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In the immediate business of everyday life we allow the majority to bear rule. But we do not feel much confidence in the wisdom of the many where matters belonging to a higher sphere are concerned.—GOETHE.

Pious Bragging.

WAS there ever a religion like Christianity for bragging? Its advocates pretend that all the good there has been in the world since its appearance has resulted from it, and that all the good there was in the world before its appearance was an anticipation of it. And as very few people know anything of history, except what they have taken on trust from these said advocates, it is easy enough to impose upon their credulity. The majority of the people in every Christian country, from Russia to the United States of America, believe that the world was an awful place to live in before Christianity became established, and that it has been an unspeakably better place to live in ever since; just as they believe that morality and happiness are only to be found in Christian countries now, and that every heathen country is full of vice and misery.

While the multitude are so easily deceived it is idle to expect any compunctious visitings of honesty in the breasts of Christian preachers. We are not astonished, therefore, that the pulpits worked this year's Good Friday for all it was worth. Common lying was unseasonable; it was a time for splendid mendacity; and it must be admitted that some of them, at any rate, rose to the occasion. One of these enterprising and successful perverters of the truth was the Rev. F. B. Meyer, a well-known Non-conformist, and a leader of the Passive Resistance movement. This gentleman prepared a "specially written" sermon for the *London Daily Chronicle*; another being "specially written" by the Archdeacon of London; so that the two largest divisions of the Great Lying Church might be suitably represented.

We intend to let the Archdeacon of London's sermon pass and devote our attention to the Rev. F. B. Meyer's. This gentleman took his text from *John xix, 41*: "In the place where he was crucified there was a garden." After an introductory paragraph he began his trickery straight away. That reference to a garden, he said, was not to be taken "as a mere note of locality"; it was a "picturesque and deep allusion to the universal truth, that *that* Cross has created Gardens, wherever it has been erected." Now anyone who takes the trouble to read the nineteenth of *John* for himself will see that this is an absurdity. Here are the last two verses:—

"Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand."

Nothing could be simpler or plainer. When you read the whole text you see clearly why the garden was mentioned. And you also see that Mr. Meyer's exegesis is only of those sickly sentimentalities which are so common nowadays, when Christianity is intellectually played out, and men continue

to preach it (for a living) with downright dishonesty.

This is a very good introduction to Mr. Meyer's praise of the Cross. He soon gets along in full sail, and this is the result:—

"For uncounted centuries, before the cross was erected on Calvary, widows were burnt on funeral pyres, villages raided for slaves, women exposed to nameless wrongs, prison-stones worn by the tread of naked feet, battlefields drenched with blood, torture-chambers saturated with the piercing cries of hapless sufferers, burying-places seamed with graves, where hope and love lay buried."

Every person who has even an elementary acquaintance with ancient history knows that this is ridiculous as a comprehensive statement of the condition of the world before Christ; and if it is not meant as a comprehensive statement it loses all its force, for the simple reason that pretty well everything in it is equally true, in detail, of the Christian period.

We need not trouble about the burning of widows on funeral pyres. Not even Mr. Meyer will have the audacity to assert that this was a characteristic of Greek and Roman civilisation. We will take the next item—"villages raided for slaves." How long is it since Christian raiders went to Africa, stole negroes there, and took them to America to sell to Christian purchasers? And is not the racial problem of "black and white" in the United States a direct nemesis—natural, not supernatural—of that infernal traffic? We might also point to what is going on in Africa to-day; particularly to the wanton atrocities in the Congo Free State, which was carved out of Africa by the European Powers and placed under the authority of the Christian King of Belgium.

Now for the "women exposed to nameless wrongs." How long is it since the last punitive expedition sent by the Christian Powers to Peking, after the Christian population of Europe were stuffed full with lies about the massacre of the European Legations? Only a very few years. And were no women "exposed to nameless wrongs" then? Thousands of Chinese women were violated, and thousands more threw themselves into rivers or wells to escape the "purity" of the "soldiers of the Cross."

As for the "battlefields drenched with blood," one can only feel astonishment that the most impudent or reckless advocate of Christianity should introduce *this* topic. Even the latter half of the nineteenth century was a history of "blood, blood, blood"—to use the passionate words of Othello. Christian Europe was tired of war after the orgie of the Napoleonic era, and for a whole generation it lay in the peace of lassitude. Then it recovered its old lust of fighting, and the Crimean war, the Franco-Austrian war, the Prusso-Austrian war, and the Franco-German war followed each other in rapid succession. England shed blood all the time somewhere in the world, and finished up on a large scale in South Africa. Now there is another war going on between Russia and Japan, and the Christian Power is undoubtedly the aggressor. Yes, the less Mr. Meyer says about "blood" the better.

Now for the "prison stones" and the "torture chambers." We have not heard of any Christian country which has abolished its prisons; and there are thoughtful men who deliberately say that the "silent system" is the most brutal system of punish-

ment yet invented. We believe, too, that the worst "torture chambers" in the whole world's history were those of the Christian Inquisition; and that they would be in full swing now if it were not for the growth of secular civilisation. For the secret of toleration is expressed in Ingersoll's epigram, at once witty and profound, that the Church did not leave off burning men alive because it was ashamed or tired, but because there came at last to be too many men who objected to being burnt alive.

Torture chambers, forsooth! The Cross was well planted at Venice during her time of power, and we know what a "garden" of tenderness grew around it. Mr. Meyer has probably not read one of the best and brightest of books from many points of view—the *Letters of Charles Dickens*. We will quote him the following from one of Dickens's letters to Douglas Jerrold. It is about Venice—the "dreamy, beautiful, inconsistent, impossible, wicked, shadowy, damnable old place."

"And, oh God! the cells below the water underneath the Bridge of Sighs; the nook where the monk came at midnight to confess the political offender; the bench where he was strangled; the deadly little vault in which they tied him in a sack, and the stealthy, crouching little door through which they hurried him into a boat, and bore him away to sink him where no fisherman dare cast his net—all shown by torches that blink and wink as if they were ashamed to look upon the gloomy theatre of sad horrors; past and gone as they are, these things stir a man's blood, like a great wrong or passion of the instant. And with these in their minds, and a museum there, having a chamber full of such frightful instruments of torture as the devil in a brain fever could scarcely invent, there are hundreds of parrots, who will declaim to you in speech and print, by the hour together, on the degeneracy of the times."

Yes, these were Christian instruments of torture; or, if you object to that statement, true as it is, they were instruments of torture in one of your "gardens" of the Cross; and, although we loathe and hate them, we cannot say the right damning word about them, until a man of genius comes along and tells us that they beat all that could have been invented by the devil in a brain fever.

Mr. Meyer does not even know, or does not tell, the truth about the early progress of the Christian Church.

"When was the Primitive Church most prosperous and victorious? When she sunned herself in the beams of Imperial Favor, and enjoyed the emoluments, prestige, and splendor which Constantine's Court afforded? No.....It was when the disciples of Christ were driven to celebrate their mysteries in the crypts of the Catacombs, and poured out their blood in rivers."

We may observe, in passing, that this "blood in rivers" is a wild exaggeration. The Christians have given to the world the story of their own martyrdoms, and they have not omitted to heighten their sufferings and their heroism. The real truth is that the "ten great persecutions" are ten great romances; and that the Christian blood shed by the Romans was nothing compared with the blood that was shed in after ages by the Christians themselves.

But that is by the way. The chief point is Mr. Meyer's nonsense about the progress of the Christian Church, which he says was retarded by the patronage of Constantine. Now the facts are all against him. Gibbon's computation—not disputed by his orthodox editors, Dean Milman and Dr. Smith—is that during the three hundred years from Christ to Constantine the Christian Church had succeeded in converting one in twenty of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire. That was by means of preaching and persuasion. But within another hundred years the vast majority of the remaining nineteen in every twenty were converted by means of bribes, persecution, imprisonment, and social and political ostracism. So much more efficacious as a missionary was the Emperor than the Holy Ghost.

The final lesson of Mr. Meyer's sermon is this: that Christianity was born of superstition and nursed by fraud; and that the arts by which it is still supported are redolent of its sweet, tender, and innocent youth.

G. W. FOOTE,

Mr. Campbell and the New Humanism.

London Opinion is the last new-comer among the crowd of weekly gossiping journals that compete for public patronage. A number of writers discourse therein on life in general, and among them the Rev. R. J. Campbell accounts for over five columns on "Religion and the New Humanism," an effusion neither better nor worse than the rest of Mr. Campbell's productions. There is about it the same air of profound thinking, and the usual pretence of occupying an impartial position and holding the scales evenly between rival parties, that are found in all Mr. Campbell's sermons and addresses. How much these are worth it may not be uninteresting to discover.

Mr. Campbell commences by telling his readers that religion has always played an "important" and "indispensable" part in the history of mankind. This is confusion number one. Important no one will deny religion to have been. Anything that has consumed the energy and attention that religion has must be an *important* factor; but that it is indispensable by no means follows. War and slavery have also been important factors; but I do not know that anyone will argue, in Mr. Campbell's way, that they must be indispensable. Continuing, Mr. Campbell says: "Human nature has never been entirely without it. Sometimes it has been so far in the background as to be almost forgotten; at other times so much in the foreground as to be a bane instead of a blessing. Frequently it has expressed itself in superstition, and at other seasons and in other senses it has been the marrow of culture, and Greek art, for instance, owes almost everything to Greek religion.....Human society has always had to take account of religion.....It might well be contended that this is the distinguishing feature of human as contrasted with sub-human societies."

Now, all this is not bad for an opening paragraph. To begin with, religion is indispensable; yet the indispensable gets into the background, and is almost forgotten; so that evidently the indispensable had been largely dispensed with. And yet, again, even when it was almost forgotten, human society had to take account of it—which could not have been a very serious matter. Then it has been a bane as well as a blessing, when it was expressed as superstition. And the only distinction between religion and superstition is that noted long ago by Hobbes—the difference between what is and what is not allowed. Then religion has been of the very marrow of culture; and the proof is that "Greek art owes almost everything to religion." Now, in the first place, Mr. Campbell would label the Greek mythology as superstition, and therefore as being "a bane instead of a blessing." And, in the second place, even a Nonconformist preacher might be expected to avoid the absurdity of claiming that because Greek sculptors used mythological subjects, therefore they owed their art to the prevailing mythology. I do not lay stress upon the very evident fact that Greek art was a great glorification of the natural and the human, because, if Mr. Campbell is unable to appreciate the first point, it is dead certain he will be unable to understand the last. And even at the risk of it being thought impertinent to bring a mere Charles Darwin against the high priest of the City Temple, I would venture to point out that Darwin expressed the opinion that the feelings of a dog towards his master might not be profoundly different from those of a savage towards his god, and that Darwin's opinion has been endorsed by later writers.

