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Behind the Cross is the Devil.—SPANISH PROVERB.

Booth's Apotheosis.

GENERAL BOOTH'S well-staged triumphal progress through England is fully reported by the newspapers; for Parliament is up, and certain columns have to be filled with other matter. Nor is this the only propitious circumstance. There would be small space for General Booth's exploits if the Japanese generals allowed war correspondents to go with their armies. If they did so we should have daily columns of blood and slaughter, which would pay the papers a great deal better than any religious proceedings. Yes, the stars in their courses are fighting for General Booth just now; and it must be admitted that the Grand Old Showman is making the most of his opportunity. We understand that there are grumblings amongst the rank and file of the Salvation Army over the enormous expense of the General's tours, but care is taken that these grumblings do not reach the public ear. Besides, the complainants should remember that every widespread business needs advertisement, and that the General is the great hustler and cash-collector of their enterprise.

Thousands of Christians have swarmed out at this holiday season to welcome the old General on his motor-car, with his Moses nose well in front, and his Aaron beard streaming behind. We have not heard of many conversions, but perhaps they are not yet harvested. The only case reported is that of an ex-burglar, who was swept along by the wave of enthusiasm. But an "ex" burglar was no great catch. He had already retired from the profession. It would have been more to the point if Booth had caught a practising burglar red-handed, converted him on the spot, and taken him round on the motor-car as a "brand plucked from the burning"—with a borrowed policeman or prison-warder to testify to the convert's genuineness. As it is one can only smile at a newspaper's report of the case as "General Booth's gallant rescue of an ex-burglar." One might imagine from this description that the General had crossed the zone of fire, brought his wounded man back safely, and earned the Victoria Cross; whereas Booth runs no danger, since he only fights the Devil, who never puts in an appearance.

Booth himself describes his reception along the line of route as "overwhelming." He even admits that it might induce an attack of swelled-head in some men, but he is different from the common run, and the Lord will look after his spiritual health. Moreover, he cannot help seeing what is perfectly obvious; namely, that his newest halo was acquired at Buckingham Palace. He admitted this to a "special correspondent" of the *Daily News* at Liverpool.

"My late reception in the United States by President Roosevelt, the Senate, and leading statesmen of that country; the sympathy that flowed in upon me at the tragic death of my dear daughter last November; the practical and cosmopolitan character of the recent congress in London; together with the straightforward recognition of the Army by King Edward and her

Majesty the Queen, are events which have each done its part in prompting the kindly feeling that has been so freely expressed on this tour."

But there is something more than "kindly feeling" in the manifestations reported in the newspapers. We read that Booth has been "officially welcomed by the Mayors and Corporations of nearly every town visited." This, we may safely say, is the result of royal patronage. All the flunkeys in the country will honor the man whom the King delights to honor. Whatever the King affects becomes fashionable. If he kept a monkey there would be a run on simians; if he wore one leg of his trousers turned up and the other down, crowds would dress in the same lopsided fashion.

We pointed out some weeks ago how natural it was that the King should smile upon the Salvation Army and pat its old General on the back. In the first place, a monarch who is not a recluse, but a man of the world, will reconcile himself to accomplished facts; in the second place, he will nobble every powerful influence if he can, and give it his open patronage if his doing so does not alienate an influence still more powerful; in the third place, the Salvation Army teaches the very principles on which all monarchies are based. General Booth exacts absolute obedience from his followers down to the smallest details; he also forbids them to have anything whatever to do with politics—except at his express command. He tells them that they are *in* the world, but not *of* the world; that they are *pilgrims* here, not *citizens*; their home being in heaven—if they are lucky enough to get there. Such an organisation, so commanded, with an income of something like a million a year, is one that a sensible sovereign would welcome as an excellent support of his throne. And the purchase is easy; it only costs a smile. King Edward paid the price, and secured a valuable lot of loyalty. We dare say his Majesty has never read Gibbon, but he acts instinctively as Constantine did in making Christianity the State religion of the Roman Empire. "The throne of the emperors," Gibbon says, "would be established on a fixed and permanent basis if all their subjects, embracing the Christian doctrine, should learn to suffer and to obey."

Behind that polished sarcasm of Gibbon's there is a profound and important truth. Religion in general (and the Christian religion in particular) has always been an excellent support of kingly authority. Those who talk about the Republican principles of the Puritans in the seventeenth century are either ignoramuses or charlatans. It is perfectly clear that Charles I. would have had the loyal support of the Puritans if he had sided with them against their ecclesiastical opponents. They broke with him because he would not break with the Episcopal Church. And the following struggle demonstrated once more that the temporal sword determines which religion shall win. Cromwell's sword kept the Puritans in power; when he died it was inevitable that the Restoration of the Stuarts should throw them at the feet of their enemies. The same principle holds good in the case of the Protestant Reformation. Where the sovereigns took up the Protestant cause it triumphed; where they did not it failed; and, as a matter of fact, the Protestant and Catholic Churches have, from a geographical point of view, remained

stationary ever since. We may thus see that Constantine was the real founder of the Christian Church. Prior to his patronage it had, in three hundred years, converted about one in twenty of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire by means of persuasion; in the course of one hundred years afterwards it converted most of the other nineteen by fine, imprisonment, bribery, ostracism, the destruction of antagonistic literature and the slaughter of unbelievers.

Just the same thing, though on a smaller and a milder scale, has happened in the case of the Salvation Army. Twelve months ago General Booth's motor-car tour would have excited no particular enthusiasm. He was still under a cloud of non-respectability. But his visit to Buckingham Palace has changed all that. Mayors and Corporations would not have budged an inch for him yesterday. They almost lick his boots to-day.

There is another important aspect of this matter. General Booth may not be suffering from swelled-head, but he is talking glibly about vaster social schemes by which he will, with the Lord's blessing, deal with all the poverty and misery of Great Britain. Now this is a real danger. Here is a religious organisation, fed on public subscriptions, and under despotic control, claiming to take in hand what is called "the social problem," and undertaking to deal with it on the most childish economic principles combined with the most unblushing proselytism. This organisation already commands a million a year; royal favor may bring it another million; and all that money (we say it deliberately) is absolutely wasted—nay, worse than wasted—as far as "the social problem" is concerned. If any person will seriously answer our criticism of General Booth's "social scheme" in the pamphlet entitled *Salvation Syrup* we will pen an equally serious reply. Meanwhile we repeat that General Booth's plan of social salvation is simply childish. It resembles nothing so much as the policy of the Irishman who cut a piece off one end of his shirt and sewed it on the other end—to lengthen it.

Even in the purely religious sphere General Booth's achievements are immensely exaggerated. What he was challenged to refute some years ago in Marylebone is true of the whole country. The fact is that no more Christians are made nowadays. The Salvation Army, like every other Christian organisation, draws its members from the common stock of believers. Its success is necessarily at the expense of the "respectable" Churches. The proof of this is very easy. The members of the Salvation Army are not allowed to drink or smoke. But does this affect the publicans and tobacconists? Not a bit of it. More money is spent on drinking and smoking every year. This is incontestable. And it disproves the common statement that the Salvation Army reclaims a lot of drunkards and ne'er-do-wells.

Booth himself told his Liverpool interviewer that, while the working-classes have "physically and materially improved," he still feels he "cannot say that religion, after the standard of the Salvation Army, taken as a whole, has greatly advanced." This is a very awkward confession. The "masses of the people" are as averse or indifferent to Christianity as ever. This is what Booth says after nearly a generation of the Salvation Army, supplementing the work of all the Christian Churches, and adding a million a year to the already vast expenditure on religious teaching.

Booth finds a grain of consolation in the fact that "There is less open blasphemy, and little of the blatant Atheism that existed thirty years ago." The first statement may mean anything or nothing—so we leave it. The second statement is comical. Fancy the chief of the Salvation Army calling Atheists, or anyone else, *blatant*! He invites the retort that the word admirably applies to his own battalions of howling dervishes, who make more noise than all the rest of the people put together.

G. W. FOOTE.

On Sects.

WHAT is, on the whole, a suggestive article on "Sects" appears in the current number of the *Christian World*. The article takes, chiefly, the form of a dialogue between two men—one a Dissenter, the other a Churchman; with, of course, the Dissenter coming out on top. The Churchman looks upon sects as a manifestation of lawlessness, the Dissenter as an instance of nature's method of producing a superior type along the lines of variation and selection. There is the usual talk of the "Nonconformist Conscience" as a "national asset" of enormous value; with the assertion that "they" (the Nonconformists) carried the Reform Bill, the abolition of slavery, and Free Trade.

Lord Russell is quoted in defence of the last statement. The quotation may or may not be accurate, but if it is, Lord Russell's meaning is obvious. Where two bodies are pretty equally matched the votes of a mere handful will decide the victory. It is quite accurate to speak of this handful as having a decisive voice, but to say that they *carried* a particular measure is in the highest degree misleading. As a matter of fact the Dissenters no more *carried* these measures than did Churchmen.

The whole article, moreover, treats English history as though it were merely a question of a struggle between Church and Chapel—which is a very common feature of Dissenting sermons nowadays. It is all part and parcel of that outburst of hysteria that does duty for sentiment, and sectarian feeling that is mistaken for reasoned conviction. What religious people have to learn, apparently, is that religious conviction is at most only one of the forces that mould the history of a nation—very often not the most important force, and often enough merely a cloak for the operation of forces that are quite non-religious in character. The history of political Nonconformity, and of Protestantism generally, is a case in point. Anyone who studies closely the history of the Protestant Reformation in England or Germany will see that for the most part the forces at work were economic and social rather than religious. Had it not been for the existence of a celibate priesthood which threatened the security of every man's home, and for the financial drain of the Roman Church, it is tolerably certain that the Protestants would not have gained the support they did. Here in England the operation of these forces among the mass of the people is very clear, and among the ruling classes the prospect of plundering a wealthy Church was far more attractive than establishing purity of religious teachings.

Nonconformity has in its history taught the same lesson. Religiously it has always been less attractive than either the Roman or the English Church. It was narrower in creed and more intolerant in practice, without any of the excuses that a Church like the Roman Church might offer. That Church was at least an established authority. It had a history, an antiquity, and the right of possession. But, on the other hand, here was a mushroom growth, a mere thing of yesterday, revolting in the name of freedom, and yet acting with a savagery and intolerance hardly surpassed by any other religious body in the world's history. Where it found itself on the side of social freedom it was there by political accident rather than choice, urged thereto by hatred of a rival, not by conviction of the soundness of a principle. In the beginning political opposition to the Roman Church was partly due to the fact that the Church power interfered with the development of trade; and it is for this reason that one finds Protestantism strongest in trading centres. And later, if Nonconformists were opposed to the landed and governing interests of the country, and appealed to the people for support, this was because their religious rival represented the Church of the governing classes, and there was no other direction in which they could seek help. A mere political accident has

determined on which side Nonconformity should range itself. Eliminate this, and it will be seen that Protestantism at large, or Nonconformists in particular, are no better, politically, socially, or economically, than Churchmen. Personally, I am convinced that of the two they are the least preferable. Historic associations, which *do* count for something; traditions of culture, which also are to be reckoned with, are all upon the side of the opponents of Nonconformity; and my experience has been that one meets with greater narrowness and intolerance in Nonconformist circles than elsewhere.

