

THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXV.—No. 4

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22 1905

PRICE TWOPENCE

If there be gods we cannot help them, but we can assist our fellow men.—INGERSOLL.

Torrey's Creed.

THERE was "A Little Sermon" by Dr. Torrey in the *Daily Mirror* of Saturday, January 14. Certainly it was a *little* sermon. Nothing ever uttered was less worth printing. It would not call for a single moment's attention on its own merits. All its importance arises from the fact that Dr. Torrey is the preaching leader of the "Great Revival" which is soon to be inaugurated in London.

Dr. Torrey seems to be more vivid when he is libelling dead Freethinkers, or displaying his "Christian charity" towards Unitarians and other professed Christians who do not share every article of his own old-fashioned faith. We have met people of this kind before. They are never fully alive except when they are malicious.

Dr. Torrey's little sermon was headed with the text, "Lord, I believe. Help thou mine unbelief." It was not so stated, but it is a fact, that these words occur in Mark ix. 24. They are natural in their place in that highly-dramatic narrative. A distressed father, whose son is a raving, foaming lunatic, clutches at any hope of the poor youth's recovery. Jesus tells him that "all things are possible to him that believeth."

"And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

The agonised father would believe anything, if he could, or say that he believed anything, in order to save his son from such a terrible fate. In his distraction he cries out "Lord, I believe." But *what* does he believe, and *how* does he believe it? The whole thing is so novel and perplexing that he is obliged to talk the language of self-contradiction. After declaring that he *does* believe, he pathetically begs Jesus to *enable* him to believe. This, we repeat, is *natural*—whether the story be regarded as historical fact or dramatic fiction. But how *unnatural* are the words of that distracted father when they come from the mouth of an old stager like Dr. Torrey! Is he still troubled with unbelief? Who would have thought it? From his dogmatic, God-Almighty style, you would conclude that he feels himself in possession of the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. He is perfectly cocksure of everything he says. You can see that he does not understand how it is possible for anyone to differ from him and be right. And this is the man, of all men, who begs for an increase of certainty.

Now for Dr. Torrey's sermon. We shall give it *in extenso*, and if we infringe copyright we are prepared to pay the sum of one farthing in full satisfaction:—

"I can sum up my creed in a very few words. I believe in the Word of God. I believe in the Bible as God's absolutely reliable revelation of Himself to me, and I believe in the power of the Bible.

"I know the old Book is not worn out. I know the old Book is just what this old, perishing world needs to-day just as much as ever it needed it, and when men stick by the Book and distrust their own opinions and everybody else's opinions, and just

approach God's truth as He has revealed it in His Word, it meets the need of the hour.

"I believe that there is power in that blood to atone for the sins of the vilest sinner; and in a moment, as soon as he accepts Christ, that shed blood will blot out every sin, and make his record as white in God's sight as that of the purest saint in glory.

"I believe in prayer. I know God answers prayer; it is no theory with me. I know God does definitely, in answer to prayer, the very thing that you ask Him to do. I know it; it is no guesswork.

"I am not able to explain the philosophy of it, but I do not care anything for the philosophy. What I am concerned with is not philosophy, but facts.

"I know that when a company of God's people—it does not need to be everybody in the whole community that professes to be a Christian—but when even a small company of God's people get really right with God, and begin to cry to God for an outpouring of His Spirit in mighty power, I know God hears.

"I believe in the power of the Holy Ghost. That is my creed."

Let the reader first note Dr. Torrey's cocksureness. He even goes to the length of abolishing the distinction between belief and knowledge. He forgets that if he believes, he does not know; and that if he knows, he does not believe. We dare say he does not "care anything for the philosophy" of anything; but he might at least walk behind, instead of running in front of, Saint Paul and the Christian Creeds. The great Apostle of the Gentiles—he was *very* great in comparison with modern business revivalists—bade all the faithful be ready to give every man a reason for the hope that was in them. The *hope*—not the *certitude*. They were seeing in a brass mirror darkly; only beyond the grave would they see face to face, and faith be lost in sight. Paul was an enthusiast, but he had some idea of what he was talking about; and we wish we could say the same (in this case) of Dr. Torrey.

The first clause of Dr. Torrey's creed, "I believe in the Word of God," may mean anything. The second looks explicit, but requires a great deal of explanation. What does he mean by the Bible being "the absolutely reliable revelation" of God? What does it reveal, and is all of it "reliable"? Dr. Torrey says elsewhere that he believes the story of Jonah being entertained by the whale. Does he mean to include this story amongst the "reliable" things in the Bible? If he does, the very Bishop of London, who has blessed his Albert Hall Mission, is ready to laugh at him. Here is a revivalist, whom all the Churches are assisting, who talks like a Rip Van Winkle. Fierce discussions have raged, and are still raging, over the significance of such terms as "revelation" and "inspiration," yet this Yankee soul-saver goes on talking the bare old shibboleths as though all were agreed as to their meaning. All are *not* agreed; there is fierce debate in the very household of faith; and the real or assumed ignorance of Dr. Torrey cannot now hide the fact from the multitude of "believers."

Another vague phrase is "the power of the Bible." Power for *what*? Just as vague is the talk about "sticking to the Book" and "taking God's truth as he has revealed it in his Word." Protestants profess to do that, and the "revelation" is so *clear* that they split up into a crowd of sects. How is that multiplication, which is

really "dissolution," to be stopped? The Higher Critics are at least *trying* to stop it. Dr. Torrey goes on smiling—or as near as he can get to smiling—like the lunatic in the boat that went over Niagara.

The more intelligent Christian preachers will gladly leave Dr. Torrey the monopoly of the blood of Christ. They seldom mention it. They know that it disgusts modern susceptibilities. A blood bath is worse than a mud bath. You cannot work it into mental or moral hygiene. It is a wretched relic of the barbarous past.

Dr. Torrey says he *knows* that God answers prayer. He cannot possibly know it. If he *knew* that God does the very thing you ask for, he would be a contemptible scoundrel to lose a minute in protesting against the imprisonment of the Peculiar People. These simple-minded Christians obey the Bible; Dr. Torrey says that he *knows* the doctrine they rely on to be true; yet who heard a whisper against their imprisonment from any of the Churches that are promoting Dr. Torrey's mission? The hypocrisy of it all is enough to make one sick.

If this professional soul-saver *knows* that God answers prayer by doing the very thing that is asked, why does he not organise a fresh round of prayers, not for this or that paltry little Church object, but for the social salvation of London? Men want work, women and children want bread; thousands of people as good as Dr. Torrey suffer the direst misery, and the prospect threatens to become blacker; and in the midst of the destitution and agony God is asked for what? Why, seventeen thousand pounds to "revive" London with words, words, words. Dr. Torrey will talk—as usual; Mr. Alexander will sing—as usual; and London's problems will be just where they were.

Let us give Dr. Torrey and his creed—yes, and his slanders—a shaking. Let us put illuminating literature into the hands of his auditors at the Albert Hall. Let us all take a share in this work—some with money and some with personal service.

G. W. FOOTE.

The Aberrations of a Scientist.

SIR OLIVER LODGE is getting his reward. His efforts to provide religious waverers with a God of an apparently up-to-date character have attracted considerable attention, much more than would have been the case had he not been a prominent scientist, and he has received the "pleasure and privilege" of preaching at Whitefield's Mission, Tottenham-court-road. It is true that Sir Oliver does not agree with the theology of Whitefield's; *his* god has no likeness to the Christian deity—save the generic one of absurdity—nor does he believe in the atoning blood of Jesus, or in the Virgin Birth, or in the Resurrection. But this does not matter to Mr. Silvester Horne. It is enough that he can get a leading scientist in his pulpit, and both he and others will then be able to point to that very religious man, Sir Oliver Lodge, who actually preaches from Christian pulpits; of course, carefully concealing the fact that he is no more of a Christian than I am. It is the opportunity of exploiting a scientific reputation that is seized, and if Sir Oliver cares to be so exploited in the interest of the crude theology of Whitefield's Tabernacle, it is, after all, more his concern than mine. It is a pity that eminent men lend themselves, even unconsciously, to such trickery, but—

Sir Oliver's subject was "Some Opportunities for Social Reforms," and what he had to say on this *special* topic was marked by a great deal of common-sense, and so far emphasised the demoralising effect of religious beliefs. Heine said that on politics the most stupid Englishman would say something sensible, but on religion the most sensible Englishman would say something stupid. Sir Oliver Lodge is not at all a bad illustration of this, nor is the present sermon a bad instance. While he keeps to the social field his remarks are eminently

rational. He points out that the great task before us is one of social organisation, and this involves greater regard in utilising those characters that fall below the average, greater attention to the utilisation of our agricultural resources, the thorough realisation of the organic interdependence of human beings living in the same society, and above all, reform in our methods of dealing with the criminal class. Freethinkers would be the last to question the teaching that when a prison treatment is not effective as a reforming force, it is—save in the cases of irreclaimables—an agency for the perpetuation of criminals. If Sir Oliver extends his study of criminology to its historical aspect, he will discover that improvement in our ideas and treatment of the criminal has come from avowed unbelievers, while opposition has always been shown by avowed believers.

I do not purpose, however, dealing with the good things in Sir Oliver's speech, except to indicate their existence. He is, as all are aware, convinced that he has a "mission" to reconcile religion with modern thought; and, as is natural in such cases, there are connected with the wise things in his address a number of things that are—well, otherwise. It is to these other things, as illustrating the peculiar effect of religion on even a scientific man, that I desire to call attention.

To commence with, here is a first-rate example of both *unscientific* thought and language. Explaining the development of the universe, he says that if one could have visited it at successive periods he would have seen, first, "a sort of chaos," then "gradually growing a sort of cosmos, order coming in," etc. More unscientific language was never used by any man. Sir Oliver is fully aware, when he is off religion, that there was just as much a cosmos when there was "a sort of chaos" as there is now, and that "order" never was "coming in," but was always there. There was as much an orderly cosmos when our entire system existed as fire mist, as there is now it exists in a highly differentiated form. Sir Oliver is perfectly aware of this—when he is not in the pulpit; but, as language always reacts on thought, the use of such unscientific jargon throws a curious sidelight on his religious speeches and articles.

Again, dealing with his favorite thesis that "Deity does not work without us, but with us," he gives vent to the amazing expression, "There was a time when things had to be left to the struggle for existence. It is not so now." I will not dwell upon the implied picture of poor "Deity," not having mankind to advise and assist him, who "had" to leave things to what Sir Oliver regards as a very crude method; it is the astonishing misconception of Natural Selection that strikes one. That the form taken by Natural Selection under social conditions is different to that it bears under pre-human or non-social conditions is quite true. But a transformation is not a funeral; nor does a change in form involve the destruction of a principle. If Natural Selection is a fact, it is as operative now as ever. And it is operative now as ever. What Sir Oliver overlooks is the fact that under social conditions qualities determine survival that were not operative under non-social conditions, and that even these undergo modification in the course of social evolution. Among unicellular organisms fitness to live involves simply the existence of qualities necessary to the existence of the cell alone. But among multi-cellular organisms fitness to survive implies the existence of qualities that enable it to play its part as a portion of a larger structure. So, too, with human beings. If we conceive man in a pre-social condition—which is only a theoretical possibility—his fitness to survive implies individual fitness alone. But with the growth of social conditions man himself becomes a "cell in the social tissue"; a whole host of new feelings, instincts, qualities begin to operate; and one form of the struggle for existence is superseded by another. Individuals may survive, not because of their greatness as hunters or fighters, or because of

physical strength, but because of mental and moral qualities that commend them to their fellows. But this does not involve the destruction of the principle of Natural Selection; only an alteration in its form. What Sir Oliver Lodge ought to protest against is the cry against human co-operation by those who argue that the *lower form* of the struggle for existence should be perpetuated. What he does argue against is the continued existence of Natural Selection. Which, as Euclid says, is absurd.

