

THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXIV.—No. 45

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1904

PRICE TWOPENCE

*Thy patient spirit to thy duties give,
Regard the dead, but to the living live.*
—CRABBE.

Some Defenders of the Faith.—VIII.

A UNITARIAN COUNTERBLAST.—III.

IX.

MR. WARSCHAUER passes on to a piece of word-juggling which is only too characteristic of present-day Christian apologetics. He wishes to prove the personality of God, and this is how he goes to work. "Love exists in this world," he says, "exists as an appreciable factor in human nature." Yes, and he might have added that it exists as an appreciable factor in the nature of the lower animals, and would have done so if man had never existed. Well now, this love exists, and Mr. Warschauer asks, "where did it come from?" One would think it was a pound of tea, or some other tangible commodity, from the way in which this question is asked. But love is not a thing at all; it is a quality, an emotion; and therefore the proper question is, Where did the beings come from who possess or display love? And the answer to that question is that they came through a long process of evolution. They were not made somewhere else and brought here. They were born here of parents, who were born of other parents; and the farther back their pedigree is traced the nearer their ancestors were to savagery, and the savages themselves had evolved from still ruder primitive men, who in turn had evolved from a non-human stock. This, indeed, is no longer questioned by scientific men, or even by clergymen who know that Darwinism has triumphed, and triumphed for ever. There are disputes about this or that aspect of Natural Selection, but Darwin's main positions in the *Origin of Species* and the *Descent of Man* are accepted throughout the whole civilised world.

But let us come to "love" itself, as though it were a thing—just to follow Mr. Warschauer. If you say it was evolved, he replies in this way:—

"Nothing was evolved that was not first involved. No matter how this may seem to work out, no matter whether we are able to reconcile it with the facts of life as they appear to us, we cannot get—we are precluded by a law of thought from getting—love as an effect out of anything save love as a Cause."

Mr. Warschauer has a strange idea of evolution. He seems to regard it as something like a telescope. You pull out the slides which were first put in; and there is nothing in the long (or developed) telescope which was not in the short (or undeveloped) telescope. But that is not a bit like evolution. The end of a long line of evolution was *not* in the beginning. The "involution" is merely a mental concept, and it is only possible to those who know the history of the process; in short, it is an act of imaginative anticipation. For the rest, Mr. Warschauer's argument is simply a play upon words. He is talking etymology, not biology. Just in the same way as others talk about "laws of nature" implying "a lawgiver"—as if the word "law" in these two instances meant the same thing, because it is spelt and pronounced alike! And just in the same way as a distinguished

scientist like Sir Oliver Lodge talks about the brain as the organ of thought, and then says that the very word "organ" suggests the idea of instrumentality—as if "organ" in biology and "organ" in instrumental music had the slightest connection with each other!

Was it not Hobbes who said, more than two hundred years ago, that words are the counters of wise men and the money of fools?

Even if there were any conceivable force in Mr. Warschauer's argument, a little reflection might enable him to see that it proves a great deal too much. The major premiss of his syllogism is plainly this, that every quality in an effect must have been antecedently in the cause. But this covers *hate* as well as *love*. And we might follow Mr. Warschauer's lead by arguing that "We cannot get hate as an effect out of anything save hate as a Cause."

Precisely the same objection applies to his argument that you cannot get morality out of a non-moral Universe. He might as well argue that you cannot get a green tree out of a non-green Universe. Such attributes as *green* and *moral* are partial and relative. Morality means nothing but the rules of social health, or, in other words, social preservation and continuance, in given conditions of time and space; and it changes with the alteration in those conditions, so that polygamy, for instance, is a moral institution in one stage of human culture, and an immoral institution when the social preparation has been made for monogamy.

It is really useless for Mr. Warschauer to cite "one of the keenest and most eminent of our men of science," Sir Oliver Lodge, as his authority for exclaiming, "Let no worthy human attribute be denied to the Deity." For when you have loaded the Deity with all the worthy attributes, on whose back are all the unworthy attributes to be piled? Your only possible reply is "the Devil's." But, in that case, the question arises, Who made the Devil? If God made him, God's responsibility is universal. If God did not make him, there are two Eternal Powers instead of one—in other words, God is not God.

X.

On the subject of prayer in relation to God, this Unitarian Defender of the Faith reasons like any street-corner preacher. How do we know, he asks, that prayer is *not* answered? But the first question is, How does he know that prayer *is* answered? It is not the doubter, but the affirmer, who is to be called upon for proof. Nor is it wise to adduce the illustration of wireless telegraphy. This was not possible ten years ago, yet it is possible now. True, but what has that to do with the possibility of answers to prayer? Why should we be so foolish as to argue the question of possibility at all? The question is not whether prayer *can* be answered, but whether it *is* answered. And that question is always evaded by the theologians.

Mr. Warschauer pretends not to evade it, but we shall see that he does:—

"How do we know but that the granting of a request may have for its condition that faith and trust and surrender of the soul which shrinks not from child-like utterance of its needs? It is all, we repeat, a question of evidence; and to any one not wilfully blinded by prejudice, the mass of available evidence in favor of answers to prayer—winnowed and sifted

and scanned with the utmost vigor as such evidence always should be—is sufficient to prove that here we have not mere coincidences, but the unmistakable action of cause and effect. To say in the face of such testimony that prayer 'cannot' be answered, is to exhibit a spirit the reverse of scientific."

This is a fair sample of Mr. Warschauer's reasoning, and we will deal with it at length.

Note, in the first place, the bland superiority of the assumption that those who cannot see eye to eye with him are "wilfully blinded by prejudice." And note the psychological beauty and accuracy of that expression. It does not occur to Mr. Warschauer that a prejudice is simply a prejudice; that, from the very nature of things, it must be involuntary; that if it becomes "wilful" it ceases to be a prejudice at all, and passes into the category of lies and hypocrisies. If we form a prejudice against a man on the ground of something we have heard to his discredit, it really means that we believe what we have heard, and act accordingly; but if we find out that the tale was untrue, and still act towards him as though it were true, we are no longer influenced by prejudice, but moved by malice or malignity.

Note, in the next place, the expression about the "faith and trust and surrender of the soul," and the "child-like utterance of its needs," which may be necessary to successful prayer. One would fancy that Mr. Warschauer was alluding to the Peculiar People. They are child-like enough in the utterance of their needs; they have perfect faith and trust—for they leave their sick children absolutely in God's hands; and they get four months' imprisonment with hard labor at the hands of their fellow-Christians.

Note, in the third place, the simple reference to that "mass of available evidence in favor of answers to prayer." Mr. Warschauer reminds us of the dragoman in *Fothen*, who led Kinglake and his party such a fine dance towards Jerusalem. Day after day they were no nearer the Holy City; and at last they ventured to ask him "Where is Jerusalem?" Whereupon he swept his dexter hand all over the horizon, and answered "There." Mr. Warschauer's "mass of available evidence" in favor of the efficacy of prayer is "There" too. But it will have to be brought nearer to be of any use in a discussion.

The only true and valuable part of this extract from Mr. Warschauer is the statement that the question is one of evidence. It is a question of evidence, and evidence is what we want. Professor Tyndall and Sir Henry Thompson tried to obtain some. They suggested a few simple experiments. But the idea positively shocked the Warschauers of that day. They called it an impudent suggestion, and asked whether God Almighty was to be put into the witness-box by his own creatures. So much for their love of "evidence."

XII.

Mr. Warschauer's chapter on "Evil versus Divine Goodness" contains only theological commonplaces.

When the evils of this world are pointed out Mr. Warschauer asks us to look at "the other side"—as though there could be any "other side" with God. Plenty of people suffer; yes, but plenty of people enjoy themselves. Plenty of people die; yes, but plenty of people live. That is how Mr. Warschauer argues—and it is sheer silliness.

Suppose a prisoner were in the dock charged with theft or murder. Would it be a good defence to say that there were people whom he had not robbed or people whom he had not murdered? He has to be found "Guilty" or "Not Guilty" in the particular case before the court.

Mr. Warschauer tries to take the bull by the horns by declaring that God could not have made a perfect world. But how does he know that? What right has he to limit the action of Omnipotence? It is idle to tell us that Omnipotence cannot make the parts of a given object greater than the whole, or two straight lines to enclose a space, or two parallel lines to meet. These things are not impossible—they are meaningless.

God is very far from omnipotent if he could not make a better world than this. Do not ask us *how* he could do so. We have not infinite knowledge nor the command of infinite resources. But we might make a suggestion. When the late Colonel Ingersoll was asked to mention one single improvement that he would make in this world's arrangements if he were God, he replied, "I would make health catching instead of disease." That would do for a start.

It is a waste of time to argue, as Mr. Warschauer does, that an "enormous proportion of the pain and suffering of the world is inflicted by men and women upon themselves and upon each other, through selfishness or ignorance or evil disposition." The fact is patent, but what does it prove? Who made those men and women? Who endowed them with selfishness, who left them in ignorance, who gave them evil dispositions? They did not make themselves. God (according to the theory) made them, and God is responsible for it all.

When all is said and done Mr. Warschauer's case breaks down. He cries for mercy; that is to say, he admits that there is "a vast amount of pain and suffering for which we can imagine no explanation at all." He can only seek shelter in mystery at the finish. But there is no mystery in the facts. The mystery is entirely of his own creation. It is simply the contradiction between the facts and his theory. To the Atheist there is no mystery at all in the matter. Pain to him is as natural as pleasure, misery as natural as happiness, good as natural as evil. Just as corn does not grow for us to eat, but we eat it because it grows; so the good in the world was not made for us, but we enjoy it because it is there; neither was the evil in the world made for us, but we suffer it because it is there; and our wisdom lies in embracing the good and avoiding the evil, and this can only be done by the growth of knowledge and the spread of humanity.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

Torrey and His Converts.

ON several occasions in these columns attention has been called to the value and general character of the evangelistic campaign of Messrs. Torrey and Alexander. The slanders of "Dr." Torrey on Freethinkers have been persistent, although, on the whole, only what was to be expected. Persons of his peculiar type of mind are utterly unable to appreciate an *intellectual* difference; everything has to be expressed in terms of moral value. And to this unintellectual character there is added the vicious quality of looking for indecency and immorality generally in all sorts of places, likely or unlikely. Their own essentially unclean minds cannot help seeing uncleanness everywhere and in everyone. It will be remembered that in the case of Walton Powell, a worker in the same field as Torrey, whose evangelistic career was interrupted by the police in order to serve two terms of imprisonment, this individual's strongest card was the immorality of Freethinkers. And the net result is that when one gets this combination of unintellectuality and moral unhealthiness slanders of opponents are inevitable. Not that this upsets even the "respectable" portion of the Christian world. Presumably the feeling is, "If these Freethinkers are not bad they ought to be, perhaps are, on the quiet, and so there is nothing to complain about." At any rate I am not aware that any Christian ever raised a protest against Torrey circulating his slanders in the name of "Christ and him crucified."

It has also been pointed out that none of these evangelistic missions add to the strength of the Christian churches as a whole. Certain members of churches, or youngsters who would in the normal course of things join a church, announce themselves as "converted" and there the matter ends. There

is a redistribution, but there is no addition. The non-Christian world is unaffected, when it is not bettered, by these campaigns. For some Christians do get disgusted with such methods, and are driven to conclude that a religion that has to depend upon slander, midnight "spiritual" orgies, the capture of little children, and prurient appeals to "men only" for its recruits needs a more careful examination than had been anticipated. And when the right kind of examination starts there is only one result.

It is, however, significant of the advance of Free-thought—and civilisation—that the Torrey-Alexander campaign did not pass off without protests from the religious world. The theology preached was of such a crude, ignorant, and disgusting nature that many of the clergy began to see that while it attracted a comparatively worthless class, Torrey's theology—which was undiluted Christianity—was alienating a large number of thoughtful believers. Protests were raised in various quarters, although, judging from what has just happened, the feeling against the mission was stronger than one would have supposed. That this feeling was, and is, pretty general, seems to me clear from the fact of the *British Weekly* having gone to the trouble of eliciting from various clergymen in Bristol and Birmingham their impressions of the result of the Torrey-Alexander campaign. Their verdict as a whole, and in a word, is that the quantity of converts gained was poor and the quality ditto. And this verdict is the more important because it comes from people who would, obviously, be only too pleased to give a different judgment. It is true that a number of those who replied accompanied their declarations by an expression of belief that there had been a "spiritual uplifting," but it will be noticed that all their facts point to failure pure and simple.

