

THE  
**Freethinker**

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXIV.—NO. 52

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1904

PRICE TWOPENCE

*Truth can never be confirmed enough, though doubt did ever sleep.*—SHAKESPEARE.

### A Christmas Sermon.

BY THE REV. JEREMIAH WARNER.

THERE are two very solemn occasions in the Christian year; Good Friday, on which God Almighty was executed, and Christmas Day, on which he was born. Every sincere believer regards them with peculiar awe, and from morn to eve ponders the transcendent mysteries connected with them. Eating and drinking, all the pleasures and pastimes of life, are out of place at such times. Who could pamper the flesh while thinking of his bleeding God, agonising on the terrible cross? Who could dawdle over savory dishes and sparkling wines while remembering the Incarnation of God in the form of a child for the purpose of walking through this miserable vale of tears, in order to save his ungrateful children from everlasting hell? Who could dance and sing on the day when his Savior began his sorrowful career on earth, where he was born in a stable, lived on the high road, and died on the gallows?

Yet, alas, the number of sincere believers is small. They are only a remnant, a little band of saints in the midst of a sinful world, oases of piety in a wide desert of ungodliness. While they macerate themselves the rest of mankind revel in all kinds of delight. Yes, on Good Friday, on the very anniversary of their Redeemer's passion, these light-hearted sinners play at cricket and football, go on picnics, and make excursions to the seaside; eating roast mutton instead of worshiping the Lamb, and swilling beer instead of mourning over the precious streams that flowed from their Savior's veins. And on Christmas Day, the anniversary of his entrance into this scene of woe, when he forsook his glorious palace in heaven for a paltry stable on earth, taking upon himself the burden of teething, measles, whooping-cough, and all the ills that baby flesh is heir to, they go not to the House of God and bend their knees in humble praise of his ineffable condescension, but stay at home, eating all manner of gross viands, drinking all manner of pleasant liquors, dancing, singing, playing cards, telling stories round the fire, and kissing each other under the mistletoe. Thoughtless wretches! They are treading the primrose path to the everlasting bonfire. How will they face the offended majesty of Heaven on that great Day of Judgment, when every smile of theirs on such solemn occasions will be treated as an unpardonable affront? Brethren, be not deceived; God is not mocked.

Still worse than these sinners, if that be possible, there are miserable sceptics who would have us believe that God Almighty was neither crucified on

Good Friday nor born on Christmas Day. These presumptuous infidels pretend that both those holy festivals are derived from ancient sun-worship. They dare to ask us why the anniversary of the Crucifixion, instead of falling on the same day in every year, depends on astronomical signs; and they mockingly remind us that the birthday of our Savior is the same as that of Mithra and all the sun-gods of antiquity. True, the heathen celebrated the new birth of the Sun on the twenty-fifth of December, from the fiery east to the frozen north, from Persia to Scandinavia. But what of that? Their celebration was invented by the Devil, who lorded it over this world until our Savior came to bruise the old serpent's head. He prompted the heathen to commemorate the twenty-fifth of December, for the plausible reason that the Sun had then decisively begun to emerge from his winter cave, giving a fresh promise of gentle spring, lusty summer, and fruitful autumn. I call it a plausible reason, because the Sun is never born, any more than it rises and sets. These phenomena are all illusions, caused by the movement of our own earth. But the cunning Devil took advantage of men's ignorance to deceive them; and having appropriated our Savior's birthday for another purpose, he calculated that it never would be restored to its rightful use. But, God be thanked, he was mistaken. Our Holy Church fought him for three centuries, and at last, having enlisted Constantine and his successors on her side, she exterminated the Pagan idolatry, and established the religion of Christ. Then were all the Devil's subtle inventions destroyed, and among them the sun-worship which disgraced the close of every year. Happily, however, the task was not so hard as it might have been, for the Devil had outwitted himself. He had accustomed the heathen to celebrate the day on which Christ *was* to be born, and so our holy Church had little else to do than to substitute one name for another, and to devote that day to the worship of the true God instead of a false one.

Since then, alas, owing to the native depravity of the human heart, Satan has recovered some of his lost power; for he is a restless, intriguing, malignant creature, whose mischief will never be terminated until he is chained up in the bottomless pit. Defeated by our holy Church in the east, he planned a fresh attack from the north, and carried it out with considerable success. He contrived to mix up our orthodox Christmas celebration with fantastic nonsense from the Norse mythology. Those who decorate Christmas trees and burn Yule-tide logs are heathens without knowing it, and it is to be feared that their ignorance will not excuse them in the sight of God. Away with such things, brethren! They are snares of the Evil One, traps for your perdition, gins for your immortal souls. Even the evergreens with which you deck your houses are a pitfall of the same old enemy. They are relics of

nature-worship, diverting your minds from the Creator to the creature; and well doth Satan know, as ye glance at the white and red berries and then at the fair faces and pouting lips of the daughters of Eve, that your thoughts must be earthly, sensual and devilish. I mean not that you will necessarily rush into illicit pleasures, and drink of the cup of sin; but the carnal mind is always at enmity with God, and at such a time as the birthday of our Lord we shall incur his wrath if we do not keep our attention fixed on things above.

There is another lesson, brethren, which you should lay to heart. Christ gave up all for you; what will you give up for him? His Gospel is still unpreached in many benighted parts of this globe. Millions of souls in Asia, Africa, and America go annually to Hell for want of the saving words of grace; and even at home, in our very midst there are millions outside the Church, who live in pagan darkness, and whose doom is frightful to contemplate. Deny yourselves then for your Savior, and if you cannot be as solemn as you should at this season, at least restrict your pleasures, and give the cost of what you forego to the Church, who will spend the money in the salvation of souls. A single bottle of wine or whiskey, a single turkey or plum-pudding less on your tables this Christmas, may mean a soul less in Hell, and another saint around the great white throne in Heaven. Do not waste your wealth on the perishable bodies of the poor, or if you must feed the hungry and clothe the naked, let your charity go through the hands of God's ministers; but rather seek the immortal welfare of dying sinners, and give, yea ever give, for the purpose of rescuing them from the wrath to come. Oh, brethren, neglect not this all-important duty.—The choir will now sing the twenty-fifth hymn, after which we shall take the collection.

G. W. FOOTE.

### The Welsh Revival.

FOR some weeks past the religious press, and a fair proportion of the secular press, has been serving up pretty liberal accounts of the religious outbreak in South Wales. So far as religious papers are concerned, there is nothing surprising in their describing it in the customary fervid phraseology, and assuring readers of the wonderful results that may be expected. The surprising, or perhaps one ought to say the disgusting, thing is to find the language of lower-class Christian evangelicalism taken over by responsible daily papers. There is, for instance, the *Morning Leader*, a paper that is suspiciously ready to pander to a peculiarly narrow form of Christian propaganda, resenting the apt comments of the *Lancet* to the effect that the phenomena in South Wales is of a neurotic character and spells a great increase in insanity, as "musty criticism," and writing as though the movement really meant great and permanent moral and social gain. The columns of space the *Leader* finds itself able to devote to such religious orgies is in striking contrast to its inability to find room for notice of such matters as meetings and movements in favor of Secular Education, and also to its treatment of the "Holy Jumpers" at Camberwell or the new sect of the "Faithists" at Balham. These latter are either frauds or lunatics. Evan Roberts and the rest are lofty characters, who will give the nation a moral re-birth. The essential difference between the two is hard to discern; and I am strongly of opinion that the *Leader* only discovers a difference because one is blessed and the other banned by its Nonconformist masters. For it would be really going too far to imagine that the *Leader* writers actually believe all they write concerning the Welsh revival.

That the average Christian preacher will make the most of this outbreak goes without saying. A number of them have either gone down to South Wales, or sent deputies, to "study the revival on the spot," and have done so with the solemnity of owls

and the perspicacity of asses. They have returned, reporting that this is a genuine revival, direct from God—although how on earth they know this is more than one can tell. Probably the basis of their report lies in the fact that the revival has caught on, and Evan Roberts has not made the mistake of running in opposition to any of the Churches. As is to be expected, none of these reports have erred on the side of understating, and most of them are characterised by an, as near as possible, absence of common sense. The *Morning Leader* reports that "every theatre outside Swansea and Cardiff has had to be closed," which is simply not true. It may be noted, however, that the *regular* theatres outside Swansea and Cardiff are very few, most of them being in the nature of halls hired for a few evenings by a travelling company; and *their* being closed is not a matter of very great moment. The Rev. H. Elvet Lewis reports that the revival has added something to "the ordinary human voice," which, he hastens to add, is indefinable—an epithet that might be applied to the reporter's judgment. Another writes that the revival is breaking down the distinction between trades unionists and non-unionists; which, I imagine, will not be the best of news to the managers of trade union organisations. And there is the usual batch of stories of bad books burned, infidels reclaimed, etc., etc.

The Rev. Silvester Horne remarks that every genuine revival—and the Welsh one is a genuine one, of course—"comes as a reaction against the extravagances of sensuality, animalism, and all the forms of practical scepticism." Preachers are usually more concerned in stringing words together than in their actual implications; but this might have occurred even to Mr. Horne as a very doubtful kind of compliment to pay Wales. Action and reaction are equal and opposite in morals as in physics, and the animalism and sensuality, to say nothing of scepticism, in Wales must have been very pronounced to create so strong a reaction. Moreover, Wales has always been held up as a most religious place, and now we learn, by implication, that it is far more irreligious and brutalised than elsewhere. We wonder what Mr. Lloyd George will think of Mr. Horne's analysis of the situation?

The curious feature about the present situation is that so many should take it seriously. This is a genuine revival, they tell us. Genuine—of course, no one questions this. But we have had genuine revivals before to-day. They are always occurring on a smaller or a larger scale. A little while ago the same journals that are now full of Evan Roberts were full of Torrey and Alexander. They brought thousands to Christ, reclaimed "infidels"—unnamed of course—caused people to forego drinking, swearing, gambling, etc. And before Torrey and Alexander there were others, just as after Evan Roberts there will be others. And with what result on either religion or morals? Well, so far as religion is concerned, the result is seen in the fact that Christianity has less hold on the people with the passing of each generation. Its revivals do not give it any permanent additions or strength. Those who believe rave a little louder than before, and some who were breaking away may be arrested for a time. But in the long run they do break away; and the departure of the stronger ones leaves the field clear for the mentally weaker and for the more hysterical manifestations of Christian extravagance.

In the direction of morals much is made of men signing the pledge, forsaking football, etc. The *Morning Leader* makes the questionable statement that the takings of publicans have fallen from £28 to £3 per week. At any rate, there is nothing intrinsically improbable in the stories reported being true, although I have no doubt there is much exaggeration. Given a people like the Welsh, naturally of a highly emotional nature, bitten by a wave of this revival insanity, always most powerful in small communities with few counter-attractions, and it is not surprising if, while the wave lasts, it should take precedence over all else. It is to be noted that the

reaction is not against "sinful" pleasures only. Surely there is no particular vice about football or cricket. Surely, too, one may go to a theatre without being a born criminal. The reaction is against everything but revival meetings, or, to be more correct, no interest is taken in any other kind of meeting. Thus the Rev. T. Levi, of Aberystwyth, writes that "every kind of meeting, literary, political, theatrical, has had to give way." To call this a healthy condition of things, or to speak of it as having any good ethical significance, is to mistake a fever hospital for a health resort.

