

THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXV.—No. 17

SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 1905

PRICE TWOPENCE

There is not a more singular character in the world than that of a thinking man.—WILLIAM MELMOTH.

Who Killed Christ?

WITHOUT committing ourselves to a full acceptance of the Gospel story of Christ's death, with all its monstrous miracles and absurd defiance of Roman and Jewish legal procedure, we propose to take the story as it stands for the purpose of discussing the question at the top of this article.

The ordinary Christian will exclaim that Jesus was murdered by those infernal Jews. Ever since they had the power of persecuting the Jews—that is, ever since the days of Constantine—the Christians have acted on the assumption that the countrymen of Jesus *did* actually cry out before Pilate, "His blood be on our heads!" and that they and their posterity deserved any amount of robbery and outrage until they unanimously confessed their sin and worshiped him whom they crucified. It made no difference that the contemporaries of Jesus Christ could not transmit their guilt to their offspring. The Christians continued, century after century, to act in the spirit of the sailor in the story. Coming ashore after a long voyage, Jack attended church and heard a pathetic sermon on the Crucifixion. On the following day he looked into the window of a print-shop, and saw a picture of Jesus on the cross. Just then a Jew came and looked into the window; whereupon the sailor, pointing to the picture, asked the Hebrew gentleman whether he recognised it. "That's Jesus," said the Jew, and the sailor immediately knocked him down. Surprised at this treatment, the Hebrew gentleman inquired the reason. "Why," said the sailor, "didn't you infernal Jews crucify him?" The poor son of Abraham admitted the fact, but explained that it happened nearly two thousand years ago. "No matter," said the sailor, "I only heard of it yesterday."

Now it is perfectly clear, according to the Gospels, that the Jews did *not* kill Jesus. He was put to death by Pontius Pilate. But if they *did* kill him, were they without justification? Was not Jesus, in their judgment, guilty of blasphemy, and was not that a deadly crime under the Mosaic law? "He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord," says Leviticus xxiv. 16, "shall surely be put to death." Were not the Jews, then, carrying out the plain commandment of Jehovah?

Nor was this their only justification. In another part of the Mosaic law (Deut. xiii. 6-10), the Jews were ordered to kill anyone, whether mother, son, daughter, husband, or wife, who should entice them to worship other gods. Now it is expressly maintained by the overwhelming majority of divines that Jesus asserted his own godhead. He is reported as saying, "I and my father are one," and, as St. Paul says, "He thought it no robbery to be equal to God." Were not the Jews, then, bound to kill him if they could?

Let it not be supposed that *we* would have killed him. We are not excusing the Jews as men, but as observers of the Mosaic law and worshipers of Jehovah. Their God is responsible for the death of Jesus, and if Jesus was a portion of that very deity, he was responsible for his own death. His worshipers had learnt the lesson so well that they killed their own God when he came in disguise.

Some friends of Jesus lay the blame of his death on Judas Iscariot. But the whole story of his "betrayal" of Jesus is a downright absurdity. How could he *sell* his master when the commodity was common? What sense is there in his being paid to indicate the best-known man in Jerusalem? Even if the story were true, it appears that Jesus knew what Judas was doing, and as he could easily have returned to Galilee, he was accessory to his own fate. It may also be pointed out that Judas only killed Jesus if the tragedy would not have occurred without him; in which case he was the proximate cause of the Crucifixion, and consequently a benefactor to all who are saved by the blood of Christ. Instead of execration, therefore, he deserves praise, and even the statue which Disraeli suggested as his proper reward.

Who killed Christ? Why, himself. His brain gave way. He was demented. His conduct at Jerusalem was that of a maniac. His very language showed a loss of balance. Whipping the dove-sellers and money-changers, not out of the Temple, but out of its unsanctified precincts, was lunatic violence. Those merchants were fulfilling a necessary, reputable function; selling doves to women who required them as burnt offerings, and exchanging the current Roman money for the sacred Jewish coins which alone were accepted by the Temple priests. It is easy to call them thieves, but they were not tried, and their evidence is unheard. If they cheated, they must have been remarkably clever, for all their customers were Jews. Besides, there were proper tribunals for the correction of such offences, and no one who was not beside himself would think of going into a market and indiscriminately whipping the traders and dashing down their stalls. Certainly any man who did it now would be arrested, if he were not lynched on the spot, and would either be imprisoned or detained at His Majesty's pleasure.

Quite in keeping with these displays of temper was the conduct of Jesus before Pilate. A modicum of common sense would have saved him. He was not required to tell a lie or renounce a conviction. All that was necessary to his release was to plead not guilty and defend himself against the charge of sedition. His death, therefore, was rather a suicide than a martyrdom. Unfortunately the jurisprudence of that age was less scientific than the one which now prevails; the finer differences between sanity and insanity were not discriminated; otherwise Jesus would have been remanded for inquiries into his mental condition.

As a man Jesus died because he had not the sense to live. As a God he must have died voluntarily. In either case it is an idle, gratuitous, enervating indulgence in "the luxury of woe" to be always afflicting ourselves with the story of his doom. Great and good men have suffered and died since, and other lessons are needed than any that may be learnt at the foot the Cross.

G. W. FOOTE.

Quackery.

ON more than one occasion during the past few months "Merlin" of the *Referee* has amused himself by playing the "superior person" towards Atheists and Atheism. I may be wrong in saying that he "amused" himself, although there can be little doubt as to his philosophical (?) disquisitions having amused many of his readers. Like the famous performance of *Hamlet*, during which the laughter of the audience could be heard whole streets away, "Merlin," on the philosophy of religion and ethics, must have been responsible for much cachinnatory exercise. To anyone who longs for a laugh, or for a brief study of the philosophic superior person, my advice is—read "Merlin" when he is discoursing on some philosophic subject.

The special article I have in front of me is one on "The Uselessness of Unbelief"; and, in the mind of the writer, "Unbelief" and "Faith" are psychologically antithetical. Of course, as a matter of fact, they are nothing of the kind. Belief and unbelief are only two aspects of the same thing, the antithesis to which is doubt. This is only a small matter, but it is one worth noting, particularly as "Merlin" thinks grave consequences follow from widespread unbelief.

"Merlin's" first discovery is that when we descend to "the bed-rock of thought" we "are all Agnostics.....When we take up such a consideration as that of the existence of a great First Cause, or the immortality of the soul, the believer in any religious creed whatsoever has no more right to declare that these things are than any positive scientist has to declare that they are not. Science will help us, analogy will help us—even our illogical intuitions may prove to be of service; but of an actual demonstrable theory there is no hope whatever." One may be excused being in a state of considerable doubt as to how science can help us to understand that concerning which we are "all Agnostics," especially as science can, by its very nature, know nothing whatever concerning that verbal jumble, "a great First Cause." If science will help us to understand it, it so far destroys our Agnosticism; and, if we are all Agnostics, it is useless expecting science to help us.

"Merlin," however, proceeds to indicate in what way science and analogy can help us—which is unwise. When a man strings together a collection of phrases that lack intelligibility it is always bad policy to add a commentary. It only emphasises the unintelligibility, where, had the matter been left alone, those who mistake obscurity for profundity—and their name is legion—would treasure such a sentence as a philosophic gem. The famous "watch" argument, he says, is of very little value. "The argument is fallacious, because, if the existence of a universe imperatively demands a belief in the existence of a Creator, that Creator no less imperatively demands an origin"—which is quite wrong, for the objection to the Paleyan argument is based upon different grounds altogether. If the universe pointed to a Maker as clearly as a watch does, there would be no fallacy whatever in the argument. It is true that it would only push the puzzle back a step, but it would be perfectly sound so far as it goes. The fallacy is in mistaking for an analogy that which is not an analogy at all. There is no analogy in the two cases, for the reason that in the one our inference that a particular watch is made rests upon the previous knowledge that watches are made, while in the other we have nothing but the bare fact of existence, which is the only point—and the least important—in which the two instances agree.

But how does science help? Well, "ever since life had a beginning it has steadily tended towards higher forms, towards the growth of intelligence, and towards the establishment of loftier systems of morality." Therefore, there is "a something not ourselves that makes for righteousness." Now this may be rhetoric, or it may be an effective literary

touch, but whatever else it is, it is not science. Scientifically "higher" and "lower" are mere expressions of convenience. All that science knows is adaptation, and that may be, and is, as perfect in the "lower" animals as in the "higher" ones. Scientifically, too, the Nature that has produced man has also produced the tapeworm or the microbe of the sleeping sickness. Nature has worked just as hard to produce one as the other, and shows as little, or as much, concern whichever gets the upper hand. I do not object to the terms "high" and "low"; they have their place and their value; but it is ridiculous to treat them as concrete facts, independent of human convention.

"Pursuing the inquiry," to use "Merlin's" phrase, although one wonders where the inquiry is, the next thing we have to note is that there is no such thing in nature as waste. That is, we can change, but we cannot destroy. And this being true of the material world "it seems reasonable to imagine that the facts of the material world may find themselves repeated in the spiritual. The most precious product of the universe.....is.....the human personality.....And is it not reasonable to assume that in a world in which the meanest and least valuable of the elements is indestructible, the final and most perfect result is indestructible also."

Bravo! It sounds like a Sunday-school, or a Y. M. C. A. meeting, or a Christian Evidence lecturer, or anything else that is equally old-fashioned and unscientific. The human personality is the most precious product of the Universe! Who says so? Does Nature, which in rearranging its internal forces has, in India, just crushed a few thousand specimens of its "precious products" out of existence? Can anyone show that, *apart from our measure of things*, man is more precious to nature than a crayfish? Why, if science tells us rightly, man will one day be wiped out altogether. And what becomes of this "precious product" then?

But this is provided for. Nature preserves the least valuable of its *elements*; shall it not preserve the most valuable of its *results*? It is hard to be consistently non-reasonable; and "Merlin" has deviated from the path he has steadily pursued hitherto in the use of the two words italicised. For these give the answer to the query. Nature does perpetuate its elements; it does not perpetuate its results. Everywhere the properties manifested by a combination vanish when the combination is resolved into its primitive elements. There is positively no exception to this rule; and "Merlin's" task is to give some reason why a law that holds good in every other instance should not hold good here.

