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*Opinion to opinion I will face any man. Kings love power, misers gold, women flattery, poets reputation—and philosophers truth when they can find it.—HAZLITT.*

## Sunday.

THE observance of Sunday—or, rather, the lack of observance in the religious sense—has of late been the subject of serious concern among the Christian clergy. It has been debated at Church Conferences and Congresses; the world has been informed by no less an authority than the great R. J. Campbell, of the City Temple, that those people who do not attend church on Sunday stay away because they are idle, sensual, drunken, gamblers; and still the situation is not altered. On Sunday, June 26, the clergy tried what would be the effect of a simultaneous attack upon "Sabbath breakers." Some seventy sermons were preached in London churches upon the value of the Christian Sunday and the need of its maintenance. It was a touching sight! Seventy men of God, representing a firm whose chief office is on the other side of the grave, a species of celestial touring agency which receives payment for escorting people through a country no one wishes to visit, and no one can be sure even exists—all of them pleading that something may be done to shut up other firms whose programme is certainly more attractive, and who bid fair to monopolise the trade in the near future.

It is a serious matter—for the clergy. And the position is the more grave because they deal in a class of goods that are so hopelessly out of date. Attempts are made here and there to dress them up to suit modern requirements; they are renovated from time to time and labelled "This Season's Fashions." But people soon detect that the only difference in the wares is an alteration in the label, and that it is still a portion of the old stock. They are in a serious position. They cannot get the people back to the style that was, and they dare not advance to the fashion that is. All that can be done is to lament the change of taste, and characterise as dangerous all that sheer self-interest forbids them appreciate at its proper value.

The above may sound to some as nothing more than a mere "skit" upon the efforts of a number of men seeking to accomplish a work they believe to be good. I believe careful reflection will show that it is a plain statement of facts. The professional interest is disguised under a number of names, but it is there all the same, and animates all the excuses offered and arguments advanced. Let anyone piece together the cry of the clergy for more pay, the scramble among them for the lucrative posts, the complaints that the growth of Sunday excursions, etc., affects church attendance, and this in turn affects the income of the churches, and he will find the professional instinct and caste interest perfectly obvious and supremely active. In the beginning of the fifth century the North African Church induced the Emperor to close all public shows on Sunday on the express ground that they kept people from church. The professional instinct that thus initiated Sabbatarian legislation has kept it alive ever since. It was commenced by a clergy uncivilised enough to be honest about their beliefs, and it is continued to-day

by a clergy sufficiently civilised to be ashamed of their creed, but hardly civilised enough to throw it overboard altogether.

Nowadays the clergy lament that the weekly day of rest is in danger. Rubbish! There is more real rest to the thousands who flock to the seaside or out in the country on Sunday than was ever enjoyed by their ancestors, who spent the day in the depressing atmosphere of orthodox or chapel. What kind of rest is it that can be gained by city clerk, factory hand, or shopman who spends his only day of leisure in a poorly ventilated building listening to long harangues on subjects that have not the remotest connection with his everyday life? Use may accustom him to the infliction. Stories are told of prisoners so long confined that release has come to them as anything but a blessing; but the fact that people should find enjoyment in spending their weekly holiday in such a manner, shows what a demoralising influence the Christian Sunday is. A man who spends one-seventh of his life in the open air, in the country or at the seaside, in visiting a museum, an art gallery, in listening to good music, or in the company of a good book, may not have upon his lips the cant phrases of the average religionist, but he will return to his labors with a clearer and saner mind, that will bring with it a larger outlook upon life, a deeper appreciation of the heights of human nature, and a more helpful sympathy with its depths.

The Christian Sunday belongs to a time when nature was shunned as evil and happiness banned as a snare of the devil. To-day it is the gospel of fresh air that holds the field. To be happy is no longer a snare but a duty; it is the fitness of man for life here and not for some mythical hereafter that is the growing principle in human affairs.

The *Church Times*, as is only to be expected, joins in the lament over the decline of Sunday. "Fifty years ago," it says, "Sunday was generally observed in England with considerable strictness." It also quotes a religious Russian who declared that London on Sunday seemed a city of saints. It suggested a weekly renunciation of the sins of the world. The speaker was a Russian, a stranger, and the shallowness of the observation was to some extent excusable. Could he have penetrated below the surface he might have discovered that hardly any other day in the week has been so mentally stupefying and demoralising as Sunday. The Christian Sabbath of the last two and a-half centuries was not in a true sense a natural expression of the national mind. It was the temper of a few gloomy fanatics imposed upon the many. It was sustained by fear and force; and as a natural result led to hypocrisy and brutalisation. It is not at all uncommon to find people who even to-day prohibit young children playing with their toys on a Sunday because their doing so would be a desecration of the Sabbath—a common survival of a feature of Christian home life that was once common. Good parents these people may have been so far as the absence of conscious cruelty or wilful neglect is concerned; and yet it would be difficult to overestimate the injury to the adult by a childhood that has had one-seventh of its existence robbed of its rightful joyousness by the overshadowing gloom of Sabbatarianism, to say nothing of the religious doctrines of a darker character still.

The Sunday was not a weekly renunciation of the sins of the world so much as a renunciation of life in its better aspects. It was a cover for idleness, gluttony, and the creation of bad habits—extra time given to feeding, hours spent in vacuous unemployment, with the church and the public-house as dual attractions for those who were out of doors. It is a problem for the sociologist to determine how much of the inherited Hooliganism of our public streets is due to the Christian Sunday. Let anyone take the crowds of young men hanging about street corners on Sunday, and he will perhaps find an answer. In the public parks religious bigotry closes the gymnasiums and prohibits cricket and football. The same influence closes museums and public institutions, and denounces the growth of Sunday music and Sunday excursions. What is there left? There is the church, there is the public-house, and there is the excitement that comes from annoying passers-by. And when the deadly dreariness of English Sabbatarianism has succeeded in developing Hooliganism, our "black army" denounces the growing *materialism* of the age. There is probably no European proletariat that makes a poorer use of the day of rest than is made of it in England.

"The leisure of Sunday," says the *Church Times*, social and legal, was ordained that men might be free to attend upon Divine Worship. It has no other object.....It is unimportant except in this regard; it is mischievous when it comes to be thought of as an end in itself." There, in a sentence, is all the concern of the clergy that men shall not be made to work seven days a week is worth! The cat is out of the bag, and perhaps some of those social reformers whom the clergy have hoodwinked into supporting them in their Sabbatarian campaign may have their eyes opened by such a frank confession. It is not the day of *rest* they care for, but the day of worship. People must be kept from business in order to go to church. When the day is not used in this manner it is of no importance; when people think the day of rest is an end in itself it is positively injurious. Such is the gospel of the *Church Times*, and this paper is only saying what *all* the clergy would say if their speech were only equally honest.

As a religious organ, the *Church Times* declares that a day of rest will be mischievous unless it is used as an occasion for religious worship. As a Secularist, I assert that the *rest* is everything, the religious worship of no consequence whatever. We have had the gospel of work preached long enough; it is time some attention was now given to the gospel of leisure. There is no glory in work, as work; although there is often disgrace and shame in avoiding it. But work is a means, not an end; and the end to be realised is that of a human life well ordered, well spent, passed in happiness, and ending without fear. And for this to be realised the spirit of puritanical Sabbatarianism must be shunned as though it were a plague. As though it were a plague! It is a plague; one that sours the mind and distorts the vision, branding as sins actions that are morally helpful and counting as vices the love of fresh air, healthy recreation, rational development, and joy in the mere fact of living.

It is of the very essence of Sabbatarianism that it should be intolerant and tyrannical. If those who are unable to appreciate all the treasures of art and literature and science do not care to visit our national institutions on Sunday, let them stay away. If they do not care for good music or a rational entertainment on that day, let them also remain at home or in church. But why should this be the pretext for preventing those who can appreciate these things enjoying them? These men not only say "We do not want these things," they say also, "Because we do not want these things, you shall not have them either." And we, who call ourselves a free and progressive people, submit to this, the worst of all tyrannies—the triumph of the mean and ignoble over the great and beautiful—and sacrifice one-

seventh of our lives before a superstition that decent people should be ashamed of!

To-day the outcry of the clergy against a rational employment of Sunday is dictated by self-interest pure and simple. The day is passing when the *fear* of religion could drive people to church; and most of them feel that given the open and fair competition of museum, concert-hall, public gymnasium, art gallery, and excursion, and their congregations would dwindle away to nothing. It is a commercial outcry, created by a commercial instinct, but without the courage to take the risks involved in commercial enterprises.

C. COHEN.

### The Family of Judah.

A "SECULARIST WORKMAN, with no time for studies," has recently discussed the above Biblical subject with a Christian preacher. The Secularist, under the guidance of Bishop Colenso's books on the Pentateuch, contended that the story of Judah and his family, as related in Genesis, is so inaccurate and contradictory as to be incredible. The grounds upon which such a contention was made are not far to seek. In Genesis xvi. 12 we read: "And the sons of Judah (were) Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Perez, and Zera; but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul." The natural inference from that verse is that Hezron and Hamul were born in the land of Canaan, and were included in the seventy persons who accompanied Jacob into Egypt. That this inference is correct is evident from the statement, several times repeated, that "these are the names of the children of Israel which came into Egypt." "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons, wives, all the souls were threescore and six; and the sons of Joseph, which were born to him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten" (Genesis xvi. 26, 27). In the sixty-six souls Hezron and Hamul must have been included, and they are mentioned as if they were natives of Canaan. But, taking the narrative as it stands, nothing is clearer than that they could not have been born at the time of the migration into Egypt. After Joseph was sold, Judah went and married Shua, by whom he had three children. Two grew up, and in succession married Tamar. Then Tamar, after waiting some time, had twin sons, Perez and Zerah, by her father-in-law. Perez grew up, and had two sons, Hezron and Hamul, both of whom went down with Jacob into Egypt. Do you not see what mighty miracles are here implied? As Canon Driver puts it: "Thus Judah marries, has three sons, and *after* the third has grown up, becomes a father again, and through the child thus born becomes a grandfather, all within the space of twenty-two years."

When the "Secularist Workman" had reached that point, the preacher demanded proofs of the various statements. The "Secularist Workman" then read the following footnote of Colenso's: "Joseph was thirty years old when he 'stood before Pharaoh as governor of the land of Egypt; and from that time nine years elapsed (seven of plenty and two of famine) before Jacob came down to Egypt. At that time, therefore, Joseph was thirty-nine years old. But Judah was about three years older than Joseph; for Judah was born in the *fourth* year of Jacob's double marriage, and Joseph in the *seventh*. Hence Judah was forty-two years old when Jacob went down to Egypt." The preacher asserted that there are three fallacies in that footnote. The first is the assumption that the seven years of plenty commenced simultaneously with Joseph's governorship. But surely there is nothing gratuitous in that assumption. It is perfectly reasonable to suppose that the commencement of the plenteous years synchronised with Joseph's appointment to his high office. At any rate, the onus of proving the opposite rests on the

preacher, and not on the Secularist. The second fallacy is in the supposition that Judah was only three years older than Joseph. But if we take the narrative as it stands the two brothers were born during Jacob's double marriage, Judah in the fourth year and Joseph in the seventh (Gen. xxix., 31-35; xxx., 24-26). But if we were to grant that Judah was nine years older than Joseph, the incredibility of the story would not thereby be lessened. The third fallacy which the preacher found in Colenso's Note is in the implication that Judah was twenty years old when he married Shua. If he was nine years older than Joseph he did not marry until his twenty-sixth year, which is a supposition that only accentuates the inaccuracy of the story. The thirty-eighth chapter of Genesis begins with the words, "And it came to pass at that time," and no unprejudiced reader would ever dream of regarding the phrase, "at that time," as referring to anything but the disgraceful event narrated in the previous chapter.