What is taking place is an orgie of half-crazy revivalism. The originator of the movement—although Mr. F. B. Meyer has put in a claim to that position—describes how he saw, in a hedge, "a face full of scorn, hatred, and derision, and heard a laugh, as of defiance. It was the Prince of this world who exulted in my despondency." And this was followed by the sight of another figure in white who smote the first with a sword. I presume none but the very ignorant, even among religious people, will believe this to be anything but sheer delusion, but it is good enough for the leaders to pretend to believe it, and act a lie in the cause of religious morality. With this as a beginning, and a free opportunity for every hysterical man, woman, and child, to rave as they please, to conjure up visions and parade themselves as inspired, little wonder that the excitement has been great, and the scenes at revival meetings more exciting and more attractive than a football scrimmage or a fourth-rate theatrical performance.

And the whole secret of the success of revival meetings lies in providing an excitement, a stimulant for a morbid constitution. The conditions that prompt certain people to regularly attend revivalist meetings, continually profess conversion, and indulge in shrieks and sobs, is fundamentally identical with the condition that drives other people to drink. It is, indeed, for this reason that such services do, for a time, replace the desire for drink. Needing a stimulant, it is found in one place or the other; just as it would be found in some other direction were neither the public-house nor the revivalist meeting available.

There is, of course, an inevitable, and desirable, reaction. The notion that it is good to see people deserting all forms of healthy sport, to see men deserting occupations and women neglecting duties in order to spend whole days and nights listening to ignorant revivalists, is one that could never obtain with a people whose minds and natures had not already been debauched by religion. And when the reaction comes the extreme in one direction is as great as it was in the other. It is an old observation of medical specialists that periods of religious exaltation frequently alternate with periods of moral depravity. Already the lunatic asylum is taking its toll from the ranks of the followers of Evan Roberts. The publicans will get their percentage later on. For neither the drink evil nor any other evil is to be successfully fought by the methods of the revivalist, but only by the methods of wise social improvements, legislative reform, and adequate education. From other methods society gains, in the end, nothing. The only ones who do gain are the members of the Black Army, who are willing to foster any delusion, to favor any craze, and pander to any passion that makes for their own immediate benefit.

C. COHEN.

### Obedience to Christ.

ACCORDING to theology, God is an infinite and eternal being, omniscient and omnipresent, all-holy and all-loving. But all the attributes of God are fully shared by Christ, because "the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is one; the glory equal, the majesty co eternal." Hence it follows that Christ's teaching, while he lived on earth, must have been characterised by

absolute infallibility, and should be regarded by his followers as positively authoritative. To them his every word ought to be inexorable law, to be obeyed with unspeakable gladness to the very last letter. There can be no excuse for the slightest degree of disobedience, because every true Christian should be able to say, "Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me." A Christian possesses a dual personality—his own *plus* the Savior's. He has two wills, two consciences, and two hearts. He can plead neither ignorance nor weakness in extenuation of any lack of conformity to the standard, because the omniscient and omnipotent One is resident within him. "I can do all things," said Paul, "through Christ which strengtheneth me."

That is perfectly sound, scriptural theology. The Holy Ghost, who is said to be the spirit of Christ, dwells personally in every believer. Now, two of the Manchester lecturers, T. C. Horsfall, Esq., M.A., J.P., and the Rev. S. E. Keeble, do not seem to be sufficiently grounded in this great doctrine. The lecture of the former is entitled "What Christ Tells Us to Do, and What We Do," and that of the latter, "Christianity and War"; but both lectures alike ignore the indwelling Christ. It has always been the boast of divines that the Holy Spirit is ever present in the Church, guiding it into all truth and so protecting it from error, and that he is equally present in the hearts of individual believers, not merely as a vague, indefinable influence, but as a living, energising person, hallowing their emotions, cleansing their souls, and strengthening their wills. If such a boast were well founded, the Church would have been an accurate reflection of the light of the world, and every individual Christian would have been a perfect imitator of his Lord. But in each case it is the very opposite that obtains.

Mr. Horsfall makes some strange admissions. He admits that "we find what at first seem to be very great differences, and what, after most careful examination, continue to be great differences, between the teaching of Christ and the conduct of the majority of those who say they accept, and try to obey, that teaching." The teaching itself he thus summarises:—

"We find in his teaching such lessons as that we are to love God with all our heart and soul and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves; that whatsoever we would that others should do unto us we must do unto them; that if a man smite us on one cheek, we must turn the other to him; that if a man take our coat, we must also give him our cloak; that we must put away our swords, or pay the penalty of dying by the sword. We find Christ telling a rich young man, in whom he seems to have been peculiarly interested, that if he would be perfect, he must sell all that he had and give it to the poor, and come and follow Christ, who was going about doing acts of kindness to all whom he met, and taking a course leading, as he knew, to a violent death. We are told distinctly that unless we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, and generally supply the needs of the needy, we shall not be regarded by him as obedient to his commands."

Then, continuing, he makes this significant admission:—

"We find, in short, a kind of teaching which, if accepted and perfectly obeyed by any community, would make it certain that in that community no one willing to work would be without work, no one of good habits would die of hunger; the advantages of life, its riches, its wholesome pleasures would be shared with some approximation to equality by all persons whose character made it possible for them to share such advantages."

On the heels of that admission follows another more remarkable still:—

"We find poor people dying of hunger, and a much larger number living poverty-stricken lives, almost empty of wholesome joys; we find thousands of children stunted by hunger and by their miserable surroundings; we find countless houses unfit to be pigsties; we find vast numbers of people forced into vice and crime by the lack of all that could induce them and help them to live rightly; we find rich people

living in large, luxuriously furnished houses, many of them spending far more on their clothes and food and pleasures than they need to do; we find people who call themselves Christians gambling and betting, and we find even bishops excusing the beginnings of gambling and betting; we see very few rich people selling all that they have and giving the proceeds to the poor; we see that countries which call themselves Christian approve of many wars; we find a state of things in which certainly if a man were to take my coat by violence, instead of giving him my overcoat I should call a policeman."

Mr. Horsfall's contention is that Christ's teaching was divine, and, consequently, infallible. Christ described himself as "the way, the truth, and the life," and called the words that he spoke "spirit and life." After his death he rose again and has ever since filled and transcended the Universe with his gracious presence. Such is the claim made for him by theology, and, if he ever really existed as portrayed in the New Testament, such was the claim he made for himself. And yet, in spite of the infallibility of his teaching, and in spite of the alleged fact that his disciples are in him and he in them in the same vital sense as the branches are in the tree and the tree in the branches, Christ, as a teacher, has proved a colossal failure, as Mr. Horsfall himself virtually admits. Christendom is not walking in the footsteps of the Galilean. Even the people who profess to be his disciples are not living in conformity to his precepts. Mr. Horsfall frankly admits that this is largely true. But, being himself a Christian, he endeavors to get out of the difficulty in which such an admission involves him by resorting to a disgraceful species of verbal jugglery. "The teaching of Christ," he observes, "is not quite what at first sight it seems to be to the careless reader of the Bible; it is not so simple as it appears to be." That is to say, Christ did not always say just exactly what he meant. Some of his sayings were incidental, and therefore not to be taken seriously. The commentator must come and make everything plain to us. That strange quibble is followed by another equally misleading—namely, "that it is often impossible to tell from what we see of the conduct of Christians whether or not they are deeply influenced by the teaching, and therefore whether or not the influence of Christ would not be proved, if we knew its effects, by its influence on them to be fitted to influence the world very powerfully for good." Surely we need a commentary on that sentence. And yet Mr. Horsfall has the temerity to assert that "now, and at all times in the nineteen hundred years since Christ appeared on the earth, an immense amount of good work has been done owing to his influence, but for which the poorest would have been poorer, the unhappy more unhappy."

Still ignoring the indwelling Lord, Mr. Horsfall introduces a false comparison, a comparison which is of necessity fatal to the divinity of Christ. He selects the relationship between human parents and their children as the standard by which to judge of the relationship between Christ and his people. What he maintains is that as the imperfect obedience rendered by children to their parents does not prove that the children are hypocrites and that parental love is a delusion, so, likewise, the fact that Christians are so inadequately conformed to the teaching of their Master is no evidence that they are insincere, or that the teaching is not divine. But is it not clear to the most superficial observer that the cases are not at all parallel? Parents and children occupy the same human platform, and are alike fallible and faulty. But Christ and his people belong to two entirely different categories. He is infinitely perfect in every particular, and as the indescribably holy One he ever dwells in his people, and this personal indwelling ought to make them actually like him in character. The branches are as perfect as the tree of which they are parts. Christ is the vine, and his disciples are the branches, and they should be as pure and good as he is. It is his life that is in them. They do not live; it is he that liveth in them. But

as a matter of fact this is not true, but the very opposite of true. Christians do not conform to the Christian standard. On many points they do not take their Master seriously. On Mr. Horsfall's own showing, Christ is no more to his followers than parents are to their children. For all we are shown to the contrary in this lecture, teacher and taught may be equally human and equally fallible. According to the lecturer's own dictum, "the efficiency of the teaching is the test of its divineness"; and, applying this very test, we unhesitatingly "infer that Christ was not a divine teacher." And, strangely enough, the substance of Mr. Horsfall's argument is conducted on the unexpressed assumption that such an inference is true.

Neither Mr. Horsfall nor Mr. Keeble can conceal the fact that, in practical life, Christianity is a total failure. They both agree that "obedience to the teaching of Christ means the removal of the causes of war"; and yet, although that teaching has been in the world for two thousand years, Christian nations are, apparently, farther away from the reign of universal peace to-day than they ever were before. Mr. Horsfall contradicts himself to the extent of saying that "even the carrying on of wars is not a proof that a country is un-Christian." Mr. Keeble, on the other hand, holds that war is essentially anti-Christian, although organised Christianity has invariably favored, and frequently practised, it. Had Christ been a divine teacher, possessed of divine power, and had he dwelt in the Church as a whole, and in the hearts of individual Christians all through the centuries, war would have ceased long ago, and the world would have been governed in righteousness, truth, and love. Christianity has ever been, and is to-day, quite as warlike as Mohammedanism itself. The Bible and the sword have always travelled hand-in-hand.

These two lectures defeat their own object by their very frankness. Christianity still leads an ineffectual, ghostly life; but Christ is utterly dead. His commandments lie in the Four Gospels, cold and neglected. Nobody even dreams of keeping them, although every Christian admits, when challenged, that they ought to be kept. Mr. Horsfall says: "Christ claims from us the constant doing of what after the most careful consideration we believe to be right." That is precisely what Secularism claims from us. If that is all Christ claims from us, then the New Testament was written entirely in vain. Our own nature tells us to do whatever we believe to be right. Hence, we are to obey, not the commandments of a teacher sent from God, but the dictates of our own moral sense. But never was there a sentiment more damaging to Christianity as a supernatural religion.

