hosts of others. Without actually saying as much, Green implies that there was something in the nature of the Bible that made the English people "a people of a book," and scores of recent utterances might be cited to the effect that it was the superiority of the Bible above all other books that led to the great use made of it in the seventeenth century. In Green's case the implied assumption is the more remarkable, as he had not failed to notice the real causes that led to the popularity of the Bible—causes that, under precisely similar circumstances, would have led to the popularity of the Koran or the Puranas.

The Bible, it is true, became in the seventeenth century largely the book of the people. Occurring to-day, such a phenomenon would quite warrant the assumption that some excellence—literary or other—in the book was responsible for the choice. For to-day it would mean that the Bible was selected from amid a host of competitors. But the seventeenth century provided no such competition. As Green himself points out, the Bible—

"formed the whole literature which was practically accessible to ordinary Englishmen; and when we recall the number of common phrases which we owe to great authors, the bits of Shakespeare, or Milton, or Dickens, or Thackeray, which unconsciously weave themselves in our ordinary talk, we shall better understand the strange mosaic of Biblical words and phrases which colored English talk two hundred years ago. The mass of picturesque allusion and illustration which we borrow from a thousand books our fathers were forced to borrow from one."

Here, then, is the real key to the secret of the influence of the Bible. People read the Bible for the simple reason that there was little opportunity for reading aught else. The book had no competitors; and while a large and accessible literature would not, in all probability, have prevented the Bible being used for its newly acquired literary quality, it would certainly have prevented it playing the part it did. The truth of this is seen in the fact that a growing literature *has* actually usurped the place in popular phraseology that the Bible once enjoyed. And added to this practical monopoly of the Bible we have to remember that attention had been directed to the book by the theological quarrels of the Reformation period, and that it was to the interests of a large and growing body of clergy that the people should be fairly familiar with its contents.

Everything thus combined to give the Bible, in English, a place as literature, and an influence

generally, that it cannot claim as the result of intrinsic merit. A perfectly literal translation into the vernacular would show it to be little, if at all superior, to any of the other "sacred" Eastern writings. It is too often forgotten when comparing the Koran with the Bible, that we are comparing eighteenth century English with Elizabethan. The larger portion of the literary beauty and influence of the Bible has been due to artificial conditions and accidental circumstances. And in spite of all it can hardly be said that the Bible has held its own. Shakespeare has conquered a place wherever literature is studied and appreciated. And this in spite of many obstacles which religion has thrown in his way. The Bible in spite of the laudations of thousands of paid supporters and numerous agencies for its distribution has lost ground. And one may safely assert that the *human* interest of the former will long outlive the *religious* interest of the latter.

C. COHEN.

### The Bishop of Worcester on the Gospels.

DR. GORE has recently been discoursing on the historicity of the Gospels, and his addresses, reported at great length in the religious press in December last, though of no value as science, are, nevertheless, interesting as showing how a bishop reasons.

It goes without saying that the Bishop makes great use of the Roman tradition. Without it, of course, the Anglican clergy are helpless. But what Newman says about the traditions of the Pharisee is true also of the traditions of the Church. They speak for themselves, they bear witness to themselves, they are their own evidence, and, as might have been expected, they are not trustworthy—they are mere frauds; they have come, indeed, down the stream of time, but that is no recommendation, it only puts the fraud up higher; it may make it venerable, it cannot make it true. Yet it is remarkable how positive the Church has been in its maintenance of these lies. It is irritated—nay, maddened—at hearing them denounced, rises up fiercely against their denouncers, and thinks it did God service in putting them to death when it had the power. It is plain, then, as Newman adds, that a popular feeling is not necessarily logical because it is strong.

The Bishop is reported thus: If Christ could have been what Christians claimed him, believed him to have been; if he really came to do that work of redemption, then certainly these miracles were a part—he ventured to say, an essential part—of that redemptive work.

Yea, verily, if the Church's teaching concerning Christ be true, there can be no doubt that the miracles, including the Virgin birth and the Resurrection, really happened. But something more than the word of the Church is required to prove that the Gospel narratives are true, and that something more, viz., evidence, is not forthcoming. It is idle saying that the Gospels must be approached in an open mind. The Rationalist has quite as much "will to believe" the Christian miracles as Dr. Gore has to believe the miracle-stories of religions other than his own. What is required is, not an open mind, but a mind which already accepts Christ the miracle worker as a real person. That is to say, the whole question must be begged from the start!

Dr. Gore tells us that the death of Christ may be dated about 29 or 30 of the Christian era. But why should he take this for granted? Irenæus says Christ was 50 years old when he died; and the story goes that Irenæus was the first to quote the four Gospels. Does Dr. Gore follow Harnack in impugning Irenæus? If so, he would do well to remember that the Gospels themselves are shown to be untrustworthy by precisely the same method and arguments that Harnack uses in dealing with the Pffasian Fragments. For example, no historian of the first century mentions either Christ or Paul. This is a



fact which has not only led to interpolations in Josephus, Tacitus, and other early writings, but, later, the forgeries being no longer defensible, has induced Pascal, Newman, and other to argue that the silence of contemporary writers does not tell against Christianity!

As regards the Apostle to the Gentiles, Dr. Gore appears to agree with Professor Sanday, who thinks there can be no doubt about St. Paul or about the time of St. Paul. The Bishop says Paul visited Corinth about 50 A.D., and died about 65 or 70 A.D., but he gives us no reason for accepting these dates. The truth is that, as Rev. Edwin Hatch, D.D., shows, in vol. ix. of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, we have no means of knowing when Paul was born, or how long he lived, or at what dates the several events of his life took place. Almost every writer, whether apologetic or sceptical, has some new hypothesis respecting Paul's history. And one theory is just as good, or bad, as another. There is only one passage in the so-called "genuine" epistles that will serve as a time-mark, viz., 2 Corinthians, xi., 32, in which Paul tells us of his escape from Damascus "under Aretas the King." If this be not an interpolation it would serve also to connect Paul with Jeschu ben-Pandera. *The Sepher Toldoth Jeschu* may, of course, be almost as fabulous as the Gospels, though it is noticeable that so orthodox a writer as Rev. S. Baring Gould sees no reason to doubt that there really lived such a person as Jeschu ben-Pandera, disciple of the Rabbi Jehoshua ben-Perachia; that he escaped from Alexander Jannæus with his master into Egypt, where he learnt magic; that he returned; and that he was stoned to death for having practised magic. The story used by Celsus against the Christians in the second century seems, anyway, to have been current in pre-Christian times; and it is certainly remarkable that Paul should speak of his escape from Damascus under a king who could not have reigned later than some ninety years or so B.C. With this passage staring him in the face, however, Professor Sanday makes the assertion, and Dr. Gore endorses it, that "there can be no doubt about St. Paul or about the time of St. Paul"! (*Vide* Professor Sanday's paper on "Miracles," read at the Church Congress of 1902.) Christian tradition represents Paul as visiting Athens, Corinth, Rome, and other places, bearding Pagan philosophers in their strongholds; but neither Professor Sanday nor Dr. Gore explains how it is that no contemporary writer mentions either Paul, the preacher, or Christ, the preached. Is it that no explanation is possible in view of the facts that it was a brilliant literary age, and that more than one writer of the first century set himself the task of recording the remarkable men and events of the time?

The Bishop of Worcester's proof of the historicity of the Gospels is as follows:—

Eusebius says that  
Papias says that  
Mark says that  
Peter says that

Christ said and did what is related in Mark's Gospel! Mark never saw Christ, but he attached himself to Peter. And everywhere that Peter went St. Mark was sure to go. Nothing was written for forty years or so. But in those days Christ's followers had wonderfully good memories; they remembered everything that Christ said and did. And so, when Mark, as Peter's interpreter, produced his Gospel while many who had seen and heard Christ were still alive, they were able to contradict Mark, as they would have done, if he had made any mistakes!