But in any case, Hezron and Hamul could not have been born prior to the descent into Egypt. This is admitted by the great majority of commentators. Kurtz says: "Hengstenberg has entered thoroughly into an examination of the difficulty referred to, and solves it on the ground that the grandsons and great-grandsons of Jacob, though not yet born, were *in their fathers*, and therefore entered Egypt with them." Somewhat irreverently Colenso exclaims, "Why not also the great great-grandsons, and so on, *ad infinitum*?" Kurtz adds: "Objections have been raised to this interpretation from various quarters; but we must still adhere to it." Whereupon Colenso ironically retorts: "We *must* adhere to it," that is, of course, if the historical character of the Pentateuch is to be maintained." To the defence of this fanciful interpretation Kurtz and Hengstenberg devote many pages; but the preacher admitted that it is a false interpretation, and vigorously maintained that Hezron and Hamul were actually born in Canaan, and so went down to Egypt with their great-grandfather. Evidently this preacher is a Bible Leaguer, and takes the Sacred Volume literally. I greatly admire his faith while vehemently deprecating his reasoning. If the Bible is inspired of God all its statements must be true, and the one business of the expositor is to establish their truth.

But the Higher Critics are almost unanimous in regarding the Book of Genesis as largely, if not as wholly, legendary and mythical. The first eleven chapters are not in any sense or degree historical. Even so cautious a writer as Canon Driver is emphatic on this point. And even as to the historicity of the Patriarchs he is not at all dogmatic, admitting that the evidence for it "is not such as will satisfy the canons of historical criticism," but claiming that "it is still, all things considered, difficult to believe that *some* foundation of actual personal history does not underlie the patriarchal narratives." They are intensely interesting narratives; but all that the worthy Canon ventures to bespeak for them is that they are "*in outline* historically true," although "their characters are idealised, and their biographies not unfrequently colored by the feelings and associations of a later age." This is also the position occupied by Professor George Adam Smith. Canon Cheyne and those associated with him in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* make much greater concessions to the purely mythical school. To them the Patriarchs are more personifications than persons, or mere eponymous names. In the thirty-eighth chapter of Genesis Canon Cheyne can see nothing but a legend, or "a tradition respecting the early development of the tribe of Judah." He further assures us that the life of Jacob is chiefly legendary. Referring to the visit to Padan Aram he does not hesitate to tell us that "it is with pure legend which we have to deal," and that "it is pure legend which asserts that Jacob had seven sons (besides daughters) born to him in Haran, who became the ancestors of

as many Israelitish tribes." To Winkler, Jacob is a mythological character, representing the moon in relation to the year, and corresponding to Abraham, who represented the moon in its relation to the month.

Thus we see how hopeless a task it must be to prove the literal accuracy of the statements made in the Book of Genesis. To what strange shifts the preacher must have recourse in his endeavor to justify the implication that Hezron and Hamul were born in Canaan. And yet his theory is only one out of a great host constructed in the interests of the same justification. Let him bear in mind that the "Secularist Workman" with whom he so lately debated has practically the whole of modern criticism on his side. He would do wisely to heed well the following Note of Canon Driver, found in his Commentary on Genesis, with references to the list of the descendants of Jacob who came with him into Egypt:—

"So far as the names of Jacob's grandchildren are concerned, nearly all recur, with slight textual variations in Nu. xxvi., and some also in different parts of 1 Chron. ii.-viii. The number seventy was traditional; and the present list (Gen. xli. 8-27) it seems, represents an attempt, or combination of attempts—for it contains indications of two computations, one *excluding* Jacob from the seventy, and the other *including* him—to fill it out with names; the names, as Nu. xxvi. shows, being those of the reputed Ancestors of the leading families, or clans, of the several tribes. Perhaps the list was originally one of Jacob's descendants as such, drawn up without reference to the migration into Egypt, and afterwards not quite consistently adjusted in its present place."

Nothing more remains to be said. I have written this article at the special request of a "Secularist Workman," who will pardon me for giving expression to my joy at finding that he is a student of Bishop Colenso's colossal work on the Pentateuch. The good Bishop did splendid pioneering work as an English Higher Critic, and the seven large volumes that were published by him from 1862 to 1879 remain to this day signal monuments to his learning, industry, and invincible courage. He brought his unrivalled mathematical attainments to bear upon the various questions in dispute; and although much new work has been done since his day, his labors should not be allowed to be forgotten. Fierce persecution fell to his lot even in England, while the South African bishops met in conclave to condemn him, and pronounced his deposition. Fierce in the extreme was the controversy that raged throughout the English-speaking world round his name and books. But his views have gloriously triumphed, and are to-day not only tolerated where they were violently denounced forty years ago, but formally taught from the professional chairs of the most orthodox churches. Truth always comes to its own at last.

JOHN T. LLOYD.

### Herbert Spencer's "Autobiography."—V.

SPENCER lost money for many years by publishing instalments of his Synthetic Philosophy. More than once he was on the point of giving up the idea of further publication. But a timely legacy, or some other unexpected encouragement, enabled him to persevere with his project. Matters were very critical in the early part of 1866. From 1850 to that date he had "sunk nearly £1,100 in writing and publishing books," and the number of subscribers had diminished instead of increasing. He was about to issue a "notice of cessation" to them when a remarkable offer reached him from John Stuart Mill. It was one of those incidents that give a fresh beauty and dignity to human nature. Mill asked to be allowed to obtain subscriptions towards making up Spencer's losses. The rest of his proposal should be stated in his own words:—

"What I propose is that you should write the next of your treatises, and that I should guarantee the publisher against loss, *i.e.*, should engage, after such

length of time as may be agreed on, to make good any deficiency that may occur, not exceeding a given sum, that sum being such as the publisher may think sufficient to secure him. With this guarantee you could have your choice of publishers, and I do not think it likely that there would be any loss, while I am sure that it could in no case be considerable. I beg that you will not consider this proposal in the light of a personal favor, though even if it were I should still hope to be permitted to offer it. But it is nothing of the kind—it is a simple proposal of coöperation for an important public purpose, for which you give your labor and have given your health."

That letter does infinite honor to Mill. Note the delicacy with which he tries to make his offer palatable. His saying that he did not believe there would be any loss was one of those white lies that go into the same receptacle with Uncle Toby's oath, which the Recording Angel blotted out with a tear. Spencer felt bound to decline Mill's offer. He did so with handsome acknowledgment of its extraordinary generosity. "It may be doubted," he adds, "whether there was ever before made a kindred proposal by one author to another: another, too, with whom he was not in complete agreement."

Subsequently a circular to subscribers was issued by Mill, Huxley, Tyndall, Busk, and Lubbock; and, as Spencer could hardly resist without quarreling with his best friends, he agreed to a certain number of copies of his next volume being taken for distribution. The number proposed was 250, but he insisted on cutting this down to 150, and on eliminating the names of some who "ought not thus to tax themselves."

Spencer's friends in America were "cuter" than his English friends. Professor Youmans collected 7,000 dollars, and invested the amount in his name in public securities. He was, of course, as Professor Youmans said, at liberty "either to appropriate it or leave it to accumulate for the benefit of his heirs." The philosopher was fairly cornered. "I was practically," he says, "put under coercion; for even could I have decided to balk my American friends, it would have been absurd to do this by letting their gift and its accumulated interest go eventually to unknown persons." So all's well that ends well; and the honors of the deal certainly lie with the Yankees. They could not look so far back or so far ahead as he could, but they could see better through a millstone right in front of them.

Spencer was fortunate in his friends. He pays handsome tributes to Huxley, Tyndall, and others, and a superlative one to Professor Youmans. But his most interesting references are to "George Eliot." He made the acquaintance of Miss Evans in the summer of 1851, and they were soon on terms of friendship, going about to concerts and theatres together, so that people whispered that they were engaged. But this was not true. Spencer admired her mind and character, but does not appear to have had any other feeling towards her. With all her fine qualities she had not the gift of beauty, and Spencer confesses in a passage of his Autobiography that physical beauty was a *sine quâ non* in his conception of marriage. Probe him to the bottom, and the philosopher is like other men. Mother Nature has settled all that.

Here is a part of Spencer's profoundly interesting description of George Eliot:—

"In physique there was, perhaps, a trace of that masculinity characterising her intellect; for though of but the ordinary feminine height she was strongly built. The head, too, was larger than is usual in women. It had, moreover, a peculiarity distinguishing it from most heads, whether feminine or masculine; namely, that its contour was very regular. Usually, heads have here and there either flat places or slight hollows; but her head was everywhere convex. Striking by its power when in repose, her face was remarkably transfigured by a smile. The smiles of many are signs of nothing more than amusement; but with her smile there was habitually mingled an expression of sympathy, either for the person smiled at or the person smiled with. Her voice was a contralto of rather low pitch, and I believe naturally strong. On this last point I ought to have a more definite impression, for in those

days we occasionally sang together; but the habit of subduing her voice was so constant, that I suspect its real power was rarely if ever heard. Its tones were always gentle, and like the smile, sympathetic."

The greatest of philosophers, because the greatest of poets, in that overpowering scene where pathos is carried to the last point of sublimity, makes the bereaved old king mention the "low" voice of his murdered daughter.

Her voice was ever soft,  
Gentle, and low,—an excellent thing in woman.

This equipment, partly by nature, and partly by self-training, belonged to George Eliot; and it is to be wished that some modern aspiring females would condescend to imitate one of the greatest of their own sex.

Spencer had the highest admiration for George Eliot's powers and knowledge. Her extraordinarily good memory, her great quickness of apprehension, and her coördinating capacity, are themes of his praise. He says he knew but few men with whom he could discuss a question in philosophy with more satisfaction. She was an instance of a "large intelligence working easily." Yet she possessed "large measures of both the factors which prompt altruistic feeling—the general sympathies and the domestic affections." She would probably have made an incomparable mother. We may see by her writings that her maternal instincts were intense, and it was one of nature's keenest sarcasms that she was denied the chief blessing of a woman's life.

Spencer does not appear to have been much struck by Comte, whom he called on at Paris in 1856, with a sum of twenty pounds due to him on account of Chapman's sales of Harriet Martineau's abridged translation of the *Philosophie Positive*. He found Comte's face "unattractive" but "strongly marked," and thus "distinguished from the multitudes of meaningless faces one daily sees." On hearing of Spencer's nervous disorder he advised him to marry, saying that "the sympathetic companionship of a wife would have a curative influence." The same advice was tendered by Huxley, who suggested that Spencer should try "what he facetiously termed gynecopathy," though he admitted "that the remedy had the serious inconvenience that it could not be left off if it proved unsuitable." But other things could not be left off either; insomnia, for instance. Let us hear him on this point:—

"A night of sound sleep was, and has ever continued to be, unknown to me: my best nights being such as would commonly be called bad ones. Save when leading a rural life with nothing but outdoor sports to occupy attention, I probably averaged between four and five hours of unconsciousness. But it was never continuous. The four or five hours were made up of bits; and if one of the bits was two hours long, it was something unusual. Ordinarily my night had from a dozen to a score wakings."

From his thirty-sixth year he was never able, even at his best, to do three hours' work without mischief. An attempt to do more led to a disastrous relapse. Reading had to be greatly restricted, and even social distractions were apt to bring on the penalty of an unusually bad night.