J. T. LLOYD.

### Original Sin.

ONE of the cardinal doctrines of the Churches is Original Sin. By our connection with Adam we have inherited a wicked nature that makes us all enemies of God and heirs of eternal damnation. It is true that not so much of this doctrine is heard from advanced pulpits as formerly. Formerly all pulpits were full of the teaching, and pulpit and pew used to gloat over the supposed fact. The doctrine is not dead or neglected altogether even yet. In evangelistic and revival meetings and missions, and in Salvation Army temples, there is plenty of the old dogma to be heard. Besides, it is in the Catechisms and Creeds; and, more than all, it is in the Bible, the Word of God. The doctrine is one of the foundation-stones of the Church, and it cannot be abandoned without endangering Christianity and discrediting the Bible as the Word of God.

That the sinfulness of nature is taught in the

Bible can be easily proved from the Old and New Testaments. Take the following quotations as an example:—"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm li. 5): "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" (Jer. xvii. 9): "And were by nature the children of wrath, as others" (Eph. ii. 3): "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22). "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12). In these verses the teaching is clear and positive. I cannot see how the new theology can put new meanings in the words, or twist them to make allegories and symbolical lessons. The words must be accepted in their plain meaning, or rejected as errors, which would destroy the claim of the Bible to be the Word of God.

In the verses quoted the following assertions are made: That the nature of man is sinful; that man is sinful and guilty because he is a descendant of Adam, who sinned; that the sin of Adam brought death into the world; and that maternity is sinful. There is no truth in any one of the assertions. For many thousands of years men believed them to be true, because they were ignorant. Science was not born. Priests and rulers dreaded its coming, and did all they could to delay its birth, having a dim premonition that it would be disastrous to their power and influence. People were naturally credulous, for they had not learned to think, investigate, and reason. And they who ought to have taught and enlightened them neglected their duties. The ruling class were ignorant and credulous themselves, though more intelligent and knowing more than the populace. They did not want the masses to be educated. Educated slaves would be a danger to their master.

The idea that maternity is sinful is a monstrosity. Maternity is the most sacred function of nature. It is not easy to discover how such an absurd and wicked thought originated. The brain of a mother never gave birth to such a delusion; and a pure-minded maid who looks forward with a sacred desire to be a mother would be horror-stricken at such a thought; and it is not very likely that any father would start such an idea. There is only one class of men likely to be capable of initiating and perpetuating the libelling falsehood—namely, the monks; that is, the priests. The sinfulness of nature and maternity is a religious idea. Nothing but religion could be stupid enough to entertain such an absurdity. Reason and science reject the delusion with scorn.

At the birth of history the world was teeming with monks. Monkery was old when the first attempt at history was made. India, Egypt, and all other ancient countries had swarms of monks. Palestine was not an exception. Elijah, Elisha, and John the Baptist were monks. The men who concocted most of the New Testament, it is almost certain, were monks, for there is a good deal of monkish ideas in its pages, especially in the discourses put in the mouth of Jesus. The world is still swarming with monks, many—if not most—of them lazy, idle, filthy beggars, supposed by the ignorant masses to be saints. And Christendom is full of monks, as well as other countries. All priests, whatever name they bear, are monks. In the Catholic Church many of the priests call themselves monks; and what are all the priests, from the Pope down, but monks of the respectable order? And what are the nuns but female monks? Like all the ancient monks, they practise celibacy, and look upon marriage and maternity as unclean and sinful. The very fact that Catholic priests and nuns abstain from marriage proves that they are of the same order and cult as the monks of India and other countries, and that they look upon marriage as unclean and sinful.

I doubt if there is a greater curse on man than monkery, which is only another name for priest-

craft. Most, if not all, superstitions originated in priestcraft, and have been spread and perpetuated by priestcraft. At all events, that seems to me the most probable explanation for their existence. And what a huge dead weight they are on the backs of the toilers! They are all drones, idle parasites, non-producers, wasteful consumers, living on the labor of others. The world loses not only what they consume, without giving any equivalent for it, but also the wealth that they could produce, if they were worthy and useful members of society. What sort of men the monks of heathen countries are I do not know. But most Catholic priests I have seen are big, powerful men; men that would make splendid navvies; and most of the nuns are big, strong women. The priests and the nuns are such that would be parents to strong and healthy children, if they were married, as they ought to be, and would be if they were not slaves to the false notion that maternity is unclean and sinful.

The other assertion that man is by nature corrupt and sinful is not true. If God is the creator of man, the doctrine of original sin is a libel on God, on nature, and on man. Man did not make himself. Man was created by God. Therefore, if the nature of man is sinful, it is the fault of God, who is responsible for it, and the blame, if any, belongs to him, and not to man. Man is only a helpless receiver. He had no say or choice to be or not to be, when to be, how to be, or where to be, and it would be as rational to blame the vessel made by the potter as to blame man for being as God made him. It would be as easy for a machine to sin against its maker as for a man to sin against his infinite Creator. In a sense, man may sin against himself and fellow men, and be made answerable for it, but for a creature to sin against his Creator is an absurd impossibility. Apply the doctrine of original sin to plants and animals and its absurdity becomes at once manifest. But it is in the case of man quite as absurd as it would be in the case of a dog. Some plants are poisonous, and some animals are vicious, but not all. In the same way some men are born with constitutions naturally prone to evil, but the vast majority are born with a nature that will grow into good and worthy members of society if properly trained and placed in favorable circumstances. The failures of society are mostly owing to unfavorable environments and not to the natural wickedness of their nature. There are but few born, comparatively, that could not be made into worthy men and women, if properly placed and rightly trained.

The assertion that man is sinful and guilty because Adam sinned is more absurd, if possible, than the doctrine of original depravity. If we suppose, for the sake of argument, that Adam was a real man, how could unborn descendants be guilty and blamed for his sin? And how could a good and just God punish his own children for a sin they never committed and could not help? There is not a government bad enough, or a tyrant cruel enough, in the whole world, to punish an innocent man for a sin committed six thousand years ago. And supposing Adam to be a real man, and did sin by eating an apple, he is more to be pitied than blamed. He did not make himself, nor the apple, the woman and the serpent. It was God that made them all, and he made Adam so weak and imperfect, and the temptation so strong, that he could not help falling. The real sinner was the maker of all, and not the unfortunate victim of the bungling work.

But really it seems a ridiculous thing to discuss such a myth seriously. The only thing that excuses the discussion is the fact that the trash is taught to children as divine truths. Adam was a myth. He never existed, never ate the apple and never fell. Man was not created, he was evolved like other animals and plants. Tens of thousands of years before the time assigned to Adam, men lived and died. Therefore, the other Bible doctrine, that Adam's sin brought death into the world, is false. Life and death are inseparable, and both are in the world together from the beginning, and always will

be to the end, if there is an end to be. But whether there is or not, the teaching of the Bible is not true. As man was evolved and not created, there was no Adam, no fall, no original sin, and no death for a sin never committed. The whole story is a childish prattle, from the ignorant infancy of the world, and very probably mostly invented by interested priests, and this rotten rubbish is the only foundation underneath all the churches of the world.

R. J. DERFEL.

### What I Want for Christmas.

IF I had the power to produce exactly what I want for next Christmas, I would have all the kings and emperors resign and allow the people to govern themselves.

I would have all the nobility drop their titles and give their lands back to the people. I would have the Pope throw away his tiara, take off his sacred vestments, and admit that he is not acting for God—is not infallible—but is just an ordinary Italian. I would have all the cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests and clergymen admit that they know nothing about theology, nothing about hell or heaven, nothing about the destiny of the human race, nothing about devils or ghosts, gods or angels. I would have them tell all their "flocks" to think for themselves, to be manly men and womanly women, and to do all in their power to increase the sum of human happiness.

I would have all the professors in colleges, all the teachers in schools of every kind, including those in Sunday schools, agree that they would teach only what they know, that they would not palm off guesses as demonstrated truths.

I would like to see all the politicians changed to statesmen—to men who long to make their country great and free—to men who care more for public good than private gain—men who long to be of use.

I would like to see all the editors of papers and magazines agree to print the truth and nothing but the truth, to avoid all slander and misrepresentation, and to let the private affairs of the people alone.

I would like to see drunkenness and prohibition both abolished.

I would like to see corporal punishment done away with in every home, in every school, in every asylum, reformatory, and prison. Cruelty hardens and degrades, kindness reforms and ennobles.

I would like to see the millionaires unite and form a trust for the public good.

I would like to see a fair division of profits between capital and labor, so that the toiler could save enough to mingle a little June with the December of his life.

I would like to see an international court established in which to settle disputes between nations, so that armies could be disbanded and the great navies allowed to rust and rot in perfect peace.

I would like to see the whole world free—free from injustice—free from superstition.

This will do for next Christmas. The following Christmas I may want more.

—Ingersoll.

### Redemption.

DEAF to our passionate cries the gods remain,  
Nor deign to illumine our ignorance or doubt;  
The prayers men utter all alike are vain,  
No answer comes even to the most devout:  
Why, then, burn incense to them, why adore  
Since adoration's ever profitless?  
Rise from your knees and vow that never more  
Will you to pitiless ears your prayers address:  
Learn in yourselves alone to put your trust;  
Man has no Savior but himself alone:  
Grovel no more abjectly in the dust,  
None but yourself can for your sins atone;  
Redemption cometh only from within,  
To seek it from without is but a sin.

B. D.

### Acid Drops.

It is reported in the newspapers that the late Oscar Wilde wrote a book during his imprisonment in Reading Gaol, which will be published early in the new year. This is news indeed! How on earth did he contrive to write a book in prison? Was he accorded special privileges? Writing materials were not granted to the editor of the *Freethinker* when he was imprisoned for "bringing the Holy Scripture and the Christian religion into disbelief and contempt"—which was, at any rate, a cleaner offence than Oscar Wilde's. Mr. Foote had a slate and pencil in his cell, and once in three months he was able to write a brief letter; but the prison rules (for he was treated as a common criminal) did not allow of his being provided with pen, ink, and paper, except on those quarterly occasions.

The *Star* shares the Rev. J. Stockwell Watts's indignation at the idea that Jabez Balfour, on his release next year, will start on a lecturing tour. It forgets that the greater the sinner the better the saint.

The Vicar of St. Jude's, Southsea, laments the falling off in attendance at his church. He thinks the phenomenon is in close connection with the "remarkable decline in the number of candidates for Holy Orders." "There can be no doubt," he adds, "that a tide of irreligion is threatening our land, which nothing short of the power of God can stay." Canon Blake recommends "prayer" as a remedy. Has it come to that?