The *British Weekly* for October 27 contains twenty-four of these reports; and as these, from both Bristol and Birmingham, are identical, one may lump them together without injustice to either.

The first point worth noting in these reports is that from neither town is there any report of a non-Christian or Freethinker having been converted. Not that this will at all prevent Torrey from telling people in America how he converted "infidels" in England, just as he tells Christians in England how he converted Freethinkers in America. But the following will show that whatever converts were made were either members of churches already, or on the way to becoming so. I leave out the figures dealing with children, for awhile.

Rev. T. Towers writes that out of seventeen names of adults submitted to him, two belonged already to his own church, and seven to other churches in the neighborhood. Rev. Hugh Singleton had ten names sent to him, all belonging to other churches in the town. Rev. F. J. Gould had the names of twenty converts sent him and found eighteen already belonged to his own church, and "the other two I have failed to induce to join." Rev. Charles Deeble says the names received by him were such as are converted at "every mission," "and if there were another mission to-morrow their names would come." Rev. R. Gray had three or four names sent him, one of a servant maid, "already an excellent member" of his church, and the others of people who had belonged to a London church. Rev. W. Burkitt says in the churches of his district the only result has been the conversion of people who were already adherents. Rev. J. E. Clegg was supplied with about twenty names of converts. "Half of them," he says, "were already members of our church.....others of them were unsatisfactory members, and they are as unsatisfactory as ever." The Rev. H. A. Thomas cannot say that "any appreciable effect was produced by Dr. Torrey's mission." And the Rev. A. D. Brown says, "The majority of the names sent to me were those of people who had been restored to the joys of salvation after a season of backsliding."

All the above testimonies come from Birmingham; but the Bristol evidence is identical in character.

The general testimony there is also that "those who have been brought to avowed decision for Christ were already associated with Christian Churches, and would in all probability have confessed their discipleship later on." Truly this is a magnificent outcome for all the advertising and sermonising carried on by this brace of American peripatetics. Their mass meetings and midnight meetings have resulted in converting the converted, in getting *Church members* to avow themselves converted by Torrey's preaching and Alexander's singing. The people who made these professions were simply lying for Christ's sake—there is no other name for it; and the missionaries who were parading them as genuine converts, and reporting thousands as being brought to the "penitent form" by them, were also lying—if not for Christ's sake, then for the sake of our modern mixture of dollars and divinity.

It is, perhaps, too hard to speak of these professing converts as lying, since that implies conscious dissimulation. With the majority I believe the dissimulation to be unconscious. There is a certain type of Christian who goes to a revivalist service as a drunkard goes to a public-house. Nay, he goes to the mission *because* he does not go to the public-house, and finds intoxication there as he would at a drinking bar. For, as a matter of fact, the ordinary mission attendant differs in no very marked degree from the habitual drunkard. There is the same morbid craving for a stimulant, and there is the same reaction afterwards. The chief distinction is that the drunkenness of the one is rather more offensive than that of the other. Psychologically, however, there is little to choose between them. At best the chronic attendant at revivalist meetings is a spiritual dram-drinker; as one of the clergy quoted has pointed out, they go to each mission that comes along, they profess the same conversion, and would attend twice as many if they had the chance.

Another feature in the character of converts of Messrs. Torrey and Alexander is their youthfulness. Some time ago—long before these gentlemen landed in England—I pointed out in these columns that nearly all conversions took place between the ages of fourteen and twenty-four; in other words, while the organism was in a very plastic condition, subject to the stress of sexual development, and likely to be operated upon by any exciting influence encountered. It is the period when drunkenness, epilepsy, or religious enthusiasm are most likely to make their appearance. The conversion of children, therefore, not only means that it is the normal consequence of subjecting them to such an exciting influence as a revivalist meeting, but also that it is a distinctly unhealthy and dangerous practice. They are subjected to a serious nervous strain at the very period when they should be most carefully guarded against it. It would take a medical specialist to work out the full consequences of this, but none who understand the subject can doubt its gravity.

But, as is made evident from these reports, the larger number of the converts made by the valorous Torrey were *children*. Here are a few testimonies to this effect; I omit names for the sake of brevity. "A number of our youngest members (especially amongst the young girls) were amongst those who professed conversion." "A fair proportion were among people under sixteen years of age." "The bulk of the names sent to me were those of children under *thirteen years of age*." "Some enquirers' names were received, the majority very young children." "Most of them [the converts] were young people already in connection with our Sunday-schools." Another writes of converts "about twelve or thirteen years of age, who were much impressed." Finally, the Rev. W. G. Percival has the following: "The dear little things followed one another for 'enquiry' until the place was a scene of utter confusion."

Other quotations might be given, but the above are enough to show the nature of the victories won by these evangelists. It quite puts the victory of the Baltic fleet over the Hull fisher-folk to shame.

This is not quite all, however. As a picture of one of the midnight meetings held in Birmingham :

"The midnight meeting was the saddest sight I have ever seen as a Christian worker. There would be about 5,000 people (I am speaking from memory), chiefly men, present, a very large number in an advanced state of intoxication. During the service the confusion was in the truest sense appalling. Foul words of interruption were frequent, and more than once men were in a state bordering upon fighting. But when Dr. Torrey invited the men to come forward who wished to decide for Christ, it seemed as though every man would crowd the platform, whilst in a condition utterly unfit to take such a great decision. These were tabulated, I believe, as 'results.'"

To be sure! And the virtuous Torrey would go away assuring people in other places that thousands were brought by him to Christ at a single meeting. And his hearers would picture in their mind's eye crowds of penitent, solemn-faced, thoughtful people "laying it all on Jesus."

Such are the results of the Torrey mission as reported, not by the malignant Freethinkers, but by Christian ministers. The best of the converts already belonging to Churches, the majority little children, and others cursing, drunken, swearing, and fighting their way to the penitent form, to throw all their sins on the Saviour. Milton makes the angel tell Adam that God made his works as they are so that he might laugh at human theories concerning them. Probably God made Torrey and fashioned Alexander that he might laugh at their crusade against children and midnight religious orgies. Yet there is a serious side to it all. People who can be preyed upon by individuals of the stamp of these evangelists are not very promising material out of which to carve the man of the future. Parents who subject their children to such an influence can hardly be expected to realise the duties of parentage in its widest and best sense. A saner civilisation would recognise such men and such movements for what they are—a danger to the mental and moral health of the community. Ordinary lunacy we are all familiar with, criminal lunacy we are beginning to appreciate. One day, perhaps, we shall recognise that in all its consequences revivalist lunacy is as bad as either of the former.

C. COHEN.

The New Christian Appeal to Science.

THEOLOGIANs are at a discount just now. Even in the Churches themselves their authority is a thing of the past. Having discarded the Bible as a direct revelation from God, theology cannot find a foothold anywhere. Its appeal to experience has proved a bitter disappointment, because the fundamental dogmas of Christianity lie completely outside the sphere of experience. Human experience knows nothing of the Trinity, the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection from the dead, and the Life Everlasting. Such subjects infinitely transcend experience. Consequently many present-day Christians reject them as unbelievable. Our fathers accepted them on the testimony of the Bible and the Church. Their descendants disbelieve them because the validity of the testimony has been thoroughly discredited at the bar of criticism and of history. Concerning these so-called central and sovereign truths of the Gospel experience is utterly silent. But does experience certify the truth of any alleged supernatural facts? No; because in every instance experience follows faith. It is faith that leads to experience, and not experience to faith. There are those who claim that they have perpetual experience of God's redeeming grace in Christ. Dr. Horton says: "It cannot too strongly be said that the Redemptive Power of Christ has always been and is to-day a fact of human experience which can be examined and tested. And Christianity in every age has rested on the inductive accumulation of such facts.....If Christianity does not redeem and regenerate men

its day is over. But if it does, those redeemed and regenerated lives stand as positive scientific facts which cannot be gainsaid."

Let us examine and test this alleged fact of the redemptive power of Christ. In the first place, be it observed that the redemptive power of Christ is contingent upon faith. Unbelievers never experience it. Christ never redeems a man because he is in bondage, but always because he believes. Faith is essential to salvation. If a man were drowning his true friend would save him whether the man believed in his saving power or not. Why is it that Christ is unable to save those who have no faith in him? In the second place, if Christ is alive and omnipresent as well as omnipotent, why cannot he save spiritually lost men without the intervention of ordained preachers and evangelists, and the excitement caused by crowded assemblies? Is there not in all this a suggestion that, after all, the salvation is very largely, if not wholly, a human achievement, and could be accomplished more easily and much better without any reference to the supernatural? In the third place, the sense of salvation is invariably in proportion to the quantity and quality of the faith. We thus see that there is no direct experience of the redemptive power of Christ, and that there is no direct proof that any redemptive power exists outside human nature itself.

The argument from experience having broken down, theologians are now seeking refuge in Science. Their contention is that science has lately undergone a radical change, and become a valued ally of religion. When asked for a proof of this, they refer us to Sir Oliver Lodge, Lord Kelvin, Dr. Wallace, and Sir William Crookes. In these famous men modern science is said to have been born again and become a servant of the Lord. The scientific name most frequently on the lips of religious teachers at present is that of Sir Oliver Lodge. Sir Oliver is looked upon as one of the most valuable living witnesses to the truth of the Christian Religion. We are not told to what extent the Principal of the Birmingham University may be termed a Christian believer, the only fact emphasised being that, while standing in the first rank of scientists, he is yet friendly to religion. But what does his friendliness towards religion signify? In the first place, whenever Sir Oliver Lodge is in a religious mood he is not scientific, and whenever he speaks as a pure man of science he is not religious. His religion and his science are two entirely different things, and he never seeks to unite them. Again, Sir Oliver Lodge does not accept a single doctrine held by the orthodox Church. Indeed, he is a most dangerous heresiarch. He advocates a complete reconstruction of the Christian Creed. He believes that if there be a God he must be a *finite* being, and not wholly free from sin. He maintains that sins are "a boil, an abscess on the Universe," which "must be attacked and cured by human co-operators, as they are hardly tractable otherwise." Then he adds in a curious paragraph:—

"If it is possible for a man at times to feel a sort of hatred and anger against his own weaker and worsened self, so I can imagine a God feeling what may be imperfectly spoken of as disgust and wrath at defects which still exist in his Universe—in himself dare we say?—defects for which in a manner he is in some sort responsible, defects which he has either caused, or for ultimate reasons permitted, or has not yet, in the present stage of evolution, been able to cure consistently with full education and adequate scope for free development of personality; defects which surely his conscious creatures will assist him to remove."

The above is not the speech of science, nor can it be regarded as wholesome theology. Surely, Christians are not prepared to welcome a finite and possibly sinful Heavenly Father, who is a kind of slave in his own Universe, being unable to act independently. Sir Oliver's deity is by no means beautiful and lovable.

Sir Oliver Lodge rejects the doctrine of the Atonement, without which Christianity would be an

entirely new religion. As he does not believe in the Virgin Birth nor in the Resurrection of Christ, it is difficult to see how he can believe in his Divinity. But his language is so vague that it is quite impossible to ascertain what he does believe. Here is a fine specimen:—

"Miracles lie all round us, only they are not miraculous. Special providences envelop us, only they are not special. Prayer is a means of communication, as natural and as simple as is speech."

That was the strain in which Sir Oliver Lodge addressed the members of the Church Congress at Liverpool, who of course cheered him to the echo. But was anything more deplorably ludicrous and absurd ever uttered? Miracles that are not miraculous are as unbelievable as a divine being who is not divine, or a Colossus that is not colossal, or a human person who is not human. To say that special providences are not special is to deny their existence altogether. When Sir Oliver said at Liverpool that he "fails to find any antagonism between the developments of science and the claims of religion," the natural inference drawn by his hearers would have been that he is an orthodox Christian; but it would have been a totally false inference. If his *Hibbert Journal* articles are to be taken seriously, he would not be able to subscribe even to the most advanced and liberal of existing creeds.