The rise of sects, which is the special subject of the article above noted, may be looked at from other points than the social or economic. The writer of the article professes to contemplate them from a scientific standpoint, and treats them as only an instance of nature's method of producing a higher type by way of variation. As is usual, a scientific truth is used to cover a religious fallacy. Scientifically, it is true that the method of natural development is a continuous variation with an equally continuous selection. And this is as true of ideas as it is of structures, since both are methods of adaptation to environment. But anyone who compares this process with the growth of religious sects will soon notice important differences. In the first place the note of struggle, of conflict, is altogether absent. Each religious doctrine surrounds itself with an artificial environment which is clearly intended to prohibit development. In this respect all churches are alike. All do their utmost to prohibit criticism and contest. Baptists and Methodists are in this respect as bad, or even worse, than Episcopalians. For it is worth noting that one of the cries against the establishment is against the "lawless" character of its ministers. That is, that its ministers, instead of being tied down to one set interpretation of the Church of England's doctrines, interpret them in manners varying between Roman Catholicism on the one side and a religious Agnosticism on the other. To make the two processes quite analogous a religious opinion should be left quite free to maintain itself against all other forms of religious and non-religious opinion, and without any kind of State support. But this is not the case, and Dissenters would be the very last to desire it. Purity of doctrine—another name for narrowness of interpretation—is one of their principal shibboleths, and none are more greedy for State help when they can get it. Each new sect thus becomes, so far as it can consciously be made so, a barrier against variation of opinion and independence of thought.

The truth of this will be seen when it is remembered how often Christian sects arise as a protest against liberality of thought. It is the natural tendency of things that the wider, in point of membership and geography, a Church becomes the greater the latitude of interpretation becomes also. And then it is that some new sect springs into existence in order to restore "purity of doctrine," which means to re-preach a doctrine to a few that is becoming distasteful to the many. Nearly all the splits among the Methodists are, I believe, of this nature. And looking at the matter broadly no one can fairly maintain that Protestantism as a whole aimed at securing any real liberty, or an opportunity for the play of diverse opinion. At the utmost there was only a variation in intolerance; a difference in the badge worn by the persecutor, a change in the formula used to punish the heretic.

There is a further distinction between the contests of religious sects and the healthy rivalry of opinions in other directions. In science, in politics, in sociology the clash of opinion continues, and it is well that it should continue. But not alone is the discussion conducted with a view to a single end, but it is fruitful in results. Both science and sociology have a certain body of settled opinion to which to appeal for guidance, and the longer discussion continues the larger this body of settled opinion becomes.

We no longer debate the reality of the principle of gravitation, nor do we even discuss the genuineness of the principle of natural selection, however much authorities may differ as to the extent of its application. Scientific men not only agree to differ, but they also differ to agree, and their difference does end in agreement some day or other.

But what settled opinion has the religious believer to which to appeal for guidance? None at all. He appeals to the existence of God as a first principle. But there are thousands of people who do not believe in a God, and it cannot, therefore, be taken as a datum for discussion. If one Christian appeals to the Church, another does not accept its authority. If another appeals to the Bible, there is yet another who will dispute its meaning. There is not a single point in religion that can be taken as settled. And there is not a single question about which the sects differ that has ever been settled by discussion. Nay, the longer the discussion continues the greater the differences become. There is no agreement for the reason that there is no settled truth or body of settled truths held in common by the religious world. Their difference of opinion is not due to the development of new questions, but to the impossibility of settling old ones. There is hardly a religious question debated to-day that was not under discussion centuries ago, and which will not remain under discussion so long as there is anyone who believes in them.

Finally, there is this important difference between a natural multiplication, variation, and contest and the growth of sects. The one is, normally, the multiplication of a healthy organism; the other is the break up of an organism no longer able to maintain itself whole. One is an illustration of sustained, the other of diminished vitality. One makes for development, the other for retrogression or stagnation. There is no healthy element of national life in religious sects. Their only good feature is that they break up into warring bodies an evil force that united would work for greater injury. In the world of real mental freedom difference is the condition of progress, but in the world of religious sects each body becomes the citadel of outworn beliefs and intellectual narrowness.

C. COHEN.

Theological Shuffling.

It is both interesting and instructive to note the numerous subterfuges to which theologians resort when confronted with grave objections and difficulties. Indeed, their shifts and evasions when cornered are simply amazing. When told that, "according to the Scriptures, it is absolutely necessary for a person to believe in the Person and Divinity of Jesus Christ before he can be assured of life eternal and future happiness," they instantly retort by saying that it is a mistake to attribute such a doctrine to the Word of God. "You do not understand," they argue, "what the Biblical meaning of faith really is, and therefore you fall into diverse and grievous errors." Then they draw an artificial distinction between intellectual belief and saving faith. The devils in hell believe intellectually, and the only consequence is unspeakable shuddering. It is spiritual believing alone that is saving. But what on earth is meant by spiritual belief? Can a man intelligently believe a thing to be true or false without using his intellect? To believe in Christ is to accept certain alleged facts as historical; but how are we to ascertain the historicity of such alleged events without employing our reason? The apostle Paul says: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans x. 9). The apostle John writes: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God" (1 John v. i.). We find precisely the same teaching in the Gospels. The central thought is that escape from the damnation of hell is possible

only through faith in Christ. Hell is on the other side of death, being a place prepared for the devil and his angels. "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be damned" (St. Mark xvi. 16).

Such is the clear and unmistakable teaching of the New Testament. Believers in Christ and his resurrection are promised the blessedness of heaven, while unbelievers in the same are threatened with the torments of hell. Such has also been the invariable teaching of the Pulpit. On their death-beds people who have led thoroughly bad, injurious lives are assured that if they believe that Christ died for them their death will translate them forthwith into paradisaical bliss. No one can deny the accuracy of this representation. All who are at all conversant with the general tone of evangelical preaching know that the supreme emphasis is always laid on faith in the atoning efficacy of the death on Calvary as the only means of deliverance from liability to future punishment and of acceptance with heaven. But when theologians are asked whether "a high conception of justice" underlies such a gospel or not, they answer by asserting that such is not the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Then they quote from Matthew xxv., where Christ is represented as making good conduct the sole condition of entrance into heaven at last. "When Christ comes to judge the whole world," they say, "He will ask them, not whether they believed in a particular creed, but whether, when they found the poor and the sick and the naked and the hungry, they tried to do their best for them; for, as he says, 'Inasmuch as ye did it—or did it not—unto one of these my brethren, ye did it—or did it not—unto me.' There is the position of belief and of practice with regard to the future. These passages are quite enough to dispose of the questioner's theory that the Gospel tells us a man's future happiness will depend upon his creed in this world."

But that is argumentative shuffling of the worst kind. Can a man be saved without faith in Christ? What about the doctrine of the Atonement? What about justification by faith? These are said to be fundamental, sovereign gospel truths; but they become utterly meaningless if character is the standard of God's final judgment. According to Paul there is no acceptance with God without surrender to Christ, no escape from sin and its penalty without faith in the finished work of the Redeemer, no forgiveness except in the blood of Jesus. That is the message of the gospel as Paul understood it. Is it true, or is it false? Is it true that if the biggest rogue and sinner on earth believes in Christ, "even at the last moment, he will enjoy all the delights of eternal bliss"? We are not thinking of creeds at all, in the usual sense; but is it true that faith in Christ is essential to salvation? Will Professor Moulton dare to say, openly, that it is not? But if it is, it necessarily follows that "the man who, true to his own higher nature, has lived a comparatively good and straight life, will suffer the torments of hell in the next world, unless he confesses Christ in this." Good deeds do not count unless they are done in Christ's name; and I admire those divines who had the courage to be consistent by declaring unambiguously that the very best works of unbelievers are nothing but splendid vices. Professor Moulton would be hooted and hissed were he to make a similar declaration to-day; and yet he cannot travel sufficiently far in the opposite direction to be able to say that good people, if they are unbelievers, will go to heaven when they die.

I am aware of the subterfuge by which theologians seek to be delivered from this dilemma. They say that saving faith leads to good works. But that saying ignores the vital point. Let us suppose that the worst man that ever lived is now lying on his dying-bed. Only a few moments before the mortal illness seized him he committed a most horrible crime. But he is now sensible of his approaching end, and a clergyman visits him, who, after repeating various prayers and hortatory passages, says:—

"Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?"

"And in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son our Lord? And that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; that he suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; that he went down into hell, and also did rise again the third day; that he ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; and from thence shall come again at the end of the world, to judge the quick and the dead?"

"And dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints; the resurrection of the flesh; and everlasting life after death?"

Is there not a fairly long and comprehensive creed involved in those questions? Then—

"The sick person shall answer, All this I do steadfastly believe."

Whereupon, after asking the dying man sundry little questions, the minister says:—

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences: And by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Again I ask, Is that gospel true, or is it false? If true, then the other teaching, which represents good works or a virtuous character as the standard of the final Judgment, must be false. What would Professor Moulton's message be to a notorious scoundrel who confessed Christ with his dying breath? Would it not be, "Thy faith hath made thee whole; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"? But if this gospel be false, then the whole scheme of Christianity falls to the ground. Stripped of the doctrines of the Divinity of Christ, the Atonement, Justification by Faith, and the Forgiveness of Sins, Evangelicalism must of necessity cease to be. If there be a God and a Hereafter, and if Christ offered himself on the Cross a ransom for sinners which was accepted by the Father Almighty, it follows of necessity that if the chief of sinners reposes genuine faith in such a Savior he shall wing his happy way into Abraham's bosom. Otherwise Christ must have died in vain. What faith in Christ is said to produce is, not good works, but a state of grace, of acceptance with God, and of deliverance from hell. A believer is a justified person, freed from the law, and washed from the guilt of sin. He may do many good works; but that of which he glories above all else is the fact that God has absolved him and given him a clear title to eternal life, for Christ's sake. From a forensic point of view, the connection between him and his wicked past has been absolutely and eternally severed.