After this Sir Oliver launches forth on a species of apology for the Deity against those who urge that God might push things on a little faster than is actually the case. "It has been no light task," he urges, "to make the human race"—an apology that sounds like an excuse for a gigantic jerry-builder. Moreover, if God did bring things to perfection suddenly, Sir Oliver Lodge would not approve. "I do not believe that it would be a wise policy for the Omnipotent Being to cut the Gordian Knot and make things perfect suddenly..... That would not be a far-sighted thing to do." But why not? Let us try and look at the common sense of the matter. Sir Oliver Lodge believes that the human race is marching towards perfection. And let us suppose that, after innumerable generations, this condition is actually reached. Will anyone say what difference it can make to the generation that realises perfection—whether it has reached that stage by a long racial evolution, or by the exercise of a divine fiat? It is useless saying that *we* are the better for the consciousness of a long struggle upwards. This can only have a value so long as we utilise a record of the past to inspire renewed effort. Besides, *we* shall then be no more; and those who do exist then will no more realise the sense of effort than we now appreciate the conditions of savage life. And the absurdity of the whole argument will be realised if we bear in mind that there is not one of us, not even Sir Oliver Lodge, who would hesitate to confer perfection upon the human race were it within their power. The apology is a mere excuse to atone for the shortcomings of a stupid hypothesis. No one does, and no one ever did, believe in it.

Finally, Sir Oliver has a word on Free Will. Some people, he says, are so impressed with the difficulty of reconciling free will with scientific law, that they are willing to say we are not free. But this is "to give up a fact for a theory..... We know, as a fact, that we are free..... We must act according to motive. But we can choose our motive, and there is something in us which can make the motive the highest or the lowest motive." With the exception of one sentence of six words, the above quotation is wholly and hopelessly unscientific and illogical. In the first place, we do not surrender a fact for a theory, for the reason that "freedom" is in itself a theory, and one of the crudest. We do not *know* we are free, "we" only believe we are; and analysis shows this belief to rest upon ignorance pure and simple. If we were always aware of the *causes* of our actions we should no more talk of our will being "free" than we should talk of a stone's freedom in falling to the ground. In the next place, what is the "we" that chooses the motive? Sir Oliver would reply, the will. But what is the will apart from the motive? And why is it that sometimes one motive is selected rather than another? If it is because one motive appeals more to a particular will than does another, our choice is not "free." It is determined by the kind of will we possess. So that even if we grant the quite unscientific notion of a mysterious entity, resident in the body, determining choice of motives, this, in turn, is determined by its appetites, and we are where we were. Like most advocates of "free will" he thinks that his case is proven by asserting a consciousness of freedom, when all the time it is this consciousness of freedom that is being questioned. Still Sir Oliver's reconciliation of religion with modern thought is excellently done—for Whitefield's Tabernacle.

C. COHEN.

"The Miracle of Changed Lives."

THE above is the title of a lecture by the Rev. Samuel F. Collier, Superintendent of the Manchester and Salford Wesleyan Mission. Of Mr. Collier's sincerity there can be no reasonable doubt. He is unquestionably animated by a genuine desire to do good to his fellow-men; and his pure motive and red-hot enthusiasm have brought him no small measure of success. Both as a man and as a worker we are truly proud of him, and shall ever wish him well. It is the interpretation which he puts upon the results of his work that is open to criticism. He is an ardent believer in the Christian Religion and, as such, regards the success of the Mission as an absolute proof of its supernatural character. It is his solemn conviction that the Central Hall is "the centre of a work itself the best proof of the truth of Christianity, and an evidence of what Christianity really is." Far be it from me to deny that much ethical benefit has been realised by means of the Mission. I am even prepared to endorse the eulogistic language of the *Clarion* concerning this organisation, which describes it as "the only real, living religious and social mission in the town" of Manchester. What I strongly object to is the evidential value which Mr. Collier attaches to its success. He dogmatically asserts that "in the miracle of changed lives we find the most powerful proof of the reality and truth of our faith."

Let us carefully examine this high claim. Mr. Collier says:—

"From the brothel to purity of life; from the gin-palace to sobriety; from the gambler's hell to honesty; from prison to respectable citizenship; from greed and cruelty to generosity, self-sacrifice, and kindness,—are changes which ought to bring conviction to every man whose doubt is honest and sincere. Such changes are not wrought by human power. They are realities which cannot possibly be mistaken for the 'creations of a fevered brain.' Culture, education, ideal conditions of life may do much, but they are powerless to accomplish these reforms. Supernatural power alone can produce such results."

Now, how does Mr. Collier know that such results are produced by supernatural power? Is not the Mission a human agency? Is not preaching a human performance? By "supernatural power" is meant, no doubt, the activity of the risen and ascended Savior through the Holy Ghost. The risen and ascended Christ is very God of very God, and so is the Holy Ghost. They are both infinite, all-powerful, all-wise, all-knowing, and all-loving. They are the second and third persons in the Holy Trinity. The Father works through the Son, the Son through the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost through specially chosen men. What a curiously round-about method of working! How tragically impotent is the Holy Trinity! The nearest to the world is the Holy Ghost; and yet he can do absolutely nothing except through a very small number of official persons; and it appears that he can do nothing even through these without the instrumentality of committees and choirs, and house-to-house visitations, and innumerable prayer-meetings. We are told that God is love, that he sent his only begotten Son to redeem a fallen world, that the Son, having made a hundred and twenty converts, and offered himself up as an all-sufficient atonement for the sins of all mankind, returned to heaven, and deputed the Holy Ghost to represent his Father and him on earth. Well, the Holy Ghost has been in the world for nearly two thousand years—what has he accomplished? *Practically nothing.* Christendom represents but a small section of the world; and yet not even in Christendom do professing Christians average more than one in six of the entire population. Surely this is not complimentary to the Holy Ghost!

Mr. Collier tells us that "over five thousand have publicly confessed Christ, and are enrolled in our membership, while thousands have acknowledged

Him in the Services, and passed on to other centres of Christian activity." But what about the tens of thousands in Manchester who have not confessed Christ, and are not enrolled in any Christian membership? Why has the Mission, why has the Holy Ghost, failed to touch and convert these? If there were a Holy Ghost acting in the world as agent of the Divine Love, would He not have redeemed the whole world, long ago, from all its evils and miseries? Mr. Collier speaks of "the miracle of changed lives"; but on the supposition that a God of love exists, and is active in the world through the Holy Ghost, the miracle is that there are any lives still unchanged, or that the world is still cursed with brothels and gin-palaces and gambling-hells and prisons and greed and cruelty. The success achieved by the Mission is highly creditable to Mr. Collier and his friends; but if the Holy Ghost is in the business the results must be pronounced woefully inadequate and tremendously disappointing.

It is estimated that over 20,000 persons have been converted in Wales during the present Revival. But if conversion is the work of the Holy Ghost, how is it that Wales had to wait so long for the present manifestations of His power? If Evan Roberts is raised of God, why was He not raised twenty or thirty years ago? Procrastination on the part of the Holy Ghost is unthinkable. It is impossible to conceive of an infinite Being, whose heart is a shoreless ocean of redeeming love, and who must have a direct access to every man, as doing His saving work through the extremely limited and deplorably inadequate channels provided by the Church.

We are informed that in a few weeks the Holy Ghost will pay a special visit to the West-end of London to save the noble and the rich. He will arrive on Saturday, February 4, in company with the Rev. Dr. Torrey and Mr. Alexander, the distinguished American Evangelists. To insure the salvation of the West-end, a sum of £17,000 must be forthcoming, and 50,000 people are said to be praying for that amount. It is the Holy Ghost alone who can save London, and it is He alone who can put it into the hearts of his servants to contribute the money, and he is implored to do the latter that he may be enabled to do the former. And the daily papers are "booming" the coming Mission as if it were a Joint Stock Company or a Buffalo Bill Show. Oh, the pity and the sadness of it all!

The only reasonable inference from all this is that there is no God in the business at all. The "results" delineated by Mr. Collier are not worthy of the Holy Ghost. If there were a Holy Ghost He would not be content with five thousand conversions in a city of over half a million of people. He would save the whole of Manchester, the whole of Great Britain—nay, the whole human race—without a single hour's delay. Nay, more; He would have converted the world many centuries ago; and the conversion would never have needed to be repeated.

It is not necessary to follow Mr. Collier through the whole lecture. "The miracle of a changed life," he tells us, "includes the salvation of the whole man, and must deal with sin, environment, evil habit, and all the powers of evil ranged against him." The powers of evil centre in the Devil; but as the Devil no longer exists except in the imagination of a few old-fashioned believers, we need not trouble ourselves about them. Evil habits can be counteracted only by the formation of good ones. Goodness is the only power that can eliminate evil from the character. What sin is Mr. Collier does not tell us; but he ridicules the people who call it "mistaken judgment—error—folly—disease." I do not know what he means when he says that "the scientist has not only formulated a scientific basis for an evangelical creed, but has shown how hopeless it is to expect any ordinary means to produce 'the changed life.'" I know of no scientist who has done either the one or the other. Even Sir Oliver Lodge does not believe in sin in any theological sense; nor does he endorse the theological conception of salvation. In his opinion, sin is a defect, a

boil, an abscess—a disease that may or may not yield to remedial treatment. There are drunkards who cannot be reclaimed. In its application to them Christianity is a colossal failure. But there are drunkards who can be reclaimed; and the reclamation is effected through the ministry of active human sympathy. Mr. Collier argues that "supernatural power alone can produce such results"; but in this instance the result is purely natural, and can be produced by purely natural means. Drunkenness is a disease of the nervous system, and up to a certain point is curable. Beyond that point cure is a natural impossibility. Moral diseases may be divided into three classes: those that can be overcome by the sufferers themselves; those that require the self-denying co-operation of devoted friends; and those that are incurable.

Every case of rescue cited by Mr. Collier can be accounted for on purely natural grounds. I once knew a drunkard quite as hopeless as the one described by him, who was permanently reclaimed through his wife's altruistic services on his behalf. If the Churches were to renounce the supernatural, and become simply ethical societies, I am firmly convinced that they would accomplish much more for humanity than they are able to do at present. After all said and done, Christianity cannot be reduced to a system of ethics. Mr. Collier is guilty of trifling with his subject when he says, "*Christianity is a life.*" He knows well enough that it is much more than a life; in fact, that it is steeped from top to bottom in the supernatural. To him Christ is a supernatural Being, who lived a supernatural life and died a supernatural death, and who, subsequent to His resurrection, a purely supernatural event, vanished into the supernatural realm, there to supernaturally interpose for the supernatural redemption of mankind. According to the New Testament and all the great Creeds, Christianity is a system of unverified and unverifiable doctrines, each one of which concerns itself with the absolutely incomprehensible and unknowable. Christianity is anything but a life. That is the reason why it is dying out, and that is the explanation of its stupendous impotence. Mr. Collier asks no better defence of it than its fruits; and it is by its lack of wholesome fruit that we condemn it. In the evolution of human character its achievements have been *nil*. It has rendered no service whatever to the life that now is. When has it defended the weak against the cruel tyranny of the strong, or the poor against the unjust oppression of the rich, or the small against the devouring greed of the great? As a general thing, it has sided with the classes in their opposition to the masses, and with the oppressor in his disdain of the oppressed.

I have nothing but good to say of Mr. Collier personally; but the Mission over which he presides achieves all its success on moral and social lines, and by quite human means. The drunkards become sober, the thieves honest, the gamblers industrious, and the libertines pure in response to the sympathetic strength and the transparent affection of the missionaries, and are kept from relapsing by the counter attraction of the mission services. It is humanism that can redeem fallen or undeveloped human beings. Mr. Collier will probably laugh at this interpretation of his work and its results; but equally laughable to us, to say the least, is his audacious claim that he and his fellow-workers are channels of supernatural grace and power. If there were a God of love, surely He would not require to use such channels, but would deal direct with all His children, just as he is supposed to have dealt with the chosen few who now arrogate to themselves the right to represent him to all others. We believe, on the contrary, that no God has ever revealed himself, and that we ought to serve one another to the utmost of our ability without any reference whatever to such a Being. What the human heart craves for is brotherhood, instinctively knowing that a due sense of brotherhood would ere long rid the world

of all the evils that now afflict it, and ensure the reign of peace, goodwill, and love from one end of society to the other.

