

# THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXIII.—No. 9.

SUNDAY, MARCH 1, 1903.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

*There are two things, each of which he would seldom fail to discover who seeks for it in earnest: the knowledge of what he ought to do, and a plausible pretext for doing what he likes.—WHATELY.*

## Earl Russell Replies.

"AN AGNOSTIC PEER" was the heading of my article in the *Freethinker* of February 15. The article itself was a criticism of a little book called *Lay Sermons* by Earl Russell. In its way it was a compliment, for it was carefully written, and longer than the usual run of my articles in this journal. Moreover, I said that there were good things in Earl Russell's book, and that his treatment of the subject of miracles was really admirable; and I closed with an appeal which implied that I was addressing a man of brains and character. But all this is ignored in the letter of reply which Earl Russell has sent me. Too many authors seem to regard praise as their due, and adverse criticism as a species of insult. I should have imagined, however, that Earl Russell was above this sort of thing. I should also have expected him to understand that I am something of a specialist on certain subjects—if only from the time and attention I have devoted to them; and that, from the very nature of the case, it is unlikely that he is as fully conversant with them as I am. But he does not appear to be in a mood to learn from such a person as the editor of the *Freethinker*, or to profit by anything such a person may happen to say. Well, that is his loss, not mine; so I will just print his letter and then answer it.

February 19, 1903.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I am sorry you are so severe upon the inaccuracy of my *Lay Sermons*, although at the same time I must point out that it was intended to appeal to the emotional side of human nature, and to those who were brought up as Christians, and does not profess to be a scientific treatise. But if your aim is accuracy, why begin by saying that the Russell family pretty effectually suppressed the heretical book of my father? A glance at the preface will show that the exact opposite is the case, and that the book was published after his death by his mother. I do not surmise inaccurately that it will be regarded as presumption to write sermons. I have already been told by a layman of the Church that no one but a parson has the right to write sermons! I am sorry that you cannot appreciate the difference in meaning between Agnostic and Atheist, but the word God is not intended to imply a personal Deity, but only conveniently to personify a state of emotions or ideas. That is to say, the personification is deliberate and emotional as in poetry, but does not profess to represent a scientific fact.

Do you really think it absurd to talk of "serving Christ," even if no Christ did exist? I suppose you do not believe that Mars ever existed, but I have heard of people "serving Mars." I do not follow your argument that Shakespeare is superior to the Bible because it has 15,000 words and the Bible 8,000 words. Surely on this basis Johnson's Dictionary is superior to either!—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

RUSSELL.

Now I am bound to say at once that this letter is as "slap-dash" as I found too much of Earl Russell's book. It is not true that I overlooked the fact that his Sermons did not profess to be a scientific treatise, or that they were intended to appeal to the emo-

tional side of human nature. I practically stated as much myself in my opening paragraph. Did I not observe that "there is nothing to be gained by discussing exhortations," and that I should and could only concern myself with Earl Russell's "ideas on religious subjects"? Did I not draw a more or less philosophical distinction between the preaching which appeals to men through their emotions and the criticism which appeals to them through their intelligence? Earl Russell is actually assuming that I overlooked a point which I positively labored.

Earl Russell does not reply to my charges of inaccuracy. He prefers to turn the charge upon me—as a Scotchman is said to answer a question by asking another. But on the one point of any importance he has really found a mare's-nest. I did not think it necessary to say that Lord Amberley's *Analysis of Religious Belief* was published. The fact is too well known. What I said was, not that the family had suppressed the *work*, but that they had suppressed the *book*. Of course I may be wrong; I make no pretensions to the smallest degree of infallibility. But this suppression of Lord Amberley's book has long been one of the open secrets of the literary world. I should be glad to learn from Earl Russell, as a matter of personal knowledge, that the family is in no way responsible for the difficulty there is in obtaining copies of the *Analysis*. He will probably know what I mean, for I can hardly conceive that he has not heard the tradition of the book-world on the matter.

On the second point, I have to observe that, while it is quite possible that a layman of the Church of England has told Earl Russell that only parsons should write sermons, I was quite accurate in telling him that there was no novelty in his enterprise; first because thousands of laymen preach sermons in Nonconformist chapels, and secondly because distinguished men like Coleridge, Cobbett, and Huxley had written Sermons before him.

As to the "difference in meaning between Agnostic and Atheist," which Earl Russell is sorry I cannot appreciate, I beg to ask him to *state* the difference in plain English, and to give his authorities (if any) for the statement. I also invite him to read my pamphlet on *What is Agnosticism?* a copy of which has been forwarded to him. When he has read it, perhaps, he will "appreciate" the difficulty of what he is asked to do.

It is perfectly clear from Earl Russell's letter that his "God" is not even a phantom, but a mere personification; and the personification is not unconscious, as in religion, but deliberate, as in poetry. Perhaps he will tell me, and the readers of this journal, by what right he uses the word "God" except to signify a personal deity? Does he claim to take any word out of the dictionary and attach any meaning to it he pleases? Or is he simple enough to imagine that by using the word "God," to express not an objective fact but a subjective fancy, he is going to impose upon the people who use it with the very opposite significance?

Personally, I regard those who do not believe in the existence of a personal deity, and yet talk of God, as mischievous persons in proportion to their influence. They lengthen the night and hinder the dawn. Whatever good they do incidentally is more than counterbalanced by their helping to prolong the

spiritual anarchy which retards the growth of what Comte called, and Shelley and Paine called before him, the Religion of Humanity. Such persons may even call themselves progressives, but they really play the game of reaction. For the word "God" is simply now the sanction of every irrationality. It is also the cover of the worst exploitation of the people. The ruling classes, which still exist even under democratic forms, do not believe in God; they only pretend to. "God to them," as Comte said, "is but the nominal chief of a hypocritical conspiracy."

Now for Earl Russell's sentences about "serving Christ" and "serving Mars." I should be sorry to think he was serious. He has brains enough to see that "serving Mars" is a mere fashion of speech; a fantastic description of soldiering. Are we to conceive of "serving Christ" in the same light? Surely this must be one of Earl Russell's jocularities.

And now for the Bible and Shakespeare. I never said that Shakespeare is superior to the Bible because he uses more words; and Johnson's Dictionary does not use words, but explains them. Earl Russell said in his Sermons that the Bible was "richer even than Shakespeare in the variety and number of its wonderful phrases and expressions." This, I said, seemed a matter of taste, and therefore not disputable. But there was one fact that told its own story. The English Bible had a vocabulary of eight thousand words, and there are fifteen thousand words in the vocabulary of Shakespeare.

I made a mistake there, by the way, and Earl Russell did not find it out. I was writing far from books of reference, and my memory—perhaps through my illness—played me a trick. I should have said that the Bible vocabulary contained *six thousand* words.

Well now, if one collection of original literature uses six thousand words, and another uses fifteen thousand, the presumption is in favor of the latter's superiority in the very respect in which Earl Russell asserted that the Bible was "richer even than Shakespeare." The literary artist who employs fifteen thousand words is almost certainly richer in "phrases and expressions"—wonderful, or otherwise—than the literary artist who employs six thousand words. A wealthy vocabulary, in original literature, implies a wealth of emotions and conceptions, to begin with; and, this being granted, it seems to follow as a necessity that the wealthier the vocabulary the richer the "variety and number of phrases and expressions."

Earl Russell will perhaps pardon me for saying, in conclusion, that Shakespeare's wit and humor—wit nimble as lightning, and humor rich as sunshine—give him an incontestable superiority over the Bible. For wit and humor belong to the highest developments of intellect and sympathy; and intellect and sympathy are the two great pillars of human culture.

G. W. FOOTE.

### The Utility of Religion.

MR. W. H. MALLOCK is one of the acutest of English religious apologists. He has the capacity of recognising the strength of the case against religious doctrines, and he has the courage, a quality of a rarer kind still, to point this out, and also the weakness of the stock religious defences, to his fellow religionists. Both these qualities, while admirable in controversial writers, are hardly those that will commend him to the religious world. The type preferred is that of the man who is obstinately blind to the most patent of facts, and who, if he does recognise their existence, only admits as much to himself or to his confidants. Clearness of vision and plainness of speech are not exactly what may be described as religious virtues; they may be tolerated, but they are not encouraged; at most certain sections of believers will admire them as one admires the daredevilry of a scatterbrained adventurer—without any desire to follow in the same steps.

A little while ago Mr. Mallock contributed a series of articles to one of the reviews dealing with the conflict between religion and science. These articles have now been gathered into a single volume, and published under the title of *Religion as a Credible Doctrine*. In the present article I am not concerned with the whole of the work, important and valuable though it be, but only with the last chapter but one, in which Mr. Mallock sets out to give us "The Practical Basis of Belief." It is necessary, however, to point out what is the general scope of Mr. Mallock's book. The larger part of the book consists of an examination of the different attempts to harmonise religion and science, and shows pretty conclusively that all attempts to bring about a reconciliation on the grounds of physical science, "free will," or from a survey of life and morality, are more or less failures. So long as we are guided by scientific methods and scientific conclusions a reconciliation is impossible. He agrees with Newman in saying that all science is Atheistic, and also with Kant that in the world of actual knowledge, fundamental religious beliefs have no logical foothold. Indeed, the bulk of his book is a translation of the Kantian position into popular phraseology.

The result of Mr. Mallock's inquiry is, in his own words, that "the facts of the universe, as science and observation reveal them to us, unite in showing that the primary doctrines of religion—the doctrines of immortality, of the theistic God, and of human and divine freedom—are superfluous as hypotheses, unsupported by evidence as assertions, and not to be reconciled with the nature of things as ideas." Where, then, does religion appear as a "credible doctrine?" Mr. Mallock seeks to establish the credibility of religion by two methods—one subtle, but not new, the other both old and commonplace, and both of which come as a rather inconsequential tag to a really brilliant piece of writing.

Mr. Mallock's first method is to point out that, although the belief in religion is rejected because, when analysed, the doctrines are found to be in contradiction with our other ideas, yet there is also an inherent contradiction involved in ultimate scientific ideas. Religious doctrines involve "a structure of contradictions which the mind cannot possibly reconcile." But if we analyse ultimate scientific ideas, there is substantially the same set of logical contradictions. We cannot think of an atom so small that it will not admit of further division; nor can we, by assuming an omnipresent ether as a medium of motion between distant stellar, or planetary bodies and our own earth, escape the difficulty of either assuming that the ether is *absolutely* continuous, in which case there is no room for motion, or assume a discontinuity, in which case the difficulty of the transference of motion still confronts us. If, then, the scientific synthesis of the world involves a contradiction, and is yet accepted, why should we reject the religious synthesis because that, too, on analysis, involves a contradiction?

Now the answer to this seems to me twofold. First, the work of science is of a strictly business-like and practical character, and its assumptions are all made for a specific purpose. Its chief aim is to predict results, and to furnish us with a coherent and working conception of things in general; and, so long as its conceptions do this, all else is a matter of secondary importance. It may be that the conception of the ether as a universal, continuous, and elastic medium, and our conception of the atom as an indivisible particle of matter, with other fundamental conceptions, all involve very serious difficulties; but the main thing is that it enables us to understand the world, to calculate and predict results, as other conceptions, at present, do not. In a word, it works, and this is the ultimate justification of science for the assumptions it makes.

And, in the second place, the assumptions of science—either those now made or others that would have to be made in their absence—is an absolute necessity. The assumptions of religion are not. So far as we are thinking beings, we are bound to make

some assumptions concerning the world in which we live; and, although it may easily be pointed out that there are difficulties connected with them, the defence would be that they are at best tentative, and will be cheerfully discarded as soon as something of a more satisfactory character is proposed. But it does not follow that because *some* difficulties are inevitable, therefore *all* difficulties are to be accepted. The fact of a given conception not fitting in with the general body of our ideas is ample warranty for rejecting it so long as its rejection is possible and profitable. And it would seem to be only plain common sense to reduce the contradictions to as small a compass and number as is possible.