But it must be remembered that this flow of unreason is preparatory to reading the Atheist a moral lesson, for your superior person is nothing unless he carries his superiority into the region of conduct. Any man who goes about the world, he says, can find illustrations "by the hundred" that the loss of faith is accompanied by a relaxation of the rules of life; and he asserts that the most "daring Agnostic" cannot be found to contend that he is morally a better man for being an Agnostic. "Mental emancipation.....never made, and it never can make, a man the wiser or the better." To which I can only reply that, although I have not been about the world so long as has "Merlin," yet I have been about, and have quite failed to see the "hundreds" every year whose lives are made worse by giving up religious belief. And while the Freethinkers I have known were not notorious for their evil lives before they became such, yet I do not suppose that any of them would deny that their Freethought has given them a wider, healthier, and, therefore, more moral outlook on life than ever they had before. Let "Merlin" quit his "high falutin'" and perfectly useless rhetoric for awhile and bethink himself whether it is not making for a healthier and cleaner life to break down religious antipathies, to plant truth in place of falsehood, and to concentrate attention upon the indispensable conditions of human welfare this side of the grave. Really "Merlin"

does not seem to have the ghost of a conception that mental honesty is one of the indispensable conditions of even moral growth. Which is the worst of your very superior person.

Finally, "Merlin" assures us, "What I most lament about the propagandist of Atheism is his want of the sense of responsibility. He does not know what he proclaims so loudly.....Experience has shown that whenever the theory has been widely accepted the result has been disastrous..... Whenever for a while in the history of nations he has achieved a temporary victory he has slain a civilisation, and has proved himself the harbinger of a new barbarism. And for these reasons.....I will strive against him till I die."

It is a pity to have to disturb such an affecting finale, especially when one reflects upon the glow of virtuous resolution that must have warmed the writer's breast while penning such a heroic resolution. But while I, for one, have always been under the impression that I *did* know what I proclaimed, loudly or softly, yet I do not know where "the theory" has been widely accepted and has proven disastrous. I do not know where it has "slain a civilisation," or ushered in a "new barbarism." I do not know where religion has brought about these results, and so would "Merlin" if his historical knowledge was worth talking about. Bacon was of opinion that Atheism never did perturb states or civilisations; but then he had not the advantage of living in a time when he could have taken in the *Referee* with its amusing front-page article. It may be that I agree with Francis Bacon because my knowledge of history is not comprehensive enough; and if so I would humbly ask "Merlin" for just one instance of where Atheism has slain a civilisation and ushered in a new barbarism.

Or it may be, perhaps, that I have quite mistaken "Merlin's" purpose in writing his article, and, if so, I crave his pardon. For, while writing, I remembered that the week before he had written that "Modern tendencies have united to make it possible for a man to achieve a reputation as a brilliant fellow by the mere act of being absurd." And perhaps the succeeding article was really written to prove this.

C. COHEN.

A Mischievous Fallacy.

THE other Sunday evening it was my good fortune to hear a thoroughly sensible as well as eloquent sermon. The night was wet and stormy, but the large building was well filled with a most attentive congregation. The text was a striking proverb, taken from a strangely pessimistic, agnostic book of the Old Testament: "Whoso breaketh through a fence, a serpent shall bite him." Anyone can see that there is no religion involved in that simple text. There is no suggestion of the supernatural in it. Its import is purely ethical. The preacher treated it, on the whole, with great candor and commendable directness. By "fences" he rightly understood ethical restraints and limitations, which cannot be removed with impunity. He who disregards or acts in antagonism to the law of his own nature and of the welfare of society, is bound to suffer, either directly or indirectly. This is a self-evident truth, and he who denies it is guilty of high treason against humanity. Very impressively the preacher unfolded and illustrated this all-important theme; and I came away well pleased, in the main, with the performance, and with the preacher securely ensconced in a warm corner of my heart.

And yet the whole service was vitiated by a subtle and mischievous fallacy. While dealing with a severely moral question, the preacher could not forget that he stood in his pulpit as a representative and champion of a supernatural religion. He was there as a believer in the inspiration of the Bible, as one in whose estimation every truth known to us has been specially revealed by God. Having elaborated

several really telling illustrations, he exclaimed, "The revelations of this grand old Book agree, on every point, with the revelations made in your own consciences." According to that teaching, had it not been for God and his gracious revelations, man would never have known that drunkenness, and dishonesty, and immorality are injurious. This fact is known to him only because it has been revealed to him from above. But there never was a greater perversion of the truth. Moral duties are social products, and the non-discharge of them is condemned because it is anti-social. We know that drunkenness, dishonesty, and immorality are injurious, not by a revelation from God, but alone by individual and social experience. These things *hurt* society, and therefore society condemns them. Consequently, the preacher weakened his otherwise powerful argument by his professional references to supernatural sanctions, rewards, and punishments.

Religion naturally engenders selfishness in those who believe in it. I know a young man who leads a moral life partly because he loves and partly because he fears God. He believes in heaven and in hell over which God is supposed to preside. When tempted to do wrong, he cries out, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" To sin against God is to incur his displeasure and become liable to his penalty. On the contrary, to do right means to please God and to become entitled to his reward. Consequently, this young man is all the time cultivating the most subtle and insidious form of selfishness. At bottom he is a consummate egotist, who subordinates everything to himself in his relationship to God. He abstains from evil from the fear of hell, and follows the right from the hope of heaven. However much he may love his neighbor, it is his love to God that is supreme; and his love of God is only a reflection of his self-love; in other words, it is a projection of his self-love, as an imaginary object, into an imaginary world inhabited by imaginary beings.

For argument's sake, it is here assumed that religion may be, and often is, productive of moral virtues. It would be utter folly to deny that the young man under consideration does lead a moral life, and that morality is preferable to immorality. The argument, however, is that, at best, the religious *motive* is essentially selfish, and social, only superficially. But here is another young man who is an avowed Atheist. He was brought up in an Atheistical atmosphere. He has never had any religious beliefs, and the mystery to him is that such beliefs are possible. And yet he was from earliest childhood trained in high ethical principles. He was taught to regard all virtues as fundamentally social. It was diligently impressed upon him that he was a member of the race, to which he owed certain duties, and that he could not be himself happy without earnestly endeavoring to make others happy. He was carefully instructed in the doctrine that altruism is the crowning virtue. As a result of that training, he is to-day an eminently moral young man. He takes great care of his bodily and mental health, because he knows that without health he cannot be an efficient servant of the community. Therefore, he practices self-control, abstaining from all hurtful excesses, and indulging in all health-giving habits. He breaks through no fences, and no serpent bites him. His moral excellence is equal to that of the very best religious young man, who attends church twice on Sunday and teaches in the Sunday-school, and takes part in the prayer-meetings. But this friend has the decided advantage that arises from having a purely altruistic or social motive. He looks upon himself as a member of society. It is his love of others that determines all his actions.

These are not imaginary portraits. You will find the first young man in all the churches of Christendom, and the second is to be met with in all Secularist organisations. I admit that the former represents a much larger class than the latter, and I hold that fact responsible for the prevailing selfishness of human life. The churches are filled with people who

live alone for what they call God—that is to say, for themselves as individual favorites of his. Go to any church you please, and the minister will say to you: "Put God first; everything and everybody else second." Then you will be told that God cares for individuals, and is "ever mindful of his own." Of course, the people so instructed may sweat their work-people, cheat in business, and make their neighbors stepping-stones to their own pre-eminence. But Secularists, when scientifically instructed, put society first, and aim at living for the common weal. Their conception of society necessitates their adoption of altruism as the only legitimate law of life.

We are often asked, "What has Atheism done for the world?" and we answer, "Much every way." For those who have adopted it it has changed the centre of gravity. It has supplied a new motive. It has made social well-being the supreme object of life. "But where are its hospitals?" To tell the truth, Secularism does not believe in hospitals; and, if it gets a fair chance, it will abolish them all. And it will do more. When it comes to its own, Secularism will likewise do away with prisons, and police-forces, and standing armies, and slums. All these institutions are so many badges which Christian society wears to show that it is still held fast in the thralldom of superstition and ignorance and injustice. Let us fasten our attention for a moment on hospitals. For whom do they exist? For the poor. For whom do the poor exist? For the rich. For whom do the rich exist? For God and his glory. That is an ascending scale of great significance. It is customary to assert that if people are poor they have only themselves to blame; and the assertion may be superficially true. It is perfectly true that many of our poor owe their miserable condition to their own carelessness and indifference, to the various forms of dissipation and gambling to which they are in bondage, and to their constitutional laziness. And it is from the same source that the majority of their ailments and diseases spring. But the conditions which make those dreadful vices and their still more dreadful penalty possible are all removable; and the force that can uproot them is education. Our opponents smile disdainfully, and say: "Education has proved itself a dismal failure." But we contend that education has not yet been tried. Education, as defined by Herbert Spencer in his famous book, is still a thing of the future. At present, the majority of children are educated for trades and professions, and not for life. The fundamental laws of life are but seldom if ever mentioned. The purely ethical note is conspicuous by its absence. But once let education be conducted on purely scientific lines, once let the culture of the whole being become the great end ever aimed at, and once let the children be instructed in the essential solidarity of the race, and to regard themselves as so many members of a vast family and as having distinct mutual duties to discharge, and soon there will begin to appear radical and comprehensive modifications of our present social conditions.

Now, under existing conditions, hospitals are excellent institutions, and, according to their number and position, Secularists have done their share in erecting and equipping them. But it is our ambition, by means of education and other social agencies, to remove existing conditions, and along with them, the need for hospitals and gaols and armies and navies. Meanwhile, however, our chief endeavor should be to persuade our fellow-being to renounce the predominant superstition and adopt a rational conception of human life. Religion bars the way to progress, and must be got rid of as quickly as possible. We do not say that the influence of religion has been or is wholly evil; but we do say that the influence of scientific Secularism is wholly good. All we contend is that religion is a serious hindrance to the practical realisation of the vital unity of the human race. The idea of God obscures and throws into false perspective the idea of man, and so to give man his due we must dismiss God. Eternity dwarfs time; and to make the most of

time we must annihilate eternity. But alongside of this destructive work we must carry on a ministry of construction upon the ethico-scientific lines already indicated.

It is a baneful delusion to imagine that moral earnestness is impossible apart from religion. The fact is that religion has often denounced morality as a filthy rag. Only the other day a prominent minister said, at a public meeting, that purely ethical discourses are entirely out of place in a Christian pulpit, and he never uttered a truer thing. As long as spiritual religion endures, ethical development will be arrested. The glory of heaven is so dazzling that the earth and its things become invisible. Therefore we maintain that moral earnestness is inconsistent with religious enthusiasm, and that we must get rid of the latter before we can have the former. And have we not seen many bright and inspiring instances of moral earnestness completely divorced from religion? Did Bradlaugh suffer from lack of moral earnestness? He acknowledged no God, and yet he was afire with an all-consuming enthusiasm for the highest welfare of society, and fought like a giant refreshed for the native rights of man as man. In his case, we had strong emotion doing homage to a stronger intellect. And that is what we want to-day. Emotionalism run wild is degrading; but emotionalism under loyal tribute to an enlightened reason is a transforming force—the only force that is calculated to carry mankind to their highest pitch of ethical development.