The present appeal of Christians to science for a justification of their position is thus seen to be perfectly futile. It is also essentially dishonest, inasmuch as it is well-known that the scientists appealed to are not Christians, and have never, as scientists, confirmed a single Christian doctrine. When preachers exclaim triumphantly, "See, science is at last on our side," it is pertinent to ask, which science? Can you inform us which scientific discovery or theory it is that favors the claims of religion? Professor Lodge, a distinguished physicist, tells the public that the science of biology shows that the claims of religion are quite reasonable. But Professors Haeckel and Ray Lancaster, and Sir W. T. Thiselton-Dyer, who are expert biologists, assert that the illustrious physicist is guilty of misrepresenting their department. These biological authorities have discovered nothing that even tends in the least degree to justify the claims of supernaturalism. They have found nothing but natural forces working on entirely natural lines and producing purely natural results. In biology Sir Oliver Lodge is an amateur, and has no right to speak with authority. But even as an amateur his prophesying is of a most unsatisfactory nature. What comfort can Christian apologists squeeze out of the statement that the invariable connection between thought and brain may be only a coincidence, or that soul may be a spiritual reality that passes through the brain as light does through a window? There is not a grain of science in such a statement; and to make it in the name of biology is a crime. We are prepared to listen to competent physicists and accredited biologists whenever they have any important communication to make to us; but we decline to accept the rhetorical vaporings of speculative metaphysicians as a scientific confirmation of the claims of religion. The biologist knows mind only as a function of the brain; and Sir Oliver Lodge can produce no scientific fact that is inconsistent with that position. When challenged by our leading biologists Lord Kelvin found himself in the same predicament. And yet we are assured that science is now an ally of religion.

Dr. R. F. Horton in an article in the *Christian Commonwealth* for October 27, maintains that the great majority of leading men of Science are believers. He tells us that "Dr. Dennert, of Berlin, has collected information about three hundred prominent men of Science in ancient and modern times, and finds that two hundred and forty-two believed in God, thirty-eight gave no information, fifteen were either Agnostic or inclined to disbelief, and only five avowed themselves to be anti-Christian

materialists." One would like to know on what principle Dr. Dennert selected three hundred prominent men of science out of as many thousands. The whole business was a solemn farce, and the tabulated result is a gross misrepresentation of the facts, as Dr. Horton himself well knows. Can he or Dr. Dennert name a hundred prominent men of science living to-day who are Christian believers, and who can say that science confirms their religion? And yet we are assured that science is now a powerful ally of Christianity.

Now, Dr. Horton makes a most important admission, an admission that cuts the ground from under the contention of the apologists who claim science as an ally. These are his words:—

"Of course, it is true that science does not prove the spiritual realities which are now under consideration, but neither does it disprove them. By its very definition, by the nature of its material, and by its method, it is excluded from handling these things of the spirit."

If Dr. Horton is right, Mr. R. J. Campbell and those who agree with him must be wrong. If religion and science are allies it follows that they both deal with "these things of the spirit." According to Dr. Horton these "things of the spirit" are "inscrutable principles which must be assumed in order to explain the physical, which can be explored and partly understood by methods of metaphysics, but which are from the very nature of the case beyond the reach of physical inquiry." It is admitted that science "deals with the things which the senses perceive"; but will Dr. Horton tell us how the "inscrutable" can be "explored and partly understood"? If words mean anything "inscrutable" and "inexplorable" are synonymous. If anything is "inscrutable" common sense declares that it cannot be "explored and partly understood." Now, religion claims to have explored and partly understood an inscrutable, incomprehensible realm, and to have revealed an unknowable God, while Freethinkers aver that such a claim is preposterous. Nature itself is a riddle which no student has as yet succeeded in fully reading; but the riddle of the Supernatural is a pure invention of the human brain, and can never be read because it can never be proved to be a reality. We are told that science cannot disprove the existence of supernatural verities; but neither can it prove or help to prove it. Science gives religion not even the ghost of support in any of its claims, and the sooner religious people realise this the better it will be for all concerned. The *onus probandi* rests, therefore, upon the believer, not upon the unbeliever. In any case, the Christian appeal to science is an egregious tactical blunder.

J. T. LLOYD.

How to Write a "Cl-r-n" Article.

(With due apologies to Messrs. Bl-tchf-rd, Th-mps-n, and Co.)

I HAD nothing to do last Monday. D-n-gl- had incontinently neglected to assign me a rôle in the week's program, so I asked him politely what I should do. Politely.

"Do?" he yelled. "Go to the Devil!"

I cursed him in seventeen places, and went.

Strange to relate (I think that's the correct phrase), I found myself bearing down on the *Fr-th-nk-r* office. Bearing down is good. Very excellent good. So I bore down, as the poet hath it, on

The blasted nook
Where the Castle Street is new.

Mr. G. W. F-te rose to embrace me.

"You desire to interview —"

"The Devil!" I ejaculated, as I stepped inadvertently on a drawing-pin.

"Precisely. Be seated. We are rather busy just now. *Tempus fugit.*"

"*Nolens volens,*" I retorted, indignantly. I wasn't

going to be outclassed in my French. Besides, I don't keep a dictionary of foreign phrases merely for the cat to make a bed withal. Perpend.

"You have many readers," said I.

"Oh, myriads. You see those shelves—positively full of reading matter. But we haven't done our work yet. The toiling millions have still to be reached. So many souls awaiting dam—ahem!—enlightenment!"

"H'm—yes. I notice that Old Nick ——"

"Eh? what?"

"I was remarking that old nick-nacks—bric-a-brac, antiquities—are plentifully distributed around. It makes me envious. That odd-looking contraption yonder would do me proud."

"That's the famous watch which Mr. Br-dl-gh didn't take out of his pocket on the celebrated occasion when he didn't request God to be good enough to strike him dead in five minutes."

"And that empty glass cylinder, sealed at both ends?"

"That contains all the Christian evidence I've ever heard."

I whistled a few bars of "Bill Bailey"; then, thinking it might be taken as a covert allusion to the *Old Bailey*, halted in confusion.

Mr. F-te's eyes twinkled through his *pince-nez*.

"The one really handsome thing the Christians ever did for me," he observed. "Devilish trying though, while it lasted. But you know the adage: 'The blood of the martyrs'——"

"Yes," said I. "You scored there. No such luck for us Socialists. No one comes to me or Bl-tchf-rd and offers us a martyr's crown—no one. They all come along with the outstretched hand of friendship. Curse 'em!"

And I wept vociferously.

"Still, you have your advantages in the *Cl-r-n*. Your literary genius."

"Aha!"

"Your brilliance, your humor, your impact."

"Whatto!"

"Your colloquialisms, your marvellous French, your Shakespearean tags."

I felt all over alike; but he continued, remorselessly:—

"Your weirdly-turned sentences, without subject, predicate, or object."

"Mr. F-te," I snorted, "I accept your compliments. We deserve them. But the—the diabolical ingenuity of your satirical insinuations—it is too much. I retire—I evaporate—I vamoose the ranch. *Adieu!*"

After which I turned round thrice upon my dexter heel, and bolted.

E. R. WOODWARD.

Acid Drops.

Readers of this week's *Freethinker* will find in "Sugar Plums" an account of the splendid meetings Mr. Foote had last Sunday in the famous Birmingham Town Hall. What we want to say in this column is rather of the nature of regret. Owing to the liberality of the Lord Mayor of Birmingham the local Secularists are granted the use of the Town Hall occasionally—once a year, anyhow. Large and orderly meetings are held, and no sort of complaint has ever been raised. Yet the same Secularists find it quite impossible to obtain good halls, either for love or money, during the rest of the year. Even the public school-rooms are denied to them, and to them only. This exclusion was the work of that vile bigot, the Bishop of Coventry, who intrigued himself into the position of Chairman of the Birmingham School Board. But his policy is continued under the new system of City Council school-management, and the Secularists are told that there is not the remotest chance of their enjoying the common rights of citizenship again. They are fit to hold meetings in the premier City building, but not fit to hold meetings in a common school-room! It is really too farcical for parliamentary words.

The great Town Hall meetings show something of the strength of Secularists in Birmingham, yet common justice is denied them by Christian bigots. They are refused the use of buildings which they pay to build and maintain. The

Christians use those buildings, and, being in a majority, they prevent the Secularists from using them. And this infamy is upheld by Nonconformists as well as Churchmen. What respect, then, can Secularists have for the Nonconformist Conscience, or what sympathy with the Nonconformist Passive Resistance movement? These Dissenting hypocrites only cry out against inequality when they themselves are the victims. They don't want to be trodden on, but they will tread on anyone else.

What a chance is here for Mr. George Jacob Holyoake! He is a Birmingham man, by birth and early training, and he is often called "the Father of Secularism." Yet we are not aware that he has ever said a word against the flagrant public persecution of Secularism in his native town. When the Nonconformists down at Brighton, where he lives, started their Passive Resistance movement, he readily joined them in their refusal to pay what they called "the sectarian school rate"—as though the sectarian school rate had not been paid from 1870 right up to date! It would have been much more to the point if he had told the Brighton Nonconformists to use their influence with the Birmingham Nonconformists, so that they might no longer assist in boycotting the Birmingham Secularists in their capacity as citizens. When they had done that they might approach "the Father of Secularism" with better grace on behalf of their own "resistance to oppression."

Rev. J. E. Ramsden, B.A., a young minister fresh from college, has been "dressing down Haeckel" in the Goodshaw Baptist Chapel, Crawshawbooth, near Rawtenstall—a report of his lecture appearing in the *Rosendale Free Press*. We see that the lecture was one of a series "for men only." Perhaps the youthful man of God thought the ladies might despise his insolence. He told his "men only"—or should it be "boys only"?—meeting that "Haeckel is not identified with science," and that "even as a scientist he has little following." Evidently the Rev. J. E. Ramsden is a much better judge of science than Huxley and Darwin. Huxley called Haeckel's *Generelle Morphologie* "one of the greatest scientific works ever published," and Darwin said that if he had known of Haeckel's *Natural History of Creation* he would probably never have written his own *Descent of Man*. But, of course, such small fry as Huxley and Darwin cannot count in the world of science against a colossal authority like the Rev. J. E. Ramsden. Yes, the great Ramsden has spoken, and the question is ended.

According to the great Ramsden, not only is Haeckel a scientific nobody, but he is "a man with an atrophied soul." You would never think it to look at him; but once more we bow to the great Ramsden's judgment. He also assures us, does the great Ramsden, thirty years old, with the milk of his *Alma Mater* wet upon his lips, that Haeckel, who has lived three score years and ten, has "never entered into the genuine experiences of humanity." The youthful exhorter has the kindness to regard the old scientist with "profound compassion," and thinks he should be the object of "the united prayers of Christendom." Well, we should be glad to see all Christendom praying for Haeckel. That would show how much efficacy there is in prayer. Meanwhile the suggestion may be taken as a confession that the Lord will have to settle Haeckel—for the clergy cannot.

What spectacles men of science make of themselves when they enter the hard service of religion! Here is Lord Kelvin at it again. In a recent address at St. George's Hospital of Medicine he had another gratuitous fling at "spontaneous generation." This is how he is reported:—

"Let them not imagine that any hocus-pocus of electricity or viscous fluids would make a living cell. Splendid and interesting work, of which some of them knew, had been recently done in what was formerly called organic chemistry, a great French chemist taking the lead..... There was an absolute distinction between crystals and cells. Anything that crystallised could be made by the chemist. Nothing approaching to the cell of a living creature had ever yet been made. The general result of an enormous amount of exceedingly intricate and thoroughgoing investigation by Huxley and Hooker and others of the present age, and by some of their predecessors in both the nineteenth and eighteenth centuries, was that no artificial process whatever could make living matter out of dead."