Added to which is the weighty consideration that the religious conceptions can be, and are, dispensed with. The belief in a God, or a future life, are not necessary to explain anything that we know of, except themselves. Mr. Mallock and others would doubtless reply that this in itself calls for explanation; that the belief in God and the soul are as much phenomena that need explanation as the revolution of a planet or the development of a species. And with this I agree; only there is no need to assume any objective validity for these beliefs in order to explain their presence. These beliefs need explanation precisely as do the beliefs in witches, fairies, and the like, and their existence can be explained in *exactly the same* manner. Mr. Mallock has himself pointed out how utterly useless is the religious hypothesis—save in one direction, with which I shall deal presently—as an explanation of cosmic phenomena, and in doing so he has quite demonstrated that religious beliefs do not belong to that class of assumptions that can fairly be classed as inevitable.

It is in his chapter on "The Practical Basis of Belief" that Mr. Mallock produces what he considers a conclusive reason why we should accept religious beliefs in spite of the contradictions their acceptance involves. This supreme reason is, in a word, that in their absence a healthy morality is a practical impossibility. To illustrate this—one can hardly say, to prove it—he draws a picture of the direful consequences of eliminating from life the belief in God, immortality, and moral freedom. He overlooks the fact that a very conclusive reply lies ready to hand, and that is to enter a direct negative. In the absence of definite data, the prophecy that an event will *not* happen is quite as good, as an argument, as the prophecy that it will; and if one were to simply meet Mr. Mallock's statement that in the absence of religion morality will deteriorate, with the counter statement that it will undergo a marked improvement, I do not see why one prophecy should be considered stronger than the other. What morality may be in the absence of religious belief is at best but a guess; what it is with their presence can be easily seen, and I do not think that the survey will considerably help Mr. Mallock's case.

But let us look at the case in greater detail. To begin with, Mr. Mallock argues that there are certain aspects of particular facts, and certain beliefs concerning which science can tell us nothing, and of the truth of which it can offer no opinion whatever. Science can tell us why the sea and sky are brighter and bluer in one place than another, or give a full account of the conditions of skin and blood which give to two women their respective appearance. But it cannot tell us why the view in one place is more beautiful than another, or which of the two ladies is calculated to inspire a man with the most romantic passion. It is rather difficult to see what Mr. Mallock intends to conclude from this conundrum, since it seems to me that when science has registered the fact of these differences of taste it has at least told us *something* about the matter; nor do I think it altogether impossible for us to have a *general* explanation given in terms of the development of the æsthetic sense, complementary colors, and the like on the one side, and sexual selection on the other. It would be tolerably safe to assert, for example, that a cultured European, having to choose between a hottentot lady and a resident of one of

the European capitals, would not hesitate long, nor would the spectators be in very great doubt as to which would be the object of his choice. All that Mr. Mallock can show in this connection is that where the choice is of a more restricted character, it is difficult to say beforehand what the decision will be. But this hardly proves that science can "tell us nothing" concerning these things.

Then with regard to beliefs. Mr. Mallock instances the belief in the sanctity of human life, and says that science can offer no opinion as regards its truth. The example needs some qualification, and is an unfortunate one for other reasons. There does not exist, as a matter of fact, any general belief, even on a small scale, in the absolute sanctity of human life. We go to war and destroy life, and most people admit that in self-defence, at least, such action is justifiable. We hang the murderer; and in the protection of life and home Mr. Mallock, in all probability, would feel himself justified in taking life if no other means of protection were at hand. And in uncivilised society the taking of life is still more common.

The sanctity of human life is, then, only believed in under certain conditions, and these conditions can not only be fairly well stated in general terms but science can give a fairly exhaustive account of the origin and growth of this sentiment, and therefore indicate its scope and utility. I am not writing to Mr. Mallock, or it would not be necessary to point out that belief in the sanctity of human life is one of the first conditions of socialised human existence. Two individuals could not live together in the presence of a desire to kill each other. If there does not exist a positive feeling in the shape of the sentiment that the taking of human life is wrong, there must exist, as the prime condition of aggregate existence, the negative virtue of not desiring the death of one's immediate neighbor. And the development of this sentiment is, perhaps, one of the easiest of social phenomena to explain. Once more, if Mr. Mallock means that science cannot tell us whether the belief in the sanctity of human life is of an *absolute* character, one can only say that the statement is very like asking whether there is such a thing as sound apart from vibration and an adequate organism. It is putting a question that does not admit of an answer, because it is so framed as to exclude the possibility of one being given.

With Mr. Mallock's arguments as to the necessity of a religious sanction for morality I will deal in my next article.

(To be continued.)

C. COHEN.

### "Edna Lyall."

"Every anniversary of my father's death brought me from her ('Edna Lyall') a box of violets and lilies of the valley sheathed in their broad pale green leaves, my father's Northampton colors in these fragrant flowers."—MRS. BRADLAUGH-BONNER in the "Reformer."

It is the fashion with that enormous class of people who talk without thinking, and who take up cuckoo-cries, to speak contemptuously of the minor writers of modern literature. However small may be their merits, they are, at all events, ten times as good as minor writers used to be. The majority of the old, forgotten novels, once the delight of the readers of the circulating libraries, are so dull and weak and inartistic, that it is impossible that they or their congeners would now find acceptance anywhere. Of course there is to-day a great deal of literary rubbish published, yet it would be easy to point to scores of novels that have appeared during the past ten years, which a century ago would have made—and deservedly have made—a high reputation for their authors.

And what holds good of ordinary fiction, is still more applicable to "religious" novels. It requires very little judgment to recognise the distinct advance in the art of "Edna Lyall" as compared with the late excellent Emma Jane Worboise. What Mrs. Henry Wood was to the worldly-minded, Emma Jane Worboise was to the other-worldly minded. In

each, vulgar but virtuous ordinary people and grotesquely impossible villains won the unlettered appreciation of their readers. "Edna Lyall" represented this taste, plus the newer culture, the "science" of Professor Drummond, the art of Suburbia, and the ethics of John Ruskin. As *Robert Elsmere* appeared a daring problem to the upper middle-class thinker, so "Edna Lyall's" novels won the heart of the lower middle-classes. And, to speak frankly, they have in this instance, as in not a few others, much the best of it. For "Edna Lyall" at her best was charitable, tolerant, and readable, whilst *Robert Elsmere*, *John Inglesant*, *John Ward*, *Preacher*, and many another dear to intense people, are all eminently unreadable.

It was said of the late Dion Boucicault's *Formosa* that its orgies in the apartments of its shameless heroine spoke well for the author's morality, but little for his accuracy. So the opera singer in "Edna Lyall's" *The Knight Errant* is an invertebrate, impossible person, whose career needed wings and a halo to complete his supernatural attributes. Donovan on the turf was funny, revealing a lady's view of the national pastime—or the national degradation—call it which you will. Since the ever-lamented Prince Consort, whose unsightly monuments crowd this island, no such perfect example of the Christian prig as Donovan has been met. For the late Prince Consort's many genuine virtues no honest man can have aught but praise; for Donovan we also have sympathy; but for the large proportion of the "tin Jesus on wheels" in both, words fail to convey the horror inspired. That "Edna Lyall's" novels are very far above the nameless crowd that find readers in *Philistia* is doubtless true. After sundry plunges into the pages of the Brothers Hocking, one might concede still more. There are at least a dozen authors well in demand at the libraries who are every way inferior; and the brave and noble impulse that produced *We Two* can only be appreciated by those who have known the paralysing influences that disgrace modern Nonconformity. It is an open secret that Charles Bradlaugh was the model from which she drew Luke Raeburn. As a unique attempt to render both sides of a theologic dispute faithfully and impartially one might willingly grant the book high place. It was this novel which turned the popular tide in "Edna Lyall's" favor, and from that time her literary position was assured. The public instinct was in this instance sound. *We Two* was immeasurably superior to the awful hybrid known as the semi-religious novel, which, neither pious nor secular, combines, like other half-breeds, the vices of both classes and the virtues of neither.

*Won by Waiting*, curiously like Black's *Daughter of Heth*, began the series, and, followed by *Donovan* and *We Two*, sealed "Edna Lyall's" fame. In the *Golden Days* was so unreadable that it is with difficulty recalled. *The Knight Errant*, *A Hardy Norseman*, and a few others complete the list of her writings. That we would recommend "Edna Lyall's" books to all readers who have a taste for thunder and small beer is, perhaps, a doubtful compliment. But, with no afterthought, they are to-day in one sense what the novels of Charles Kingsley were to a previous generation. They aid in soothing consciences just ruffled by doubt, and leave them at peace in the quiet of their hereditary superstition.

Maybe, because "Edna Lyall" was reticent in quantity, the hard-won popularity has been less in peril; and now, with a group of novels that show fully the power and the limitations of her work, it is only right that they should receive recognition, not merely as interesting books that have charmed away many dull hours for thousands, but as a new, if unimportant, force in literature. True, it appears to be likely to be as short-lived as its lamented author; yet the historian of English fiction will, one fancies, be compelled to consider it more seriously than contemporary critics have done. "Edna Lyall's" novels were books for people who were still Christians to profit by. Their leading feature is their intolerance of all that is mean and weak; their scornful anti-

pathy to indolence, cowardice, and selfishness—all the vices that debase the mind or rust the faculties. They must have given an impulse for good to thousands. "Edna Lyall" loved Truth and Liberty without misgiving, and Truth and Liberty loved her in return, and have crowned her grave with honor.

MINNERMUS.

### The Sanction of Morality.

A SHORT time before his death, M. Littré wrote a work entitled *Origin and Sanction of Morality*, a subject of paramount importance for the future of lay society.

Nothing is effectually destroyed until it is replaced. Theology and metaphysics will be definitely ousted only when positive philosophy shall be able to substitute, for a transcendental morality, extrinsic to human nature, a morality thoroughly grafted on the phenomena and laws of nature, confirmed by calculation, experiment, and observation.

M. Littré, having maintained the possibility of moral actions being absolutely disinterested, was contradicted on that point—wrongly, we think. If man never acted disinterestedly he would be inferior to animals, several of which have been known to perform acts of undoubted disinterestedness. Everyone knows the story of Androcles and the lion; the dog of Montargis; the dog of St. Bernard, now in the museum at Berne. We find in the chronicles of the Middle Ages, as well as Arabian stories, several examples of horses that have carried off from the field of battle their riders, dead or wounded. The fact of a horse on duty at a railway station throwing off the line his driver, who had fallen nearly under the wheels of a wagon, is mentioned in the annals of the Society for the Protection of Animals. A hen defending her chicks from the hawk; the monkey attempting to deliver her young one from the hands of man, careless of the shots; the bird feeding her young through the bars of a cage—all these feel, perhaps, a sentimental satisfaction in the exercise of heroism and virtue. But what can be said of the following example? In 1854, in the Balkans, near Adrianople, some French soldiers killed a boar, which was followed by another much bigger, and whose steps seemed to fit into those of the first. The latter stopped short, and made no movement until he fell dead from the shots; it was then discovered that he was blind, and held in his mouth the tail of the first. So great was the impression caused by this sight, that no one felt inclined to laugh at the remark made by one of them, that they had just killed Oedipus and Antigone.

In connection with this, we find another very similar circumstance related in a German work, showing the existence of virtue amongst animals impossible to be doubted; therefore we shall not be astonished to find heroism and virtue amongst men devoid of all culture and reasoning powers. It is true that the same men may show an equal spontaneity in crime and cowardice. One man is capable of an act of foolhardiness, without any interest, ambition, or glory, yielding up to a comrade, mortally wounded, the contents of his water-can, at the risk of dying of thirst in a desert country; another gives his last penny to succor an unfortunate stranger, and the next day will show the utmost selfishness by refusing assistance to his father in distress.

These observations go to prove that altruism ceases to be an accident only when it is implanted in a man's character, or in a race of men, through education and hereditary transmission.

Having incidentally submitted to the reflection of the reader the arguments suggested by the observation in favor of disinterested morality, acknowledged by M. Littré and denied by his opponent, it is time to return to the sanction of morality, our subject matter, for the question of the origin of morality is of secondary importance.

Having pointed out altruism as existing among animals, we might find the source of its evolution in

the physico-chemical phenomena, and even in astronomical phenomena. As all these phenomena are acted on by laws, as minor laws are in subjection to major laws, these latter to gravitation, as first cause, irreducible until now from universal order and progress, the cause of morality must necessarily be connected with the natural order of all things. But, whilst admitting that the origin of morality is part and parcel of final causes, that the *why* of morality escapes our researches, it is sufficient to remark in history, as well as in our own experience, *how* it is manifested, in order to draw an immediate advantage from the study.