Among the other celebrated persons whom Spencer refers to are Carlyle and Ruskin. He was not born to understand either of them, and they were not born to understand him. Spencer laughed at the idea of Carlyle's being a "philosopher," and Carlyle is reported to have called Spencer an "unending jackass." The philosopher's description of the man of letters (and half-articulate poet) is almost racy; and it must be admitted that he touches a weak spot when he says that "Carlyle's nature was one which lacked coördination, alike intellectually and morally." His opinion of Ruskin is summary. "Doubtless he has a fine style," Spencer says, "writes passages of great eloquence, and here and there expresses truths; but that one who has written and uttered such multitudinous absurdities should have acquired so great an influence, is to me both surprising and disheartening." Ruskin, on the other hand, regarded Spencer as a dull apostle of the gospel of dirt. So apt are great men, moving on different planes of idea and temperament, to say hard things of each other!

A few personal points may be noted before we come to Spencer's final reflections on religion. He says that his hands were unusually small—smaller than the hands of a woman less than his own height. "How is this?" he asks, and then proceeds to give an explanation based upon his own theory of the inherited effects of use and disuse. It was the result of "two generations of diminished action." Neither his father nor his grandfather had wielded anything heavier than pen or pencil, and Spencer's diminutive hands were the consequence! Which is a signal instance of how even a philosopher may be blinded by devotion to his own theories.

Spencer tells us that he occasionally used opium to subdue his insomnia, and that the average result was beneficial. He considers that there is "an undue fear of opium" both amongst the general public and the medical profession. Spencer also tells us that he tried vegetarianism, and that the experiment was not a success. First he felt the cold more keenly; then he noticed that his friend Loch, after six months' abstinence from animal food, gave evidence of a lowered condition, his voice having become extremely mild and feeble, and one of his feet nearly powerless; finally he suffered himself in the eyes, and decided to abandon vegetarianism. "I found," he adds, "that I had to re-write what I had written during the time I was a vegetarian, because it was so wanting in vigor." This is interesting as far as it goes. But there is vegetarianism and vegetarianism, and it would have been useful to know what diet Spencer tried to subsist upon. What were the details of his menu? This is a very important question, and he leaves it unanswered.

Let us now deal with Spencer's religious ideas, chiefly in reference to the "Reflections" at the end of his *Autobiography*, written in 1893, when he was in his seventy-third year. Under a much earlier date (1862) he had observed how "men's judgments have been paralysed by authority and tradition on religious questions." It seems to us, however, that respect for religion—perhaps a reassertion of an inherited tendency—to some extent paralysed his own judgment in his old age. He began to "see" that superstition and priestcraft had been so universal that they must have had some evolutionary justification, and that "the maintenance of social subordination had peremptorily required the aid of some such agency." Yet in the very next paragraph he observes what a trifling influence Christian preaching has upon Christian practice—and that after the lapse of nearly two thousand years! Superstition and priestcraft have been inevitable, but so have war and slavery been; and in neither case is the fact any plea for toleration and continuance. Spencer saw this in relation to war. Why could he not see it in regard to religion?

Spencer noted what we may call the dissolution of Christianity. The decline of the belief in hell and the devil show that what is practically a new creed is taking possession of the field.

"And when we observe, too, how in modern preaching theological dogmas are dropping into the background and ethical doctrines coming into the foreground, it seems that in course of time we shall reach a stage in which, recognising the mystery of things as insoluble, religious organisations will be devoted to ethical culture."

This optimistic view of things led him to "look calmly on forms of religious belief" to which he "had, in earlier years, a pronounced aversion." He also deprecated "sudden changes"—as though there were much danger of them, especially in England. But how could he justify his own heresies in the face of this debilitation? His answer is this. "It is for each," he says, "to utter that which he sincerely believes to be true, and, adding his unit of influence to all other units, leave the results to work themselves out." Quite so. But this only shows the futility of what he said before, when he was mistaking (as we think) the suggestions of old age for the whispers of a mellowed philosophy. The same lassitude explains the shuddering glance into the mystery of infinitude,

which gives a touch of pathos to his concluding utterances. His very last words are these:—

"Thus religious creeds, which in one way or other occupy the sphere that rational interpretation seeks to occupy and fails, and fails the more the more it seeks, I have come to regard with a sympathy based on community of need: feeling that dissent from them results from inability to accept the solutions offered, joined with the wish that solutions could be found."

This is what the philosophy of the Unknowable (with a capital U) leads to; a yearning for a "rational interpretation" of what is declared to be "an insoluble mystery." And the only refuge lies in the wisdom of a thinker to whom Spencer was never exactly just. It is at our peril that we reject Comte's advice to leave the question of Ultimates as impracticable, and to confine our mental and moral activities within the sphere of positive knowledge. Thus only shall we escape from metaphysical perplexities; thus only shall we find in Humanity a satisfactory substitute for God.

G. W. FOOTE.

### The Romance of War!

A thrilling account of the attempted escape of a Japanese crew from the harbour of Port Arthur after they had sunk a merchant ship in the roadstead is given by M. Nemerovitch-Danchenko, who describes the incident as one of the most striking episodes of the war. He writes:

From one of the merchant ships destined to block Port Arthur a little boat put out with a crew of eight men. Their sixteen oars were raised as a salute.

"It is impossible for us to leave them alive," said an officer, "because they will show the way into the harbour to our enemies."

Thousands of shells and bullets commenced to fall around the little boat. But the men with the oars did not falter; they continued to work quietly.

"They will escape," was the exclamation of an officer. "Oh, no! How is it possible?" was the reply. The boat suddenly shot behind one of the merchant ships, and we imagined how it was directing its course at the rear of the black mass. As soon as their oars reappear in the open space they will provide an easy mark. In the struggle of a little boat to escape from hundreds of machine guns and heavy guns there is real tragedy. Even those who strive to reach them with bullets unconsciously think "I should like them to escape."

They appear once more. The oarsmen are fewer, and those who remain do not work as before. There are some killed and others wounded in the boat. The guns are silent; it is not worth while to fire upon the unfortunate boat. But the machine guns continue working—it is their gloomy fate! There are two generals on Electric Hill, and they are full of the martial instinct. One of them takes a rifle from a soldier, the same general who two hours before spoke to us about two girl relatives to whom he had given shelter in his house. At the time we thought what a soft heart this man possessed. Now he is trying to get a correct aim! Crack! One of the oars ceases to work. The Japanese sailor who held it has dropped his head and no longer moves. The laurels of this general raise the spirits of the other. General X. has gained a reputation for the excellence of his rifle shooting. A soldier hands him a rifle. Crack! Another oar falls into the water, and the boat proceeds slowly forward. Another crack from each of the generals. You can see through binoculars how hard this unfortunate boat struggles for liberty. It is jerked forward as though it were seized with a deadly convulsion. Then it stops.....

Only three oars are working now—two—then the boat commences to drift away. All the oarsmen have dropped their heads. One of them is looking into the water. What does he see there? The man with the glazed eyes?

One of the crew is lying alive in the bottom of the boat convulsed with agony. The current sends the boat shoreward, nearer and nearer Electric Hill.

"Not one soul," shouts General Y.

Another general remarks, "Only their souls are alive now."

"Japanese! Souls of monkeys!" another general interposes, ironically.

And the small boat with the dead bodies drifts along the shore quietly. It is brought to land and remains there. The water leaks through the bullet holes in the stern, and the big waves push the boat forward on the white sand.

The machine guns are silent—the batteries are at rest.—

Central News.

### Spare the Rod!

THE proposal of President Best, of the Brooklyn Teachers' Association, to restore the rod to the school-room, and to encourage teachers in its use, meets with the approbation of the most pious. A woman, who must be a lovely and tender-hearted creature, wrote to the *Times* not long ago, quoting the injunction, "Spare the rod and spoil the child," and virtuously snapping out the decision that the rod can never be banished from the school or the home while those inspired words remain between the lids of the Bible. If you were to go into that woman's house you might expect to find a twenty-pound Bible on her table, with a rawhide coiled like a snake on the top; but one would suppose that before beating a child in obedience to divine command a not altogether savage mother would want to turn to the record and make herself sure it is there. Everybody likely to read this paragraph knows that the Bible does not contain the words "Spare the rod and spoil the child." They are from Butler's *Hudibras*, where they are rhymed with another line, but the child-beaters don't know it.

Love is a boy by poets stiled;  
Then spare the rod and spoil the child.

To disseminate the knowledge of the actual source of the rod-and-child would do more for the backs of young people than the beatitudes have ever done for their heads and hearts. But there is little hope. As I prepare these lines for the printer, June 1, the *New York Journal* spreads abroad this misinformation: "That Solomon knew more about the truancy problem than Superintendent Maxwell of the city schools, was the general consensus of opinion of the various teachers' and principals' organisations at the corporal punishment-discussion meeting at the Board of Education rooms yesterday afternoon. This was because Solomon averred that to spare the rod was to spoil the child."

It is exasperating.

While it may be right to whip children, and while whipping may be beneficial to them, it remains true that children are not whipped for either of those reasons. They are whipped in the belief that God has commanded it, or because the person doing the whipping has lost his temper. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" holds its place as scripture because Christian parents and teachers need an excuse for wreaking their anger on somebody not of their size. The divine command supplies the authority for the act; that makes it right. The good of the child, coinciding with the ill-temper of the beater, furnishes the occasion. Ignorance of fact allows the authority to stand, and transparent hypocrisy carries it out. Yet nobody ever struck a blow thinking of the good it would do to the one who received it.

The stern parent who prefaces the whaling of his son with the remark, "It will hurt me more than it will hurt you," cannot look the boy in the eye while speaking. He knows the boy thinks he is lying, and he is more than half convinced of it himself. Of course it is likely to be a lie when spoken—one of those perfunctory lies that nobody is expected to believe; and yet the parent is fortunate if words so spoken do not turn out to be true. He is to be envied if the day does not come, and come quickly, when that whipping hurts him worse than physical pain; and he is blessed if it ever has an end. Ingersoll advised parents to have their photographs taken in the act of laying on the blows, so that if the child should afterwards die they might take the picture along on a visit to its grave, and examine it in connection with that locality. But neither the grave nor the photograph is really essential; it answers the purpose to go and look at the young ones when they are asleep.

We shall doubtless continue to manifest our disapproval of the conduct of our children by striking them. That we shall ever discard our hypocritical pretence that we do it for the child's good, and not for the satisfaction of some grouch of our own, is less likely. As for Christian parents and teachers ever surrendering the belief that Solomon said spare the rod and spoil the child, that is now out of the question; it has become constitutional and organic.

Truthseeker (New York).                      GEORGE MACDONALD.

Camels and Christians receive their burdens kneeling.—  
*Dod Grile.*

OF COURSE.—Teacher: "Who was Joan of Arc?" Pupil:  
"Why—er—Noah's wife."—*Princeton Tiger.*

PREFERRED TO PRACTISE.—The Rev. Sainly: "Aren't you young people coming to church with me? I'm going to preach on 'Love One Another.'" His Daughter: "No, father, we will stay at home and practise what you preach."

### Acid Drops.

General Booth and his Salvationists recently had "Two days with God" in the Strand. It was a queer place for such an appointment, and there is no proof that God kept it. Perhaps someone will make an appointment with the other party, and treat the public to "Two nights with the Devil." That would attract a larger crowd than Booth's.

The *Daily News* has made a grand discovery. "Your up-to-date Salvationist," it says, "is essentially a thinker as well as a pleader." We wonder if this refers to Booth's waltzing round his International Congress platform with a fat old black lady from Africa.