Now, this hotch-potch of conflicting statements and loose reasoning is contained in an opening paragraph of just *twenty-five lines*; and its author is a man whom the Nonconformist world acclaim a profound thinker and a brilliant reasoner. Mr. Campbell may well assert that his life would be quite changed were it not for Jesus Christ. Imagine a man capable of writing twenty-five lines such as the above trying

to make a living in any branch of intellectual labour save religion!

After this introduction Mr. Campbell turns to deal with what he calls the "new humanism." He says: "Religious institutions always tend to conservatism and to persecution," which is quite a brilliant generalisation—for him; but whenever a protest has been made, "the protest has been made in the name of a larger life, the ultimate sanction of which is inevitably religious." "Inevitably religious!" To Mr. Campbell there is no doubt of the truth of this statement. It is not something to be reasoned about; it does not require any demonstrating; the ultimate sanction of life *is* religious. Mr. Campbell says so, and we are evidently expected to take it as beyond question. This specimen of fatuous writing is followed by Lucretius' splendid apostrophe to Epicurus as the one who, undaunted by tales of the gods, raised human life from the mire and laid bare the secrets of nature. This, he says, is the "note of humanism, half cynical, but wholly earnest." Half cynical! Why, bless the man, there is not a shadow of cynicism about the passage. It is a simple hymn of praise to the great Greek who trampled superstition and error underfoot, and taught man "fearless with level gaze to scan the heaven." Mr. Campbell's only reason for calling it names is that it is not Christian. And as it has to be called *some* name, whether it is called cynical, or pessimistic, or anything else that is meant to be unpleasant, matters little to Mr. Campbell and his admirers.

And this is followed in turn by this:—

"It has often been asserted that the age of Erasmus and Leo the Tenth was pagan, as was that of Voltaire and Rousseau. But was it really so? The best in the old pagan world which the humanist rediscovered was far from resembling the Opportunism, Atheism, Materialism of these decadent humanists, who, in repudiating ecclesiastical trammels, repudiated morality also."

One is not quite sure whether the "decadent Humanists" refer to Erasmus, Leo, Voltaire and Rousseau, or to somebody else who lived at the same time as these. On the face of it, it would seem that the former is meant, and in that case one can only brand such a statement as either a deliberate falsehood or a fine specimen of that elaborate ignorance that does duty as Nonconformist culture. And one may point out for Mr. Campbell's benefit that the chief meaning in calling either of these periods pagan is that when men began to work for the betterment of the world, it was pagan literature, pagan science, and pagan art that supplied the chief stimulus, and the intervening centuries of Christian culture were set on one side as substantially worthless.

When Mr. Campbell at length reaches the "new humanism" he reminds one of a savage with a kodak. He is evidently at a loss what to do with it. Finally he decides it is just religion, without knowing it. And he proves this in his own peculiar manner. He was talking to a newspaper man "a few days ago" (the way in which recent experiences fit in with preacher's sermons is plainly providential) whose attitude towards religion and church-going was one of unmitigated contempt. And before the two separated the newspaper man asked Mr. Campbell's co-operation in sending some cripples to the seaside, and argued that it should be impossible for weak and helpless people to be left without comfort." And Mr. Campbell comments, "Quite so, but where did our strong-minded friend learn all this?.....He was obeying a humanitarian impulse which bade him not only speak, but act as though the kingdom of heaven were at hand." And he proceeds to assure us that the same thing holds good of those who agitate for the opening of museums on Sunday, and the development of Sunday excursions, of the good work done by the County Council, and of the reforming efforts of politicians.

So far this is extremely good when we remember it is said by one who believes the ultimate sanction of life is religious. But the awkward fact is that these advocates of the new humanism do not believe

in religion, and yet as Mr. Campbell's newspaper friend shows, they are ready to do what they can to make life better for the ignorant, the weak, and the crippled. But what has Christianity to do with this phenomenon? Mr. Campbell believes that "What is needed at the present moment is that the religious and humanitarian movements should combine and come to understand and complete each other." Then Humanism "would come to see that its own impulse was divine, that all service for humanity is the action of God working through human hearts, and hands, and brains."

Which is quite a convenient conclusion—for a preacher. Humanism—that is, the belief that man needs no religious beliefs to keep him to the path of duty, and the determination to make the most of life on a broad basis of human fellowship—is here, and here to stay. Its adherents under various names increase daily. More good work is being done in the name of humanity, and less in the name of God. And Mr. Campbell, seeing that Humanism holds the winning cards and is bound to win in the end, thinks it would be a good thing to combine, which, I repeat, would be an excellent consummation—for parsons.

Mr. Campbell's proposed alliance reminds one of that in a recent comedy. Says one friend to another, "We will share all our money and troubles together—your money, my troubles." So Humanism is to do the work, and religion get the credit. "Men," Mr. Campbell admits, "are not so much interested in a heaven beyond the grave as they are in doing something to make heaven here." And he thinks it remarkable that "this humanitarian impulse should so seldom be able to give any account of itself." The justice of the first observation has to be admitted; and it sounds the death-knell not only of Christianity, but of *all* religion. For the fundamental belief of all religions is that of a soul and a continued existence beyond the grave; and when this weakens religion surely decays. Old habits, interested institutions, a professional priesthood may manage to give it a longer lease of life than it would otherwise have, but none of these agencies can confer upon it immortality.

What Mr. Campbell means by the last remark is not quite clear, probably not even to himself. It may mean either that the humanitarian impulse cannot give an account of its origin, or that it cannot justify its existence. If the former, one need only point out that a study of social evolution would quite inform Mr. Campbell's mind on that aspect of the matter. And if the latter, then the justification of the humanitarian impulse is found in the fact that all the improvements in social life may be traced to its existence. It has even toned down many of the more revolting features of Christian theology, and destroyed others. It has during the past century made even ministers of religion feel that the needs of man are more imperative than the wishes of God, and that human perfection, if it is ever to be realised, must be effected here on earth and not in some fantastical heaven in the clouds.

C. COHEN.

"The Originality of Christ's Teaching."

AT the Newcastle-on-Tyne meeting of the Free Church Council it was repeatedly stated that present-day attacks upon Christianity are so weak, vulgar, and ineffectual that they neither deserve nor require any serious refutation. The motto of the assembly with reference to them seemed to be, "Do not be at the trouble to refute ignorance." And yet every minister in the land makes an attempt to answer the modern critics of Christianity. The fact is that the Churches are beginning to realise that the situation is intensely grave, and that unless some vigorous action is taken the time will soon come when their doors might as well be closed. Hence from innu-

merable pulpits, from all the religious newspapers, and from public platforms not a few, issue crushing and final replies to Haeckel, Blatchford, & Co. I have already called attention to several lectures delivered at the Central Hall, Manchester, and, as many readers of the *Freethinker* are aware, those were numbers of a series of twenty-two or more "popular lectures on subjects relating to recent attacks on Christianity." The fourteenth of that series was given by the Rev. A. L. Humphries, M.A., and is entitled "The Originality of Christ's Teaching." This is undoubtedly and by far the best of the series hitherto delivered, and it deserves to be seriously considered. Mr. Humphries makes the very most of a radically bad case.

But being an orthodox divine he falls into several obvious errors. As he is supposed to be arguing with sceptics he has no right to assume what they deny. By doing that he fixes an impassable gulf between himself and them. He assumes the Incarnation which they reject. He says: "It is at once the wonder and the glory of the humiliation to which the Son of God stooped in the Incarnation that, so far as knowledge was concerned, he chose to become even as we." That is an unwarrantable assumption. How does he know that Jesus was the Son of God clothed with human flesh? What sceptics believe is that, if Jesus ever lived, he was even as we are in all essential respects. Had he been the Son of God he would have been omniscient, for, according to Orthodoxy, the Incarnation did not make him a human person; but if he continued to be a divine person after the Incarnation, it follows that he must have retained all his divine attributes, among which is omniscience. Mr. Humphries assumes the historicity of the Four Gospels, which sceptics emphatically reject; and in their rejection of it they are at one with several eminent Professors of New Testament Exegesis. What sceptics believe is that the Four Gospels are largely if not wholly mythical. This contention is capable of positive proof, and has been proved to the hilt by such Christian scholars as Wilhelm Soltan, Usener, Schmiedel, Abbott, and Moffat. Does Mr. Humphries maintain that the first two chapters of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke belonged to the original copies, and are consistent with the rest of their contents? Does he imagine that the last eleven verses in Mark's Gospel were in the first edition? If he does, he is at variance with the great majority of living scholars. If he does not, why does he build his argument on the gratuitous assumption that the Gospels are historically trustworthy?

Mr. Humphries takes for granted that the Four Gospels contain the genuine teaching of a historical Christ. But there are many believers in the historicity of Jesus who yet regard most of the sayings attributed to him as spurious. Even so conservative a critic as the late Dr. Martineau admitted that many of them cannot be accepted as genuine. That was also the opinion of the late Professor Bruce, of Glasgow, a more conservative scholar still. An ever-increasing number of present-day critics are arriving at the same conclusion. Many of these aver that the mythical element in the Gospels outweighs the historical. While still adhering to the belief in the historicity of Jesus, they do not hesitate to affirm, in the most positive manner, that the majority of the deeds and utterances ascribed to him were partly invented by his admiring followers, and partly borrowed from the heathen world. Mr. Humphries ignores this fact altogether; but the sceptics with whom he is arguing take full cognisance of it, and contend that he had no right to leave it out of account.

In consequence of that blunder Mr. Humphries presents a fundamentally inaccurate statement of the sceptical position. His lecture is calculated to seriously mislead all who have no direct and independent knowledge of the teaching of Freethinkers on the subject in dispute. His main contention is that in becoming man the second person in the Holy Trinity lost his omniscience and became as ignorant

as any ordinary Jewish peasant; that although one moment before the Incarnation he possessed the most intimate and minute acquaintance with all the religions of the world, yet one moment after it, and during the whole of his life on earth, he was not aware that such great men as Confucius and Buddha had ever existed; and that consequently he could not have appropriated any of their teaching. But it is an egregious mistake to imagine that sceptics regard Jesus himself as a plagiarist. In their estimation Jesus was quite as ignorant as Mr. Humphries so inconsistently represents him to have been. Dismissing the stupendous miracle of the Incarnation as absolutely unbelievable, they have no difficulty whatever in accounting for that ignorance. Whatever may have been true of the educated and professional classes of that period, it is a certainty that a Galilean carpenter would have known nothing of the great world-forces outside Palestine. On this point I am in full agreement with the lecturer. I could adopt his own words and say that "I know of no scholar who believes that Christianity had such an origin, because no one believes that Jesus had the universal knowledge which that theory assumes." "No! Jesus was not a disciple of Buddha," nor of any other heathen master. Furthermore, I contend that Jesus was not the founder of the religion that perpetuates his name. According to numerous New Testament critics who call themselves Christians, the bulk of the contents of the Four Gospels is composed of pure inventions or myths. Professor Schmiedel is firmly of opinion that they contain only nine "absolutely credible passages about Jesus." Paul knew nothing of a teaching God-man; for on the supposition that he knew of him his silence concerning him is utterly inexplicable. But if Paul, say in the year 70, did not know of the teaching, who did? Is it not fair to infer that the churches which that great apostle is said to have founded shared his ignorance? Then it must be borne in mind that the first written Gospel must have been a very slender production; and no one can tell when the Four Gospels reached their present dimensions. All we know is that they grew gradually and slowly. New stories were added to them from time to time, and the original material was periodically modified to suit new conditions. That is doubtless the explanation of the innumerable contradictions found in them, which no amount of exegetical ingenuity can reconcile, and which stamp the Gospels as totally unhistorical.