In the first place, there is no moral order independent of material order. Morality is not a theological entity, a metaphysical abstraction; like force and intelligence, it has its visible and observable correlatives; it must submit to the immutable law which rules causes and effects; consequently it has a sanction. The sanction is evident to all persons whose judgment is not obscured by prejudice. The legend of future rewards and punishments, of a paradise and a hell, has so blinded the human mind that it is incapable of understanding natural justice that punishes or recompenses every act on this earth according as it is in accord or disaccord with natural laws.

The ancient Jews, who did not believe in immortality, had already recognised this law. When the God of the Bible menaces them with famine, leprosy, and plague as punishment for their misconduct; when Ezekiel says that the sins of the fathers shall fall on the children even to the fourth generation, they proclaim the sanction of causes by effects. When the Mohammedan legislator claims an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, he does not invent, he simply repeats the law of Moses and Aaron, the unintelligent application of a natural law. Retaliation, the only source of justice amongst primitive peoples, is found more or less in civilised codes. The scaffold has its roots in retaliation. All punishment is derived from retaliation. Retaliation badly carried out is the cause of all repressive justice. Like the science of medicine, justice will become essentially preventive when science shall pursue the suppression of evil effects through the suppression of evil causes.

If, in moral order, there were no final equilibrium between causes and effects, we should be compelled to acknowledge a continuity of solution between those two terms, or else an arbitrary power capable of arresting or turning aside the course of natural laws, at the risk of snapping the springs of the universal mechanism. But nature recognises neither efficacious grace nor sufficing grace; its justice is blind in its march, inexorable in its sentences. *Piat justicia, ruat cælum.* Similar causes produce, sooner or later, similar effects. The fruit is always in relation to the germ, the harvest to the seed.

Amongst the many causes in movement, there are some pre-existent and superior to man, independent of his will, and restricting his liberty; there are others that arise from his own initiative, and for which he is directly responsible.

In the first case he is the victim of fate; in the second he is the artisan of his own destiny.

The sanction of causes by effects is not always verified immediately: sometimes it passes over the heads of the guilty and falls on the innocent. Such is the case with hereditary diseases.

Very often the effect of a recognised cause is retarded; it comes *pedo claudo*, but, sooner or later, it shows itself. History is essentially the history of retaliation. The fall of empires, the decline and ruin of peoples, revolutions, wars, assassinations, slavery, and misery, all the repeated catastrophes which make history but one long tissue of horrors—what is it but the punishment inflicted by nature on the violators of her laws?

We recommend to minds anxious to meet with proofs of the sanction of morality in history, to concentrate their meditations on this later period, that which begins with the French Revolution, and is

continued in contemporary politics. No drama can be more compact, more logical; none where the successive *dénouements* are easier to foresee; none where the powerlessness of man to counteract the laws of nature is more apparent.

The triumph of natural morality is seen in the tragic end of the principal actors of the French Revolution, of the final catastrophes of the Empire, the Restoration, the *régime* of July, the Republic of 1848, the Second Empire, and the reactionary conspiracy under the name of moral order! What poet has ever imagined a more lamentable *dénouement* than that of the Mexican adventure? Maximilian and Charlotte are personages worthy of Sophocles. A downfall through blood and shame—such was the logical end of the Second Empire. Even to the young prince, whom the *lex talionis* brought face to face with the lance of a Zulu, in order that his mother might expiate her part of responsibility in the disasters of France! History always assimilates the moral of the drama, or rather it is the drama that is assimilated to the moral of history.

—From the French of C. Mismar.

(To be concluded.)

### Babel and Bible.

UNDER the above the *Chronicle* quotes the following summary of an interesting lecture by Mr. St. Chad Boscawen before the Ethical Society in Steinway Hall, on "Babylonian Epic Poetry in Relation to the Higher Criticism":—"Referring to the controversy to which the lecture of Dr. Delitzsch in Berlin had given rise, Mr. Boscawen pointed out that the Babylonian Creation Legends and the Deluge Story were in literary form as early as B.C. 2300, and in a form differing in hardly any degree from that in use in the days of the Captivity. How could such legend be quoted as confirming works supposed to be written a thousand years later? A great point has been made by Apologists of the discovery of the Tel-el-Amarna tablets. We have been informed by Professor Sayce that they proved the existence of libraries in Egypt in the days of Moses, in which Babylonian literature was studied, hence his knowledge of the Creation story. The real facts are quite different. About 200 tablets written in Cuneiform were discovered in the scribes' room of the palace of the heretic King Khu-en-Aten at Tel-el-Amarna. These were, with the exception of one fragment, the draft of a letter, tablets that had been sent from Syria, Mesopotamia, and Babylonia during the reigns of Amenophis III. and IV. No tablets were found anywhere else. The heretic city was destroyed; the tomb of the King desecrated, as he himself had seen, a few years after his death, and the tablets remained in the office. There was not the slightest proof of Cuneiform literature having been studied by the Egyptians either at that time or later, still less in the days of the Ramesides. What these tables do prove is that throughout Canaan, in both large and small towns, there were scribes who could read and write the language of Babylonia and presumably had a knowledge of Babylonian literature. With this literature Moses never came in contact. As to the Hebrew creation stories, their Babylonian origin was most indisputable to all who would consider them simply as documents. As to the Elohist version we had the Sabbath and the Creative week, both of which were borrowed from the late Babylonian sacerdotalism, but the Yahvist's version was saturated with Babylonian matter. The creator Yaveh was a god of agriculture—he possessed a sacred garden in which there grew the Tree of Life, the Tree of Knowledge, and the garden was watered by the Tigris and the Euphrates. So the Babylonian Ea, the old creator god, was an agricultural god, entitled 'the bestower of planting, the founder of sowing, who causes the green herb to spring up.' He had his sacred garden in Eridu, where the Tree of Life grew, the Euphrates was his sacred river, and he created man out of the clay of the ground, having the title of the 'divine potter.' Not only was this in general agreement with the Babylonian stories, but in those chapters, Genesis ii.-iv., there occur over thirty words of Babylonian origin, of none of which a satisfactory Hebrew etymology can be given."

But, good my brother,

Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,  
Show me the steep, and thorny way to heaven  
Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,  
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,  
And reck's not his own road.

—Hamlet.

## Acid Drops.

Tolstoy's novel, *Resurrection*, now being acted as a play, is described as a gloomy, grandiose, heart-breaking story. The title, *Resurrection*, is not used in the usual theological sense, but as an equivalent for moral regeneration. A girl, seduced by a noble, falls lower and lower in her degradation, until she is finally sent to Siberia on charges of poisoning and robbery. The noble, who happens to be on the jury that tries her, is struck with remorse, and follows her to Siberia, in order to marry her. She refuses to ruin his career by such a marriage. After declaring their mutual love, they part, and two souls are supposed to be saved by being purified and elevated by love and self-sacrifice.

Tolstoy is a man with a religious and social mission. He writes his pathetic story in order to support the teachings of the Gospel as set forth in the Sermon on the Mount. We are not to condemn others lest we be condemned ourselves. He accordingly attacks all civil and political authority. All who suffer punishment in the story are depicted as more or less in the right, while all who wield authority are in the wrong. The court, the jury, the prison officials, alike defy the great principle laid down by Jesus. The penitent nobleman is made to see clearly "that all the dreadful evil he had been witnessing in prisons and gaols, and the quiet self-satisfaction of the perpetrators of this evil, were the consequences of men trying to do what was impossible—trying to correct evil while being evil themselves.....The only certain means of salvation from the terrible evil from which men were suffering was that they should always acknowledge themselves to be sinning against God, and therefore unable to punish or correct others."

The State, in short, as well as individuals, must give up the supposed right of punishment. Universal benevolence and non-resistance of evil are the only means to be employed in overcoming evil. The necessity of self-protection and of social protection by systematic control involving the right of punishment is forgotten. The book is intended to justify the views put in practice by the Doukhobors, whose late follies in Canada have given so much trouble to the authorities. It is an illustration of the mischievous perversion of good sense caused by the ultra-moralism of the New Testament. All infliction of pain on others is regarded as "evil" which must necessarily be avoided. The author fails to see the ruin which must fall upon society if his teachings were adopted.

We confess to a liking for a good dramatic representation, and we are proportionately thankful to the actors and actresses who have enabled us to spend a pleasant evening now and again. We feel, therefore, that it is our duty to warn the "profession" generally that the Rev. Stanley Parker, of Barrow, is on their track. This shining light considers the theatre "irrecoverably, irretrievably lost." There is hope for the blackest of sinners, but the theatrical profession is past saving. Not even the religious play moves his bowels to pity. "The only motive for the production of religious plays is to fill the pockets of the proprietors." Oh, shades of Hall Caine and Wilson Barrett!

Some people condemn on hearsay. Not so the Rev. Stanley. Like some Paladin of old, he sallied forth to explore the interior of a Barrow theatre. He sat in the second row of the pit. He saw that some of the people were reading a pink paper containing the portraits of prize fighters, etc. People also went out between the acts for a drink. When the play began, it was very tame until an actor came on "with a fearful oath." Then the people applauded. "During the whole night this actor continued to curse and swear in a most horrible manner." The things he heard from the stage were "unrepeatable," the sights he saw were "indescribable." "One of the most innocent" was when one actress said to another, "Let us change dresses," and "these two women deliberately undressed themselves in the presence of that crowd of men without a blush." We presume that the valiant Stanley wished his hearers to believe that the two actresses appeared quite naked, as Adam and Eve used to appear in the *Church* plays of the middle ages. We imagine that the undressing consisted of the removal of an outer skirt. But this clerical explorer was not to be daunted, and his pure mind, thanks to Wesleyan Methodist nurture, was able to see two perfectly naked women by the mere removal of an outer skirt. After all we suppose that what Emerson said of people and reading applies to people and theatres. Each one gets from a play, as from a book, pretty much what they put into it.

The other day we were looking over Inspector Lansdowne's *Life's Reminiscences of Scotland Yard*. The writer said that he did not often adopt disguises, but when he or his colleagues wished to catch people selling indecent books or pictures, the most effective disguise was that of a clergyman.

The Rev. Stanley Parker is as great on Christian evidences as he is in attacking the theatre. He once received a letter from Mr. John Motley, dated "1902," on which he moralises thus: "What a tremendous admission! That Christ is so powerful as to compel the nations to count the years by Him, and unbelievers to date from Him! Every time a Secularist writes these figures he signs the death warrant of scepticism." What a number of death warrants there must be out against scepticism, to be sure!

It is with due fear and trembling that we venture to point out that every time the Rev. Parker writes "1902" or "1903" he is admitting the supremacy of Hindoo and Arab, who gave these numerals to us. In penning his onslaught on scepticism he was admitting the power of the ancient Egyptians, whose hieroglyphics are represented in our alphabet. And when he consulted the clock, to see if he was in time to start on his journey to the theatre, he was admitting the power of the ancient Babylonians, whose division of time we follow. And, in all probability, every time he preaches a sermon he is giving a practical illustration of the truth of that portion of the Bible which narrates how Balaam's steed rose up and rebuked his master.

The excitement in Germany over Professor Delitzsch's lecture on "Babel and the Bible" has not yet subsided. It was thought that William of the "Mailed Fist" sympathised with the Professor's views; and, in order to clear away any misapprehensions, the Emperor has now come forward with a confession of faith. He thinks it a grave mistake that the Professor should have approached the subject in a polemical spirit, more or less denied revelation, and traced it back to historical and purely human things. He winds up with the following statement of his beliefs: "(a) I believe in one only God. (b) We men need a form in order to teach His existence, especially for our children. (c) This form has hitherto been the Old Testament in its present version. This form will be positively and substantially modified under the influence of research and inscriptions and excavations. That does not matter. Neither does it matter that much of the niubus of the chosen people will thereby disappear. The kernel and the contents remain always the same—God and His works. Religion has never been the result of science, but the outpouring of the heart and being of man from his intercourse with God." We presume that the next step will be to confine the Professor for *Lese Majeste*.