Some of our readers may open their eyes wide at the preceding paragraph. Is it really true? they may say. Yes, it is true, unless the *Daily Chronicle* lies. Witness the following extract from that journal dated Tuesday, June 28, under the heading of "Salvation War":—

"A chorus of colored people, old mammies and Uncle Sambos from the States, picturesquely garbed in stars and stripes, gave, with much gusto, a hymn o which the first verse was as follows:—

There's gwine to be a gloriou time  
By'm by, by'm by,  
Where the children are a-singin'  
And the bells they are a-ringin'.

(Chorus): Way over yonder on the hill-top.

At the last line, repeated through every verse, fourteen black forefingers pointed to an imaginary hill-top with a jerk that nearly took the old people off the platform. Then they fell to clapping hands in time to the tune, and at last danced up and down with such enthusiasm that it carried General Booth himself off his legs, and, seizing hold of a fat old black lady, he waltzed round amidst the roars of laughter of the delighted audience."

A little later on Booth indulged in some supplementary antics. Hindu Salvationists were beating tom-toms and howling at each other, and the audience laughed until they cried. "During this performance," the *Chronicle* said, "General Booth, who was in a very merry humor, took up the long-necked swan and strolled about the stage twanging its strings."

More of Booth's antics were reported in Friday's (July 1) *Westminster Gazette*. When the Swiss Choir obliged with a "jodelling" refrain the General "donned a native hat of one singer, and, seizing an alpenstock, sprang into their midst to the accompaniment of roars of laughter." Later on, when the French and German musical Salvationists sang together, he had a few words to say about the brotherhood of man. "And then," the report says, "in the exuberance of his spirits General Booth executed a little step-dance." The irrepressible old seventy-sixer!

Salvationists have had to appeal to the principle of toleration, just as the early Christians did, and for the same reason. All religious parties ask for toleration when they are weak—and all deny it when they are strong. With the lessons of history in our mind, we are not so simple as to imagine that the Salvation Army would be any better than other Christian bodies if it had its own way, or that General Booth really loves freedom any more than the Pope of Rome. Those of our readers, if there are any, who are inclined to believe otherwise, should think over the following incident. Mr. F. Howard informs us that he visited Southend recently, where he came across a Social Democratic Federation meeting near the entrance to the pier. There was a large audience, what the lecturer said was evidently appreciated, and he concluded amidst applause. When answering questions he said that the Salvation Army Colony at Hadleigh was, socially speaking, a gigantic fraud, and did not benefit the farm laborers one iota—which, by the way, is perfectly true. Directly the words were out of his mouth a band of Blood and Fire apostles stormed the platform and broke up the meeting. Mr. Howard says that he, not being a Socialist but a Freethinker, jumped upon the platform and appealed for fair play; but one Boothite struck him heavily across the face, and another tried to throw him into the sea. Judge from this what Boothism would be like if it had the chance.

The *Christian Age* gives a glowing account of Revivalist Torrey's performances at Brighton. Many "converts" were made—of course. But we do not hear that anybody of any importance has been saved. Dr. Torrey should have tried his hand on the veteran "infidel" of Eastern Lodge. Had he converted Mr. G. J. Holyoake he would have had something to boast of. And he really ought to be capable of this—seeing that he carries about Omnipotence in his portmanteau.

Dr. Henry, at Hackney, according to the *Christian Age*, has actually converted an infidel during his "mission." "A young woman whose parents were followers of Ingersoll and Bradlaugh," we read, "who had been thoroughly indoctrinated in infidel teaching, and who had been the subject of many prayers, was gloriously saved at one of the evening meetings, and has begun an active Christian life." These anonymous infidels swarm in the reports of revival meetings. To discuss them is merely a waste of time. No investigation is possible when no clue is afforded. We may observe, however, that if this anonymous young woman was "saved" at Dr. Henry's meeting it follows that all "infidels" are lost. That is, they are going to hell—where we are afraid they will meet plenty of Christians.

After a year of Passive Resistance the turn of Dr. Clifford has arrived. He was summoned with other bold defiers of tyranny to appear before the magistrates at the Paddington Town Hall. He went, he saw, he conquered; that is to say, he was applauded by his followers, who turned the court into a circus, and lauded to the skies in the *Daily News*. That journal was very sarcastic at the expense of the unfortunate magistrates, who have simply to administer the laws, not to praise or condemn them. Because they did not grovel at the feet of Dr. Clifford, when he came with his mob red-hot from a prayer-meeting, the organ of the Non-conformist Conscience accused them of "each attempting to look as much as possible like the Lord Chief Justice," whom we dare say, most of them had never seen. One magistrate had "a little nose," another "a little lip"—and so on, and so on, in the well-known style of religious courtesy. Dr. Clifford "had a typed MS. in his hand," and insisted on firing it off at the magistrates, who must have read it all times out of mind in the newspapers. He grew warmer and warmer as he proceeded, "striking the table with his hand and hitting home his points with his index finger," and finally "sweeping up his papers and bringing them down within an inch of the magistrates' nose." (They seem to have had one nose between them.) Dr. Clifford concluded "amid applause." And when the poor magistrates heard that there were sixty more Passive Resisters, all bent on displaying their monotonous eloquence on the same topic, they fled in despair.

Afterwards Dr. Clifford addressed a meeting from a cart. It was for all the world like one of the old processions to Tyburn.

We shall not be sorry to see Dr. Clifford do a week, a fortnight, or a month. He will then understand "martyrdom" from the inside; though, even then, he will be a long way behind the editor of the *Freethinker*, who did twelve months like a common felon in a Christian gaol.

We are afraid, however, that Dr. Clifford's taste of prison, if he gets any at all, will be homeopathic in quantity; like that of another blessed martyr, the Rev. J. B. Anderson, of Kirby Stephen, who was dragged off to Carlisle Gaol for an awful two days' imprisonment. Imagine his sufferings during that tremendous period! It is enough to melt a heart of stone. Ours is dripping.

Passive Resisters in France beat Dr. Clifford hollow. Two squadrons of dragoons, two companies of infantry, and forty mounted gendarmes were brought up to expel the Capuchin monks at Nice under the new French law. The gates of the monastery had to be blown in, and it was then discovered that one of the two stairways had been destroyed and the other blocked by massive beams. When scaling ladders were placed against the windows the monks showered furniture and utensils upon the soldiers. Finally the monks had to be drenched with a fire-hose; and even then they refused to budge, and had to be carried out one at a time and deposited in the street.

Mr. W. B. Yeats's play, *Where there is Nothing*, seems to depict the career of a maddish anarchist, who exclaims "Where there is nothing, there is God." But is there not, after all, something more than mere madness in this exclamation? Is it not a statement from another side of the meaning of Disraeli's epigram that where our knowledge ends our religion begins? All we know is Nature; all we don't know is God. God is always where there is nothing, as far as we are concerned; for what we don't know is to all intents and purposes non-existent.

Reviewing *Rome in Ireland*, by Mr. M. J. F. McCarthy, which is a strong impeachment of Roman Catholicism by a professed Catholic, the *Athenaeum* writes as follows:—

"He keeps maintaining that the Church of Rome is sucking the life-blood out of Ireland, and that, until men shake

off this spiritual oppression, no progress is possible. Within the last forty years the lay population of Ireland has diminished 27 per cent.; the Roman Catholic clergy, monks and nuns have increased 137 per cent. In the lecture entitled 'Further Contrasts' he gives (as he did in his 'Priests and People') detailed figures, which proves his statement up to the hilt. But this is not all. He maintains that spiritual slavery, ignorance, idleness, prevail in proportion as the clergy preponderate in numbers and in wealth. The facts are very clear, and have not been disputed by the Catholic clergy. They affect to treat Mr. McCarthy with silent contempt, and think it enough to prevent Irish newspapers from advertising and reviewing his books. Nevertheless, in the long run, he must be answered. If we can judge from the onslaughts made on Sir Horace Plunkett, not for preaching, but for hinting at the same conclusions, the answers will be mere *argumenta ad verecundiam*. Unless something better can be produced, it seems to us that Mr. McCarthy justifies not only the policy of Henry VIII, but also that of M. Combes in France; nay, even the watchword of Voltaire—*Ecrasez l'infame!*"

This is pretty strong from such a sober and respectable journal.

Freethought is spreading inside the Churches in America as well as in Great Britain. At a convention of the American Bible League held in New York City one of the speakers denounced the critics who are sapping the walls of orthodoxy from within. "For nineteen centuries," he said, "the Christian church has been the church persecuted and the church militant. Now we must fight treason in our midst. Men are using their positions in our pulpits and chairs of learning to disseminate treason. Church collections, salaries, endowments are being used to support those who talk higher criticism and spread heresies." One prominent minister "in this city" actually read his Apostles' Creed in this way: "Jesus, who, *they say*, was born of the Virgin Mary; Jesus, who, *they say*, was raised after the third day." Shocking! "If this continues," the horrified Bible Leaguer said, "the time must come when there will be but one refuge, and that will be the Roman Catholic Church."

Christians are accustomed to having things their own way; and, as they are decreasing in number, they will probably carry the game on until they experience a rude awakening. Down at Bournemouth the Christian bodies have induced the Mayor to let them hold religious meetings in the Square, and while they are blocking it the Superintendent of Police makes arrangements for the traffic. We dare say a Freethought meeting of fifty people in the same locality would be treated as an obstruction.

England is a Christian country, but it is perfectly certain that if Jesus Christ were living now, and as he did in the Gospels, he would be run in by the police as a vagabond. We read that the Son of Man had not where to lay his head. Now it is a crime, according to English law, for a man to be in that condition; just as it is a crime for him to be going about without visible means of subsistence, which was how Jesus Christ went about during pretty well all the three years of his public career. Down at Stratford lately a grocer's assistant named John Bond, and his wife Martha Bond, were brought before the magistrates for sleeping "at large" with their six children. The man was out of work, his furniture had been seized for rent, he had been turned out by the landlord, and then the "bobby" had him for being homeless. And according to the law of Christian England that poor fellow could have been sent to prison! It is enough to make decent people swear.

Colonel Garrett, the chairman of the Stratford magistrates that day, showed himself superior to the law of Christian England. He gave half a sovereign out of his own pocket to the court missionary, saying, "Go and get some grub for them, and give them the change." We don't know Colonel Garrett from Adam, or whether he is Christian, Jew, Turk, or Infidel. But we lift our hat to him, anyhow. He just obeyed a natural impulse; and when *that* dies out all the creeds in the world are simply rotteness.

Now that Dowie has been chivvied off, and the dull season is approaching, the newspapers are turning their attention once more to Messiah Piggott. They send their representatives to look through his windows and keyholes, or even to look over his gate. Anything for copy! And how they turn on the indignation! Bottled up for twelve months, because it was not wanted, it now bursts out with great force against the "wicked" Messiah. Probably we shall soon see fresh mobs raised outside his Temple, and fanatical old ladies belaboring the new Jesus Christ with their umbrellas. On both sides it is a curious sign of the times—and not a very gratifying one.

Old Dowie's continued "insults to the King" are telegraphed all the way from New York. It appears that Elijah the Second, like some better men, doesn't understand King Edward being called "Defender of the Faith." "King Edward," he says, "runs races, smokes, drinks, and when he does those things he is a fine defender of the faith." So this is an "insult" to the King—and such a deadly one that Dowie must be kept out of England for ever. What madness! Or rather what hypocrisy.

When "General" Booth had the honor of seeing the King at Buckingham Palace, he knew very well that his Majesty drinks and smokes—two things absolutely forbidden to all members of the Salvation Army. But what did that matter? A King's a King for a' that. And the Grand Old Showman has a keen eye for good business. Look at it. And look at his nose.