If that gospel is true, "the Bible is not the true and perfect revelation of God which is claimed for it," nor is God himself fair and just in his dealings. Indeed, the Christian Religion is rooted in a deep soil of injustice, and sensible people no longer believe in it. Even Professor Moulton fails to endorse it in its primitive purity and simplicity. He is anxious so to modify it as to make it acceptable to the modern mind. But that is a task to the accomplishment of which he is by no means equal. It is an impossible task. The Virgin Birth, the Expiatory Sacrifice, the Resurrection and Ascension are ideas utterly abhorrent to the modern scientific mind. A God who wreaks his vengeance against the rebels of the Fall upon the innocent Son of his heart is an immoral being, and deserves to be roughly hustled from his throne and consigned to everlasting oblivion.

Professor Moulton tells us that "many people seem to be very hazy in their notions as to what Christianity really teaches." This is not to be wondered at when it is borne in mind that the Bible contradicts itself on the most essential points. When James disagrees with Paul, and Paul gets out of temper with Peter, and when Jesus is made to contradict himself again and again in the Gospels, it is scarcely to be expected that modern theologians should be at one as to what Christianity truly is. Here is Dr. Moulton's

conception of it: To believe in Christ "means to trust and obey him, to take him as Lord and Master of our lives." Who believes in him in that sense? Who even attempts to live up or down to his teaching? Dr. Campbell Morgan said the other day that those who interpret Christ's teaching literally are fools. When the Master says, "Resist not evil," we are not to take him too seriously, although, according to Dr. Moulton's definition of saving faith, we should loyally follow him in all things. "Trust in Jesus Christ," we are assured, "is beyond comparison the most powerful agency ever known for producing pure, unselfish, and noble lives." Then Christians ought to be beyond comparison the best and noblest people in the world. But are they? Read Ecclesiastical History, and you shall have a thunderous negative for your answer. The Ages of Faith, looking at them from the ethical standpoint, were woefully dark and low. The present is not an age of Faith; and yet its moral standard is higher than that of any previous period. Non-Christians are not one whit less useful to their day and generation than their Christian brethren. Christianity is slowly dying out, and the world will be ethically all the richer for its disappearance. It is well known that godliness has seldom been synonymous with manliness; and it would be better to get rid of the former in order to strengthen and improve the quality of the latter.

And now I close in these entirely true words of Professor Moulton: "And surely to be made useful is the highest object that any worthy man can have as his ambition either here or in the mysterious future"—useful to the society of which he forms a part.

JOHN T. LLOYD.

Mr. Dooley on Mahatmas.

"HE hasn't come home," said Mr. Dooley.

"Who? Bill Bailey?" asked Mr. Hennessey.

"No! ye blitherin' idiot!" snapped Mr. Dooley.

"Who's afther talkin' av Bill Bailey? It's the Grand Lama av Thibit that Oi'm spakin av."

"Didn't know he was lost," rejoined Mr. Hennessey.

"But he is," asserted Mr. Dooley. "He hasn't been seen since the airth-hungerin' British took Lasso."

"The stampede wasn't quite a failure thin," remarked Mr. Hennessey. "If they missed Lama they corralled Lasso; and they'll be throttin' him around for the bhoys to see."

"If ye'd read the papers instead av' drownin' the little wit ye've got in whiskey, ye'd know that Lasso was the mitropurlis av Thibit," said Mr. Dooley, severely.

"Ye don't say?" remarked Mr. Hennessey. "An' pwhat's Thibit? Is it a steeplechase or a throttin' meetin'?"

"It's neither the wan nor the other," explained Mr. Dooley. "It's a place in Asia where the Myhatmas come from. An' I suppowse ye don't know what a Myhatma is, so I'll just explain phwat it is to ye. About twinty years ago Misther W. T. Stidd was walkin' along Piccadilly about midnoight; for he used to strowl along at that hour in the howpes of gitting missages from the spirit wurruld. An' suddinly a female forrum sprang up bfore him, sayin', 'This is moi sicond toime on airth.' An' he fowldid her to his arrums, and sid, 'My long-lost Joolia.' 'Ye're wrang, W. T.,' siz the lady; 'Oi'm Madam Ballyvatski, an' it's from Thibit Oi've come, to boind the Czar av Roosia, an' the Mad Moolah, an' the Prisidint Krujer, an' the Jarmin Impiror, an' the Mikado av Japan in a britherly lague av universal pace.' 'The dhrame av me loife is realoised,' sid Misther Stidd, 'an' there's ownly wan thing liff me to do.' 'Phwat's that?' axes Mother Ballyvatski. 'Whoi, to convart me ould friend Annie,' siz Misther Stidd. 'Is it Annie Bissint ye mane?' siz Ballyvatski. 'The very same,' says W. T. 'Then lave

her to me,' siz Mother Bally; 'she's been convarted so aften bfore that Oi'll aisily do it wance again.' Now ye moind, Hinnissy, that Missis Bissint stharterd boy bein' very poiou; but as she hadn't jined the Blissid Catholic Churruch, her poiety had no rute, an' it withered away. An' she married a clargyman, so as to be clowser to the churruch; an' she sit out to convart a dridful infidil called Bridlaw; an' whin she saw Bridlaw she bicame a bigger infidil than he was. An' whin she mit a Socierlist called John MacKinnon, she became a Socierlist too, an' wanted to orate in Thrafalgar-square with a red flag. An' thin she mit somebody ilse, an' bicame a School Board; an' she brought in a Bill to have pianners in School Boards; an' the ratepayers sid they couldn't afford pianners to howm, an' they didn't see why their money should be taken fram them, and their childrin should go in rags, jist because Annie Bissint wanted pianners for Board Schoolers. An' thin she mit Madam Ballyvatski, an' became a Tay-an'-sopha-ist."

"A phwat?" inquired Mr. Hennessey.

"A Tay-an'-sopha-ist," repeated Mr. Dooley. "Ye see, Hinnissy, Mother Ballyvatski wantid to inthrouje Injian customs amang her discoiples, an' so she made thim all sit an Injian sophies an' dhrink Ceylon tay; an' that's why they were called Tay-an'-sophies. All ixcept Missis Ballyvatski herself. She dhrank nothin' but whiskey an' sowda. An' whin she convarted a smowker, she would licture him on the evil av his ways, and take all his cigars an' smowk them herself so that they shouldn't git wasted; an' if they were nasty cigars—the same as that shpalpeen O'Rourke sills down the sthreet—her language was that shockin' that they called her Madame Billingsgateski. An' she wrowte a book called *Oices Unveiled* explainin' phwat dridful mixtures the Oitalians put in their oice-crame an' howkey-powkey, that childrin ate this hot wither, poor cratures. An' she sid she got all the information fram Myhatmas, that lived in Thibit. An' the Myhatmas, Hinnissy, are wise min. They don't git wise boy radin' the newspapers; but they sit an' gaze at their Little Maries, till their hids swill; an' they know more thin a bhoys av nointeen thinks *he* does. An' Madam Ballyvatski towld the wurruld that instid av havin' wan Kirristy in sowl insoide, they had sivin sowls, an' iviry single sowl in need av salvation."

"Ye don't say!" exclaimed Mr. Hennessey. "Whoy, whin Oi pass yer saloon in the mornin', Mr. Dooley, before ye're owpin, Oi feel that hivvy, that Oi can harrudly dhrag misilf to wurruk. It must be the sivin sowls insoide me, a-weighin' av me down."

"Thru for ye, Hinnissy," remarked Mr. Dooley, "it's many a man that's towld me the same; an' if the Myhatmas foind we've got any more sowls, we'll be so weighted down that we wown't be able to move at all, at all, begorra. An' Mother Ballyvatski, Oi may till ye, suffered from *ongbongpong*, an' she was three toimes as big as any other Tay-an'-sopha-ist; an' boy the rules av arithmitic she had three toimes as many sowls. Ownly fancy, Hinnissy, walkin' round with twinty-wan sowls insoide ye!"

"Turrible!" ejaculated Mr. Hennessey, pushing forward his glass for replenishment.

"An' there was another thing, the Myhatmas foind we'd got," continued Mr. Dooley. "They sid we all had an O'Raa."

"Any relation av the O'Raas av Sligo?" asked Mr. Hennessey.

"No! ye blockhead," replied Mr. Dooley. "If ye'll lave intherruptin' Oi'll explain it to ye. The O'Raa is a bag av gas, that hangs around the human forrum. An' whin two O'Raas touch, they rade ache ither's thoughts. An' Oi was inthrouje to a Colonel Bonbonther that was a thought-raider, an' he looked at me an' he siz, 'General de Wet Oi blave.' An' Oi siz, 'At yez sarvice, yer ixcellency,' an' he wint aff smoilin'. An' Oi siz to Captin Allcutancomagin, siz Oi, 'He made a bloomer

that toime.' 'It's alroight,' siz the Captin, 'he didn't git in yer O'Raa; whin he gits there he rades ye loike a book.' 'Be jabbers!' siz Oi, 'some spalpeen has got insoide me pockit an' liftid me satchil an' a twinty dollar bill.' But belave me, Hinnissy, Oi saw nothin' more av that Colonel, or that double ix."

"Whoy! Oi took ye to be a cuter coon, Misther Dooley," said Mr. Hennessey.

"Ye needn't shtand there grinnin' loike an Oitalian's monkey," remarked Mr. Dooley. "Ye need to be cute whin Myhatmas, an' Ballyvatskis, an' O'Raas are around."

"But ye havn't towld me phwat the Myhatmas looked loike," said Mr. Hennessey. "Did Ballyvatski lade any tame spicimins around?"

"Oi can't tell ye phwat they looked loike becuse Oi niver saw none," explained Mr. Dooley. "Ye see they shtopped in Tibit, an' sint their rivilations by powst. An' whiniver they filt loike sindin' missiges, they dropped an Madam Ballyvatski wheriver she moight be. She moight be a-sittin' down discorsin' an the ilivation av the masses; an' plump a wraith av rowses would hit her an the showldber. An' she'd shtoop down to pick up the rowses, an' a Myhatma litther hits her on the nowse. She had a black oye for a week through gittin' in the way av a vallyntoine wan av the Myhatmas was sindin' her."

"It was loike the bombardmint av Porrut Arrthur," observed Mr. Hennessey.

"It was that," assented Mr. Dooley. "An' afther all some spalpeens wouldn't belave that Ballyvatski received the litters; they sid she wrowte thim hersilf; an' afther Ballyvatski wint to Nivanna, Missis Bissint——"

"Where's Nivanna *asthore*?" inquired Mr. Hennessey. "Is it outsoide the Powstal Onion?"

"No, ye ignorant haythin," replied Mr. Dooley. "Whin the Tay-an'-sophies kick the buckit, they call it goin' to Nivanna; becuse it's the place where the good niggers go. An' as Oi was a-tellin' av ye, afther Ballyvatski handid in her chicks, Missis Bissint gits up an' she siz, 'Since Mother Ballyvatski snuffed it, Oi've had litthers from the Myhatmas in the same handwroitin',' she siz, siz she; 'so ye may take moy wurrud as a gentlemint that she didn't wroite thim hersilf,' siz she."