In this way, the Bishop tells us, the first Gospel, Mark's, was written. Matthew and Luke had Mark's narrative before them when they wrote, and their Gospels are Mark's, with additions of their own. Matthew wrote, say, about forty-five or fifty years after Christ died, and Luke a year or two later. Such is the Bishop's account of the origin of the Synoptics,

Apparently Dr. Gore is unable to understand how anyone can doubt this pretty story, for he tells us that we have no excuse for not accepting Mark's narrative. But, even if we accept the traditional Apostolical Fathers at the traditional dates—and that is taking a good deal on shaky evidence—it is clear that we have not got Mark's Gospel. Our Gospels are merely copies, the originals having been lost no one knows when or where; and, as we shall see, they are not even true copies. Papias is represented by Eusebius as saying that Mark, as Peter's interpreter, took great care to write with great accuracy, without making any attempt to record the words and deeds of Christ in the order in which they were spoken or done, for he neither heard nor followed Christ. He wrote from memory, but made it his business not to modify or omit anything that Peter said concerning Christ. Such is the story ascribed to Papias. Now, even orthodox Professor Sanday says: "The second Gospel is written in order, it is not an original document. These two characteristics make it improbable that it is, in its present shape, the document to which Papias alludes" (*Gospels in the Second Century*). Eusebius tells us that accurate copies of Mark ended at verse 8. So that, even on the most orthodox authority, we have it that our canonical second Gospel does not represent what Mark wrote, if he ever wrote anything.

The Bishop of Worcester impugns the Higher Criticism, but he gives no reasons for accepting the early dates assigned to the Gospels by orthodox writers rather than the later dates given by the Higher critics. He talks glibly about Mark having been written forty years after Christ's death, as if there could be no doubt about it. But the simple fact is that little or nothing was known outside the Church about the Gospels before the invention of printing. The sixteenth century is the only date about which we can feel fairly sure. It was then that the *Ecclesiastical History* ascribed to Eusebius, on which so much depends, was first published; it was then that the Gospels were first brought out by Erasmus. The Gospels may have been in existence before the sixteenth century; but it would puzzle Dr. Gore to trace them back century by century from the sixteenth to the first. That is what he should do before telling us that we have no excuse for not accepting this or that Gospel.

We are told that Eusebius was Bishop of Cæsarea at the beginning of the fourth century; that Papias was Bishop of Hierapolis (150-167); and so on. But what authority have we for all this? It rests mainly on the precious *Ecclesiastical History* alleged to have been written by Eusebius Pamphili. But, on the face of it, this is very shaky evidence; for it sets out with a fabulous story of a letter written by Christ to Abgarus, King of Edessa; it shows every sign of being a compilation; and it was not known until, the Gospels having been published, the Church found it expedient to try and bolster them up with some sort of historical "evidence." Let Dr. Gore try and prove his documents backwards from the age of publication; if he succeeds it will be time enough then to talk about the historicity of the Gospels.

There can be no kind of opinion, Dr. Gore says, that the Gospel narrative could have been invented. But this is simply reckless rhetoric in view of the fact that all the stories told of Christ in the Gospels had previously been related of numerous other mythical heroes and divinities. What need had the writers of the Gospels to invent anything? They had these very ancient miracle-stories at hand for materials; and they could not make Christ a less imposing figure than any of the ancient deities. They simply had to invest him with all the attributes of his predecessors; and so they made him a miracle-worker, born of a virgin, and who, after being dead, rose again and ascended into heaven.

What Bishop Gore says about the Resurrection is somewhat puzzling. If, he is reported as saying, the external evidence was meant to be compulsory and



obligatory, our Lord should have appeared to his opponents, and confuted their unbelief; but it would have been against his whole spirit to have done so. But, even if the object of the Resurrection was not to confute unbelief, Christ, if he "rose again from the dead," certainly ought to have given his opponents a chance of seeing him. Does Dr. Gore mean that belief is optional? It certainly ought not to be compulsory, for we learn from Matthew that Christ's resurrection was doubted even by some of his disciples. "Then the eleven went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted" (Matthew xxviii. 16, 17). Now, if some of the disciples doubted, why should we believe that Christ rose from the dead? Will Dr. Gore kindly explain?

The question of the Virgin Birth does not arise, Bishop Gore tells us, until after assent has been given to St. Paul's view of the person and resurrection of Jesus. But, again, does Dr. Gore mean that we are free to accept or reject Paul's view of the person and resurrection of Christ according as we find it credible or otherwise? The Virgin Birth was not part of the apostolic testimony, the Bishop says, which was, he adds, a testimony to what they had seen and heard, beginning from the baptism of John until the Resurrection. "It thus is not included in Mark's narrative, although this does not involve that it was unknown to him." The Virgin Birth was not much talked of at first, Dr. Gore continues, for fear of scandal. But all this is special pleading. If anyone knew the facts as regards Christ's birth it was Mary, who, in Luke ii. 48, distinctly refers to Joseph as Christ's father. "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing," she is represented as saying. How does Dr. Gore explain this? Was Mary lying, with the view of deceiving the doctors in the midst of whom Christ was sitting? If not, the silence of Mark, of John, and of Paul regarding the Virgin Birth requires no explanation.

After some fatuous remarks on the "sinlessness" of Jesus, the Bishop of Worcester concluded as follows: "In these few addresses I have endeavored to bear the witness of a man who is conscious that he has done his best to give all their proper and legitimate weight to the arguments which are alleged against the truth of the Gospels." Well, if Dr. Gore has given us of his best in these addresses, it is plain that his best is of no value so far as science is concerned. Judging by what he has said, one might suppose that he is unaware of the real difficulties of belief. In that case some charitable reader might help the Bishop by sending him a copy of the *Pioneer*.

ANDREW LIDDLE.

### Mithraism and Christianity.

AT the time when this Pagan monotheism sought to establish its ascendancy in Rome, the struggle between the Mithraic Mysteries and Christianity had long begun. The propagation of the two religions had been almost contemporaneously conducted, and their diffusion had taken place under analogous conditions. Both from the Orient, they had spread because of the same general reasons—viz., the political unity and the moral anarchy of the empire. Their diffusion had been accomplished with like rapidity, and toward the close of the second century they both numbered adherents in the most distant parts of the Roman world. The sectaries of Mithra might justly lay claim to the hyperbolic utterance of Tertullian: "*Hesterni sumus et vestra omnia implevimus.*" If we consider the number of the monuments that the Persian religion has left us, one may easily ask whether in the epoch of the Severi its adepts were not more numerous than the disciples of Christ. Another point of resemblance between the two antagonistic creeds was that at the outset they drew

their proselytes chiefly from the inferior classes of society; their propaganda was at the origin essentially popular; unlike the philosophical sects, they addressed their endeavors less to cultivated minds than to the masses, and consequently appealed more to sentiment than to reason.

But by the side of these resemblances considerable differences are to be remarked in the methods of procedure of the two adversaries. The initial conquests of Christianity were favored by the Jewish diaspora, and it first spread in the countries inhabited by Israelitic colonies. It was, therefore, chiefly in the countries washed by the Mediterranean that its communities developed. They did not extend their field of action outside the cities, and their multiplication is due in great part to missions undertaken with the express purpose of "instructing the nations." The extension of Mithraism, on the other hand, was essentially a natural product of social and political factors—namely, of the importation of slaves, the transportation of troops, and the transfer of public functionaries. It was in government circles and in the army that it counted its greatest numbers of votaries—that is, in circles where very few Christians could be found because of their aversion to official Paganism. Outside of Italy it spread principally along the frontiers, and simultaneously gained a foothold in the cities and in the country. It found its strongest points of support in the Danubian provinces and in Germany, whereas Christianity made most rapid progress in Asia Minor and Syria. The spheres of the two religious powers, therefore, were not coincident, and they could accordingly long grow and develop without coming directly into conflict. It was in the valley of the Rhone, in Africa, and especially in the city of Rome, where the two competitors were most firmly established, that the rivalry, during the third century, became particularly brisk between the bands of Mithra's worshippers and the disciples of Christ.

The struggle between the two rival religions was the more stubborn as their characters were the more alike. The adepts of both formed secret conventicles, closely united, the members of which gave themselves the name of "Brothers."\* The rites which they practised offered numerous analogies. The sectaries of the Persian god, like the Christians, purified themselves by baptism; received, by a species of confirmation, the power necessary to combat the spirits of evil; and ardently expected from a Lord's Supper salvation of body and soul. Like the latter, they also held Sunday sacred, and celebrated the birth of the Sun on the 25th of December, the same day on which Christmas has always been celebrated, at least since the fourth century. They both preached a categorical system of ethics, regarded asceticism as meritorious, and counted among their principal virtues abstinence and continence, renunciation and self-control. Their concepts of the world and of the destiny of man were similar. They both admitted the existence of a Heaven inhabited by beatified ones, situate in the upper regions, and that of a hell peopled by demons, situate in the bowels of the earth. They both placed a Flood at the beginning of history; they both assigned as the source of their traditions a primitive revelation; they both, finally, believed in the immortality of the soul, in a last judgment, and in a resurrection of the dead, consequent upon a final conflagration of the universe.