J. T. LLOYD.

A Roman Catholic Counterblast.

THE amount of consternation engendered in religious circles by the vigorous Freethought and anti-Christian propaganda of the past few years may be gauged by the fact that even the Roman Catholic Church has begun to rouse herself. It takes a good deal to alarm the Church of Rome. Not that she is usually excessively somnolent where her interests are concerned, but her policy in this country towards *Infidel* attacks has been for some time one of ostentatious indifference or affected unconsciousness.

The day was when she could silence the *Infidel*, and she did it unscrupulously. Whatever will she may have at the present day to do likewise, she no longer has the power. Accordingly, she perforce falls back upon the expedient of keeping her children—as far as may be—in profound ignorance of the cumulative mass of evidence that has been heaped up during the last half-century against supernatural religion in general and the dogmas of the Roman Church in particular.

But the new generation of Roman Catholics is restless and inquiring, and young members of the Church of Rome are beginning to surmise that all truth is not contained in the *Church Catechism*, *Catholic Belief*, and the other orthodox manuals of instruction and devotion in which the good Catholic delights.

Then the literature of *Infidelity* (most dreadful of words) is being so boldly and extensively circulated throughout the community that it is impossible for even the Church of Rome, with all her boasted confidence in Divine support, to continue putting the telescope to her blind eye and swearing she sees nothing. (We have it on the authority of a prominent politician that this is Nelson's year, so the metaphor may pass.)

And, although a section of the clerical press attempted to pour disdain and ridicule on the Freethought Congress at Rome last year, we may be sure that that event gave rise to qualms of uneasiness in Roman Catholic circles the world over. Even the more or less estimable old gentleman, who presently wears the Papal tiara, lost his temper over the matter, as if he did not feel quite so sure about the security of that rock on which he is supposed to be built.

Now we have the Catholic Truth Society on the war-path. Under its auspices a series of lectures dealing with the fundamental truths of the Christian religion has been delivered in Glasgow. The first lecture, on "The Existence of God," was given by Monsignor Moyes, D.D., of Westminster Cathedral.

From the report of the lecture published in the local Roman Catholic organ it seems to have been mainly a re-statement of the old argument anent a First Cause, which the reverend lecturer, as usual, identified with the Christian God. Then there were the customary arguments that the existence of law in the Universe implies a Law-giver; that the great fact of motion, or movement in matter, indicates a Prime Mover; that there never could have been a time when there was nothing, and necessarily whatever had no beginning must be God.

These arguments have been ruthlessly swept aside scores of times by Freethought speakers and writers. And it has been repeatedly asked of what value would a God after the Monsignor's definition be for purposes of worship? A mere scientific or philosophic First Cause or Eternal Force is of no use to the average Roman Catholic. That is not the conception of God presented for the love and adoration of the faithful by the Roman Catholic Church. You cannot have prayer, or public worship, or religious fervor, without thinking of God as a personality. As a matter of fact, the Church of Rome herself in the Vatican Decrees of 1870 distinctly defined the existence of a personal God, in opposition to what were styled "the daring attacks of modern infidelity."

We will do Monsignor Moyes the justice of saying that seldom from a Roman Catholic pulpit has the supremacy of reason been so emphatically asserted as in the following passage, which we have much pleasure in quoting as reported. After remarking that "we must be true and loyal to our reason," he says:—

"If we doubt the validity of our reasoning we cast ourselves into the chaos of know-nothingism, for without our reason we can know nothing, and by doubting the veracity of our reasoning we disqualify ourselves from the possession of any knowledge."

These are plain words. But we would ask the Monsignor—What if reason moves us to reject Roman Catholicism, with all its dogmas, including belief in God and in the immortality of the soul? Must reason then be stifled? Or must we be damned eternally for obeying its dictates?

The second lecture of the series, on "The Resurrection of Christ," was by a layman; and for the purpose of this discourse one of the public halls was taken. The Church of Rome is chary of permitting any infringement of priestly privileges such as would be involved in giving a layman the use of the pulpit. The lecture was delivered on a Sunday afternoon, and the speaker was Dr. G. W. B. Marsh, B.A. (Lond.), F.R.Hist.Soc.

A name preceded and followed by such an array of alphabetical letters has an imposing appearance, and no doubt duly impressed Glasgow Roman Catholics. Of this second lecture the writer was an interested auditor. We did not go with the expectation that even a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society could convince us that in dealing with the Gospel narrative of the Resurrection we are dealing with historic fact. But we were desirous of hearing what an educated man of the standing of Dr. Marsh could find to say in the year 1905 in support of the orthodox Roman Catholic belief on this question.

Dr. Marsh has clearly missed his vocation. His style and his language would do admirably in the pulpit, but on the platform—and in connection with any serious controversy—it is completely out of place. As a demonstration of the truth of the Resurrection story the whole lecture was a farce. What the audience seemed to consider his most effective passages were merely specimens of cheap rhetoric having no bearing whatever on the credibility of the Resurrection. Apart from appeals *ad captandum vulgas*, the lecture was singularly uncon-

vincing. We are quite positive that had Dr. Marsh gone into the question with an open mind, and not as a believer, the considerations he submitted to his hearers would have had very little weight with him. But the Roman Catholic believer in religious dogma who searches into the history of any particular doctrine very seldom does so to ascertain the truth. Why should he? He knows he *has* the truth! It is only a case of seeking for evidence to support a conception already well established in the mind.

Dr. Marsh valiantly declared that he did not merely base his belief in the Resurrection on supernatural authority. He accepted that miracle on human testimony, and he had the hardihood to declare that the Resurrection was the best-attested fact in history! We are accustomed to hearing sweeping and ridiculous assertions of this kind from clergymen, but coming from a distinguished layman, a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society—who ought to know something about history—it sounds amazing.

And what was this human testimony on which Dr. Marsh so confidently relied? The Epistles of Paul, the Gospel narratives, and the writings of Irenæus! All three combined form a very shaky foundation for "the best attested fact in history." Dr. Marsh indeed went so far as to admit that the major portion of the so-called Pauline epistles had been rejected as spurious by modern Biblical critics. He evidently had not heard that Professor Van Manen had repudiated them all. And, although he referred freely to the Gospel story of the Resurrection, he omitted to mention that the Books of the four Evangelists have been hopelessly discredited as historical documents by the most competent critics.

Paul, of course, was Dr. Marsh's leading witness for the Resurrection, probably because of the unhesitating fashion in which he makes the actuality of the Resurrection the guarantee for the truth of Christianity. What the Roman Catholic Church would do without Paul goodness only knows. Yet it might occur to those Christians who quote Paul as an authority that, even if we acquiesce in the authenticity of the Epistles which bear his name, Paul had no first-hand knowledge of the events leading up to and immediately succeeding the death of Christ. In fact throughout the whole New Testament there is not even the suggestion that anyone actually witnessed the Resurrection taking place. The writers of the various books take the incident as having occurred; and all the evidence that has come down to us, or that can be produced by Dr. Marsh or anyone else, merely proves that certain people *believed* in the Resurrection—not that it happened.

Dr. Marsh labors under a fallacy which is common enough, but to which *he*, at least, ought to have been superior. He seems to think we should regard as true everything in the Gospels that cannot be proved false. It has been pointed out repeatedly that the onus of proof rests with those who affirm, not with those who deny. Yet Dr. Marsh brings forward as evidence for the Resurrection not only the fact that it is believed in to this day, but also the contention that no one has yet proved that it did not occur! This is the sort of reasoning that his unthinking audience loudly applauded—instead of laughing at it.

Quite the most amusing—not to say grotesque—passage in Dr. Marsh's lecture was his examination of the Crucifixion story from the point of view of a medical man—to use his own expression. The lecturer quite rightly pointed out that it would be idle to speak of Christ's physical resurrection unless it were certain that Christ was really dead when placed in the sepulchre. So (in refutation of the "swoon" theory) we were treated with certain pathological details for the purpose of showing that Christ *did* die on the Cross—of a broken heart.

Dr. Marsh referred to the incident narrated in the latter part of the 19th chapter of the Gospel accord-

ing to St. John—the piercing of Christ's side by the soldier's spear and the subsequent flowing of blood and water from the wound. This account by a non-medical witness ignorant of pathology, of the result of the piercing was, he asserted, in entire conformity with the *post-mortem* conditions a modern surgeon would expect to find in the case of a person who had died of a broken heart. With this difference, of course, that the surgeon would use different terms in describing those conditions. Thus what St. John calls blood is characterised by Dr. Marsh as a "treacley semi-congealed" fluid that would be regarded by a lay observer as blood. And that which St. John calls water was, in medical language, *serum*. It was in this ingenious fashion that Dr. Marsh met the objection that blood does not flow from a wound inflicted on a dead body.

It will be noticed Dr. Marsh quietly assumed that the spear incident really happened. Of course if it could be demonstrated that Jesus was stabbed through the heart by a Roman soldier, we might admit that his death had been pretty well consummated. But it is worth while recalling that it is only in the Gospel according to John that any mention is made of this piercing of Christ's side. And it is also significant that no one but John mentions the story about unbelieving Thomas placing his hand in Christ's wounded side. Matthew, Mark, and Luke seem to have known nothing about either of these incidents. Add to all this that the fourth Gospel is regarded by the generality of modern scholars as the least trustworthy of them all. What are we to think of an exponent of *Catholic Truth* who ignores such considerations, and coolly passes over the now well-known fact that all the "human testimony" he parades—the Epistles, the Acts, and the Gospels—has been branded as utterly unreliable by those best qualified to judge.

G. SCOTT.

WORLDLY PLACE.

Even in a palace life may be led well!
So spake the imperial sage, purest of men,
Marcus Aurelius. But the stifling den
Of common life, where, crowded up pell-mell,
Our freedom for a little bread we sell,
And drudge under some foolish master's ken
Who rates us if we peer outside our pen,
Matched with a palace, is not this a hell?
Even in a palace! On his truth sincere,
Who spoke these words, no shadow ever came;
And when my ill-school'd spirit is aflame
Some nobler, ampler stage of life to win,
I'll stop, and say: "There were no succor here!
The aids to noble life are all within."
—Matthew Arnold.

Let the strict life of graver mortals be
A long, exact, and serious comedy;
In every scene some moral let it teach,
And, if it can, at once both please and preach.
Let mine, an innocent gay farce appear,
And more diverting still than regular,
Have humor, wit, a native ease and grace,
Though not too strictly bound to time and place:
Critics in wit, or life, are hard to please;
Few write to those, and none can live to these.
—Pope.