"Religion has never been the result of science." That, at least, is one expression of the Emperor's which unprejudiced men will agree with, and we commend it to the attention of all those who are so fond of airing windy platitudes concerning the essential identity of religion with science. We do not know that Kaiser Wilhelm II. has any claim to be considered a profound thinker, but he certainly has the capacity for seeing things as they are. Many of his actions and speeches show this; and in this particular instance he recognises what most others must recognise, whether they admit it or not, and that is, that the growth of sound intellectual activity, and a decline of religious belief, are concurrent phenomena the world over.

The *Morning Advertiser*, commenting on the Emperor's article, while agreeing with his position, thinks that it would have been wiser to have followed the advice (which it wrongly attributes to Dr. Johnson) laid down by Lord Chesterfield, and have kept his religious opinions to himself. This is the cowardly rule upon which most of our daily papers, and a great many individuals, seem to act without much persuasion. "Keep your opinions to yourself" may be a justifiable retort to one who is making a nuisance of himself in their ventilation, but on the whole opinion is too vital a force in the world for it to be profitably suppressed. And there can be nothing more demoralising all round than men and women who *have* opinions locking them up in their own breasts, and by implication supporting opinions in which they do not believe.

At the Lower House of Convocation sitting at York on Thursday, February 19, Canon Lister brought before the House a gravamen relating to the virgin birth of Christ. The petition was to the effect that steps be taken to make manifest to all Christian people that the Convocation held fast to "the primitive faith of the undivided Church in Our Lord's virgin birth and in His resurrection," and was fully persuaded that none other than such as confessed and held the faith in those verities should be either admitted into, or

permitted to exercise the sacred ministry of the word within the Church of England. The names of fifteen archdeacons and proctors were appended to the petition, and Canon Lister moved that it be discussed with the view to its being adopted as an *articulus cleri*, urging that not only from reported speeches, but from published books, there was great reason for disquiet on the subject. Twenty-five voted for the proposal, and twenty-one against.

We cannot refrain from wondering what will happen if, when the subject is fully discussed, it is decided that belief in the miraculous birth of J. C. is not essential to holding office in the Church. Such a decision would, of course, only serve to emphasise the already well-known fact that the Christian ministry is permeated with Freethought and scepticism, but it would be something gained to have that fact officially recognised and endorsed, as it then would be. But there is very little doubt but that the Church, as represented by its Convocation, will either pursue its usual ostrich-like policy of ignoring the subject altogether, or else will pass a colorless resolution in the terms of Canon Lister's motion, and assume that that will dispose of the difficulty. But will it?

The subject is considered of sufficient importance by the *Newcastle Daily Leader* to devote a leading article to it. The *Leader* points out that "as Canon Lister affirmed in the strongest and most emphatic language, the doctrines of the virgin birth and of the Resurrection lie at the roots of Christianity. To explain these cardinal miracles away as the Higher Critics are doing is to remove the foundation stones on which historical Christianity rests. 'They are,' to quote Canon Lister's words, 'the two greatest miracles of the Gospel, and the only two mentioned in the Creed.'" The *Leader* proceeds: "Now in these latter days there has arisen a new and dangerous kind of heresy which at one and the same time challenges the central dogmas and declares that the holding or rejection of them does not signify much. Against this destructive latitudinarianism and indifferentism Canon Lister protested with great vehemence. The assailed doctrines, he declared, mean everything. Without them the Church of England would be utterly ruined. To whittle them away after the manner of the writers of the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* was to shatter the Christian faith. If there was no miraculous birth and no miraculous resurrection of an actual body, then the whole Christian Scriptures were wiped away. The Bible Canon Lister regards as the men of old did, as a book inspired from Genesis to Revelation—not as a merely ethical work of past ages to be rejected or accepted according as historical analysis or the thought of the age permits." The conclusion arrived at by the *Leader* is that "In these days we are apt to forget those things, to pass over such cardinal distinctions as of little moment, and to go on pretending to believe in doctrines which have long ceased to have any operative effect on the mind or heart. Wherefore, we think that Canon Lister's gravamen will do much good." A pious opinion which we are afraid we cannot share, however much we may sympathise with those Christians who deprecate the action of the clergy and others who accept money for teaching dogmas and beliefs to others which they have utterly outgrown themselves.

Providence is again at work—this time with the sardine fisheries in Brittany. There are more than 30,000 men employed in this industry, which represents the livelihood of 150,000 individuals. The distress among them, in consequence of the bad season, is terrible. At Guilvinec, out of 5,000 inhabitants, 4,000 are starving. At Douarenez 1,200 families out of a population of 12,000 have applied for public assistance. There are nearly 1,000 starving in this place alone. Some efforts are being made to cope with the distress. Man is, as usual, trying to make up for the deficiencies of Providence. No community of men and women could watch such a general state of starvation untouched. God alone seems capable of this.

Of course, it will be argued that Providence *is* working through the agency of those who are trying to alleviate the distress. But as Providence is responsible for the distress in the first instance, it is, even at best, only undoing some of its own mischief. And the mother who is watching her children die of starvation is hardly likely to feel thankful to God for sending a little belated assistance in the shape of *human* charity.

Finland is suffering from famine, and 500,000 persons are reported to be starving. President Roosevelt has sent a contribution to the relief fund; but Providence, who on the Christian theory causes the distress by mismanaging the weather, looks idly on, and leaves the misery unrelieved, except by human effort and human benevolence.

Another awful example. Councillor Norman, a well-known public man at Cardiff, died suddenly at a Baptist missionary meeting recently. A hymn was being sung, when Mr. Norman fell down dead. He appeared to have been in his usual health up to the time of his seizure.

Dr. Long is a Protestant medical practitioner, with a growing practice in Limerick. His Protestant proclivities have brought him into collision with the Roman Catholic section of the city. The Evangelical Church papers contain strong protests against the way in which this religious antagonism manifests itself. Circumstantial details of interference with his practice are given, from which it appears that Dr. Long had been subjected to unpleasant experiences for two or three years, but during the last few weeks the antagonism has assumed a more violent form. How those Christians love one another!

Two more ministers have been charged with fraudulently collecting money. One of them—the Rev. Maurice Otto Fitzmaurice, vicar of St. James's, Wigan—was sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labor. His companion, the Rev. C. Harrower, was discharged. The vicar had been calling at various houses in Birkdale and selling tickets for a concert on the pretence that the profits would be given to different charities. Many other clergymen, if they had their deserts, would similarly pass from their pulpits to some gaol where they would be made to do a little work. Independently of individual failings, indeed, the whole tribe of priests and parsons live by a wholesale system of obtaining money under false pretences.

Religious mania has caused the death of Mr. Dunthorne, of Glastonbury. His son, a married man of thirty, was seen struggling with his father and endeavoring to drag him off the railway line, when a passing train ran over them and killed them both.

The Rev. Canon Haygarth, vicar of Wimbledon, leaves over £100,000 behind him, because, as people say, he cannot take it with him. Evidently, like most of his brethren, he did not believe in Christ's command, "Lay not up treasures on earth;" and it is equally clear that he cared nothing for Christ's warning of the impossibility of a rich man entering the kingdom of heaven. Like so many of the priestly kind, he preached one thing and practised another.

Miss Florence E. L. Guillon, aged twenty-two, has drowned herself because she had not "a heart at peace with God." She had everything that could make a girl happy except this, she explained in the letter she left behind. Like the poet Cowper, she was made wretched by her religious belief. She felt that she had "lost all hope." Thus tormented, she escaped from her misery by throwing herself into the Thames. The coroner's jury returned a verdict of suicide during temporary insanity.

Senator Tillman upholds lynching in the name of the Deity. He says he "will willingly head a mob to inflict summary punishment on the man who would harm a woman, white or black." As to trial, in which the woman would be required to give evidence, or, as Senator Tillman puts it, would have to "submit to that second crucifixion in open court," some might ask for it as a necessary prelude to execution; but, says the Christian senator to his Christian audience, "thank God, the people of the South never will."

At a recent meeting of the Plymouth Board of Guardians, Mr. R. E. Govier moved a resolution to the effect "that in the opinion of this Board it is very undesirable to inflict corporal punishment on boys under the care of the Guardians at the scattered homes, and that in future all cases of misbehavior must be reported to the committee for their consideration." After considerable discussion the motion was defeated by nine votes to five. Evidently the majority of the Plymouth Guardians are still imbued with the pernicious Biblical teaching, "Spare the rod and spoil the child."

The question of the utility of the birch in education has recently been discussed at some length in the columns of the *Blackpool Times*. One correspondent, who signs himself as "A Blackpool Parent," writes that "the parents of to-day are quite too soft and easy with their children. As an old Sunday-school teacher I am quite convinced that is the case," and proceeds to advocate more cane, not only for day schools, but in Sunday-schools also. He writes: "I would have every boy flogged who smoked, for his own sake. They are impudent, many of them swear and use the vilest language—even those who attend Sunday-school.....I once heard a very successful elementary teacher say that he always dreaded Monday most, because the children were always worst to manage that day. He blamed it on the fact that

most of them had been to Sunday-school, where they did as they liked, and where there was no discipline." Surely a curious commentary on the good effected by attending Sunday-school.

This pious flogger advocates the use of the cane absolutely indiscriminately. "A sound thrashing has saved many a lad from ruin"; "for lying, stealing, and bullying.....there is nothing like a good sound flogging"; "a good scientific (1) caning by the head teacher is a good thing for many, if not most, of our boys"; "I am afraid, as I said before, that we are too easy and soft with our children nowadays." These are some of the gems of wisdom included in this precious effusion. It is at any rate fairly certain that the children of "A Blackpool Parent" do not find things made too soft and easy for them.

At a recent meeting of the Actors' Church Alliance of New York City it was proposed that that organisation join with the Church Club in discouraging indecent or morbid plays. The plan suggested was to appoint a committee of clergymen to attend the opening performances and report on the moral worth, or worthlessness, of the plays. This report is to be made public, and is to serve as a guide to that part of the theatre-going public which desires to see the stage made more of an active force for good in the life of the community.

This proposal induces the New York *Evening Post* to ask if clergymen are, as a rule, the "best judges of the moral quality and effect of a play? Is it not, as a matter of fact, almost proverbial that they are easily beguiled by a little mock religious sentiment, and that they have frequently extended valuable countenance and support to very flagrant theatrical impostures? Plays like *The Sign of the Cross* and *The Christian*, not to mention a host of others, in which the attempt has been made to give a religious flavor to cheap and meretricious melodrama, have never experienced any difficulty in securing clerical commendation, sometimes in very unexpected quarters. On the whole," it concludes, "if these clergymen wish to engage in the work of theatrical reform—and nowhere is reform more urgently needed—they will be wise to avoid the danger and the odium of denouncing or recommending any particular performance. Let them devote themselves rather to the work of renewing in the public mind a proper respect for what is clean and decent in the abstract." Good advice, no doubt; but even then the further question arises whether the clergy are any more qualified for such a function than for censoring plays.

Recently a novel departure in journalism has been made in America, where the *Assumption Independent* is reprinting the Bible in weekly instalments in its columns. It is asserted that since its commencement the editor of the paper in question has been threatened with a prosecution by a prominent official, on the ground of publishing "improper literature." Interviewed on the subject, the editor explained that it was to some chapters in Genesis and Deuteronomy that the objection was taken. "For my part I consider anything that is fit to be the basis of Christianity and to be taught to the children in the Sunday schools is good enough to be submitted to newspaper readers along with news items of the day." Sound enough logic, no doubt, and we shall await the issue with a considerable degree of interest to see whether the "prominent official" views the matter in the same light.

Nothing seems to suit wealthy collectors nowadays but editions that are beyond the reach of the ordinary book buyer. An American firm, for instance, announces an edition of Montaigne to be published in three vols. at £9 net per volume. If this were a sign of a really genuine desire to possess finely-printed editions of good works, a desire springing out of admiration for the writings of great authors, there would be nothing to find fault with. We suspect it is merely another illustration of the insolence of wealth, and that the purchasers would, for the most part, buy quite as readily a similar edition of Marie Corelli, Hall Caine, or Samuel Smiles. If someone would only reprint, in a handy edition, Lucian's *Illiterate Bibliomaniac*, it might be a good stroke to send some of these millionaire collectors a copy, free, gratis, for nothing.