Why does Lord Kelvin flog a dummy in this way? Who asserts that living cells are manufactured in laboratories? Huxley laughed at the idea. True, but he also held that life originated naturally on this planet; that living matter (if it must be put so) did arise out of dead matter in the beginning of its earthly history. This is what Haeckel says now—and he says no more. And the fact that "spontaneous generation" does not occur now is no proof whatever that it did not occur in an earlier and very different stage of the earth's evolution. No doubt Lord Kelvin knows this, but it suits him to attack what is not defended.

Was it not this same Lord Kelvin who once suggested that life-germs were brought to this planet by a meteorite? That was one way of putting the problem back. But it did not catch on. We mean no pun in saying that scientific men thought it very far-fetched.

Mr. Raymond Blathwayt, the well-known interviewer, cannot forget his old clerical training. In a letter to the *Morning Leader* of October 25 he denounces "the ridiculous Humanitarian Society" and argues that certain criminals should be "officially flogged to death." It is curious how piety and brutality so often go together.

It was this same ex-reverend Raymond Blathwayt who wrote that pious lie about Haeckel in the journal facetiously called *Great Thoughts*. In the report of an interview with the Rev. Frank Ballard he wrote thus on his own account:—

"None can deny Haeckel's sincerity; few can deny a certain wistful eagerness; all must stand saddened at his pessimism. He himself, if report be true, is shaken to the very core as to his own position. A friend of his, entering his study a few weeks ago, found him in a somewhat mournful condition. 'What is the matter?' said he, and the great philosopher replied, 'I cannot feel certain of my own position; suppose all my theories should turn out to be false.' So that even Haeckel, whom most people regard as a blank materialist, is overshadowed now and again by the spirit world which surrounds us all, and to him also come the doubts and craven fears to which the strongest of humanity is liable now and again."

This sloppy statement, expressed in sloppy composition, was submitted to Haeckel by Mr. Joseph McCabe. Haeckel replied: "The anecdote about the wavering of my Monistic position is a pure invention. My views are firm as a rock."

The Godites and Christites must have an innings. All that critical week the statesmen—the men of this world—were engaged in averting a war between Great Britain and Russia. On the Saturday morning there appeared a letter in the newspapers from the pen of that peculiar person, the Rev. F. B. Meyer, calling upon Christian churches to make Sunday a day of general prayer for peace. It would never do for the Godites and Christites to be left out in the cold. But they were too late this time. Mr. Balfour was able to announce a peaceful solution late on Friday night. So the "general day of prayer" fell flat.

Mr. Balfour, perhaps recollecting his authorship of *Philosophic Doubt*, and forgetting his more recent *Foundations of Belief*, indulged in a sly dig at the confused character of divine revelation. "My utterances," he said, "have received as many commentaries as if I were a classic, and as many different meanings have been wrested from them as if I were inspired." Capital!

One of the funniest things said about the Russian outrage on British fishing-boats came from the lips of Count Lamsdorff, who told the St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* that the Russians are "too cultured and too Christian" to sail away and leave the victims of their mistake to die miserably without help. *Too Christian* is particularly good. The Russians were not "too Christian" to massacre thousands of Chinese men, women, and children on the banks of the Amur, only a few years ago. They were not "too Christian" to toss Chinese babes on their lances. Neither were they "too Christian" to hold a thanksgiving service afterwards, and bless and praise the holy name of their God for enabling them to murder all those innocent people without any losses on their own side.

Mr. John Burns made a vigorous protest against the erection of another big "doss house" by the London County Council—though he failed this time to carry the Council with him. Mr. Burns said that he had been looking into London's charities lately, and had even stood in a queue of 1,310 men waiting at three o'clock in the morning for a pint of soup and half a pound of bread. Amongst such crowds he had noticed the honest, deserving poor man out of work alternating with the cadger, the criminal, the loafer, the wastrel, the man who lived on the woman, the man who lived on the children, and the man who was frequently drunken, if he were not diseased. This was the tendency of things in this big city of private and organised religious charity. Providing shelter and distributing food indiscriminately was done by organisations that were "too often the appanage of religious propaganda." The Salvation Army wished to outbid the Wesleyans, the Church Army wished to outvie the Methodists, and all were creating poor, demoralising the worthy, and bringing all sorts of unwelcome persons into London. "Don't let us overdo this sort of thing," said Mr. Burns. He believed that these big male

lodging houses, these celibate barracks, were a danger to the men themselves, and a potential danger to the community. He would like to see the working-man a married man, and if not a married man the lodger of a decent woman who was married. Altogether, it seems to us that Mr. Burns made a wholesome protest against what may soon become a very crying evil; and we particularly admire his courage in pointing out the evil that is apt to be wrought by religious bodies which simply trade upon the general desire for social amelioration.

The *Westminster Gazette* draws attention to a "gentleman leaving for Foreign Mission Work" who advertises that he must dispose of a "supremely beautiful" grand piano at a third of its cost. "Who shall say," our contemporary asks, "that Mission work does not demand heavy sacrifices?"

That important body, the Wolverhampton Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, recently held its annual meeting, with the Rev. J. Guinness Rogers as the principal speaker. This gentleman remarked that the Bible was a wonderful book—which we cheerfully admit. He also remarked that it had triumphed over all its enemies—which we venture to think is very doubtful. Mr. Rogers said that there had always been men in past ages who were going to make an end of the Bible, but still the Bible was "unshakon as a rock." "The book," he added, "that could sustain attack after attack, and come out unscathed and triumphant, could afford to smile at the designs of its foes."

Let us look into this. Certainly the Bible still exists. So much must be granted. "Infidels" have not destroyed it. But did they ever propose to? They did not. What they proposed to do was to destroy the divine claims of the Bible. And in that they have succeeded. They destroyed the Bible's claim to be a scientific guide; they destroyed the Bible's claim to be an historical guide; they are now attacking its claim to be a moral guide; and when they have finished that third part of the job they can afford to let the Christian Churches hug it for all it is worth. For it won't be worth much then.

We ask Mr. Rogers to consider this. England lived under a monarchy eight hundred years ago, and England lives under a monarchy to-day. But the monarchy of to-day is not the monarchy of William the Conqueror. An absolute despotism has gradually changed into a veiled Republic. And just in the same way the infallible Bible has changed into a book which you can read when you please and believe when you like. Perhaps the book hasn't changed; yes, but we have.

"Lord G—, however," a London paper says, "although a faithful son of his Church, is a much better sportsman than his father, who took life uncommonly seriously." This is too good to spoil.

We are delighted to see the *Daily Mail* standing up for religion, though it may be doubted whether some religious people will share the sentiment. Our pious and accurate contemporary denounces "blighting science," which we admit it does not allow to come too near to its own office, and declares that England has lost "much of the high seriousness, and tremendous will-energy, which made her a power in the world in the days of her faith." The *Daily Mail* as a champion of "high seriousness" is calculated to promote the gaiety of nations.

There is hope for England yet. "It will take her," we are told, "many years to recover her freshness, her poetry, and her ancient force." Never mind the time. The great thing is that it can be done. We have the *Daily Mail's* word for it. And all the world knows what that is worth.

The "Do We Believe?" discussion goes on merrily in the *Daily Telegraph*. But what a question to ask in the twentieth century after Christ! One wonders why he came at all. Perhaps he came two thousand years too soon. He might try the experiment of coming again now. The *D. T.* (not the *D. T.'s.*) would be very glad to run him. True, it is owned by a Jew, but the modern Children of Israel don't neglect business.

Mr. George Harwood, M.P., has been explaining in the Manchester Town Hall why he regards the Bible as the Word of God. His one argument, if we may judge by the report in the *City News*, was that the Jews are a fixed race, while all other races are changing. Evidently he overlooked the Chinese, or perhaps he thought they didn't count. In any case, we see no connection between the tenacity of the Jews (which is very largely the result of

Christian persecution) and the truth of their Holy Scriptures. At the finish, Mr. Harwood was obliged to fall back upon his own impressions. He felt that the Bible was different from other books. Yes, but is it so different from other books of religion? That is the question. And there is no recognition of it in Mr. Harwood's speech.

The *Free Lance* used to be run more or less, on the religious side, in the interest of Roman Catholicism. The death of Mr. Clement Scott, however, seems to have brought a change. Our contemporary has taken up that old "big gooseberry" subject, "Is Marriage a Failure?" Amongst other persons it has interviewed "Saladin," and publishes "his opinions" as those of "a representative Agnostic." But on the marriage question, we believe, he represents nobody's opinions but his own. He advocates "legalised polygamy" as a social solution. Being a man, and not a woman, it did not occur to him to recommend "legalised polyandry"—which is just as decent and just as useful. Ingersoll's opinion of polygamy is well known. He denounced it in the most passionate language at his command.

Reynolds's Newspaper reports "a demonstration" in Hyde Park "to welcome back the British delegates who attended the Rome Congress." A letter was read from Mr. Holyoake, who did not go to Rome, and a poem by "Saladin," who also did not go to Rome. The only person present who attended the Rome Congress was Mr. William Heaford. When is this comedy going to end?

The Revised Version of the Bible is not half good enough. Some day we shall have a *real* Revised Version, with half of the Bible left out as quite unsuitable to the present age, and the other half carefully brought up to date. Meanwhile it is worthy of notice that the Churches are revising their hymn-books. The Wesleyans have done this pretty thoroughly, and "Hymns Ancient and Modern" is being treated in the same way. We hear that one change is *very* edifying. "Hark, the herald angels sing" is altered into "Hark, how all the welkin rings." The angels are dropped. And so is the euphony.

The Passive Resisters have had a big beanfeast at the City Temple. Mr. Campbell presided at the opening meeting, and his remarks were not all applauded. When he ventured to say that Nonconformists were not tied to the Liberal party, he was soundly hissed; which shows that the Passive Resistance movement is, after all, very largely, if not mainly, political. That is to say, it is the latest political move of Nonconformity in its ecclesiastical war with the Church of England.

Mr. Campbell declared that he was not afraid of Secular Education, though he did not accept it. What does this mean? In our opinion, it means that the Nonconformist leaders are beginning to see that Secular Education is likely to be the result of the religious strife over the schools, and that they are trying to get their followers a little more used to the idea, just as a horse is led up to an object he is pretty sure to shy at.

Mr. Aked came up from Liverpool to the City Temple meeting and had a great reception—as one who has made a gallant fight to keep out of heaven. But he could do nothing more than spout the hackneyed old hypocrisies about "religious equality" and "no sectarian tests," with a dash of "No Popery." Dr. Clifford indulged in the same foolish pastime. Of course he was applauded by his own party. But would he dare to talk such insincere absurdity in an open meeting where discussion was allowed?

Dr. Clifford has sustained his second martyrdom. They have distrained his goods again for the Education rate. His silver tea and coffee service (poor minister!) fetched £2, and a picture of himself, for which he paid £4, only fetched £2 too. So there is still a deficiency of £2 11s. 7d. Dr. Clifford says he will keep up this comedy until the Education Act is repealed. We are glad he has named a time. But, before it expires, the comedy may have to be taken off to make room for a more attractive performance.

Rev. J. Briggs, a friend of Dr. Clifford's, astutely let the distrainers collar his four volumes of Spurgeon's *Autobiography*, which went off at the auction for ten shillings. We fancy it was a tip-top price. Mr. Briggs is up to date.

Dr. Clifford "mounted the rostrum" after the auctioneer had done, and made another speech. We don't know the number of it—probably the five-thousandth. Amidst a lot of verbiage he said that "The only remedy was that all

Churches should be withdrawn from interference with State education." We agree with him; only we mean it, and he doesn't. To withdraw the Churches from State education you must withdraw their *teaching* from State education; otherwise they are still there—by proxy. And that means Secular Education. "Yes," says Dr. Clifford, with his eyes to heaven, "I am in favor of Secular Education too: Secular Education plus the Bible." Good old joker! He might fill the vacancy caused by the death of Dan Leno.