The human understanding resembles not a dry light, but admits a tincture of the will and passions, which generate their own system accordingly; for man always believes more readily that which he prefers. He therefore rejects difficulties for want of patience in investigation; sobriety, because it limits his hope; the depths of nature, from superstition; the light of experiment, from arrogance and pride, lest his mind should appear to be occupied with common and varying objects; paradoxes, from a fear of the opinion of the vulgar; in short, his feelings imbue and corrupt his understanding in innumerable and sometimes imperceptible ways.—Bacon.

Learn to make Time the father of wise Hope;
Then trust thy cause to the arm of Fortitude,
The light of Knowledge and the warmth of Love.
—Wordsworth.

Acid Drops.

A crane fell at the Putiloff works, St. Petersburg, killing eleven men and injuring fifteen others, besides smashing two gunboats in course of construction. The workmen say that the accident is a judgment of God because of the continuance of the war in Manchuria. But in that case the crane should have fallen on the Czar and some Grand Dukes.

Baron Kaneko, addressing a meeting at New York, declared that the Russians had violated every principle of humanity, broken every article of the Geneva Convention, and outraged every maxim of decency. They dragged 200 wounded Japanese prisoners through the streets of Mukden for thirteen hours as a spectacle for the Chinese populace. Yet there are 90,000 Russian prisoners in Japan, well-housed, well-clothed, and well-fed, and allowed every comfort consistent with their safe custody. Baron Kaneko stated that the Emperor of Japan was so torn to the heart by the sufferings of his army from the cold in Manchuria that he forbade any fires to be lighted in the palace until the war was over. "We will not be warm," he said, "until our soldiers are warm too." The Czar of Russia is too good a Christian to talk in that way.

Religious people cling to the old Bible idea of "punishment." Mrs. Forster, wife of the Rev. F. S. Forster, vicar of St. Mark's, Walworth, felt she had to "punish" her thirteen-years-old son for what the newspapers call "a little act of disobedience." She therefore told him he would have to keep to his bedroom for the rest of the day. She went up to see if his room was ready. When she came down he was gone. The next day his decapitated body was found on the Great Eastern Railway near Tottenham. What a sad story! That clergyman's wife might have had her boy beside her still if she had given up the religious idea of "punishment" and had treated him with natural common sense. She might have taken his hand, and looked in his eyes, and asked him not to give too much trouble to the mother who loved him, and it would have been better, as well as safer, than the bedroom-prison treatment. Perhaps she feels it now—too late!

Unto him that hath shall be given! General Booth was sneered at and laughed at when he was a minor quantity. Now he is a success, and is under royal patronage, the newspapers all sing his praises. We read the other day in a London journal a rapturous eulogy of Booth and his Army in connection with their Self-Denial week, which brought in upwards of £60,000. The self-sacrifice of these people—their doing without tea or sugar for the good of the movement—was lauded to the skies. But the writer must have known very well that the money was largely raised by unlimited, and often brazen, public cadging. Salvationists held out collection boxes at railway stations and in the streets; they actually went round begging for the Army from door to door. How absurd it is, then, to call the cash thus collected the fruit of their own self-denial!

"General Booth's Tour" was the heading of a long interview with that old gentleman in Tuesday's *Daily Chronicle*. One passage is worth a moment's notice as an illustration of the spirit of superstition. Booth visited Jerusalem and saw all the "sacred places"—real and bogus—in and around the Holy City; and, of course, he was profoundly affected. "With a heart full of emotion," he told the interviewer, "I gazed on the places associated with the life, suffering, death, and resurrection of my Lord. I did not trouble to waste time with the arguments pro and con., as to the literal correctness of the locality of this, that, and the other event. I simply surrendered myself to an unquestioning faith in the statements given." He wanted some pious excitement and he got it. Critical inquiry would have been not only a "trouble" but a "waste of time." Such is the temper of superstition—which is only another word for religion.

Father Adderley—who, by the way, is a Church of England parson, not a Roman Catholic priest—has been (no doubt unconsciously) taking a leaf out of our book. Preaching at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, he said: "They had been told, on the authority of the daily newspapers, that 12,000 people had lately been converted in London. One would have thought that would have made some appreciable difference even amongst a population of five millions. They might, perhaps, have got together to live in some square or locality this life of love." Yes, all those conversions ought to have made a difference, but have they? We doubt it. Father Adderley seems to doubt it too. We have pointed

out before that General Booth's much-trumpeted success—seeing that his followers are reckoned by myriads, and that all of them are supposed to be teetotallers and non-smokers—ought to have made a considerable difference to the drink and tobacco trades. But they have done nothing of the kind. What, then, is the explanation? It is very simple. General Booth's converts are drawn from other Christian bodies. There is a shuffling of the cards but no change in the pack.

Dr. Torrey, at the opening meeting of the Brixton mission (according to the *Dispatch*) read "a request for prayer for the superintendent, staff, and inmates of an asylum." We suppose the "inmates" felt that Dr. Torrey was their man.

"An Appreciation of Dr. Torrey" in the *New Age*, a paper which has the blessing of some Free Church leaders, describes the American revivalist as a "sheer mediocrity," and his address as "an utterance unrelieved by a single touch or trace of imagination or even rhetoric; a long, dreary ramble, starting from nowhere in particular, and making steadily for the same goal all the way." It laughs at Dr. Torrey's scholarship, and says that if you "dissent from him in doctrine he accuses you of loose living." The article concludes by hoping that his "campaign of calumny" will be put an end to by a revolt of the Christian conscience.

Dr. Torrey explained at his Brixton first-night performance that he "wanted the streets of Brixton to ring with the name of Jesus Christ." We guess that would happen without his interference. Being part of a Christian-English city, Brixton has the usual quantity of profane language, and the name of "Christ" is frequently heard in its streets.

The working-men at the Brixton mission are conspicuous by their absence. There is the same old array of comfortable middle-class church and chapel people on the mission seats. Brixton is a perfect match for Kensington in this respect.

A lady correspondent sends us a letter she has received from Dr. Torrey in reply to her request that he would say something definite about his charges against Paine and Ingersoll, and either substantiate them or withdraw them. She referred to our pamphlet on "Dr. Torrey and the Infidels" but did not tell him that she was a Freethinker. His reply, dated from the Mission Hall, Brixton, April 15, is a piece of characteristic impudent shuffling. "The man you mention," he says, "has been constantly misrepresenting me in his paper ever since I have been in this country." "I do not think," he adds, "that his paper and pamphlets do any harm to intelligent people." Neither do we think that they do any harm to intelligent people. The person they do harm to is the Rev. Dr. Torrey.

Dr. Torrey ends with a hypocritical whine. He advises the lady not to waste her time in reading what infidels have to say, but to spend it in "reading your Bible and other good literature"—including, we suppose, Dr. Torrey's trashy books, and his slanders on better men than himself.

With regard to Paine and Voltaire, Dr. Torrey says, "I know of no statement that I have made about the persons you mention which I have not good reason to suppose to be true." Very well, then; let him publish his "good reason." He has published the charges; he is bound, now he is challenged, to publish the evidence. What a time he takes in doing it!

Some weeks ago we referred to the case of the Rev. Dr. Sandilands, who was fetched back by the police from England to India, to stand his trial there on the charge of corrupting girls, and performing an illegal operation, at the United Free Church Mission Orphanage at Bhandora. We now see that the reverend gentleman has been found guilty and sentenced to five years' rigorous imprisonment. This would make a good subject for a special address by Dr. Torrey.

There is a Christian temple called Holiness Church at Lebanon, Indiana. A discussion took place in it on the question of inviting a negro minister to preach. Miss Minnie Chambers, a member of the congregation, objected to some remarks made by the Rev. John Dodge, the pastor of the church, and slapped him in the face. The pastor's wife then attended to Miss Chambers, and a desperate struggle went on between the two Christian ladies. An attempt was made to part them by Mr. Oscar Johnson, but this was resented by the pastor, who drew a knife and plunged it several times into Johnson's back. This is

another good subject for one of Dr. Torrey's special addresses.

The appeal of the Rev. Emmanuel Morgan, parish priest of Riccarton, Kilmarnock, has been dismissed. The House of Lords has decided that he did commit adultery with the wife of John Johnston. The divorce therefore stands. Here is another subject for Dr. Torrey.

Four medical specialists at Liverpool have examined Evan Roberts and signed a certificate that he is sound in mind and body, but is suffering from the strain of overwork, and should take a good rest. How did they discover that his "mind" was sound? Is it possible even for "specialists" to decide such a point in one interview with such a patient? Common-sense people who are not "specialists" will be apt to think that if some of Evan Roberts's recent performances were compatible with a "sound" mind, it is high time to unlock the gates of our lunatic asylums.

A very comical incident occurred at Evan Roberts's meeting at Liverpool on Thursday evening (April 13). When converts were called for, 120 persons held up their hands. At that moment a young man rose in the gallery and shouted "Halt." Pointing at the Welsh evangelist he exclaimed: "Thou dreamer of dreams, let thy dreams cease. Thou deceiver of the nations, thy hour has come. The Master of the House has risen up." The dreamer of dreams was quite equal to the occasion; having a good eye for business, in spite of his vagaries; in other words, there is a good deal of method in his madness. The prophet in possession settled the prophet in embryo by drowning his voice with a rattling Welsh hymn.

According to Mr. A. T. Simon's report on the Pitcairn Islanders, who now number seventy-seven males and ninety-two females, they are a hard-working healthy people, exhibiting certain vicious tendencies which religion has been unable to eradicate. Many of them are narrow-minded and unstable. But is that so unusual among Christians? Mr. Simon fears he can say little in favor of the Islanders' morals. Illegitimate children, petty thefts, brawls, and bad language are common. They have embraced the faith of the Seventh-Day Adventists, and are exemplary in their attendance at weekday prayer meetings and church gatherings, and they shell out freely for religious purposes; but they are rather prone to vulgar stories and exclamations and obscene songs. Clearly they want a visit from Dr. Torrey. But we fear there are not enough of them to pay his price.

The Rome correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* favored his paper with the following interesting telegram:—

"Cardinal Callegari, Archbishop of Padua, and Cardinal Bacillieri, of Verona, have prohibited the sale and circulation in their respective dioceses of a treatise on 'Religious Worship, its Defects and Abuses,' issued in the form of a Lenten pastoral by Monsignor Bonomelli, Bishop of Cremona.

"Mgr. Bonomelli is one of the senior members of the Italian Episcopate who deplored the prevalence of superstition and fetish worship among Roman Catholic populations in Italy, and recommended that the clergy should bestir themselves in instructing the flocks entrusted to them in the true Catholic doctrine and sound Christian piety.