Addressing a public meeting the other day on the subject of education, Canon Cleworth, of Hopwood, Lanes., asked the question, "Why should children be divided into pens, bearing distinctive marks like sheep in the cattle market? Why should there be little Methodists, little Wesleyans, little Congregationalists, little Romanists, little Churchmen?" Of course, the correct answer is that if there are no little Christians, there is but a slim chance of there ever being

big ones. And therefore unless they are marked like sheep while young, there will be small opportunities for the clergy to fleece them when shearing season comes round.

Canon Cleworth's answer is, however, that why he is not content with confining their instruction to matters of conduct is because "morality is very beautiful, but it is not Christianity;" with which we quite agree. "There could be no true Christianity without a good life, but it was useless to teach a good life without giving real Christianity," with which we do not agree. Christianity has never had more than an incidental connection with morality, and the association has been generally far from helpful towards the development of a sound sense of real obligations and social duties. And of this Canon Cleworth is perhaps as good an example as another.

"The difference between a Voltaire and a Wesley is all but infinite." So said the Rev. R. J. Campbell, of the City Temple. We are not inclined to quarrel with the statement, as a statement, although we imagine that there would be a slight disagreement in the interpretation thereof. Voltaire was certainly "all but infinitely" (to use Mr. Campbell's phrase) superior in point of intellect to Wesley, whose mind was of anything but a first rate order. Witness his acceptance of all the stupid superstitions that many contemporary Christians had given up, and which all intelligent believers have since surrendered. And we venture to say that, at bottom, Voltaire had a much broader human sympathy than the founder of Wesleyan Methodism possessed. Voltaire's championship of Calas is a case in point.

A correspondent writes to ask who was David's mother. He says that he has been having a discussion with someone on the matter, and on referring to the Bible is unable to find the required information. Neither can we. The Bible does tell us who David's father was, but is silent as regards his maternal relative, and for a very plain reason. In the Bible women are never of sufficient importance for any special information to be given, unless unusual circumstances make this necessary. The phrase "the congregation of the children of Israel," does not include women, only the men being counted. And of the Hebrew religious service the same statement holds good. The ten persons necessary to perform a religious service must be men; no number of women would make good the deficiency. Woman in the Bible is a cipher, she does not rise to the dignity of a numeral.

Not only is woman not counted in the Bible, but there is a special measure of uncleanness about her. The period set apart for a woman's purification after childbirth, for example, is twice as long in the case of a female child as in that of a male. The same sentiment is carried into the New Testament. The disciples selected by Jesus were all men. Paul advocates the celibate life as being in all ways preferable to the married state. And when Mary Magdalene, after the resurrection, rushes to embrace Jesus, she is repulsed, on the obvious grounds that her touch would have polluted him, thus exemplifying a well-known characteristic of Eastern religions. All these considerations, with many more of the same kind that might be cited, have a very vital bearing upon the claim of the Christian Churches to have elevated both the character and the social position of woman. The truth is that all religions have more or less stamped woman with the mark of inferiority, and of these Christianity belongs to the "more's."

### Kind Words.

At a prayer meeting at the Cove, reports the *Buffalo Commercial*, one man, a money lender, not loved by the people whose collateral he held, spoke of himself and the others present as "miserable sinners," and took rather too abject an attitude to please a free-spoken neighbour. "Some people," the latter said, "don't mean nothin' when they profess to be miserable sinners, but I will do Elder Cossey the justice to say that we all believe him to be just as blame mean as he professes to be." It must have been Elder Cossey at whose funeral the hard-pressed parson is reported as saying: "It is true, my hearers, that our departed brother was mean in some things—but we must in all charity remember that he was meaner in others."

A little girl had been looking at pictures of angels, and she turned to her mother and asked: "Mamma, why are there no men in heaven?" "But there are men in heaven," replied the mother. "Then why is it," asked the child, "that we never see any pictures of angels with whiskers or moustaches?" "True, but there are men in heaven," was the reply; "only they get in by a close shave."



### Mr. Foote's Lecturing Engagements.

Sunday, March 1, Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, London, W.: 7.30, "Religion: How it is Born, How it Lives, and How it Dies."

March 8, Athenæum Hall, London.

### To Correspondents.

C. COHEN'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—Address, 241 High-road, Leyton.—March 1, Birmingham Labor Church, Bristol-road Board Schools; 8, Glasgow; 15, Liverpool.

R. K. NAGARKA (India).—Pleased to get your letter, and to know that you are pleased with *Pioneer*. Copies ordered are being sent. We are not surprised that many of Ah Sin's statements concerning missionaries in China are applicable to missionary work in India. It seems pretty much the same all the world over. We cannot say who the authorities are upon which the writer based the statements contained in his article.

MR. J. UMPLEBY, the Blackburn veteran Freethinker, enclosing his annual subscription to the N. S. S., offers to subscribe to the Society's funds a further donation of £10 if nine others can be induced to follow his example. We sincerely hope the "others" will take him at his word. It does not seem such an impossible condition to comply with.

MR. MANN writes, in reply to Mr. Lintorn, that the reference to Winwood Reade's *Martyrdom of Man* should be p. 240, edition 1896, not p. 62, as given in his article. He regrets the error, but hopes that the correction will make him more careful in the future.

GARDENSTOWN.—Miss Vance asks us to state that she has received an order for seven shillings and sixpence worth of pamphlets, P.O. enclosed for that amount, but without name or address. If the sender will supply the deficiency the pamphlets will be forwarded.

G. CROOKSON.—Thanks for your letter. Evidently there was a mistake, as we surmised. We are obliged to you for the trade circular showing that the veteran firm of John Heywood (Manchester) is doing full justice to the *Pioneer*.

E. M. BAINTON.—Letters advocating the suppression of Vivisection in the name of Christ would be out of place in the *Freethinker*. Appeals to science and humanity are the only ones that tell with our readers. You should try a more orthodox journal.

H. CLIFTON.—Thanks for a sight of your friend's letter. The suggestion as to reprinting the Letters from a Chinaman in pamphlet form is under consideration. He says it could be circulated amongst people who would not read the *Freethinker*. We should be glad to hear from others on this point.

T. FISHER.—Very glad to receive better news. See acknowledgment. Thanks.

J. WHITE.—See "Acid Drops."

NEMO.—Order handed to Miss Vance, and subscription acknowledged elsewhere. We are sorry to hear such ill news, and hope the prospect will improve.

J. YOUNG.—We know nothing of Isaac Selby. He represents himself, we understand, as a "converted infidel" from the Antipodes, but he could not have been very illustrious over there, or we should have heard of him.

H. H.—Pleased to receive your promise. You seem to have overlooked the fact that, besides referring to the negligent and lazy, we allowed that many must feel the pinch of the times and be unable to give anything.

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.

### Sugar Plums.

Mr. Foote lectures at the Athenæum Hall, 73 Tottenham Court-road, this evening (March 1) for the first time since the old year. No doubt he will have a large audience. His subject is "Religion: How it is Born, How it Lives, and How it Dies." This is the lecture that "caught on" so at Glasgow the previous Sunday evening.

Mr. Foote's visit to Glasgow was made under some disadvantages. Alternate wind and rain during the preceding week had played havoc with the bills on the outdoor posting-stations, and the advertisement of the meetings was thus seriously affected. The weather on Sunday, too, was very inclement, and it was not surprising that the morning attendance was not up to Mr. Foote's usual level. There was, however, a fine audience in the evening, and the lecturer met with an enthusiastic reception. Mr. Turnbull took the chair on both occasions, and managed to draw forth a little discussion. Fervent hopes were expressed that Mr. Foote would be none the worse for his Glasgow visit, that he would keep well, and live long to fight the battle of Freethought.

Mr. Foote did not return from Glasgow till Monday evening, and being rather fatigued, though not otherwise worse for the tax upon his returning strength, he is not able to do anything serious in the way of fresh writing for the present issue of the *Freethinker*, which is got ready for the press (as usual) on Tuesday. He will have more to say next week. Until then he must beg the readers' indulgence at all points where it seems necessary.

To-day (March 1) Mr. Cohen lectures at the Labor Church, Bristol-road Board Schools, Birmingham, on the subject of "The Problem of the Criminal." We have no doubt there will be a good audience.

The *Pioneer* is only a baby journal as yet, of course; but it is already three months old—or rather in its third number. The March issue will be published soon after this week's *Freethinker*, and a full list of contents will appear next week in our advertisement columns. Meanwhile we beg to assure our friends that the new number of the *Pioneer* is a lively one, which they would do well to circulate as widely as possible. The cheap terms for copies to be distributed in this way are still continued: six copies for threepence, twelve copies for fivepence, twenty-four copies for ninepence—post free.

The discussion on Science and Religion still continues to occupy several columns weekly in the *Clarion*. We have no desire to step between "Nunquam" and his critics, but we are heartily pleased to see that some of the leaders of the labor movement are at length beginning to recognise the necessity of clearing theology out of the way, if a permanent social improvement is to be effected. A great deal of the friendly difference between Secularists and Socialists has arisen upon this issue, and we shall be well pleased if this discussion serves to bring about a clearer understanding of the position taken up by Secularists in relation to social problems.

The Glasgow Branch is doing well with its monthly Sunday evening concert, which attracts a large audience and a number of ladies and young folk, besides assisting the Branch funds. Another concert will take place this evening (March 1). The printed program of instrumental music is an admirable one.

We must ask those who have subscribed for the Dresden Edition of Ingersoll's works to excuse the unavoidable delay in fulfilling their orders. We were advised some time ago that the sets were shipped and on their way, but the authorities at this end have not yet received them. There must have been an error, in directing or in some other matter, and the delay is now being investigated. However, those who have subscribed need be under no apprehension, as the sets are bound to come to hand sooner or later. The delay is vexatious, all the same.

Someone living in Macclesfield is endeavoring to circulate our literature in a rather peculiar manner. Copies of the *Freethinker*, *Pioneer*, etc., are being sent to addresses in various parts of the country in unstamped wrappers. As many of the addresses are wrong ones, the papers are returned to us, and the customary charge of twopence per letter made by the postal officials. We have no objection to anyone sending our literature to quarters where they think it may be productive of good, but in common fairness to its

intended recipients we think the postage should be prepaid. At any rate, we wish to warn this Macclesfield unknown that no more unstamped letters will be accepted at this office, and we advise others to follow our example.

The new pamphlet by Colonel Ingersoll, *A Wooden God*, is selling rapidly. It is the first time that this essay has appeared in England, and its quick sale bears indisputable evidence of the great Freethinker's undiminished popularity. *A Wooden God* is an essay that has both a political and a religious point to it, and incidentally throws much light upon the position of Christian people in the "long-lived Empire." The price, one penny, for a sixteen-page pamphlet, is one that places it within the reach of all, and makes it eminently suitable for distribution.

### 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.

Nemo, 1.

Per Miss Vance: R. Lancaster, 2; R. B., 1; T. H. and A. J. W., 4; J. Stocks, 1; D. Evans, 1; J. Moffat, 2; E. Oliver, 10; G. B. Taylor, 4; Frangary, 3; W. Lancaster, 2; V. Page, 1.—Total to date, £53 2s.

#### SPECIAL

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

W. W. Pearce, 5; Glasgow Branch (collection at Mr. Foote's meeting), 23; T. Fisher, 3.—Total to date, £24 10s. 6d.

#### SPECIAL

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

Per Miss Vance: J. Umpleby, 10.—Total to date, £14 7s.

### Lord Bacon on Atheism.

(Concluded from page 116.)