"Hasn't Annie Bissint mit anybody ilse, an' got convarted any more?" asked Mr. Hennessey, with his usual thirst for knowledge.

"No, Hinnissy," replied Mr. Dooley. "She says Tay-an'-sophyism offers sich a lot av varoiety that ye don't need to look outsoide it. All the tinnits av Tay-an'-sophyism git changed now an' agin; so that ye're parpituallly a-studyin to keep yersilf up to date. An' whin Annie was a Sickillarist, she rowde about in hansom cabs; now it's a browam. Thin she was niver mintioned in the papers; now she figgers as aftin as Prisidint Roosevelt or the Jarmin Impiror. But as Oi was a-tillin' av ye, Joe Chamberlin sid that the Myhatmas av Tibit were hungerin' an' thusterin' for Birritish Thrade; an' Birritish Thrade they should have, even if it cost a Big Lowf to give it thim; an' so they sent a misshin', an' a xpidition, an' cannons, an' sepoyes, an' yaksis, an' donkies, an' officers, an' snapshooters, an' they got to Lasso; an' whin they got there, they found the Lamas had iscaped an' rin away; an' they haven't come howm yit."

C. E.

According to the St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Petit Parisien*, the assassin of M. de Plehve is not a Finlander or a Jew, but a pure-bred Russian. He is what the world calls a gentleman, and one of learning and reflection. But no details of his life are obtainable; he will answer nothing. This correspondent declares that the popularity of the war is unquestionable. The people are beginning to think for themselves. They no longer believe the orthodox faith as they did. The Christian idea of a long punishment on earth and eternal happiness in Paradise has not the hold on their imagination that it used to have. So says this correspondent, and we hope he is right.

Acid Drops.

The Czar sent a message of thanks to his brave soldiers at Port Arthur for holding the fortress for him and Russia. He also implored God Almighty to bless their efforts to defend it. He almost went to the length of saying that God Almighty would do so. Apparently it did not occur to him that God Almighty might have a very different opinion of what should be done. If the Czar were really a pious man he would not talk as though he held God Almighty on a string. He knows very well that any God of justice is bound to be against him. He, the prater of peace, the assassin of Finland, the murderer of Jews, is the cause of this present war and all its misery and slaughter. He positively forced the Japanese into a war of self-defence. And now, when the tide of battle is flowing against him, he keeps out of danger and mouths about God. It all convinces us—if that were needed—that the despots of the world are its bamboozlers too, and simply use the catchwords of religion to gull the superstitious multitude. When you can't give a man an earthly reason why he should cut another man's throat and risk his own, you must find him a heavenly reason. That may do the trick.

The Heathen Japs beat the Holy Russians at every turn; not only in fighting by land and sea, but also in brains and humanity. It was a gratuitous act of grace on their part, when they had Port Arthur apparently at their mercy, to offer to let the non-combatants leave the doomed place. Take again the Japanese squadron's saving 600 lives after the sinking of the "Rurik"—which, by the way, was the flag-ship of the Russian squadron in the naval demonstration that forced Japan to give up Port Arthur ten years ago. How different from the action of the Russian cruisers of the Vladivostok squadron, that sunk Japanese transports with all their living freight, and sailed callously away, without trying to save any, on the pretence that they were in a hurry! No wonder a distinguished Jap said that in this act of humanity his nation had revenged themselves on the Russians. "We offer them," he finely observed, "their living for our dead." A nation that can act and speak in that way ought to win.

Some time ago we drew attention to a foolish paragraph, apparently sent from Japan by Mr. Bennet Burleigh—who ought to know better—stating that a great religious meeting had been held at Tokio, with a view to getting Christianity adopted as the religion of the land. We now see from the *Manchester Guardian* that Bishop Awdry, of South Tokio, contradicts this statement, partly at the wish of Count Katsura, the Japanese Prime Minister. "I venture to say," the Bishop writes, "that no meeting has been held with any such object, or with any object even remotely connected with it; or, if there was such a meeting, it was of infinitesimal proportions. I have been totally unable to meet with anyone who has even heard of it." With regard to the part of the paragraph which stated that "an edict establishing a Church of Japan is not improbable," Bishop Awdry says: "I venture to state, and should therein be sure of the concurrence of everyone who knows anything about Japan from the inside, that few things are more improbable." The Bishop points out that absolute religious freedom (the State remaining absolutely neutral in such matters) is part of the Constitution of Japan; and from it, he says, there is "not the slightest thought of swerving." So much for that foolish paragraph. One would like to know who inspired it. Was it engineered by the Missionary party for business purposes?

The Church Missionary Society is still hopeful of the Christianisation of Japan. Of course it is. How could it possibly be otherwise? Who could expect it to cry "stinking fish" to its patrons? An income of £394,000 is not to be lightly lost. The gentlemen who run the Church Missionary Society want it. So they must be "hopeful" all over the world. With regard to Japan in particular, they say in their annual report that there are a good many natives who have been brought to Christ already; but, alas, there are "millions of Japanese peasants who have never yet heard of Christ." We dare say this is true. On the other hand, there are some Japs who have heard too much of Christ, and don't want to hear any more; though this fact is not included in the Church Missionary Society's report.

Bishop Ridley (the report says), who has lately visited Japan, "admires the nation, but sees their weaknesses." Indeed! And are there no weaknesses in the Christian nation to which Bishop Ridley belongs? Surely this gentleman need not have travelled thousands of miles to find "weaknesses." He might have found any quantity of them within a mile of the Church Missionary Society's office.

General Booth continues his run through England on a Salvation motor-car. Christians flock to cheer him (fresh from his interview with the King and Queen) wherever he stops; he makes them speeches, sometimes ten minutes and sometimes an hour and a half long; then he shouts "Hallelujah!" and resumes his journey. No doubt it is exhilarating, and a capital advertisement; but not even General Booth can imagine that it adds to the number of Christians.

One doesn't hear so much of that old watch story nowadays; still, it crops up occasionally. The following was wired over from New York by the local correspondent of the London *Daily Telegraph* on Tuesday, August 16:—

"The dramatic death of an avowed atheist named Whitney, is reported to-day from Baltimore. Whitney was arguing with some friends concerning the Deity when suddenly he shouted, 'I defy the Almighty to strike me dead.' Instantly Whitney fell to the ground lifeless. The case, which has excited great consternation, is well authenticated." Probably this yarn is as true as all its predecessors. It may even be that the man Whitney is an absolute fable. We shall keep an eye on our American exchanges for some reference to this Baltimore incident. Meanwhile we shrug our shoulders and pass on to the next business.

Charles Bradlaugh was said to have taken out his watch in public and given God Almighty five minutes to strike him dead. People said they had seen him do it. Of course it was not true. Bradlaugh's worst enemies pretended to believe he was a scoundrel, but none of them ever pretended to think him a fool. And only a born irreclaimable fool could imagine that the "watch trick" had any bearing on the question of God's existence. Bradlaugh once prosecuted a man for publishing this atrocious nonsense about him, and obtained a verdict against him; although, if we remember rightly, the damages were made contemptuously small. On the matter of fact, however, the jury had no difficulty in coming to a conclusion.

That watch story was not confined to Bradlaugh. It was told of Freethinkers before he was born, and told of other Freethinkers while he was living. Sometimes it was a deliberate invention; at other times it was a product of lawless imagination. Even the Rev. J. M. Logan, who debated with Mr. Foote at Bristol, cheated himself into the belief that he had once attended a Freethought meeting at Glasgow, and heard Mrs. Harriet Law give God Almighty five minutes to settle her hash on a public platform.

Rev. Dr. Horton, of Hampstead, writes to the papers denying that he said that the Education Act was a move on the part of the Church of Rome towards claiming the Church of England. Dr. Horton does not, however, state what he did say—which is rather unsatisfactory. He throws the whole burden of the blunder upon the reporter; yet, at the same time, he expresses a belief in the reporter's good faith. What a mixture!

A Passive Resistance martyr, at St. Just, Cornwall, is the Rev. S. J. Finch, Bible Christian minister. Having made over his property to his wife, in order to secure the martyr's crown, he had a committal order made against him. Had he been a Freethinker he would have been marched off to "quod" at once. But the magistrates took into consideration the fact that he was a Christian. They suspended the order until after the next Sunday, and provided that it should not extend over the following Sunday. So the reverend gentleman's business was not seriously interfered with. He simply suffered a few days' seclusion between one Sunday and another. Yet a crowd of sympathisers, including several men of God, saw him off at the railway station, and, as the *Cornish Telegraph* says, expressed their deep sympathy. Perhaps some of them cried over the reverend gentleman's martyrdom. But some outsiders might have felt, in Shakespeare's language, that "the tears lie in an onion that should water this grief."

Some of these Passive Resisters are very funny fellows. Mr. Neighbor, of Hammersmith, attended a prayer-meeting in a Baptist church before facing the magistrates in the Town Hall. At the latter place he declared that he could not obey the Education Act because it was "contrary to the will of God." Mr. Neighbor was spokesman for the other Passive Resisters. He seems to have been spokesman for God too. The wicked magistrates made the usual order.

The Bishop of Hereford delivered an address to the British Association on "Education." He pointed out very clearly the chief defects of our present system. What he did not point out is that these defects are mainly due to the quarrel over "religious teaching." If religion were swept out of the public schools, the men of God would cease to meddle with

them, and the education of children would fall entirely into proper and competent hands.

Rev. R. D. Green, of King's Cross, London, speaking at a Passive Resistance meeting at West Mersea, is reported to have "shown, by instances connected with members of his own family, how many disabilities were suffered by the children of Nonconformist parents entering the teaching profession." Very sad, no doubt! But how is it that the Nonconformists laughed at "disabilities" when suffered by Secularists and Freethinkers? We don't remember that they so much as squeaked a single protest when Mr. F. J. Gould was practically hounded out of the service of the London School Board. They could give many other instances; indeed, we have drawn attention to many during the past twenty years in these columns; but one instance is as good as a thousand in such a case. The truth is that the Nonconformists only hate the lash when it falls on their own backs. Their policy, therefore, is not freedom but self-interest. That is why we have no sympathy for them.

Buckle pointed out that causation in human affairs could be proved by the average actions of any society. Even carelessness is not freakish, but is under the rule of law. So many people commit this blunder, and so many that, in proportion to the population. How true this is may be seen by the list of articles left behind in the carriages of the Central London (Tube) Railway, which are announced for sale by auction as unclaimed property. The list includes 14,000 pairs of gloves, 50 dozen umbrellas, 100 walking sticks, 480 packets of clothing, 60 packages of boots, 204 purses, 215 packets of ironmongery, 186 various parcels, 120 pairs of eyeglasses and spectacles, and 1 tray of jewellery. People would leave their heads behind if they were movable.