Objection is taken to Old Dowie's travelling about first-class and putting up at first-class hotels. But what humbug it all is! Don't all the exploiters of human superstition make the best of this world—for themselves? Even our own royal Defender of the Faith, as he is called on our coinage, does not affect any wonderful simplicity. See what the *Westminster Gazette* said (not meaning censure) when King Edward went off to meet Emperor William—another Defender of the Faith. "A mountain of clothes," our green contemporary said, "will accompany the King to Kiel. Wherever he goes he takes with him suits of every imaginable kind to meet any emergency. Two valets, superintended by a head-servant, have charge of his Majesty's wardrobe, and the King gives a few general directions to them before the work of packing begins." What is it Christ said? "Take no thought for the morrow, what ye shall eat, what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed." The text is, "Don't think about your clothes." The commentary is "Two valets and a head-servant look after my wardrobe." And the newspapers are mad because Old Dowie says King Edward isn't much of a Christian.

Recent statistics of religious denominations lend much support to Macaulay's prognostication that the Catholic church will be with us always. Out of 241,651 people who were questioned as to their religious preferences, 109,400 answered that they were Roman Catholics. And this in Puritan Boston! Protestantism is being driven out of one of its oldest strongholds. Not only are the denominational churches not making any progress, but they are actually yielding to the advancing cohorts of Irish Catholics. Who would have thought a hundred years ago that the cradle of the Pilgrim and Puritan Fathers would become one of the principal suburbs of Rome? The Massachusetts Sunday-school Association has discovered as the result of its recent canvass that nearly forty-six per cent. of the children in Sunday-schools are Roman Catholics. This gives the Baptists, who are the next strongest religious party, only about nine per cent. of the attendance. It appears also that the Catholic church has stronger hold upon the male population than the Protestant denominations. Its attendance shows 49,767 males to 58,613 females, while in the Protestant churches the women outnumber the men in the proportion of nearly two to one.—*Liberal Review* (Chicago).

Miss Marie Corelli is a very pious lady. She is on the best of terms with Jesus Christ, and we fancy she dines now and then with the Almighty. She is a sworn foe of Atheism. Not even a Primrose Dame could excel her hatred of that wicked philosophy. And then how modest she is as well as pious! Her publishers might have announced her forthcoming novel as the greatest the world has ever seen. Instead of that, they merely say that "it is a work of extraordinary vivacity and charm, with an intense human interest which will appeal to an enormous circle of readers." So enormous, indeed, that intending readers are advised, for their own sakes, to order early.

Edwin Markham, the American poet—or versifier, just as you happen to regard him—is responsible for a piece called "The Muse of Brotherhood," which a number of Socialists seem to consider a wonderful effort. From a purely literary point of view, it appears to us to be rather poor stuff—some millions of miles below Mr. Swinburne's outbursts in *Songs Before Sunrise*. Here is a sample from bulk: just as good or bad as all the rest.

My love is higher than heavens where Taurus wheels,  
My love is deeper than the pillared skies:  
High as that peak in Heaven where Milton kneels,  
Deep as that grave in Hell where Cæsar lies.

"Kneels" is about the last word that one who knew the

facts would think of using in connection with the name of John Milton—unless, of course, he was bound to find a rhyme for "wheels." Then, as to that grave in Hell where Cæsar lies. Really, it is not Cæsar who *lies*, but the American poet who writes this line about him. Who will say that Cæsar was not a greater man than Mr. Markham? And when it comes to character, we fancy there is less of it in a hundredweight of Markham than there was in an ounce of Cæsar. The sentimental Yankee bard evidently takes "a scunner" at the Atheist amongst Emperors and Emperor amongst Atheists.

As the victory of Japan in the present war will mean the awakening of China and a fresh adjustment of the relations of the West towards the East—or, rather, of the East towards the West—it is well to bear in mind what is the real difficulty between China and England. This may be seen by turning to what Prince Kung once said to Sir Rutherford Alcock. "If you will take away your opium and your missionaries," he said, "our two nations will live in perfect peace."

Heathen Japan looks down upon Christian Russia. General Oku, in a report to the Imperial headquarters, cites several cases of Japanese prisoners being cruelly treated by the Russians, and says that he feels he is "not fighting a civilised army." What a humiliation for the dear Christians, who fancy themselves the salt of the earth (see their own Scriptures), and the possessors of all the virtues.

"Providence" allowed the cupolas of some of the churches to be blown off in the hurricane at Moscow. It could not recognise its own buildings. "Providence" also allowed the *Norge* to go to the bottom with what the newspapers call six hundred "souls." The captain of the *Salvia*, who picked up one boatload of survivors, says: "I saw one woman floating holding a lifebelt with one hand and a dead child with the other." Maternal love was stronger than God's. Some passengers prayed, some cursed; and both sank together.

Canon Freer, rector of Sudbury, Derbyshire, died in the pulpit on Sunday, June 26. He was half way through his sermon. "Providence" did not permit him to finish it.

There used to be a John the Baptist in London. We see that there is another in New York. His name is John Hoop. He has been arrested and sent to a hospital for medical examination—just as if any prophet could stand *that test*! Hoop appears to envy Dowie, whom he calls a "grey-bearded old scoundrel." How they love one another!

Rev. F. B. Meyer, President of the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches, makes an appeal for "purity." He doesn't like to see churches getting up "kissing games." No doubt it is a dangerous pastime. But does not the Bible say, "Salute one another with a holy kiss"? And may not the pious girls and fellows get behind this text?

David Henderson, one of Belfast's leading Christian philanthropists, committed suicide instead of facing charges made against him in connection with two homes for children. He left a letter declaring his innocence and appealing to God. Evidently he had not much trust in God in this world, or he would not have emigrated so hurriedly to the next.

It would be interesting to know a little more about the genesis and history of the "large framed lithograph" which the Alake of Abeokuta has been exhibiting with pride to his friends in this country, and which purports to represent the late Queen Victoria presenting a Bible to the Alake's father, with the words (inscribed underneath), "This is the secret of England's greatness." Such a picture has been a stock-in-trade of missionary and Bible societies for years, and has been reproduced thousands of times, although no one ever heard till now that the dusky hero of the supposed incident was the late chief of Abeokuta. But the really interesting point is that her late Majesty, a year or two before her death, took the very unusual step of expressly and publicly repudiating the whole story, intimating through her private secretary that it had never occurred. The matter, as regards our present African visitor, certainly wants a little clearing up.—*Daily Chronicle*.

There are some subjects on which General Booth speaks with authority. "Some people," he says, "are born cranks, live as cranks, die as cranks, and go to the cranky corner of Paradise." It will have to be a big corner to accommodate all the candidates from the Salvation Army.



## Mr. Foote's Lecturing Engagements.

(Suspended during July and August.)

### To Correspondents.

- C. COHEN'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—Address, 241 High-road, Leyton.—July 10, afternoon and evening, Victoria Park; 17, morning, Mile End; 24, morning, Kingsland; August 14, Failssworth; 21, morning, Kingsland; afternoon, Victoria Park.
- L. B. GALLAGHER.—Thanks for cuttings.
- A. LITTLE.—We are obliged to you for the good wishes in your letter.
- A. G. LYE.—Present our compliments to Mr. Shufflebotham.
- ELIZABETH EDWARDS.—Your suggestions shall be considered. Thanks. It always gives us pleasure to hear from Secularist ladies. The female half of the human species is unfortunately the principal support of priestcraft.
- JOHN GREEN.—Thanks for your good wishes.
- T. WHITELEY, S. FURNESS, DUTY.—Duly received through Miss Vance.
- W. REDMAN.—We hope your "best wishes" may be realised.
- J. K. SYKES.—We have drawn attention in this week's "Acid Drops" to a Salvation Army outrage at Southend. Does your letter refer to the same case or to another? Kindly let us know, if necessary, in time for next week's issue.
- G. RIVERS.—Mr. George Wise has never met Mr. Foote in public debate. Two or three times, some years ago, he attended Mr. Foote's lectures and offered some opposition, as anyone in the audience was free to do. That is all. We believe Mr. Wise has debated with Mr. Percy Ward. We cannot answer your second question.
- A. HIGHTOWN JEW (Manchester), in reference to a last week's "Sugar Plum," writes that there is already a Jewish Atheist group in Manchester; but it is only for foreign Jews, and speaking at the meetings is in Yiddish. This correspondent says that English Freethinking Jews, like ourselves, don't want any barriers. He also says that he was delighted with Mr. Foote's lecture on Shakespeare, and has secured us three regular subscribers among Jewish friends of the local Clarion Fellowship.
- JAMES NEATE.—You were much better employed in enjoying a few days' holiday, which a hardworking man like yourself must find very welcome. Accept our respect and best wishes.
- J. MAGNESS.—Your order is passed on. Glad to hear you think the *Freethinker* is "improving very much."
- J. BAKER.—Thanks for copies of the *Regiment*. It is amusing, as you say, to see Christians discussing, nearly two thousand years after Christ, what he meant by what he said. The other matter shall be seen to.
- W. P. BALL.—Much obliged for cuttings.
- J. E. BROADBENT.—We do not think we can find room, at any rate at present, for reports of Ethical Societies' meetings. The Ethical movement has its own organ, which will probably find room for your communications. We mean no offence, but we have our own work to do.
- C. H. WHELE.—Received, and under consideration.
- J. M. DAY.—We keep your letter by us, to say something about the matter shortly. Thanks.
- J. BLACKHALL (Gateshead).—The Rev. W. R. Chesterton's outpourings, which you send us, are really beneath contempt. When he talks of "the scurrilous pamphlet, the coarse buffoon, and the brainless atheistic agitator" he simply displays the manners contracted in a pulpit sheltered from criticism. Thanks for cuttings. See "Acid Drops." We are pleased to hear that Mr. Cohen's lectures at Newcastle were, in your opinion, so successful, and that you consider he is improving year by year.
- R. JOHNSON (Manchester).—Thanks for your cheque for the Rome Congress Fund. We note your trust that "there may be a good number of delegates and friends, so that we may make a bold show for English Freethought." The details you ask for will be supplied in due course. Thanks for your personal good wishes.
- J. PARTRIDGE.—Glad to hear the Birmingham and Coventry "saints" had such a good time.
- D. McLEOD.—Order passed on to proper hands. We were aware that the local representative of Smith and Sons you refer to supplied the *Freethinker*, but there were reasons against saying too much about it. With regard to the other matter, nothing could be more foolish than the snap-shot quotations made by Sir R. Anderson. The idea that because Huxley recognised Dana's authority as a geologist he was bound to accept Dana's view as to the agreement of Science with the book of Genesis, is worthy of Bedlam. Where, for instance, does biology look in? We have dealt with the whole matter in the "Creation Story" chapter of our *Bible Romances*, the new sixpenny edition of which is nearly ready for publication.
- J. WAY, 32 Jewel-road, Walthamstow, will be pleased to hear from local Freethinkers with the view of starting a Branch of the N. S. S.
- M. WEATHERBURN.—Appreciation and encouragement from a stalwart of your stamp are always valued.

J. JONES.—Your *Freethinker* subscription has been placed to your credit. Our private letter to you must have crossed yours in the post. If you wish further correspondence on the matter do not hesitate to write.

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THE National Secular Society's office is at 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

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

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

FRIENDS who send us newspapers would enhance the favor by marking the passages to which they wish us to call attention.

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## Sugar Plums.