ALTHOUGH Lord Bacon was not the "meanest of mankind," there was certainly a lack of the heroic in his disposition; and this passage emanated from the most prosaic part of his mind and character. "Great thoughts," said Vauvenargues, "spring from the heart." Now the heart of Lord Bacon was not as high as his intellect; no one could for a moment imagine his facing martyrdom. He had none of the splendid audacity, the undaunted courage, the unshakable fortitude, of his loftier contemporary, Giordano Bruno. So much truth is there in Pope's epigram, that his lordship was capable at times of grovelling; witness his fulsome, though magnificent, dedication of the *Advancement of Learning* to King James—the British Solomon, as his flatterers called him, to the amusement of the great Henry of France, who sneered, "Yes, Solomon, the Son of David," in allusion to his mother's familiarity with David Rizzio. And in this very passage of the essay on Atheism we also see the grovelling side of Lord Bacon, with a corresponding perversion of intelligence. Being incapable of understanding martyrdom, except under the expectation of a reward in heaven, his lordship cannot appreciate the act of an Atheist in suffering for his convictions. His concluding words are positively mean. Surely the Atheist might trouble himself about truth, justice, and dignity; all of which are involved in the maintenance and propagation of his principles. But, if the closing observation is mean, the opening observation is fatuous. This is a strong word to use of any sentence of Lord Bacon's, but in this instance it is justifiable. If an Atheist mistrusts his own opinion, because he talks about it, what is to be said of the Christians, who pay thousands of ministers to talk about their opinions, and even subscribe for Missionary Societies to talk about them to the "heathen"? Are we to conclude that an Atheist's talking shows mistrust, and a Christian's talking shows confidence? What real weakness is there in the Atheist's seeking for sympathy and concurrence? It is hard for any man to stand alone; certainly it was not in Lord Bacon's

line to do so; and why should not the Atheist be "glad to be strengthened by the opinion of others"? Novalis said that his opinion gained infinitely when it was shared by another. The participation does not prove the truth of the opinion, but redeems it from the suspicion of being a mere maggot of an individual brain.

Lord Bacon then turns to the barbaric races, who worship particular gods, though they have not the general name; a fact which he did not understand. More than two hundred years later it was explained by David Hume. It is simply a proof that monotheism grows out of polytheism; or, if you like, that Theism is a development of Idolatry. This is a truth that takes all the sting out of Lord Bacon's observation that "against Atheists the very savages take part with the very subtlest philosophers." We may just remark that the philosophers must be very hard pressed when they call up their savage allies.

Contemplative Atheists are rare, says Lord Bacon—"a Diagoras, a Bion, a Lucian perhaps, and some others." They seem more than they are, for all sorts of heretics are branded as Atheists; which leads his lordship to the declaration that "the great Atheists indeed are hypocrites, which are ever handling holy things, but without feeling; so as they must needs be cauterised in the end." This is a pungent observation, and it springs from the better side of his lordship's nature. We also have no respect for hypocrites, and for that very reason we object to them as a present to Atheism. Religion must consume in its own smoke, and dispose of its own refuse.

The causes of Atheism next occupy Lord Bacon's attention. He finds they are four: divisions in religion, the scandal of priests, profane scoffing in holy matters, and "learned times, especially with peace and prosperity." "Troubles and adversities," his lordship says, "do more bow men's minds to religion." Which is true enough, though it only illustrates the line of the Roman poet that religion always has its root in fear.

It will be observed that, up to the present, Lord Bacon has not considered one of the reasons for Atheism. What he calls "causes" are only occasions. He does not discuss, or even refer to, the objections to Theism that are derived from the tentative operations of nature, so different from what might be expected from a settled plan; from ugly, venomous, and monstrous things: from the great imperfection of nature's very highest productions; from the ignorance, misery, and degradation of such a vast part of mankind; from the utter absence of anything like a moral government of the universe. Only towards the end of his essay does Lord Bacon begin business with the Atheists. "They that deny a God," he says, "destroy a man's nobility; for certainly man is of kin to the beasts by his body; and, if he be not of kin to God by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature." This is pointed and vigorous, but after all it is a matter of sentiment. Some prefer the fallen angel, others the risen ape. Lord Bacon, like Earl Beaconsfield, is on the side of the angels. We are on the other side. A being who has done something, and will do more, however humble his origin, is preferable to one who can only boast of his fine descent.

Finally, his lordship takes the illustration of the dog, to whom man is "instead of a God." What generosity and courage he will put on, in the "confidence of a better nature than his own." So man gathereth force and faith from divine protection and favor. Atheism, therefore, "depriveth human nature of the means to exalt itself above human frailty." But this is to forget that there may be more than one means to the same end. Human nature may be exalted above its frailty without becoming the dog of a superior intelligence. Science, self-examination, culture, public opinion, and the growth of humanity, are more than substitutes for devotion to a deity. They are capable of exalting man continuously and indefinitely. They do not appeal to the spaniel element in his nature; they make him free, erect, noble, and self-dependent.

On the whole, we are bound to say that Lord Bacon's essay on Atheism is unworthy of his genius. If it were the only piece of his writing extant, we should say it was the work of one who had great powers of expression but no remarkable powers of thought. He writes very finely as a strong advocate, putting a case in a way that commands attention, and perhaps admiration, for its force and skill. But something more than this is to be expected when a really great man addresses himself to a question of such depth and importance. What, then, are we to conclude? Why this: that Lord Bacon dared not give the rein to his mind in an essay on Atheism. He was bound to be circumspect in a composition level to the intelligence of every educated reader. We prefer to take him where he enjoys greater freedom. Under the veil of a story, for instance, he aims a dart at the superstition of a special providence, which is an ineradicable part of the Christian faith. Bion, the Atheist, being shown the votive tablets in the Temple of Neptune, presented by those who prayed to the god in a storm and were saved, asked where were the tablets of those who were drowned. Bacon tells the story with evident gusto, and it is in such things that we seem to get at his real thoughts. In a set essay on Atheism, a man of his worldly wisdom, and unheroic temper, was sure to kneel at the regular altars. The single query, "Why should they trouble themselves?" explains it all. F.

### Mr. M. D. Conway on Thomas Paine.

The following, with the exception of a few preliminary remarks, is Mr. Conway's Address at the Annual Paine Celebration in New York. Mr. Conway, having made the subject peculiarly his own, his Address cannot fail to be of interest to English readers.

I HAVE so recently said my say about Paine that it seems a shame for me to occupy time on this subject. I have had a Paine experience, not a painful experience. I remember just forty-three years ago to-day, being then minister of the First Congregational Church in Cincinnati, that I had announced in the papers that on the 29th of January, 1860, I meant to preach a sermon about Thomas Paine. I presided over the wealthiest and most aristocratic church in Cincinnati, composed largely of influential people, judges, lawyers, and bankers. They all came that day, and there was considerable enthusiasm. With fear and trembling I delivered what was said to be the first sermon from a pulpit that spoke with respect of Thomas Paine; it was quite favorably received, and I was requested to have it printed. So I concluded that the people were becoming anxious for some revision of the fictions that had gone abroad regarding Paine. I am not specially proud of that sermon now, as at that time I was ignorant of Paine from my present point of view. I have noticed that among the clergy there has been a strong sense that Paine has been treated unjustly. For instance, when it was announced that I intended to write a life of Thomas Paine, the Rev. Dr. Jackson, a learned Presbyterian of New York, called on me and said that he had been so much impressed by the errors regarding Paine that he had in the British Museum made a complete list of Paine's works, and had intended to publish something on the subject himself. He said that I was at liberty to use his list. That is one of many instances that I have known of the change of mind about Paine.

In England I went about to different places, and found a local interest in Paine wherever he had touched, and no hatred. In Thetford, the place of his birth, the rector of the largest church took pains that I should see all records bearing on the Paine family.

At Bromley there is an old palace where the bishops used to live, now occupied by a wealthy man named Child. Mr. Child, in whose house I stayed, took me out to see what is called the Thomas Paine tree. It is an old oak-tree with a hollow large enough for a table and a man, and the legend is that Paine began writing his *Age of Reason* in that old oak in the sanctified grounds of the bishops. Other trees about it have perished, but that tree is pinned and ironed limb to limb to see that no branch fails to be sustained. It is not known that there is any "Infidel" in that locality. I asked Mr. Child who it was that took care of this Thomas Paine tree away in the field all alone. He did not know, but thought the inhabitants generally looked after it. And that tree is flourishing with green to this day, notwithstanding its hollow; even as, despite the hollow made in some of Paine's

views by Higher Criticism, his thought and spirit are crowned with evergreen to this day.

Paine was not a revolutionist in the present sense of the word, but only in the peaceful sense. The word "revolution" which now connotes bloodshed, did not connote bloodshed up to the time of the American revolution. Revolution meant what we would now call Evolution. It meant a change in the form of government that should be as peaceful as a change of season from spring to summer, or the revolution of our planet. Paine and many Quakers believe in changing the government, but had the greatest horror of bloodshed. He was so horrified by the idea of a bloody revolution, that at the outset he tried to induce the people of this country to be reconciled to the Mother Country. He said human life is too sacred to be destroyed because of a tax. He was in the same state of mind that my friends and myself were in regard to the Civil War. We refused to countenance bloodshed and the waging of war against the people of the South until the event of Fort Sumner. After war broke out we favored the side that promised freedom instead of slavery, and so Thomas Paine never dreamed of actual war until the fighting was begun at Lexington. Then he knew that anything short of independence for the colonies would mean perpetual rebellion on this side and perpetual invasion from the other. He abhorred a revolution for the sake of an economic change or for the repudiation of any tax whatever.

Ladies and gentlemen, Thomas Paine made a considerable number of very good after-dinner speeches, and I wish I could so amuse you. When I received the summons to speak here, by a gentleman whose brave devotion to his cause entitled him to summon me, I became reflective and said what people want after a good dinner is something that will aid digestion, and at that moment I composed a sermon which, like others I have composed in my life, composed me. I entered into the dream of life and there met Thomas Paine. He came up to me when I was looking into a deep excavation on Fourth Avenue, and said, "All are but parts of one stupendous whole." I at once responded, "There is no doubt that New York is now a splendid city, as a hole."

Paine was given a great banquet in London in 1792, and some humorous fellow proposed a toast to Joshua. "Well, why toast Joshua?" "Because he killed so many kings." Paine got up and said: "I do not like Joshua's way. I am rather of the opinion of the old Scotch parson, who, at the time of Louis XIV., prayed, 'O Lord, take the French King and shake him over hell, but, O Lord, do not let him quite drop.'" That came all the way from a Scotch parson of the time of Louis XIV. to Paine; I borrowed it from Paine, and now have dropped it here in New York. I am not so certain about the kings as Paine was. And I am sure some of their ministers should be shaken over the place alluded to, and am not sure but what I would be satisfied to have two or three of them drop. Of course, I do not advocate eternal punishment for the majority of mankind, but am prepared to consider exceptions.

After this after-dinner speech of Paine, which was very good, the company drank to the health of the Republic of the World, and this was really in his heart. This large-hearted man could not confine his sympathies to a race. Those who struggle and sympathise with a race not their own, such as the colored race, are never again willing to think of any ethical or racial prejudice.

Paine saw his friends thrown in prison in England for circulating the *Rights of Man*, and he himself was pursued to the sea-shore; but he managed to get the start of the Government agents, and bowed to them from his little ship as he sailed across the Channel to take his place in the French Convention. A French historian describes him as the most attaching man of the Convention of France. He had men hating him, and on the other hand were people loving him, passing the love of a woman. One person tried to kill himself, and inflicted a wound, because he had reason to believe that Paine was about to be executed. He instructed his associates in philosophy and liberty. Robespierre was a jurist, and did not allow Paine to be executed, knowing that Paine was an American citizen, and not an Englishman. Gouverneur Morris tried to persuade the enemies of Paine that he was an Englishman. Paine was put in prison with Robespierre's consent, but not by his order.

But after Paine was in prison, Robespierre had a man named Denis Julian put in prison for the purpose of watching and conversing with Paine. This was not to spy against him, but to get information. This Denis Julian became so attached to Thomas Paine that they sat together. They could not talk aloud, because the prison was full of spies, and they wrote on bits of paper, and threw in the fire what each other wrote, after reading. They were too timid to talk with their tongues, because all around were spies to catch every word and utilise it. That man, Denis Julian, sent there to watch Paine, became his admirer; and at last, when Robespierre was dead, Denis Julian was summoned before the

tribunal to be tried for his life because he had been Robespierre's agent in prison. They wanted to sacrifice Denis Julian. Julian said: "Go to Thomas Paine, still in prison, and see what he says about me." Paine sent word to the tribunal: "I knew that man well. We conversed on bits of paper. I am certain he is a friend of justice and humanity, and nothing now said of him alters my opinion of him." Julian was at once released.