To prove the originality of Christ's teaching is impossible until it has been proved that the Gospel history can be trusted—a task which no scholar has hitherto succeeded in performing. Professor Adeney made a heroic attempt to perform it, a few months ago, but ignominiously failed. Now, then, I base my argument against Mr. Humphries on the assertion that the teaching of Christ did not exist, except germinally, as late as the year 70, and that it was compiled and arranged by Gentile Christians, who were in close touch with several great religions, and constantly on the look-out for fresh material to be used in the construction of the cult of Jesus. Mr. Humphries is entirely wrong in saying "that we must demand that Christianity, in any process of comparison, shall be confronted by other religions one by one, and not by all of them together," because the contention of Secularists is that Christianity is indebted, not to Buddhism alone, but to several pagan religions. For the legends of the Virgin Birth, the Angelic Song of Praise, the Magi, and the Guiding Star, it was not necessary to go farther afield than Greece and Rome, where wonderfully exact prototypes existed in great abundance. The sources of the teaching were more varied, including Judaism and Buddhism. Christianity is "a mosaic" constructed "after that eclectic fashion." Mr. Humphries himself admits that "Christianity is not a perfectly independent growth," but "has its roots in Judaism," and that the resemblances between it and Buddhism "are sufficiently striking to deserve investigation." But he denies that there was any path by which a knowledge of Buddhism

could have reached the mind of Jesus. "By what route, then," he asks, "is Buddhism thought to have come?" Some think "there is good reason to suppose that the Buddhists, who were the first and the most successful of all missionaries, reached Egypt and Palestine, and made their influence felt." "There is good reason to suppose no such thing," triumphantly exclaims our lecturer. It is proverbial how theologians give one another the lie direct on almost every point, and as a pertinent instance of it I cite the following extract from an article by Dr. T. M. Lindsay, of the United Free Church of Scotland, who is, to say the least, fully as competent to speak on the subject as Mr. Humphries (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. 5, p. 692):

"In the 5th century before our era the vast Buddhist movement had overspread the East from Thibet to Ceylon, and the Greek and Roman conquests in Asia brought Europe within the intoxicating influence of its subtle religious ideas. This strange Eastern theosophy, which during the first four centuries of our era is known by the name of Gnosticism, had a most powerful influence on the old religions of the West, which seemed to dissolve under its touch. Everywhere in the art and literature of the period we find its prevalence in the West during the age of Augustus and his successors. It insensibly undermined the beautiful, sensuous mythology of Greece, and the harder, sterner religion of Rome, and substituted for them a religion in which, if fear was the prevailing emotion, worshippers still felt that there was more spirituality and greater claims to universality than their old national religions could give."

Will Mr. Humphries still cry, "There is good reason to suppose no such thing"? Will he call his brother Professor a false witness? He himself admits that the missionaries of Buddhism penetrated into Persia and Bactria; but why does he refuse to accept the testimony of pillars and rock-inscriptions which tell of the conquests of this religion in the West as well as in the East, in Egypt, in Greece, and in Babylon as well as in Ceylon and Bactria? Everybody knows that some two or three hundred years before our era the relations between East and West were of the closest and most vital nature. Greece had established itself in Bactria and Persia in Babylonia, and there was nothing easier or more natural than the gradual dissemination of the knowledge of Buddhism in Egypt and Palestine, in Greece and Babylon as well as in Eastern countries. There are Hindu Books of Chronicles which relate the successes that attended Buddhist missions in different Western lands. There are gold and silver coins which bear witness to the reign of the Greeks not only in Bactria but also in Afghanistan, the Punjab, and a large tract of northern India, and it is undeniable that in all those territories Buddhism was the chief religion, as various inscriptions on simpler coins used by the natives abundantly testify.

Mr. Humphries makes much of the fact that no reference to Buddhism is to be found in Greek and Roman classics which he claims would not have been the case had Buddhism gained any considerable footing in the West. But this silence of classical writers proves nothing, because they are almost equally silent about Mithraism and Christianity.

Mr. Humphries has done his best; but the facts are dead against him, and he knows it. The cause for which he pleads is doomed, and no amount of special pleading can help it. Christianity as a specially revealed and infallible religion stands finally condemned. What is the use of saying that "Christ's teaching as a whole is a seamless robe" when it is not true? What is the use of placing Christianity on a pinnacle, immeasurably above all other religions, when there are impartial and unprejudiced scholars who unhesitatingly declare that Buddhism is ethically its superior? Christianity has not spoken the highest word concerning ethics. Whatever its highest ethical word may be it can be matched with a similar word from other religions. But Mr. Humphries knows as well as did the late Bishop Magee that the maxims of Christianity cannot be converted into practice. Who does or can love his

enemies? Who has ever made hatred of his nearest relations and best friends a test of Christian discipleship? No religion is wholly bad, and none is wholly good. "Some of you may remember," says Mr. Humphries, "Wellhausen's caustic answer to those who affirmed that all that Jesus said was to be found in the Talmud. 'Yes,' replied the German scholar, 'all, and a great deal besides.'" Secularists admit that there is not a little ethical truth in the Four Gospels, but they are bound to add that there is a great deal besides.

JOHN LLOYD.

Moral Causation.

[An extract from one of Mr. Foote's speeches in his debate with the Rev. Dr. McCann. Now reprinted for the sake of some who are puzzled by the Free-Will discussion.]

Dr. McCann does not appear to understand the doctrine of moral causation. I will as briefly as possible explain what I think it is. If you go to the inanimate world you find causation ruling. Every fact, as even the Christians now admit, has its antecedent cause or causes; and wherever the physical cause or causes operate the effect or effects will follow. There is no disputing that in the inanimate world. We pass from the inanimate world to the animate world. We come to the lowest forms of vegetable life. The transition is so gentle that it is practically impossible for the most skilful botanist to put his finger on the point where the vegetable world begins, and the inanimate world ceases. Even the Christian does not dispute that in the vegetable world the rule of causation still obtains. But no person can deny that a new form of causation has come into existence. The vegetable is generally stationary. It has a local position, and what we call life; that is, it has the power of preserving its identity against the shock of the surrounding universe. Now there is a capacity in this plant of responding to external stimulus. It comes under the law of excitation. There are plants so developed in this respect, that they actually live by flies and are carnivorous, and they are so susceptible, and so unconsciously discriminating, that if a piece of meat is dropped upon a leaf it will fold upon it; but if a piece of stone is dropped on it, which is of no use, it will not attempt to digest it. We pass by a gradual transition from the vegetable world into the animal world. No physiologist can lay his finger exactly on the spot and say, "Here the vegetable world ceases, and here the animal world begins." Among the lowest forms of animal life we find this response to external stimulus. The law of excitation obtains there very much as it does in the vegetable forms. But as the animal rises in the organic scale—as it develops a nervous structure and a brain—it gets what we call intelligence; and when this intelligence reaches a certain point motivation commences. That is, the external world stimulates the organism, not only directly through the channels of sense, but indirectly through the intelligence, which remembers previous facts of sense, and has a capacity of looking forward, and of regulating its course, by considerations that extend far beyond the mere external solicitations of the moment. As you proceed higher and higher you come to man. Those of us who are Darwinians believe that there is no absolute difference between man and other forms of life. We hold that man has been developed from a lower form, and he is still subject to the law which ruled his progenitors. An ordinary man acts mainly through immediate external stimulus. A glass of beer is there. Unaccustomed to think, the man drinks it, and then he drinks another and another, and gets frightfully drunk. He beats his wife, neglects his children, and becomes a suicide or perhaps a murderer. Another man, with some culture, with more capacity of thinking, not only sees the consequences of his action, but is brought under the sway of fresh motives. Let us take an illustration. An ordinary criminal is about to commit

a burglary. Suppose I know, as well as he does, that £50,000 is in that house, and might be had if the burglary were successful. The temptation to me would be very much smaller than it would be to him—partly because of my past life, which has been decided by my organisation and my training, and partly from the fact that my superior culture gives me a greater power than he possesses of estimating the consequences of my actions. Nay, my superior culture has also opened up in me a number of motives which may be latent in him, but are certainly not operative. I have dear friends, and to lose their respect would be worse than death. I have a large circle of acquaintances throughout the country, belonging to the party which I have the honor to represent, who would scorn me and hate me for committing such a crime, and my punishment, if I were detected, would be infinitely greater than the ordinary criminal would suffer. Thus you see I have fresh motives, and these fresh motives come not through the heart but through the head. When you improve men's understandings you give them fresh motives, besides strengthening the old ones. Notwithstanding all Dr. McCann's speeches, and all the sermons on his side, I say that a great argument in my favor is the one advanced last Thursday and which he has not replied to. The Education Act of 1870 has reduced crime more than all the sermons, from all the pulpits in Christendom, through all the centuries.

A word as to praise and blame. I am on explanatory lines now, because I want Dr. McCann to understand my position. If a man strikes me, and inflicts pain, I cannot help feeling annoyed or wroth, as the case may be. If a man does me an injury, that is, if he retrenches the happiness I should otherwise have enjoyed, or inflict upon me positive pain, I cannot help feeling indignation or hatred towards him. That is a recognised fact, which has been decided for us by nature. Were it not so it would be very obvious, as Bishop Butler points out, that society would soon go to rack and ruin, because individuals would not have sufficient self-assertion to protest against wrong. An external object is palatable or serviceable, and I call it so. Why do I not praise or blame it? Simply because it is not an organism under the rule of motivation. It is an inanimate object, not amenable to motives. Whenever men even cease to be amenable to motives, you treat them accordingly. You put them in lunatic asylums. You no longer praise or blame them, but treat them with kindness to the end of their lives. Now if I praise an action which I like, it is an inducement to the person I praise to repeat it. Society punishes in order to prevent crime, and not merely to wreak its vengeance upon the man who has violated the law. Punishment is sensible if you know that men are amenable to motives, and that the dread of the punishment will be a strong deterrent from crime. But if you cannot calculate—if man does anything he pleases according to some fantastic free will of the soul lying in some secret recess of his being—then legislation against crime is an absurdity. No prevision is possible without causation. You would be dealing with an incalculable future that might frustrate all your efforts and baffle all your designs. We punish to prevent crime. We know it will do so, because men are amenable to motives. We know that the man who violates the social law, and has not the social instincts strong enough within him to conform to it deliberately, may conform to it under the fear of punishment. If he do not then conform, the punishment is inflicted; he is incarcerated in gaol, and is sent there, if need be, again and again, until he learns the lesson, or ceases to plague the world.