The Portsmouth Board of Guardians has had a warm discussion over the religious instruction of the local paupers. At one stage of the proceedings the Clerk gave a table of these unfortunate people according to their religious denominations. It was as follows:—

Church of England	...	...	...	1,584
Roman Catholics	...	...	...	114
Wesleyans	...	...	...	74
Baptists	...	...	...	26
Presbyterians	...	...	...	10
Methodists	...	...	...	2
Congregationalists	...	...	...	5
Unitarians	...	...	...	2
Jews	...	...	...	3
Atheist	...	...	...	1
Mohammedan	...	...	...	1
Agnostic	...	...	...	1
Roman Catholic Agnostic	...	...	...	1
Independent	...	...	...	1
Nonconformists	...	...	...	3

This table reminds us of the famous classification of animals into men, horses, quadrupeds, and ponies. But the Roman Catholic Agnostic takes the cake. He ought to be exhibited—unless he is a humorist and is having a lark with the Board. There are three paupers who call themselves "Nonconformists," but the total number of Nonconformists is 120, though they call themselves by sectional names. The Atheistic party amongst the Portsmouth paupers numbers one. If anything happens to him ours is a lost cause in that establishment.

The Czar is an extremely pious gentleman. Most members of the Russian Autocracy are very pious gentlemen. They are also dappers at the business of what is politely called "diplomacy"—that is, procrastination, shuffling, and oracular lying. Just look at the North Sea Commission of Inquiry. It will probably begin its job in real earnest after the second coming of Christ.

Rev. Murdo Macqueen, Moderator of the Wee Kirk, thanked God Almighty for the death of Lord Shand, which secured the House of Lords' judgment against the Free Kirk. Lots of people, including Scotsmen, thought, or affected to think, that such gratulation was perfectly shocking. They forgot that there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow, and that there should be an extra-special providence in the fall of a lord.

Moderator Macqueen is still on the warpath. Speaking at the recent opening of Dingwall Presbytery, he referred to the Moderator of the Free Kirk as "roaming the country, jumping, and stamping, and roaring, and bellowing like a mad bull." Such are what Matthew Arnold called the amenities of theological controversy.

"This sweet-tongued man," the great Murdo continued, "would, at the first moment, plunge his dagger hard into that Church's [the Established one's] heart, and bury her deep down in the grave of secularism and atheistic voluntarism. That body had provoked the Most High by

trampling on the Word of God, and was now under the Judgment of the Most High." Trampling on the Word of God! What does that mean? It means that the majority of Scotland's men of God see that the old game of orthodoxy is played out, while the Highland Brigade is determined to play it still for all the little it is worth. And it happens to be worth a lot, from a worldly point of view, because it carries the cash-box with it.

Talking about the Higher Criticism, it is amusing to watch the antics of some of its clerical exponent. Take the Dean of Westminster, for instance. This gentleman says that the Bible must be reverently studied, and that Christians must be in the front of the army of investigation. Then he proceeds to retail the commonplaces of "infidel" criticism as though they were Christian discoveries. And the poor ignorant Christians listen open-mouthed while he tells them of the patchwork authorship of the Pentateuch, of the double accounts of the Creation and the Flood, and so on, and so on. All of which, to take one instance amongst many, was set forth quite clearly, and far more entertainingly, in Mr. Foote's *Bible Romances*. It would do the Christians a great deal of good to read that work instead of following the Dean of Westminster. And they can get it for sixpence—which is less than they would be expected to put into the Dean's collection-plate.

"Brethren," said the Dean of Westminster on Sunday morning, "we have not lost our faith." Who thought he had? Who expects him to "lose" such a profitable friend? He would have a genius for losing friends to do that.

"Man's Place in the Universe" was the subject of Mr. E. T. Whittaker's lecture in the Central Hall, Manchester, on Sunday afternoon. Judging from the report in the *Guardian* it was a feeble effort; but perhaps the report does him injustice. One remark made by the lecturer, right at the finish, calls for a little comment. He spoke of the time which Christ foresaw on earth when "mankind should arrive at a perfect state of cultivation, in which every man should have his opportunity and live in the peace and knowledge of God." Christ foresaw that state of perfect cultivation, did he? How far off was it then? And how far off is it now? Why didn't Christ hasten it a bit? If he couldn't do that, why did he come at all? What is the use of foreseeing what never arrives?

Things are progressing. "But for Balaam's Ass there would have been no Christ" was a headline in the last *Weekly Dispatch* with reference to an utterance by "Father" Ignatius. No doubt there is truth in this. But it really took more than one ass to make Christ possible. Millions of them were necessary. And they turned up. They turn up still.

Rev. Walter Abbott, vicar of Paddington, died last Sunday during divine service. Had it been the case of a Secular lecturer, the papers would have treated it as a "judgment." Being only the case of a parson, it doesn't matter.

Bishop Gore has gone up higher at last. King Edward has graciously appointed him to the new Bishopric of Birmingham. No doubt he has an eye on something still higher in the course of time. Of course he has the other eye on Christ. We could say which one it is if we knew the eye he winked with.

Mr. Joseph Howes, lecturer for the National Liberal Federation, brought an action against Mr. T. H. Packer, Conservative sub-agent for Mid-Devon, for libel on account of a leaflet issued in the heat of the last election. Mr. Howes gained a verdict and a farthing damages. We gather that some reflection was cast upon his orthodoxy. He had been a good Primitive Methodist for twenty years, and objected to his wicked past being raked up against him; and the wicked past in which he had called himself a Secularist and read a paper entitled "A Hunt for the Devil." Even then he was not an Atheist. The farthing proves it.

The newspaper reports do not agree as to the result of the Howes-Packer libel case. Some state that the jury returned a verdict for the defendant, for whom judgment was entered, with costs. We also see it stated that Mr. Howes's "Hunt after the Devil" took place as far back as 1875.

The dear *Daily News* is printing the most astonishing rubbish in regard to the Welsh Revival. We mean that it would be astonishing if we did not know the dear *Daily News*. Its special correspondent, writing from the classic region of Tylors Town, says that "The collier's forehead is high and broad and intelligent." Well, if it is high and

broad, there is no need to say it is intelligent. But *is* it high and broad? Are we to believe that high and broad foreheads are universal, or even common, in any part of Great Britain—or in any part of the world, for that matter? Is this real Welsh phrenology, or the phrenology of the Non-conformist Conscience?

"Our Special Correspondent" tells the readers of the *Daily News* that the highest class in Welsh Sunday-schools "deals with the deepest problems of theology and Biblical criticism." People who believe that will believe anything.

Just as "blasphemous" old *Freethinker* jokes are now served up as decorous jocularities in highly respectable newspapers, and sometimes creep even into the religious press, so our sarcasms get taken up in time for the sake of their vividness by the most respectable journalists. We have written a lot about "soul-saving" and "soul-savers," and now the *Daily News* heads "Our Special Correspondent's" telegraph letter from Tylors Town with "Soul Saving in Wales." Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

The Welsh revivalist, Evan Roberts, according to the *Manchester Guardian*, had another awful experience at Libanus Chapel, Tylors Town. Shortly before midnight a man in the gallery cried out "There is no God." Probably it was as true as anything else said that evening, but it caused "a feeling akin to consternation." After a few seconds of awesome silence, Evan Roberts asked the interrupter to stand up. The report says that he "obeyed." We should say that he had the courage of his convictions. It required a brave man to face that passionate assembly. "Do you mean what you say?" asked Evan Roberts. "I do," was the reply, "and I challenge anyone to prove it." Thereupon it was suggested that he should be turned out, and had he been so he would very likely have been torn to pieces. Evan Roberts, however, had the sense to avoid violence. "No, no," he said, "it is such men we want to reach." Then he pleaded with the man, and the congregation prayed for him. The report says that "it is not known what effect was made upon him." Which means, of course, that he was not converted. Evan Roberts's converts were Christians before he took them in hand.

General Booth went down to Wales to exploit the revival movement. His first day's talk brought in six hundred saved souls. Prodigious! But who counted them?

In spite of all that big first batch of "converts," General Booth was not happy in Wales. According to the *Daily News* correspondent, he was "a little disappointed," and gave up the idea of making a tour in the valleys. It was not quite a case of "See the conquering hero comes." He forgot that the Welsh have a soul-saving hero of their own just now.

While General Booth was seeing what capital he could make out of the Welsh revival, John Morley, the Free-thinker, was talking good sense to a large audience at Woolwich, recommending culture to the multitude, and chatting to them very agreeably about the books they should read; and, although no men fainted, and no women were carried out in a dead swoon, the meeting was really enthusiastic, and cheered "Honest John" even when he gave some sly digs at democratic failings. He denied most emphatically that all men's opinions on all subjects were of equal value. Of course, it might be true that one man was as good as another, but he pawkily added, the statement "required some explanation." And the audience laughed. Which was good—really good. They saw the point, and took it. They felt that "Honest John" was telling them, as pleasantly as possible, some very medicinal truth. And we are sure they respected him all the more for it. Which was honorable to both sides.

The wave of religious exaltation at present passing over this country is not a purely local manifestation. Religious revivals of some kind have lately taken place in France, and now the excitement has passed to Italy. A day or two ago, at the small Italian village of Putignano, three missionaries opened a conference in connection with the anniversary of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Large crowds of the poorest people flocked to the meetings, at one of which the women of the congregation were invited to step outside while the men remained to flagellate themselves with heavy cords. Before the women were well through the exits the men commenced, and flogged themselves with such good-will that a panic set in, and concluded with a general stampede.—*Daily Chronicle*.

Herbert Mott, secretary of the Argentine Meat Preserving

Company, and deputy-organist at St. Augustine's Church, Highbury New Park, has been sentenced to eighteen months' hard labor for robbing his employers. His defalcations amounted to £22,000. The editor of the *Freethinker* suffered twelve months' imprisonment for laughing at the Bible. Such is Christian England's scale of crimes.

Rev. S. F. Collier, of Manchester, delivered one of the Central Hall afternoon lectures, taking for his subject "The Miracle of Changed Lives." He declared that thousands of men and women had been turned to noble living by Christian influences; and he argued that, as lives could only be so changed by supernatural power, this was an unanswerable argument for the Christian religion. But is not the "supernatural power" in the case a pure assumption? People can, and do, lead just as "noble" lives *without* Christianity. There are sceptics quite as good as any Christians. It is not necessary to say more. Mr. Collier's argument is already gasping for breath.

There is a new Bishop of Dorking. He has been Archdeacon of Furness, and rejoiced in the appellation of the Venerable Cecil H. Boatflower. In a letter to the clergy he leaves behind him he explains that he "goes up higher" very reluctantly. He has been positively pressed into taking a better job. And there is no room to doubt what "God's will" is. The venerable reverend gentleman has our sympathy. We hope God will temper the wind to this shorn lamb; in other words, that the increased salary will agree with him.

The Bishop of London says that it is not so much intellectual unbelief as moral inertness which keeps people from the faith. This sort of insolence invites the retort that everybody knows what keeps the Bishop of London to the faith. If the salary were thirty shillings a week, he would soon find something else to do.

What is the matter with Mr. Will Crooks, M.P.? We see by the *Daily Telegraph* that he was talking lately in a Congregational church at Bournemouth, and that in the course of his remarks he rebuked the people who suggested that Christianity was played out. But the jewel of his speech was this. He declared that if a man would go into the vilest slums in England, and advocate the abolition of the Bible in schools altogether, he would soon find what the people thought of him! Well, we dare say that the honorable gentleman was quite right; but, from his own point of view, was it a *discreet* utterance? No doubt the "vilest slums in England" are overwhelmingly in favor of the Bible; but is that really the best of testimonials?