Well, after a time there came forward Bonaparte. He went to Paine, and said in effect: "I am now about to enter upon a career for the purpose of liberating mankind. All the world is to be either republican or Cossack, and I intend to go to England and liberate the people." He also said to Paine: "For writing the *Rights of Man* you should have a statue of gold set up here in Paris. Now, you write instructions about setting up a republic. I will get ships, and we will go over there and proclaim a republic, and when the work is completed I will return to Paris, for I have no intention of remaining in England, only to set up a republic." Such is the substance of what passed, and Paine now stands impaled for sympathy with Bonaparte's idea of invading England. Paine only intended to go there and open the prisons. He may have had in mind that Jesus Christ was interested in opening prisons, and to Paine it was not an expedition of conquest at all.

Paine said, in one after-dinner speech: "The astronomers are now talking much about sun-spots, but there is now arising in France a sun without a spot." Well, we know that the rising sun became all spots, and he spotted Paine; and he, too, would have put Paine in prison, but he was saved by being a citizen of this country. Bonaparte warned Paine that if he did not take care he would banish him to America, but that was just what Paine then most desired.

Just one hundred years ago Thomas Paine was here keeping his birthday with his friends, for he had excellent friends, among whom was Elihu Palmer, one of the most splendid men that ever lived in this country. This learned man was assisting this "filthy little Atheist" to found the first Theistic Church in America. President Roosevelt has been taking Gouverneur Morris too seriously to thus describe Paine. Morris was the nominal American Minister to France, but Paine was the actual one. Instead of consulting Morris, the French people consulted Paine, and that aroused the jealousy of Gouverneur Morris. You have but to look at the picture owned by a gentleman in Syracuse, N.Y.—with his beautiful shirt ruff, with his English dress, his knee-buckles and silk stockings—to see what a filthy man that was! You should not forget that he was about two inches taller than Mr. Roosevelt, and he had taken the lead in both England and America to found Theistic Churches; so, with the exception of those three things, Mr. Roosevelt's description was perfectly accurate. The point of Mr. Roosevelt's mistake is this: He could not conceive that you people, who, many of you, do not believe in a God, and that Bradlaugh and the rest in England, and the *Investigator* people in Boston, would uphold Paine with enthusiasm unless Paine agreed with you. It is perfectly plain that Mr. Roosevelt was perfectly ignorant of Paine's writings, and he does not understand how any person not an Atheist could be upheld by the great majority of Freethinkers in the world. He has taken that by conjecture, and he has failed to learn that Freethought invites universal toleration, and that we can love those who favor tolerance, whether they agree with us in our opinions or not.

In 1798 there was a very great banquet in Paris, and Paine was an honored guest. He was called upon for a sentiment, and said: "I drink to the three guarantees of republics; first, that opinions shall be entirely free; second, that the rights of all shall be equal; third, that the majority shall govern others as they govern themselves." There was an explosion of laughter after that, for the company saw the joke of ever expecting a majority to govern itself.

Paine was not happy here in America after his return from France. He longed to return to Paris. He found that here there was no personal freedom such as he had become accustomed to in France. He lived in Paris for ten years. His sufferings continued during one year of that time, and the other nine years were the happiest of his life. He was surrounded by refined people and authors in France, and he enjoyed the friendship of good women. They had a kind of Paine society or club there, but in America there were fulminations against him, and the tenderness of family life was very little known to him in this country after his return. He was an isolated man here. There was that difference between France and America.

And here let me say in closing, that I have ascribed this largely to religion. Where it is a question of the freedom of the congregation or of the State, of the independence of nations, give me Protestantism. Where it is a question of personal liberty, Roman Catholicism is far ahead of Pro-

testantism. There is far more liberty in France and in Spain than you can get in New York. Paine did not find personal liberty here when he needed it, and instead he was met with abuse and isolation, and he longed for his friends in France.

## Correspondence.

### VIVISECTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Notwithstanding that Mr. Bailey says he has read my criticism of Mr. Mallet's letter, he repeats the very faults I criticised. He says that "disease has enormously increased," whereas the well-known fact is that disease, as measured by the death-rate, has very greatly *decreased*. How can he expect that intelligent readers will place confidence in statements made by gentlemen who endeavor to support their case by perversions of the truth, and who moreover persist in that policy after the misrepresentation has been pointed out to them? If anti-vivisectionists wish us to accept their personal assurances that they are not indulging in the slightest exaggeration, they should not allow themselves to make assertions calculated to deceive persons who do not happen to know the truth from other sources. As Mr. Bailey assumes that I said "plainly stated fact" when the words I used were "*fairly-stated facts*," I may once more say that it is the latter which I specially recommend. Accuracy and fairness are much more important than mere plainness of statement.

Why should Mr. Bailey tell the Atheists to whom he is appealing that "Almighty God" has committed the animals to our care, and that we shall be responsible to him for the treatment we accord them? The assertion is highly questionable even from the Biblical point of view; and in the opinion of those whom he is addressing it is mere fiction. Surely he does not wish to strengthen any suspicion we Atheists may feel as to the untenable or unreasonable nature of the basis on which his arguments and descriptions are founded. Why, too, does he tell us that vivisection is an "insult to Christianity"? Our opinions and our very existence have been regarded as an "insult to Christianity" and an outrage upon the feelings of the Christian majority. Does Mr. Bailey wish to make us sympathise with vivisection? If vivisection is an insult to Christianity, let the Christian vivisectioners deal with a matter which is certainly no concern of ours.

Why need the anti-vivisectioner attack Science as a "false idol," and treat scientific research as a mere "pretext" for the indulgence of unbridled curiosity and "lust" of knowledge? Scientific investigators—including a number of vivisectioners who are "good Christians"—may be quite as earnest and sincere, and may easily be as truthful and as fair, as the anti-vivisectionist who hurls at them the severest words he can find.

On the moral question, the use of such condemnatory terms as "crime," "cruelty," "wrong-doing," etc., simply begs the question at issue. The question is, *Ought* vivisection in all cases to be regarded and treated as a crime? Argument is needed—not the flinging of hard words. First, Is it a crime to cut an animal rendered insensible to pain by anaesthetics, and if so, why? Second, Is it a crime to cause intense pain to an animal for the benefit of man? If the answer to the latter question is really in the affirmative, moral man is in a universe for which he is horribly unfitted, and from which, if he is logical and consistent in his morality, he will have to betake himself as quickly as possible.

I may add that my feelings are so far with the anti-vivisectioners that I would wish my words to be taken as friendly counsel rather than as hostile criticism. A policy of restriction, where the fully effectual use of anaesthetics cannot be ensured, would have my thorough approval.

W. P. BALL.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In his article on "Vivisection and Ultra-Moralism," Mr. W. P. Ball, courteously referring to my book on *Animals' Rights*, construes my admission that "rights" are subject to the permanent interests of the community into an unwitting abandonment of the claim for "absolute justice" to all living things. I was, however, quite deliberate in not advancing any claim of that kind; for absolute justice, I imagine, is at present out of the question, whether for the human or the non-human animal. Mr. Ball seems to me in this matter to have misapprehended the humanitarian position. Far from postulating an absolute justice, we start from the actual

standpoint of an imperfect world slowly emerging from barbarism, and we desire gradually to humanise the conditions of society by the discontinuance of the more savage customs that have come down to us from the past. To argue, as Mr. Ball does, that because we regard the vivisection of highly sentient animals as one of the most cruel and irrational of these barbarities—a practice, as Ingersoll described it, which “degrades and demoralises and hardens, without adding in the slightest to the sum of useful knowledge”—we are therefore precluded from killing the lowest forms of life, is to trifle with a serious question of ethics and humanity.

HENRY S. SALT.

*Humanitarian League, 53 Chancery Lane, W.C.*

### SPELLING REFORM.

TO THE EDITOR OF “THE FREETHINKER.”

SIR,—Your correspondent, Mr. Lodge, would have us help spelling reform by adopting simpler spelling in correspondence. I am afraid this method would cause endless disagreements depending on individual fancy. Take Mr. Lodge's own little sample of suggested reform, namely, the omission of the letters he italicised. In eight cases where the word “more” occurs in his letter he shows that he would omit the final “e” as redundant. But such a correction would be absolutely inaccurate, since the “e” serves the purpose of altering the vowel sound. “Mor” would not be the equivalent of “more,” just as “for” is not identical in sound with “fore,” and “or” is not the same as “ore.” In other places, too, the eliminated (italicised) letters serve a purpose, and therefore are not really redundant. Thus “ful” is not necessarily the same as “full,” just as “hal” is not the same as “hall,” and “bulbul” is not the same as the word “bull” repeated. The eliminated “u” in “guide” serves to harden the “g,” thus preventing us from pronouncing the word as “jide.” In several words ending in “le” (“article,” “trouble,” “distinguishable,” etc.) the italicised “e” serves the purpose of indicating the vowel which must occur in each syllable of a word, and if this italicised “e” is omitted accuracy will require the insertion (and the previous invention) of the proper vowel sign in its proper place, namely, before the “l.” The rejected “e” in various words ending in “es” is also not entirely functionless. Plurals, etc., in “es” being always sounded as if the final “s” were a “z,” the “e” in such a word as “faculties” makes us say “facultiz” rather than “facultiss.” So in “purpose” the “e” objected to by Mr. Lodge indicates that when unslurred the full sound of the word is “pur-poce” rather than “pur-poss.” In “foreigners” Mr. Lodge would eliminate the wrong letters. “Foreigner” is not pronounced “forener,” but “foriner.” In the word “attempt” the rejected “p” is not silent according to Nuttall's Dictionary, though I admit that the point is disputable.

Simmiluri, if I wur too rite foanettikull at mi oan plezhur, Mr. Loj wood roejekt mi aarthografi in menni kayciz, and wood tshooz spellingz uv hiz oan. Wurdz kan be spellt foanettikull in menni different waze (or weiz, or wayz, or weyz) in English, and thu(r) rizult wood be u(r) konfewzhu (or cu(r)nfyoozhu(r)n, or k'nfeuzh'n) graytur dhan dhat hwitsh preoveyld too aur three sentyooriz ago.

If real reform is ever to be effected—for mere tinkering is not worth the trouble involved—it will depend, I believe, upon the thorough and almost life-long investigation and development of the whole subject by some particular person possessing the requisite ability, perseverance, and inclination. The resultant conclusions, inventions, analyses, etc., would be embodied, I presume, in books which would become standard works, and in the course of time might form a generally-accepted basis of the reformed spelling of a perhaps distant future. A society might help such a man by pecuniary and other encouragement, and by friendly criticism and suggestions. One thing to be decided would be whether the present alphabet should be accepted and improved by suggestions and alterations, or whether a totally different set of alphabetic signs should be framed, as in shorthand, with its simple straight lines and curves, etc., or as in Arabic, etc. In either case a complete collection and correct analysis of sounds used in spoken language should be made, and a complete and thoroughly suitable set of signs should be selected or invented. Compound vowels, slurred words, conventional fictions, and many other matters must be carefully, suitably, and convincingly dealt with. The depth and obstinacy of our ignorance and prejudice on such points is so great as to be almost invincible.

In work of this kind haste would be fatal. Such reformed alphabets and spellings as Pitman's themselves needs reform. The new system should be perfected before we are asked to face the serious inconveniences of a period of change lasting at least over a generation or two,

W. P. BALL.

### Liberty.

PROVIDED that you yourself do not abdicate your freedom; provided that you yourself do not allow others to enslave you; and provided that to the violent and anti-social passions of this or that person you oppose your equally vigorous social passions, then you have nothing to fear from liberty.

Until now humanity has never been without large natures overflowing with tenderness, with intelligence, with will, and using their feeling, their intellect, their active force in the service of the human race without asking anything in return.