The Divine stands wrapt up in his cloud of mysteries, and the amused Laity must pay Tithes and Veneration to be kept in obscurity, grounding their hope of future knowledge on a competent stock of present ignorance.—*George Farquhar.*

Acid Drops.

Good Friday is supposed to be the anniversary of Jesus Christ's death, and Easter Sunday of his resurrection. One of the aliases of Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace. For our part, we have always regarded this as a bit of burlesque; and it seems that the Volunteers think so too, for they have been using the "holiday" time to practise shooting and drilling. We understand, though, that most of them are Christians.

The Bishop of Ripon addressed a large meeting in the Leeds Town Hall on Good Friday evening, and the newspaper report before us says that the audience consisted of "working men." Possibly this is true; probably it is not true. We should like to know who checked off the 3,500 "working men," and what test was applied. Did they hold out their palms to show that they were "'orny 'anded sons of toil"?

Another Good Friday exhorter was the Rev. Dr. Hanson, of the Marylebone Presbyterian Church. This gentleman remarked that "Infidelity remained absolutely dumb before the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection." Well, it is evident that Dr. Hanson will never be dumb before anything. He has too much confidence and loquacity for that. What he says about "Infidelity" shows that he speaks from a plentiful ignorance of the subject. "Infidelity" sees no sort of "mystery" in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was a common-place occurrence in ancient times. This is a fact which Protestant exhorters always try to hide.

It is getting quite a common trick amongst professional exhorters to make out that they were once unbelievers; probably because they want to create, as cheaply as possible, the impression that they are quite up to both sides of the question. Here is the Rev. W. Carlile, of the Church Army, for instance, who burst out on Easter Sunday—or, as he delicately called it, Egg Sunday—with a reference to "When I was an Agnostic, and was too big for the Bible, too big for Heaven." Of course it is open to any exhorter to say he was once an Agnostic; the difficulty is to specify when and where, and to produce corroborative evidence. We don't suppose for a moment Mr. Carlile will do this. It is too much to expect from a man of God who plays the trombone in the pulpit, and appeals for funds to purchase a "good drum"—one that will make plenty of "noise."

Good Friday fell this year appropriately enough on the first of April—all fools' day. The first of April, as the *Daily News* observed, is also the anniversary of the death of Adam; an old gentleman as mythical as Christ. The day was marked in old calendars as "Memorial of the Death of Adam." "It is to be feared, however," our contemporary says, "that the observance of the death-day of Adam was lamentably neglected" this year. We should think so. Few people outside the *Daily News* office gave "the grand old gardener" a thought.

"According to the Oriental legend," our contemporary says, "Adam when he was dying ordered his body to be embalmed and interred in a cave near Paradise, and directed his children to bury him when they quitted that neighbourhood at the centre of the earth, whence should come salvation. This was done by Noah and Melchizedek, who buried him on Calvary." We are tempted to ask what is the Oriental legend? There are many Oriental legends about Adam. According to some ancient writers, he was buried at Hebron. Origen taught that he was buried at Calvary, where Christ was crucified; but Jerome doubted the story, although it was soothing to the popular ear. The Persians say that Adam was buried at Ceylon, and his tomb used to be shown there. According to Jewish tradition, his body was embalmed, taken into the ark by Noah, and afterwards buried at Jerusalem by Melchizedek. The skull was actually found there in later ages; hence the spot was called Golgotha. Such is the legend, and we are not going to dispute it. All we wish to say is that Adam's skull must have been pretty thick. A bigger simpleton was never born: we beg pardon—never existed; for Adam was not born, he was manufactured.

Lots of football matches were played on Good Friday; yes, and the *Daily News* reported them. This fact—not the football, but the report—must have been felt by many Non-conformists as "the most unkindest cut of all."

Father Adderley, wearing a cassock girt with a leather belt—as who should say, Look at me now!—has been

holding forth to an interviewer on the sad falling-off in the pious commemoration of Good Friday. The nation is going from bad to worse in this respect, he says; and the natural result is the increase of sin and degradation. The only light for all our social darkness comes from the Cross; and people, alas, look to it less than ever. Sad! Very sad! We quite feel for the weeping "Father," and are half-minded to offer him a pocket-handkerchief.

Rev. R. J. Campbell, the day before Good Friday, preached in the City Temple on the incident of Pilate washing his hands, and saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person, see ye to it." Of course there is nothing too silly and incredible for Christian ministers to preach about. We are therefore not surprised at Mr. Campbell's choosing this particular subject for his oratory. It could hardly be expected that he would tell his congregation how absurd it was to believe that a Roman Governor acted as Pilate is said to have done, and that washing the hands in this way would have been utterly meaningless to any Roman. A good text for a sermon is not to be sacrificed for the sake of accuracy and honesty.

Rev. R. M. Spoor, Wesleyan minister, of London, was seized with illness while conducting morning service at Grace-hill Wesleyan Chapel, Folkestone, on Easter Sunday, and died in the afternoon. There is no moral to the story except that one thing befalleth ministers and other people—yea, they have all one breath.

The Bishop of Norwich says that cycling itself is a harmless pleasure, yet when it keeps people from going to church it becomes a sin. Of course it does. Everything is a sin that keeps people from going to church. Formerly such sin was punishable by law. Now the only penalty is a reproachful sermon—which you need not hear. What a blessed improvement!

Churches and chapels, being dedicated to the service of God, are exempted from local rates. Hospitals, being dedicated to the service of Man, have to pay up. Mount Vernon Consumptive Hospital has had to appear, through its secretary, at the Hampstead Police Court, in answer to a summons for non-payment of the rates due on that institution. The Hospital is greatly in debt, and a fifth part of the beds have been closed for want of funds. Surely the nearest half-dozen gospel-shops might well be made to pay the Hospital rates between them.

A French soldier named Denouel, on his way by train to join his regiment at Rennes, swore—yes, positively swore—and, like most persons who swear, used the name of "the Deity." Whereupon a seminarist, a young man about to become a priest, rebuked the soldier, who told him to mind his own business. This the seminarist did in a peculiar way. At Rennes he handed the soldier over to a railway official, who delivered him over to the stationmaster, who passed him on to the Major in charge of the garrison, who sentenced him to eight days' imprisonment. But that was not the end of the matter. Rennes is a very Catholic town, and the French officers are most ardent clericals. So further trouble was in store for poor Denouel. The General commanding the district changed his sentence from eight to sixty days. It seems almost incredible, yet it is perfectly true; and General André, the Minister of War, has been appealed to on the subject by M. de Pressensé. After this one knows what to expect from the narrow-minded Jesuit-trained French military officers. It enables one to understand the Dreyfus affair a little better.

A discussion on dancing has been going on in religious circles recently. Such a discussion is nothing new; it has been going on, at intervals, for hundreds of years. The question is this: Should Christians dance? Is dancing compatible with Christianity? Is it even compatible with decency? The general verdict of Christians, especially of professional Christians, is that dancing is sinful. One man of God, however, says it is not so if it be carried on in the proper way. And what is the proper way? The men should dance together in one room, and the women should dance together in another. This is the man of God's lively suggestion; and he ought to have a medal for it. While it is being got ready we are trying to make up our mind whether he is too simple or too clever for this world.

Dancing, like so many other things which the clergy now condemn, began as a religious exercise. We see this even in the Bible. David danced before the Ark when he brought it up to Jerusalem. All he had on was a linen ephod round his middle, which did not conceal what it affected to cover, for he capered and leapt; or, as the text says, he "danced

before the Lord with all his might"—which must have played the deuce with that dangling bit of linen. That it did so, indeed, we may be sure from the reproaches of David's wife who watched his antics from a window and "despised him in her heart." "How glorious," she said to him afterwards, "was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself." Evidently they had seen too much.

All the "nobs" amongst the Jews danced at the close of the Feast of Tabernacles. The members of the Sanhedrim, the rulers of the synagogue, and the doctors of the schools, leapt and danced with torches in their hands for a great part of the night; and the people watched their performance. Special provision was made for dancing in the choir in the early Christian Church. Scaliger says that the bishops led the dance on feast days. But dancing fell into discredit with the Agape, or love-feasts, when more than heavenly love sometimes prevailed. It lingered on in the Church, however; and as late as 1813, at Seville, twelve young men danced before the Sacrament on Holy Thursday. Even in England, in the eighteenth century, the Welsh followers of Whitfield, called the Jumpers, took for their text: "Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy." Not so many years ago, in the early days of the Salvation Army, the hal-lelujah lasses, with their tambourines, often danced like bacchantes. And less than half a generation has elapsed since the Army of the Lord at Brighton, worshiping in a place called the Glory Hole, used to dance until they fell exhausted; women, as well as men, taking part in the pious exercise, and often exhibiting an unfashionable amount of stocking—to say nothing of worse exposures when they tumbled helpless on the floor.

Russian convents are said to be fabulously rich. They have plenty of money and heaps of precious stones. According to a St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Westminster Gazette*, the Troitsko-Sergius Monastery, near Moscow, has pails full of pearls; and one of the principal jewellers in Europe, who has seen them, says they are the only pearls worth mentioning. This is how the professional followers of Jesus Christ lay not up for themselves treasures on earth.

Archbishop Maguire made a curious request to the Catholics of Glasgow on Palm Sunday. He urged upon them to abstain from all intoxicating liquors during the last week in Lent, in commemoration of the Sacred Thirst of Christ. Intoxicating liquors do not quench thirst, and abstaining from them would not make the faithful Catholics thirstier. Perhaps the Archbishop had the idea that abstinence would develop a craving, and this would give his flock a notion of what Christ suffered on the cross. But the idea is very fanciful at the best, and we wish Archbishop Maguire would explain his meaning. Not that it is of much importance in itself, but he has excited our curiosity.

The dear *Daily News* could not wait for the publication of Herbert Spencer's *Autobiography*. It had to come out with a leader on the "advance" extracts printed in the *Times*. "Herbert Spencer on Himself" was the title of the leader, which was deliberately vicious. Naturally the organ of the Nonconformist Conscience is glad to have a fling at "philosophers." It dreads them as the Devil is said to dread holy water, and for a similar reason.