It was all on account of the lodger. His name was Walter Wallis, and he preached on the beach at Southampton, and was very religious. Looking about for lodgings, he lighted on the house of Arthur E. Rabbits, where he took up his quarters. He was comfortable there. He also made love to the landlord's wife. Finally the precious pair went off and lived together, and Arthur E. Rabbits has just obtained a decree nisi in the Divorce Court. He will beware of pious lodgers in future.

Parson Mason, Rural Dean of Bow and Poplar, is a modern Jeremiah. He weeps and howls over the sins of London. "Men and women alike," he says, "are forgetting God." They have also "lost faith in the Book of Books." What is more, they indulge in worldly pleasures on the Lord's Day instead of attending religious worship. Sad, sad, inexpressibly sad! Especially for gentlemen in Parson Mason's line of business. We beg to offer them our profound sympathy.

That funnily-named body, the Working Men's Lord's Day Rest Association, is on the warpath again. It is making "an earnest appeal" to the London County Council to "put a stop to the disastrous policy" of allowing public halls with music licences to open for Sunday concerts. These bigoted busybodies ought to know that the London County Council has nothing whatever to do with this matter. It issues a six days' license, and what the proprietors and managers of halls do on the unlicensed day is a question for those who have to carry out the general law of the land. If the Queen's Hall concerts, for instance, are illegal, any member of the Working Men's Lord's Day Rest Association (if it has any members) can take action against them. There is no need to appeal to the London County Council. And if the Sunday concerts are not illegal, is it not impudence on the part of this Sabbatarian society to kick up such a rumpus?

Talking about Dan Leno, it seems pretty evident now that his letter to the *Freethinker* in the spring of 1902, was the first symptom of the mental malady that overtook him. He demanded an apology for a libel he said we had published about him. One of our contributors, in some verses entitled "Dan Leno in Heaven," had described that establishment as utterly in the dumps, until a lively little sprite came along and sent a thrill of expectation through it. The new comer was the ghost of Dan Leno. He went to work, singing, dancing, and pattering, and gave the gods, the angels, and the saved souls a welcome treat. Applause rang through all the heavenly courts. Dan had saved the lot from suicide. Of course it was only a stretch of fancy, but it was no libel; it was the finest compliment Dan Leno ever had. And we told him so. Perhaps he is now justifying our poet's imagination.

National Secular Society.

THE monthly Executive Meeting was held on Thursday, October 27. Mr. G. W. Foote in the chair.

There were also present:—Messrs. J. Barry, C. Cohen, F. Cotterell, H. Cowell, F. A. Davies, J. Neate, V. Roger, F. Schaller, S. Samuels, H. Silverstein, T. J. Thurlow, F. Wood, and the Secretary.

Minutes of previous meeting were read and confirmed. Cash statement adopted.

The President, who was, unfortunately, unable to be present at the last meeting in consequence of a cold, gave a formal report of the delegation to the Rome Congress, the more interesting details of which have already appeared in the *Freethinker*.

The Secretary reported the Holborn Restaurant was engaged for the Annual Dinner on Tuesday, January 10, 1905.

It was also resolved that a new edition of the Secular Education Manifesto be printed, and the question of a new issue of Freethought tracts for distribution was placed upon the Agenda for the next meeting.

The meeting then adjourned.

E. M. VANCE, Secretary.

Mr. Foote's Lecturing Engagements.

Sunday, November 6, Public Baths Assembly Hall, Coventry : at 3, "Who and What Was Jesus Christ?" at 7, "What Do We Know of God?"

November 20, Manchester; 27, Liverpool.

To Correspondents.

C. COHEN'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—Address, 241 High-road, Leyton.—November 6, Glasgow; 13, Birmingham; 20, Coventry; 27, Birmingham. December 4, Leicester; 11, Liverpool.

J. LLOYD'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—December 11, Manchester. January 22, Birmingham. February 12, Leicester.

HORACE EAGERS.—The Shakespeare-Bacon (or Bacon-Shakespeare) literature is quite voluminous now, and you ought to be able to find some of it in your local free-library. We do not know of anyone of good standing in literature who favors the theory that Bacon wrote the plays attributed to Shakespeare. For our own part, we regard the Baconian theory as fantastic and far-fetched. It is possible to go on discussing till doomsday if you overlook the essential facts on which everything turns. One of these essential facts is that Bacon wrote works which he acknowledged, including some verses; and we do not see how anyone with the slightest pretension to literary taste could imagine that the author of those works (and verses) wrote *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *As You Like It*, and the *Sonnets*. We do not advise you to waste your time over such a mare's-nest. But if you elect to do so, pray take it from us that unless you read both Bacon and Shakespeare, and that with understanding, your opinion at the finish will not be worth a straw.

T. B. WALLER.—All the men and women in the English group at the Bruno monument (with a single exception, admitted as an act of courtesy so far from home, and referred to in our first week's Congress report) held N. S. S. delegates' tickets for the Congress—and held no other tickets. You must excuse us from doing more than state the facts. You can correct the fictions yourself.

A GLASGOW CORRESPONDENT, whose name we cannot quite make out, asks us to "give an authoritative pronouncement as to whether Mr. George Jacob Holyoake or Mr. Charles Bradlaugh was *Iconoclast*." We reply that "*Iconoclast*" was the name under which Charles Bradlaugh lectured and edited the *National Reformer*, before he left business altogether and devoted himself entirely to public work. It was never used by George Jacob Holyoake.

S. E. FURNESS.—"Suggestion" does not seem to have anything to do with magnetism. We never heard of its taking place except through the medium of language. Of course it is a very old thing, although it is now being studied scientifically.

F. J. GOULD.—Thanks for paper and cutting. Unfortunately you did not say what journal the latter was from. We see it notices the "crowded audience" at Mr. Foote's lecture in the Leicester Secular Hall. Next week we hope to be able to announce that you have won the Castle Ward seat on the Town Council.

J. S.—Pleased to know you think the Bruno picture was "first-class." Your suggestion as to a cheap separate publication of it shall be considered. Thanks for the cutting.

W. P. BALL.—Best thanks for cutting.

W. P. ADAMSON.—We have not had time to look into the cheap Gibbon now being published by Grant Richards, so we cannot advise you concerning it. From what we know of the firm, we should think that there would be no meddling with Gibbon's text. Glad to hear the *Freethinker* "enjoys a fairly good sale" in your district.

JAS. KNOWLES.—Thanks for your letter and cutting. See "Acid Drops."

G. L. MACKENZIE.—Glad to see your letter in the *Star*. The Christians generally howl for "blood" when there is a chance of a quarrel. "Infidel France" has played the part of peace-maker.

F. BONTE.—Thanks, but we noticed the *Sunday Circle* liars before. Their portrait of the imaginary Atheist named Whitney who was struck dead for challenging the Almighty is the neatest press invention of modern times. It beats the *Daily Mail*.

A. LAWSON.—Yes, we did debate with Harry Long in Glasgow some twenty-five years ago; certainly not less, though we have not the date at hand. The subject was the Origin of Man, and the debate lasted four nights. There was no "decision" on the part of the audience. Votes are not taken after public debates. We believe, as a matter of fact, that the *Freethinkers* were in the majority.

C. BAKER.—A good letter in its way, but Spiritism, not Mr. Will Phillips, was the real matter in dispute.

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.

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Foote delivers two lectures to-day (November 6) in the Public Baths Assembly Hall, Coventry. A strong effort was made to prevent the Secularists from having the use of this hall again, but we are happy to say that it was decisively defeated, and we congratulate the Town Council on its refusal to act in a bigoted and unfair way towards a section of honest citizens. Mr. Foote's subjects are expected to draw big meetings on this occasion. It is not so stated on the bills, but we understand that Councillor Jackson will once more take the chair.

Mr. Foote had grand meetings in the Birmingham Town Hall on Sunday. The first meeting was a record one, for an afternoon; it was larger, we believe, than any evening meeting on previous occasions; and the noble hall presented a fine sight as the lecturer walked upon the platform accompanied by his chairman, Lieutenant-General Phelps. After an introductory speech by the chairman, what is sometimes called "the religious" part of the proceedings, namely, the collection, was taken. Mr. Foote then rose amidst an enthusiastic reception, and lectured for more than an hour on "Science and Religion," with special reference to Sir Oliver Lodge's recent replies to Haeckel. His discourse was followed with profound attention, and very warmly applauded; in fact, there was quite an ovation at the close. Some questions were asked and answered. In the evening another splendid gathering assembled to hear the lecture on "What Do We Know of God?" A more intelligent and appreciative audience could hardly be desired. Happily it included a large proportion of ladies. Mr. Fathers, the Branch president, took the chair, and was supported by several visitors and local friends, amongst whom we were glad to see the veteran Mr. Ridgway, looking better and fresher than he did twelve months ago. Altogether, it was by far the best day the Branch has ever had in connection with the Town Hall meetings; and the Lord Mayor of Birmingham might have been gratified if he had heard the cheers that went up on the vote of thanks to him for granting the use of the Hall. His liberality is such a contrast to the bigotry of so many other "personages" in Birmingham.

Mr. Partridge, the Birmingham Branch secretary, the quiet man always keen on business (for the Branch), had a fine old time at the bookstall on Sunday; selling a large number of copies of Haeckel's *Riddle* and Mr. Foote's *Bible Romances*, besides a considerable supply of the *Freethinker* and other literature.

One very gratifying fact at Birmingham lies in the number of young men and young women who are gathering round the Secular standard. These bright young people are a prophecy of the future of Secularism there. May their number increase as the years roll by.

"Saints" came to the Birmingham Town Hall meetings from outside places. One came all the way from Evesham. Some came from Wolverhampton, and were anxious to renew the Freethought propaganda in that town. A good contingent came over from Coventry, where the newly formed Branch has another good winter's work mapped out.

Many little meetings were reported in the Birmingham papers on Monday morning, but only one deigned to notice the big Freethought meetings in the Town Hall. The *Gazette and Express* gave nearly a half-column report of the "Lodge and Haeckel" lecture. It says that "there was a very fair audience, in which were many ladies." Probably the reporter had to minimise the importance of the meeting in some way, and "very fair" was an elastic phrase, which suggested an untruth without actually perpetrating it. Perhaps the same motive inspired the sentence that Mr. Foote is "endowed with a fair share of eloquence." "Fair" seems a favorite word at the *Gazette and Express* office. However, it is to be thanked for the report itself, which is a welcome sign of liberality.

Mr. Cohen had another capital meeting at the Queen's (Minor) Hall on Sunday evening, and we hear that his lecture was the finest he has yet delivered there. Some discussion followed, and the meeting was a long one. This ended the first course of Queen's Hall lectures this season. There will be a fresh course in December, which Mr. Foote will probably take in hand himself. Meanwhile we may remind Freethinkers that they ought to be as liberal as possible in contributing to the collection at these meetings. Only a few of them pay for seats, and they should bear this fact in mind when the collectors come round. We appeal to *them*, of course, because it is to them, rather than to strangers, that we must look for the wherewithal to meet the inevitable expenses, which they may easily understand are pretty heavy. Ever since Mr. Foote's opening lectures, the audiences have kept up well, but the finances have sadly dropped, as though some auditors were getting into the habit of giving nothing, or next to nothing. Things cannot go on in this way, and we hope there will be a great improvement in the future.

Mr. Cohen lectures to-day (Nov. 6) at Glasgow, where we have no doubt he will have first-class meetings. We hear that his audiences improve every time he goes there; which is the best of signs.

Mr. George Cadbury stated, from his own personal knowledge, that all the Labor men in the House of Commons were Christians. We pointed out that this was not really true in the case of Mr. Keir Hardie, and was quite untrue in the case of Mr. John Burns, who was "well-known to be a Freethinker." We might have strengthened this statement respecting Mr. Burns if we had seen the report in *Reynolds'* of the recent discussion on "Municipal Puritanism" after a Fabian lecture by the Rev. Stewart Headlam. Mr. Burns referred in his speech to "Freethinkers like himself and Mr. Sidney Webb." Surely this is decisive enough, and we invite Mr. George Cadbury to revise his sweeping declaration.