J. T. LLOYD.

Some of the Claims Made for Jesus Considered.

(Continued from p. 43.)

Is it true that Jesus did no sin, and that no guile was found in his mouth? There are many kinds of sins—sins of omission and commission. Anything that is wrong and hurtful is a sin. Anything that is a sin in man would be a sin in Jesus as a man or God. To apply a higher standard of morality to man than to God would be unjust and absurd. What is condemned as a sin in man cannot be treated as a virtue in God. Apply these principles to Jesus, and what do we find? We find, according to the Gospels, that the life of Jesus was as full of sins as the lives of most ordinary men. His sins of omission are very conspicuous. Let all remember that sins of omission are often as bad as or worse than sins of commission. Duty corresponds to ability and opportunity. A man who has ability and opportunity to employ it for the benefit of his fellow-men, and neglects to do it, is a sinner of a bad type. If this is true of man, it must also be true of God. Christians tell us that Jesus is the real infinite Almighty God. As a God, he knew all. He knew the earth was a globe, and not a plane; that there was no creation four thousand years before his time, as told in Genesis; that man and other things were evolved in the course of millions of years; that the Scriptures of the Jews were not his Word; that all the religious beliefs of the people were only superstitions; but he never told them so, as he ought to have done. He never tried to enlighten the people, and free them from the darkness and misery of superstitious errors. As God, he knew the position of woman was scandalous, but never uttered a word in her favor or made the least effort to uplift her; he knew that the people were poor because they were exploited and robbed by the rich, but never told them so; he knew that slavery was wrong, but never said a word against it; he knew that education was good, and essential to useful citizenship, but he never uttered a word in its favor; he knew how the people might be healthy and strong, and how they might increase wealth for the comfort of all, but never offered to share his knowledge with the people; he knew all the great and grand facts discovered by laborious efforts by scientists, but he never revealed one of them.

If Jesus was God, and the Gospels are true, his sins of commission are very numerous. He was rude and insulting to his mother; he despised the world he had made; he destroyed the Gadarene swine, which were not his property; he cursed a fig-tree because it had no fruit out of season; he made wine to supply a wedding party who were already well drunk; he sent two of his disciples to steal an ass and a colt, the property of another person, that he might ride on them to Jerusalem; he went to the temple and upset the tables of the money-lenders, which was an act similar to entering a bank to upset the gold, silver, and notes; he lived a life of idle beggary, living on the charity of silly women, and was to all intents and purposes what we now call a tramp and treat as a sinner. All mentioned, and more might be, are treated by all civilised nations as sins punishable by law. And if these acts are sins in ordinary men, they were sins in Jesus, although a God. Therefore it is not true he did no sin.

Neither is it true that no guile was found in his mouth. If he was God, his mouth was full of guile all his life. He taught what he, as a God, knew to be untrue. He told a falsehood to his brothers, who did not believe in him. He told them he would not go up to the feast, but after they started he went after them secretly another way. After telling an

untruth, he dissembled. He disguised himself to two disciples, and, after pretending he was going further, he went with them home, where they recognised him, and he instantly vanished. He dissembled to Judas when he allowed his traitor to kiss him, and made a pretence he did not know the purpose of his visit, although he had told his disciples before that he was coming, and what for. He taught that the world would come to an end during the lifetime of men then living, which, as a God, he knew was not true. He orders his disciples to mutilate their bodies, to practise celibacy, to despise this world, to look on poverty as a virtue and on wealth as a vice; taught beggary and monkery; taught in parables to conceal his meaning, that the people might not understand him, and be damned; he taught revenge and vengeance; in his charge to his disciples he taught the duty to hate and desert family relations; he taught that his disciples, to be saved, must eat his flesh and drink his blood, which is an old doctrine of cannibalism. As a God, he must have known that a great part of what he taught was false and injurious. Therefore the saying that guile was not found in his mouth is not true.

An infinite God of necessity would be immutable. He could not change if he tried. Is it true that Jesus was the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever? It is not true, or the Gospels lie. He changed often from one extreme to another. He spoke against cursing, but he cursed himself. He taught his disciples not to judge others that they might not be judged themselves, but he himself judged others continually. He taught that anyone calling another a fool was in danger of hell fire, but he never missed an opportunity to call the scribes and Pharisees hypocrites, vipers, and fools. He taught the duty to love a neighbor as oneself, and the object of his coming was to establish peace and goodwill among men; but another time he said he did not come to bring peace, but a sword; and at the time of his arrest he instructed his disciples to provide themselves with swords—a remarkable change from his first teaching. Some of his precepts he never practised himself. Many of his precepts are absurd and impracticable, and putting them into practice would lead to universal ruin. Many of the sayings put in the mouth of Jesus are nothing but superstitious errors and delusions. Jesus avows, in plain, unmistakable words, that he came not with peace, but with a sword. Here are his words: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace but a sword," etc. (Matt. x. 34). In Luke the same avowal is given in stronger language still: "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptised with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished. Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division; for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided; three against two and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law" (Luke xii. 49-53). A better description of the result of Christianity could not be given in few words. But what a marvellous change from the carol sung by the angels and the supposed early teaching of the Prophet of Nazareth! If the Gospels are true, the assertion that Jesus Christ was the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever is not true. The Jesus of the Gospels was not immutable, was not sinless, was not guileless, was not perfect, and therefore was not God. It is absurd to suppose that God would have said or done many of the things said and done by Jesus. It is also very unlikely that any one man would have said and done many of the things attributed to Jesus. The most probable explanation of the whole thing is that the Jesus of the Gospels is a myth, and therefore never existed. The writers of the Epistles knew nothing of the story of his birth, his miracles, his speeches, and other things recorded

of him. Had they been known, it is certain the writers of the Epistles would have referred to them often, and quoted freely from them—which they have not done. The inference is plain: the Epistles were written before the Gospels, which were concocted after by monks and priests, to uphold their vested interest in religious errors and delusions, and all their superstitious, absurd rites.

R. J. DERFEL.

Acid Drops.

Mr. George Cocoa Cadbury's pious paper, the well-known daily organ of the Nonconformist Conscience, devoted a whole column of its biggest type the other day to the supernatural adventures of Mrs. Jones. This lady is a Welsh farmer's wife, and dates from Dyffryn, in Merionethshire. She is a "prophetess" and she has the gift of "second sight." When this gift is said to be possessed by palmists, for instance, the *Daily News* advocates their being sent to prison. When it is boasted by a wild Welshwoman, our contemporary regards it as one of the holy wonders of the great revival. So much do circumstances alter cases.

Second sight is a superstition that always flourishes in the haunts of ignorance. Dr. Johnson had his own superstition, but he was very sensible with regard to other people's; and he remarked that second sight disappeared at the approach of science and civilisation. At one time it was common in the North of England, subsequently it retreated to the lowlands of Scotland, and finally it retreated to the Highlands.

If there are persons who really possess second sight, why don't they prove it by seeing into the middle of next week, and telling us of what is going to happen? Or why don't they state what is on the other side of wood or iron, which people who have only first sight are unable to see through? Mr. Labouchere once had a valuable banknote locked up in a safe, which any of the second-sight fraternity—including Spiritist mediums—could have by simply reading the date and number. But none of the fraternity were able to do the trick, though the offer was kept open, we believe, for several years.

Perhaps it was well for Mr. Labouchere that Mrs. Jones, of Dyffryn, Merionethshire, did not come along. This lady is "able to say before a meeting is held, not only how many, but who, will be converted at the meeting." She receives "signs"—or, as Mr. Stead used to call them, *tips*—from heaven. These signs take the form of fire.

"Sometimes the sign appears in the heavens above a particular house—and there Mrs. Jones will either have already secured a convert, or is certain to do so. At other times the strange light falls in a dazzling beam upon the roof of the chapel where she may be ministering, the roof standing out in vivid distinctness amidst the surrounding inky gloom of a winter's night, and plainly visible to startled spectators at a distance. The light does not always appear in precisely the same form. One sees it as three bright streaks of light, each apparently a yard or so in length: to another it is a single column of fire: to yet a third it assumes the appearance of a ball of fire, which resolves itself into the shape of a fiery hand with the index finger pointing to a particular locality—but each and all have some relation to her mission." This is very astonishing of course; some would say *incredible*; still, we are not going to deny it. We dare say it is quite as true as the story of the Star of Bethlehem which led forward the Wise Men from the East. But a question arises in our mind, and we venture to put it to the *Daily News*. If this Mrs. Jones is worthy of so much attention, why does our contemporary make light of the story of the Virgin's appearance at Lourdes or La Salette? We should really like to have a reply.

M. Pobiedonostzeff, of the Holy Synod—the Czar's wet-nurse in religion—presented his imperial master with a warm address against giving way to the growing cry for a Constitution in Russia. It was said that the Czar was much impressed by it. Well, if this be true, his case his hopeless; and an explosion may send him sky-high—without the chance of coming down again.

Here is the first paragraph of pious Pobiedonostzeff's wonderful document:—

"Our Lord and God, Jesus Christ, has confided unto thee the sacred mission of erecting the Orthodox Cross in the Far East, among races which believe in idols and not in the true God, and therefore do not reflect the Divine Image, but bear a resemblance to the impure race of monkeys."

Fancy talking of the Japs as "monkeys" at this time of day—after the fall of Port Arthur, and with the Baltic Fleet going to its doom! Really, one hardly knows whether to laugh or weep at this spectacle. It was said of old that the Gods first make mad those whom they mean to destroy. The first half of the process has clearly been accomplished in the case of Russia.

The pious gentleman with the frightful name evidently thought that it was a bit of a staggerer to declare that it was the Czar's mission to erect the Orthodox Cross in the Far East; so he tried to cheer up his august master by telling him that "The hour of victory is approaching." And no sooner were the words uttered than the Japs entered Port Arthur. The hour of victory *was* approaching, but it was for the opposite side.

"Forget not, O Czar," the pious exhorter continues, "that thou art the anointed of God." Nicholas isn't likely to forget it. It is about the only thing he has to boast of. And what a lot of good it is doing him just now! Alas, the holy ointment is no protection against Japanese guns and rifles—or bayonets either, when it comes to the push. Wouldn't it be as well to anoint the Czar again? Perhaps anointing is like vaccination. Its efficacy may wear off in time. Perhaps that is why Russia is getting such a licking—from the "monkeys."

Poor Dan Leno lost his head after dining with the King. General Booth has been six inches taller since he visited Buckingham Palace, and we hear that he wears a hat like a saucepan. Now it is the turn of the Rev. W. Carlile, the head of the Church Army. He has been to see the King, who wished him success, and gave him £100. We hope the excitement won't make him play his trombone out of tune.

Dr. Clifford, replying to the Rev. J. O. West in the *Daily News*, repeats for the thousandth time his old hypocrisies on the Education question. Here is one of them. "Passive Resisters," he says, "are seeking deliverance from the tyranny that compels them to pay for sectarian teaching." Now it is to be noted that Dr. Clifford never attempts to define "sectarian." Probably he feels that to do so would be to invite trouble. For it would reveal the fact that by "sectarian" he simply means just the quantity and quality of Christian teaching which all the Churches might agree to keep in the State schools at the expense of all who disbelieve it. Merely this, and nothing more. And stated thus nakedly—that is to say, honestly—Dr. Clifford's policy is perceived to be most contemptibly mean. The truth is, that the only valid objection to "sectarian" religious teaching is that it is carried on in the name, and at the expense, of citizens who believe it to be false. Tried by this test, Dr. Clifford's policy is just as tyrannical as that of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Church Pope and the Nonconformist Pope are fighting a trade battle; while citizens who understand and love *real* religious liberty cry "A plague on both your houses!"