"It is not to be wondered that Bonomelli's plain speaking roused priestly opposition. Already several world-renowned shrines, whose fame reposes upon apocryphal traditions, have of late years suffered severely from a financial point of view through the decay of credulity and the growth of the historic sense. Such, for example, is the case with the Holy House of Loreto, which it was claimed had been transported in the air by angels all the way from Nazareth to North Italy. Roman Catholic scholars have demonstrated the falsehood of the legend, which, however, is still inculcated in the Catholic peasantry for the sake of revenues so considerable that the Vatican actually found it worth while to create a special congregation of cardinals in the Roman Curia to administer these monetary hauls."

The weak point of this telegram is the statement that the falsehood of the House of Loreto legend has been demonstrated by Roman Catholic scholars. The falsehood of the legend has been a byword amongst non-Catholics for many centuries. It is dealt with in the fifth chapter of our *Crimes of Christianity*.

The *Evening News* of April 6 (we give the date for precision) was wicked enough to refer to the Bible as often taking "its place in the poor man's parlor as an ornament in company with a flower-pot and an antimacassar." This sort of thing is expected in the *Freethinker*. But in a Conservative newspaper it is simply terrible.

Lord Hugh Cecil, in the name of Christian morality, opposed the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill. It passed the

House of Commons, however, by an overwhelming majority. Of course it will be knocked on the head again in the House of Lords. Lord Hugh Cecil's friends, the Bishops, will see to that.

The theological students of the Lutheran churches in Germany continue to steadily decrease in numbers. Taking Prussia, in which are four-fifths of the Protestant population, in 1887 there were 2,061 students of Protestant theology. At the present time there are only 728. It is expected that the effects of this decrease will begin to appear in 1908, when the authorities will have over 200 vacant pulpits. In 1910 the number will be over 400. In Hesse there are numerous empty pulpits, and the consistories do not know where to look for supplies. People are inquiring into the cause of this scarcity. Some attribute it to the greater attractions of commercial life, some to the contentions in the church, and others to the "higher criticism" which has taken possession of the colleges. Certainly, when the professors labor to show the folly of faith, they will not inspire many to spend their lives in preaching salvation by faith.—*The Present Truth* (Christian paper).

According to the *Daily News*, which ought to be a sound authority on such matters, there was a lively revival scene in the Primitive Methodist Church at Forest Gate on Saturday night, April 8. Some sixty members of the church, and other Christian friends, assembled at half-past ten and held a prayer meeting. Then they sallied out to visit a number of public-houses. Gathering up a party of "sinners" as they went along, they finally returned to the church for a midnight service. Things went on swimmingly until a little before two in the morning, when the Rev. Mr. Bagnall invited all and sundry to come forward and sign the teetotal pledge. There was a perfect rush of converts—the pubs. being closed just then. Unfortunately one convert jostled against another convert, who suggested a free fight. The suggestion caught on, and a terrible scene of confusion followed. "The mission hymn books," the report says, "were rolled into balls and thrown by the men at each other," and even the hassocks were used as missiles. Naturally, as blood was up, it took a long time to restore order. It was half-past two before you could hear a crowbar drop.

The sequel is no less interesting. Seventy or eighty of these public-house sweepings attended the Sunday evening service; the majority being "under twenty-eight years of age" and "mostly in a deplorable state of intoxication." Were they "infidels"? Had they lived in "infidel" homes and received an "infidel" training? Torreyites would expect the answer to be "Yes." But the *Daily News* answer was different:—

"From a knowledge of the individuals, from conversation, and judging from their knowledge of the hymns, etc., it was evident that amongst them were the sons of members of Christian Churches, and that almost without exception they all had a previous acquaintance with Christian worship."

This bears out what we have urged again and again; namely, that these "revivals" are simply engaged in converting Christians to Christianity.

We have had a revival in Wales, a revival in London, and a revival here, there, and everywhere, and now the papers report "a revival in shipbuilding"—which is much better news.

A writer calling himself "Lux" is one of the stock illuminators in the *Daily News*. He wrote an article lately on "What We Believe," from which we take the following passage:—

"When in the Bible you find battles, and murders, and treachery, and lust, and cruel oppression, you may wonder why these crimes occupy so large a space in so priceless a book. You may be inclined to agree with the people who tell you that the Old Testament is, after all, a sordid and sanguinary record of human degeneration. That, however, is precisely the explanation of the book's incomparable value."

It would be difficult to beat that. It reads like G. K. Chesterton gone mad. A good deal of modern cleverness in religious circles consists in standing on your head and talking upside down.

The late Bishop of Llandaff, the Right Reverend Richard Lewis, left property which is valued at considerably over a hundred thousand pounds. He was a preacher of the gospel of "Blessed be ye poor." We shudder to think of his fate if that gospel be true. Probably he knew it wasn't.

The bubonic plague in India has been carrying off 50,000 victims weekly. "Providence" licks fighting generals hollow in human slaughter.

The earthquake in India was no respecter of persons. Neither was it a respecter of religions. Christian, Hindoo, and Mohammedan places of worship were more or less wrecked. His tender mercies, as the Scripture saith, are over all his works.

Shocking loss of life was caused by the recent earthquake in India. It is reported that 4,500 natives were killed at Kangra alone.

St. Matthias' Church, Richmond, was struck by lightning on Sunday afternoon and seriously damaged. The service had to be abandoned. About the same time the Parish Church of Llanishen, between Chepstow and Monmouth, was struck by lightning and destroyed. Facts like these show the impartiality of Nature—or the negligence of God. Christians say that God runs Nature; in that case, he does not spare his own temples in a thunderstorm. Can it be that he doesn't recognise them? Is it a case of "I never knew you?"

Rev. William Earle, a self-styled baronet, and a building speculator, has been ordered by Judge Addison, of the Southwark County Court, to pay a debt of £26 in monthly instalments of 5s. or be committed for twenty-one days. Judge Addison thought it was very wrong on the part of a clergyman to go on in this way. Yes, but if a man of God cannot have little luxuries above the average, why should he stick to his holy profession?

Richard Dickinson, of Croston, a Passive Resistance martyr, being ordered off for the second time to Preston Gaol, refused to walk to the railway station, and, as the two available policemen could not carry him, they conveyed him in a wheelbarrow. The "martyr's" sense of dignity seems to be worthy of his principles.

Mr. Plowden, of the West London Police Court, expressed himself pretty strongly about the case of a Greek prisoner who was brought up from Wormwood Scrubs and charged with assaulting a warder. The man had been compelled to attend a Church of England service. Mr. Plowden regarded it as "petty persecution" and said he should like to have the opportunity of telling the jury what he thought of it.

There are "ructions" at a Wesleyan Chapel in the High Wycombe Circuit over the "Amen" which the choir sings after every hymn. The minister, the choir, and the organ-blower are at loggerheads. We will not worry them by saying "Amen." We will say "Hallelujah."

Of the 488 non-provided schools for the maintenance of which the Education Committee of the London County Council is now responsible no less than 342 are found to have unsatisfactory drainage. Other defects are in proportion. The Council will have to spend £224,000 a year to set matters right. What an eye-opener to believers in "religious education" who are not hopelessly blind to the truth!

One of the speakers at the Ipswich annual meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was the Rev. H. J. C. Knight. This gentleman said that "India was getting ready to catch the fire from the Church." Was he referring to Hell? We hope not. India is mostly hot enough already.

A drivelling paper called the *Sunday Companion* prints a column of sloppy nonsense (with a strong dash of malignity) from the pen of Paul J. Gilbert, of the Torrey-Alexander mission. Dr. Torrey's mouth is stopped for the present about Colonel Ingersoll—in consequence of Mr. Foote's "attack," but this underling is turned on to do the dirty business for a while. Ingersoll died suddenly of heart failure, and Dr. Torrey's underling puts it that he was "cut off without a moment's warning." Well now, it appears from another religious paper that Dr. Torrey himself expects a "sudden death" when the time comes. His father and two of his brothers died suddenly, and his mother died of apoplexy; so the great man reckons on a similar exit for himself. Of course that will be perfectly natural—though Ingersoll's death in the same way was (of course!) not natural.

Paul J. Gilbert refers to a nameless "New York specialist" who frightened Ingersoll (apparently for a lark) by telling him that if he did not have his throat operated on successfully he was a dead man. When the great Atheist heard that, "a deathly pallor suffused his face, and in his terror his feet fairly rattled on the floor." Such are the puerile stories that are thought to be level to the minds and hearts of orthodox congregations. No wonder the lunatic asylums are all filling up!

Mr. Foote's Lecturing Engagements.

April 30, Liverpool. May 7, Stratford Town Hall.

To Correspondents.

C. COHEN'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—Address, 241 High-road, Leyton.—April 23, a., Victoria Park, e., Stratford Town Hall; 29, Hetton-le-Hole; 30, South Shields; 30, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

J. LLOYD'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—April 30, Stratford Town Hall; May 7, Merthyr Tydfil; 9, Mountain Ash; 21, Fails-worth.

W. GOODBOURN.—You will see that we have dealt with the cutting. Thanks. You wonder how it is that "the Torrey-Alexander people don't drop dead." Doesn't it occur to you that they believe in the Bible just as much as you do?

GEORGE JACOB.—That correspondence is closed for the present. We note, however, the following part of your letter:—"I have frequently remarked that Atheists are more stingy and unsociable than any other class of people I know. The fact that Atheists do so little for you sufficiently proves my assertion. Five hundred Atheists ought to, and could easily give £2 each, for one year, to furnish you with a substantial annuity. At present you are not only terribly overworked, but in a miserable state of uncertainty regarding the future." Whatever element of truth there may be in this, it appears to us that you have overlooked an important fact. Christians give for all sorts of by motives, as well as from disinterestedness. Freethinkers give from disinterestedness alone. They have nothing to gain, but rather to lose, in business and social consideration.

OUR ANTI-TORREY MISSION FUND.—Previously acknowledged, £109 15s. 4d. Received this week: Horace W. Parsons (second sub.) 10s., W. Palmer 1s., Martin Weatherburn 5s., John Ferguson 5s., Unknown 2s. 6d., W. P. Ball £1, E. B. 2s. 6d., David Powell 5s., R. J. 1s., A. Warwick 1s. 4d., B. 1s., T. Williams 1s., T. Gibbon 1s., C. Bowman 7s. 4d., P. Fitzpatrick 1s., J. Chapman 1s., H. Organ 1s., Friend 1s., Bill Bailey 6d., F. Rich 2s., H. D. Strong 10s., E. Mean 2s. 6d., R. H. Wharrier 5s., Common Policeman 2s. 6d.