Mr. G. W. E. Russell, speaking at a meeting of Anglicans lately, said: "I have been for many years occupied, to an extent you will hardly think credible, in the task of trying to hold back both laymen and clergymen from secession to Rome." This may be perfectly true, yet statistics are against the theory that England is going over to the Catholic Church. That Church has more places of worship, more colleges and schools, and more priests; but, in proportion to the increase of population, it has *not* more people.

John Thomas Kay, the murderer of Jane Hirst, with whom he had been living, was jerked to Jesus at Leeds last week. He received the Sacrament at the hands of the chaplain, to whom he said just before his neck was stretched, "I am quite happy." It did not seem to matter to him whether the woman he murdered was in heaven or hell. John Thomas Kay was all right. Yet they tell us that religion wars against self-love.

Rev. George Moore, vicar of Cowley, has been fined 40s. and costs for assaulting Mr. William Henry Morris, a member of the Cowley Parish Council. There was a churchyard dispute over a gravestone. It turned upon a fee of 10s. 6d. for a fresh inscription. The reverend gentleman tried to make out that he had been assaulted himself, but the Bench held that he was the aggressor. Poor saints! They always were persecuted!

Rev. Robert Newberry, Congregationalist, of Blackwood, was accused of corrupting a girl named Fanny Carey, a member of his Church. He brought an action against her parents for slander, and obtained a verdict in his favor at the Swansea Assizes. Since then the girl has brought an affiliation action against him in the Blackwood Police Court, and the Bench has made an order against him for four shillings a week, with heavy costs. It is the old story. A prophet is never without honor save in his own country.

"With dearest love to yourself and to all, and trusting that God will pardon my sin." Wilhelm Botterman, of Sheffield, thus ended a letter to his wife before shooting himself dead with a revolver. The jury brought in the usual verdict. This suicide was not an Atheist either.

The *Freethinker*, which, as everybody knows, is edited by a vulgar, illiterate fellow, now and then gives its more accomplished and dignified contemporaries a little lesson in English literature. We have given the *Daily News* several. Here is one for the *Daily Chronicle*—which we corrected only the other day for talking about the "Christian" months of the year, when their names are all Pagan (like the names of the days of the week), two of them (July and August) being called after Julius and Augustus Cæsar. Our contemporary, in a very interesting and useful article on Mr. Wilfrid Blunt's efforts at better housing for the peasantry

says that it interviewed him at Fernycroft, a place in the New Forest,

Annihilating all that's made,
(by way of building by-laws)
With a green thought in a green shade.

Now we beg to tell the *Chronicle* that this is sheer nonsense. Moreover, it is sheer literary assassination. Andrew Marvell in "The Garden" wrote noble sense and lovely poetry. After a luscious description of the home of fruit and flowers he passes into a metaphysical ecstasy:—

Meanwhile the mind from pleasure less
Withdraws into its happiness:
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;—
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas,
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

How exquisite! The *Chronicle* only changes "to" into "with." That's not much to the dullard, but everything to the sensitive. "The little more, and how much it is; The little less, and how far away!" Severing a man's windpipe or his jugular vein is only making a little hole in his throat; but the result is the difference between a man and a corpse.

There seems to be a good deal of the Job in the Rev. Job Urquhart, of Glasgow. He has been horrifying a London chapel congregation by telling them that he could mention churches in which a congregation could not be obtained unless the minister kissed all the young ladies. Fancy all of them! What a task for one unassisted clergyman! It can't be true. Job of Glasgow, thou must be mistaken. An enemy hath done this, and thou art the too easy victim of a godless joker.

Mr. John Morley, as an apostle of Freethought, seems dead and done for. One hardly ever hears a whisper of Freethought from him nowadays. This comes of turning an apostle into a politician. If you once put a thinker into the House of Commons he soon ceases to think, or else he keeps his thought to himself, except on matters where thinking is tolerated—as, for instance, the difference between Mr. Balfour and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. For this reason a friend said to us the other day, when we were talking of a gentleman who aspires to a seat in parliament, "What does he want to go there for? I can understand a man going into the House of Commons to promote himself; I cannot understand his going there to promote anything else."

This paragraph on Mr. Morley was suggested by the newspaper report of his movements. He has been staying with Mr. Andrew Carnegie at Skibo Castle; his next visit is to Lord Tweedmouth at Guisachan. Early in October he goes to the United States. Is he to be the guest there of Mr. Pierpont Morgan?

What a number of times the earth has gone round the sun since George Meredith wrote his noble sonnet "To J. M.!" Here is the splendid ending:—

Thou fighting for poor humankind wilt feel
The strength of Roland in thy wrist to hew
A chasm sheer into the barrier rock,
And bring the army of the faithful through.

Mr. Morley has not cut through the barrier rock; he has not brought the army of the faithful through; he is not a Roland.

The Upholland ghost is a godsend to the local publicans. Crowds of people come from Rainford, Orrell, Pemberton, Wigan, St. Helen's, and surrounding localities to get a glimpse of this mysterious spirit; and, while they are there, they sample the other sort of spirit which is not mysterious. Some of them probably see spirits on the way home.

What is the difference between spirit from heaven (or elsewhere) and spirit from the public-house? One is disembodied and the other is disembotled.

A number of half-baked High Church parsons—including Percy Dearmer and Conrad Noel—have started a Faith Healing movement. Naturally they get a good advertisement in the dear *Daily News*. The name of the new society has not yet been decided, but it will be only for members of the Church of England, though other Christians (there are others, then) will be welcome to the meetings. Associated with the great Church of compromise, it will, of course, be a half-and-half affair. The medical profession will not be flouted. "We regard them," Conrad Noel says, "as part of God's means of health, but we say their skill can be supple-

mented by the prayers and faith of the patients and others." God and the doctors are thus to be treated as in a sort of partnership; God getting the praise and the doctors the fees; which will suit the doctors very well—and God too, for all we know. The "old practice of unction or anointing" is to be revived, but not to the exclusion of medicine. In other words, the parsons don't mean to be edged out by the doctors; they want a finger in the pie somewhere, though they won't run any risks. They leave danger (and honesty) to the poor Peculiar People.

Newspapers that would not give a line to the greatest Freethought meeting find space to report the latest erotic vagary of a certain French ex-Princess, who might well have had the first place in Juvenal's sixth satire. Such is "Christiau" journalism!

Mr. Morrison Davidson has never been able to forgive the Freethought party for being in front of him. In last week's *Reynolds* he says that "Secularism of the old Ingersoll-Bradlaugh school [the other gentleman he mentions never was a Secularist, and repudiates the term] was at best but one sect more—a mere Little Bethel of Negation—impotent to move the vast fabric of Christian Orthodoxy from its adamantine dogmatic moorings. But with the Higher Criticism it is altogether different." Mr. Davidson then sets forth six conclusions of the Higher Criticism, every one of which is purely negative. These six conclusions were all taught by Bradlaugh and Ingersoll. They were even taught a hundred years ago by Thomas Paine, and may all be found in the *Age of Reason*. So much for the novelty of the Higher Criticism. Mr. Davidson will have to try again.

The following is clipped from the *Birmingham Daily Post*:—

"PRIEST AND THE ATHEIST.—The late Father Healy, once travelling in a third-class carriage on one of the big English lines, found himself opposite a bitter-looking individual, who, after some casual remark of the priest's about the weather, took the opportunity to declare himself an atheist. The cleric merely nodded his head, and became absorbed in his book. But the unbeliever was bent on having an argument, and began to set forth his views in a loud voice, and with many expressions bordering upon coarseness. At last Father Healy looked up quietly, and said: 'You, sir, as an atheist, believe in nothing.' 'I only believe in what I can understand,' replied the other. 'It comes to the same thing,' was the bland retort, and the spouter remained silent for the rest of the journey."

Christian humility was always a conspicuous virtue. It comes out specially strong in the stories Christians make up to glorify themselves and belittle their opponents. Atheists, of course, are all "bitter-looking" and all "spouters." Christians are all sweet-looking and quiet. Which unless a man faithfully believe without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

"Religious Riot. Thirteen Men Arrested." This headline in the *Daily Telegraph* was followed by a report of a pious meeting of Kensit preachers with Roman Catholics at Harrington in West Cumberland. How these Christians love one another!

"Owe no man anything," the Bible says. There would be very little business done if this were acted upon. Nevertheless a Christian is bound to obey it. Evidently the Rev. Thomas Beville Paynter, of Vauxhall Bridge-road, thinks otherwise. In the London Bankruptcy Court his liabilities are £29,700, and his assets have realised nothing. The reverend gentleman is thus poor enough to go through the needle's eye without squeezing. Probably his creditors feel that his preparation for the kingdom of heaven has been rather expensive.

"I belong to a Bible class, and I have been praying for you to have a fine day." So said Edward White, of Bristol, to his employer before starting off with an ice-cream cart. He is now doing two months in prison for sticking to a day's sales. This was more than he prayed for.

"Providence" is up and doing in Persia. No less than 25,000 deaths from cholera occurred during six weeks in Teheran. "He doeth all things well."

The *South London Press* is clamoring once more for repressive measures against Freethought propaganda in Brockwell Park. It makes great play with the word "indecent," but this appears to mean only disrespect for Christian "feelings." It also pretends that Freethought speakers invite God to strike them dead in five minutes. We are considering whether the editor ought to be in a gaol or a lunatic asylum.

Mr. Foote's Lecturing Engagements.

September 11, Stratford Town Hall; 18 to 25, International Freethought Congress, Rome.
 October 2, Queen's Hall, London; 9, Queen's Hall; 23, Leicester; 30, Birmingham.
 November 6, Coventry; 27, Liverpool.

To Correspondents.

B. B.—Yes, as you say, every little helps. We wish the "rank and file" of the party would remember it. A thousand of them could easily make up a big subscription in small amounts.

JOHN GRANGE (Bradford), subscribing to the Rome Congress Fund, says: "I am glad that you have resolved to pay Rome a visit, not only for your health's sake, but for the sake of English militant Freethought's having a really *live* representative there." We are afraid that the trip will not be a catch as far as our health is concerned. Railway travelling, for four days out of nine or ten, will be rather upsetting than refreshing. We appreciate Mr. Grange's concluding compliment.

MRS. FLEMING (Belfast) considers it a great privilege to be permitted to assist in such an important affair as the Rome Congress. "I appreciate," she adds, "the compliment paid to women in this week's (Aug. 14) 'To Correspondents.'"