Dr. Horton is not finding much benefit from prayer. He has gone to Wiesbaden to consult a German specialist about his eyes, which are giving him much trouble. During his recent seclusion the reverend gentleman has composed a poem on St. John. We presume this St. John is the person who is believed to have written the fourth gospel. Well now, we read in that gospel (Chapter IX.) of the clay-and-spittle treatment by which Jesus cured blindness; and we suggest that Dr. Horton should try it himself, instead of resorting to such a commonplace remedy as medical science. Perhaps he would reply that he knows where to get clay, but not where to obtain the saliva of Jesus. But that is a matter in which faith must help him. It is impossible for us to offer him any assistance.

Dr. Clifford has been interviewed by the Passive Resistance daily newspaper on the arrangement that is reported to have been made between Mr. Balfour and the Rev. R. J. Campbell for amending the new Education Act. We do not propose to criticise Dr. Clifford's natural hostility to what emanates from Mr. Campbell. That is a personal matter which does not specially interest us. We shall simply deal with Dr. Clifford's own declaration of

policy on the matter of religious instruction, which is contained in the following extract:—

"Would you, Dr. Clifford, give your support to the Secularist policy?"

"If Parliament undertakes elementary education, it must not debar the young mind from access to the finer portions of the highest literature the world possesses; and yet if the State is to act fairly towards all organised religions, it *must* make illegal any sectional and partisan use of that literature. But though this is my conviction, I would not impose my will on another, and therefore I would leave the question as to the use of the Bible exactly as it is left by the Act of 1870, that is, purely optional to the ratepayers, through the education authority. Thus the will of the people would determine which of the two courses shall be taken, Parliament only asserting that the local authority shall not do anything that may endanger the larger life of the whole community. Therefore the only difference between my position and that of those who advocate what is known as the secularist policy is that, while they abolish the Bible from the schools, I would allow the citizens in each district to determine for themselves whether they retain it or not."

Our readers will see that Dr. Clifford is thoroughly steeped in the hypocrisy of his position. What humbug it is to start a discussion on what is the highest literature in the world! What on earth has "literature" to do with the present controversy? Dr. Clifford has been reminded again and again that the Bible was not *placed* in the schools as "literature," and nobody would lift a finger—much less spend sixpence—to *keep* it there as "literature." It was placed there as a book of religion; in short, as the Christian Scriptures; and the Nonconformists are trying to keep it there as the Word of (their) God. All this talk about "literature" on Dr. Clifford's part is downright dishonesty. And the same condemnation applies to his affected love of popular control. He would leave the question of religious education to the ratepayers. Well, it is left to them now. Town Councils are as much elected by ratepayers as the School Boards were; nay, more so, for an immensely greater number of ratepayers take the trouble to vote for the more important body. What this reverend Nonconformist really means is that he wants to evade the discussion of *principles*—as he has been doing all along. He knows that the majority of the ratepayers are professed Christians, and that if the matter is left to them they will, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, just provide the Christian instruction that they can agree upon. And he also knows that what they can agree upon is pretty certain to be undenominational. Which is precisely the Nonconformist ticket.

Let us put a case which will serve as a test of Dr. Clifford's sincerity. Suppose the majority of ratepayers in any locality resolved to have the Church Catechism taught in the provided schools. Would Dr. Clifford recognise this as just and right because the citizens in the district had determined for themselves? Or would he call it an abuse of power and clamor for a strong display of Passive Resistance? Everybody knows, of course, that he would do the latter. What is it, then, that he would leave to "the citizens in each district"? Simply the determination of whether they will have Bible reading and explanation or no religious teaching at all. That is to say, the citizens must not decide locally between Church and Dissent, for that would "endanger the larger life of the whole community"—which is a grandiose way of saying that it might be rough on the Nonconformists. But the citizens may decide between Dissenters and Secularists—for Dr. Clifford knows how that decision would go. This is what Dr. Clifford's policy comes to under a full analysis; and we have not the slightest hesitation in saying that he is a mouthing charlatan who talks pure disinterestedness while he is simply pursuing the interests of his own branch of the clerical profession. He is far less entitled to respect than the bolder bigots of the Anglican Church.

There are a few honest men, in relation to the Education question, amongst the Nonconformists, and we cheerfully admit their existence. Even at the late Free Church Congress a handful had the courage to vote against Dr. Clifford's hypocritical policy. We note also that the Rev. G. B. Stallworthy, Congregational minister, of Hindhead, writes to the *Daily News* declaring that: "We want no arm of the law to assist priest, parson, or minister, or any religious body, in driving children in to their instruction. The last people to wish for this should be Nonconformists. For them to insist on Bible teaching supported by the rates is to give their principles away." Precisely so. We have been saying this all along. Nonconformity does not mean membership of one of the so-called Free Churches. That is a contemptibly narrow definition. Nonconformity means the denial of the right of the State to meddle with religion at all; discouragement and patronage on the part of the State being equally offensive.

There are two more Passive Resistance "martyrs" at Birmingham. Mr. C. W. F. Coney and Mr. Richard Woosnam, said to be well-known (we don't mean to the police), were sentenced to three days' imprisonment each. Terrible! The early Christian martyrs should hide their diminished heads.

Rev. G. W. Wellburn, of Deal, another Passive Resistance "martyr," was to be arrested at Folkestone and taken to Canterbury Gaol for the awful term of a fortnight. But some unknown person paid the rate for him half an hour beforehand, and the man of God was grievously disappointed. At least he says so.

A Passive Resister at Clipping Norton, Mr. John Fowler Maddox, a Justice of the Peace, eighty years of age, told the Bench that he would never pay the rate. "They might take anything out of his house," he said, "except his wife." Evidently the old gentleman looks upon his wife in the spirit of the tenth commandment. It will be remembered that the wife, with the house, the ox, and the ass, is there included in the inventory of the husband's belongings.

Amongst the goods of three Passive Resisters sold at Birmingham was a gold presentation watch belonging to the Rev. James Barnes, Primitive Methodist minister. This was the second time it had been offered for sale, so it must have been bought in. Moreover, the reverend gentleman must have deliberately handed it over to the bailiff, as you cannot distrain on a man's person. What a comedy!

Fancy a "martyr" in a silk hat and frock coat! This was the rig-out of Mr. E. P. Luke, a Passive Resistance martyr, who has just done fourteen days in Exeter Gaol. He was allowed to wear his silk hat and frock coat in prison—which must have been a great comfort. It appears that he came out of prison "much better and stronger than he went in"—which speaks volumes for the cruelty of the martyrdom. We shall presently see some Passive Resistance martyrs, weighing twenty stone, exhibited round the country.

The National Union of Teachers opened its thirty-fifth annual Conference at Portsmouth on Easter Monday. Mr. G. Sharples, a Manchester headmaster, delivered the Presidential address, and had something to say about the religious education difficulty. He evidently looked upon the question at issue as one entirely between Christians; other citizens, apparently, not being entitled to a "look in." Here is an extract from Mr. Sharples' speech:

"If this un-Christian strife was to continue with ever-increasing bitterness, men would be driven to the only logical conclusion, secular instruction alone. His own opinion was that such a result would be a national calamity. He believed that the mass of the people were in favor of simple Biblical teaching in the schools, and he implored the leaders of the Christian Churches to come to some common agreement, for the sake of the children."

What a spectacle! The President of the Teachers' Trade Union talking about "the only logical conclusion" as "a national calamity." Mr. Sharples seems to have as much respect for logic as he has for justice and fair-play. And the worst of it is that the assembled teachers applauded him; which is a sad reflection on their average intelligence and character. There must have been a minority, however, who cherished saner and more liberal opinions; and it is a pity that they had not the courage to avow them.

We see that England has as many women as men who are classed as habitual drunkards;

That there is more drinking in Great Britain in proportion to the population than in any country on the earth;

That all so-called Christian nations are filled with drunkards;

That the only people who do not get drunk are the heathen;

That the morals of India, China, Japan, and most of Africa are in many respects higher than those of Europe or of America;

That there is less stealing in Bombay than in Boston;

That there is less gambling in Peking than in London;

That Christians have a religion that does not make them moral;

That missionary labors should begin at home.

—Boston Investigator.

Mr. Foote's Lecturing Engagements.

Sunday, April 10, Town Hall, Stratford, 7.30, "Holy Russia and Heathen Japan."

April 17, 24, Printers' Hall, London.

To Correspondents.

C. COHEN'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—Address, 241 High-road, Leyton.—April 10, Camberwell; 17, Stratford Town Hall; 24, South Shields.

J. LLOYD'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—April 10, Manchester; 17, Merthyr Tydvil; 24, Failsforth.

R. O. CAMPBELL.—Of course quite up to date cuttings are preferable. Glad to hear you appreciate your *Freethinker*, and hope you will always do so.

H. C. SHACKLETON.—When we see a letter in a morning paper, dated from the writer's residence, we presume that he is at home; and that, being at home, he cannot very well be elsewhere. Still, it does not matter a straw whether the Rev. R. C. Fillingham was in England or America at the time we wrote our paragraph, and nobody but himself is likely to fly into a temper about it. When the reverend gentleman refers to the editor of the *Freethinker* as "a besotted idiot" he simply speaks after his kind, and we are too familiar with it even to feel annoyed. We are obliged to you, however, for a look at the correspondence; and we note that Mr. Fillingham is not such "a besotted idiot" as to answer your civil question about Secular Education. He and his like treat that question with a well-calculated reticence.

N. S. S. BENEVOLENT FUND.—Miss Vance acknowledges:—Glasgow Branch 12s. 3d., Huddersfield Branch 15s., Dr. R. T. Nichols: £1. Gifts of cast-off clothing are now urgently needed.

J. V. H.—We have a paragraph or two on the general subject in this week's "Acid Drops." Sorry we cannot see our way just at present to writing an article on Good Friday football at Tottenham—or elsewhere. We have too many articles mapped out already, and the subject would be stale by the time we could reach it. Thanks, all the same, for the suggestion.

J. MAQUSS.—Order transferred to the proper hands. No doubt some Freethought lectures would do a lot of good down Monmouth way. But the "saints" in the district would have to help locally. Are they able and willing to do so?

W. P. BALL.—Your cuttings are always welcome.

H. B.—Pleased to hear from you again, and glad to learn you are getting a little more leisure.

B. SAUNDERS.—One of the best single-volume English Dictionaries is the new Chambers's "Pronouncing, Explanatory, Etymological." It is published at 12s. in cloth. Of course there are smaller Dictionaries, and one of the best of these is Chambers's "Etymological"—price, we believe, 4s.

W. R. D.—Glad to hear you are so pleased at the resumption of "Book Chat." We hope to make it a strong feature of the *Freethinker* in the immediate future. We have quite an accumulation of books read and marked for notice in the "Book Chat" column, and we begin to feel like tackling them.

NORTHERN FREETHINKER.—The National Secular Society's Conference is always held on Whit-sunday, and we expect to make a definite announcement as to the place in our next issue. The choice is being made as we write between two towns, and either of them is near enough to your locality to make it reasonably possible for you to attend.