"God have mercy on my poor head," wrote Florence Showell, of Culvert-road, Greenwich, before committing suicide. Not an Atheist, evidently—poor woman.

Jacob Popp is still going strong at High Wycombe. He has just answered his hundred and fifty-eighth summons for selling tobacco on Sunday. We admire his pertinacity. But think of the pertinacity of the magistrates and the police! They deserve medals.

Ethicists are getting on, under the guidance of Dr. Stanton Coit. This gentleman, who is supposed by some persons to be a Freethinker, having discoursed on how he found God, why he prays, and the sinfulness of Atheism, now comes forward with suggestions for a State Ethical Church. It is almost amazing; yet we read it in Monday's *Daily News*. But it is quite amazing that "a Conference of Positivists" should meet at Essex Hall, in response to Dr. Coit's appeal, and discuss the question, "Should Moral and Religious Societies accept State endowment?" Dr. Coit must be very ignorant of Positivism to imagine that it could possibly tolerate such an idea, and these Positivists must be very queer followers of Comte to meet together to discuss it.

The black King of Uganda's visit to England will be fresh in the minds of most of our readers. This being a Christian country, it took the police all their time to keep "Society" women off the dusky potentate; and his reflections on the subject would be well worth having. But he has left the writing of a book on his visit to his Prime Minister, whose name is Apolo Kagwa. This gentleman's account of their travels and adventures has been translated and published in England. One thing he couldn't under-

stand in the British Museum. It is only 6,000 years, according to the Bible, since the creation of Adam; yet they showed him a mummy 8,000 years old. One thing they showed him in the Museum was very gratifying; it was "the whale that swallowed the prophet Jonah." We wonder who it was that "got at" Apolo Kagwa? Or is Apolo Kagwa "getting at" us?

Jesus Christ said "Give to every one that asketh." The Bishop of Manchester boasts of being too swart for boggars on the high road. The Bishop of Manchester is—a Christian.

It was not an Atheist lecturer, but the Rev. Arthur James Humphries, Vicar of Drendon, who was brought before the Ulverston magistrates and charged with attempting to commit suicide. The poor man of God was committed for trial. He has our sympathy.

A Rugby correspondent raises a dreadful wail in the *Daily News*. He went over to Leicester, and called at the Gaol, in order to see his friend, the Rev. Thomas Chaupness, who was doing four days' imprisonment as a Passive Resister. To his astonishment and disgust, he was not allowed to walk in and interview the victim of base, brutal, and bloody tyranny. Well, both gentlemen have our sympathy. What a shocking martyrdom the poor prisoner had to suffer! Fancy, four days without a visitor! It makes one's blood run cold.

As we are going to press we are glad to see a cutting from the *Daily Mail* in which the statement which we gave publicly a fortnight ago is plainly repeated. The statement made by a local correspondent of ours was that Evan Roberts was paid £8 for two days' soul-saving in a certain town—which was contrasted with the £1 15s. per week that he had been earning down the pit. The *Daily Mail* reports that he was paid £8 at Tylors Town. It appears that "a sufficient fee must be forthcoming for a two-days' mission." We don't pay the money, and we raise no objection. But when a man receives £4 per day, is it not monstrous to print stuff by the yard about his pure disinterested love of God and burning desire to save human souls at any price? £4 a day is not *any* price. It is a *good* price. A lot better than "five bob" a day at hewing coals.

The savage, as he emerges from a state of barbarism, gradually loses faith in his idols of wood and stone, and in their place puts a multitude of spirits. As he advances in knowledge, he generally discards the petty spirits, and in their stead believes in one, whom he supposes to be infinite and supreme. Supposing this great spirit to be superior to nature, he offers worship or flattery in exchange for assistance. At last finding that he obtains no aid from this supposed deity—finding that every search after the absolute must of necessity end in failure—finding that man cannot by any possibility conceive of the conditionless—he begins to investigate the facts by which he is surrounded, and to depend upon himself. The people are beginning to think, to reason, and to investigate. Slowly, painfully, but surely, the gods are being driven from the earth. Only upon rare occasions are they, even by the most religious, supposed to interfere with the affairs of men. In most matters we are at last supposed to be free. Since the invention of steamships and railways, so that the products of all countries can be easily interchanged, the gods have quit the business of producing famine. Now and then they kill a child because it is idolised by its parents. As a rule they have given up causing accidents on railroads, exploding boilers, and bursting kerosene lamps. Cholera, yellow fever, and small-pox are still considered heavenly weapons; but measles, itch, and ague are now attributed to natural causes. As a general thing, the gods have stopped drowning children, except as a punishment for violating the Sabbath. They still pay some attention to the affairs of kings, men of genius, and persons of great wealth; but ordinary people are left to shirk for themselves as best they may. In wars between great nations, the gods still interfere; but in prize fights, the best man, with an honest referee, is almost sure to win. The Church cannot abandon the idea of special providence. To give up that doctrine, is to give up all. The Church must insist that prayer is answered—that some power superior to nature hears the grants and requests of the sincere and humble Christian, and all this same power in some mysterious way provides for all.—*Ingersoll*.



## Mr. Foote's Lecturing Engagements.

January 22, Glasgow.

### To Correspondents.

- J. LLOYD'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—January 22, Birmingham. February 12, Leicester.
- F. S.—Much obliged for cuttings.
- W. JONES.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."
- E. PACK.—There are so many Hyde Park "orators." It seems a perfect hot-bed. It did not occur to us that our readers would suspect you of being the peccant person we referred to last week in this column. We stated that he was a man with whom we had no personal acquaintance; and "no"—as we try to use language, precisely—means "none at all," or "none whatever," or any other form of the absolute negative. However, we will settle the matter in the most perfect manner by giving his name, as stated in the newspapers—Kenneth Macdonald.
- W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for cuttings.
- HAROLD ELLIOT.—There was never any charge for what you enquire about.
- W. M. & S. D.—There is, unfortunately, no Branch of the N. S. S. in Dublin, nor any other Freethought Society that we are aware of. Some of you in that city might get together. Why not try? One might have his name and address printed in the *Freethinker* as wishful to hear from others in Dublin.
- E. ATTWOOD.—Under consideration.
- JESS.—The verses are not without merit, but are not quite up to our standard for publication.
- F. S.—Thanks for useful cuttings.
- E. R. W.—Always pleased to hear from you. We reciprocate your good wishes.
- E. CHAPMAN.—Copies shall be posted to the addresses. Thanks.
- J. ALLAN.—See "Sugar Plums." The opportunity was nearly missed, as your letter only arrived on Tuesday. We should have been glad to announce the function a week earlier; but better late than never.
- H. FERGUSON.—So many questions have arisen over the "time and space" subject that we cannot go on answering them in this column, which is not meant to be controversial. As soon as we can manage it we will write a special article on the subject. Those who don't agree with us can then state their own views.
- WILLIAM VILE.—We quite agree with you. We hope to deal with the question of Determinism very early in the new year. It is essential that the whole psychological basis of morality should not be given away to the Christians; as is very nearly being done at present.
- W. P. PEARSON.—Glad to hear you had successful meetings for Mr. Ward on Sunday. He has our best wishes for his future at Liverpool.
- T. H. ELSTON.—Yes, we saw in Monday's papers the announcement of the death of Mr. Ralph Young, secretary of the Northumberland Miners' Association. Thanks, however, for copy of the *Newcastle Chronicle* which speaks of him in the highest terms. We shall be glad if you will send us a careful obituary, as suggested, for our next issue. Of course we knew that Mr. Young was an ardent supporter of Charles Bradlaugh; also that he was a staunch Atheist; and we are pleased to learn that it has been arranged for the veteran Martin Weatherburn to read the Secular Burial Service over the coffin in the Burt Hall, leaving Mr. Charles Fenwick, M.P., to deliver the speech at the graveside.
- F. DANIELS.—We are going to deal with the "time and space" question separately. With regard to "extension," you forgot, in reading our reply, that we are not responsible for the infirmities of human speech. The word "extension" itself is purely finite, for the "ex" involves a standing point. We advise you, also, to read again what we said about force and matter; and to recollect, in doing so, that the element of analogy and metaphor cannot be banished from language.
- JOSEPH BRYCE.—Mr. Lloyd has applied to Mr. Baker, and your letter is therefore out of date. If you are dissatisfied with his reply, you can state your objections in a fresh letter.
- H. W. MATTHEWS.—Thanks for addresses. We should not repel the support of aristocratic patrons, but we are not built to court them. Do you really believe, though, in Socialist countesses? Did you ever read the story of the lion who had his fangs and claws drawn to improve his appearance, and what became of him? There is no nobbling Freethought—and they know it.
- J. G. BLANEY (Cape Colony).—Our business manager is attending to your order. We are pleased to learn that in "dying for something good to read right away" you think of the *Freethinker*.
- T. DIXON.—(1) You owe us no apology; on the contrary, your letter is very encouraging, and we are glad to receive it. It is good to know that the *Freethinker* has played such a large part in your mental emancipation, and that your appetite for this paper increases week by week. (2) Father Ignatius is all right as a critic of the Higher Critics, but as a mystery-monger he is just a joke.
- G. SCOTT.—Received with thanks.

OSSTAN.—You didn't introduce yourself on Sunday evening. Still, we are glad to have had your letter. It helps to encourage us in our life-work. Your account of your first meeting with the *Freethinker*, 6,000 miles away, of your eyes dilating and heart contracting from sheer terror, of how the accursed paper gradually worked the miracle of your conversion, is vivid and entertaining. We wish other converts to Freethought would favor us with their experience.

G. DAVEY.—Your letter has given us pleasure. The knowledge that we have the "gratitude" of readers whom we have intellectually helped is better than all the wild mob's mad applause.

N. D.—See paragraph. Thanks.

FRANK DAVIES.—(1) Your Christian friend who tells you that we "publicly owned defeat" in our debate with Mr. Logan at Bristol, relates what never happened. He is also under a radically false impression. A debate is not a prize fight. It is supposed to be the elucidation of a particular question. It never occurred to us to ask whether we had defeated our opponent, or our opponent had defeated us. Such a state of mind is mere vulgarity. (2) Renan does not say that there is evidence of the truth of the Resurrection. He says the very opposite. It is difficult to say whether he believed in a God or not. (3) No profane historian, anywhere near the time, mentions the Resurrection. The execution of Christ is referred to in a famous passage of Tacitus, which is probably a forgery.

C. PAINE.—There is not a word of truth in the Thomas Paine story which you send us from a "believer's" letter in the *Daily Telegraph*. That pious lady at Paine's deathbed, recording his ravings, is a sheer invention. The letter of Publius Lentulus about Jesus is another rank forgery. There is not a scholar in any Church who would defend it. But it still lives a poor skulking life in baser Christian evidence regions and in silly newspaper correspondence.

A. WEBBER.—Dr. Clifford's long letter in the *New Age* only repeats the shallow sophisms, and hypocritical protestations, which we have so often exposed.

W. JONES.—Thanks for cuttings.

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.