J. L. G. MACKINNON.—Thanks; see paragraph.

G. W. B.—Rather out of our line.

J. CLAYTON.—Thanks for cuttings.

F. RANKE.—Much obliged. See "Acid Drops."

ANDREW LITTLE hopes the Rome Congress Fund will be a thorough success. "Yours," he adds, "is indeed a strenuous battle, what with the asperity and jealousy of your enemies and the apathy of some of your friends. It shows that you are an honest and fearless soldier in the cause of progress."

ROME CONGRESS FUND.—Previously acknowledged:—£52 5s. 0d. Received this week:—R. J. D. 5s., H. Hoye 1s., John Grange £2 2s., Henry Smith 5s., Mrs. Fleming 10s., Glasgow N. S. S. Branch £1 1s., T. Robertson 5s., J. Proctor £2 10s., Andrew Little 2s. 6d., George Todd 2s. 6d., B. B. 5s., W. H. Sergeant 5s., W. Hoye 1s., C. Riddle 5s., W. Sanders 1s., J. Martin £1 1s., F. Garraway 2s. 6d., F. S. £5, M. B. 1s., W. D. Foster 1s., Joseph Bevins 10s., Dr. W. Mortimer 10s., R. E. D. 5s., James P. Browne 6s., R. Miller 10s., H. A. L. 5s., F. Morgan 5s., R. Lloyd 1s., Felix 2s. 6d., E. W. Hoare 1s., J. O. Bates 2s. 6d., E. Neville 2s. 6d., A. G. L. 2s., S. Shufflebotham 2s., T. H. Smith 1s., T. Whitehead 1s., G. and H. Harris 1s. 6d., L. Brandes 1s., H. W. Parsons £1, A. Clarke 10s.

GEORGE TODD.—Yes, we recollect the name and the incident. You will do good by persevering with the private propaganda you describe. Thanks for your good wishes.

C. RIDDLE hopes we shall have a good time at the Rome Congress, and trusts to read a good report of it in the *Freethinker*.

W. SANDERS.—The Ingersoll extract was not an attack on Socialism. You have read it wrongly. Hundreds of good Socialists have preferred freedom and poverty to slavery and plenty. Ingersoll's apologue contains a truth that applies to the fighters for principle of every school.

J. MARTIN.—Thanks for the good wishes you send with your subscription.

T. J. T.—Will give it a special paragraph next week.

M. BORTHWICK.—See "Acid Drops."

W. H. MORRISH.—Thanks for cutting. See paragraph.

W. P. BALL.—Much obliged for your weekly cuttings.

F. GARRAWAY, subscribing to the Rome Congress Fund, hopes that "others of the fraternity will quickly respond."

THE DEVIL (Liverpool).—This is how you sign yourself, so we may ask you whether you prefer your new residence to the old one. We note what you say about "English" and "British." The bother is, you see, that it is the English language which is general and legal on both sides of the Tweed.

W. SEXTON.—We had already written a paragraph on the case. Your suggestion is not a bad one that the Rev. Dr. Aked should use this nice man of God to illustrate his next reference to "materialism."

W. D. FOSTER.—We shall certainly keep pegging away. It is our nature to, as the hymn says. Thanks for your good wishes. But pray don't give to any cause what is really wanted at home.

H. HARRISON.—Our leading article is enough on the subject at present. Thanks all the same.

F. H. PRATT says:—"I have just finished reading your *Bible Romances* and *Bible Handbook*, and cannot help expressing my appreciation. The *Romances* is hard to equal, much less beat, for select sarcasm and genuine wit, combined with that outspoken spirit of challenge which, from my hazy recollection, was a marked characteristic of the late Charles Bradlaugh." We don't ask people to believe what this correspondent says, but they may think it a sufficient recommendation of *Bible Romances*, which we want to see circulated by the thousand.

FRIENDS having clean copies of the *Freethinker* to spare for January 25, February 8, March 1, and November 1 and 8, 1903, would greatly oblige by forwarding them to Miss Vance, at 2 Newcastle-street, E.C. Published price will be paid if desired.

ALCHEM.—Always glad to receive cuttings.

W. H. ROOKE.—Shall have attention.

J. P. BROWNE.—Certainly it is better late than never—*much* better. You thought the amount we asked for "would be easily raised." We believed it would be raised, though not easily.

JOSEPH JAMES.—See "Acid Drops." The "well authenticated" is like "everybody says so." Fools think it as good as proof. You must expect the newspapers to print what will sell. The "dignity of the press" is a joke to those who have given the matter a moment's consideration.

F. S., sending subscription to the Rome Congress Fund, writes: "I enclose herewith cheque for £5 as my contribution towards this deserving object, and sincerely trust the very modest sum you ask the Freethought party to subscribe may now soon be collected."

DR. MORTIMER.—Very pleased to hear from you again. Thanks.

A LADY writes to us from Brighton that a gentleman put a copy of the *Freethinker* into her hands, and it was the very thing she had thirsted for without knowing of its existence. "Born a Christian," she says, "educated a Roman Catholic, at heart a Freethinker, by nature an Atheist, I feel very glad that your charming paper by happy chance has dropped into my life, brightening its dark and gloomy way." This should encourage the friends of the *Freethinker* in circulating it judiciously. Some seed thus sown will spring up, and that is worth all the trouble.

THE SECULAR SOCIETY, LIMITED, office is at 2 Newcastle-street Farringdon-street, E.C.

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.

ORDERS for literature should be sent to the Freethought Publishing Company, Limited, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon street, E.C., and not to the Editor.

PERSONS remitting for literature by stamps are specially requested to send *halfpenny stamps*.

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

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

The Rome Congress.

I WAS a little too "previous" in saying last week that the N. S. S. party's joining the French contingent at Paris, and proceeding with them by special train to Rome, would be decided while the *Freethinker* was going to press. It ought to have been, but it was not. The greatest difficulty has been experienced in getting definite information from the continent. Mr. Victor Roger has been in rather fruitless communication both with M. Léon Furnémont, of Brussels, and M. Victor Charbonnel, of Paris. On Tuesday of last week (August 16) I took the bull by the horns myself and telegraphed to M. Furnémont, prepaying for a reply. But no reply came till last Monday evening (Aug. 22), apparently in consequence of M. Furnémont's absence from home. His telegram said "Yes" to my query, and added that I should "receive a letter to-morrow." But it has not arrived up to the present moment (6 p.m.), and this week's *Freethinker* is just leaving my hands.

But the "Yes" in M. Furnémont's telegram is good as far as it goes. It means, or should mean, that the N. S. S. party *can* join the French contingent at Paris on Sunday, September 18. This may be taken for granted, unless M. Furnémont's letter is to the contrary; in which case the friends with whom Miss Vance has been in personal communication will be promptly notified.

Meanwhile I may state that the cost of the trip to Rome will really not be as much as I represented. The £10 is the price of the ticket from Brussels.

£8 10s. is the price of the ticket from Paris. To this must be added the £3 for which Messrs. Cook will engineer the N. S. S. party from London to Paris and back, including hotel accommodation at Paris on the Saturday night and Sunday morning (the French train not starting till 2 o'clock in the afternoon). Altogether this makes £11 10s., which is a very low quotation.

There may still be friends who wish to join the N. S. S. party. I hope there are, and I beg them to write to Miss Vance immediately. *Not to me.* I shall be away from London for some days, and their letters will require prompt attention.

All the friends who go to Rome as visitors at their own expense will be made "honorary delegates" of the National Secular Society. This will entitle them to some privileges and more consideration.

With regard to the Rome Congress Fund, the amount I asked for was £100. A valued correspondent calls this "a very modest amount." I am glad to hear it, for he knows what he is talking about. Out of that £100 will be paid the direct and indirect expenses of four delegates (Mr. Cohen, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Roger, and myself), a liberal contribution towards the costs of the Congress itself, and all incidentals of what kind soever. Nothing should fall upon the poor N. S. S. in the case of a special effort like this. Every penny ought to be provided by the Congress Fund.

Of course we must have that £100. The party must reconcile itself to the fact and shell out. The tide is creeping up gradually, and I have no doubt it will cover the top of the pole in time. But I should like to see the process hastened, if only because I wish to cease writing about it. If I were a millionaire I would plank down the money myself, and say "Next, please." But I am only a poor devil of an apostle, so I have to stand by the wayside begging—for the cause.

G. W. FOOTE.

Sugar Plums.

The handsome Queen's (Minor Hall) has been engaged by the Secular Society, Limited, for all the Sunday evenings in October. Mr. Foote will deliver the first two lectures—after his return from the Rome Congress. He will be followed by Messrs. Cohen and Lloyd. Admission to these lectures will be free, but a certain number of front seats will be reserved at a shilling. Tickets for these can be obtained at the box-office at the entrance.

East London Freethinkers should make a note of the two special Sunday evening Freethought lectures at the Stratford Town Hall on September 4 and 11. Mr. Cohen leads off with a discourse on "What Is Man's Chance of a Future Life?" Mr. Foote winds up with a discourse on "What do We Know of God?" These two questions cover pretty well all the ground in dispute between Christians and Freethinkers, and the treatment of them should prove both interesting and instructive. There will be free admission to all seats—first come first served, with a collection towards defraying the expenses, which will be rather heavy in consequence of good advertising. Stratford Town Hall is "all very fine and large" and takes a lot of filling; besides, it is no use putting up lecturers if the public are not given a chance of hearing them.

Separate chapters of the old edition of Mr. Foote's *Bible Romances* can be obtained, in large or small quantities, for free distribution, by applying to Miss Vance at our publishing office. Each copy, in the form of an 8 or 16-page pamphlet, has a neat slip attached to it, advertising the new edition of *Bible Romances*, and also the *Freethinker*. During the holiday season the "saints" might place copies in likely hands, or leave them in trains or other places where they are likely to be found and read. We hope to hear that some thousands of copies of these pamphlet chapters of the old edition have been circulated in this way.

Professor Lamb, in the Mathematics and Physics section of the British Association Congress, said something which Freethinkers should note and Theologians ponder. "We have given up," he said, "the notion of causation, except as a convenient phrase; what were once called Laws of Nature are now simply rules by which we can tell more or less accurately what will be the consequences of a given state of things."

The Humanitarian League has reprinted in pamphlet form some correspondence in the *Times* on "Flogging in the Navy." The valuable part of it is a letter from the pen of Mr. G. Bernard Shaw, who is as brilliant as usual. Mr. Shaw winds up as follows:—"I am not prepared to argue about it; it is an elementary point of honor with me, just as it is an elementary point of honor with me not to pick 'In Partibus Maris's' pocket, though I could give a column and a half of excellent reasons for believing that I could spend his money much more beneficially to the nation than he could himself. In short, there are certain practices which, however expedient they may be, are instinctively barred by the humanity of the highest races; and corporal punishment is one of them. I should blush to offer a lady or gentleman mere reasons for my disgust at it."