This fertility of mind, of feeling, or of will takes all possible forms. It is in the passionate seeker after truth, who renounces all other pleasures to throw his energy into the search for what he believes true and right, contrary to the affirmations of the ignoramuses around him. It is in the inventor, who lives from day to day forgetting even his food, scarcely touching the bread with which perhaps some woman devoted to him feeds him like a child, while he follows out the invention he thinks destined to change the face of the world. It is in the ardent revolutionist, to whom the joys of art, of science, even of family life seem bitter, so long as they cannot be shared by all, and who works, despite misery and persecution, for the regeneration of the world. It is in the youth who, hearing of the atrocities of invasion, and taking literally the heroic legends of patriotism, inscribes himself in a volunteer corps, and marches bravely through snow and hunger until he falls beneath the bullets. It was in the Paris street arab, with his quick intelligence, and bright choice of aversions and sympathies, who ran to the ramparts with his little brother, stood steady amid the rain of shells, and died murmuring, “Hurrah for the Commune!” It is in the man who is revolted at the sight of a wrong, without waiting to ask what will be its result to himself, and when all backs are bent, stands up to unmask the iniquity, and brand the exploiter, the petty despot of a factory or great tyrant of an empire. Finally, it is in all those numberless acts of devotion, less striking and therefore unknown and always misprized, which may be continually observed, especially among women, if we all take the trouble to open our eyes and notice what lies at the very foundation of human life, and enables it to unfold itself one way or another, in spite of the exploitation and oppression it undergoes.

Such men and women as these, some in obscurity, some within a large arena, create the progress of mankind. And mankind is aware of it. This is why it encompasses such lives with reverence, with myths. It adores them, makes them the subject of its stories, songs, romances. It adores in them the courage, goodness, love, and devotion which are lacking in most of us. It transmits their memory to the young. It recalls even those who have acted only in the narrow circle of home and friends, and reveres their memory in family tradition.

PETER KROPOTKINE.

I speak for those who do not believe in the existence of a unique, all-powerful, infallible Judge, for ever intent on our thoughts, our feelings, and actions, maintaining justice in this world and completing it in the next. And if there be no Judge, what justice is there? None other than that which men have made for themselves in their laws and tribunals, as also in the social relations that no definite judgment governs? Is there nothing above this human justice, whose sanction is rarely other than the opinion, the confidence or mistrust, the approval or disapproval, of our fellows? Is this capable of explaining or accounting for all that seems so inexplicable to us in the morality of the universe that we at times feel almost compelled to believe an intelligent Judge to exist?.....Is there a graver, deeper justice, one less visible perhaps, but less subject to error?.....That such a justice exists we all of us know; for we all have felt its irresistible power. We are well aware that it covers the whole of our life and that at its centre there reigns an intelligence which never deceives itself, which none can deceive. But where shall we place it, now that we have torn it down from the skies?—*Maeterlinck*, “*The Buried Temple*.”

Learning is like a river, whose head, being far in the land, is at first rising, little, and easily viewed; but still, as you go, it gapeth a wider bank: not without pleasure, and delightful winding; while it is on both sides set with trees and with beauties of various flowers: but still, the further you follow it, the deeper and the broader it is; till, at last, it enwaves itself in the unfathomed ocean.—*Feltham*, “*Resolves*.”

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

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

**THE ATHENÆUM HALL** (73 Tottenham Court-road, W.): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "Religion: How it is Born, How it Lives, and How it Dies."

**CAMBERWELL SECULAR HALL** (61 New Church Road, Camberwell): 7.30, Conversazione; 7, Music—Vocal and Instrumental.

**EAST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY** (Bromley Vestry Hall, Bow-road, E.): 7, G. F. O'Dell, "The Worth of Life."

**EAST LONDON BRANCH N. S. S.** (Hayfield Hall, 160 Mile End-road): 3.30, Annual Meeting. All members are requested to attend on this occasion.

**SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY** (Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road): 7, Count Tchershoff, "Social Life in Russia."

**STREATHAM AND Brixton ETHICAL INSTITUTE** (Carlton Hall, Tun-stall-road, Brixton): 7, W. Platt, "Moliere."

**SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION** (Welcome Hall, 32 Upper Tooting-road, Tooting): 7.30, F. A. Davies, "The Fallacy of Patriotism."

**WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY** (Kensington Town Hall, High-street): 11.15, A. Vernon Harcourt, F.R.S., L.L.D., "The Poetry of Clough."

**COUNTRY.**

**EDINBURGH SECULAR SOCIETY** (Temperance Hall, 84 Leith-street): 6.30, Mr. Swan, "Materialism and Spiritualism." Music at 6.15.

**LIVERPOOL** (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, L. Bergmann, "Science and Faith."

**MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL** (Rusholme-road, All Saints): Ernest Evans, 3, "The Germ Theory of Disease and How to Prevent Epidemic Diseases"; 6.30, "The Social Life of Animals and Plants." With lantern illustrations. Tea at 5.

**NEWCASTLE DEBATING SOCIETY** (Lockhart's Cathedral Café): Thursday, March 5, at 8, A. W. Halbaum, "The Ice Age."

**SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY** (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, Willie Dyson, "Herbert Spencer's First Principles."

**SOUTH SHIELDS** (Victoria Hall, Fowler-street): 7, A. L. Coates, "Why I am a Secularist." Committee meeting at 6.30; business important.

**LECTURER'S ENGAGEMENTS.**

**H. PERCY WARD**, Alexandra Hall, Islington-square, Liverpool.—March 8, Liverpool; 22, Liverpool; April 5, Liverpool; 19, Glasgow; May 3, Liverpool; 17, Liverpool.

**FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT.****By G. W. FOOTE.**

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

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

**CRIMES OF CHRISTIANITY.****By G. W. Foote & J. M. Wheeler.**

Hundreds of References given to Standard Authorities. A complete, trustworthy, unanswerable Indictment of Christianity.  
224 pages, cloth, 2s. 6d.

The Freethought Publishing Co. Ltd., London.

**HEALTH WITHOUT DRUGS.***The VITALISM Series of Publications (4th Edition).***EXPOSITORY OF THE LEPPÉL DIETARY SYSTEM.**

1. *Suitable Food.* Combinations of foods which make one either old or youthful looking. 7d., or 15 cents. 2. *Hints for Self-Diagnosis.* Gives directions by which the diseased and ugly can be made healthy and good-looking. 1s., or 25 cents. 3. *Vital and Non-Vital Foods.* Foods are given for the aspiring who wish to do their work more efficiently, also foods which induce or increase certain complaints. 1s., or 25 cents. 4. *Dietetic Way to Health, Strength, and Beauty.* A convincing essay. 2½d., or 5 cents. 5. *The Tea Question Solved.* 2½d., or 5 cents. 6. *Missing Link in Dietetics.* 2½d., or 5 cents. 7. *Nut and Fruit Dietaries.* 2½d., or 5 cents. 8. *Densmore versus Leppel.* 2½d., or 5 cents. 9. *Sexuality and Vitality.* The average person sacrifices his Vital powers on the altar of his passions. Cause and cure given. 4½d., or 10 cents.

The above nine Pamphlets, with six copies of the health journal, *DIET versus DRUGS*, for 4s., or a dollar bill.

**THE EAGLE AND THE SERPENT.** A Journal for Free Spirits and for Spirits Struggling to be Free. Edited by John Erwin McCall. Price 3d. Post 3½d.

All Orders for THE EAGLE AND THE SERPENT to the PIONEER PRESS, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

**A Testimonial.**

But only one out of Hundreds.

REMPSTONE, LOUGHBOROUGH,

February 12, 1903.

Dear MR. GOTT.—We thank you very much for the 27/6 Suit, which fits beautifully, and we are sure it will wear well, as all the goods have done which we have had during the last eight or nine years. If Freethinkers only knew the value you send out your business would not suffer through being boycotted by bigots.

Yours truly,

THOS. DENNIS.

FOR  
35/-SEND FOR SELF-MEASUREMENT FORM  
AND PATTERNS POST FREE.FOR  
35/-

**1 Gent's Lounge Suit**  
TO MEASURE,  
ANY COLOR. FIT GUARANTEED,  
AND  
**1 Pair of our famous**  
**"Bradlaugh" Boots,**  
ALL SIZES,  
FOR BEST SUNDAY WEAR,  
For 35 shillings only.

WE DEFY THE WORLD WITH THIS LOT.

FOR  
35/-

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

FOR  
35/-**THE BEST BOOK**

ON NEO-MALTHUSIANISM IS, I BELIEVE,

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

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

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

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

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

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

Orders should be sent to the author,

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

THE SAFEST AND MOST EFFECTUAL CURE FOR  
INFLAMMATION OF THE EYES.**Thwaites' Celandine Lotion.**

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

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

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

6d.

NOW READY.

6d.

# THE SECULAR ANNUAL

(FORMERLY THE "SECULAR ALMANACK")

## FOR 1903.

### CONTENTS.

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

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

### Pamphlets by C. COHEN.

- An Outline of Evolutionary Ethics - 6d.
- Foreign Missions: Their Dangers and Delusions. Full of Facts and Figures. A Complete Exposure of the Missionary Movement - 9d.
- What is the Use of Prayer - 2d.
- Evolution and Christianity - 2d.
- Pain and Providence - 1d.
- The Decay of Belief - 1d.

THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY, LTD.,  
2 NEWCASTLE-STREET, FARRINGDON-STREET, LONDON, E.C.

### New and Cheaper Editions

OF WORKS BY

## COLONEL INGERSOLL.

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

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

### BOOKS FOR SALE.

COLLET: History of Taxes on Knowledge. 2 vols., cr. 8vo, 4s. (pub. 7s.). JEUNE (Lady): Lesser Social Questions. Cr. 8vo, 2s. (pub. 6s.). THOMSON: City of Dreadful Night. 12mo, 1s. 6d. DE GALLIENNE: Book Bills of Narcissus. cr. 8vo, 2s. LOTI: Book of Pity and Death. Cr. 8vo, 1s. 6d. THEAL: Little History of South Africa. Cr. 8vo, 1s. WALDSTEIN: Ruskin and His Influence. Cr. 8vo, 2s. 6d. USSHER: Neo-Malthusianism. Cr. 8vo, 3s. (pub. 6s.). WHITE (Arnold): The English Democracy. 8vo, 2s. 6d. (pub. 7s. 6d.). *All excellent condition, cloth, and post free. Cash with order.*

GEO. KEENE, 10 Salisbury Road, Leyton, Essex.

### READY VERY SHORTLY.

A NEW ISSUE OF  
THE TWENTIETH CENTURY EDITION  
OF  
**THE AGE OF REASON**

BY  
**THOMAS PAINE.**

Issued by the Secular Society, Limited.  
PRICE SIXPENCE.

## COMMON SENSE.

BY  
**THOMAS PAINE.**

It is in this pamphlet that the expression "Free and Independent States of America" first appears, and it was the arguments Paine here used that influenced the colonists to rebel, and led to the establishment of the present government. *This is a complete edition of Paine's great work.*

Paper Covers. Price 8d. Postage 1d.

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

### A Grand Purchase on Easy Terms!

THE "DRESDEN" EDITION OF  
**Colonel Ingersoll's Works**

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

Is offered on the  
**MONTHLY PAYMENT SYSTEM.**

This Edition is sold for \$30 (about £6) in America, but by special arrangement the FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY is able to supply it in this country for

**£5 10s., or cash £5,**

*Payable in Monthly Instalments of 10s.*  
The whole twelve Volumes will be forwarded, Carriage Paid, on receipt of the first instalment of 10s.

**Write for Prospectus.**

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

LOOK OUT FOR THE MARCH NUMBER  
OF  
**The Pioneer**  
A POPULAR PROPAGANDIST ORGAN  
OF  
ADVANCED IDEAS.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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

NOW READY

**A WOODEN GOD**

BY THE LATE

**COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL**

ITS FIRST PUBLICATION IN ENGLAND

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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

**NEW PUBLICATIONS BY G. W. FOOTE.**

(1) **DROPPING THE DEVIL :**

**AND OTHER FREE CHURCH PERFORMANCES.**

PRICE TWOPENCE.

(2) **THE PASSING OF JESUS.**

**THE LAST ADVENTURES OF THE FIRST MESSIAH.**

PRICE TWOPENCE.

(3) **WHAT IS AGNOSTICISM ?**

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

PRICE THREEPENCE.

(4) **THE MOTHER OF GOD.**

(In the Press.)

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