It was dry overhead on Sunday evening, and the Queen's Hall lecture, unlike either of the others this month, had a fair chance. The result was a very fine meeting—the reserved front seats being particularly well patronised, and the audience including a gratifyingly large proportion of ladies. Mr. Vaughan, who occupied the chair, made a special appeal for a big gathering at the Annual Dinner on January 10. Mr. Foote's lecture on "The Virgin Birth of Christ" was immensely enjoyed. One of the most appreciative listeners was Mr. John Lloyd, who occupied a front seat, and was having "a night out." Several questions were asked and answered after the lecture, but there was no formal discussion.

We are pleased to hear that James Thomson's ("B.V.") translations of Leopardi's Dialogues, which we lately referred to, are soon to be published by a well-known firm at a price which will make them universally accessible. Mr. Bertram Dobell is our informant, and we understand that he will be responsible for the editorship of the volume, which is perfectly satisfactory.

Many years ago—oh so many!—James Thomson ("B.V."), the Atheist poet, wrote a withering satire on painful piety under the title of "Virtue and Vice," and it was printed in Charles Bradlaugh's wicked, blasphemous *National Reformer*. The other day (it was December 12) that poem was reproduced in the *Daily Mirror* as "A Poem You Ought to Know." Yes, the world *does* move. Give it time, and you will see.

Twenty years ago, the man who prophesied that James Thomson's poem would be reprinted in a highly "respectable" and "family" newspaper would have been considered mad. Twenty years hence—who knows?—the *Daily Mirror* may reprint bits from our *Bible Romances*.

The Blackburn *Times* of last Saturday (Dec. 17) had a very outspoken leader on "The Bishop and the Brute Creation"—in reference to Bishop Thornton's statement that "animals have souls as well as minds." It observes, quite truly, that the Bishop's statement is not novel; being as old as Plato, and, of course, a good deal older than that. It also suggests that the Bishop might go farther if he thought the question out. Where, it asks, is the soul-seeker going to stop? For there are no clearly-defined lines in biology, and if you grant a soul to a dog, you "can scarcely deny it to a parasite on the dog's back." Finally, it dismisses "resurrection, immortality, and future rewards and punishment" as questions which "while they stimulate the mind are of no great practical value."

The better the day the better the deed. The Glasgow N. S. S. Branch has chosen Christmas Day as the date of its annual Children's Party, which takes place in the Secular Hall, Brunswick-street; starting at 5 p.m. and ending God knows when—for it is not on the program before us. This is always a great function, and we expect to hear of a big crowd and a blazing success this year. Tickets for juveniles are threepence each; for adults sixpence; and can be obtained at D. Baxter's, tonsorialist and news-vendor, Brunswick-street. Members or friends who could assist in any way at the entertainment of the young folk should communicate immediately with Mr. J. F. Turnbull.

The Liverpool Branch is closing 1904 very hopefully. It has more members than it had this time last year, more elastic resources, and better Sunday meetings. In connection with the Branch there is a Rationalist Debating Society, which is well attended by all sorts of enquiring spirits—Secularists, Positivists, Ethicists, and even Spiritualists and Theosophists.

The Manchester Branch holds its Annual Soirée for members and friends next Sunday (Jan. 1). Tea will be served at 5.30 p.m., after which there will be "a social." We don't know the particulars, but we dare say they will be enjoyable, and we hope the hearts of the Branch committee will be warmed and encouraged by a first-rate gathering of "saints." It will be a good new year's opening.

The theological lectures are the worst attended in the University of Berlin. "It is curious to note," the Berlin correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* says, "that the decline in the number of theological students is not confined to Berlin University, but is observed in every other seat of German learning. The decline has been so rapid during the past ten years as seriously to alarm the leaders of the Church. Since 1895 the decrease has been nearly 50 per cent." One of the causes assigned is "the decay of belief," in consequence of "the destructive criticism of the Bible and religious dogmas by the professors of the modern liberal school."

In the December number of the *Reformer* there is a good, though rather belated, criticism of Mr. John Morley's rather carping references to Charles Bradlaugh in the *Life of Gladstone*. We referred to those references in pretty plain language when we were lecturing on Mr. Morley's book. Mrs. Bradlaugh-Bonner performs a work of filial piety in defending her father's reputation against gratuitous slurs. It is fair to Mr. Morley, however, to point out *per contra* that he gave, from a letter to the Queen, Gladstone's magnificent compliment to Bradlaugh as a speaker.

We regret to see that Mrs. Bonner devotes one of her last pages to a rather misleading statement concerning the balance of the old Bradlaugh Memorial Fund (there was no "Hall" in it) which has been lying for more than ten years at the Birkbeck Bank. We do not mean that the statement is *intentionally* misleading; we mean that Mrs. Bonner has not sufficiently refreshed her memory as to the facts. It will be our duty to make an official statement on this matter shortly. Meanwhile we may correct two impressions which Mrs. Bonner's readers will probably derive from her concluding sentences. In the first place, Mr. Foote has received no kind of communication from her on the subject. In the second place, it is not a fact that he has given no reply to a letter sent to him early in December. He received a letter from Mr. Sydney Gimson, of Leicester, and answered it carefully and at length; for the matter is not as simple as

Mrs. Bonner represents it. Further correspondence has taken place between Mr. Gimson and Mr. Foote; the N.S.S. Executive has been consulted, and will have to be consulted again. So much seems necessary to be said; and we desire to say *no more* than is necessary.

Dr. Kuyper, the Dutch Premier, half laments that Christianity in Holland is very superficial as compared with other countries; for example, in England, where the discussion in the *Daily Telegraph* on "Do We Believe?" proves the immense influence which religion has over all classes of the community, and especially over leading men. Evidently the Dutch Premier has been led into taking a ludicrously false view of the state of things in this country. Still, he is a much better judge of the state of things in Holland, and we take his word for it that Christianity is in a bad way there.

London Freethinkers, and provincial Freethinkers who may happen to be in London just then, should make special note of the Annual Dinner which takes place at the Holborn Restaurant on Tuesday evening, January 10. There ought to be a grand rally on this occasion. The tickets are only four shillings each—including everything; a good dinner, good short speeches, good songs, and good instrumental music. The date is very near Mr. Foote's birthday. Probably it will be quite his birthday by the time most of the diners are getting home.

Next week's *Freethinker* is our new year's number, and we shall try to make it one of special interest. It will contain special articles by all our best contributors, and attractive items; and we hope that our friends in all parts of the country will feel that it is just the thing to pass round amongst the liberal minded people they happen to know. By passing it round they will be advertising to the very best advantage. All that the *Freethinker* really wants is to be known, and it is beyond our individual power to make it so, but a thousand of our readers could easily "do the trick," if they would, by following the course suggested.

Let it also be remembered that we shall be very glad to send the *Freethinker* post free for six weeks to any addresses our readers may send us of persons it is likely to interest. Good has been done in this way already. Will our readers kindly help? It is not much that we are asking them to do. By taking just a little trouble they can help the paper that helps the movement.

The Freethinker does not fight spooks. He would not waste an ounce of powder upon them. He fights the fighters of spooks. He assails the superstition on which they flourish. He seeks to free the human mind from gratuitous fears. He dispels the shadows and deepens the sunshine of life. Surely this is a good work. Whoever takes part in it is giving the race an unmixed blessing. War with the army of enslavement! Down with the seducers of childhood—the spiritual profligates who debauch the youthful mind! Banish them, with their spooks, from the school, the college, the court of justice, the hall of legislation! Let us train generations of sound minds in sound bodies, full of rich blood, and nervous energy, and frank inquiry, and dauntless courage, and starry hope; with faces that never pale at truth, hearts that hold no terms with falsehood, knees that never bend before power or mystery, heads that always keep a manly poise, and eyes that boldly challenge all things from height to depth.—G. W. Foote.

It appears to us that sky-pilots, like other men, should be judged by their practice. If they show no belief in what they preach, we are foolish to believe in it any more than they do. It also appears to us that their profession is as fraudulent as fortune-telling. Many a poor old woman has been imprisoned for taking sixpence from a servant-girl, after promising her a tall, dark husband and eight fine children: but men dressed in black coats and white chokers are allowed to take money for promises of good fortune in the "beautiful land above." It further appears to us that the sky-pilots should be compelled to come to a reasonable agreement before their trade is licensed. They should settle *where heaven is* before they begin business. Better still, perhaps, every applicant for a license should prove that *some human soul has been piloted to heaven*. Until that is done, the profession is only robbery and imposture.—G. W. Foote.

## Tolstoi or Spencer?

BY ROBERT H. LOWIE.

(From the *Liberal Review*, Chicago.)

THE publication of Spencer's *Autobiography* has led to a remarkable increase of interest in the British philosopher. The magazines are flooded with interpretation of his character; his opinions, scientific and literary, are freely discussed by the daily press; and premature attempts are made to assign him a definite rank among the thinkers of the world. Amidst much appreciation that is purely conventional we detect much that bears the stamp of sincerity; and amidst much criticism perfunctorily complimentary there is some of sterner stuff, judicious and profound.

One opinion stands out prominently in criticisms otherwise contradictory; nearly all critics unite in charging Spencer with emotional deficiency. His inflexibly impartial attitude in judging men and events; his dissection of works of art lovingly admired by the connoisseur; his immunity from romantic relations with women; all these seem to alienate human sympathies. There is a feeling that a man so estranged from the world of ordinary mortals can have no message to his fellow-men, no legacy to posterity. Tolstoi, with characteristic vehemence, voices the general sentiment. "Great thoughts," says he, "come from the heart. Spencer had very little heart, and he had no great thoughts."

Those exoterics not accustomed to the meanderings of Tolstoi's mind may not consider it necessary to take any judgments from that source too seriously. But the Russian sage is only giving forcible expression to a widespread view; besides, the number of obsequient disciples who will re-echo the master's words is large even in our country; and the venerable cosmopolitan order of obscurantists is sure to gloat over the dictum and make the most of it. It is, therefore, well worth while to look at the charge a little more closely.

What is meant by the charge of heartlessness? It cannot be based on Spencer's relations to his immediate associates, for these present nothing unusual. Respect and filial devotion to his father and loving tenderness for his mother mark his feelings for his parents. His long friendship with George Eliot and Lewes, with Huxley and Tyndall, all of whom were certainly not lacking in emotional development, and the unanimous testimony of American admirers, indicate neither moral callousness nor blunted sensibilities. His sociability—shown, among other things, by his fondness for club life—also discountenances the notion of a repulsive personality. Evidently the accusation must have a different meaning; it must refer, not to Spencer's private life, but to defection from a duty to mankind.

The fact of the matter is that the charge of heartlessness against Spencer is exactly the same, arises from precisely the same motives, as the charges once made against the greatest artists of the last century, Goethe and Turgéniéff. It springs from the congenital inability of one type of mind to sympathise with any other type.

Heine divides all men into two classes, Nazarenes and Greeks. The former are the ascetics, the enthusiasts of self-abnegation, ever planning reforms, ever executing some scheme for the good of their fellow-men; the latter are the apostles of joy and life, of culture and beauty. Neither class is friendly to the other. But while the Greek merely stands aloof from the labors of the Nazarenes, and views them as a distant spectator, a like tolerance is not shown by his sterner brethren. "He who is not with us is against us" is their motto. Only altruistic activity directed to the betterment of political and social conditions is justifiable; all other work is *anathema maranatha*. That a man of different character and endowments may labor in a different way for the good of all; that his mere existence, purpose-

less though it seems, may in the end result in equal benefits for the race, they cannot comprehend.