D. HOYE.—Useful cuttings are always welcome.

G. E. HARRIS.—Thanks.

W. HALL.—It is all very well for the editor of the *Christian World* to say that he "has no recollection of any letter from Mr. Cohen." Of course he hasn't. We dare say he has no recollection either of Mr. H. S. Salt's letter, which we reproduced in the *Freethinker*. Mr. Cohen's letter was not inserted, neither was Mr. Salt's. Both drew attention to Dr. Torrey's libel on Ingersoll and Paine. That is why they were dropped into the waste-basket. It is an old game.

N. D.—The subscription was acknowledged under your initials in last week's list. We understood that your name was not to appear in full. If we were wrong on this point please inform us. Your Christian friend's postcard does not strike us as very sensible. It is the easiest dodge in the world to answer our Torrey pamphlets by asking questions on totally different subjects. The other Christian who told you, from his own personal knowledge, that Charles Bradlaugh had a Christian priest at his death-bed, and died in the Christian faith, ought to join Dr. Torrey in the revival business. Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner's pamphlet, "Did Charles Bradlaugh Die an Atheist?" will give you all the facts. She, his daughter, took part in nursing him in his last illness. No priest of any faith was there. Your friend is—well, let us say a Torreyite.

J. ROBERTS.—We cannot dispute taste with you. It does not follow that yours, or any other man's, is the standard. With regard to the lawyers and statesmanship, there have been heaps of lawyers in the House of Commons; was there ever one that made a first-class statesman? Sorry you don't approve our taking Dr. Torrey to task for libelling Paine and Ingersoll. We don't care a fig for Dr. Torrey, but we care a great deal about the good name of historic Freethinkers; moreover, although Dr. Torrey is intrinsically nobody, he becomes accidentally somebody when the Christians adopt him as their representative. Do you see now?

W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for cuttings.

PERCY HOWSETT.—What do you suppose your father bought "infidel" books for except to read them? Your letter is mere ineffable silliness. From what you say about Voltaire's deathbed it is evident that you have been reading "trash."

W. P. PEARSON.—Glad to hear that Mr. Cohen had "very good meetings" at Liverpool on Sunday, and that his lectures were "much enjoyed."

J. A. M. CRORIE.—Thomas Paine's friends did not "all forsake him on his death-bed." Even if they did, a Christian ought to be ashamed of mentioning it. When Jesus Christ was arrested, and his death was at hand, his very apostles "all forsook him and fled." The Bible says so. The story about Paine's writing a confession that he wished he could undo the mischief he had done by attacking Christianity is a fable; in other words, an absolute falsehood.

H. ORGAN.—The Shelley articles, with which you were so "enraptured," will be included, after some revision and slight expansion, in a new volume which we hope to publish in the autumn.

F. RICH.—Order placed in the proper hands.

COMMON POLICEMAN.—Acknowledged as desired. We understand.

S. H. KEWLEY.—We answered your question, and cannot do more. Why not write to the person you mention?

ANONYMOUS correspondents are once more warned that their letters go into the waste-basket.

G. INWIN.—We do not answer such inquiries by post, nor shall we print filthy libels on Charles Bradlaugh, by anonymous Christians, for the sake of denying them.

A. A.—Your suggestion shall be considered. Pleased to hear you enjoyed our "delightful" articles (as you call them) on Mr. Holyoake's book, and that you consider them a "great boon" to those who cannot get the book for themselves.

E. MEAN writes that the Secretary of the Brixton Mission referred to our pamphlets given away outside, and said, "They will do you no harm as long as you tear them up." Good old Torreyites! How they love investigation!

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

THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S office is at 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Foote had first-rate audiences at Manchester on Sunday, and his lectures were enthusiastically applauded. Some questions were asked, and there might have been some decent discussion if an orthodox buffoon called Coleman had not rendered it practically impossible. This person has inflicted himself upon the Manchester Secularists for years, and we have never been able to understand why he is tolerated. He is utterly incapable of discussion; he just utters any nonsense that comes into his head; and his antics are simply an abuse of the opportunity offered for debate.

One gratifying feature of the Manchester meetings was the presence of a goodly number of ladies. Some of them were following the lectures with keen appreciation, judging by the bright and eager look upon their faces.

Mr. Cohen visits South Shields again next Sunday, April 30, and delivers two lectures at the Tivoli, Laygate, near High Shields Station. Tyneside Freethinkers will please note. This effort closes the very successful winter season of the South Shields Branch.

We are glad to see a notice in the *Liverpool Daily Post* of a recent lecture by Mr. H. Percy Ward. True, it is very brief, but a little is better than nothing. The old conspiracy of silence against Freethought may break down all round presently.

Mr. Percy Ward had three well-attended open-air meetings at Wigan on Sunday. We met some Wigan friends at Manchester in the evening who had heard him in the morning and gave us a very favorable report of the proceedings. Sixteen persons filled up application forms for membership of the National Secular Society, which were forwarded with fees to the Executive in London with a request for permission to form a Wigan Branch.

The April number of the *Liberal Review* (Chicago) edited by Mr. M. M. Mangasarian, reproduces Mr. G. J. Holyoake's recent account of the Pooley case, and what it is pleased to call our own "generous comments" upon it.

Under the heading of "Science and the Soul" the *Daily Telegraph's* correspondent telegraphed a summary report of Professor Haeckel's two lectures at Berlin. In the course of the first lecture Haeckel fulminated against the Papacy and called it "the greatest swindle that ever dominated the world of thought." We quite agree with him. But when we say such things in the *Freethinker* some "Rationalists" hold up their hands and cry "Shocking!" Now that

Haeckel says it they will doubtless smile and cry "Hear, hear!" So much do circumstances alter cases.

West Ham and district Freethinkers should remember the three special Sunday evening lectures in the Stratford Town Hall. Mr. Cohen takes the first on Easter Sunday; Mr. Lloyd follows, and Mr. Foote winds up the course on May 7. We dare say the Town Hall will be crowded as before. But that is no reason why the local "saints" should not try to give the lectures all possible publicity.

Many letters have reached us of late from subscribers in various parts of Great Britain and Ireland. Some of them are very interesting and encouraging, and we often wish we had space to print a liberal selection of them word for word. Here is a sample of what we mean. A Liverpool reader writes:—

"Just a line or two in praise of your works, the *Freethinker* in particular. I have always been fond of my books, but never came across a combination of instructive and interesting (sometimes amusing) matter to come up to your publications. I have sent the *Age of Reason* and *Bible Romances* to a friend of mine in Wales, to whom I send the *Freethinker* every week. I was more than delighted, seeing I had never mentioned Secularism to him, on being told that he looked forward to it as a weekly treat.....In '96 I became seriously ill through overworking myself for a Scripture examination. At that time I knew the New Testament off by heart, practically speaking. I noticed many contradictions, and, not being bigoted, I looked things up. I knew nothing of any Secular movement then, but when I came to Liverpool I read an announcement of a lecture at the Alexandra Hall. I went there and procured several of your publications; inevitable result, I'm an Atheist. I have to smile when I think of the days when I was a poor deluded Christian."

This correspondent goes on to say that he meets a few Christians, not many, who don't like Dr. Torrey's slanders of better men than himself; and he is doing his best to circulate our pamphlets, copies of which he has sent into Wales for distribution. He says he expects to be tackled by the godly when he goes home at Easter, but, with the aid of our *Bible Handbook*, he feels quite able to battle with all of them.

We are still open to receive the names and addresses of persons who would be likely to become subscribers to the *Freethinker* if it were introduced to them. We are prepared to post a copy free to such addresses for six consecutive weeks. At the end of that period the recipients would either wish to drop it or to purchase it for themselves. We have made a good number of fresh subscribers in this way lately.

Some good correspondence on Torreyism has appeared in the *Hull Daily Mail*. Some ministers of religion have joined in it. One of them, the Rev. W. H. Abraham, of St. Augustine's Vicarage, quotes from a letter by "a most intelligent Christian lady in London," in which she describes Torrey and Alexander as "a couple of rather low-class Americans with a frightful twang," who "go on like very second-rate Salvation Army people." Another minister, the Rev. Thomas Sykes, a Dissenter, says that Dr. Torrey should go to Constantinople with his gospel of blood and revenge. "I would rather," he says, "have the Gospel according to Robert Blatchford than the Gospel according to Dr. Torrey."

Rev. Stewart D. Headlam, lecturing at Carshalton, advocated "secular schools" and "the abolition of the old blasphemy laws, as a Christian country should not need them." It is refreshing to find a clergyman talking sense and fair play on such questions.

We do not pin our faith to Nietzsche or anyone else. Nevertheless we gladly admit that Nietzsche was a powerful thinker, whose works, if read by persons of information and discrimination, are calculated to do much good, even if only by way of stimulus. One who has done a great deal to make Nietzsche known to English readers is Mr. Thomas Common, of 8 Whitehouse-terrace, Corstorphine, Edinburgh. Mr. Common issues a little quarterly publication called *Notes for Good Europeans*—the price being threepence, with a halfpenny extra for postage. The last number to hand contains an article on "The Functions of a Philosopher," in which it is contended (after Plato) that until philosophers govern it the world will never be in a state of stable welfare. In speaking of free discussion, Mr. Common says: "The narrow-minded rationalists, freethinkers, secularists, and ethiculturalists, are often more intolerant of free discussion, than liberal-minded Christians." This may be so true as to be a truism. No doubt the narrow-minded people of one section are not as tolerant as the liberal-minded people of another section. But is this a fair comparison? Judging by the average we should think it an absurd thing to say that

Freethinkers were more intolerant than Christians. We hope Mr. Common thinks so too.

Mr. Common goes on to say that "Hardly any notion of sensible thought in the realms of logic, ethics, and politics has as yet dawned upon the atrophied intellects of some of the presumptuous leaders of so-called 'Rationalists,' who, notwithstanding their name and their loud appeals for support, are the most irrational of freethinkers." In a footnote he mentions a certain Rationalist lecturer, who has been many things in his time, as "dealing with the most reasonable criticism" like a "short-sighted, snappish, snarling bear." Later on Mr. Common mentions the *Freethinker* as containing a "number of good things," so we presume he does not consider us as being quite as bad as some think us. We beg to assure Mr. Common that we keep an open mind. Nietzsche's works are on our own bookshelves. They lie there quietly beside other works of a very different character. These juxtapositions, indeed, are often very amusing. The other day we noticed that a French Bible and grand old Rabelais (in his own tongue) had got cheek by jowl together, and they seemed to agree remarkably well.