Dr. Clifford has transferred his belongings to his wife, so that he cannot be distrained upon for rates again under the Education Act. He has been a long time doing it. Has he done it at last in view of the approaching General Elections? An eager "martyr" would have done it at the outset—if he trusted his wife.

In the way of revivalism the following incident takes the cake. One of the Aberystwyth students who are conducting revival meetings at Welshpool visited the parents of an imbecile boy, and it occurred to the parents and the students that they might make this poor afflicted creature the subject of a "miracle." Accordingly he was taken to the evening service at the Congregational Chapel and placed in a front pew. At the end of the service the revivalist called upon the congregation to pray that the Almighty would cure the boy of his affliction; and in order, we suppose, that the Almighty might make no mistake as to the subject of this divine operation, the boy was taken to an open space in front of the pulpit and told to kneel. Then the revivalist began the strange supplication; but the performance was interrupted by the unfortunate imbecile, who pulled an apple out of his pocket, and invited the praying revivalist to take a bite. Evidently the poor afflicted boy was not the worst imbecile in the Chapel that evening! The *County Times* feels bound to refer to the incident as "unseemly," and to say that "It is only calculated to cast ridicule upon the whole movement."

We admit that, from a Christian point of view, the Welshpool revivalist was acting quite consistently; but nobody but an imbecile or a lunatic can be an orthodox Christian nowadays. Logically, of course, Omnipotence can do any-

hing; and it is as easy to stretch a boy's skull and increase his brains as to bring a child into the world without a father or to raise a dead man from the grave, and waft him up through the sky in spite of gravitation. One miracle is just as easy as another to Infinite Power.

The vicar of Welshpool, the Rev. D. Grimaldi Davis, while allowing that "regrettable extravagance might occur" at revival meetings, holds that "the movement is genuine and God-sent." An outpouring of the Holy Spirit is needed for many reasons; amongst others, to "soften men's hearts to give towards the extension of God's Kingdom in the world." To give! Why, certainly. "Them's my sentiments" cry all the *extenders*.

Last week we asked for the names and addresses of the "two Atheists" converted at a Cardiff revival meeting. A correspondent of ours at Grangetown informs us that there were Atheists present at the meeting in question, but they were not converted; neither did all of them leave in disgust, for some of them stayed to follow the whole proceedings. There was only one "Atheist" converted, and he was unknown to the other Atheists present; moreover, he was a very singular one, for, on being spoken to before his conversion, he said that "he was not a Christian but he believed in the resurrection of Christ." Our correspondent concludes that the man was mad or drunk. Many of the converts, he says, are "drunks" who will be "drunks" again when the revival is over—and some of them before.

A Newcastle paper, on the authority of "a Welsh correspondent," publishes a circumstantial account of the conversion of a well-known doctor at a revival meeting. He had "renounced both chapel and Bible for years," but at that meeting he "announced himself publicly a disciple of Christ." "The scene which followed," we are told, "can be imagined but not described, the social and professional position of the convert investing the incident with a quite unusual character, and leaving a deep impression upon circles hitherto little affected." How interesting! But when we looked carefully through this bit of revival journalism for the name of the place where the conversion happened we could not find it. Nor is the name of the convert given. The writer says "we will call him Dr. Thomas Brown." What a pious mixture of publicity and concealment! It is worthy of the faith which has always cheerfully lied for the glory of God—and the pride and profit of his representatives.

A Passive Resister has discovered a new objection to the Education Act. The Rev. T. Phillips, of Norwich, denounces it as "a man-made statute." Evidently this reverend gentleman will never be satisfied until God (that is, the clergy) make the laws of England.

The Bishop of Exeter once said that lunatics were specially accessible to religious influences—which was just what we expected. A touching illustration of lunatic piety recently occurred at the Hatton Lunatic Asylum. Lieutenant Lempriere, the well-known Birmingham aeronaut, descended in the midst of what he took to be a garden party. He was soon surrounded by a grinning crowd—for he was in the Asylum grounds; and one of the lunatics exclaimed, "It's Elijah from the clouds! Let's pray."

Old Dowie was anxious to capture Miss Ella Russell, the English prima donna. He informed her that he was forming a "Choir of Angels" to attend his meetings and "sing down pressmen, pigs, and other children of hell." Old Dowie keeps up his vigor—evidently. But he didn't bag the lady—who sings to more appreciative audiences.

Holy Russia is the land of no-education. About 75 per cent. of the people cannot read or write. Heathen Japan has plenty of schools, and every boy and girl receives instruction.

"Providence" indulged in a striking bit of sarcasm during the recent gale at Sunderland. A Salvation Army meeting was going on, and one of the "soldiers" was wrestling with the Lord in prayer, when a mighty gust of wind blew down a chimney which knocked a lot of the roof on to the platform and the floor in front of it. Many persons were injured, seven severely. "He doeth all things well."

Matthew Errington, assistant schoolmaster at East Stanley Council School, cut his throat with a razor. The coroner's jury brought in a verdict of "Suicide whilst temporarily insane." Police Constable Borthwick said that deceased had been reading a Life of Christ, and his sister told witness that he had read it two or three times. Was that to account for the temporary insanity?

During a revival meeting at Hirst, the *Northern Echo* says, converts told their experiences, and "One declared that all his family had been at the meetings, and that even the dog wanted to come." He forgot to say what the dog wanted to come for. Surely not to be converted; for dogs are nearly all honest and truthful, and who ever saw one drunk? Probably the dog wanted to see the fun. It would have been the treat of his lifetime.

"The tide is coming in. The water of life is flowing." So says Commissioner Nicol, of the Salvation Army. Pastor Daniel Jones, of Loughor, is not so enthusiastic. He has resigned because his flock insist on holding meetings until three in the morning, because they are too noisy, and because they have done £60 worth of damage to his church. We quite sympathise with his objection to three in the morning meetings. People, and especially young people, soon acquire a taste for sitting up late; and when they do it in the name of the Lord there is no end to the length they will go. And every man (or woman either) with a grain of common sense, and another grain of common honesty, is easily able to see what is likely to come of these midnight gatherings. Let us quote Scripture again: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." It is notorious that revivals stimulate the growth of population, and multiply the number of fatherless weans.

Poor old General Booth is quite hysterical over the Welsh revival. Perhaps he feels that he may be left stranded if he doesn't go with the stream. He has called for an all-day prayer-meeting at Exeter Hall on January 19. The Lord's ears are to be battered for at least ten hours' on end. He is to be implored to arise and scatter "the hosts of evil, of doubt, and disbelief." As one of the hosts of disbelief we watch Booth's antics with much equanimity—and some amusement.

In his address to his beloved soldiers of the "Blood and Fire" Army the "General" exclaims: "Specially remember the 19th. Oh, make it a model day—a memorable day—a day to be remembered on earth, in Heaven, and in hell." There's a large order for you. We remember nothing like it since Ancient Pistol, after eating the loek, exclaimed, "All hell shall stir for this."

"Comrades," cries William Booth, "I trust you. I rely on you. You never have failed me, and you never will." How pathetic! Some would call it maudlin. Let us draw a veil over the touching sight!

The Torrey-Alexander Mission Committee is holding a *daily* prayer-meeting. God is not to have the least peace. They won't even give him the week-end. One day's prayer is that "the Godless may be convicted and converted." If by the Godless they mean Atheists, we can predict the exact number of the converts who will be bagged. It is the figure used to represent zero on the thermometers.

One of the most important prayers organised by the Albert Hall committee is fixed up for Fridays. Every week, on fish day, prayer will be offered up "That the necessary funds may be provided." God mustn't be allowed to forget that

The *Daily Mirror* could not understand Dr. Torrey's denunciation of dancing, except on the supposition that he looked upon men and women as rotten to the core. Our contemporary did not see that there is another explanation. Religion lies very close to sexuality; stir up one emotion and you soon kindle the other. Religious people are notoriously inflammable. The slightest sign of familiarity between the sexes puts them into a fever. Their imaginations travel so fast that it soon reaches the fifth act of the drama. The sight of a man's arm round a woman's waist, even in a public assembly, suggests to them the last embrace of love. So they shiver, and run away, and pray to God to save them from their evil thoughts—which are only signs of their diseased condition of mind. They remind one of the Arab who could not understand how men and women could mingle in society, as they do in the West, without perpetual conflagration. One of them said to Edmond About, "It may be very well for you, but for us—ah!" And what was the reason? Simply the seclusion of women in the East, which accentuates sexual differences and stimulates sexual imagination. And the result is—inflammability.

Dr. Torrey denies that his attitude towards dancing is based upon the supposition that men and women are rotten to the core. "I do not," he observes, "say that society is rotten to the core, but I do reassert that there are very many moral lepers in society, and the *Daily Mirror* knows that as well as I." Then the revivalist gives a bit of his own history.

"I have been a great deal in society on both sides of the Atlantic, and I know more about dancing in the upper class than most people. I was once regarded as the finest waltzer in my set in America, and I have also had the management of charity balls."

Now we understand from the newspaper puffs that Dr. Torrey has always been pious, and has had a strict religious training from childhood. The people he danced with, therefore, were probably as pious as himself. Is this the reason why he takes a sinister view of the light fantastic toe business?

Dr. Torrey's jaundiced view of dancing suggests to us that he might read with advantage the ninth Letter in Ruskin's *Time and Tide*. Ruskin points out that music and dancing were both a "principal part of the worship of the gods" amongst the "great ancient nations." He also draws attention to the fact that dancing is never censured in the Bible; on the contrary, when Jeremiah pictures the happy future of Jerusalem, under the true worship of Jehovah, he says: "thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and thou shalt go forth in dances with them that make merry." Such were to be the holy pastimes of the "Virgin of Israel."

Martin Luther would have snorted disdain at Dr. Torrey's anti-dancing mania; and we suppose the German reformer was as good a man as the Yankee revivalist. "If anyone," said Luther, "sets up the observance of Sunday upon a Jewish foundation, then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to feast on it, to dance on it." Yes, the great Martin Luther would even have danced on Sunday. The hypochondriac Puritanism of Dr. Torrey would have made him sick.

Dr. Torrey extends his hatred to theatres. He says he would sooner see his own daughter in her coffin than on the stage. Perhaps theatre-goers would too.

"The influence of the stage," says Dr. Torrey, "is under the best conditions ruinous to womanly modesty." All the punishment we wish him is a five minutes' interview with Mrs. Kendall, Mrs. Cyril Maude, Mrs. Tree, Miss Evelyn Millard, and half a dozen other leading actresses, who live better lives than he does, and have more "modesty" in their little fingers than he has in his whole body. His soul isn't worth mentioning.

We have pleasure in reproducing from the *Daily Mail* a letter in reply to Dr. Torrey from the Rev. Forbes Phillips, the well-known Vicar of Gorleston:—

"All men of clean, healthy mind must be indignant at the foul utterances of Dr. Torrey on the ballroom and the stage. Just as there are places of worship of the Peasenhall type, so there are loosely-managed theatres; but a note to the police about the latter soon puts things right. Not so with the loose chapels.

"I cannot boast of being 'the best waltzer in my social set.' I am no dancer; but I like to see people dance, and I encourage it in my parish as a healthy form of amusement. I go to these parochial dances, and as the scene of innocent public joy comes again into my mental vision, I feel indignant at his monstrous charge. Only a dirty mind and a jaundiced life could imagine such things; and I should hope all sweet-minded women will hesitate before allowing their daughters to attend the ministrations of Dr. Torrey.

Dr. Torrey might put that in his pipe and smoke it. But perhaps he doesn't smoke.

Gibbon said that to a philosophic eye the virtues of the clergy are more dangerous than their vices, and maybe it would be better for Freethought if all Christian preachers resembled Dr. Torrey. But we happen to have a little human nature about us, and we would much rather live in the same world with a man like Forbes Phillips than a dirty bigot like Dr. Torrey.