The *Humane Review* (quarterly) for October opens with a poem "To Nero" by Ernest Crosby—the said "Nero" not being the famous emperor, but Mr. Crosby's dog. The sentiment is admirable; the verse is—well, it isn't verse at all, but impossible prose cut into arbitrary lengths. Lady Florence Dixie follows with a vigorous denunciation of "Blood Sport." Then comes an able, a calm, and an important criticism of "The Law of Vagrancy" by "Appellant." A charmingly-written article by Nancy Bell on "The Work of Dr. William J. Long," an American writer on animal life, is followed by Ernest Bell's article on "Humane Slaughtering of Animals," in which there are some strong words against the cruelty of the Jewish method. Other articles make up an excellent number. We heartily commend the *Humane Review* to our readers' attention. It is beautifully printed, and the price is one shilling.

Of course the *Daily Telegraph* correspondence on "Do We Believe?" has been carefully selected. We know of good, strong, well-written letters on the sceptical side that went into the waste-basket. But it was impossible not to give that side some sort of hearing, and now and then a very awkward letter crept in. One writer, signing himself "A Brother of a Clergyman," let the cat out of the bag to some purpose. "I have no hesitation," he said, "in stating that among the highly educated a rapidly increasing number of agnostics exists. It is impossible to get actual figures on the question of belief, but I know that in the University to which I belong many of those who attend chapel do not believe. They are forced to do so by public opinion, which regards it as a sin to seek after truth. A close friend of mine, who is a lecturer in another University, tells me that very little genuine belief exists among his colleagues. My 'bread and butter' would go short if I proclaimed my inward thoughts."

Mr. J. M. Robertson lectures at the Alexandra Hall to-day (Nov. 6) for the Liverpool Branch. The local "saints" should, and doubtless will, see that he has meetings worthy of his earnestness and great ability.

The *Leicester Pioneer*, an admirable weekly conducted in the Labor Interest, gave an extremely able report of Mr. Foote's lecture on "Holy Russia and Heathen Japan" in the Leicester Secular Hall. The report was a column in length, and gave the pith of the lecture in a masterly fashion. The crowded audience is noted, and the fact that "some scores of folk were turned away"; also that "many rounds of applause greeted the close of Mr. Foote's eloquent lecture."

The Power of the Gospel.

A FAVORITE argument for Christianity by a certain class of believers is the supposed power of the Gospel to attract, reform, sanctify, console, and preserve its adherents. They are sure it does so; they have no doubt of it. They take the power to be a fact, and look upon you as an ignorant fool if you express a doubt or denial. They will tell you that the Gospel only has this unique influence, and therefore must be the power of God.

This universal belief of Christians is not the result of inquiry and reasoning, but the outcome of teaching at home, in the school and the church, and especially of pulpit oratory. The belief is taught in the Holy Bible, and that is considered a sufficient proof of its truth.

Most Christians are very familiar with the following verse: "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Roman i. 16). The verse is a great favorite as a text for sermons. I preached from it many a time myself, and the sermon used always to go. I believed the declaration to be true, felt its influence, and communicated the warmth of my conviction to the congregations. It was in the days of my Egyptian darkness, before the rays of doubt and the light of reason began to shine on my mental faculties.

The resolute power of reason is great; and the aim of education ought to be to teach children how to use their reason—to search, observe, analyse, compare and weigh evidence in a scientific way. If this were done, superstition would gradually disappear, and the power of the priest would be broken.

Examine the quoted verse carefully, and you will soon see that it is not as full and positive as believers think, and as the writer, no doubt, intended it to be. The Church receive the message as a declaration of the all-powerfulness of the Gospel. The Church is never tired of relating the miracles of its influence. What it has done, is doing, and can do is a regular stock argument by its defenders. And no doubt the writer intended to convey the idea of an irresistible power in the declamation. There is an air of confidence and defiance in the whole passage.

Let us see what there is in the sentence. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. That much is about all the Church takes in. The Christian stops at the power of God. The power of God is almighty, infinite; therefore the Gospel is almighty to conquer opposition, convert and regenerate sinners, and gain all the world under its heavenly influence. He never tries to know whether his notion agrees with facts or not. His idea is from the Bible, the infallible Word of God; there is no need to question, and to doubt or deny would be blasphemy. But read on. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. The last five words in the sentence qualify and limit the first part very considerably. The Gospel is the power of God to salvation to believers only. To unbelievers, therefore, it is no power at all. And that is about the truth. Unless the Gospel has power to compel belief as well as to save the believer, its renovating power is reduced to a very small compass.

And with this all the facts agree. Had the Gospel the power which the Church claims for it, all the world and all the sinners in it would have been converted long ago, and the priests would have had nothing to do to earn their emoluments. Instead of that, the world is full of sinners. Other Gospels have more adherents than the Christian. In Christian countries unbelievers are more numerous than believers. I suppose we must take it for granted that only members and communicants are true believers. If so, unbelievers are a great majority in every church and chapel. And this fact does not give us a very high idea of the power of the Gospel of Christ to save sinners.

But is it true that the Gospel of Christ is a power of God unto salvation even to believers? What does the salvation mean? What are the believers saved from? Are they better men, more moral, more useful, better citizens, better neighbors, better husbands and fathers, better masters and workers, than unbelievers? If not, as I think is the fact, of what good is the power of the Gospel to them?

That many Christians think, believe, and feel that the Gospel is the power of God to themselves and others may be granted. But that does not prove that it is so. The Brahmin, Buddhist, Confucian, Mohammedan, and Mormon feel and believe the same way; but no Christian would acknowledge their feeling and belief to be the power of God. And, naturally, neither would they acknowledge the claim of the Christian.

But the crucial question is, Has the Gospel a power for good to them that believe, and others? Leaving aside the question whether the Gospel story is true or not, if it has power to save, reform, and preserve, it may be defended for the good it does. Personally, I would not mind granting that, though the Gospel story were proved to be a myth or untrue, if it could be shown that a belief in it was beneficial in its influence, it might be defended and preserved. I know the apologists will point to reformed characters and to useful service by men connected with Churches, and claim that the reformation and usefulness is the result of Gospel influence. But that would be very difficult to prove, as something else may be the cause of both. There are as many, if not more, reformed characters outside the Church as within it. And reformed men are found in every country where the Gospel is not known, and therefore the change is caused by other influences; and other influences may be, and probably are, producing the regeneration attributed to the Gospel in Christian countries.

The salvation power of the Gospel must be decided by facts, and not by faith. Is the Church any better than the world outside? I fear, in many cases, it is worse. Is Christian Russia any better than Agnostic Japan? The true answer must be that Japan is by far the best. Is Christian Spain better than Free-thinking France? France is incomparably ahead. Does the Gospel preserve purity, honesty, truthfulness, chastity, integrity, and charity? All know that it does not. The reports of police, divorce, and bankruptcy courts, weekly, and almost daily, tell a very different tale. If the Gospel reformed the drunkard, it would preserve the sober from becoming one; but it does not. If it really was a power of salvation to believers there would be no falling from grace, as we know there is to a great extent. As a matter of fact, it fails to preserve the faith or the character of a painful number of those who teach it. I doubt whether the proportion of black sheep is so great in any class or profession as in the priestly class. If the Gospel fails to save and preserve believers and teachers, as undoubtedly it does fail, it is not true that the Gospel is a power of God unto salvation, even to believers.

The foundation of morality is much lower down in the depths of humanity than in a belief in God and a mythical Christ. The Gospel and a belief in God has been, and is now, a hindrance to progress of every kind. Pure ethics cannot be founded on the rotten errors of belief and superstition. Super-naturalism has filled the world with injustice, oppression, degradation, and misery; and it will not be rid of them till ethics becomes a science, as it is already gradually becoming. R. J. DERFEL.

A Poet's Philosophy of Happiness.—II.

[An Address by M. M. Mangasarian, before the Independent Religious Society, at the Grand Opera House, Chicago.]

There have been those who have told us that the best way to be satisfied with existing things is to enjoy them. Others have advised us to be indifferent to good and bad fortune alike. Shakespeare has

made an ideal of the man that "fortune's buffets and rewards takes with equal thanks." Another advice is seriously offered by Hartmann of Germany: the destruction of the human world by the supreme force of united volition. Some day, when humanity shall outgrow the sorrowful illusion that it is pleasant to live—when it shall learn that the goal it seeks is not attainable here, or anywhere—then it shall rise to the summit of a purpose which shall honor man more than the creation of the world honored God, and put an end to this masquerade we call life; thus changing the ancient formula, "Let there be light," with which began our doleful pilgrimage, into a "Let there be death"—a death which shall wrap us once more in the impenetrable folds of everlasting peace. Such is the word of European pessimism. It was also a philosopher of the Hartmann school who said that the first untruth ever spoken was when God, having surveyed his creation, declared that "it was good."

We are familiar with that classical story, which is *apropos* here, of the two Greek youths who yoked themselves like a pair of oxen, and with their stout limbs dragged the cart in which their mother sat to the feast of Hera. The gods were so pleased with their filial devotion that they bestowed upon the handsome and brave youths the best reward in their possession—*death!*

The Gospel of Christianity, on the other hand, would make the present darkness bearable by painting in rosy hues the glory of the future: We must bend under the cross now, that we may win the jeweled crown in the world to come. Hence the lugubrious hymns written to wean us from the pleasures of life, and to remind us that "here we have no abiding city."

But there is another solution, which is advocated by the poet of the Orient—Omar Khayyām. His is the gospel of love, wine, and song! Not self-sacrifice, but self-indulgence, is what he recommends. He does this so beautifully, so gracefully, with such cogency, charm, and melody—with so much fire and force—that it "almost persuades" us to subscribe to his epicurean creed. Let him be heard. We can hold on to *our* thought while listening to his.

What is Omar's panacea?

This:—

And lately by the tavern door agape
Came shining through the dusk an angel shape.
Bearing a vessel on his shoulder, and
He bid me taste of it, and 'twas the Grape.

At this point it would help us to try to grasp the central thought which gives this poem its atmosphere. What was Omar's philosophy?

There are three days in the calendar of life—the yesterday, the to-day, and the to-morrow. Omar proposes to strike out the *dead* yesterday and the *unborn* to-morrow, leaving only the *present*. To-day is all we have, and, as it is very short, we should make haste and permit to our senses—the eye, the ear, the nerves—all the pleasures within their reach. To torment the only day which we can call ours with futile attempts to explain its origin or its future is to make martyrs of ourselves—for nothing. Perhaps one of the strongest stanzas in the poem is the following:—

Some for the glories of this earth
And some the sigh for the prophet's paradise to come.
Ah! take the cash and let the credit go,
Nor heed the rumbling of the distant drum.

Omar evidently is not of the opinion of those who believe that in order to have the right to laugh to-morrow we must weep to-day. Every day is a to-morrow, for every day has been preceded by a yesterday. Moreover, when will the "to-morrow" in which happiness will be permitted arrive? And how does to-day's suffering or misery entitle us to future happiness? May not the habit of asceticism grow upon us in such a way as to disqualify us hopelessly for the joys when they arrive? Youth can look forward to old and crippling age, as summer to the desolation of winter or life to the loneliness of the tomb. Therefore in youth, and not in old age;

in the summer of life, and not in the winter; now, and not in death, should we seek happiness. Yes, now, while we are young, while the blood is galloping in our veins, while the roses are blooming about us, while the skies are near and clear—now! and not when old age clangs in our ears its tocsin of approaching decay, or when the chill of the tomb has begun to permeate the crimson blood of the heart! Omar, then, advises us to prepare for future happiness by seizing each present joy that comes along. If it is right ever to be happy, it is right to be happy now and here. This is the gospel according to Omar.