Last week's *Athenæum* contained an able and interesting review of the reprint of the English Bible in "The Tudor Translations." The writer takes just the same view of the Authorised Version which Mr. Foote took many years ago in his article on "Bible English" reprinted in *Flowers of Freethought*. We do not mean that there has been any borrowing in the case; the same view might very naturally present itself to two open-minded students who knew something of English literature. The *Athenæum* writer points out what Mr. Foote dwelt on at greater length—namely, that the English Bible was intended to be read aloud, and that all who had any hand in it were accustomed to addressing audiences. They had *ears*, in short, like their congregations; and the fact had immense influence upon their style as far as its cadences were concerned. But there is one thing that the *Athenæum* writer overlooks, which Mr. Foote is almost alone in pointing out nowadays. The English of the Bible has no relation whatever to the rest of English literature; it was never spoken or written outside the translations of the Bible; it grew up through many generations as a special dialect, if we may say so, exclusively devoted to the translation of the Christian Scriptures. Those who deny this are challenged to produce a page of printed matter before 1611 in any way resembling Bible English. Afterwards is quite another matter.

One passage in this *Athenæum* review will be of particular interest to our readers. "The change in the attitude of the nation, educated and uneducated," the writer says, "towards the Scriptures as a religious text-book during a short lifetime is so marked that their intrinsic value as literature is in danger of sharing the discredit of their religious infallibility."

We may call attention to a letter, which appears in another column, addressed to us by Mr. H. Percy Ward on behalf of the Liverpool Branch of the National Secular Society. We very much regret to see evidences of a poor sectarian spirit amongst the Ethicists. For our own part, we have always held that the Army of Progress may have many divisions, each contributing to the ultimate victory of reason over superstition, and of humanity over theology. We have therefore refrained from all criticism that did not appear to be absolutely necessary. We have even held our tongues when we had proofs that leading Ethicists were trying to break up Secular Societies. And we have smiled, instead of getting angry, at such titles of Ethical lectures as "The Sin of Atheism." But we may have to draw the line somewhere. There must be reciprocity in any good understanding. Freethinkers are not obliged to love their enemies; they are only obliged to show them justice. Let us hope that this hint will suffice. We should be sorry to be compelled to change our attitude towards any "progressive" society. Perhaps we may take the opportunity of adding that the Branches of the National Secular Society have hitherto shown a fine example of liberality. They have always welcomed leading Ethical speakers upon their platforms—of course under the usual conditions.

Mr. H. Percy Ward sends us a copy of the new edition of his little biographical pamphlet, *From Wesleyan Pulpit*

to *Secular Platform*, which he now publishes at his own residence (4 Redgrave-street, Liverpool) at the popular price of one penny. We presume that the pamphlet is also obtainable at the Freethought Publishing Company's office. Mr. Ward's account of his "conversion" is bright, interesting, and instructive. We should like to see it well circulated. Unlike most of the Christian cases of "converted infidels," *this* "convert" gives his name and address. What is more, he can be found there.

The Liverpool N. S. S. Branch, which has just received a grant of £10 as a small encouragement from the Board of the Secular Society, Limited, does not mean to let the grass grow under its feet. It has made arrangements for Freethought open-air lectures by Mr. H. Percy Ward, its lecturer and organiser, at Wigan, Oldham, Preston, Bolton, and Birkenhead. Handbills of these lectures are printed, and we hope the "saints" in the various towns will distribute them. Copies can be obtained by writing for them; address, Alexandra Hall, Islington-square, Liverpool.

During the past week Mr. H. Percy Ward has been conducting a Freethought mission for the Leeds Branch, and has had good appreciative audiences on Woodhouse Moor. Two evenings were devoted to debates with a Christian representative. The N. S. S. Executive has assisted in this effort. We may add that Mr. Ward is anxious to start Branches of the N. S. S. in the South Lancashire towns mentioned in the previous paragraph, and will be glad to hear from local Freethinkers who would like to co-operate. His address is 4 Redgrave-street, Kensington, Liverpool.

The Liverpool Branch's annual picnic takes place next Sunday (July 17). Brakes leave Woodside Ferry at 10 a.m. for Burton Woods. Tickets, including dinner and tea, are 4s. 6d. each; cyclists' tickets 2s. 6d. All who mean to go should lose no time in writing to the secretary, Mr. W. Pearson, 5 Ricehey-road, Egremont.

The South Shields Branch has its annual picnic next Sunday (July 17). Brakes leave North Shields at 1.30. All who desire to join the party should communicate with the secretary, Mr. E. Chapman, 32 James Mather-terrace, in order that proper accommodation may be provided.

The Birmingham Branch had its annual picnic on Sunday, and was joined by the Coventry Branch at Stratford-on-Avon. The party, numbering sixty, sat down to an excellent dinner, at the close of which Mr. C. Steptoe, on behalf of Birmingham, tendered hearty greetings to the Coventry "saints," for whom Mr. A. G. Lye responded. After some enjoyable hours out of doors the party took tea at the "Coach and Horses." Rambles to interesting spots in the locality completed the most successful of outings.

The *Liberal Review*, which succeeds the late Mr. Green's *Freethought Magazine*, is edited by Mr. M. M. Mangasarian, and published at 140 Dearborn-street, Chicago. Mr. Mangasarian is the author of that excellent little work, *A New Catechism*, and should make a good magazine editor. He is doing capitally up to the present. The June number of the *Liberal Review*, which we meant to notice before, opens with a fine portrait of Björnson, the Norwegian writer and Freethinker, who shares with Ibsen the honor of being the first representative of his country's literature. This is followed by some thoughtful and readable editorial notes, and the articles are from the pens of well-known American Liberal writers. Amongst them is a very good one by George R. Peck on "Bacon or Shakespeare." The objections to the Baconian theory are put with great force and good temper. We wish the *Liberal Review* a long and prosperous career.

Mr. W. L. Courtney, reviewing in the *Daily Telegraph* the new book by Mr. John Ingram on *Christopher Marlowe and His Associates*, protests against whitewashing the virtual founder of the English drama and originator of English blank-verse into a sort of orthodox saint. Too much may have been made of Marlowe's free conversation, but "the extraordinary freedom with which Marlowe discusses doctrines of the Church and the sacred rights of kings through the mouth of some of his characters is not to be wholly imputed to dramatic reasons." There may have been a good deal of the Bohemian in his young life, but amidst much that is doubtful "the one thing that is certain is that his was a fine liberal nature." He was a great poet, the morning star to Shakespeare's sun; and the greater poet has embalmed his memory, and only his of all his contemporaries:—

"Dead Shepherd now I find thy saw o' might,  
Who ever loved that loved not at first sight?"

These lines occur in "As You Like It." They do honor to both poets.

Marlowe, in Mr. Courtney's opinion, may not have been responsible for "some of the detestable things which the 'note' of Richard Baine puts into his mouth." This refers to the information laid against Marlowe for blasphemy. Some of the things in it would certainly be "detestable" to an orthodox believer. But the "may not" of Mr. Courtney may be simply answered with a "may." The "blasphemies" in Richard Baine's note are really too clever and spirited to have been invented by a dull-witted enemy. The statement that the New Testament was "filthily written" reminds us of Mr. Swinburne's dictum that our own New Testament (the Authorised Version) is "translated out of canine Greek into divine English."

Tolstoy's long paper on the Russo-Japanese war, translated into English and published in the *Times*, contains a striking passage on the part played by the orthodox Church in Russia at the present crisis. "This unfortunate, entangled young man," says Tolstoy of the Tsar, "recognised as the leader of 130,000,000 of people, continually deceived and compelled to contradict himself, confidently thanks and blesses the troops whom he calls his own for murder in defence of lands which with yet less right he also calls his own. All present to each other hideous ikons, in which not only no one amongst the educated believe, but which unlearned peasants are beginning to abandon—all bow down to the ground before these ikons, kiss them, and pronounce pompous and deceitful speeches, in which no one really believes. Wealthy people contribute insignificant portions of their immorally-acquired riches for this cause of murder, or the organisation of help in connection with the work of murder; while the poor, from whom the Government annually collects two milliards, deem it necessary to do likewise, giving their mite also. The Government incites and encourages crowds of idlers, who walk about the streets with the Tsar's portrait, singing, shouting hurrah! and who, under pretext of patriotism, are licensed in all kinds of excess. All over Russia, from the Palace to the remotest village, the pastors of churches, calling themselves Christians, appeal to that God who has enjoined love to one's enemies—to the God of Love Himself—to help the work of the devil to further the slaughter of men."

Mr. Arthur Diösy, lecturing lately at St. James's Hall on the Japanese Navy and Army to a large and fashionable audience, in aid of the Japanese Red Cross Fund, laid great stress upon the training, preparation, and forethought, backed by a remarkable spirit of religious fervor, permeating the whole organisation of the Army and Navy. The religion he referred to was Japan's one religion—the love of the Japanese for their own country, the Spirit of the Fatherland. That ancient spirit had survived and spread over modern Japan through the efforts of wise men. There never was such a group of wise men gathered together as that which between 1859 and 1889 laid the foundations of New Japan. Mr. Diösy might have added that this "group of wise men" who practically created modern Japan were nearly all Freethinkers—men who accepted Western science and philosophy and declined its religion; men who honored Darwin and Spencer, but took no stock in Jesus Christ.

As soon as possible we shall give our readers an account of the late Professor Alexander Bain's *Autobiography*. Meanwhile we may observe that Bain, who was brought up in the strictest and most painful Calvinism, became the Freethinker that all knew he was in later life, partly by reading Channing, but more by a deep study of Comte's *Philosophie Positive*. The study of Comte by a small club "had to be kept secret, although it was impossible to avoid giving indications that in those days were calculated to bring the individual student into trouble." The same club made a study of Mill's *Logic* when it appeared in 1843. When Bain applied for a chair at St. Andrew's he was told by John Hunter, who was rather a liberal-minded Free Churchman, that his philosophy was "desolating." A memorial was drawn up against Bain at Aberdeen "using as an argument that they ought not tamely to sit and see an infidel appointed to a chair." Even when Bain established *Mind*, the first English philosophical journal, and took part in a discussion on Free Will, one of the contributors, Mr. W. G. Ward, had to "shut up," as the man in the street says; having "received a hint from the English Roman Catholic bishops as to the impropriety of his appearing in the columns of such an objectionable periodical." Considering that Bain was a very poor man's son, that he had to gain his own education, and that religious bigotry opposed his progress, his great success as a thinker and teacher is a powerful tribute to his strength of mind and character.

## Danger Ahead.

RATIONALISTS and others are sometimes very optimistic. They assume that the triumph of science over theology and superstition is assured. Truth, they say, must and will prevail. All supernatural religions will pass away, never to return. Errors and superstitions will be superseded by knowledge. Priestcraft and the churches will decay and die never to be revived.

The picture is pleasant to look at. I hope it is true. All good and true men will heartily desire that truth and goodness will ultimately prevail. But it is useless to ignore facts. Our faith in the right cannot be very strong if it refuses to look at the other side. That there is another side to the matter is certain. Everything has a reverse side, and there cannot be any harm in looking at it briefly. It may have the result of confirming our optimistic view of society.

Errors and superstitions are as old as man. They were born with him, have grown with him, and remain with him. Many thousands of years ago some of them were seen and exposed, but they are still alive. Enlightened views have often perished under the growth of popular delusion. Fairy tales and folklore are to-day believed in as realities by scores of millions of the human race. The belief in witchcraft, astrology, fairies, ghosts, goblins, and demons is not dead, as fortune-tellers well know, and impostors flourish by its help.

The philosophy of Greece and Rome killed their theologies and turned them into mythologies. One would have thought that the knowledge which vanquished the old errors and superstitions was powerful enough to prevent the rise of new delusions, quite as absurd as the old ones. But they failed to do it, and were conquered by a collusion of old Pagan and new Christian supernaturalism. As a result the world was plunged into dense darkness that lasted many long centuries. Is it not possible that the same thing may happen again, notwithstanding the great discoveries of science and the spread of learning and knowledge?