A veteran provincial Freethinker, writing to us recently, threw out an idea. "Your writings," he said, "are a continual source of pleasure to me, and whenever I feel dull the perusal of a few pages of any one of them rouses me up. I often think what a grand thing it would be were you to edit a Freethinkers' Cyclopædia. A complete work after the style of the American 'Handbook of Freethought' would be of incalculable service to Freethinkers; and were I a Carnegie, I would put a few thousands of pounds at your disposal in order that the work might be commenced at once and be pushed on with vigor. I am inclined to think that such a work, if issued as your 'Bible Romances' were, would catch on—and PAY! Of course every earnest Freethinker would render you every assistance in his power in order to lighten your labor. Think of it."

Mr. A. G. Scopes gave an admirable lecture at Ipswich lately on "The Life Story of Charles Bradlaugh," a good report of which appeared in the *East Anglian Daily Times*. The lecture was illustrated by limelight views. Portraits were thrown upon the screen of Charles Bradlaugh, G. J. Holyoake, and Mrs. Besant, and actually one of G. W. Foote. Curious to relate, no accident happened; the screen was not injured, the roof did not fall in, the building was not burnt down.

Mr. Guy A. Aldred, who offered to supply the *Freethinker* to the Clerkenwell Public Library, has received a reply from Mr. H. G. T. Cannons, Acting Librarian and Clerk to the Public Libraries Committee. "The Committee," this gentleman says, "desires to thank you for your offer to add the *Freethinker* to the papers already supplied by you free of charge, but regrets that they are unable to accept your offer." The grammar is shaky, but the meaning is clear. The Committee draws the line at the *Freethinker*. We draw the line at the Committee. When it comes to its senses and acts decently we will take its case into fresh consideration.

We have repeatedly said that Japan's victory will have more than a political significance. It will alter the balance of religious power on this planet. Christianity will cease to be regarded, even in Christian countries, as the be-all and end-all of man's interests. We were not surprised, therefore, to see the following remarks in a *Daily Mirror* leading article recently (March 23):—

"We received yesterday the annual report of the Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge among the Chinese, one of the leading missionary societies in the Far East. This report is openly anti-Japanese. Why? Because the Japanese view of life and morals and conduct is rapidly spreading in China, and the missionaries are afraid of it.

"A general impression seems to be gaining ground," says the report, "that Japanese civilisation is better for China than that of Christendom." Again: "A united policy for the whole yellow race is fraught with enormous consequences, to which no intelligent man can shut his eyes," and so on. In fact, the whole tenor of the report is, "Beware of Japan."

"It is a little curious that, whenever there appears a likelihood of Christianity being put upon its trial, those who ought to be most convinced of its power to prevail immediately begin to run about, as if distracted, crying aloud that they are undone.

"It is no wonder that Japanese ideals should be gaining ground in China. The Chinese are in a position to contrast the way their near neighbours practise what they preach with the way in which Christians follow the precepts of Christianity. And the contrast is scarcely favorable to the latter."

Twenty years ago, ten years ago, such sentiments would never have appeared in a "respectable" newspaper.

My Recent Litigation.

MANY of my friends will recollect that I had a shattering illness in the early part of 1902. In the early part of 1903 I had another attack. When I recovered I expected to hold some successful Sunday evening meetings at the Athenæum Hall. In this, however, I was disappointed. The proprietor suddenly informed me that he had sold the Hall to the new Hampstead and Charing Cross Railway. My occupancy of the place was one of the facts on which the amount of his compensation was reckoned; but, as far as I was concerned, he appeared to hold that I had neither legal nor moral right to anything. Naturally I took a different view. It was absurd to suppose that I could be told one week that I could not use the Hall next week. How could lecturing arrangements be made on such a basis? Moreover, I had paid rent for the Hall during the summer months when I was not actually using it. I considered therefore, as a mere matter of elementary ethics, that I was entitled to proper consideration in the shape of an adequate notice. I told the proprietor so, and gave him to understand that I should regard the rent then due to him as a set-off against the loss I had sustained by his peculiar course of action. For eighteen months he made no sign, and I concluded he was satisfied. But in November last, without any warning, he served me with a writ. Wishing to avoid unpleasantness, if possible, I urged the strength of my claim, I pointed out that he was a comparatively wealthy man and I a very poor one, and that, as between man and man, I did not conceive he was acting properly. However, for the sake of peace, I suggested a friendly settlement, which would have been arrived at if he had not trusted too much to his solicitor. The result, then, was that I was thrown upon the law. Now I had warned him that if we went to law he would probably lose. But he smiled at my warning. He went to law, and he got law; in fact, he got nothing else—for he lost the action.

There were several pleas in my defence—which was disclosed by affidavit. I will not trouble my readers with all of them, because there is only one of any public importance. In talking the case over with my solicitor—the one who helped me in devising the Secular Society, Limited—we both saw a splendid and long-sought opportunity of getting a straight decision on the old George III. Act concerning Sunday meetings. I had been thrown upon the law, and I might as well ascertain what the law really was. Hitherto there had been evasions rather than judgments. To put an end to this state of things, which favored others and left Free-thinkers in danger, we determined to plead the Statute against the plaintiff. Counsel appeared on both sides, my counsel being a judge's brother. Mr. Justice Warrington tried the action, and soon seized upon the plea which, if valid, did away with the necessity for all the other pleas. In an hour or so he gave judgment for the defendant. He declared that as my meetings at the Athenæum included debate, no matter on what subject, they came under the Statute and were illegal. He also declared that he should have no hesitation in holding that a Sunday lecture, even without debate, to which admission was by payment, was an "entertainment" under the Act, and also illegal. This judgment, it will be observed, is *positive*, while Mr. Justice Collins's previous judgment was only *negative*. What it involves I will deal with in another article. For the present I can only say that it is a judgment of the highest importance, which may be turned to our advantage instead of our detriment. As far as the plaintiff is concerned, I am indifferent. He would not have a friendly settlement—he would have the law, the whole law, and nothing but the law—and he has had it.

G. W. FOOTE.

The Book of Daniel.—VII.

(Continued from p. 236.)

IN chapter viii. we have a vision, presented in another form, which has reference to the same events as that last examined (chap. vii.). In this vision, however, the Babylonian monarchy is omitted, and prominence is given to Alexander the Great. According to this veracious history, the fictitious prophet Daniel saw, in the third year of the reign of the mythical king Belshazzar, "a ram which had two horns.....pushing westward and northward and southward; and no beasts could stand before him." Next, there appeared "an he-goat" which "came from the west over the face of the whole earth," and, approaching the ram, "ran upon him in the fury of his power," and "cast him down to the ground, and trampled upon him." The he-goat then "magnified himself exceedingly" until his horn was broken, and in its place "there came up four notable horns towards the four winds of heaven" (viii. 3-8). This portion of the vision is thus explained by the angel Gabriel:—

"The ram which thou sawest that had the two horns, they are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough he-goat is *the king of Greece*.....And as for that which was broken, in the place whereof four stood up, *four kingdoms* shall stand up out of the nation, *but not with his power*" (viii. 20-22).

There can be no mistaking the meaning of this; the he-goat that "came from the west over the face of the whole earth" was the great conqueror Alexander the Great, who put an end to the Persian empire. The two-horned ram thus represented the line of kings that bore rule over what the writer calls "Media and Persia," and symbolised more particularly Darius Codomanus, the last of the Persian kings, who was deposed by Alexander. The "four notable horns"—or, as given in the interpretation, the "four kingdoms" which arose out of the great conqueror's empire—are likewise too plain to be mistaken. Upon Alexander's death his immense empire was divided amongst his generals, and four kingdoms were formed. These were: Babylon and Syria under Seleucus Nicator, Egypt under Ptolemy Lagi, Asia Minor under Antigonos, and Thrace under Lysimachus. Antipater and Cassander are not reckoned. This division of Alexander's empire is again referred to in another vision (Dan. xi. 3-4). Of these four kingdoms the writer is concerned with only one—that of Syria, over which a century and a half later ruled the tyrant Antiochus Epiphanes. The last-named king he calls "a little horn" which, he says, arose out of one of the "notable horns" or kingdoms.

"And out of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceedingly great, toward the south and toward the east, and toward the Glorious land [Palestine]..... Yea, it magnified itself, even to the Prince of the host [the god Yahveh] and it took away from him the continual burnt offering, and the place of his Sanctuary was cast down.....and it cast down truth to the ground, and it did its pleasure and prospered" (viii. 9-12).

Thus we arrive once more at the year 168 B.C. in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes. To remove all doubt, the angel Gabriel explains to Daniel that the "little horn" represents "a king of fierce countenance" who shall "destroy the mighty ones and *the people of the saints*," and shall "stand up against the Prince of princes." The writer's knowledge of the exact period during which the temple was profaned is also made the subject of revelation.

"Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said unto that certain one which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the continual burnt offering, and the transgression that maketh desolate, to give both the Sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot? And he said unto him, Unto 2,300 evenings and mornings; then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed" (viii. 13, 14).

The period here mentioned would be 1150 days, or 3 years and 54 days; but, as we shall see presently, no

renance can be placed upon the figures. The writer further says: "And the vision of the evenings and mornings which hath been told is true." This means, of course, that the fulfilment of the prediction was not a mere matter of probability; the writer was perfectly certain that the Lord's holy temple would be "trodden under foot" at the time and for the period named. And this certitude he might well possess, seeing that he wrote after the event.

We come now to the last of these pretended revelations, and one which occupies two chapters (Dan. xi. and xii.) We are told that "in the third year of Cyrus king of Persia" an angel appeared to Daniel, and proposed to reveal to him "what shall befall thy people in the latter days," and commenced his revelation by saying:—

"Behold there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all; and when he is waxed strong through his riches, he shall stir up against him the realm of Greece."

The "realm of Greece" was Alexander the Great, who is further described in the verses that follow. Here we have proof, if any were needed, that the author of the book of Daniel had no more knowledge of the kings who reigned in Persia than of those belonging to the Babylonian dynasty. He believed that there were only *three* Persian kings (or, from the wording, possibly *four*) who reigned after Cyrus the Great. As a matter of history, the kings of Persia who bore rule subsequent to Cyrus were: Cambyses, Darius I., Xerxes I., Artaxerxes I., Xerxes II., Sogdianus, Darius II., Artaxerxes II., Ochus, Arses, and Darius III. It was against the last-named monarch, Darius Codomanus, that was to come "the realm of Greece" in the person of Alexander, whose empire, he says, should later on "be divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity." And it is upon the accurate knowledge of this writer (who is supposed to be the inspired prophet Daniel) of the chronology between the Babylonian period and the time of Christ, that the Rev. Baxter and a host of Christian commentators base their absurd predictions of the second coming of the Nazarene.