M. Combes, the French Premier, talks invincible common sense. It is pretended that France will lose, if she breaks away from the Papacy, the protectorate of Christians in the East. Being questioned on this point by a Vienna *Neue Freie Presse* interviewer, M. Combes said: "It's all a figment; all verbiage. Let us look at the reality. Every Power in the Far East protects its own Christian subjects. We shall protect ours. This office of protectress has always done France more harm than good. So you Austrians wish to protect those Christian strangers in the Far East. Well, you may; it's all one to me; but, as a friend of Austria, I am sorry for her."

Referring to the Concordat, which the Pope himself is demolishing as fast as he can, M. Combes said that there was no need to attack; all they had to do was to let the Pope go on with his work of destruction. "Yes," M. Combes concluded, "separation is inevitable. The idea of separation has made enormous progress in France during the past two years." Within the next two years we may see in France that complete separation of the spiritual and temporal powers, which is one of the first principles of true civilisation.

FREEDOM.

O Freedom! thou art not, as poets dream,
A fair young girl, with light and delicate limbs,
And wavy tresses gushing from the cap
With which the Roman master crowned his slave
When he took off the gyves. A bearded man
Armed to the teeth, art thou; one mailed hand
Grasps the broad shield, and one the sword; thy brow,
Glorious in beauty though it be, is scarred
With tokens of old wars; thy massive limbs
Are strong with struggling. Power at thee has launched
His bolts, and with his lightnings smitten thee;
They could not quench the life thou hast from heaven.
Merciless Power has dug thy dungeon deep,
And his swart armorers, by a thousand fires,
Have forged thy chain; yet, while he deems thee bound,
The links are shivered, and the prison walls
Fall outward; terribly thou springest forth,
As springs the flame above a burning pile,
And shoutest to the nations, who return
Thy shoutings, while the pale oppressor flies.
Thou shalt wax stronger with the lapse of years,
But he shall fade into a feebler age;
Feebler, yet subtler. He shall weave his snares
And spring them on thy careless steps, and clap
His withered hands, and from their ambush call
His hordes to fall upon thee. He shall send
Quaint maskers, wearing fair and gallant forms,
To catch thy gaze, and uttering graceful words
To charm thy ear; while his sly imps, by stealth,
Twine round thee threads of steel, light thread on thread
That grow to fetters; or bind down thy arms
With chains concealed in chaplets. Oh! not yet
Mayst thou unbrace thy corslet, nor lay by
Thy sword; nor yet, O Freedom! close thy lids
In slumber; for thine enemy never sleeps,
And thou must watch and combat till the day
Of the new earth and heaven.

—William Cullen Bryant.

Religious Instinct.—II.

As already stated, an instinct for goodness, even called religious, does not prove that Christianity is true. Neither does it prove it to be a natural product of human nature, nor that it is universal. An instinct for goodness is good, but that does not prove that a religious instinct is good unless you are prepared to assert that all religions are good. Christians cannot maintain that all religions are good, for they send their missionaries abroad to speak against other religions, and to fight and destroy them if they can. Chinese, Hindoos, Mohammedans, and many others have strong religious instincts as well as Christians; and, if those instincts are bad, may the Christian instinct not be bad also? At all events, existing Christian instinct is no evidence that it is good, nor that Christianity is true, or religion is divine.

Man has many instincts—some bad, some different, and some good—and most of them are acquired. Habits, tendencies, opinions, and likings have been grafted on human nature, and environment and outside influences have nourished them till they became a second nature, and, as such, are transmitted in the form of heredity. Children of drunken parents—at least, some of them—have an instinct for alcohol, but the instinct is not a spontaneous result of human nature, but the fruit of excessive habitual drinking. The same explanation applies to many other instincts.

In my opinion, which amounts to a strong conviction, all the religious instincts, whether in Christian or Pagan countries, are the product of outside example and teaching, and not the spontaneous fruit of human nature. On that supposition it is easy to understand and explain the differences in different countries. On any other supposition they are inexplicable.

One enthusiastic Christian apologist lately exclaimed that twenty thousand pulpits preaching the Gospel would overcome all arguments brought against it. It is here where we must look for the source and power of the religious instincts. Twenty thousand pulpits, and many twenty thousands of other agencies, all engaged in creating and sustaining a religious instinct. It is really astounding the number of agencies engaged in this priestly business. The parents are religiously superstitious to begin with, and they desire their children to be like unto themselves. The nurse, when there is one, is credulous and full of the instinct, and considers it her duty to inoculate the children with her own superstitions. Sunday and day school help on the work. College and University extend and confirm the impressions. Church and chapel vie with each other in their unholy work, and the press report their speeches and commend their objects. Wealth untold is employed in the task, influences unnumbered are exercised in their favor, and rewards and punishments are dexterously handled to encourage faith and deter unbelief.

And for tens of thousands of years, in some form or another, the priestly craft has been carried on successfully. Is it any wonder that the people are superstitious? It would be a marvel if they were not. Considering the immense influences at work in Church and State to promote and secure the vested interest of the priest in supernaturalism, it is a marvel that any are able to overcome their insidious influences.

The plain truth seems to be that what is called religious instinct is nothing more than the artificial product of priestism. The priests of all religions, including Christianity, create a religious sentiment, and then appeal to their own creation, under the name of religious instinct, as a proof that it is innate, and therefore divine. The masses, taught to believe that their sacred books are the words of God, and that the priests are the ministers of God, are ever ready to believe and defend their utterances. In this there is nothing to be wondered at. But

that any Freethinkers and Agnostics should countenance the delusion is to me a puzzle.

I cannot resist a belief that some scientists, some Rationalists, and many so-called religious reformers concede too much to the pretensions of priests. I maintain that all religions, in a theological sense, are nothing but priestcraft disguised under various euphonious and ambiguous phrases. The groundwork of all the new religious sects is the supposed existence of a religious instinct or a natural craving for a religion. All founders of new religions, as theological systems, are either impostors or men with a priestly mind. The founders of Positivism and the Labor Church were, manifestly, men with a priestly mind. Others, which need not be named, were founded by impostors.

I fear the delusion about the religious instinct is infecting the minds of some Rationalists, for they seem to think that men must have religion under some name or other. If men cannot live an honest, useful life without a God, priest, and Church, they might as well remain as they are. Priestcraft under any other name would be quite as harmful and hateful. A paid Ethical lecturer would in time become as much a priest as any in the Churches, and Ethicism would crystallise into a religion.

Tolstoy seems to think that no good can be done without a religious motive. What the motive means he does not say. If it means anything beyond the good desired, I deny the assertion. It is the means employed that effects the good, and not the motive. The motive without the means would effect nothing; the means will produce the same results without a motive as with it. Men seem to lose their reasoning faculties when they begin to talk or write about religion. No sane man would think that a religious motive was needed for the farmer, mechanic, or weaver in their avocations. The farmer sows the seed, and it will grow and ripen independent of motive, faith, or prayer. No amount of faith, prayers, or motives will influence the crop in the least, and want of them will not retard its growth. The fruitfulness of the crop will depend on the effectiveness of the means employed in the farming, and the favorableness, or otherwise, of climate and weather. And I cannot see that a religious motive is more wanted in morality than in secular and material affairs. Use the proper means and establish the right institutions, and the right results will be produced independent of any thoughts or motives men may have.

It seems to me almost a certainty that the religious sentiment and instinct are the result of countless ages of cunning and conscious priestly teaching and influence. The notion that morality and prosperity are not possible without religion has been so imbued into man that even some Rationalists are not able to free themselves from the delusion. Wherever there are priests the same idea prevails. Pagan devotees feel the sentiment and instinct as strongly as the Christian. And no wonder; for the children everywhere have been, and are, under the tuition and control of priests, and children can be made into almost anything, and taught to believe the greatest errors to be divine truths. Human nature will never have a chance to grow naturally until the children are rescued from the custody of priests.

The difference in intellectual ability between man and man accounts for much in society. The mental power of some is almost infinitely above the average mass. No doubt physical power enabled many to become chiefs at the beginning of tribal and national development; but superior brain power did more to consolidate their authority and gather wealth and influence around them. Shrewd rulers would soon find out the value of labor to produce wealth, and slavery was instituted. The value of land as a source of wealth and an instrument of power would be early discovered by sharp-witted chiefs, and land was made private property at the disposal of the chieftain. In the same way the shrewd ruler would find out that men were credulous and superstitious, and gradually means would develop

to foster and strengthen their superstition and utilise it to keep the masses in subjection to the State, and the priesthood was established. At first the chief would be both priest and potentate in one, but ultimately the priesthood would become a separate institution; but still connected with, and under the control of, the rulers. Thus kingcraft and priestcraft became allied powers to fleece the people and keep them in subjection. From the beginning rulers have supported the priesthood, and the priesthood has supported the State. Both are a huge weight on the backs of the people, and both are to a greater extent than is generally supposed the result of conscious and deliberate scheming. And the religious instinct, Christian and Pagan, is little, if any, more than the manufactured product of the priesthood. Remove the priests and the religious instinct would soon cease to be.

R. J. DERFEL.

A Converted Materialist.

AMONG the notable events discussed in the Liberal periodicals at present is the conversion—which appears not to be recent—of Mr. B. F. Underwood, who has abjured the fallacies of this world and embraced those of the next. He has ceased to be a Materialist in philosophy and has become a Spiritualist in belief. The change is about as strange and unaccountable as the one that took place when Annie Besant turned Theosophist, and for my part I do not believe that it has been caused by any new light that Mr. Underwood has received. That is, I do not suppose that he has reviewed the old arguments he used to make for Materialism, founded on the fact that consciousness is nowhere discoverable, except by the eye of faith, apart from material organisms made up of flesh and blood, and called bodies for short, and found them wanting in logic or cogency. His change of belief has not, probably, been preceded by any such investigation as would make a Freethinker of a Christian, or as would cause any rational person to surrender his faith in the supernatural.

The process whereby the Materialist becomes a convert to the spiritual philosophy of a certain kind is quite the opposite. In one case facts and arguments are wanted; in the other they are not necessary. Mr. Underwood says that he does not care to witness spirit phenomena (phenomena being facts), and that he wastes no time in reading reports of them. His faith does not require the support of evidence or testimony. That is where faith differs from knowledge. To know a thing you need to have the evidence of the senses, or the statement of some person on whose word you can rely; to believe a thing, in a religious and philosophical sense, you have only to think it ought to be so, and then jolly yourself into the conviction that it is. In a funeral discourse not long ago Mr. Underwood said:—

“We do not deny ourselves the hope which is so general that the life which disappears here reappears in some form and under conditions beyond our present vision. Man is the product of an evolution which has been going on for inconceivable periods of time. It is not strange that so many refuse to believe that man, the highest outcome of this process of development, is to be blotted out of existence.”