Rev. Dr. J. Warschauer writes to the *Daily Chronicle* from Oakfield-road Church, Clifton, to complain that "Dr. Torrey, not content with stating his own views on matters of theology and dogma, is in the habit of making the gravest aspersions upon the morality of those who do not share them." Which means that Dr. Torrey floods Unitarians as well as Freethinkers with torrents of Christian charity.

The *Daily Chronicle* could not help puffing Dr. Torrey, but what it really thinks of him is clear enough if you only read *between* the following lines:—

"It is an old religion which Mr. Torrey preaches. The doctrine of the material hell is in his mind, and he seems to abhor the sentimental theory of love and goodwill as he portrays the horrors of life to come with an eloquence which, in spite of the nasal tones in which it is expressed, is wholly engrossing."

This is picking the revivalist up with one hand and knocking him down with the other. We hope he likes it. æ 2810

The funniest thing said about the Torrey-Alexander Mission appeared in the *Daily News*. After regretting that Dr. Torrey had "spoken unadvisedly with his lips"—as if he could have done it with his feet—and regretting the action of those who "refuse to have anything to do" with him "because of his inaccurate and uncharitable statements about creeds other than his own"—our contemporary emits the following wheeze: "We are of opinion that if the two years' labor of these evangelists had only resulted in the conversion of one person their toil would have been well rewarded." What an ambiguous compliment!

If the accounts of the Torrey-Alexander mission were published in detail (and honestly) we should know how much had been spent on advertising through the editorial department of newspapers. We may depend upon it that the preliminary newspaper puffs have all been paid for. This sort of thing is not done for nothing. The average journalist booms religion as he booms other things—for the usual consideration. There is no superfluous piety about him. "Are you saved?" shouted General Booth to a man at a revival meeting. "No," he replied, "I'm a reporter."

The *Manchester Daily Express* is to be congratulated on having the courage to print an adverse report of the Torrey-Alexander troupe's performances at Liverpool—in its issue for January 11. The writer speaks of Mr. Alexander's well-groomed appearance, his prematurely bald head, his "narrow, definite brows," his autocratic style, and his "not musical American voice." Of Dr. Torrey he writes: "One expects music from a man who is reputed to have wielded and held enchanted thousands of people. It is, however, a harsh voice. One expects eloquence. There is none, however much grandiloquence there may be. The accent is unpleasantly American, the matter is mainly words, words, words." Great fun is made of the gentleman who stepped forward to talk about the collection. The sad fact appeared that the people who attend the Mission (according to the collection figures) come "at the rate of three a penny."

William Blake said that:—

To be good only is to be
A God or else a Pharisee.

We wonder which Dr. Torrey is. "For twenty-four hours each day," according to the *Daily Mirror*, which appears to have obtained the information from Mr. Alexander, "he lives the perfect life." Fancy!

The neatest thing said about the Welsh revival was a bookseller's slip. Ordering a fresh lot of Bibles for sale in the affected district, he wrote: "Please send these on at once. Great demand for Bibles now the revival is doing such havoc in our midst." *Havoc* is distinctly good. It hits the nail right on the head. We may add that we did not invent this story. It is circulated by the Bible Society.

The late Mr. Spurgeon taught that the greatest of all sins was "infidelity"—by which he meant not believing what he believed. For all other sins, even for murder, there was forgiveness, but "infidelity" was like the sin against the Holy Ghost; there was no forgiveness for it, either in this world or in the world to come. This also seems to be the opinion of the Rev. S. Whitehead, President of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. This gentleman has just issued a sort of pastoral letter to the ministers and people of his Church on the Welsh revival, which he naturally recognises as "not of man's getting up" but "a gracious work of God;" for any other theory would simply give the game away, or cry stinking fish. Our point, however, is that, in the course of that letter, President Whitehead gives what we may call a *crescendo* list of the classes of sinners whom the revival reaches. It is as follows: "Gamblers, drunkards, blasphemers, and even infidels." "*Even infidels!*" You see they are by far the worst of the lot. And we can quite understand that they are—from a clerical point of view. Does not the old book say that "jealousy is stronger than the grave"? And is not *professional* jealousy one of the bitterest forms of that passion?

Rev. Darlow Sarjeant, of Littlehampton, while at prayers on Tuesday morning (Jan. 10) read the first fourteen verses of the fourteenth chapter of John. On reaching the words "I go to prepare a place for you," he commented thus upon them: "When the place is ready Christ comes for us." We presume the reverend gentleman's place was ready, for Christ came for him in the evening. After tea he went for a walk on the parade, where he had an apoplectic seizure, and died shortly afterwards.

Mr. Foote's Lecturing Engagements.

Sunday, January 22, Secular Hall, Brunswick-street, Glasgow: at 12 noon, "What Japan's Victory Means"; at 6.30, "What Do We Know of God?"

January 29, Manchester.
February 12 and 19, Camberwell.

To Correspondents.

- C. COHEN'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—Address, 241 High-road, Leyton.—January 22, Queen's Hall.
- J. LLOYD'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—January 22, Birmingham; 29, West Ham; February 12, Leicester; March 12, Glasgow; 19, Liverpool; May 7, Merthyr Tydfil.
- J. S. EAGLESON.—What on earth is the matter? You take offence where none could be intended. You are quite wrong, too, in supposing that the Church of England and the Church of Rome are "our pet friends." Our opposition to the Passive Resisters is based upon the principle that they are *false* Nonconformists. If they were *true* Nonconformists, they would keep Religion and the State absolutely separate—in public education as well as in public worship.
- R. E. HOLDING.—To put a man like the Rev. R. J. Campbell to review a book like Haeckel's *Wonders of Life* (which is a bad title, by the way) is—well, it is worthy of the *Daily Mail*. We are going to deal with Sir Oliver Lodge's reply to Haeckel next week, so we cannot undertake to deal at present with such inferior criticism as Mr. Campbell's. We call it criticism really by way of courtesy; for all his answers to Haeckel are prophecies. You say it would be amusing to know what Haeckel thought of Campbell. But just listen! When the great Thackeray was in America he was asked by an admirer of a certain versifier what the people of England thought of Tupper. "Sir," said Thackeray, "they do *not* think of Tupper."
- J. BLACKALL.—Pleased to hear you are taking "an extra copy or two weekly for judicious distribution." Thanks for cutting.
- W. JONES.—Thanks for cutting with subscription.
- A. WAYMARK.—We shall keep your letter by us. Thanks also for the addresses.
- F. TESCHELEIT.—We know nothing about the matter; the paper you mention can be bought for a penny, and it is not one that we should trouble to notice.
- W. DICKSON.—We appreciate your good wishes. Shall always be pleased to hear from you.
- F. C. FULLER.—Glad to hear you "enjoy" the *Freethinker*. That is how we like to hear our readers talk. It gives us real encouragement.
- A. LEWIS.—Papers would have been sent in any case, so the whole amount is acknowledged as a subscription.
- P. B.—Sent as requested. Write whenever you please.
- G. A. P.—Thanks for your pleasant letter.
- A. D. CORRICK.—Dr. Torrey would never venture to debate with us. He knows a trick worth two (or more) of that.
- N. D.—Shall be pleased to hear from you on the other matter.
- ALEXANDER WHITE.—We are obliged to you. See paragraph.
- J. S. CLARKE.—Mr. Foote has never "debated" with the Mr. C. H. Bell you mention, and whom we hear of for the first time. Neither has Mr. Foote ever been "hissed off" a platform. There seem to be some very romantic liars in the Newcastle district.
- F. GUAINAZZI.—Thanks for your picture postcard from Morfasso, with good wishes.
- W. H. POWELL.—Your own common sense should tell you that we never said, in any article or lecture, that "Until marriage laws are abolished, prostitution is a good substitute." It is an idiotic invention. We are writing you on the other matter by post. We quite understand that the Welsh revival may do a great deal of good for Freethought. Glad to hear it is "sickening" the more thoughtful in your neighborhood already. You have done well to get a list of twenty Freethinkers already who mean business.
- G. TODD.—Thanks for good wishes and addresses.
- J. M. DAY.—Sent as requested.
- E. STRIBLING.—Thanks.
- C. W. TEKELL.—Glad to have your warm appreciation.
- MARTHA DYE.—Thanks for the pretty card and your thought of us.
- UNKNOWN.—You forgot to send your name with the subscription, so we have credited it to "Unknown." You will recognise the amount; besides, you wished "More power to your good right arm."
- JAMES GILMORE, 8 Station-road, Lambeg, near Belfast, would be glad to hear from any Freethinkers in the neighborhood, with a view to forming a local Secular Society.
- UN AMI.—Pleased to hear that you regard the *Freethinker* as "the best twopennyworth you ever get," although your income is only a working-man's, and that you have "picked up more information" from it than at one time you "ever thought possible." Thanks for the cutting.
- MRS. TURNBULL.—Yes, we are quite sure that you and yours appreciate the *Freethinker*. Shall be glad to see you all at the Brunswick-street meetings.

- E. J. SHEA.—Thanks for letter and addresses. We are writing you by post, as desired. See also paragraph.
- W. WAYMARK.—We hope our success may equal your wishes.
- G. NEWMAN "contributes a splinter to the whipping post for Torrey," and says that "the whip will be in good hands."
- TOM JACKSON.—Thanks for addresses. The matter referred to in your letter is having attention.
- R. B. MIDDLETON sends a subscription to "damp the ardor of the Yankee," and hopes we may "long be spared to carry out like objects."
- HARRY WALKER.—Certainly we appreciate it. One man's half-crown may be a greater gift, relatively, than another man's pounds. The brotherly way is for each to give according to his means, and none to despise or envy others. Pleased to hear you so "admire" our articles on "Two Graves at Rome." If we "write better as we get older," as you say, it is a sign that our heart is in the work.
- OUR ANTI-TORREY MISSION FUND.—Previously acknowledged, £30 9s. 9d. Received this week: John Brierley 10s., W. Jones 2s. 6d., A. Waymark 1s., Blackheath Hill 1s., James Toope 5s., J. M. Day 1s., C. W. Tekell 1s., T. S. 2s., Unknown 4s., Mrs. Turnbull 5s., W. Waymark 2s., G. Newman 2s. 6d., R. B. Middleton 5s., Harry Walker 2s. 6d., W. Dickson 1s., A. Lewis 3s. 6d., F. M. 2s., G. A. P. 5s., A. D. Corrick 2s. 6d., N. D. 5s., J. Brodie 1s., W. Palmer 1s., W. A. Holroyd 1s., Joseph Bevins 5s., Hugh Hotson £1, W. W. Curties 5s., A. W. Davis 10s., G. B. (Liverpool) 2s., S. Edmonds 5s., J. G. Stuart 2s., Miss Tocher 2s., David Watt 2s. 6d., A. J. Watson 1s. 6d., Elektron 1s., J. Chick 5s., H. T. 2s., W. Robertson 1s., G. F. H. McCluskey 2s. 6d., W. O. Foster 1s., J. K. £1, J. M. C. Pointon 1s., T. J. 5s., Two Sarumites 3s., David Powell 5s. 6d., E. R. 2s., R. Gibbon 10s. 6d., G. Shepherd 2s. 6d., E. D. Side 10s., R. H. Side 10s., R. W. Dowding 4s., P. Rowland 5s., G. Scott 2s. 6d.
- W. P. PEARSON.—Pleased to hear that Mr. McCabe had "excellent meetings" at Liverpool on Sunday. He is one of the straightest Freethinkers amongst the "Rationalists."
- W. A. HOLROYD.—Mr. Foote's health is better than might be expected in this trying weather.
- G. WOODWARD.—So the Roman censor has been busy again with our comic friend *L'Asino*, has he? There will have to be another Congress at Rome if this goes on.
- HUGH HOTSON sends a donation towards checking Dr. Torrey's slanders, and says "I hope the friends of Freethought will at this time rally round our leader."
- A. W. DAVIS.—Glad to learn that you were at the Dinner, and enjoyed yourself thoroughly, and mean to go again next year. Your letter is very encouraging. We like to hear from our converts, and it is good to be assured that the *Freethinker* has led them to the light, broadened their minds, and introduced them to advanced literature which they might never otherwise have known. Thanks for your mental narrative.
- W. W. CURTIES.—Your suggestion is a good one, and may supplement our own project.
- J. G. STUART.—We have noted it in "Sugar Plums." Thanks for your cheery letter. We have another Rome article still to write, and hope to do it next week.
- DAVID WATT (Paisley) is glad to see that a "Scotch Friend" heads our new subscription list. Of course it is open for an English friend to beat it, and we are quite sure that the "Scotch Friend" will be pleased to excite such rivalry.
- J. CHICK.—No doubt it will, as you say, do good. The Liverpool friends distributed a lot of back numbers of the *Freethinker* at the Torrey-Alexander meetings in their city, and are confident of having done good thereby.
- VICTOR ROGER.—Accept our thanks. We shall be dealing with the whole matter of the 1905 Congress next week, when your communication will be very useful.
- THE BOY.—You do not waste our time at all; we are pleased to hear from you, and glad to know that the *Freethinker* is "the treasure of your life," which is a good deal after reading it as long as you have.
- J. E. LING, 2 Surbiton-road, Southchurch, Southend-on-Sea, will be glad to hear from Freethinkers in the district, with a view to local propaganda in the immediate future.
- W. P. BALL.—We are obliged to you for your useful cuttings.
- M. ELCOAT.—Thanks for the addresses. It is strange to hear that newsagents "cannot afford to have copies of the *Freethinker* left unsold." This journal has always been supplied to the trade over our counter on "sale or return" terms. Local newsagents, who find any difficulty in this respect, have simply to insist on receiving proper attention from their wholesale agents.
- H. IRVING.—Thanks. It won't do the reverend gentleman any harm.
- W. ROBERTSON.—Cuttings welcome, though too late for this week; will probably be useful for next.
- W. O. FOSTER.—It won't do you any harm, and it may do Torrey (or his dupes) some good.
- H. LEWIS.—Your order, etc., passed over to the proper hands. Other matters will be attended to. Your letter is quite refreshing. Keep pegging away.
- J. K.—We will try to give some account of religious frenzies in all parts of the world, past and present. It will be of interest to others as well as yourself. We do not know of any particular book on the subject. Glad to know you "greatly admire" the *Freethinker*.