W. SPENCER.—We noticed Mr. J. M. Robertson's edition of Buckle a few weeks ago, and noticed it very favorably. It is impossible for us to give the book a longer notice at present, nor do we think it would serve any useful purpose to do so. Mr. Robertson's editorial notes are many, and it would be a heavy task to go through them. We sampled them, and found them, in our judgment, very good. Surely this is sufficient on the part of a reviewer. On the personal question, since you ask it, we do not think Buckle as great a man as Comte. Comte was one of the greatest of thinkers, and profoundly original, in the only intelligible meaning of the term. Moreover, he has been, as Fuseli said of Blake, "damned good to steal from."

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

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Foote takes the second lecture of the Stratford Town Hall course. His subject this evening (April 10) will be "Holy Russia and Heathen Japan." This lecture has proved very interesting to audiences in other localities, and should attract a crowded meeting at West Ham. The admission is free, with a collection towards defraying the expenses.

London Freethinkers will please note that Mr. Foote begins the Sunday evening lectures in the new meeting-place next "Lord's Day" (April 17). The Printers' Hall is in Bartlett's-passage, Holborn, right behind the well-known furnishing house of Wallis and Co., and can be approached on the east side of Wallis's from Bartlett's-buildings, or on the west side from Fetter-lane. Though not in a great thoroughfare, it is only a stone's-throw off one, and is really very easy of access to people who want to find it. Ludgate-hill Station is only three or four minutes' walk distant. Farringdon-street Station on the Underground Railway is about the same. The nearest Twopenny Tube station is the "Chancery Lane" in Holborn, about two minutes' walk from the Hall. North London trams from Hampstead, Holloway, and Finsbury Park run to the corner of Gray's Inn-road and Holborn, which is quite near the Hall. Several tramcar lines from East London run to the same place. And everybody knows, of course, that omnibuses run through Holborn, east and west, from various parts of the metropolis. Altogether it would be hard to find a place *more* centrally situated than Printers' Hall. We may add that it is little more than a pistol-shot from the City Temple.

We have already said, but we may repeat it, that the Printers' Hall was formerly a Welsh chapel, and still bears a somewhat ecclesiastical appearance. Now that the "saints" are duly notified of this fact they will not be startled when they go to hear Mr. Foote lecture, fancy themselves in the wrong shop, and slip out again saying "This is no place for me."

The subject of Mr. Foote's opening lecture at Printers' Hall will be announced in next week's *Freethinker*. The intention is to take right up-to-date subjects, from week to week; and these cannot possibly be printed on a bill weeks beforehand.

Mr. Cohen had an excellent audience on Sunday evening, the Stratford Town Hall being well filled, and a good collection contributed towards the expenses. It is pleasant to add that the meeting was very sympathetic, and that all the points of the lecture were well taken.

Herbert Spencer's *Autobiography* will be published shortly, and we shall review it for the benefit of our readers. We see that the *Times* has been giving some "advance" extracts from the book. Without saying whether this is wise or just, we prefer to take no notice of such extracts, but to wait until the whole *Autobiography* is available. An extract is often modified or qualified by the context.

Mr. John Davidson, poet, dramatist, and critic, had an interesting paper headed "A Drastic Discussion" in last week's *Academy*. What made Tennyson popular (he says) was not his poetry, but his "good bourgeois morality," the note of which is so bathetically struck in the reference in the *May Queen* to "that good man the clergyman." Mr. Davidson thinks that Mr. Swinburne's reputation will have to wait for generations on account of his political and religious heresies. "Religion and politics," Mr. Davidson adds, "still hide Shelley away; and the great immoralist of Scotland, Robert Burns, the Dionysos who brought a free mood into the most priest-ridden country in Europe, is worshiped only in public-houses and drinking clubs. It may yet appear that the real source of the traditional preference of Virgil to Lucretius is not his superior art, but the theological bias which could not tolerate the noblest materialism, which approved the orthodoxy of the pious Æneas, and detected a Messianic prophecy in the Eclogues."

Last week's *Athenæum*, reviewing the complete edition of Christina Rossetti's poems, makes the following observation, which we have ourselves made in other words before:—"It is curious—curious and regrettable—how few poets retain the white heat, the thorough-blast of their inspiration when they dedicate themselves to direct religious themes. Since the days of Crawshaw, Vaughan, and Herbert many have felt themselves called, but few have been chosen. It seems only to demonstrate the inferiority of holy-water to the Picrian spring as a source of inspiration."

"Japan and Christianity" is the title of an article by Mr. C. W. Salesby in last week's *Academy*, the following extract from which will interest our readers:—"A little less than half a century ago the country was opened, and the history of Christianity in Japan begins a new chapter. And first as to its official history. Some years ago, when the Mikado and his Government were engaged in the reconstruction of Japanese society, they considered the question of Christianity. A Commission was appointed to prepare a report upon its influence in checking vice and crime abroad. The verdict was unfavorable, and was in consonance with that of Kaempfer in the seventeenth century, who said of the Japanese, 'They profess a great respect and veneration for their Gods, and worship them in various ways. And I think I may affirm that, in the practice of virtue, in purity of life, and outward devotion, they far outdo the Christians.' The Commission seems to have been appointed in recognition of the principle 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' One wonders whether the horrible irony of the situation has appealed to the officials of Christianity."

Mr. W. H. Thresh delivered two lectures on Sunday for the Merthyr Ethical Society, and has been invited to "come again." The hall was full in the evening, and the local *Express* says that the lecture was "extremely interesting" and that the lecturer "held the audience from start to finish."

The East London N.S.S. Branch starts its open-air work again this morning (April 10) at 11.30 on Mile-end Waste. Mr. Ramsey will deliver a lecture on Easter. The local "saints" are requested to note this,

M. de Charnoy, a rising young French genius, has just finished a bust of Ernest Renan, which is said to be a noble and characteristic sculpture. It will be placed either in the Panthéon or the Collège de France.

Good Friday was chosen by the French Minister of Justice for beginning the removal of crucifixes and other religious emblems from the Courts of Justice. This ought to have been done long ago, and the delay shows the absurdity of the idea that the Freethinkers are in power in France and use the opportunity to oppress their Christian fellow citizens. What the Freethinkers are doing is simply putting an end to the old Christian usurpation. Christians should keep their emblems in their own buildings; they have no right to place them in buildings belonging to the whole community.

The Parisian Freethinkers held their annual banquet in honor of "The Crucified for Freethought in All Ages" on Good Friday, under the presidency of Deputy Gustave Hubbard. Speeches were delivered by Victor Charbonnel, Gustave Féry, and others. A feature of this gathering was a special delegation representing the Post and Telegraph Departments. Other Freethought dinners were held on Good Friday in various French towns.

M. Furnémont, the well-known Belgian Freethinker and member of the Belgian Parliament, has just returned from a propagandist tour through Italy in the interest of the International Freethought Congress which is to take place at Rome in September. M. Furnémont was splendidly received everywhere, and all the Italian dailies reported his meetings in the various cities he visited. In Rome itself he was entertained at a public dinner presided over by an Italian deputy. M. Furnémont reports that the Rome Congress promises to be a phenomenal gathering of Freethinkers.

The April number of the *Pioneer* contains an article by the editor on "The New Eastern Question" which ought to interest a good many readers of the *Freethinker*. There is also an excellent article by the writer who signs himself "Julian" on "A Christian Atmosphere." Other contents of this little monthly will be found in our advertisement pages. We appeal once more to our friends to circulate the *Pioneer* amongst their more liberal-minded acquaintances, or in other judicious ways that may suggest themselves.

Correspondence.

PROFESSOR PEAKE EXPLAINS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I am sorry to trespass on your space, but I must clear up a mistake on which Mr. Lloyd comments severely in his review of my lecture "Did Jesus Rise Again?" in your issue of March 20th, 1904. On p. 11 of my lecture the following sentence occurs:—"The Church has consistently

asserted that the explanation of this strange fact, that the Jews accepted a person who had been crucified as Messiah, is to be accounted for by the belief that that person had risen from the dead." Mr. Lloyd, naturally, could scarcely believe the testimony of his eyes, for in his own admirably chosen words he says, "I had always thought that not even a Professor of Theology could have fallen into such an obvious and absurd error." It would surely have occurred to Mr. Lloyd, if he had not been so ready to believe that a professor could make so grotesque a blunder in the elements of the subject he has to teach, that the error lay in the reporting, transcribing, or printing. If for "the Jews" he will read "Jews" he will have what I said and what I meant. The reference was to the disciples of Jesus, who were Jews, and retained a belief in his Messiahship in spite of the crucifixion, not to "the Jews," who neither before nor after his death accepted his Messiahship. I am the more surprised that Mr. Lloyd should not have hit on so obvious an explanation, when on the opposite page this sentence occurs:—"For this is our problem—How was it that Jews, who had been brought up to believe that no man could hang upon a cross without falling under the ban of God, could yet suppose that this had happened to the leader of the Messianic movement, and still retain their faith in his Messiahship?" Here "Jews," not "the Jews," is correctly given, and "retain their faith" shows that it was not the Jews in general, but the followers of Jesus whom I had in mind. The reference to "a belief on the part of the apostles" in the sentence after that quoted by Mr. Lloyd makes my meaning clear; and I may call attention further to the following sentence on p. 13: "As I have already shown, it was a serious problem to the original apostles how they could still believe one who was crucified to be the Messiah." Mr. Lloyd himself gives a quotation on p. 180 at the foot of the first column, which reiterates the point about "his followers."

I enclose a copy of my lecture that you may verify my quotations.

ARTHUR S. PEAKE.

16, Wellington-road,
Whalley Range, Manchester.

[We gladly insert Prof. Peake's letter, for we like fair play and dislike misunderstandings. But we are bound to say that "the Jews" on p. 11 of his pamphlet is precisely as Mr. Lloyd quoted it; and when a lecture appears in pamphlet form it is generally supposed to have had the speaker's revision.—*EDITOR.*]

National Secular Society.

REPORT of Monthly Executive Meeting held on Tuesday, March 29; the President, Mr. G. W. Foote, in the chair. There were also present Messrs. C. Cohen, F. Cotterell, W. Leat, Dr. R. T. Nichols, J. Neate, S. Samuels, T. Thurlow, and the Secretary.

Apologies were read from other members in consequence of illness and the pressure of the holiday season.

Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed.

The Secretary produced a very creditable balance-sheet of the Lectures recently delivered at Coventry, and reported that the Branch had revived consequent upon the President's highly successful visit, in proof of which sixteen new members' forms were presented to the meeting and accepted.

An application for permission to form a Branch at Leeds was received and granted, and four new members were also received for the Birmingham Branch.

Correspondence was read from the Liverpool Branch expressing their desire to invite the Conference and asking for a slight extension of time, during which they hoped to be able to conclude arrangements. The friends at Leeds were also endeavoring to make arrangements, and it was finally resolved to hold the Conference in Liverpool if possible, otherwise to leave the arrangements in the hands of the President.