Thus it happened that in a period of political restiveness Goethe, the poet and scholar, was reviled by the patriotic and "liberal" doctrinaires of his country. He was a weakling, a reactionary, an egotist. He had no great thoughts, for he had no heart! To-day Germany, with a juster sense for differences of temperament, honors Goethe as the greatest and best of her sons. Thus, too, the purblind reform party of Russia stigmatised Turgéniéff in the sixties as an enemy of progress. Twenty years later the same party hailed with enthusiasm the dispassionate sketches of "Fathers and Sons," who had soared above party strife. So let it be with Spencer.

Like Goethe and Turgéniéff, Spencer was not the propagandist of a panacea for human ills; but he presents a new type of mind. Lacking alike the moral enthusiasm of the Nazarenes and the Hellenic buoyancy of the artist, his personality is distinctively the product of the pure reason of science. This is not a confession that he was the intellectual machine pictured by his detractors; for the subjective element can indeed be altered and refined, but it can never be annihilated. The point usually ignored by the champions of man's emotional nature is that it is the very intellect, of which they deprecate the encroachments, that raises the emotions from a plane of comparative savagery. What are the noblest manifestations of emotional life? Probably love and the fine arts. But we place the devotion of Mill, the "cold" logician, high above the brutal bestiality of men whose reason is crowded out by their feelings, and who may plausibly claim the approbation of consistent anti-rationalists. And if the history of criticism teaches anything, it proves that intellectual grasp is a *sine qua non* in art. Perhaps Tolstoi supplies the artistic wants of uncultured understandings; to the enjoyment of Goethe's or Turgéniéff's works intellectual culture is a prerequisite, as it is a prerequisite to their production.

When, therefore, we say of Spencer that his character was moulded by the influence of science, we say that in him the highest humanising principle asserted itself, not spasmodically or accidentally, but as the essence, the guiding impulse of his thought and being. The essence of science is its objectivity, its thoroughness, its contempt for authority. Spencer exhibited these qualities, not in the limited domain of the specialist, but in the whole field of human knowledge and action. Whatever subject he treats, he never truckles to established canons. He is not less of an independent scientist, opposed to dogma, in indignantly denying homage to Homer and Raphael, the fetiches of the critical guild, than in demanding the evidence for special creation.

This independence is nowhere better exemplified than in his comparison of antagonistic views. With Spencer the rejection of one dogma is not equivalent to embracing an antithetical creed, equally dogmatic. He is not a partisan. Regarding no opinion absolutely wrong, every view relatively warrantable, he is neither idealist nor materialist, neither egoist nor altruist, neither an advocate of despotic rule nor an idolater of representative government, but simply a catholic scientist. Even militarism, though strongly repugnant to his personal tastes, he recognises as historically defensible. To his method of treating rival doctrines it has been objected that it is wanting in practical utility; that by ignoring the element of passion and emphasizing the basic rational principle held in common he misses the essence of the conflict; and the reconciliation of science and religion is constantly quoted as a case in point.

To be sure, the participants in the fray will not be immediately benefited by an exposition of the origin and nature of their contention. So much the worse for them. Here, as everywhere, Spencer's purpose is not to effect a compromise by making concessions to either party, but to disregard the feelings of both

and show that their supposed antagonism of ultimate principles does not exist for the consistent, impartial reasoner. Yet even to the contending parties some practical benefit, though perhaps intangible, is likely to accrue. The unflinching objectivity of the arbiter may communicate itself to some of the litigants. Both parties are forced to consider the possibility of harmony, and thus make the first step to a mutual understanding; and all must be deeply impressed by the spirit of tolerance that is the emotional side of Spencer's objectivity.

We have touched the key-note of Spencer's moral teaching, his enthusiastic championship of tolerance. The strongest expressions of dislike to be found in his writings are provoked by the spirit of subjugating the individual rights of men or nations. When he contrasts England's military aggressiveness with the hypocritical religious professions of her legislators, and lashes their "political burglary" and "unscrupulous greed of conquest," he shows no morbid suppression of feeling. Only *his* feelings, elevated as they are by the influence of science, demand more than passive sufferance. "Our endeavor," says he, "must be not simply to refrain from injustice of word or deed, but also to do justice by an open recognition of positive worth. We must qualify our disagreement with as much as may be of sympathy." Yet this man is denounced as a heartless egotist!

We are asked with a sneer, how many disciples this spokesman of science now claims. Tolstoi and Ruskin, who minister avowedly to the spiritual needs of their neighbors, have a cult. Where is Spencer's cult? Grant Allen, and Fiske, and Youmans are gone. Who has taken their places? There is a reaction against Spencer's "materialism." His concept of force is found to be antiquated. His conclusions in biology, in psychology, in sociology, are said to be sadly in need of revision. Even his famous formula of evolution is challenged as inadequate.

These objections cannot be disregarded. It must be admitted that the idolatry of Spencer's system of cosmic evolution is passing away. Like all systems it was not a final, but a provisional interpretation of the cosmos. The followers that hailed him as the Messiah of philosophy, who had for all time solved the riddle of the universe, forgot Feuerbach's caution that such a Messiah will never arrive. Science cannot stand still. New facts knock old generalisations on the head; and the discoveries of the specialist cause the dismantlement of the finest synthetic edifices of thought.

Not on the infallibility of his positive conclusions rests Spencer's fame, but on his method; the method of viewing all sides of a question, comparing all opinions, and seeking a solution for himself, the method of minimising personal inclinations and prejudices, which marks the acme of scientific and artistic achievement. Not by accepting blindly the doctrines sanctioned by an *ipse dixit*, but by subjecting Spencer's conclusions, like all others, to incessant scrutiny, by superseding the flattery of earlier days with the sincere desire for imitation, can we honor Spencer's spirit. In this sense every scientist, every man in quest of truth, is a follower in the wake of Spencer.

There is, of course, no disputing about tastes. Men of the narrow-mindedly altruistic type of Tolstoi will still insist that Spencer was an egotist, and that his message to the world was worthless. This is quite natural. *Mundus culti decipi*. Spencer had no taste for rhetorical fireworks, no longing to pose as a martyr; worst of all, he never loudly proclaimed himself a lover of humanity. The very appearance of charlatanism repelled him; and he never sought to acquire the tricks of the hustings for arousing sympathy. Yet to some Spencer, threading his way, practically alone, looking neither to the right nor to the left, refusing to bow the knee to fetiches of any sort, is a sublime spectacle; to some Spencer, pursuing his great work amidst constant ill-health, and sacrificing financial gains to the cause of science, will not appear deficient in the

highest emotions. These will deem it Spencer's proudest boast that he had no cult in the age that worshiped Tolstoi! And as long as the emotions are appealed to in support of current dogmas; as long as professors of psychology challenge the law of natural causation; as long as partisanship deafens the voice of reason, some will still turn to the clear, strong rationalist's legacy, and not fail to find in it great thoughts.

## Correspondence.

### "JOHN WESLEY'S IDEA OF A CHRISTIAN."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR.—In reply to Mr. C. Baker's courteous letter, under the above heading, which appeared in the *Freethinker* for December 18, permit me to say that I am in heartiest agreement with every word in it, and that the article on which it comments in so friendly a spirit is also in agreement with its leading sentiment. In saying that the love of enemies is a virtue beyond human achievement I did not intend to convey the idea that "personal hatred is the proper condition of the human mind." Speaking for myself, I can honestly affirm that there is not one person on the planet whom I actively hate. I am so constituted that hatred is by no means natural to me. It is my firm conviction that hatred hurts its subject quite as much as it does its object. But not to hate is a radically different thing from positively loving. If you have an enemy who cunningly plots against you, and who works with might and main to accomplish your destruction, who never lets slip a single opportunity to drop vague hints against your character, and who is most assiduous in the vile work of impugning your motives and depreciating your actions, can you take him into your heart as an intimate friend and love him with supreme devotion? Is it not your first impulse to retaliate in some effective manner, to get even with him in some way, and to make him feel how utterly you despise him? Or if you succeed in suppressing your forcibly rising anger, is there not still a thick, black cloud between you and him which your love is not strong enough to pierce? Love him? No. You are a wonderfully good man if you can give him bare justice, which is all that Confucianism requires at your hands.

Of course, the point I wished to emphasise in my article was that, if the love of enemies is essential to salvation, as the Rev. Mr. Simon maintained, the number of the saved must be invisibly small, and that, personally, I do not know of one who has attained to such a state of grace. I once knew an elderly gentleman who was generally regarded as an exceptionally saintly and Christ-like character. One day I had occasion to consult him as to the intellectual attainments of a man who was, to my certain knowledge, an inveterate enemy of his. He was extremely cautious in his response to my inquiry, some of his words being highly ambiguous; but his expressed opinion of the person in question was decidedly prejudiced, and would have done positive harm had I repeated it in certain quarters. The eminent man of God could not be even just to his enemy.

All I say is that, in our present stage of development, the love of enemies is not natural to us, while "moods of tiger and of ape" often are. But if we cannot love our enemies, let us discourage every impulse to hate them. Let us endeavor to give them fair play in the great struggle for life. Let us refrain from flinging obstacles across their path. Let us rather give them a helping hand as they climb the steep and tiring hills. If we gave them love, they might scornfully trample it under their feet, while a little unostentatious kindness, now and then, might touch and melt and win their angry hearts, and eventually convert them into loyal friends. I am a firm believer in the sovereignty of love in all the relationships of life; but indiscreet, unregulated, and unenlightened love may do more harm than good. If Mr. Baker endorses this, then our agreement is complete.

J. T. LLOYD.

### FREETHINKERS AND MARRIAGE—AN IDEA.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR.—Like your correspondent, "X.," on this subject (Sunday, Dec. 4) I must preface my few remarks by expressing the sincere pleasure and enlightenment I have derived from the perusal of your splendid journal, which is sent to me regularly by a friend who is an advanced Freethinker.

I am only a woman, and, perhaps, not qualified to cope with the difficulties of a scientific discussion in deep waters,

but I have thought long and earnestly over the great social problems of the day, and perhaps may be able to say a few words to the purpose on the subject started by "X."

Now, in the first place, I think "X." must be a very diffident and retiring sort of individual; and if he allowed himself to be cut out by a "smug-faced hymn-singing humbug," I can only say "Serve him right."

A woman likes a bold and masterful wooer, and if the "smug-faced" Christian showed pluck and determination in his efforts to win her, while the dashing Freethinker was actually glad to retire from a position which had "become positively painful to him," all honor to the Christian say I. And all this because, perhaps, a merry girl poked a bit of fun at him, or asked him a few cheeky questions. I should like to give "X." a few wrinkles before he next goes a-wooing. He should remember what our greatest poet and most advanced Freethinker, Shakespeare, says. "He who has a tongue is no man, if with that tongue he cannot win a woman." No, no! I still maintain if our friend had gone the right way about it he could have won the girl and married her.