A. E. RANDALL.—Your letter shall appear. We stand by and note the discussion for the present. Pleased to hear from you.

T. MANVILLE.—In our next.

GERALD GREY.—Thanks for cuttings and compliments.

W. R. ALLEN.—Your letter is behind date. Our readers would have to go back to our Jan. 1 issue to understand what you write. We note, however, your denial that you have acted unfairly in Hyde Park, and your statement that "the audience has freely subscribed for a new platform" in appreciation of your work.

T. H. ELSTON.—It is having our attention. Thanks for good wishes.

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.

Considering the bitter weather, which must have kept many indoors, there was a capital audience at the Queen's Hall on Sunday evening, when Mr. Foote delivered the second lecture of the present course on Sir Oliver Lodge's reply to Haeckel. A considerable number of questions were asked and answered after the lecture, which, by the way, was much applauded. This evening (Jan. 22) the third and last lecture of this course will be delivered by Mr. Cohen, who takes for his subject "Revivalism Ancient and Modern"—which should be particularly interesting just now.

Mr. Foote pays Glasgow another visit to-day (Jan. 22), and delivers two lectures, at 12 noon and 6.30 p.m., in the Secular Hall, Brunswick-street. His subjects are fresh and attractive, and bumper meetings are expected. Mr. Foote had been invited to lecture elsewhere in Glasgow on Monday evening, but he was obliged to explain that his editorial duties compel him to be in London on Tuesday.

The London Freethinkers' Annual Dinner, under the auspices of the National Secular Society's Executive, took place at the Holborn Restaurant on Tuesday evening, January 10, and was a very brilliant success. The top record was reached in the matter of attendance, 124 ladies and gentlemen being present; and, to use the words of Byron, all went merry as a marriage bell. Mr. G. W. Foote occupied the chair, and was supported by Messrs. C. Cohen, J. T. Lloyd, "Chilperic," Victor Roger, F. A. Davies, Harry Snell, and other well-known London Freethinkers; not forgetting Mr. E. Wilson, who has so often given great assistance to the open-air propaganda by gratuitously supplying a brake and a pair of fine horses for Freethought Demonstrations in the London Parks. Several provincial Freethinkers were present, including "F. S.," whose initials are familiar to our readers as that of a very liberal subscriber, Mr. R. L. Martland, and Mr. Richard Green. After the dinner, which was of more than usual excellence, there was a mixture of grave and gay in a few brief speeches and in vocal and instrumental music. The Chairman's address was listened to with keen interest, and warmly applauded. Mr. Lloyd, whose hearty reception must have been gratifying and encouraging, proposed the Toast of "Freethought at Home and Abroad" in a capital short speech. One dry point brought down the house; it was when he said, with mingled pathos and humor, that it was much easier to be a successful Christian parson than a successful Secular lecturer. Mr. Cohen, who responded to the Toast, was brief, bright, and effective. He was loudly cheered when he said, in conclusion, that if the Freethought pioneers of to-day did not "succeed," they would at least have the success of making it easier for those to succeed who came after them.

The "entertainment" part of the program was provided by Madame Saunders, who ably presided at the piano; Miss

Jenny Atkinson, whose sympathetic voice gives such a charm to all she sings; Mr. Eric Wynter, who had the honor of singing with her in a duet; Mr. Will Edwards, who was enough to convulse a Welsh revival meeting with laughter; and Mr. John Warren, the famous ventriloquist, whose impromptu bits, suitable to the occasion, were very highly appreciated. This part of the program had been arranged by Miss E. M. Vance, the N. S. S. secretary, who has the largest and hardest part of the work in connection with these Annual Dinners. She looked happy that evening, for the function was more successful than she had deemed it would be.

Before the Dinner party broke up by singing "Auld Lang Syne" the independent voice was heard of an unannounced gentleman on his legs. It proved to be Mr. W. A. Vaughan, who wanted to know whether the reference to the Chairman's birthday was to be left entirely to Mr. Warren. He believed that he was voicing the general sentiment in wishing the President many happy returns of the day. They all hoped that Mr. Foote might long lead them in their great fight for freedom, truth, and justice. "Hear, hear!" cried the diners, and they all got up (ladies and gentlemen together) and sang "For he's a jolly good fellow." This unforeseen part of the program was followed by another—a few words of acknowledgment from the chair. Finally the gathering dispersed amidst general handshaking and good wishes for the new year.

Of course the Annual Dinner was boycotted as usual by the "free and independent press" the "palladium of British liberty," etc., etc. Miss Vance sent out a modest press announcement; it was inserted in *Reynolds'*, but in no other paper. Even the *Morning Leader* could not find room for three or four lines. It was so much occupied with the Welsh revival.

Mr. James Neate, who is one of the N. S. S. vice-presidents, and very far from being ashamed of the fact, has received notice from the London County Council that he is appointed a Manager of the Mansford-street, Turin-street, and Waverley-street group of Day Schools, in South-West Bethnal Green. Mr. Neate is a member of the local Borough Council. Good education has no better friend in the district—and the children have a friend in him too.

We are glad to learn that Mr. H. Percy Ward has recovered from his recent illness and is able to resume his lecturing and other duties in connection with the Liverpool Branch. He lectures to-day (Jan. 22) in the Alexandra Hall, and there will doubtless be "full houses" to welcome him back. Mr. Ward lectured at Birmingham last Sunday for the Labor Church, and was reported in Monday's *Gazette*. Had he lectured for the N. S. S. Branch he would probably not have had a line.

The *Consett Chronicle* reproduces, with due acknowledgment, our recent article on "Wicked Freethought Poets" in reply to an article by Mr. James Davidson which appeared in our contemporary's columns. The *Chronicle* also prints an excellent letter from the pen of "Eclectic" on similar lines to our own.

Reviewing Professor Lewis Campbell's *Tragic Drama in Eschylus, Sophocles and Shakespeare*, the *Academy* expresses our own view of the "Bard of Avon's" irreligion. "Shakespeare," it says, "is Pagan to the core. Professor Campbell says mildly that 'his conception of the supernatural is tinged with scepticism.' Tinged! when throughout the tragedies the only viaticum administered to the dying is nescience."

Our friends are once more reminded that we are sending weekly copies of the *Freethinker* to persons whose names and addresses are sent to us as those of likely subscribers. We have received a good many of such names and addresses already, and we shall be glad to receive a good many more. We are happy to state that some fresh subscribers have been obtained in this way.

We do not mean, of course, that the object mentioned in the preceding paragraph is the only one that our readers are asked to care about. Those who can afford to do so—and their number must be considerable, are earnestly invited to purchase when they can one or more extra copies of the *Freethinker* and circulate them judiciously amongst their friends and acquaintances, or persons whom they may happen to meet in social or business intercourse. By doing this they will help to counteract the boycott which is still employed against this journal, and which prevents its circulation from doubling or trebling, as it would soon do if it were obtainable as easily as other periodicals.

The Practice of Christianity.

"Suddenly there comes to him (the ancient Greek) like the clang of a dolorous bell, the sound of the clock of time, striking the Christian era. A bitter east wind, full of spiritual influenza, swept across the world. As the poor Greek shivers in the blast, he realises for the first time, like Adam, that he is naked, that it is wrong for him to be happy in his simple, natural way."—RICHARD LE GALLIENNE, *The Puritan Crusade*, Lecture, 1895.

"I condemn Christianity, I bring against the Christian Church the most terrible of all accusations that ever an accuser has taken into his mouth.....Let a person still dare to speak to me of its 'humanitarian' blessings! To do away with any state of distress whatsoever was counter to its profoundest expediency, it lived by states of distress, it created states of distress in order to perpetuate itself eternally."—NIETZSCHE, *The Antichrist*, p. 353.

"for thou didst groan, not weep,
When from its sea of death to kill and burn,
The Galilean serpent forth did creep,
And made thy world an undistinguishable heap."
—SHELLEY, *Ode to Liberty*.

"Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean; the world has grown grey from thy breath."
—SWINBURNE, *Hymn to Proserpine*.

We concluded our previous article with the fall of the Roman Empire, to which calamity Christianity materially contributed. Henceforth Christianity became the established faith, and Christians were at liberty to pursue the task of gaining salvation, without let or hindrance.

As we have plainly shown, Christ taught that salvation could only be gained by abandoning the world and everything that could distract the attention from heavenly things, even the nearest and dearest relations must be abandoned. Obviously, the best way to avoid the distractions of this earthly life was to fly from the towns and cities, the homes of civilisation, and live like a beast in a desert or a cave, where there was nothing to distract the mind from dwelling upon the heavenly life.