To say the least, there is a possibility of a reversal, if not of a defeat. In everything there seems to be an ebb as well as a flow. Great civilisations have been evolved and devolved. They had a birth, a growth and death. Is it not possible that the same thing may happen again? It is not pleasant to think so, but thinking and writing about it may be a means to prevent such an occurrence.

How was it that Pagan-Christian superstitions overcame the learning and knowledge of Greece and Rome? There are several things that will explain the sad event. The bulk of the people were ignorant and saturated with long continued and inherited superstitions. It was to them the new missionaries preached, and from them, mainly, they obtained their converts. The missionaries of the new delusions carried on an organised propaganda in which they displayed great enthusiasm and courageous confidence. In the course of time the new religion got allied with the State, and all opposition was ruthlessly suppressed. The victory was won by the organised armies of Church and State operating together on a credulous and superstitious mass of people. And this also shows why the learning and knowledge of Greece and Rome were defeated. They had no organised army of missionaries to attack or to defend. The learned few were only an unorganised mob, whilst the ignorant devotees were an organised army, trained to attack and defend.

It is here where I see dangers ahead still. We are very proud of the progress of science and its triumphs over the Church—the only dangerous enemy that it ever had—and we are tempted to think that superstition is finally conquered, so that all danger of a revival is passed. But I am not over sure that our optimistic confidence is fully justified. Some few facts, that are patent to all intelligent

observers, ought, I think, to make all rationalists consider seriously whether something more than we have is not wanted to secure the victories already won for the benefit of future ages.

Superstition is not dead. It seems to be ingrained in the very nature of man. Even the best education, in the majority of cases, fails to eradicate it. The rise of Mormonism, Spiritism, Christian Scienceism, and many other absurd isms, proves that the masses are credulous and superstitious. Fortune-tellers who are prosecuted when found out find no difficulty in getting dupes, ready to part with their money, to have their fortunes told; and fortune-tellers who are protected and rewarded for fortune-telling wholesale find thousands of congregations ready waiting for them all the year round. Revivalism, as carried on by professional mongers, would not be possible were the masses not steeped in superstitious credulity. The masses seem to like to be deceived. There is nothing too absurd to be accepted by multitudes. In fact, as a rule, the greater the absurdity the greater its success.

And we must not forget that errors and superstitions are established, endowed, and State protected all over the world. Scores of thousands have vested interests in their continuance. Every known religion is more or less a superstition. Even Positivism is not entirely free from it. All the priests, parsons, ministers, preachers, and teachers are a huge army trained to propagate errors under the name of truths. They have immense wealth at their service, and all conveniences to carry on their work. Every theological college, cathedral, church, and chapel is a nursery of supernaturalism. Even day-schools are forced to teach legends and fairy-tales to the children as sacred truths. And all the wealth, all the institutions, and all the power of the State are at their back. Seriously, whilst this state of things continues, how is it possible for science to triumph over superstition? Till all churches are disestablished and disendowed, till all convents are dissolved and confiscated, till all priests and priestly theology are driven out of every school, college, and university, and till every endowment of superstition is made illegal, every supernatural religion will remain a permanent danger ahead.

Besides, signs are becoming more manifest that the monster of superstition is awakening and showing alarm at the spread of rationalism. Societies, guilds, classes, brotherhoods, sisterhoods, pleasant meetings, and all kinds of paraphernalia and gaudy millinery are established to keep the disciples from the influence of Freethought. With all the churches united to attack the unbeliever, and all the wealth and influence at their command, it must be manifest that there is danger ahead. Christian apologists are becoming bolder and more unscrupulous, whilst many Freethinkers are more lukewarm and less ready to attack and defend. Many Freethinkers conceal their doubts because an avowal of unbelief would endanger their livelihood. Others are silent in order to get the help of Christians to realise their hobbies. And I scarcely think, with few exceptions, that scientists speak out as plainly and boldly as they ought to do, and do amongst themselves in private. We can understand why timid, ignorant men should be afraid of offending Mrs. Grundy, but professors in universities can surely ignore the old lady and all her family.

Amongst professors and scientists there are a few eminent men that are quite a puzzle. I need not mention names, as they are well known. It is very difficult to understand their position or to account for some of their utterances. They are not Christians in any sense of the word, but they write books or appear on Christian platforms, and utter or write ambiguous sentences which the churches seize and use to bolster their supernaturalism. We cannot think they are dishonest, or hypocritical, or cowardly, or incapable. How are we to explain their conduct? Is it atavism, or is it a vague idea that some form of an ideal supernatural religion is necessary for the masses? There are many of that opinion, but you

would not expect to find scientists amongst them. Whatever the cause, the performance is unfortunate. It tends to retard the progress of rationalism and to perpetuate the reign of supernaturalism.

The danger ahead is not an imaginary one. It is a very real and a very powerful one. Superstition has got vast armies of trained soldiers to attack opponents and defend itself against their onslaught, with immense wealth to finance its operation. And what have the Rationalists got to fight them with? They have reason and truth on their side, and more than an average amount of intelligence. But they are unorganised, and therefore are only a mob fighting trained armies, and this constitutes a grave danger ahead.

The paramount need of Freethought is a more efficient organisation. The world will never be what it might be, and ought to be, till supernaturalism is vanquished. And how can it be overcome without an organised army of Rationalists? I would suggest that the Freethought Congress in Rome should take the matter in hand, for nothing of greater importance can engage its attention. Supernaturalism is kept alive by organisations. Rationalism failed in the past because Rationalists failed to see the need of organisation; and if Freethought is to succeed in the future Rationalists must form a thoroughly efficient organisation.

R. J. DERFEL.

### "Spirit Fruit."

NEW CHRISTIAN CULT WHICH IS NOW THE TALK OF THE NEWSPAPERS.

UNIVERSAL LOVE, NON-RESISTANCE, AND COMMON OWNERSHIP OF ALL THINGS, INCLUDING WIFE AND CHILD, THE CARDINAL PRINCIPLES.

(By Dr. J. B. Wilson, from the "Blue Grass Blade," Lexington, America.)

You have all, no doubt, been reading about the "Spirit Fruit" cult, with headquarters at Lisbon, O. The majority of Presidents, Generals, great men, and great things generally, come from Ohio. Mormonism first took root in Ohio, and now we have "Spirit Fruit." Jacob Beilhart is the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost of this new addition to, or rather new edition of, pure and undefiled Christianity. His is not an entirely new brand, but he claims to have discovered the quint-essence of the Christian life.

The papers are making a big sensation out of it, and it is the talk of the country.

The amusing part of it is that they have not been able to tack the sensation on to Infidelity, Socialism, and Anarchy, for Beilhart claims that Spirit Fruit is the true Christian faith.

Beilhart's Society is called "The Spirit Fruit Society," and he edits a monthly paper called *Spirit Fruit*. He has established headquarters on a hundred acre farm near Lisbon, Ohio. The farm is under a fine state of cultivation, and the house is a mansion of fourteen rooms. Here live ten men, and as many women—and one child, a niece of Beilhart's, who is called "the love child."

The type of government is communal. What is mine is yours, whether it be money, wife, husband, or child.

#### SOME REMARKABLE STATEMENTS.

Investigation has so far brought out some remarkable facts in connection with the "Spirit Fruit" farm. Not the least remarkable of these are some of "Jacob's" own statements.

He states that the "Spirit Fruit" farm is nobody's property. It belongs to the whole world.

He declares that, in the spirit of his belief, which he hopes to make universal, his wife is your wife, your wife is his wife, his children your children, your children his children.

He affirms that it is wrong to resist. If you want to punch off his head he will not raise a hand to stop you.

He says that on the "Spirit Fruit" farm the members are free to choose any one they like, and that they all love each other just the same.

A practical instance of the extreme unconventionality of his ideas is found in the person of Evelyn Gladys Beilhart, a beautiful little girl who is known as the "Love Child." This blue-eyed little tot is the child of Beilhart's sister, Mary Beilhart, and Ralph Galbreath, both present members of the colony. The parents are not married, nor do they desire marriage, Jacob Beilhart explaining that they do not care to selfishly

confine their love to one person, but desire to live the life of "universal love."

#### A VARIED CAREER.

Beilhart is a native of this country, thirty-seven years of age, and his parents were German Lutherans. After having spent several years in Kansas, he became a Seventh Day Adventist preacher at the age of twenty-one. Two years later he felt that he was needed for something else, and went to Battle Creek, Mich., where he took a course in nursing in the sanitarium. It was here that he conceived the notion of healing by prayer; but, after effecting several cures by that method, he was ordered to leave the place. He then devoted himself to an investigation of Mental Science, Christian Science, Theosophy, the Protestant and Catholic religions, and then single tax, Socialism, and political economy.

From these investigations he decided that most people were living on a false plane, and that the entire social, economic, and political systems are false and unjust. He says he came into consciousness of having no will of his own, and decided that the universe is only a manifestation of spirit; that man only acts through himself the universal will. He recognises the one universal law of love to which all material things are subject, and maintains that the moment an individual will is asserted antagonisms are created. The cult recognises no personal God.

#### CHRIST AND MARY MAGDALA.

Beilhart illustrates and proves his propositions by the Christ-life, although he makes no pretensions of being a reincarnation of Christ, or a prophet of any kind.

The peculiar thing, and the one claiming greatest interest in this cult, is its sex relation. The public, and Christians in particular, are horrified over its free-love tendencies. Beilhart disclaims free-love in the abstract, but admits that it is allowable in persons who have advanced to the stage of what he calls "universal love." He says that universal love was the teaching and practice of Christ, and he is astonished that Christians should be at all surprised at his stand, as it is identical to that of Christ.

He illustrates this in the relation of Christ to Mary Magdala, the love existing between whom, he says, was identical to the "Spirit Fruit" brand now advocated by himself. And we Infidels, standing aside and gazing upon these phases of Christian manifestation, are compelled to wonder at Christian inconsistency, for we know that if Christ were to come now to this country and make a gospel tour with Mary Magdala, her character being known as that of a common prostitute, not a Christian door would be open to him; and should he preach the very doctrine that Christians now venerate—such as coming to bring a sword, and putting son against father—and should he go into a Chamber of Commerce and revile the money-changers, and drive them out with a cat-o'-nine-tails, he would be arrested as an Anarchist or a free-love lunatic, and either be hung or sent to an insane asylum.

Beilhart makes it plain that Christ ate "Spirit Fruit," and wonders that his teaching of it to-day should excite surprise. And it is due to Beilhart to say that he is open, frank, intelligent, and dignified. He claims that law, government, and marriage are essential to those whose love is on a low, selfish plane. For such, he says, free love is not good. But among those who are educated up to the "universal love" standpoint—perfect sex—freedom should prevail.

#### THE DIFFERENCE.

He draws this difference between his application of Christian "Spirit Fruit" and that generally practised by the old-established Christian denominations.

He says that in his practice, love is gathered under one roof or into one community; while the general Christian practice extends to many roofs and many communities. He claims that he is far more consistent than the Christian whose home is only a headquarters of his affections.

He points to the immense number of public women and public houses which exist upon demand largely of Christian spirit fruit raisers. All such he places on a low love plane.

#### CHRISTIANITY HORRIFIED.

Christians generally are horrified at the newspaper exposure of the Spirit Fruit cult. They are suffering untold chagrin on account of the Christian claims of Beilhart, who having investigated all forms of Christianity, settled on the Spirit Fruit as the one most nearly reflecting the Christ-life.