We have seen that the theology of the Mysteries made of Mithra a "mediator" equivalent to the Alexandrian Logos. Like him, Christ also was a *μεσίτης*, an intermediary between his celestial Father and men, and like him he also was one of a Trinity. These resemblances were certainly not the only ones that Pagan exegesis established between the two religions, and the figure of the tauroctonus god reluctantly immolating his victim, that he might create and save the human race, was certainly com-

\* I may remark that even the expression "dearest brothers" had already been used by the sectaries of Jupiter Dolichenus (CIL, VI, 406=307,58: *fratres carissimos et conlegas hon[estissimos]*) and probably also in the Mithraic associations.



pared to the picture of the Redeemer sacrificing his own person for the salvation of the world.

On the other hand, the ecclesiastical writers, reviving a metaphor of the prophet Malachi, contrasted the "Sun of justice" with the "invincible Sun," and consented to see in the dazzling orb which illuminated men a symbol of Christ, "the light of the world." Should we be astonished if the multitudes of devotees failed always to observe the subtle distinctions of the doctors, and if, in obedience to a Pagan custom, they rendered to the radiant star of day the homage which orthodoxy reserved for God? In the fifth century not only heretics, but even faithful followers, were still wont to bow their heads towards its dazzling disc as it rose above the horizon, and to murmur the prayer, "Have mercy upon us."

The resemblances between the two hostile churches were so striking as to impress even the minds of antiquity. From the third century, the Greek philosophers were wont to draw parallels between the Persian Mysteries and Christianity which were evidently entirely in favor of the former. The Apologists also dwelt on the analogies between the two religions, and explained them as a Satanic travesty of the holiest rites of their religion. If the polemical works of the Mithraists had been preserved, we should doubtless have heard the same accusation hurled back upon their Christian adversaries.

We cannot presume to unravel to-day a question which divided contemporaries and which will doubtless for ever remain insoluble. We are too imperfectly acquainted with the dogmas and liturgies of Roman Mazdaism, as well as with the development of primitive Christianity, to say definitely what mutual influences were operative in their simultaneous evolution. But be this as it may, resemblances do not necessarily suppose an imitation. Many correspondencies between the Mithraic doctrine and the Catholic faith are explicable by their common Oriental origin. Nevertheless, certain ideas and certain ceremonies must necessarily have passed from the one cult to the other; but in the majority of cases we rather suspect this transference than clearly perceive it.

Apparently the attempt was made to discern in the legend of the Iranian hero the counterpart of the life of Jesus, and the disciples of the Magi probably drew a direct contrast between the Mithraic worship of the shepherds, the Mithraic communion and ascension, and those of the Gospels. The rock of generation, which had given birth to the genius of light, was even compared to the immovable rock, emblem of Christ, upon which the Church was founded; and the crypt in which the bull had perished was made the counterpart of that in which Christ was born at Bethlehem.\* But this strained parallelism could result in nothing but a caricature. It was a strong source of inferiority for Mazdaism that it believed in only a mythical redeemer. That unending wellspring of religious emotion supplied by the Gospel and the Passion of the God sacrificed on the cross never flowed for the disciples of Mithra.

On the other hand, the orthodox and heretical liturgies of Christianity, which gradually sprang up during the first centuries of our era, could find abundant inspiration in the Mithraic Mysteries, which of all the Pagan religions offered the most affinity with Christian institutions. We do not know whether the ritual of the sacraments and the hopes attaching to them suffered alteration through the

influence of Mazdean dogmas and practices. Perhaps the custom of invoking the Sun three times each day—at dawn, at noon, and at dusk—was reproduced in the daily prayers of the Church, and it appears certain that the commemoration of the Nativity was set for the 25th of December because it was at the winter solstice that the rebirth of the invincible god, the *Natalis Invicta*, was celebrated. In adopting this date, which was universally distinguished by sacred festivities, the ecclesiastical authority purified in some measure the profane usages which it could not suppress.

The only domain in which we can ascertain in detail the extent to which Christianity imitated Mithraism is that of art. The Mithraic sculpture, which had been first developed, furnished the ancient Christian marble-cutters with a large number of models, which they adopted or adapted. For example, they drew inspiration from the figure of Mithra causing the waters of the well of life to leap forth by the blows of his arrows, to create the figure of Moses smiting with his rod the rock of Horeb. Faithful to an inveterate tradition, they even reproduced the figures of cosmic divinities, like the Heavens and the Winds, the worship of which the new faith had expressly proscribed; and we find on the sarcophagi, in miniatures, and even on the portals of the Romance Churches, evidences of the influence exerted by the imposing compositions that adorned the sacred grottoes of Mithra.

—Prof. F. Cumont, in the "Open Court" (Chicago).

### Acid Drops.

No one can read without a feeling of positive horror the story of the Colney Hatch fire. Over fifty poor women, already in pitiable condition enough, literally cremated in less than half an hour. Yet there are people who can read the terrible story and still talk glibly about the overruling providence of God! Do such people, we wonder, ever try to realise what they mean by such an expression? For the sake of human nature, we hope not. Surely no one could ever realise that there is a God who watched the holocaust at Colney Hatch, who *could* have prevented it, but preferred to sit idle, watching his own failures burn. Savages believe that the deity has the insane under his special care. We see that he watches them frizzle, and sends a gale of wind to fan the flames. The doctors and nurses worked heroically to rescue all they could. The firemen did all they were able. Only God sat idle watching his creatures burn.

A correspondent in the *English Churchman* writes thus of the Dean of Ely and the Thirty-nine Articles. The Dean had been "hedging" in his usual fluent manner: "If the Dean had confined himself to the Bible and its teaching, instead of pleading for social evolution and adapting our religious views to fall into harmony with the same, he would have been true to his ordination vows, and would have commanded more attention and respect from his hearers. God's laws and His Word are immutable; how then can these be made to adapt themselves to mundane affairs which are ever changing? I take it this is an absurd view." So do we, but for a different reason. We remember that Dr. Stubbs once tried to graft Christ on to modern economics, which we thought equally absurd. In the opinion of the writer there are some things the Dean appears to have ignored: "That all clergymen have entered into a written contract when they were ordained, 'to obey the Thirty-nine Articles.' Before entering into so solemn an undertaking one would think that candidates would carefully and prayerfully study these Thirty-nine Articles. Instead of that it is an open question if they even read them through once with serious attention, but present themselves for ordination as carelessly as a good many persons do when they stand as godparents at a christening. In accepting the said Thirty-nine Articles, the Bible is laid down to be the sole guide and arbiter. How many of our clergy accept and act upon this, in letter and in spirit? The only course for honest men who find the Thirty-nine Articles too circumscribed is to resign." This is certainly the logical position, and we sympathise with the orthodox who are grieved to see so many black sheep in the fold.

The "hedging" parson gets it hot and strong from the gentle Mr. Andrew Lang in the current *Longman's Magazine*,

\* M. Jean Réville (*Études publiées en hommage à la faculté de théologie de Montauban*, 1901, pp. 339 et seq.) thinks that the Gospel story of the birth of Christ and the adoration of the Magi was suggested by the Mithraic legend; but he remarks that we have no proof of the supposition. See also M. A. Dieterich in a recent article (*Zeitschr. f. Neutest. Wiss.*, 1902, p. 190), in which he has endeavored, not without ingenuity, to explain the formation of the legend of the Magi kings, admits that the worship of the shepherds was introduced into Christian tradition from Mazdaism. But I must remark that the Mazdean beliefs regarding the advent of Mithra into the world have strangely varied. (Cf. *T. et M.*, t. I., pp. 160 et seq.)



As thus: "A man may speak the thing he will, unless some merely amateur defender of opposite opinions choose to knock him down. But a clergyman is another kind of man. He is under certain obligations—in honor, if not in law—to uphold, or certainly not to attack, a given set of beliefs. If he holds none of them, but still preaches them, that is between himself and his conscience. If his conscience does not tell him that he is a sneak, a humbug, a hypocrite, he will be so much the happier. If he chooses to have in one sense the courage of his opinions, and to publish ideas which leave the religion he professes with no more historical basis than the tale of Troy, nobody will interfere with him. He is quite safe. Nobody will deprive him of his bishopric. Still, his conduct is amazing to a lay mind. To that unsophisticated intellect it seems such a man has a plain course before him. He should send in his papers. After that he would be free with honor to invent any theories, however absurd, and to promulgate any mythological hypothesis, however antiquated and obsolete. How these things can be done with honor while a man wears the uniform of any Christian sect is a mystery to the laity" and to Mr. Lang.