And now this is where the real trouble comes in. A girl brought up in the narrow groove of Nonconformist principles, in the equally narrow, if somewhat laxer, views of the Church of England, or in the more severe and tyrannical training of Roman Catholicism, cannot make a fit and proper helpmate for an Atheist.

I speak of ordinary women, and ninety-nine out of every hundred are fashioned in an ordinary groove, completely mastered and enslaved by their environment, early training, education, and the opinions of their companions.

Here and there a few women rise above the herd and dare to think and speak for themselves, and ten to one the very men who now grumble over the success of their "smug-faced" rivals would be the first to laugh, perhaps, at a girl bravely asserting a non-religious opinion, or, for the matter of that, any advanced opinion. Such women, men say, always want to rule. We should be nowhere. Not so. I have seen women with the broadest minds and loftiest ideals gentle and humble, while creatures incapable of sharing their husbands' thoughts, or of helping on their cause, are almost invariably selfish, exacting, and domineering.

I shall not say much at this stage of the discussion, but hope the matter will be thoroughly sifted. What I really wish to say is this: Let Freethinkers and Atheists marry women of similar views. Let them not hope *after* marriage to "convert" a Methodist, Church of England, or Roman Catholic wife. In nine cases out of ten they will fail.

One of those French kings whose vices paved the road to the great French Revolution declared: "One woman is as good as another to bear our children." Granted; but one woman is not as good as another to *train* them. The mother's influence—subtle, deep, and insidious—will operate on the children, and the next generation will be just as backward on the road to scientific knowledge and intellectual enlightenment as the present. Only women of large minds and generous hearts are capable of becoming Freethinkers—women of a noble courage, daring enough to shake off the shackles of that social environment which so hampers and hems us in. Surely such women should make the best wives and mothers. They should help most effectively to crush bigotry, superstition, and cant.

They must, of their very nature, be true friends, intelligent companions, and competent assistants to a Freethinking husband in his struggle towards the "higher life."

JUVENA.

## Holy Mary, Mother of God.

AN "INFIDEL" CHRISTMAS PRAYER.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
Are you there in Heavenly "quod"?  
Hearken to an "infidel's" prayer:  
Maid of Bethlehem, are you there?  
'Phone me, prithce, a 'phoneless 'phone,  
Where's your Son who came to atone,  
Christ the Stem-of—Thingamy's Rod,  
Holy Mary, Mother of God?

Holy Mary, Mother of Christ,  
Thinking men, by Science enticed,  
Ponder, *re* the ascending One:  
Earth is round and spins round the sun,  
Did the Lord when flying away  
Start too soon or late in the day,  
Miss the route to Heavenly "quod,"  
Holy Mary, Mother of God?

Holy Mary, where is the Prince?  
No one's seen or heard from Him since.  
Is He dead, or is He alive?  
Did He start and did He arrive?  
Answer now an "infidel's" prayer:  
Maid of Bethlehem, are you there,  
Caged in gilded Heavenly "quod,"  
Holy Mary, Mother of God?

Was the Savior perfectly sane  
When He said "I'm coming again  
Ere the death of some of you here"?  
'Twasn't true, 'tis perfectly clear.  
Of those folks not one has survived,  
All are dead, He hasn't arrived.  
Really now, it's devilish odd,  
Holy Mary, Mother of God.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
Well might Scripture call him a Rod!  
Why did angels herald His Birth,  
Loudly shrieking, "Peace upon earth,  
Peace on earth, good will unto men"?  
They've been fighting ever since then.  
Christ has reigned and ruled with a rod,  
Holy Mary, Mother of God.

Holy Mary, Mother of God—  
No reply—it's devilish odd!  
What can be the meaning of this?  
Are you there, immaculate Miss?  
Wire me, prithce, a wireless wire,  
*Re* the Son of the Sireless Sire,  
Is He there in Heavenly "quod,"  
Holy Mary, Mother of God?

ESS JAY BEE.

In the olden times, the existence of devils was universally admitted. The people had no doubt upon that subject, and from such belief it followed, as a matter of course, that a person, in order to vanquish these devils, had either to be a god, or assisted by one. All founders of religions have established their claims to divine origin by controlling evil spirits and suspending the laws of nature. Casting out devils was a certificate of divinity. A prophet, unable to cope with the powers of darkness, was regarded with contempt. The utterance of the highest and noblest sentiments, the most blameless and holy life, commanded but little respect, unless accompanied by power to work miracles and command spirits.  
—Ingersoll.

"A London Cabman" asks, "What can a poor cabby do who has been paid only his legal fare?" A friend of the late Dr. Ffrench Mullen tells a story that provides an answer. The doctor had one day been addressing a Nationalist meeting at Kilmainham, and at the end of it he took a cab to the station in order to catch a particular train. On arriving there he found that all the money he had in his pocket was a sixpence—the driver's legal fare. He gave the jarvey sixpence, and the latter, putting the coin in the hollow of his hand, looked at it, and tried hard to summon up words capable of expressing a portion of what he felt. Meanwhile the doctor had disappeared, and when the jarvey discovered this his command of language completely failed him. At length a neighboring driver came to the relief. "Lave him to God, Mike!" he said, "lave him to God!"—*London Opinion*.

Mrs. Maude Howe Elliott tells of a conversation that once took place in a friend's house in Boston in which there were discussed certain phenomena of the mind. Some one observed that it was a curious fact that no man could do one thing and think of another. During the discussion a little girl of ten, the daughter of the host, was listening attentively. "I can do one thing and think of another," she said. "What is it?" asked her father. "Well," she said, "it is very easy for me to say the Lord's Prayer and think of almost anything else I want to. I do it every night."—*Harper's Weekly*.

**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.**

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Liberal Hall, Broadway, Forest Gate, E.): No lecture.

**COUNTRY.**

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Bull Ring Coffee House): Thursday, Dec. 29, at 8, E. B. Ensell, "The Unreliability of History."

FAIRSWORTH (Secular Sunday School, Pole-lane): Home Service.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (110 Brunswick-street): 12 noon, Discussion Class. Open Discussion; 5.30, Children's Christmas Party.

GLASGOW RATIONALIST AND ETHICAL ASSOCIATION (319 Sauchiehall-street): Monday, December 26, at 8, G. Scott, "Woman's Claim to the Franchise."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): Pagan Festival: no lectures.

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

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

Orders should be sent to the author,

J. R. HOLMES, HANNEY, WANTAGE, BERKS

**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.

**THE RIGHTS OF MAN.**

By THOMAS PAINE.

With a Political Biography by the late J. M. WHEELER.  
Paper Cover, 1s. Cloth Edition, 2s.

The Freethought Publishing Company, 2 Newcastle-street,  
Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

**Take a Road of Your Own**

Or, Individuality and Mental Freedom

By COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL

PRICE ONE PENNY

The Freethought Publishing Company, Ltd., 2 Newcastle-street,  
Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

**GRAND CHRISTMAS  
PRESENT**

Sent in each Parcel up to December 31.

**21s. Parcels worth 30s. each.**

No.

- 1—Dress Length, any color, Pair Best Boots, and Umbrella
- 2—Costume Length, any color, and Lady's Mackintosh
- 3—1 Gent.'s Suit, any size up to 40 inches chest
- 4—1 Gent.'s Overcoat (Waterproof) and 2 Shirts
- 5—3 Pairs Trousers, to measure; warranted all wool
- 6—1 Gent.'s Mackintosh and 1 Pair Trousers
- 7—1 Lady's Mackintosh and Pair Best Boots
- 8—3 Boys' Suits, to fit boys up to 10 years
- 9—3 Pairs Best Boots (1 gent.'s, 1 lady's, 1 children's)
- 10—1 Dress Skirt, 1 Lady's Fashionable Mackintosh
- 11—1 Pair Blankets, 1 Pair Sheets, 1 Quilt, 1 Tablecloth, 1 Pair Curtains
- 12—6 Smart, Fashionable Blouses, all different
- 13—10 Yards Shirting, 10 Yards Flannel, 10 Yards Flannelette
- 14—2 Costume or Dress Lengths, any color
- 15—1 Overcoat Length and 1 Suit Length
- 16—12 lbs. of the Finest TEA, in Beautiful Canisters
- 17—50 Yards Very Fine Flannelette
- 18—30 Yards Remnants for Girls' Dresses
- 19—15 Yards Remnants for Boys' Suits
- 20—Parcel of Odd Goods, state requirements

**21s. each.**

Cash must accompany each order.

J. W. GOTT, 2 and 4 Union Street, Bradford

(And at 60 Park Road, Plumstead, London, S.E.)

**THE BOOK OF GOD**

IN THE LIGHT OF THE HIGHER CRITICISM.

By G. W. FOOTE.

"I have read with great pleasure your *Book of God*. You have shown with perfect clearness the absurdity of Dean Farrar's position. I congratulate you on your book. It will do great good, because it is filled with the best of sense expressed with force and beauty."—COLONEL INGERSOLL.

"A volume we strongly recommend.....Ought to be in the hands of every earnest and sincere inquirer."—*Reynolds's Newspaper*.

Bound in Stout Paper Covers - 1/-

Bound in Good Cloth - 2/-

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

NO FREETHINKER SHOULD BE WITHOUT THESE:—

**Design Argument Fallacies.** A Refutation of the argument that Nature exhibits marks of having been designed by an Intelligent Being. By the Editor of the *New York Truthseeker*. Price 8d., postage 1d.

**Answers to Christian Questions and Arguments.** By D. M. Bennett. Price 1s., postage 2d.

**Sabbath Breaking.** Giving the Origin of Sabbath Ideas. A book brimful of good reasons why the Sunday Laws should be repealed. By John Remsburg. Price 1s., Postage 2d.

The Freethought Publishing Co., Ltd., 2 Newcastle-street,  
Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

**AFTER DEATH—WHAT?**

Freethinkers should read THE DEVIL'S DIALOGUES WITH AIMAN, by Ernest Marklew. Racy, Original, Daring. 1s. 1d., post free, from F., The Medium Press, 18 Waverley-road, Preston.

# 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 GATECHISM.** 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.*

**MICROMEAS.** 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.

# THE LONDON FREETHINKERS' ANNUAL DINNER

(Under the auspices of the National Secular Society's Executive)

WILL TAKE PLACE AT

## THE HOLBORN RESTAURANT

ON

TUESDAY EVENING, JANUARY 10, 1905

Chairman: Mr. G. W. FOOTE.

Tickets 1s. each, obtainable at 2 Newcastle-street, E.C.

A BARGAIN

## DIALOGUES CONCERNING NATURAL RELIGION

BY

### DAVID HUME

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY G. W. FOOTE

The Most Exquisite Work of the Greatest Thinker of the Eighteenth Century: a Literary and Philosophical Masterpiece; and the First Defence of Agnosticism.

Handsomely Printed on Fine Paper, 105 Pages

Price **FOURPENCE**

(Post free, 5d.)

THE PIONEER PRESS, 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

*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.

# 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*.

Printed and Published by THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING Co., Limited, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