It is the old story of “hope,” and refusal to believe that which is possibly unpleasant to contemplate. But against that hope and the refusal of belief stands the fact that men are blotted out of existence every day.

Evolution is brought in here by the speaker without warrant. Whatever evolution touches suffers a change, and in that change a death occurs. The old dies out. You do not find the result of evolution living at the same time with the thing from which it was developed. The monkey-like ancestor of man is extinct; and if in the processes of evolution we live hereafter it can be only in the

sense that the ape lives in the man; and that life will have to us the disadvantage of not being ours but that of somebody as far removed from us, perhaps, as we are from our brute progenitors.

I am surprised that a man of Mr. Underwood's familiarity with science should appeal to evolution in connection with the spirit life. There has been no evolution of life. There has been evolution in the forms through which life manifests itself; organisms have become more complex, but I think it would be hard to distinguish such life as there is in a bug from that which is found “under conditions beyond our present vision,” if such conditions exist.

There has not been evolution in life, but there has been considerable evolution in men's notions about life—especially about the life beyond. Modern life in the summerland is so much refined over what it was when people went there bodily without removing their boots, that conceptions of a hereafter may almost be called rudimentary or vestigial, like a hen's gills or the muscles we still possess for flopping the ear. It seems to me that the bump where such belief is generated belongs to this class of rudimentary organs, and its function would soon be suspended if it were not stimulated in the child at a tender age by parents and Sunday-school teachers. When a person who has once entertained the mechanical theory of the universe, or the Materialistic theory, develops a belief in life “under conditions beyond our present vision,” the evolutionist must call it a case of reversion. I should as soon have expected Mr. Underwood to grow a tail.

When Mr. Underwood was lecturing on philosophical Materialism he used to tell a story that all audiences delighted to hear. Some years after his career as a lecturer began he met an orthodox old lady who had known him in his youth, and she said to him: “Benjamin, is it true, as I hear, that you have joined them Universalists?” And he told her: “No, there isn't a word of truth in it. I haven't joined the Universalists, and I consider them a mistaken lot of people. I am a philosophical Materialist, and anything you may have heard to the contrary is untrue.” And the old lady was much relieved. “I am so glad to hear that,” she said; “I've been afeared you was losin' your faith.” Mr. Underwood's other old lady friends who have looked askance at his Materialism may be comforted by his recent statement that he no longer regards matter as the “ultimate basis of all phenomena,” but as “only a phenomenal manifestation of the Ultimate Reality.” And as the first old lady missed nothing by not knowing a philosophical Materialist from a Methodist Episcopal, so these will lose no sleep over the uncertainty whether the Ultimate Reality is a term in Spencerian Agnosticism or a new kind of bust developer.—G. MACDONALD, *Truthseeker* (New York).

The Economic Value of Sensationalism.

THE University of Chicago seems determined to keep in the public eye. In an address to the divinity students of said university by one of its accredited divines, the extraordinary plea was presented that, “if a preacher does not exaggerate he will have no audience.” Continuing: “I make a plea for pulpit exaggeration,” said the speaker. Incredible as this may seem, as coming from a conservative university, it is perfectly in harmony with the methods which have prevailed in the religious world from the foundations of the world. To present the preacher's thought faithfully, let us quote from his address:—

“Exaggeration in the pulpit is entirely allowable. If the modern minister stated things as they actually are people would not listen to him. I do not give this as an apology for lying, but it is a fact that the audiences of to-day demand sensationalism. They want to be impressed by big and extraordinary things, and the preacher must supply this demand. This necessitates exaggerated statements. The audience is attracted to them, discounts them, and accepts them at

their real worth, while without the exaggeration they would never have noticed them."

He speaks the truth. The Bible, which is the text book of the preacher, owes its popularity to its exaggerations. One million people with their effects, baggage and babies marched out of Egypt in one night, says the Bible. That is the way to exaggerate. The angel of the Lord smote the first born in every Egyptian family in one night, says the same book. That is what the Chicago University professor of divinity means when he recommends exaggeration. To enable one barbarian to destroy another, both sun and moon, not the sun alone, or the moon alone, but both these heavenly bodies were arrested—that is the kind of exaggeration which is sure to hold anybody's attention. And when Jesus expired on the cross there was darkness over all the earth, writes one of the apostles. He, too, understood the value of exaggeration. To be sure he was not in a position to know, at the time, whether there was darkness also in India, China, Africa, and America (in some of these countries the people must have been in bed, owing to the difference in time, when the drama of the crucifixion was being enacted in Jerusalem), but he wished to exaggerate. If, then, a preacher desires an audience he must not adhere to the truth too closely—that is not his profession; he must leave that commonplace duty to the scientist. The preacher must exaggerate; he must be flowery and rhetorical; he must preach as the journal prints the news—in flaring, sensational type; it is the only way the world will be attracted to the church. Be sensational; never mind anything else—such is in spirit the advice given to the divinity students in one of our universities. The Rev. W. M. Lawrence, D.D. (we wonder what earned him his degree of "divine doctor" or "doctor of divinity"), is where he ought to be. In no other profession would his services be as dear. Fidelity to truth will depopulate his church and throw him out of a lucrative and comfortable position, and we congratulate him upon his candor in suggesting that he owes his success to exaggeration in the pulpit. Dr. Lawrence is careful not to recommend lying: that is too naked a word, but he has the clerical courage to make, in his own words, "a plea for pulpit exaggeration." A number of Dr. Lawrence's fellow clergymen have objected to the above advice. Well, they will go to the wall, or preach to emaciated congregations, unless they imitate the methods which enabled Talmage to amass three hundred thousand dollars while preaching "Blessed are ye, poor," and "Woe unto you, the rich," and which have assured for W. M. Lawrence, D.D., a fine post in the vineyard of the Lord. We trust we are not exaggerating the importance of Rev. Dr. Lawrence or his talk to the divinity fellows of the University of Chicago. Upon seeing the report of his lecture in the papers, the doctor appeared the next day with a statement that he did not mean what his words meant. He admitted he was correctly quoted, but added that the burden of his whole lecture to the students was that they should only preach the truth—that is to say, of course, as much of it as would not subject them to a heresy trial. We leave it to the doctor to reconcile his statement on Monday that "if a preacher does not exaggerate he will have no audience," with his Tuesday statement that he counselled the students "always to stick to the truth." Sensationalism in the pulpit would no doubt fill the pews, but with what kind of people? Of course, these have souls too, but they will only succeed in dragging both preacher and pulpit to their level. More and more, exaggeration will be necessary to keep their patronage, a patronage which cultivates flattery, materialism, and commonplace thinking. Of Goldsmith it was said that whatever he touched he adorned, and of the late Sir Leslie Stephen that whatever he touched he elucidated; of the mob who may be attracted to church by the exaggerations of the pulpit it can be rightly said that whatever they touch they depreciate.

M. M. MANGASARIAN.

—*Liberal Review* (Chicago).

Balfour, Defender of the Faith.

MR. BALFOUR.

Your standpoint I can't understand a bit;
The Christian faith suits me; what's wrong with it?

AGNOSTIC.

Nothing at all—except that it's not true.

MR. BALFOUR.

Pooh! that objection Pilate long since slew.
What's truth? A thing that's neither here nor there,
And which you'll never find, with all your care:
The Christian faith's as true as any other,
And just as useful—then why make a pother?
Truth—if there's such a thing, which much I doubt—
No mortal man has ever yet found out.
The question is not if the faith is true,
But does it keep in check the rebel crew
Who else our social system might upset?

AGNOSTIC.

To choose the false is a base action yet:
Even if the truth we may not hope to find
Error can only fill with tares the mind.

MR. BALFOUR.

My friend, you've not the metaphysic gift
Wherewith a question so profound to sift:
Falsehood and truth are words and nothing more
When into their real meaning you explore.
All things when analysed themselves resolve
To monads and electrons, which dissolve,
When we their nature try to realise,
To thin unreal impalpabilities,
As clouds dissolve and fade before our eyes:
'Tis true that faith, examined thus, may fade
Into a gossamer web of moonshine made;
But since all things a moonshine aspect wear
Wherefore should faith in different manner fare?

AGNOSTIC.

Well then, since moonshine's faith, and faith moonshine,
Let us to Dian rear once more a shrine:
But tell me, subtle reasoner! will you,
When your next quarter's salary is due,
Consent to be with moonshine money paid?
Or will the members of the preaching trade
With such uncurrent coin be content?
Let this once come to pass and I'll consent
To join the holy and self-righteous crew,
And spend my time in splitting hairs like you.

LUCIAN LAMBERT.

Correspondence.

"MARK RUTHERFORD."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—You published in the *Freethinker* of August 14 an article by "Sirius" on the Mark Rutherford novels. The writer, while bestowing high praise on the one he has read, and of which, curiously enough, he has only just made the acquaintance, acknowledges that he knows nothing of their author, and surmises that they may have been written by a woman. I can hardly understand how so acute a critic can have imagined that such strong and virile works as these could have proceeded from a woman's pen; but as a matter of fact the authorship of the novels has long been a pretty open secret. They are the work of Mr. W. Hall White, the author of several other books which ought to be better known than they are, and of many articles and essays on literary subjects which are hidden away in magazines and reviews. He is also a leading authority on Coleridge, Wordsworth, and the other poets of the early part of the nineteenth century. Mr. White is one of those authors whom it takes long for the general reading public to discover, and also one whom the public that reads Hall Caine and Marie Corelli never will discover. To the *Freethinker* of the more militant type Mr. White is sometimes a little unsympathetic; but his work, as a whole, always makes for liberty of thought and enlightenment, and should therefore be read and studied by all good reformers.

LUCIAN LAMBERT.

A great city is that which has the greatest men and women,
If it be but a few ragged huts it is still the greatest city in
the whole world.

—Walt Whitman.

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, James Marshall; 5.45, C. Cohen.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S.: Station-road, 11.30, W. H. Thresh; Brockwell Park, 3.15 and 6.30, a Lecture.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (corner of Ridley-road, Dalston): 11.30, J. W. Ramsay.

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. (Bull Ring Coffee House): Thursday, September 1, at 8, Mr. Easthope, "Tom Hood."

COVENTRY BRANCH N. S. S. (Baker's Coffee Tavern, Fleet-street): 7, T. H. Smith, "Religion and Ethics."

HUDDERSFIELD (Market Cross): Saturday, Sunday, and Wednesday, at 8, G. Whitehead and C. J. Atkinson.

LEEDS BRANCH N. S. S. (Armley Park): 11, G. Weir, "Religion in School"; Crossflats Park, 7, "Prophecy."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): Islington-square, 3 and 7, H. Percy Ward. Monday, 8, Birkenhead (Haymarket); Tuesday, 8, Edgehill Church.

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