Canon Scott Holland himself spoke in pretty plain terms about this type of parson. In *Lux Mundi* he describes him as ever "shifting his intellectual defences," as "adopting this or that fashion of philosophical apology," and then, when it is shattered by some new scientific generalisation, leaving it for a new formula. So he goes on changing his philosophical coat as often as he sees fit. The Bishop and Dean of Ripon are brilliant "quick change" artists in religion.

The Rev. Father Kelly, of the Society of the Sacred Mission, has been giving his experience of missions in South Africa. "Colonial opinion," he said, "was almost unanimously averse to missions. They had embittered the relations between whites and natives to a very serious extent." He was not at all sure that they had not created two or three of our most serious native wars. In South Africa to-day there was not merely one native question, but five at least. There was, for instance, the question of native labor in the town and on the farm, which was an extremely delicate one. What had impressed him most was the great lack of sympathy between the white and the native races. There existed an opinion, only thinly veiled, in favor of slavery, and he felt nervous as to what might come of it. He doubted whether it was possible for a white man to make a native convert. The truth does leak out sometimes."

The statistics of the London Missionary Society show that there are employed in the foreign mission field 276 European missionaries, 940 ordained native ministers, 3,474 native preachers, and 1,789 native school teachers and Bible women, making a total of 6,479 recognised workers in connection with the Society. There are 106 principal mission stations, and over 2,000 regular out-stations. In the 57 mission hospitals and dispensaries 5,269 in-patients and nearly 160,000 out-patients were treated last year. There are 1,283 Sunday-schools, and 1,832 day schools, in which upwards of 90,000 scholars receive instruction. During the year the native Christians contributed over £31,000 towards the work of the Society. And the results accruing from this vast expenditure of human energy and money—are they not written in the Book of Cohen, that "he who runs may read"?

Reliable statistics of the number of those who transfer their beliefs and adherence from one Church to another are always difficult to obtain, and are invariably regarded with suspicion. But when a positive statement is made by an ecclesiastical authority respecting lapses it may be presumed that the statement will not err on the side of exaggeration. Mr. C. Eiland, writing to the *Daily News*, says: "It may interest your readers to learn to what extent Roman Catholics are leaving their Church. Last Sunday morning I paid a visit to St. George's Cathedral, Southwark. At High Mass the preacher, the Very Rev. Canon Keatinge—as I learnt from the notice board outside—stated that no fewer than fifty-two persons, or an average of one per week, had left the Cathedral and become Protestants, whilst the converts they had made numbered only seven, a loss of forty-five persons from that one church alone." It would be interesting to learn how many persons had "left the Cathedral and become"—Freethinkers. Or, for that matter, we should like something more convincing than the bare statement of the Very Rev. Canon Keatinge that the fifty-two persons who left his church last year had done so to "become Protestants."

An Archbishop has fallen down stairs and broken his neck. If this had occurred to a Freethinker it would have been a judgment from God and a lesson to all unbelievers. As it happened to a Christian dignitary who was Archbishop

of Melitine as well as Secretary of St. Peter's, it was, of course, a mere accident and not a warning.

In Bennet Burleigh's account of our preparations for the expedition against the Mullah in Somaliland, he remarks that the "dittoes" in the lists of stores are interminable, and says: "There was a quartermaster-sergeant man from Woolwich who had contracted the ditto habit to excess. He acted as assistant to a chaplain in the field on occasions I was of. In giving out the hymn he always employed his mannerisms, saying, '363 hymn. Begins. Art thou weary? Ditto, languid? Ditto, ditto, sore distressed?'"

Lord William Nevill, who has just written a book on his five years' experience as a convict, notes that among his companions in penal servitude "there were ex-clergymen, ex-dissenting ministers, ex-doctors, ex-solicitors," etc. Atheists and Freethinkers are not mentioned in this list.

A love tragedy which has occurred in France affords an illustration of the mischief caused by religion. The Abbé Vales, rector of Scilh, near Toulouse, and a beautiful girl, a member of his flock, had fallen in love with each other, but had resolved to keep out of each other's way. They continued, however, to exchange letters, which they deposited in a secret nook known only to themselves. To end the matter the religious authorities decided that the priest should be removed to another parish. Dismayed at the thought of being separated for ever, the lovers resolved to die together. They were found in the belfry of the church, shot by a revolver. The priest, attired in his cassock, held a crucifix in his rigid left hand, and the girl, who had been brought up in a convent, still clasped a rosary. They were both highly esteemed. The priest was twenty-eight, the girl seventeen. The civil law of the country did not forbid their marriage. But religion interposed a barrier which to good Catholics was impassable, since a priest could never marry nor abandon his calling. Hence the lamentable suicide by which two young and promising lives have been ended. The tragedy shows that though religion was powerful enough to blight the happiness of its devotees, it was not powerful enough to prevent the suicides by which they escaped from its tyranny. The priest, indeed, was legally the murderer of the girl, for his hand must have fired both shots.

Thomas E. Tufnell an infant aged eighteen months, has been scalded to death at a Salvation Army Home in Woodstreet, Walthamstow. Two of the female officers of the Army prepared a bath of hot water, which proved to be so hot that the child's skin peeled off its legs, and it died from the effects of the shock. Neither of the officers tested the temperature of the water before placing the child in it. Dr. Hornes said there had been gross carelessness. The Coroner's jury censured the two Salvationists.

Some little while ago Mr. Blatchford wrote an appreciative and thoughtful article on Haeckel's *Riddle of the Universe*. He of course received a number of letters. In one of these he is asked if Bishop Gore, Dr. Clifford, and the late Dr. Martineau are not evolutionists, and the writer, a theological student, refers him with quite refreshing impertinence to the philosophic pages of *T. P.'s Weekly* for enlightenment on the subject of religion and scientific theories. We can imagine this hopeful specimen of some training college taking credit to himself for having set Mr. Blatchford on the right path. But he is woefully mistaken. Some of the correspondents are annoyed that discussion of religion should be brought into the *Clarion*. What Mr. Blatchford says on this subject is to the point, straightforward and honest:—"But I see no reason why religion should be excluded. I do not see how it can be evaded. I hold that the Christian religion is not true. I know that those who deny its truth are made to suffer for their temerity, just as Socialists are made to suffer for their's. I think that, under these circumstances, it is cowardly to hide one's opinions, and to skulk under cover, while other men are out in the open under fire. Besides, what is the good of anything that is not true? And is it many of the millions who think as we think to cloak their belief? And is it grateful to such men as Darwin and Haeckel to permit the Church to obscure the truth for which they worked so nobly? I am told that to express these convictions in the *Clarion* will give pain to many good men. I am sorry. But those good men gave pain to other good men when they declared for Socialism. I am told that the presence of a few bad men amongst the clergy does not prove the Church bad. Neither does the presence of a few good men prove it good. I am told that the Roman Catholics and the Protestants have done many good, as well as many bad, things. So have the Tory and Liberal Parties, yet we Socialists oppose them. These are side issues. There is but one question: is religion true? If



it is true, let us be convinced of its truth. If it is not true, let it perish."

The *Spectator*, criticising Mr. Mallock's book on *Religion as a Credible Doctrine*, thinks Mr. Mallock was never more flip-pant and audacious. "He professes respect for both parties (the rationalists and the faithful), treats both with cavalier indifference, and in particular seems to go out of his way not only to make game of them, but to choose for his illustrations examples and metaphors which appear deliberately and practically irreverent. Thus he compares God Almighty to a man firing a thousand shots every day into the sea, and twice in a life-time hitting the bathing machine. He insinuates that the spectacle of the starry heavens which so much impressed Kant may be looked at in a very different way, and suggested nothing so much as a wearisome Court ceremonial surrounding a king, who is unable to understand or break away from it. The rest of the passage is even more startling, and there are many passages like these and some more shocking still." Yet, as the *Spectator* agrees with Mr. Mallock's conclusions, it does not take so serious a view of that gentleman's flighty irreverence. Its severest sentence is that he is an *enfant terrible*, a naughty boy that delights in shocking serious-minded fogies like the *Spectator* reviewer.

For a sample of undiluted impertinence commend us to the parsons. A few days ago "a distressed vicar" wrote to one of the papers complaining that he had tried to obtain some addition to his income through the Pastoral Aid Society. The Society thought, we presume, that he was not in a very bad condition, so they took no notice of him. He complained through the papers and told an unsympathetic world that something ought to be done for the number of parsons whose income was under £130 per annum. But why? The members of any other profession when they are in somewhat straitened circumstances do not cry out in this indecent way. Besides these gentlemen choose their particular profession knowing that they may be always comparatively poor. There may be a large number of plums in the pudding, yet there is a limit, and any one would think that a man who had elected to follow in the footsteps of the Jewish Carpenter would even be contented with something under £130 a year and a vicarage thrown in. But the Church is a bad training for any man who wishes to preserve his self-pride.