Says the learned and Christian historian, Dean Milman:—

"According to the monastic view of Christianity, the total abandonment of the world, with all its ties and duties, as well as its treasures, its enjoyments, and objects of ambition, advanced rather than diminished the hopes of salvation. Why should they fight for a perishing world, from which it was better to be estranged?"*

Milman says "According to the monastic view"; but "the monastic view" is the view that Christ taught; the monk merely put in practice the teaching and example of Christ. "The total abandonment of the world, with all its ties and duties, as well as its treasures, its enjoyments, and objects of ambition," was the very essence and marrow of the teaching of Christ. To be a pilgrim upon the earth, ever looking forward to the future life, that is the kernel of Christianity. In the Dark Ages they merely carried the teachings of Christ to their logical conclusion. Says Lecky:—

"A hideous, sordid, and emaciated maniac, without knowledge, without patriotism, without natural affection, passing his life in a long routine of useless and atrocious self-torture, and quailing before the ghastly phantoms of his delirious brain, had become the ideal of the nations which had known the writings of Plato and Cicero and the lives of Socrates and Cato."†

After the fall of the Roman Empire, the Literature of Europe—as Buckle points out—fell entirely into the hands of the clergy, with the result that "from the sixth to the tenth century there was not in all Europe more than three or four men who dared to think for themselves; and even they were obliged to veil their meaning in obscure and mystical language. The remaining part of society was, during these four centuries, sunk in the most degrading ignorance."‡

"But," it is said, "the monasteries provided a refuge for the cultured and gentler natures in a barbarous age." But how much better it would have been if these gentler natures had remained in the world, to have married and passed on their own better qualities to their children. Says Galton:—

"The long period of the Dark Ages under which Europe has lain, is due, I believe, in a very considerable degree, to the celibacy enjoined by religious orders on their votaries. Whenever a man or woman was possessed of a gentle nature that fitted him or her to deeds of charity, to meditation, to literature, or to art, the social condition of the time was such that they had no refuge elsewhere than in the bosom of the Church. But the Church chose to preach and exact celibacy. The consequence was that these gentle natures had no continuance, and thus, by a policy so singularly unwise and suicidal that I am hardly able to speak of it without impatience, the Church brutalised the breed of our forefathers. She acted precisely as if she had aimed at selecting the rudest portion of the community to be, alone, the parents of future generations. She practised the arts which breeders would use who aimed at creating ferocious, currish, and stupid natures. No wonder that club law prevailed for centuries over Europe; the wonder, rather, is that enough good remained in the veins of Europeans to enable their race to rise to its present, very moderate level of natural morality."*

But it should be remembered that these people were only following in the footsteps of Christ, who lived a bachelor all his life, disparaged the married state, and enjoined his followers to hate their nearest and dearest relations.

We are often told that during the Middle Ages the monasteries were the homes of charity; that no beggar was sent empty away from the monastery door. But this indiscriminate charity gave rise to more evils than it cured. To cite Lecky again:—

"A form of what may be termed selfish charity arose, which acquired at last gigantic proportions, and exercised a most pernicious influence upon Christendom. Men gave money to the poor, simply and exclusively for their own spiritual benefit, and the welfare of the sufferer was altogether foreign to their thoughts."

"One of the first consequences of the exuberant charity of the Church was to multiply impostors and mendicants, and the idleness of the monks was one of the earliest complaints.....Withdrawing multitudes from all production, encouraging a blind and pernicious almsgiving, diffusing habits of improvidence through the poorer classes, fostering an ignorant antipathy to the habits and aims of an industrial civilisation, they have paralysed all energy, and proved an insuperable barrier to material progress. The poverty they have relieved has been insignificant in comparison with the poverty they have caused."†

The practice was to "give to everyone that asketh," not out of pity or compassion, but because by so doing the giver believed that he was laying up treasure in heaven, where he expected to be repaid a hundredfold.

We have shown in a previous article that this concentration of the thoughts on a future life was the direct result of the teachings of Christ. We are well aware that the majority of modern professors of Christianity do not renounce the world. On the contrary, their practice is "to make the best of both worlds," and it must be admitted that they succeed very well in this world, at any rate; but they are not followers of Christ, or real Christians, unless they have forsaken all for the sake of the world to come. Renunciation is the keystone of Christianity. As the late Professor Huxley caustically remarked, "People who talk about the comforts of belief appear to forget its discomforts. They ignore the fact that the Christianity of the Churches is something more than faith in the ideal personality of Jesus, which they create for themselves, plus so much as can be carried into practice, without disorganising civil society, of the maxims of the Sermon on the Mount."‡

No one has exposed the hidden springs governing Christian motives with more success than Ludwig Feuerbach, who had been an earnest Christian, and at one time had studied to enter the Church. The knowledge gained during that time he used with masterly skill in his great work *The Essence of Christianity*; the most deadly weapon ever launched against the creed of Christ. "The salvation of the

* Milman, *Latin Christianity*, vol. ii., p. 206.

† Lecky, *History of European Morals*, vol. ii., p. 107; 1902.

‡ Buckle, *History of Civilisation*, vol. i., p. 269; 1902.

* Galton, *Hereditary Genius*, p. 357; 1869.

† Lecky, *History of European Morals*, vol. ii., pp. 93-94.

‡ Huxley, *Essays on Controverted Questions*, p. 359.

soul," says Feuerbach, "is the fundamental idea, the main point in Christianity"; and he rightly remarks that—

"To him who believes in an eternal heavenly life, the present life loses its value: belief in the heavenly life is belief in the worthlessness and nothingness of this life. I cannot represent to myself the future life without longing for it, without casting down a look of compassion or contempt on this pitiable earthly life."*

The first Christians *believed* in an eternal heavenly life. "They absolutely courted death," says Dr. Knighton, "especially when it came in the form of martyrdom. 'O feet blessedly bound by the smith,' exclaimed Cyprian, 'which are to be loosed, not by the smith, but by the Lord! O feet blessedly bound to guide us to paradise along the road of salvation.'"[†]

During the Middle Ages no type was more admired, says Lecky, than a saint or a monk:—

"To die to the world; to become indifferent to its aims, interests, and pleasures; to measure all things by a standard wholly different from human happiness, to live habitually for another life was the constant teaching of the saints. In the stress laid on the cultivation of the spiritual life the whole sphere of active duties sank into a lower plane; and the eye of the mind was turned upwards and inwards and but little on the world around. 'Happy,' said one saint (St. Francis de Sales) 'is the mind which sees but two objects, God and self, one of which conceptions fills it with a sovereign delight and the other abases it to the extremist dejection.'

"As much love as we give to creatures," said another saint (St. Philip Neri) 'just so much we steal from the the Creator.' 'Two things only do I ask,' said a third (St. Teresa) 'to suffer and to die.'"[‡]

But the best epitome of Christianity is contained in that famous work of the Middle Ages, *The Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas à Kempis. Catholics and Protestants agree in recognising this work as the most perfect presentation of a Christian life ever penned by mortal man. By Catholics it is regarded as hardly less inspired than Scripture itself, and can be obtained bound up with the New Testament in one volume. Renunciation is the keynote of the work. It declares that "He is truly wise that counteth all things as dung, that he may win Christ. (Bk. 1, ch. iii.) Also to "Keep thyself as a stranger and pilgrim upon the earth, and as one to whom the affairs of this world do nothing appertain" (ch. xxiii.). For "Assure thyself thou canst not have two paradises; it is impossible to enjoy delights in this world, and after that to reign with Christ" (ch. xxiv.). "Thou oughtest to leave thy dear ones for the Beloved; for Jesus will be loved alone above all things" (ch. vii., bk. 2). "Thou oughtest to be so dead to such affections of beloved friends, that (so far as thou art concerned) thou wouldst choose to be without all human sympathy. Man approacheth so much the nearer unto God, the farther he retireth from all earthly comfort" (ch. xlii.).

Yes, that is genuine Christianity. Give up your dearest friend, estrange your parents, desert your wife and children, lest they distract your attention from the heavenly mansions where you are to reside in bliss for ever and ever. What a reptile creed! "Oh!" but, exclaims the Protestant of to-day, "that was the creed of the monks and the saints, those are the errors of Romanism. Luther swept all that away and restored the true faith as it is in Jesus." In reply, we beg to say that the *idea* of Christianity—that is, that this life is a weary pilgrimage, where we are to live apart from the world—was the same among the Protestant reformers as was held by the Catholics, but the Protestants never attempted to carry the idea into *practice* like the more consistent Catholics. In our next article we shall show, from the writings of the greatest and most influential Protestants, that there is no essential difference between the two Churches as to their ideal of Christianity.

W. MANN.

* Feuerbach, *Essence of Christianity*, p. 161.

† Knighton, *Struggles for Life*, p. 91.

‡ *The Map of Life*, p. 44, 1899.

Correspondence.

FREETHINKERS AND MARRIAGE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—It is much to be hoped that the discussion started by "X." will be allowed full scope, for, without doubt, he has raised a most important issue.

I remember being much struck, some twelve or more years ago, by a remark made to me by Henry Jeffreys, a name now almost forgotten, but who did some good missionary work in the Robert Owen movement when almost all the real Radical reformers were, like G. J. Holyoake, pronounced fighting Freethinkers.

Jeffreys had, like many others, tamed down as he got older and better off; and, when talking to me, was of the Unitarian body, and was, perhaps, for a variety of reasons, much out of touch with living Freethought; but I am forced to confess that, when he challenged me to find a Freethinker of the third generation, I was at a loss to find material to disprove his statement then and there.

I have since then put the point to many others of our friends, but I have yet to get any satisfaction in the answers, and in that fact, I submit, is a very complete proof of the need of raising the issue as done by "X."

The picture may be a trifle extreme, but it would, perhaps, astonish a good many readers to try the experiment I am going to suggest: Go to your bookshelves, and take down "B. V.'s" *City of Dreadful Night* (Reeves & Turner; 1888), and at page 149 turn up his short poem, "Virtue and Vice":—

She was so good, and he was so bad:
And a very pretty time they had

She filled their home with freezing gloom;
He felt it dismal as a tomb:
Her steadfast mind disdained his toys
Of worldly pleasures, carnal joys;
Her heart firm set on things above
Was frigid to his earthly love

She left him: she had done her part
To wean him from his sinful heart,
But all in vain

The narrow path she strictly trod,
And went in triumph home to God:

The number of homes which have been broken up and wrecked by the woman drawn by Thomson, the

pure saint
Serene in soul, above complaint,

would make a very long list if only it could be authentically compiled and vouched.

The writer of the contribution in "ours" of January 8 says that at our lectures the men outnumber the women by ten to one; but as it is always so much better to use our enemy's ammunition than our own, I have much pleasure in drawing attention to a speech by the grammatical and polite Bishop of London on the same point.

In a scream of his reported in the *Daily News* he says "that while the men's side of the church was only a quarter filled the women's side was over-filled, and the ladies had to be taken to the men's side to fill up. That was a disgrace to the Church of England.....Were they going to sit down and see the Church's work done by women? No; they must wipe away that reproach."

These screaming ecclesiastics are always getting their tongues entangled with their teeth, and muddling up their cause by affronting their best friends or helping their opponents by unlucky admissions.

Thus we learn that the men's side is only a quarter full, and further—and so true to the traditions of the Church—it is a *reproach* for Church work to be done by women.

One of the wonders of the world surely is the way in which women, age after age, allow themselves to be exploited and insulted by the religionists of every sect.

The fact remains, however; and it is for us to somehow circumvent the slaveholders, and, by enfranchising the slaves, prepare the way for the production of a succession of Freethinkers.

"Juverna" insists rather strongly on the need of Freethinkers marrying only Freethinkers; but it is manifest that this is a counsel of perfection, if "One Who Has Missed the Post" is right with his ten men to one woman; even with a big discount it would seem difficult to meet the demand for fitting women.

It seems that the only real hope is, first to draw off some of the Bishop's reproach; and, secondly, to try and reach that enormous number of women who have shaken off the shackles of the old superstitions, but not found anything to satisfactorily take its place.

This class, I am sure, is more numerous than many people think. It is not yet fully realised what has been done during the last ten or fifteen years, by the wider education, and, perhaps, more still, by the wider economic and industrial life of woman. Of the immensely increased number of women now getting their own livings, as teachers, clerks, and in so many new fields of labor, a very large proportion have freed their minds from all the old chains, but yet hesitate to step right into our circle.

We may thank ourselves for much of this hesitancy. We have felt ourselves, as a party, so strong in our honesty—of purpose—that we have relied wholly upon Right and Reason to make all our converts. We never have paid sufficient attention to the lighter sides of propagandism.