The Children's Party Committee reported a highly successful function, albeit there was a deficit still.

Other routine business having been dealt with the meeting closed.

EDITH M. VANCE,
General Secretary.

N.B.—Secretaries of Branches are requested to kindly note the date upon which the Books of the Society close, and the time for sending in notices of motion for the Agenda as per the Circular now in their hands.

It was never intended that men should be saints in heaven until they are dead and good for nothing else.—*Dod's Grille.*

Story of the Inquisition.

BY DR. J. E. ROBERTS

(Minister of the Church of This World, Kansas City, Mo.)

THE story of religion is a story of blood. Every religion that has had the power has persecuted. No religion has ever possessed power and exercised it with justice and gentleness. Jesus said he "came to send not peace, but a sword." The fulfilment of that prophecy drenched the earth with slaughter. In every age the heretic has been hated. Until the present time free thought and free speech have been capital crimes. In every age to differ from the majority in matters religious has been an invitation to death. The fire on the altar and the fire at the martyr's stake have lighted the pathway of religion. The worshippers of God have been the destroyers of men. The cries of victims and the strains of the "Te Deum" have mingled and mounted together. All this is different now. Civilisation and enlightenment have put out the fires of persecution and wrested the sword from the hand of religion. Civilisation has civilised religion.

But why should man persecute man for opinion's sake? Why should men inflict wanton pain upon their fellows? If these circumstances were found only here and there they might be attributed to the badness of the individuals, but when we find every religion persecuting, when we find the stains of blood on every hand, explanations fail and theories are futile.

Who or what is responsible? How shall we explain man's inhumanity to man? Out of what did these cruelties arise? As for the Christian religion, there are two things which must share the responsibility of Christian cruelties. That was a fateful hour for our human world when a miscellaneous collection of writings produced by a sanguinary and barbaric people was exalted and revered as a revelation from God. At that moment reason went into eclipse; it was no longer the guide. Men stumbled blindly in their unreasoning adoration, and the natural instincts were stifled. It is notorious that imitators copy and exaggerate the imperfections and faults of their models, while at the same time they remain almost blind to their excellences.

The worshippers of the Bible reproduced its imperfections with disastrous fidelity. The Biblical injunction, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," was the death warrant of unnumbered thousands of the unfortunate. The representations that the chosen people upheld slavery forged chains for millions of human beings. The fact that the alleged chosen people waged wars of rapine and conquest, exterminating or enslaving weaker tribes, gave for hundreds of years to bloody war the Christian and Biblical sanction. David, the man called "after God's own heart," lying upon his death-bed, affectionately called his son to his side and adjured him to "remember Joab, my enemy, and see that his head goes not down to the grave in peace." At the moment of going into the mysterious beyond, this same man "after God's own heart" said to his son, "Remember Shimei, to protect whom I took a solemn oath; see to it that his grey head goes down to the grave in blood."

Moreover, had not the same God that made that revelation declared death against any heretic or apostate? Were not the tenderest ties of affection and love required to be violated? Was not the husband of a wife required to be the first to hurl the stone upon her that she might be stoned to death if she had turned away from the God of her fathers? Did not that same God who made the revelation himself execute wholesale death upon a world of apostates by sending a flood to destroy them? How could a symbol like that of the ancient Scriptures, exalted as it was by an ignorant people, and revered and worshiped as God's divine message to man, how could its influence be anything else than to brutalise,

harden, and make savage its votaries? How could the worshippers of this God be any more humane or gentle or kind than the being to whom they bowed down?

Until the year 325 the Christians were weak, for the most part poor, often persecuted, and, as a general thing, sane. Apostates and heretics were treated with leniency and consideration by the early church. In that year the throne of Rome was, for the first time in its history, occupied by a prince professing the Christian name. The Popes and Bishops under his successors, many of them being men of exemplary lives, displayed great zeal for the triumph of the Catholic faith, and the extirpation of heresy. They succeeded in inducing Constantine and his successors to enact civil laws against heretics. That was the beginning of what was to develop into the Inquisition. In the year 382 the Emperor Theodosius published a decree requiring the Manicheans to be put to death and their property confiscated for the State. As far as I have been able to ascertain, that is the first mention of inquisition and accusation in connection with heresy. The power of the Church was now rapidly augmenting. The ambition of its leaders knew no bounds.

Two principles were established which did more than any other to enlarge and strengthen the ecclesiastical power. The first principle was that the Pope possessed the power to release the subjects of any king, or sovereign, from allegiance to their ruler. This principle made the kings, princes, and ruling nobles subject in reality to the Pope. It became necessary for all rulers to conciliate him. The second principle was that excommunication carried with it and produced all the effects of infamy, not only to the one upon whom the anathema fell, but to any who should assist, aid, or in any way have communion with the excommunicate.

Three other principles were developed, and they, with these that have been mentioned, form the foundation to the Inquisition. One was that excommunication could be pronounced against any species of crime; not alone that of heresy, for which it first existed, but any crime that the ecclesiastics chose. The second was that the person excommunicated, after the period of one year, if he did not seek reconciliation with the Church, was regarded as an obdurate heretic, and proceeded against with the extreme penalty. The third was that it was a meritorious act to denounce a heretic, and that compensation for such service in the interest of the cause of religion was made by giving special indulgences. With these principles well established in ecclesiastical law, the Pope is practically the master of all sovereigns of Catholic states—every man under suspicion, and everyone promised a reward who will inform against or denounce another as guilty of heresy. It must not be concluded that this execrable institution was established without bitter opposition and indignant protest.

In the year 1,202 or 1,203 Pope Innocent III. commissioned twelve monks to go into France and preach against and persecute the Albigenses. In the year 1232 Pope Gregory IX. sought to establish the Inquisition in Spain. In the years that followed there was the most determined opposition from ruling princes and nobles, as well as from many ecclesiastics that were still loyal to the Catholic Church.

The Inquisition was not securely established in Spain until two or three centuries afterwards. Indeed, so great was the outcry against it that it remained in a state of comparative inactivity for more than a century. Meanwhile, the Pope had issued a decree requiring the Bishops or their archdeacons to visit at least once a year every diocese and put all of the inhabitants under oath to denounce heretics. He had threatened every count, duke, and ruling noble with excommunication and the confiscation of his pro-

perty if he did not aid in the work of the Inquisition.

Let me mention some of the things for which men were accused and punished. The first was blasphemy. Here is an illustration of blasphemy. A man, whose daughter was sick, invoked the Virgin in her behalf in these words, "Holy Mother of God, command thy Son that my daughter recover." The daughter died. The man took a metal image of the Virgin that he had been used to carry about with him and threw it away. He was informed against, brought before the Inquisition, and put to death.

Then there was the crime of sorcery, the crime of invocation of demons, the crime of sheltering or protecting in any way a heretic, the crime of any noble who refused to banish all heretics from his state, the refusal of any sovereign or ruler to annul any laws of his kingdom that might interfere with the operation of the Inquisition, the crime of any lawyer or notary who should give advice to or otherwise aid anyone suspected of heresy, the crime of being a deceased person and having it discovered afterwards that during his life he had been guilty of heresy, the crime of being a Jew or a Moor and endeavoring to make converts to those religions. Every phase and field of human life was covered. Moreover, the Pope issued a decree declaring that anonymous testimony was valid. You might go in the dead of night to a certain appointed place and drop a note without your signature, or any witness, denouncing somebody as guilty of heresy; this man would then be apprehended by the agents of the Inquisition and brought to trial—that is, to torture. The certainty of these trials may be inferred from the fact that of those accused only one in two thousand escaped conviction.

But the Inquisition which is generally in the minds of people when the Spanish Inquisition is spoken of is that which was established or re-established under the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella in year 1481. In the general mind this institution stands identical with the Roman Catholic Church. Those who have read hastily, or have acquired their information by hearsay and report, think of the Spanish Inquisition as the right arm of the Pope of Rome; but it must be said, I think, in all justice, that the Pope of Rome was not the originator nor chiefly instrumental in the re-establishment of that hideous institution in 1481. The responsibility seems to lie with three parties—Ferdinand of Aragon, Isabella of Castile, and her father confessor, the execrated and forever infamous Torquemada. The motive of Ferdinand seems to have been simply the acquiring of the money and the property of the heretics. It was a form of robbery under ecclesiastical law. The motive of Isabella seems to have been the unification of different provinces of Spain under her and her husband's joint reign, and the ultimate conquest of the kingdom of Grenada and other Mohammedan states in the peninsula. The motive of Torquemada seems to have been simply one of lust for blood. Under the first two years of the Inquisition, from 1481 to 1483, the executions were not so frequent. In the month of January, 1481, they burned alive but six persons; in March but twenty-six; in November of the same year only 298, and during all of these first two years of the new Inquisition only two thousand were burned at the stake. Torquemada succeeded as inquisitor general in the year 1483. He held that office for eighteen years, and then, on account of his unspeakable atrocities and bloodthirstiness, was removed by one of the Popes of Rome, be it said to his credit for all time. During the eighteen years of his sway as head of the Inquisition he is said to have burned alive more than ten thousand persons, to have burned in effigy more than six thousand, and to have otherwise tortured and punished more than one hundred thousand. The burning in effigy was what occurred after a man was dead, or after he had fled and could not be apprehended, and the effect of a trial, condemnation, and execution in effigy was the confisca-

tion of all his goods, money, and property, and the attaching of infamy for all time to his family.

The successor of Torquemada held the office for twelve years. He is credited with burning alive more than three thousand people, with burning in effigy more than one thousand, and with otherwise torturing and punishing more than thirty-five thousand. He was succeeded by a man who held the office for five years, and who was then relieved of it by being elevated by election as Pope of Rome. When he ascended the papal throne, when he put on the triple crown, when he robed himself in purple as the vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, he had placed to his credit twenty-eight thousand victims of the Inquisition.

(To be concluded.)

Isaac Selby Has Turned Up at Last.

MANY of the *Blade* readers will remember the above individual, as he made a tour of this country some years ago, preaching in churches against Infidelity. He is an Australian, and for many years was a co-worker there with Symes, in his Infidel propaganda. He lectured all over Australia, and next to Symes was that country's most prominent Infidel.

But Selby had an itching palm, and as he was not making money fast enough preaching Infidelity, he turned Christian, and great was the joy among the holy ones, as he went about preaching Christianity in the places where he had taught Infidelity. And he prospered.

About seven years ago he came to America, and made a tour, advertising himself as the great converted Infidel of Australia, and challenging Infidels as he went to debate with him.

He came to Cincinnati and Covington, and churches opened to him, and he drew great crowds.

Having all the advantage of Infidel training and education, he could handle the ignorant Christian crowds to perfection. He was careful to expose only the weak points of Infidelity, and having set his men of straw, he would proceed to smash them, much to the delight of the gaping Christian crowds.