The extent to which simony—covert, it may be, but none the less simony—prevails in the Church of England is indicated in that extremely interesting publication, *The Church Patronage Gazette*, in the January number of which appears "confidential particulars of advowsons, etc., for transfer by private treaty." The list contains no less than 138 "very desirable advowsons for sale" alone, each being described with the alluring wealth of detail with which public houses are described in the *Morning Advertiser*. For instance, a rectory in Warwickshire (net income about £420) has the advantage of being sheltered from N. and E. winds, church new and very beautiful; incumbent aged 64. Price, £2,000. Another rectory in the Midland Counties, with an income of about £970, is priced at £4,000, but it is "open to offers." "Church, a modern edifice in the Gothic style, with embattled tower containing clock and three bells." This is described as "a very important and unusually desirable property." Probably the Gothic style alone is considered worth the money. Subscribers are further informed that intending purchasers (or their solicitors) can have, free of charge, full particulars of any of these preferments; but in case of indirect applications, "the name of the clergyman for whom the benefice is required must be given, in the spirit of mutual confidence." No wonder that the publisher "trusts to the honor of all parties to keep this register strictly private!"

Twenty-seven deaths from plague have occurred at Durban. Pro-Boer Christians may imagine that their Deity is punishing the British Colonials with this visitation of his wrath. Unfortunately for this theory it is the natives and Indians who are the sufferers.

Two cases of suicide during last week further prove the assertion of Talmage that only Atheists commit suicide. At Chelsea a servant named Rose Abbott, who was found dead in bed with her throat cut, left a note on the kitchen table worded as follows: "For God's sake get Mrs. Amos [a neighbor] to come up with you to find me." And at Hartlepool another servant girl named Emily Oxley, before taking laudanum, wrote a letter to her brother, in which she advised him to "keep off drink; put your faith in Jesus." Yes; evidently both these girls were Atheists.

Charles W. H. Payne committed suicide at Battersea on Saturday, January 24, by taking prussic acid. He left

behind a remarkable letter addressed to his wife and children in the form of a diary covering his movements since December, 1895, during which period he had been in several lunatic asylums. He had, he said, suffered terrible persecution because he would not obey "a voice inside his head" which commanded him to kill his wife and children. In his diary he says: "On my refusal to accept, I have been persecuted day and night, brutally ill-used, tortured, polluted by vile visions, threatened and cursed; in fact, no savage, however evil, would torture his wretched victim as I have been." And rather than obey the "voice" he elected to commit suicide. The *Two Worlds* commenting on the above case refers to it as "A terrible case of what was undoubtedly obsession," and concludes a brief notice as follows: "We feel convinced that such awful torment could have been prevented, and the fearful cursing spirit banished, had the doctors half the knowledge possessed by Christ and the adepts of all time. The day must come when drugs will give place to the 'power of the spirit.'"!

A bishop discoursing on "The Dangers of Clericalism" should surely be edifying, if not instructive. The Bishop of Stepney lectured on the above subject at Sion College on Tuesday last, and passed a little mild—very mild—criticism upon the recrudescence of Clericalism as evidenced by the passing of the Education Act of last session. Referring to the partial revolt of Church laymen which had resulted therefrom, the Bishop said "the real cause was that these good men were conscious of a certain irritation at, and suspicion of, certain tendencies which they felt to be working amongst the English clergy, and they wanted in the plain and blundering way characteristic of a good Englishman, to remind the English clergy that they had better get rid of those causes of irritation and suspicion. There was an impression abroad among these good laymen that a large section of the clergy were devoted to the task of propagating a system which was out of touch with English life and character; that an effort was being made gradually to introduce into our churches, our schools, and our family life, a system which was at least alien, if it was not sinister, and he only paused to ask whether there was not something in the language and conduct of some of their friends at least to justify the appearance of such irritation?" "A Daniel, a very Daniel, come to judgment!"

Earl Carrington, speaking at a Liberal meeting at Warwick last week, referring to the Education Act, said he was speaking with a peeress at Derby Races, who said she was all for the Bill because it would shut the mouths for ever of "those horrible parsons, who were always begging and cadging for those dreadful schools which we have to keep up in the outlying portion of the estate, and which we are always hearing of and never see."

On the placard put forth by one of the evening papers last Saturday appeared in very large letters the words, "No Gods at the Criterion." This does not mean that the theatre is conducted on Atheistic lines. It merely means that there will be no gallery at this theatre, and hence "no gods in the gallery."

There is some agitation in the States just now over the question of whether an apostle of the Mormon Church should or should not be allowed to be elected to the Senate. Of course, there is a great cry from the Christian side about the evils of polygamy. Those who are yelling, conveniently forget that the Bible teaches polygamy both by precept and practice, and that the New Testament nowhere prohibits it. Monogamy is Christian only in the sense of it having adopted it. It was Pagan Greece and Rome that set the teaching here. Each of the Greek and Roman national heroes had but one wife; it was God's favorites who distinguished themselves by a multiplicity of the article.

A dramatic performance on Sunday, although a private one, is a step in the direction of a more rational treatment of that day. Ibsen's strange and enigmatic play, *When the Dead Awaken*, was given at the Imperial Theatre.

A petition demanding the abolition of celibacy among the priesthood has been sent to the Vatican from Sicily. Over two hundred of the priests of that island have signed it. They assert that celibacy is in reality nowhere observed in Christendom—least of all in the precincts of the Vatican itself. Such a document is a sign of the change that is taking place in the Romish Church. Another sign of this reforming tendency is that the native Catholics of the Philippine Islands are forming a National Independent Church of their own with native preachers as priests.