For twenty-five years we have allowed ourselves to be scared by a bogus orgie, and dared never to suggest a ball in connection with a Freethought branch. All which time, churches and chapels make money and converts by more and more detailed study of every form of amusement and attraction.

Where and how can our men and women meet and study future possibilities? What have we which will in any way compare with the multitude of opportunities provided by and for the orthodox. Fred L. Greig is right in insisting on the way in which the Catholics cater to the social instinct, and the need of Freethinkers taking the hint; social anæmia is exactly the trouble with our party.

It always has had an excess of brain power compared with its animal virility. Something without doubt must be allowed on account of the strenuousness of the fight in the past, but we have arrived at a new stage.

New times demand new measures; and though it may be true, that there are more real Freethinkers and Atheists than fifty years ago, it is nevertheless quite as true that as an effective phalanx we are to-day swamped and merged almost beyond recognition.

Something in the way of a Matrimonial Bureau seems to be required. This might be the simplest and readiest means of reaching some of the isolated items of society; but when this Bureau begins work it will speedily be seen that something more has to be done to safeguard all concerned.

Banned as our sect is, the mere introduction of people does not do much towards a satisfactory acquaintance.

It will no doubt be news to many of our friends, to learn that some eight or ten years ago a very serious attempt was made, by two or three Freethinkers of influence and standing, to start a really honest Matrimonial Bureau.

After some few months of very harassing and serious work, and the expenditure of some six or seven hundred pounds, the matter had to be dropped, the principal reason being that very few of the clients were honest or bona fide.

Although started by Freethinkers the business was not restricted to Freethinkers, and that perhaps may in a measure account for the rather large percentage of what in America would be called 'Crooks,' who made application for the help of the organization.

Whether time is more fitting to-day is an open question, but the experiment proved that the introduction is not by any means *all* that has to be done to make such a business safe and useful.

Freethinkers are on the whole rather prone to pooh pooh the teachings of the orthodox, and so it may perhaps be rather idle to suggest it, but W. T. Stead in this particular matter is heterodox enough to be a very particular thorn in the sides of the ordinary and orthodox minded person, and so to be justified to some of our readers. If this be so they might be interested in Chap. xvi. of his annual for 1905, *Here am I*.

Again hoping some good may come of this discussion, this is submitted.

THE ESS.

"FRIENDSHIP AND FREETHINKERS."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

Sir,—Being a Freethinker, I am nothing if not sceptical; and "Juverna's" creed calls for consideration rather than credence. For the success of an organisation, it may be admitted that cohesion and co-operation of individuals is necessary. But the object of Freethought propaganda is not, I take it, to replace the Church of England by a Freethought Secular Society, but to make everybody a Freethinker in the literal sense of the term. If this be so, permeation is as effective as percussion; there is no need for the Freethinkers to fall en masse on the believers, and cohesion between the individual Freethinkers is quite unnecessary.

"Juverna" asks: "Can you have too many allies?" It depends on the allies. If the allies require constant attention and training they will be an incumbrance rather than a support. If all women were George Eliots, their

influx to the body of Freethinkers would be an inestimable boon. But "Juverna" shows us clearly that she is not a George Eliot; she complains of the cold on the "mountains of intellectual greatness," and she asks, timidly I admit, for the lowering of the quality of the "Freethinkers" that the other uninteresting females, who yet fill the churches, may be enticed into reading the paper. Is there any man, full of the glory of fighting for the truth, who would regard the applause or sympathy of such women as an encouragement? The women belong to the Church, and the men are forsaking the "House of God," probably because the women do attend. The women who "shrink and shiver," "get chilled, and fall away from the movement," are of no value to Freethought, and are best in the Churches. The essence of the matter is this. Religion may be defined as intellectual dissipation, and Freethought as intellectual occupation. Social intercourse, the bonds of friendship, are as irrelevant in the one case as in the other. The fight that Freethought wages is one of ideas, and, as the conflict waxes keener, higher and higher must the mind ascend. It is unjust to our leaders, unfair to our cause, to ask for the adulteration of our literature. If the truth for which we fight has not the power of consolation in it, but needs the assistance of female sympathy, then, I submit, we are in a bad way. The path of truth is a lonely one, but the lover of truth needs only the knowledge that he is on the right path to recompense him for everything.

The instances of friendship quoted by "Juverna" are quite useless, because they are the great exceptions. A poet may need friendship; although I believe that Dante's Beatrice died at about fourteen years of age, and am not aware that Petrarch enjoyed very much of Laura's society. I am rather hazy on these points, and am open to correction. A philosopher may find a mind of equal calibre an assistance, but he does not need the friendship or sympathy of anyone. But commonplace people like myself are satisfied with the verity of our cause; we take the hard knocks of combat as the necessary consequence of fighting; and sympathy of other people is useless to us, who are sustained by the consciousness of our rectitude. A final question. We have been overdosed with sentimental piety; is the antidote to be sentimental scepticism?

ALFRED E. RANDALL.

Lying Angels, and Truthful Jesus.

(A Gospel Rondeau.)

"Christmas (Old Style) at Bethlehem was marked by a bloody fight between the Greek and Latin Clergy."—DAILY PAPER.

In Bethlehem, the Christians fight,
And break each other's heads for spite;
Yet, there, the Angels in the sky
Sang: "Peace on Earth," from God on high;
But those who "watched their flocks by night"
And said they saw the heavenly light,
And heard the song, were, doubtless, "tight"—
Unless the Angels told a lie

In Bethlehem.

Said Christ, whom Christians praise—and slight:
"I bring not Peace," but Discord's blight;
So, Angels—where they told the lie—
Look down on many a blackened eye,
Because, like beasts, the Christians fight

In Bethlehem.

G. L. MACKENZIE.

A SELFISH RELIGION.

Going through a churchyard one afternoon I noticed that nearly all the people who were buried there, if the inscriptions on the tombstones might be taken to represent the thoughts of the departed when they were alive, had been intent solely on their own personal salvation. The question with them all seemed to have been, shall I go to heaven. Considering the tremendous difference between heaven and hell in the popular imagination, it was very natural that these poor creatures should be anxious above everything to know whether they would be in hell or heaven for ever. Surely, however, this is not the highest frame of mind, nor is it one to be encouraged. I would rather do all I can to get out of it, and to draw others out of it too. Our aim ought not so much to be the salvation of this poor petty self, but of that in me which alone makes it worth while to save me; of that alone which I hope will be saved, immortal truth. The very centre of the existence of the ordinary chapel-goer and church-goer needs to be shifted from self to what is outside self, and yet is truly self, and the sole truth of self. If the truth lives, we live; and if it dies, we are dead.—"Mark Rutherford."

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.

QUEEN'S (Minor) HALL (Langham-place, W.): 7.30, C. Cohen, "Revivalism Ancient and Modern."

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (North Camberwell Hall, 61 New Church-road): 3.15, J. Prince, "Phrenology"; 7.30, J. M. Robertson, "Can the Gospels Be Regarded as History?"

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Liberal Hall, Broadway, Forest Gate, E.): 7.30, R. Rosetti, "How I Escaped Death and Siberia."

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Prince of Wales Assembly Rooms, Broad-street): J. T. Lloyd, 3, "House Building"; 7, "The Way to Heaven." Thursday, Jan. 26, at the Coffee House, Bull Ring, at 8, B. Ensell, "The Unreliability of History."

FALLSWORTH (Secular Sunday School, Pole-lane): Fred Morgan, Recital.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (110 Brunswick-street): G. W. Foote, 12 noon, "What Japan's Victory Means"; 6.30, "What Do We Know of God?"

GLASGOW RATIONALIST AND ETHICAL ASSOCIATION (319 Sauchiehall-street): 3, Sunday-school. Monday, Jan. 23, at 8, G. Scott, "Woman's Claim to the Franchise."

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Rev. Conrad Noel, "The Catholic Faith: A Modern Apologia."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): H. Percy Ward, 3, "The World's Religions.—I. Mohammedanism"; 7, "Marriage and Divorce: A Freethought View." Monday, at 8, Rationalist Debating Society, H. Buxton, "The Principles and Objects of the Ethical Society."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, All Saints): 6.30, J. Harvey Simpson, "Cremation." Lantern views.

NEWCASTLE DEBATING SOCIETY (Temperance Institute, Rutherford-street): Thursday, Jan. 26, at 8, M. D. O'Brien, of Sheffield, "The Utter Failure of Compulsory Instruction."

OLDHAM SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Institute, Bankside-street): 7, Open Discussion, Local Affairs. Saturday, Jan. 21, at 7, Special Social and Dance, with refreshments.

SHEFFIELD SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall of Science, Rockingham-street): 7, Willie Dyson, "In Defence of Rationalism: Mr. T. W. Holmes Notwithstanding."

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.SS.

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.

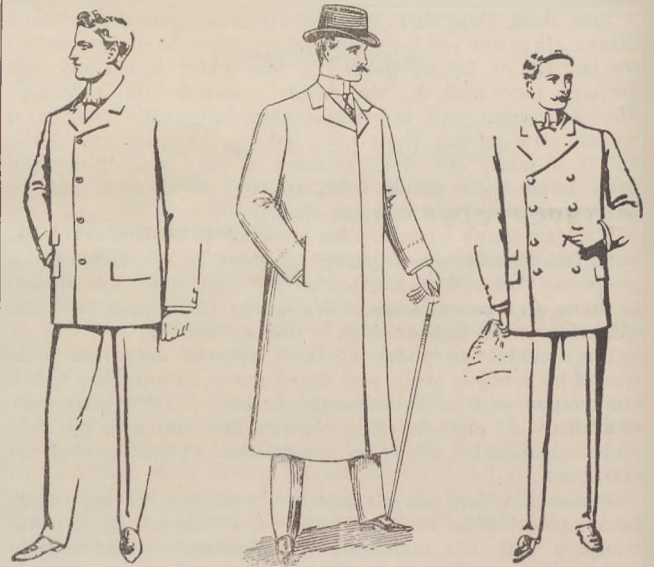
Evolution and Christianity - - - - - 2d.

Pain and Providence - - - - - 1d.

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

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.



Fashionable Lounge
Suit
33s.

Rainproof
Overcoat
25s.

D. B. Reefer
Suit
35s.

ALL MADE TO MEASURE

From left-over Winter Cloths.

ALL COLORS.

FINEST QUALITIES.

Patterns and Measurement Forms Free.

MUST BE CLEARED.

FREE GIFT. With each Suit or Overcoat I will send Free of Cost a Pair of my 10s. 6d. BRADLAUGH BOOTS, Black or Tan, any size.

This offer holds good till Feb. 11, 1905.

New Spring Patterns ready Feb. 11.

AGENTS WANTED.

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

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.

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.

VOLTAIRE'S ROMANCES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE SECULAR SOCIETY, (LIMITED)

Company Limited by Guarantee.

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

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

Secretary—E. M. VANCE (Miss).

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

The Memorandum of Association sets forth that the Society's Objects are:—To promote the principle that human conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action. To promote freedom of inquiry. To promote universal Secular Education. To promote the complete secularisation of the State, etc., etc. And to do all such lawful things as are conducive to such objects. Also to have, hold, receive, and retain any sums of money paid, given, devised, or bequeathed by any person, and to employ the same for any of the purposes of the Society.

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

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

The Society has a considerable number of members, but a much larger number is desirable, and it is hoped that some will be gained amongst those who read this announcement. All who join 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, FARRINGDON-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.

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.

A MIRACLE OF CHEAPNESS

"MISTAKES OF MOSES"

BY

COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL

(THE LECTURE EDITION)

Thirty-two pages, good print, good paper

ONLY A PENNY

Twelve copies post free for tenpence for gratuitous distribution

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

THE BIBLE HANDBOOK

FOR

FREETHINKERS AND INQUIRING CHRISTIANS

EDITED BY

G. W. FOOTE AND W. P. BALL

A New Edition, Revised, and Handsomely Printed

CONTENTS:

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

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

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

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