But what constitutes happiness? The three things which this poet recommends are: Wine, Song, and Love. All three produce the same result—a physical or intellectual intoxication. Under the influence of wine one forgets the cares and worries, the fears and failures, of life. With the ruddy fluid flowing in our veins, the "hags of the night" melt into thin air—at least for the time being. Under the influence of love the same transport is produced—the same abandon! The man who is in love is almost ethereal; he does not feel the earth under his feet; he walks on air. He is forever in the sunlight. He dwells in dreamland. The lover is entranced, rapt—he is intoxicated as with wine. The same experience happens to the man who is devoted to great ideals. He feels the joy and rapture of the master-thought of which he is possessed. He is blind to the small calculations and petty trials of life. His great thought lifts him far above the clouds and the canker of the humdrum world, to summits where shadows do not visit. Happiness, then, according to Omar, consists in having a great passion—a passion for a woman or for a cause; a passion strong enough to intoxicate us, to make us forget everything else, and to covet only its divine caress—strong enough to make us exclaim, "Stay, thou art fair!" Perhaps after this explanation we shall find it easier to understand Omar's elegant tribute to the "Jug of Wine," the "Book of Verse," and "Thou Beside Me"—

Here with a little bread beneath the bough,
A flask of wine, a book of verse—and thou
Beside me singing in the wilderness—
Oh, wilderness were paradise e'now!

The Grape that can with logic absolute
The two and seventy jarring sects confute,
The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
Life's leaden metal into gold transmutes.

Wine is the mighty Mohammed who scatters with his whirlwind sword the black horde of fears that infest the soul—that plucks the ruby from the cheek, the light from the eyes, and the song from the heart. It is the only power that can clear to-day of "past regrets and future fears."

Love, like doubt and sorrow, is a favorite theme with the poet. As it is, love is a subject we cannot very well get away from. Love is in every thought, in every picture, in every song, in every poem, in every prayer. It is in the glance of the eye, in the grasp of the hand; in the stars, in the daisy; it is in the zephyr "that kisses all it meets," in the dew that steals noiselessly upon grass and flowers. It is the emerald that melts into the grass, the sapphire that melts into the sea.

A loveless life would be like the world without the sun—dark and dead. Love is not less essential to the fruition of human life than the sun is to the fecundity of the earth, or the sap to the tree, or the refreshing dew to the flower. The difference between the bleak and barren branches of a tree rattling in the frosty winds of winter, and the summer tree, luxuriant with foliage and fruit, and the sun wavering upon its branches, is not more striking than that between a man devoted to some other and the man without comrade or companion in the world.

The poet is attracted to the lover for the same reasons which interest him in the doubter. They are both alive. The mind of the one and the heart of the other are on fire; the one seeking light, the other—love; both reaching out and beyond them-

selves. Like doubt, love implies agitation—the travail of soul which alone gives birth to ideas. All great intellectual and moral creations are born of passion. Indifference is not fecund; there is no harvest for the lukewarm. It is for these reasons that the poet feels a strange fondness and shows a decided partiality for the doubt which compels inquiry and discovers truth, and for the love which kindles life. Niagara is more interesting than the slow-coursing stream or the placid lake sleeping in the lap of the verdant hills, because Niagara is nature in passion. The sceptic's thrill and torment for truth and the lover's sigh for life spur the poet's powers, because these represent *human nature* in passion—mind and heart at high tide. The poet takes Hamlet, Faust, Job, Prometheus, Manfred or Romeo, Chimmene and Marguerite, for his themes, because these thinking and loving Titans alone rise to the full stature of his genius.

The poet of Persia will share with Homer and Shakespeare their immortality—not for the quantity of his work, but for its quality. Omar's theme is of universal and enduring interest, and the execution of it worthy of the highest intellectual powers. So long as the problem of human destiny shall interest man, Omar's song will continue to stimulate and inspire!

Some readers are offended at the bold and defiant spirit in which Omar summons the Deity to an accounting. Mr. Lewis, in his life of Goethe, tells us how the English booksellers refused to publish the "Prologue in Heaven," with which the poem of *Faust* opens. It was considered so blasphemous that even Coleridge concluded to leave it out from his translation of the work rather than run the risk of scandalising the British public. The objection to Goethe's Prologue was that he introduced Mephistopheles into the Divine presence, putting at the same time in his mouth words of defiance, bordering on contempt. Mr. Lewis then quotes the following from one of the miracle plays, which were as a rule composed and presented in the churches of the Middle Ages by the priests.

One of these religious plays opens with God, the Father, sleeping on his heavenly throne during the crucifixion of his Son. An angel appears and this dialogue follows:—

"Angel.—Eternal Father, you are doing what is not right, and will cover yourself with shame. Your much beloved Son is just dead, and you sleep like a drunkard.

"God the Father.—Is he then dead?

"Angel.—Aye, that he is.

"God the Father.—Devil take me if I knew anything about it."*

After the English public had read this, it was glad enough to tolerate Goethe's Prologue in Heaven. There is nothing in Omar that can suggest such flippancy. Even Job, in the Old Testament, is less refined in his imprecations against the Deity—the fulminations he hurls at his Maker—than is Omar in his boldest utterances. Job it seems has a personal quarrel with Jehovah, while Omar proposes to the Deity human problems for solution. Moreover, Job's pessimism lacks the picturesque element which helps so much to relieve Omar's thought of its shadows.

Perhaps the boldest expression of thought in the *Rubaiyat* is the following:—

Oh, Thou, who man of baser earth didst make
And e'en with Paradise devise the snake:
For all the sin wherewith the face of man
Is blacken'd—man's Forgiveness give—and take!

We have heard much of man being on trial before his God, and in need of God's mercy. Omar intimates that God himself shall not escape trial—there is a judgment day for him, too. On that day he shall ask for mercy, which suffering humanity, having learned the lesson of compassion through sorrow and sin, shall cheerfully grant him. *Let us forgive and be forgiven*, will be the text of our Reconciliation!

For the thorn in the rose, the tear in the eye, the sigh in the voice, the cloud in the sky, and the death that strangles life—oh, God, we forgive thee!

* *Life of Goethe*, Vol. II., p. 288.

In fact, it is not irreverence, but a strong sense of justice which prompts the Persian poet to protest against the treatment accorded to human beings who have, against their will, been "provoked out of senseless nothing" into a "conscious something." He would know why men are treated as though they were a "moving row of magic shadow shapes that come and go," and why the Master of this show, whose hand is directing the ghostly dance, hides himself in the darkness!

Impotent pieces of the game he plays
Upon his chequer-board of nights and days,
Hither and thither moves, and checks and stays,
And one by one back in the closet lays.

It will take many a quaff of the cup to reconcile man to such insolent treatment—insolent enough to make even a worm turn in the dust!

A moment in annihilation's waste,
A moment of the well of life to taste.

We have, then, infinite yearnings, but only finite means to satisfy them; we can love for ever, but the object of our love is mortal; we thirst for the absolute truth, but the relative, or opinion at best, is all we may have. We long for immortality, but a *moment* is all we can claim. We open our mouth for the bread of life, and behold it is stopped with dust! Why is the desire permitted and its satisfaction withheld? Why the pursuit of truth enjoined upon us while the truth itself is denied us? Why goad us to set sail for an undiscoverable shore, and upon a sea for which we have neither sail nor compass?

If coming had been in my power
I would not have come.
If going had been in my power—I would not go.
Oh best of all lots, if in this world of clay
I had come not, nor gone,
Nor been at all.

Is it any wonder that the earnest inquirer, whose prayer returns to him unanswered, should cease to look for help from above?

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,
Lift not your hands to It for help—for It
As impotently rolls as you or I.

For help he must fall back upon himself. That is the lesson which all earnest and honest inquirers learn sooner or later in this world.

I sent my soul through the Invisible.
Some letter of that After-life to spell;
And by and by my soul returned to me
And answer'd 'I myself am Heav'n and Hell.'

But Omar has also deep yearnings for the Ideal, glimpses of which have visited his eye. He permits his thoughts to wander, at times, to those higher regions where "phantasy piles her towers, rears her colonnades," and wraps them all in the azure drapery of hope.

Ah Love! could you and I with him conspire
To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Remould it nearer to the Heart's desire!

Now and then his eye glistened with the streaks of a new dawn trembling in the sky—a dawn which shall come not by miracle, or from above, but as the foregleam of a reconstructed, enlightened humanity.

With this hope he would confront the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." Yes, with the suns of such a future as he has reared in his thoughts shining in his face, he can press the bitter cup of death to his lips and "lie down to pleasant dreams."

Does not Omar, after all, learn and teach the same truth which Faust, after a turbulent career, succeeded in mastering? It was to the thought of a happier humanity made possible by his own earnest and generous efforts that Goethe's hero exclaimed: "*Du Bist Schön.*" To remould the world nearer the heart's desire was Omar's, as well as Faust's, salvation.

In *Candide* Voltaire finds the cure of pessimism in withdrawing from barren dialectics to interests that are practical. Go into your garden, he says, plant and produce, and your fever will leave you.

This was also Carlyle's panacea: "Produce, produce!" he shouts. In action, in devotion to an end

beyond self is the medicine that can minister to a mind diseased. The same grand gospel is in George Eliot's *Choir Invisible*. Work is the best creed. Work and Thought and Love—the best Religion.

When the French Revolution was at a raging pitch, and the frown of the guillotine was upon all brave men, Condorcet, the French philosopher, though hourly awaiting in his cell the hangman's visit, took up his pen, and with death knocking at his prison door, inscribed these wonderful words, fit to be called the "Swan-Song" of all truly great men and women: "Our hopes as to the future of the human race may be summed up in these three points: The raising of nations to a common level; the progress towards equality in each separate people; lastly, the practical amelioration of the lot of man. It is in the contemplation of such a future that the philosopher may find a safe asylum in all troubles; may live in that true Paradise to which his reason may look forward with confidence, and which his sympathy with humanity may invest with a rapture of the purest kind."

The Saint goes to his grave sustained by the expectation of the glory awaiting him in the skies; the Martyr hugs the flames which promise him an immortal crown, but the Philosopher, trembling upon the brink of the grave, forgets himself, entranced by the sweet hope of a better future for mankind here on earth. This is the Paradise he sees descending from above, and in the glory of this vision he closes his eyes. This is sublime beyond compare!

No stretch of the imagination is necessary to make us believe that Omar, too, looked forward to the time when an awakened humanity would "remould the world nearer to the heart's desire," and with that hope as a seed in his heart he went to sleep under a crimson rain which has been falling upon his grave for the last eight hundred years—a rain of Roses!

Correspondence.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON ON EVIDENCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—We believe in the murder of Julius Cæsar on one-twentieth of the evidence on which some reject the resurrection of Jesus, complains the Bishop of London. If it were so, it would be quite reasonable, seeing that the assassination of Cæsar was an event at least a billion times more natural than the resurrection of Jesus. *No hearsay "evidence"* can justify us in believing in the supernatural. We must have at least as direct evidence as those present at the resurrection are said to have had before we can be put on equal terms with them. Moses saw the back parts of Jehovah, it is alleged. We may believe in Jehovah when he gives us the same evidence he is said to have given Moses. Why should we be asked to believe on hearsay when Moses and others are alleged to have had ocular demonstration? If Jehovah is infinite, then, as your contributor, Mr. Derfel, well said some weeks ago, we are as near him now as we ever can be; and how an infinite God can show any back parts is an infinitely difficult problem to solve.

SOLVITUR AMBULANDO.

GHOSTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Coleridge, once, on being asked "if he believed in ghosts?" replied, "No, sir, I've seen too many of 'em!" I, on the other hand, not having, so far as I know, seen one, do not believe in 'em. So extremes meet! If, however, as Christmas will soon be here, you think it worth while to open your columns to a discussion on the evidence, if any, in favor of the existence of ghosts, I venture to suggest that Mr. W. Phillips should give us his definition of a ghost. I believe Jasper Petulengro, who disbelieved in a soul, declared to George Borrow that he had seen "Jerry Abershaw's spook." Thus it appears that one may believe in ghosts and yet disbelieve in a soul!

D. ROLL.

First Scot: "What sort o' minister hae ye gotten, Geordie?" Second Scot: "Oh, weel, he's muckle worth. We seldom get a glint o' him; six days o' th' week he's envees'ble, and on the seventh he's incomprehens'ble."