### To Correspondents.

- C. COHEN'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—Address, 241 High-road, Leyton.
- BIRMINGHAM.—Prince of Wales Assembly Rooms. Afternoon, "The Farce of a Christian Democracy." Evening, "Sir Oliver Lodge on Science and Faith."
- J. R.—Yes, we have seen *Reynolds's*, and are surprised, not at Mr. Watts' gross misrepresentations—we are well used to these—but that anyone should be silly enough to contradict what upon the face of it is a bare statement of facts. Mr. Watts says that the whole of the second paragraph of the resolution of the Executive is untrue. But it is not untrue that a specially-convened meeting of the Executive did remove his name from the register. Mr. Watts, or those who have written for him, admit in the next sentence that this did happen. Nor can it be untrue that the Executive saw in the charges, and in Mr. Watts' non-appearance, adequate grounds for their action. Clearly the Executive would not have removed Mr. Watts' name unless there had been very serious reasons for their so acting. Mr. Watts' talk about disproving the charges when they were first made is pure bluff. It is not written for those who know the facts, but to impose upon those who do not. The Executive never asked Mr. Watts to reply to any charges but on one occasion, and then he preferred a tardy resignation rather than face the Executive. Mr. Watts' further talk about having the charges investigated before "an impartial tribunal" is, again, bluff. Personally, we know nothing of such an offer, nor does the Executive. And even were it made, it could have no possible bearing on the action of the Executive. Mr. Watts was summoned to a special meeting in order to answer certain specific charges concerning his relation to the N. S. S., not to discuss any personal difference between himself and Mr. Foote. The raising of other points in this connection is but throwing dust in the eyes of his readers.—C. C.
- A. J. FINCKEN.—Thanks for your humorous and encouraging letter, as well as for the subscription. Glad you admired Mr. Cohen's outspokenness *re* the *Reynolds's* paragraph. You say that you and many of your friends thought us too reticent, to our own disadvantage. Perhaps you are right. One never knows. But we were deliberately reticent, in order not to make matters worse by saying more than seemed absolutely necessary. It is thirteen years since Charles Bradlaugh handed us over the President's hammer. During that time several "Freethinkers" have tried to fasten a quarrel upon us, but they never succeeded. Once, and once only, we had to strike out, and then it was imperative. And once in thirteen years hardly shows a quarrelsome disposition. After all, you know, one must get on with one's work. That is the only thing that tells in the long run. And ours is too absorbing to leave time for personalities, unless they are inevitable.
- V. PAGE (Nelson) says the friends there have their own key to judge certain matters with. He remembers, and they remember, that when Mr. Foote lectured at Nelson and lost by the visit, he never murmured, but even looked cheerful; whereas another lecturer, who is now reviling him, took the full pound of flesh in the shape of a fee, although he knew that less money had been taken at the doors, and all the local expenses remained to be met. "When Mr. Foote left us," this correspondent says, "it was with a desire to work up a good Branch; when the other lecturer left us that desire was dead."
- W. APRLEBY.—*Freethinker* was sent as usual. Must have gone astray. Another copy has been sent.
- J. BLUNDELL.—H. L. Hastings, the Yankee evangelist, and his "female eye witness" were no authorities as to the last hours of Thomas Paine. Read the chapter on Paine in our *Injidel Death-Beds*. It will be sent free from our publishing office for eightpence.
- F. GOODWIN.—We might have expected it, as you say; but on Bradlaugh's death we were willing to try the experiment of burying the past and working with all and sundry in the welfare of the movement. We know we have made mistakes in our time, but the man who never makes mistakes never makes anything.
- T. PACEY.—We wish the new Liverpool experiment all success, but it is sure to prove arduous, and we hope you are prepared to find it so.
- C. H. WREN.—You refer to the "dead set" against us, and hope all Freethinkers will support us. Well now, if anybody will take the trouble to turn to the conclusion of our reply to George Anderson's pamphlet, in January, 1903, he will see that we prophesied it in the clearest possible language. But we did not fear it then, and we do not fear it now. A coalition of pigmies tied Gulliver down to the ground, but they tied him down when he was sleeping.
- T. G. THOMAS.—You have done nobly for "Shilling Month." Would that many who can better afford it had done as much. We are glad to see that you now recognise why we pursued Mr. A. E. Fletcher so closely, and thoroughly approve our policy in the matter.
- J. JONES.—We value the good wishes of such a veteran Freethinker.
- H. SILVERSTEIN.—Yes, well on the road. Thanks.
- J. PRESTON.—Pleased to hear from an auditor at the Logan-Foote debate, and especially pleased to hear that you were particularly struck by our eulogy of Charles Bradlaugh.
- THE TURNBULL FAMILY (Glasgow) send what for people in "their station of life," as the parsons say, is a very liberal subscription to Shilling Month. They send with it a nice letter to Mr. Foote, calling themselves his "sincere friends," and he believes every word they say; for all the Glasgow Freethinkers know that if the Turnbulls are ever found speaking anything but the truth it will be time to think that the Psalmist need not have said he was in haste when he made that sweeping statement about human veracity. The friendship of such men and women is something to be proud of. How curious it is, by the way, that we have no warmer friends in any city in Great Britain than we have in Glasgow, which our enemies prophesied was to be the grave of our reputation. We have no heartier welcome anywhere, and the meetings speak for themselves.
- W. BEAN.—See acknowledgment in list, and advise us if there is any mistake. Thanks for good wishes.
- T. ROBERTSON.—*Age of Reason* is reprinting, and will be ready shortly.
- C. W. TERELL.—Paper has been sent. Thanks for good wishes for Mr. Foote's recovery. He is steadily progressing, and we hope will soon be in his usual form.
- C. S. R. (Berlin).—Thanks for your good wishes on behalf of Shilling Month, though you are too straitened to contribute yourself. You ask whether Mr. Foote has tried Sandow's or other physical exercises as a remedy for insomnia. Well, heavy physical exercise is not possible during illness. When he is well, however, he strips daily at home for really heavy exercise with clubs and dumb-bells; with a cold wash all over after thoroughly cooling down. Friends mean well in giving advice, and we are obliged to them; but we assure them that we do not exactly trifle with our health. Insomnia like ours is due to one of two things—worry or brain-fag. When a man is a little off color, travelling and lecturing (as we lecture) involve a certain risk.
- LOUIS LEVINE (Charleston).—We have handed your remittance for the *Freethinker* and the *Pioneer* to the right quarter. Glad to have readers in America, and always pleased to hear from you. Thanks for your kind and encouraging letter. We have not forgotten the little book we projected on Jesus Christ as an historical character. It will appear some day. We are scheming for more time for literary work, and hope to succeed.
- A. S. STRANGER.—We are not Christian, and it is not a matter of life and death to us what Jesus Christ taught. But, as a matter of fact, you have not lighted upon a novelty. A good many Christians, and some of them influential, like Archbishop Whately and the late Mr. Gladstone, have held that the Bible does not teach man's natural immortality, but merely a general resurrection of the dead at some unknown time, and the prolongation of the lives of the elect by a perpetual miracle. Behind all this, however, is the philosophical question, Has man a soul distinct from his bodily organisation? If he has not, or if it cannot be found, Christianity (and every other religion) goes to the dogs.
- PERCY MAIN.—This was the postmark on your envelope, but there was no note inside, and we have acknowledged your subscription—for such we suppose it—under "No Name."
- H. WALKER.—All subscriptions as to which we are given a choice are put to the General part of the Shilling Month fund. See your acknowledgment there. Copies of the *Pioneer* sent. You cannot do better than consult Giles's *Hebrew and Christian Records*.
- D. STRAUS.—Thanks for cuttings.
- O. V. BLAKE.—Sorry your letter was not inserted. We do not understand that *Reynolds's* was open to us, as you seem to think, to reply to Mr. Fletcher in. Anyhow, we were confined to a sick room just then, and could only do a little writing, and that had necessarily to be for the *Freethinker*.
- J. UMPLEBY.—Very much pleased to see your handwriting again. We hope you keep as well as can be expected at your venerable age.
- W. P. PEARBOE.—Glad you are so pleased with the *Pioneer*.
- A. WEBBER.—We assure you we don't mind. Thanks for your letter.
- M. D. CLIFTON.—Your good wishes are appreciated.
- W. P. BALL.—Accept our best thanks.
- 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.



## “Shilling Month” and Other Matters.

JUST before my illness I penned an appeal in the *Freethinker* on behalf of the new “Shilling Month.” It was to begin on January 11 (my unfortunate birthday, which I spent in bed) and was to end on February 11. During that period I invited the readers of this journal to send me a contribution of one or more shillings, according to their means and their love of the Freethought cause. One shilling would be acceptable and a million shillings would not be refused. It was quite an optional matter, with no salvation or damnation hanging to it anywhere; and that, of course, cut away at once nearly a half of the motives appealed to by Christians—nearly all the other half consisting of love of a good advertisement, and a desire to make the most of all the avenues to social distinction. I knew, therefore, that I was appealing to but one motive of absolute disinterestedness; and I did not expect a headlong rush of subscriptions; yet I did imagine that the result might be better than it has hitherto proved to be. Nevertheless, there is still time to make up a good total. I am writing this on Monday, February 2, and the present number of the *Freethinker* will be in general circulation on Thursday, February 5. Nearly a week will then remain in which the laggards and procrastinators, as well as those who had to postpone their donations, will have an opportunity of “crowding in at the death.”

Let me beg my readers to regard this matter a little seriously. I should be sorry to think that I edited a paper for Freethinkers who, for the most part, don't care a shilling whether Freethought swims or sinks. Many of them, scattered over Great Britain—to say nothing of those outside—seldom (from the very nature of the case) give anything to promote Freethought. Emancipated themselves, they do nothing towards filing off the fetters from others. But this is not generous. It is not even honest. Those who have been freed owe something to the freedom of their fellow-men. Only in that way can they show gratitude for their own liberation; and, although there is nothing about it in the law books, I do not hesitate to say that ingratitude is one of the very worst forms of dishonesty.

I ask my readers to look at the matter in this light. Let every one of them ask himself what he can afford to give. If only one shilling, let it be one shilling. Twenty of them will make a pound, and two thousand of them will make a hundred pounds. Send the shilling along if that is all you can afford. But if you can afford to send five, ten, twenty, fifty, or a hundred shillings—send them. It only wants a little effort. You know you will never miss the money. I defy any man to lay his hand upon his heart and say that he ever missed anything that he ever gave to what he considered a good object.

It has been explained how the fund will be allotted. One half of it I shall pay over to the Executive of the National Secular Society. The other half will be devoted to maintaining the Sunday evening Freethought platform at the Athenæum Hall in the West-end of London. But those who wish their subscriptions to go wholly to one or the other, instead of being divided, have only to say so, and their wishes will be respected. Could anything be fairer?