It would be a great feather in the Christian hat if they could tack "Spirit Fruit" on to Infidelity and thus show what Infidelity leads to.

But they know that Infidels have the laugh on them, and will hold up "Spirit Fruit" for just what it claims to be, an off-shoot and result of Christian doctrine. Christians generally are horrified also, because they are ignorant of the

close relation of sex to religion. They are not aware that they go hand in hand. They do not know that Christianity and Judaism, as well as all the old religions are founded upon Phallic or sex worship. They do not know that Jesus is pictured as an Hermaphrodite to typify both the male and female principles in one person. They do not know the sex-effect of religious revivals upon the young, that it is one of excitation and reaction, or that it may be manifested in various forms. With some Christians sex is religiously associated with vice and vulgarity. It is the one great sin and impurity. The celibacy of priests and nuns is one of its abnormal phases. Here, more than in any other existence, we perceive the association of sex and religion, by the assumption or pretension that to be really religious, these creatures must make themselves sexless. Prayer takes the place of sex with the nuns and porterhouses and sherry with the priests.

The priest puts aside sex only to brutalise himself with eating and drinking, the stamp of which is indelibly inscribed upon his person, and the nun puts aside sex only to become a mental imbecile, which is indelibly stamped upon her person.

As bad as Beilhart's Spirit Fruit teaching in the name of Christ may be, it ought to be plain to every person with eyes, that there are others worse.

CIRCUMCISION

Is still a sacred rite among the Jews, one of their most solemn covenants. A book might be written on this subject alone illustrating the relation of sex to religion.

Why should Beilhart's religio-sex philosophy shock any one familiar with the religio-sex significance of circumcision and celibacy? Why strain at gnats and swallow double-humped camels? Measured by Christian celibacy Beilhart's Spirit Fruit is to be respected.

The difference is that the public, and Christians in particular, have grown accustomed to these old forms of religio-sex manifestations, and have come to think them all right and reasonable enough because they themselves practise them.

Marriage itself, which should be only a legal acknowledgment of the right of cohabitation, is made a religious mystery, and all kinds of pious exorcisms are mingled with the ceremony. Marriage is called, not a natural, but a Christian institution. When a priest joins a couple he pretends that the Lord is doing it. Although young people or even older people are not conscious of it, the religious mysteries connected therewith, the blessing, the supposed divine unification, and the invocation to the Holy Ghost, have all a bearing upon the sexual right. If the good people knew of some of the religious rites which in past times, and which even to-day among the more ignorant in the old country have been and are practised, especially in preparing the bride for marriage, they wouldn't at all be shocked at Beilhart's philosophy.

(To be continued.)

Correspondence.

THE ETHICS OF "ETHICS."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—We are loth to publicly find fault with organisations pursuing objects similar to our own, but there are occasions when silence involves treachery to principle.

For several years the *Freethinker* has paid various Ethical Societies the courtesy of regularly inserting in its "Lecture Notices," without charge, announcements of their meetings. *Ethics*, the official organ of the Ethical Movement, has a similar column of forthcoming lectures. As several members of our Branch are regular purchasers of *Ethics*, we requested our Secretary to send notices of the Branch's meetings to the editor, foolishly imagining that he would reciprocate to a Secular Society that courtesy the *Freethinker* shows towards Ethical Societies. These lecture notices have been sent regularly to *Ethics* for several months, but not one has ever been inserted.

When the editor of *Ethics* (Mr. Joseph McCabe) lectured in Liverpool a few weeks ago two of our members (Messrs. Schweizer and Rhodes) asked him for an explanation. They were told that the size of the paper did not allow of the insertion of notices of meetings other than those of Ethical Societies.

We see that a prominent Ethicist suggests that the Ethical Movement should appropriate and ethicise such theological terms as "God," "religion," "prayer," etc. Has some Ethicist discovered a new meaning for the word "boycott"?

We have no wish to entrench upon the exceedingly valuable, though limited, space of *Ethics* against the will of its conductors; and we regret our mistaken sense of fair-

play. But as a matter of common justice we consider that public attention should be directed to that unique ethical spirit which so generously allows the editor of the *Freethinker* to enrich his pages by inserting notices of Ethical lectures with such titles as "The Sin of Atheism," "Why I Pray," etc.

For the Committee of the Liverpool Branch of the N. S. S.  
June 30. H. PERCY WARD.

THE ORIGINALITY OF JESUS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Mr. Scott's paper in your issue of to-day is an admirable one in many respects. Writing, however, in a Freethought journal, Mr. Scott might have said not merely that there is no proof of the divinity of Jesus, but that there is no evidence on the point whatever; and that there cannot, in the nature of the case, be any evidence, since no one knows, or has known, what a divinity is.

I should like to suggest a line which Mr. Scott seems well qualified to work out on this subject of the originality of Jesus' teachings. Putting aside, as do all Freethinkers, the supernatural claims of Jesus as as utterly unthinkable as the supernatural claims made by or for any other alleged god or demi-god, we are left with the ethical teachings of Jesus as those only which it is worth any sane man's while to consider.

These are not so very formidable a list, and I suggest that Mr. Scott gives them, and side by side with them their parallels from the records of the forerunners or contemporaries of Jesus, or even of his successors who are known not to have had any knowledge of his existence.

We should then find what, if anything, in the teachings of Jesus was without its equal or like for wisdom or kindness or truth.

Comparative theology has had a great influence in destroying the supernatural element in every religion; comparative ethics or sociology may have the effect of showing, what we believe it must show, that even in ethical teaching there have been no catastrophic elements, but a gradual unfolding, or growth and decay.

My own opinion is that the claims of Jesus to any originality in his ethical teaching will be reduced to at most a vivid and fresh presentation of some views which have been held by human beings since the dawn of recorded history; whilst it will be found in other cases that his presentation of the already existent views on the conduct of life were less sound and less telling than those of his predecessors and independent contemporaries and successors.

To carry out my suggestion with thoroughness will need wide reading, an alert mind, and a good memory, together with a fine sense of comparison.

These qualifications I dare to think Mr. Scott can bring to the task if he considers, with me, that the task is worth attempting. With the whole human race and all recorded time to draw upon, there can be little doubt a fine list of teachings anticipatory of those of Jesus can be made.

June 23.

A. READER.

P.S.—I don't know any analysis of Jesus' teaching that is at once so thorough and so luminous as that in William Renton's *Jesus*, a work in many respects of far greater insight than the works of Renan or Strauss.

National Secular Society.

REPORT of Monthly Executive Meeting, held on Thursday, June 30, 1904.

There were present:—Mr. G. W. Foote, President (in the chair), Messrs. J. Barry, C. Cohen, H. Cowell, F. A. Davies, W. Leat, Dr. R. T. Nichols, C. Quinton, V. Roger, S. Samuels, H. Silverstien, M. Strang, F. Wood, and the Secretary.

Minutes of previous meeting were read and confirmed.

This being the first ordinary meeting of the new Executive, Messrs. Roger, Samuels, and Leat were elected as a Benevolent Fund Committee.

Messrs. Leat and Samuels were elected as monthly auditors, and E. M. Vance was re-elected as General Secretary.

The President's action with regard to the recent Police Court proceedings against Mr. James Toope was heartily endorsed. It was also resolved that the President be thanked, and his action in making an appeal for donations towards the expenses of the delegation to the Rome Congress be endorsed.

Two new members were admitted for the Kingsland Branch, and the meeting closed.

E. M. VANCE, Secretary.

## 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.

#### OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 3.15 and 6.15, C. Cohen.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S.: Station-road, 11.30, W. J. Needes; Brockwell Park, 3.15 and 6.30, E. B. Rose.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (corner of Ridley-road, Dalston): 11.30, F. A. Davies.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (The Grove, Stratford): 7, R. P. Edwards.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Hyde Park, near Marble Arch): 11.30, a Lecture; Hammersmith, 7.30, a Lecture.

### COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S.: Open-air Propaganda, 10, 12, 14, and 17, H. Percy Ward, in the Bull Ring; 11, 13, and 15, corner Suffolk-street and Hill-street.

Huddersfield BRANCH N. S. S.: Market Cross, Huddersfield. Saturday evening at 8, C. J. Atkinson and George Whitehead will deliver addresses on Freethought. Market-place, Heckmond-wike, Sunday at 3 and 6.30, George Whitehead and C. J. Atkinson will speak on Secularism, and at 7.30 at Lumbart's, Coffee Palace, Market-place.

LEEDS BRANCH N. S. S. (Armley Park): 11, G. Weir, "The God Christians Swear By"; Woodhouse Moor, 3, "Miracles"; Crossflats Park, 7, "Bible and Beer."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): Outdoor Propaganda: Islington Square, 3 and 7, W. C. Schweizer.

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, George Berrisford, "The Economics of Labor," with debate following.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, Market-place): 8, Final arrangements for Picnic, etc., etc.

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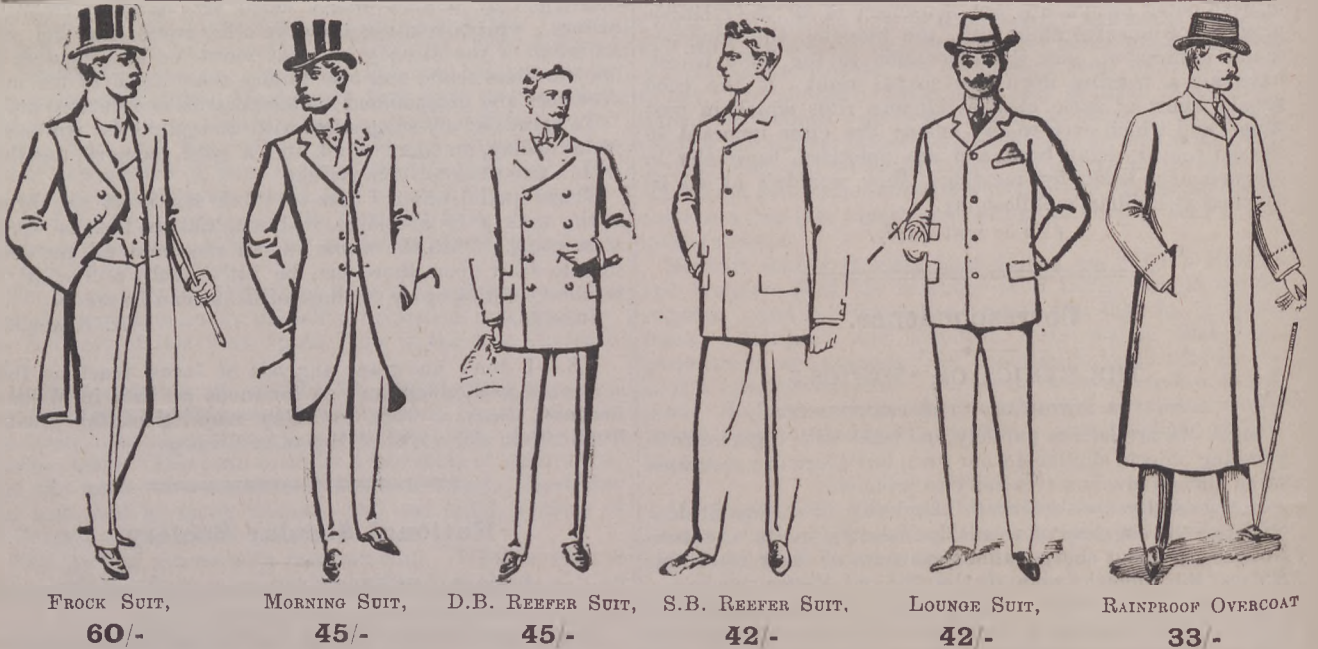
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