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.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): Annual General Meeting of members; 3.15, Religious Freethought Parliament; 7.30, Conversazione for members and friends.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Liberal Hall, Broadway, Forest Gate, E.): Doors open 7, chair 7.30, W. J. Ramsey, "Is There a God?"

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Bull Ring Coffee House): Thursday, Nov. 10, at 8, J. Shields, a Paper on Botany.

COVENTRY BRANCH N. S. S. (Public Baths Assembly Hall): 3, G. W. Foote, "Who and What Was Jesus Christ?"; 7, "What Do We Know of God?"

FAIRFORTH (Secular Sunday School, Pole-lane): 6.30, Quarterly Meeting.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (110 Brunswick-street): 12 noon, C. Cohen, "Some Old Problems with Modern Answers"; 6.30, "Atheism v. Theism: The Final Issue." Committee meets at 1 p.m.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 3, John M. Robertson, "The Meaning of Materialism"; 7, "The Compromises of Christians." Monday and Tuesday, at 8, Public Debate on "Do the Dead Return?" between H. Percy Ward and Ernest Marklew (Editor of the *Medium*, and Lecturer of the Preston Spiritualist Society). Admission 3d. and 6d.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, All Saints): 3, H. Percy Ward, "Has Man a Free Will"; 6.30, Debate with W. Simpson; subject, "Atheism: For and Against." Tea at 5.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation Schools, Market-place): 7.30, Committee Meeting; lecture arrangements.

PHONOGRAPH in handsome moulded dark oak case, chain driving band, improved motor, plated movements, large aluminium trumpet, superior recorder and reproducer; 32s. carriage paid. Musical instruments, strings, etc. State your wants and write for prices.—ROSETTI, Harrow-road, Leytonstone, Essex.

THE BEST BOOK

ON NEO-MALTHUSIANISM IS, I BELIEVE,
**TRUE MORALITY, or THE THEORY and PRACTICE
OF NEO-MALTHUSIANISM.**

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

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

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

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

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

Orders should be sent to the author,

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

Pamphlets by C. COHEN.

An Outline of Evolutionary Ethics - 6d.

Foreign Missions: Their Dangers and
Delusions. Full of Facts and Figures. A
Complete Exposure of the Missionary
Movement - 9d.

What is the Use of Prayer - 2d.

Evolution and Christianity - 2d.

Pain and Providence - 1d.

Freethought Publishing Co., Ltd., 2 Newcastle-st., London, E.C.

FREE OVERCOATS

I WANT to suggest to you a plan by which you can get a first-class Rainproof Overcoat without laying out a single penny. I have just placed a contract for sufficient material to make 6,000 (six thousand) Overcoats in 10 different designs and colors. I am making up sets of patterns, and will send same with self-measurement form and illustrations to any reader on receipt of name and address. I would suggest that you show the patterns round amongst your friends, and to your friends' friends; and when you have got me orders for 10 Overcoats I will make you one for yourself, free of all cost.

Or if you first buy one for yourself as a sample, which will help you very much in getting orders, I will return your money in full as soon as I have received the 10 orders.

The price for each Overcoat will be

21s. only.

And every garment will be honest value at 30s. The cloths are all thoroughly rainproof, all wool, best colors, latest designs. Fit and satisfaction guaranteed in every case. Any reader with only a small amount of push and go in him can easily sell 10 of these coats during spare time in *one week*.

13 Years Ago

I secured a few patterns of Suitings and Overcoatings, took them round to my friends and got an introduction to their friends. Always taking care to offer materials good in both quality and value, year by year my trade increased until now I supply thousands upon thousands of people with goods every year. My advertisement this week will enable anyone to make a beginning exactly on the same lines as I did

13 Years Ago

Will you allow me to send you patterns and thus get an overcoat in an easier fashion than you have ever dreamt of previously?

If you give this a trial it may be the means of starting you in a successful business.

ANOTHER EYE OPENER.

LOT 11.

1 Pair Pure Wool Blankets
1 Pair Large Bed Sheets
1 Beautiful Quilt
1 Bed-Room Hearthrug
1 Pair Fine Lace Curtains
1 Long Pillow Case
1 Pair Short Pillow Cases
1 Pair Turkish Towels

All for 21s.

Bradlaugh Boots

10s. 6d., 12s. 6d., and 15s.
PER PAIR.

Best Value in the World.

All Sizes and Fittings. Black or Tan.

FREE CLOTHING TEA.

Send me 24 penny stamps for a 1lb. canister of the finest tea you ever tasted. Selling in hundreds of different towns.

J. W. GOTT, 2 & 4 Union St., BRADFORD. ALSO AT 20 Heavitree-rd., Plumstead, London, S.E

VOLTAIRE'S ROMANCES

"Voltaire was the greatest man of his country, and did more to free the human race than any other of the sons of men."

CHINESE CATECHISM. Dialogues between a disciple of Confucius and a Chinese Prince, before the Christian era. *Paper covers 1s., postage 2d.*

IGNORANT PHILOSOPHER, The. Containing portraits of René Descartes and Benedict Spinoza.—As entertaining as a French Comedy. *Paper covers 1s., postage, 2d.*

LETTERS ON THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION. With comments on the writings of the most eminent authors who have been accused of attacking Christianity. *Paper covers 1s., postage 2d.*

MICROMEGAS. A Voyage to Planet Saturn. By a native of Sirius; and Twelve others. *Illustrated. Paper covers 1s., postage 2d.*

MAN OF FORTY CROWNS. Dialogues on National Poverty; Adventures with a Carmelite, etc. *Illustrated. Paper covers 1s., postage 2d.*

THE SAGE AND THE ATHEIST. The Princess of Babylon. Adventures of a Young Englishman, etc. *Illustrated. Paper covers 1s., postage 2d.*

ZADIG: or, Fate. The White Bull; The Blind of One Eye, etc. *Illustrated. Paper covers 1s., postage 2d.*

When ordering, a second choice should be given, to prevent disappointment

THE SECULAR SOCIETY,

(LIMITED)

Company Limited by Guarantee.

Registered Office—2 NEWCASTLE STREET, LONDON, E.C.

Chairman of Board of Directors—MR. G. W. FOOTE.

Secretary—E. M. VANCE (Miss).

This Society was formed in 1898 to afford legal security to the acquisition and application of funds for Secular purposes.

The Memorandum of Association sets forth that the Society's Objects are:—To promote the principle that human conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action. To promote freedom of inquiry.

To promote universal Secular Education. To promote the complete secularisation of the State, etc., etc. And to do all such lawful things as are conducive to such objects. Also to have, hold, receive, and retain any sums of money paid, given, devised, or bequeathed by any person, and to employ the same for any of the purposes of the Society.

The liability of members is limited to £1, in case the Society should ever be wound up and the assets were insufficient to cover liabilities—a most unlikely contingency.

Members pay an entrance fee of ten shillings, and a subsequent yearly subscription of five shillings.

The Society has a considerable number of members, but a much larger number is desirable, and it is hoped that some will be gained amongst those who read this announcement. All who join it participate in the control of its business and the trusteeship of its resources. It is expressly provided in the Articles of Association that no member, as such, shall derive any sort of profit from the Society, either by way of dividend, bonus, or interest, or in any way whatever.

The Society's affairs are managed by an elected Board of Directors, consisting of not less than five and not more than twelve members, one-third of whom retire (by ballot) each year,

but are capable of re-election. An Annual General Meeting of members must be held in London, to receive the Report, elect new Directors, and transact any other business that may arise.

Being a duly registered body, the Secular Society, Limited, can receive donations and bequests with absolute security. Those who are in a position to do so are invited to make donations, or to insert a bequest in the Society's favor in their wills. On this point there need not be the slightest apprehension. It is quite impossible to set aside such bequests. The executors have no option but to pay them over in the ordinary course of administration. No objection of any kind has been raised in connection with any of the wills by which the Society has already been benefited.

The Society's solicitors are Messrs. Harper and Battcock, 23 Rood-lane, Fenchurch-street, London, E.C.

A Form of Bequest.—The following is a sufficient form of bequest for insertion in the wills of testators:—"I give and bequeath to the Secular Society, Limited, the sum of £— free from Legacy Duty, and I direct that a receipt signed by two members of the Board of the said Society and the Secretary thereof shall be a good discharge to my Executors for the said Legacy."

Friends of the Society who have remembered it in their wills, or who intend to do so, should formally notify the Secretary of the fact, or send a private intimation to the Chairman, who will (if desired) treat it as strictly confidential. This is not necessary, but it is advisable, as wills sometimes get lost or mislaid, and their contents have to be established by competent testimony.

FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT

By G. W. FOOTE.

First Series, cloth 2s. 6d.

Second Series, cloth 2s. 6d.

Contains scores of entertaining and informing Essays and Articles on a great variety of Freethought topics.

The Freethought Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

Introduction to the History of Civilisation in England

By H. T. BUCKLE.

New and Revised Edition with Annotations and an

Introduction by JOHN M. ROBERTSON.

Demy 8vo, bound art linen, price Five Shillings.

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

THE SAFEST AND MOST EFFECTUAL CURE FOR INFLAMMATION OF THE EYES.

Thwaites' Celandine Lotion.

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

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

G. THWAITES,

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

Uncle Tom's Cabin Up to Date; or, Chinese Slavery in South Africa.

By E. B. ROSE.

One Penny. Post free, Three-halfpence.

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

NOW READY

THE POPULAR EDITION

(Revised and Enlarged)

OF

“BIBLE ROMANCES”

BY

G. W. FOOTE

With a Portrait of the Author

CONTENTS:—

THE CREATION STORY
EVE AND THE APPLE
CAIN AND ABEL
NOAH'S FLOOD
THE TOWER OF BABEL
LOT'S WIFE

THE TEN PLAGUES
THE WANDERING JEWS
A GOD IN A BOX
BALAAM'S ASS
JONAH AND THE WHALE
BIBLE ANIMALS

BIBLE GHOSTS
A VIRGIN MOTHER
THE CRUCIFIXION
THE RESURRECTION
THE DEVIL

Reynolds's Newspaper says:—“Mr. G. W. Foote, chairman of the Secular Society, is well known as a man of exceptional ability. His *Bible Romances* have had a large sale in the original edition. A popular, revised, and enlarged edition, at the price of 6d., has now been published by the Pioneer Press, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, for the Secular Society. Thus, within the reach of almost everyone, the ripest thought of the leaders of modern opinion are being placed from day to day.”

144 Large Double-Column Pages, Good Print, Good Paper

SIXPENCE—NET

(Post Free, 8d)

ISSUED BY THE SECULAR SOCIETY (LIMITED)

Published by

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

A MIRACLE OF CHEAPNESS

“MISTAKES OF MOSES”

BY

COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL

(THE LECTURE EDITION)

Thirty-two pages, good print, good paper

ONLY A PENNY

Twelve copies post free for tenpence for gratuitous distribution

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

THE BIBLE HANDBOOK

FOR

FREETHINKERS AND INQUIRING CHRISTIANS

EDITED BY

G. W. FOOTE AND W. P. BALL

A New Edition, Revised, and Handsomely Printed

CONTENTS:

Part I.—Bible Contradictions. Part II.—Bible Absurdities. Part III.—Bible Atrocities.
Part IV.—Bible Immoralities, Indecencies, Obscenities, Broken Promises, and Unfulfilled Prophecies.

Cheap Edition, in paper covers, 1s. 6d.; Best Edition, bound in cloth, 2s. 6d.

“This is a volume which we strongly commend to all interested in the study of the Judaic-Christian Scriptures. It is edited by G. W. Foote and W. P. Ball, and Published by the Freethought Publishing Company, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, E.C., price 1s. 6d. Indeed, we cannot conceive any Christian as having a faith worth regarding unless he has studied this remarkable volume. Teachers in Sunday and elementary schools will find it of special value as an aid to the exposition of the Christian religion from a thoughtful and critical standpoint. It is a perfect army of facts and comparisons. Since 1888 it has been the standard volume of the subject with which it deals, and its popularity is emphasised by the fact that the public have demanded a new edition.”—*Reynolds's Newspaper*.