Well now, scores of you, hundreds of you, old and new readers of mine, I have this word for you. *Hurry up!* It may be called slang, but it is very expressive. You know what it means. A disserta-

tion couldn't make it clearer. *Hurry up!* Don't let “Shilling Month” slip by and then wish you had sent something. Send it now. Now is the accepted time, now is the hour of subscription. *Hurry up!*

And now for a few words about the *Pioneer*. I am happy to say that the first number has gone off remarkably well. There never was a Freethought journal before that started off with such a circulation. But a great deal, of course, depended on the friendly exertions of its well-wishers in London and in the provinces. I therefore beg them to continue their exertions for the (new) February number, which I hope they will find a good one. Six copies (post free) will be posted for threepence to any friend who will take them in this way for distribution. Twelve copies (post free) will be sent for fivepence, or twenty-four copies for ninepence.

The object of the *Pioneer* is to spread Freethought views amongst the general public, in a paper with an unaggressive title, and published at the people's price of one penny. It is not meant to injure the *Freethinker*, but rather (in the course of time) to help it.

And now a word about myself. I am mending more rapidly now that I am upon my feet again and can get out of doors in the daytime when the weather is favorable. When this is in the readers' hands I expect to be recuperating at the seaside, where I trust a brief stay will set me quite right again. I am getting my sleep back, and that carries everything else with it. Meanwhile, although my pen is not absent from the *Freethinker*, the paper continues to be editorially in the charge of Mr. Cohen.

G. W. FOOTE.

## Sugar Plums.

This evening (Feb. 8) Mr. Davies occupies the Athenæum platform, taking for his subject “The Value of Religion.” Mr. Davies is not a frequent lecturer at the Athenæum, and we hope there will be a good attendance. The address is sure to well repay attention.

The new (February) number of the *Pioneer* will, we think, prove acceptable to the readers of the first. There are some good articles in it, some interesting topical paragraphs, a fresh instalment of the “Women's” section—written, of course, by a woman—and a bright, stimulating contribution from a fresh pen, that of Mr. F. J. Gould. We trust that all the friends of the *Freethinker* will help to push the circulation of the *Pioneer*. It is a piece of well-calculated strategy in the war against superstition.

To-day (Feb. 8) Mr. C. Cohen lectures at Birmingham, in the Prince of Wales Assembly Rooms. His subjects are: Afternoon, “The Farce of a Christian Democracy”; evening, “Sir Oliver Lodge on Science and Faith.” We hope there will be a good muster of “saints”—and sinners—at both meetings.

Mr. George Meredith has been giving a representative of the *Manchester Guardian* his impressions concerning the future of Liberalism. What he has to say on the question of religious education in the State-supported schools is as neat a piece of satire as we have seen for some time. He hopes that “ultimately we shall be able to take teaching out of the hands of the clergy, and that we shall be able to instruct the clergy in the fact that Christianity is a spiritual religion, and not one that is to be governed by material conditions.” The point is admirable, but perhaps a trifle too subtle for the average “liberal Christian” to perceive it.

Dr. Clifford has been letting off some fine old crusted nonsense in *The New Liberal Review* on the same subject. He believes that “If England yields to this Education Act as it is, her liberties will soon be destroyed and her life not worth fifty years' purchase.” Well, the people of fifty years hence are hardly likely to read Dr. Clifford's speeches, so there will be no opportunity of anyone laughing at him at the expiration of the period. So far as we can see English



liberties remain under the Act, substantially what they were before it was passed. And education in general is almost certain to benefit by the larger measure of State help. The real objection to the Act is the subsidising of religious instruction by the State. But as Dr. Clifford *wants* the State to pay for that monstrous absurdity "Non-Sectarian religion," it is really a question, so far as he is concerned, whether Nonconformist or Conformist get the lion's share. If Dr. Clifford and those with him were perfectly frank they would either advocate complete secular instruction, or complain that they are not getting their fair share of the public plunder.

Mr. H. Percy Ward has settled down for the present at Liverpool, where the N. S. S. Branch has engaged him as lecturer and organiser. He starts this evening (Feb. 8) with a lecture at the Alexandra Hall on "Morality without Theology." Naturally the Branch is appealing for funds on behalf of this enterprise. We wish it success and we hope it will be adequately supported. Contributions should be sent to the honorary secretary, Mr. T. Pacey, Alexandra Hall, Islington-square; or to the honorary treasurer, Mr. E. T. Rhodes, 12 Chiswell-street, Kensington (Liverpool).

A debate will take place this morning at Highbury-place between Messrs. E. B. Rose and H. T. Nicholson, on the question, "Christianity or Secularism: Which is Best?" The terms agreed upon are that each speaker shall occupy the platform for thirty minutes, fifteen minutes, and ten minutes respectively. Mr. Rose will open the debate at 11.30 sharp, and it is to be hoped that all Secularists who can possibly do so will make a point of attending and supporting him in his advocacy of Secularism as opposed to Christianity. A collection will be made for the benefit of the Penrhyn Quarrymen's Fund.

The newspapers continue to furnish samples of judicial wisdom (?) in connection with the "conscientious objector" to vaccination. Most of the magistrates seem to labor under the impression that applicants must convince *them* of the evils of vaccination. They need do nothing of the kind. The magistrates' opinion on the subject matters absolutely nothing; nor do we feel that many of them are qualified to express one. The only point is if the applicant has a genuine objection to vaccination; and the mere fact of his applying for exemption is presumptive evidence of this. Something really ought to be done to protect respectable people from the jibes and downright insolence of officials on the Bench. It is simply monstrous that a measure intended to protect certain people from the operations of a law should be nullified in so many cases by the stupidity of a mere magistrate.

"Why Do the Ungodly Prosper?" is the query that has been propounded by the editor of *The Eagle and the Serpent* to Messrs. Benjamin Kidd, Bernard Shaw, G. J. Holyoake, and many others. Their answers appear in No. 18 of the journal named, and will, no doubt, prove interesting reading. From the point of equity, the ungodly *ought* to prosper in this world, seeing they are to have so little chance in the next; but between "ought" and "does" there is often a wide difference.

## 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.

C. H. Wren, 5; T. J. Thomas, 10; J. Jones (second sub.), 3; H. Silverstein, 2½; A. J. Fincken, Family, and Friends, 25; No Name, 2; F. Goodwin, 2; T. T., 3; W. Milroy, 2½; V. Page, 1; J. E. Pearson, 3; H. Walker, 2½; J. Preston, 1; W. S. Kershaw, 5; Lloyd Passant, 3; W. P. Pearson, 1; A. Frith, 5; J. Umpleby, 20; A. Sweede, 5.  
Per Miss Vance: E. Purchase, 1; W. H. West, 1; Two Friends (Dundee), 5; F. Schaller, 4; J. R. Wobley, 5; F. Aust, 5; R. Wood, 2; J. Hindle, 2; M. Wetherburn, 2; W. A. Williams, 1; J. Halliwell, 2; J. W. Beak, 2½; D. B., 2; J. Pruet, 2½; W. Duffin, 2; R. T. Portsea, 2; T. Gibbon, 1; R. Wallis, 1; E. J. R., 2; J. Terry, 1; M. Fisher, 2; R. Taylor, 1½; J. Primrose, 5; G. Smith, 5; M. Murray, 2½; T. Robertson (Glasgow), 5; J. Thackray, 2½; A. F. Bullock, 1. Camberwell Branch: F. Cotterell, 2½; F. Wood, 1; H. Baker, 1; W. Young, 1; F. A. Davies, 1; J. Wilson, 1; C. Herbert, 1; J. Milnes, 1; H. Dodson, ½.—Total to date, £38 0s. 6d.

### SPECIAL

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

Mrs. Turnbull and Family, 15; W. Bean, 5; M. D. Clifton, 5; A. G. Lye, 1.—Total to date, £17 13s. 6d.

### SPECIAL

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

Total to date, £7 8s. 6d.

## The Christian Sabbath.

(Concluded from page 70.)

SINCE the Old Testament commands respecting the Jewish Sabbath, which have been transferred by the Christian Church to the "Lord's Day," are declared to be binding upon all mankind, it may not be out of place to see exactly what is enjoined respecting that day in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The most ancient code of laws in the Old Testament is the "Book of the Covenant" (Exod. xx. 22—xxiii. 33). In this code—which is complete in itself, and which contains the most ancient laws known to the Jews—the command relating to the Sabbath is as follows:—

"Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass *may have rest*, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, *may be refreshed*" (xxiii. 12).

This is all. The seventh day was to be a day of rest for slaves or servants, and for beasts of burden. No religious services are commanded to be celebrated on that day, and no penalty is announced for its non-observance. This day and that of the New Moon appear to have been the only holy days originally kept by all Jews from the earliest times down to the reign of Josiah, King of Judah. Both are frequently mentioned as ancient institutions, as will be seen in the following examples:—

2 Kings iv. 23: "And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? It is neither New Moon nor Sabbath."

Amos viii. 5: "Saying, When will the New Moon be gone that we may sell corn, and the Sabbath that we may set forth wheat?"