The Liberals all saw that he was a hypocrite, and that he was using his knowledge of Infidelity against the facts of Infidelity, as a lawyer uses the tricks of law against the law.

I reported his Cincinnati visit in the *Blade* at the time, and cautioned Liberals to be on the look-out for him, and predicted that it was only a question of time when the trickster would turn up in a scrape and be kicked out of the churches which he was playing.

WELL, HE HAS TURNED UP.

A San Francisco paper at hand gives an account of his arrest, fine, and imprisonment for cruel treatment of his wife. She could stand his brutality no longer, and applied for a divorce, and thus this contemptible Infidel's rascality came to the surface. Her statement of his starvation of her and his cruelty, falsehood, hypocrisy, and general meanness and worthlessness was well established by witnesses.

The Judge gave him a terrible scoring, and the limit of the law, and wished that it was only twice as severe, that he might apply the full penalty to such scoundrels.

So little Ikey Selby has at last reached the jumping-off place.

Both Christians and Infidels have found him out, and he has at last learned that it is better to be honest than to be a hypocrite.

His career in this country is no reflection upon Christianity, even though he played the churches for all he could get, and they took him up and championed him with great bluster and pride.

Selby is an Infidel. He was out for graft. As long as his heart was in the cause of intellectual liberty he had character and standing. When he began playing the hypocrite he began to degenerate, just as every other man will do who so acts.

If he had been sterling and honest he might have held high position in the Freethought ranks in this country. He is a man of undoubted information and ability. We needed him. We could have kept him in the field. But alack! he has the fatal weakness of not being true to himself, and it follows, as the night the day, he cannot be true to any man. Christianity has lost out in taking up with this mountebank, and Infidelity has gained in getting rid of a contemptible hypocrite. If we ever hear of Selby again it is not likely that we will hear of anything good.

We are pleased to expose this man, just to show that Infidelity is as quick to hold up rascality of Infidels as to expose the rascality of the clergy.

—*Blue Grass Blade* (Lexington).

The Scolliver Pig.

ONE of Thomas Jefferson's maxims is as follows: "When angry, count ten before you speak; if very angry, count a hundred." I once knew a man to square his conduct by this rule, with a most gratifying result. Jacob Scolliver, a man prone to bad temper, one day started across the fields to visit his father, whom he generously permitted to till a small corner of the old homestead. He found the old gentleman behind the barn, bending over a barrel that was canted over at an angle of seventy degrees, and from which issued a cloud of steam. Scolliver *père* was evidently scalding one end of a dead pig—an operation essential to the loosening of the hair, that the corpse may be plucked and shaven.

"Good morning, father," said Mr. Scolliver, approaching, and displaying a long, cheerful smile. "Got a nice roaster there?" The elder gentleman's head turned slowly and steadily, as upon a swivel, until his eyes pointed backward; then he drew his arms out of the barrel, and finally, revolving his body till it matched his head, he deliberately mounted upon the supporting block and sat down upon the sharp edge of the barrel in the hot steam. Then he replied, "Good mornin', Jacob. Fine mornin'."

"A little warm in spots, I should imagine," replied the son. "Do you find that a comfortable seat?" "Why—yes—it's good enough for an old man," he answered, in a slightly husky voice, and with an uneasy gesture of the legs; "don't make much difference in this life where we set, if we're good—does it? This world ain't heaven, anyhow, I s'pose."

"There I do not entirely agree with you," rejoined the young man, composing his body upon a stump for a philosophical argument. "I don't neither," added the old one, absently, screwing about on the edge of the barrel and constructing a painful grimace. There was no argument, but a silence instead. Suddenly the aged party sprang off that barrel with exceeding great haste, as of one who has made up his mind to do a thing and is impatient of delay. The seat of his trousers was steaming grandly, the barrel upset, and there was a great wash of hot water, leaving a deposit of spotted pig. In life that pig had belonged to Mr. Scolliver the younger! Mr. Scolliver the younger was angry, but remembering Jefferson's maxim, he rattled off the number ten, finishing up with "You—thief!" Then perceiving himself *very* angry, he began all over again and ran up to one hundred, as a monkey scampers up a ladder. As the last syllable shot from his lips he planted a dreadful blow between the old man's eyes, with a shriek that sounded like—"You son of a sea cook!"

Mr. Scolliver the elder went down like a stricken beef, and his son often afterward explained that if he had not counted a hundred, and so given himself time to get thoroughly mad, he did not believe he could ever have licked the old man.

—Dod Grile.

To April.

[In this month of uncertain weather a chapel-stone-laying ceremony in Colchester, and the remarks of the Circuit Bug presiding, were brought to an abrupt and unrehearsed conclusion by the rain.]

O fair blue eyes and rosy cheeks,
April, thou girl of quips and freaks,
When solemn folk outdoors are met,
Why come with showers that splash and wet?

When chapel-stones are being laid,
Capricious, pert, wild-hearted maid,
And dames with silks and bangles graced,
Why send them flying in hot haste?

Oh! was it maidenly for you,
Who should have look'd your sunniest, to
Cut short the Reverend O'K.
Right in the middle of his "say"?

What! no regard for chapel stones?
Nor all the flock of chapel drones?
O April, girl of quips and freaks,
O fair blue eyes and rosy cheeks.

H. B.

THE RAILROAD OF LIFE.

Sometimes I think that a world with death in it is a mistake. What would you think of a man who built a railroad knowing that every passenger was to be killed—knowing that there was no escape? What would you think of the cheerfulness of the passengers if every one knew that at

some station, the name of which had not been called out, there was a hearse waiting for him; backed up there, horses fighting flies, driver whistling, waiting for you? Is it not wonderful that the passengers on that train really enjoy themselves? Is it not magnificent that every one of them, under perpetual sentence of death, after all, can dimple their cheeks with laughter; that we, every one doomed to become dust, can yet meet around this table as full of joy as spring is full of life, as full of hope as the heavens are full of stars? I tell you we have got a good deal of pluck.—*Ingersoll*.

LIFE'S PHILOSOPHY.

Of human life the time is a point, and the substance is in a flux, and the perception dull, and the composition of the whole body subject to putrefaction, and the soul a whirl, and fortune hard to divine, and fame a thing devoid of judgment. And, to say all in a word, everything which belongs to the body is a stream, and what belongs to the soul is a dream and vapor, and life is a warfare and a stranger's sojourn, and after-fame is oblivion. What then is that which is able to conduct a man? One thing, and one only, philosophy. But this consists in keeping the demon within a man free from violence and unharmed, superior to pains and pleasures, doing nothing without a purpose, nor yet falsely and with hypocrisy, not feeling the need of another man's doing or not doing anything; and besides, accepting all that happens, and all that is allotted, as coming from thence, wherever it is, from whence he himself came; and, finally, waiting for death with a cheerful mind, as being nothing else but a dissolution of the elements of which every living thing is compounded.—*Marcus Aurelius*.

TRUE PHILOSOPHY.—This is philosophy; to make remote things tangible, common things extensively useful, useful things extensively common, and to leave the least necessary for the last.—*Landor*.

There are thousands of men who believe that superstition is good for women and children—who regard falsehood as the fortress of virtue, and feel indebted to ignorance for the purity of daughters and the fidelity of wives. These men think of priests as detectives in disguise, and regard God as a policeman who prevents elopements. Their opinions about religion are as correct as their estimate of woman.—*Ingersoll*.

The world of mind will be divided upon the question of baptism as long as there are two simple and effective methods of baptising, and they are equally disagreeable.—*Dod Grile*.

I choose the nobler part of Emerson, when, after various disenchantments, he exclaims, "I covet truth." The gladness of true heroism visits the heart of him who is really competent to say this.—*John Tyndall*.

Better than councils, better than sermons, better than Parliament, is that free discussion through a free press, which is the fittest instrument for the discovery of truth and the most effectual means of preserving it.—*J. Anthony Froude*.

There was an absent-minded Episcopal rector in Texas. One Sunday just before the service the organist went to him and said: "What would you play?" "I don't know," replied the rector. "What kind of a hand have you got?"

Parson Hosking, a Collingwood (Vic.) gospel dispenser and a vigorous Prohibitionist, is said to have forwarded the following letter to R. H. Lemon, secretary to Victorian Licensed Victuallers' Association:—"Sir, I am astonished at your statement, that I seriously damage the reputation of the liquor trade. Why, I would damage it any hour if I could, and send the whole traffic to the devil. It is the most damnable traffic on the face of God's earth at the present time. It is blasting the homes, crushing the childhood, womanhood, and manhood of the State. It is impossible for me or anyone else to slander the liquor trade. It is a dirty traffic, a traffic in slavery of the worst kind, a God-hating, soul-destroying traffic, a menace to the health, life, and morals of the people. To slander such a traffic is impossible. My prayer to God is, 'damn the liquor traffic, and send it back to hell!' Wishing you and your association every success in trying to stir the mud and stench of this traffic, yours, etc., JOHN HOSKING." If a man can use language like that on cold tea what a noble bullocky he would make after two runs!—*Sydney Bulletin*.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, etc.

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

LONDON.

NORTH CAMBERWELL HALL (61 New Church Road, Camberwell): 7.30, C. Cohen, "Science and Man."

STRATFORD TOWN HALL: 7.30, G. W. Foote, "Holy Russia and Heathen Japan."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Masonic Hall, Camberwell New-road): 7, J. M. Robertson, "Yellow Perils."

WEST LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Kensington Town Hall, High-street): 11.15, Service.

WOOD GREEN ETHICAL SOCIETY (Fairfax Hall, Portland-gardens, Harringay): 7.15, G. E. O'Dell, "Forsaking All."

OUTDOOR.

EAST LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Mile End Waste): 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "Easter."

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (The Grove, Stratford): 11.30, W. Thresh.

COUNTRY.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (110 Brunswick-street): 12 noon, Discussion Class. A. McCron, "Caverns"; 6.30, A. G. Nostic, "The Antiquity of Man." With lantern illustrations.

LEEDS (Covered Market, Vicar's Croft): 11, George Weir, "Why I am a Secularist"; Woodhouse Moor: 3, "Did Jesus Ever Live?" Town Hall Square: 7.30, W. Woolham, "Secularism and Socialism Compared."

LIVERPOOL (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 3, W. C. Schweizer, "Is Socialism Possible?" 7, H. Percy Ward, "Spooks: An Exposure of Spiritualism."

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL (Rusholme-road, All Saints): John Lloyd, 3, "The Trial of Christianity" 6.30, "What Think Ye of Christ?" Tea at 5.

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): W. J. P. Burton, F.G.S., 3, "The Ancient Volcanoes of Derbyshire"; 7, "The Origin and Antiquity of Man." Illustrated with lantern slides. Tea at 5.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, Market-place): 7, Business Meeting. Lecture arrangements.

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