From the latter passage it is clear that the Israelites in the time of Amos observed these two holy days reluctantly, and out of mere superstitious fear, because their fathers had done so before them.

About two centuries after the time of Amos, and about eight centuries after the time when Moses is supposed to have given the Israelites all the laws now contained in the Pentateuch—in the reign of Josiah, the sixteenth King of Judah—a new code of regulations came into existence. This was the book of Deuteronomy. In the thirteenth year of the reign of king Josiah, Jeremiah appeared as a prophet; and, finding that the Sabbath was at that time openly desecrated by the men of Jerusalem, he took his stand at one of the gates of that city, and in the name of the Lord expostulated with the Sabbath-breakers, giving them, at the same time, fresh commands respecting the proper observance of that day. According to the book which bears his name, he is reported to have said:—

"Thus saith the Lord: Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, neither do ye any work: but hallow ye the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers" (Jer. xvii. 21-23).

In the 18th year of the reign of Josiah the "Book of the Law," otherwise the book of Deuteronomy, was "found" in the temple by the high priest Hilkiah. It is remarkable, if not significant, that Jeremiah was of the priestly order, that his father was named Hilkiah, and that a large number of peculiar forms of expression which occur in Deuteronomy are found in the book of Jeremiah, and nowhere else in the Bible. There can be little doubt that Jeremiah could very easily have named the writer of the book of Deuteronomy, had he felt so disposed—which writer certainly lived in his days.



In the Deuteronomic code appears for the first time the Decalogue complete. Here the commands respecting the sabbath are set forth at greater length and with more precision than in the more ancient Book of the Covenant. These are as follows:

"Observe the sabbath day to keep it holy.....Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a sabbath unto the Lord thy god: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor the daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And thou shalt remember that thou was a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day."—DEUT. v., 12-15.

Here we have a reason assigned for keeping the sabbath, and this reason clearly indicates that the observance of that day was intended to be binding only on Jews, including, of course, their slaves, and any non-Jewish dwellers in their cities—the stranger within their gates. They were commanded to abstain from all manual labor on the seventh day because Yahveh their god had delivered them from a long period of enforced labor in Egypt.

The book of Deuteronomy was written in the name of Moses, a mythical leader and law-giver, who according to ancient Jewish legend, was the agent employed by Yahveh in effecting their deliverance. The commands in this book are represented as given to the Israelites while that nation was performing the imaginary forty years' journeyings in the desert, and before the entrance into Canaan. The commands were given only to the worshippers of the tribal god Yahveh. If the Christians take over that god, and profess to do his will, then not only are the injunctions relating to the sabbath binding on them, but they are bound also to observe the whole Mosaic ritual, including the Jewish festivals and holy days, the Hebrew ceremonial laws, and animal sacrifice. All were delivered to the Jews for observance; no distinction is made between the Decalogue and the other laws; no intimation is anywhere given in the Old Testament that any of the Mosaic laws should ever be abolished.

About two centuries after the finding of the book of Deuteronomy, some of the Jewish priests who returned to Jerusalem after the Exile brought with them a new code of laws, which, like the Deuteronomic Code, was represented as originally delivered to the Israelites by Moses. This Priestly Code (which comprises part of Exodus, the whole of Leviticus, and the first ten chapters of Numbers) also contains the Decalogue—the latter being almost verbatim with that in Deuteronomy. The commands in this code respecting the sabbath are as follows:—

"Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle.....For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth.....and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it" (Exod. xx. 8-11).

It is to this priestly writer we are indebted for the Bible creation story, which ends as follows:—

"And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it" (Gen. ii. 2-3).

The same priestly writer, speaking in the name of "the Lord," further says:—

"Verily ye shall keep my sabbaths; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that I am the Lord which sanctify you.....Whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.....for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed" (Exod. xxxi. 13-17).

Here two reasons are assigned for the institution of the sabbath. First, because the Lord, after spending

six days in creating the universe, rested from his work on the seventh day, and by so resting "was refreshed." What was found to be beneficial to the Creator must also be beneficial to his creatures; hence the command to rest on the seventh day. Secondly, the keeping of the sabbath was a sign to the Israelites that Yahveh was the God that sanctified them.

In this priestly version of the fourth commandment of the Decalogue we find, besides the mere command to observe the seventh day as a day of rest, a penalty decreed for its non-observance. Anyone doing work on that day was to suffer death. A case is also recorded (Num. xv. 32-36) in which this penalty is stated to have been inflicted. A man is said to have been found "gathering sticks" upon the sabbath day. For this heinous sin the Lord, who is stated to be slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, pronounced judgment as follows: "The man shall surely be put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp"—which merciful sentence was immediately carried out.

We have thus four different reasons, assigned by three independent writers—whose statements were all made under the influence of divine inspiration—for the institution of the Sabbath. First, it was instituted merely in order that the bondmen and cattle of the Israelites might have a periodical day of rest. Secondly, it was ordained because the Israelites had been delivered from bondage in Egypt. Having been compelled to work seven days a week in that country for several generations, they were now to rest on every seventh day in remembrance of that enforced labor. Thirdly, it was appointed to be observed because the Lord had rested on that day after his six days' work of creation, and felt refreshed. Fourthly, the observance of the seventh day as a Sabbath by the Israelites was a sign that the Lord sanctified them.

As we have seen, the Hebrew sacred writers represent the Sabbath as originally instituted by the god Yahveh, who is said to have made known his will to his chosen people through his servant Moses, to whom he gave his commands in person on Mount Sinai. It is also represented as an institution peculiar to the Jewish nation, it being a sign that the people were sanctified by Yahveh. Now, as a simple matter of fact, the command to keep the Sabbath was not given to the Israelites by the god Yahveh. That people borrowed the custom from the ancient Assyrians and Babylonians. Long before the time of the mythical Moses the Assyrians observed a day of rest on the 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th days of the lunar month, and called it by the same name as the Hebrews—"the Sabbath." The name signified in Assyrian "a day of rest for the heart;" but the Akkadians, from whom the Assyrians derived the institution, called it "a day of completion of labor"—a designation which suggests the Bible statement that "on the seventh day God finished his work which he had made." No work was permitted to be done in Assyria or Babylonia on that day. Thus, the observance of the Sabbath as a day of rest originated with the most ancient inhabitants of Babylonia, the Akkadians, who, ages before the Israelites had become a nation, had been accustomed to rest for one day after six days of labor, and to devote that day to the worship of their gods. On one of the ancient Babylonian tablets it is stated that in the intercalary month Elul—"The seventh day is a fast day, dedicated to Merodach and Zarpanit; a lucky day, a Sabbath. The Shepherd of Many Nations [i.e., the king] must not eat flesh cooked at the fire or in the smoke. His clothes he must not change," etc. The Jewish priests who brought from Babylonia the Third or Priestly Code represent their god Yahveh as commanding:—

"On the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a Sabbath of solemn rest to Yahveh: whosoever doeth any work therein shall be put to death. Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day." (Exod. xxxv. 2-3).

The ascription of the institution of the Sabbath to







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

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

THE ATHENÆUM HALL (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30, F. A. Davies, "The Value of Religion."

CAMBERWELL SECULAR HALL (61 New Church Road, Camberwell): 7.30, J. M. Robertson, "Christianity and the Sword." 7 to 7.30, Vocal and Instrumental Music.

EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Bromley Vestry Hall, Bow-road, E.): 7, J. McCabe, "The Future of Catholicism."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road): 7, G. O'Dell, "The Ethics of Immortality."

STREATHAM AND BRIXTON ETHICAL INSTITUTE (Carlton Hall, Tun-stall-road, Brixton): 7, Felix Volkhovsky, "The Russian Awakening."

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall, High-street): 11.15, Miss McMillan, "Heretics."

**COUNTRY.**

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Prince of Wales Assembly Rooms, Broad-street): 3, C. Cohen, "The Farce of a Christian Democracy." 7, "Sir Oliver Lodge on Religion and Science." Tea at 5.

EDINBURGH SECULAR SOCIETY (Temperance Hall, 84 Leith-street): 6.30, D. McLean, "John Stuart Mill." Music from 6.15.

GLASGOW (110 Brunswick-street): 12, Class, Open Discussion, 6.30, Robert Park, M.D., "Spiritism and Occultism; and the Idea of a Spirit Providence."

LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, H. Percy Ward, "Morality Without Theology."

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, Harvey Simpson, "Cremation." Lantern Illustrations.

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