Returning to the vision, the writer goes on to describe the principal wars between the sovereigns of two of the kingdoms which arose after Alexander's death—Syria and Egypt—the Syrian monarchs being designated "kings of the north," and those of Egypt "kings of the south." Here, again, it is evident that the writer was living in Judæa, and not in Babylon; for Syria is to the north of Palestine, and Egypt to the south of that country. In describing in his enigmatical way the wars between the rulers of these two dynasties, the writer commences with Antiochus Theos (Syria) and Ptolemy Philadelphus (Egypt), thus making eleven kings, as in Dan. vii. 23. The names of these sovereigns—six kings of Syria and five of Egypt—have already been given; it is therefore unnecessary to insert them here. Of the history of these later kings the author of Daniel appears to have possessed a very fair knowledge. The following may be cited as a sample:—

Dan. xi. 5, 6.—"The king of the south shall be strong; and one of the princes [of the north] he shall be strong above him, and have dominion: his dominion shall be a great dominion. And at the end of years they shall join themselves together; and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the strength of her arm, neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her, in those times."

This is the writer's prophetic way of relating the following events of history: The Egyptian king, Ptolemy Philadelphus (the south), was strong; the Syrian king, Antiochus Theos (the north), was stronger. After some years of warfare (*i.e.*, in B.C. 252) the two kings made a league, and to cement the peace it was agreed that Ptolemy should give his daughter Berenice in marriage to Antiochus, and that the latter should put away his wife Laodice.

This was duly carried out. "The daughter of the king of the south" came to "the king of the north" to "make an agreement." Berenice did not, however, long "retain the strength of her arm." In B.C. 250 "he that begat her" died, whereupon Antiochus divorced her, and took back his first wife Laodice. Berenice was thus "given up." This act turned out badly for Antiochus, for three years later his reinstated wife poisoned him in order to secure the succession for her eldest son Seleucus, after whose accession she caused Berenice and a son who had been born to her to be put to death.

In the next two verses (xi. 7, 8) reference is made to Ptolemy Euergetes, the son and successor of Philadelphus, who advanced at the head of a large army against Seleucus to avenge the death of his sister Berenice—and with complete success and much spoil. It would take up too much space, however, to go into all the wars and historical events narrated respecting these eleven kings. It must suffice to say that the writer comes at last to Antiochus Epiphanes, whose appearance at the end of the vision was inevitable. All the remainder of the chapter (xi. 21-36) is taken up with the acts of this tyrant, and his "abomination of desolation" closes the vision. Of this Jewish persecutor the writer says:—

"And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully.....In time of security shall he come even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers." [Then follows a prediction of this king's two invasions of Egypt, which ended in Antiochus being ordered to leave that country by the Romans]..... "Therefore he shall be grieved, and shall return, and have indignation against the holy covenant, and shall do his pleasure: he shall even return, and have regard unto them that forsake the holy covenant.....And they shall profane the Sanctuary, even the fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt offering, and they shall set up the abomination that maketh desolate. And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he make profane by flatteries: but the people that know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.....And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of Gods: and he shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished" (xi. 23-36).

Here reference is made to the league made by Antiochus with the Jewish high priests, and to his plundering Jerusalem "in time of security," as well as to his profaning the Sanctuary two years later. Reference is also made in the vision to Judas Maccabæus—"the people that know their God shall be strong, and do exploits"—and to the unfortunate Jews who to save their lives "forsook the holy covenant." The last allusion to the "abomination of desolation" is the following:—

"And I heard the man clothed in linen.....swear by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when they have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.....And from the time that the continual burnt offering shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be 1290 days" (xii. 7-11).

Here, once more, reference is made to the $3\frac{1}{2}$ years' persecution. The "time, times, and half a time" appeared in a former vision (vii. 25), and "half a week" in another (ix. 27). As we have seen, the number of days in the vision last examined (viii. 14) is stated to be 1150; here it is given as 1290. In the copy of Josephus the number was 1296 days. It thus becomes clearly evident that the text giving the figures is corrupt; one thing only is certain—the writer intended in every case to represent $3\frac{1}{2}$ years.

In this last vision some attempt is made to vindicate the justice of God in permitting "the breaking in pieces" of his chosen people. Those who fell "by the sword and by flame" are said to have suffered "to refine them, and to purify, and make them white." But since only the most religious and patriotic of the nation—who did not need "refining"—were so afflicted, some compensation to the faithful

appeared necessary. Hence, our ancient fictionist represents the angel as saying that "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." This promise, however, we learn from 2 Macc. vii. 14, was only a *hope*, and one which no other Old Testament writer appears to have shared.

ABRACADABRA.

(To be concluded.)

"Christianity on Trial."

THIS was the title of an editorial in the *Daily Mirror*, March 23, contrasting not very favorably the discordant dissent of Christian missionaries in China with the strong desire of the Japanese for closer bonds of union with England. "The Japanese view of life and morals and conduct is rapidly spreading in China, and the missionaries are afraid of it."

"It is a little curious," continues the editorial, that whenever there appears a likelihood of Christianity being put upon its trial, those who ought to be most convinced of its power to prevail, immediately begin to run about, as if distracted, crying aloud that they are undone." "We hope no attention will be paid to such attempts as we have quoted to discredit our allies by means of that stale old weapon, theological prejudice."

Yes, Christianity is upon its trial, and has ever been so from the first, ever since the disciples of "that Deceiver" claimed him to be the only begotten Son of God and man's only Savior. History has witnessed from age to age the progress of that trial of the Faith, and has recorded its defeats century after century. Convicted of falsities and forgeries, branded by countless cruel persecutions, recording a vast array of ambitions, strifes for power and wealth, and exhibiting a shameless, insatiate greed for every temporal advantage, Christianity has been, and now is, on its trial before the world, and we may anticipate with no little degree of confidence what the verdict of the world will be.

The religion that has slain so many noble men and women, and traduced and slandered so many others who have dared to differ from it; the religion that even now would revive the rack and the stake for unbelievers, if it could; that religion is now in its last days, on its open trial. As it lied unblushingly about the Pagans and their sacred, secret mysteries—careless of the opprobrium of shame cast upon it through the orgies of the Agapæ—so it has persistently falsified not only its own Scriptures, but invented shameless untruths from the days of Giordano Bruno to those of Charles Darwin, or from brave Arias to noble Colonel Ingersoll. The last contributor to Science, the free and lofty poet, the courageous writer, the undaunted public speaker, unabashed and undismayed, these have known the virulence of Christian hatred, these have felt the spite and venom of Christian intolerance.

It is a black record, one to be ashamed of, and yet the Christian priest, minister, missionary, or layman, pretends that it is "the only name given under heaven whereby we must be saved," advocates it as the only way of life temporal or eternal, and ignores the fact that its Bible has been almost set aside, its sacraments disregarded, its ministry set at naught, and its teachings ridiculed. Even in its professing rank insincerity is the most prominent characteristic. "The foundations are cast down, and what hath the righteous done?" Nothing, nor likely to do anything. Revivalists may howl and caper, missions may seek to stir enthusiasms, clergymen may strive to catch converts, but there is a breach in the high wall of Zion ready to fall, whose breaking cometh suddenly in an instant. "Stand from under!" we call to the world's thinkers and the world's workers, "for, while they shall say 'Peace and safety,' sudden destruction shall come upon them"—the ruin of faith, the blasting of hopes, confusion of all that attends the dire upheaval of a religious system.

Yet, as Carlyle says, there will ever remain the gullible, there will be those whom no soundness of reason can affect, no representation convince, no events agitate. "I have no desire to think otherwise than I do, even if you are right, and I am wrong," said a bigot—a name in which he boasted. The beautiful message of truth and enlightenment are not allowed to penetrate such a mind. He dwells still in obscurity, gropes still in the dark. He has clouded the windows of his intellect, alas, and so

Shut out the glory at the gate.

GERALD GREY.

Two Hours with Evan Roberts.

My curiosity as to his "spiritualistic" performances having been aroused, I determined to hear and see for myself the "lion of the hour" in Liverpool—Evan Roberts. Accordingly, I took my way to Sun Hall at 4.30 p.m. on Friday last, having first secured a ticket of admittance. I chose a seat as near as possible to the platform and found myself next door to an affable Welshman who kindly translated for me much of what was said as the evening proceeded. Hymn-singing in Welsh prevailed until about 5.15 p.m., when a Welsh reverend read from a Welsh Bible and then "led in prayer," which latter seemed to be duly appreciated by the masses present, judging from the frequent encouragement he received in the form of "Amen" and "Ee-ows," which latter my neighbor interpreted as "thanks." Hymns and prayers alternated (occasionally clashed) until 6 p.m., when a tall, slim youth, followed by two country lasses arrayed in white blouses, took his seat upon the platform, and stage whispers from all quarters introduced "Evan Roberts." Silence reigned for a minute or two, then broke out vigorous hymn-singing, followed promptly by prayers in all manner of voices and from men in all attitudes—the tearful wail of a woman being succeeded by the apparently blustering threats of a guttural Welshman; the oily adulations of another quickly succeeding him. Meanwhile the Revivalist sat mute and unaffected, waiting (I was told) for the "spirit" to move him. After a considerable time it did so apparently, for he arose and proceeded to speak, with little or no show of effort or emotion, to the six or seven thousand people before him. Scarce two minutes had passed when prayers from a dozen voices at one time interrupted him, and he presently resumed his seat. Yells of "Ee-ow" and "Amen" mingled copiously with the promptings, pleadings, threats, adulations, and life histories presented to, or hurled at, the Deity simultaneously, until the hall became a perfect Bedlam. Gradually prayer resolved itself into tune, until the whole building resounded with the volume of sound, and one naturally concluded that the praying had ceased; but not so; every pause in the tune was filled with the voices of those who still prayed, apparently oblivious of the opposition they encountered. This state of things continued for a length of time, when again the "spirit" stirred the "lion," who rose and uttered several short sentences, after each of which there was a response from the audience. My interpreter informed me of what proceeded. "He says someone has come here to hypnotise him!" The people respond, "God forgive them!" "Some have come here out of curiosity!" and again the people cried "God forgive them!" Then, shaking his head several times vehemently, the hysterical youth cried out that "an Englishman had just mocked him!" Then he took his seat and dropped his head and hands on to the Bible before him. This show of hysteria seemed to be catching, for now sobs and moans were mingled with the renewed petitions of men and women, evidently doing their utmost once more to make some impression on their hitherto unmoved deity. And so time proceeded with no variety in the program, and most people apparently well satisfied.

I came away at 8 o'clock. Evan Roberts had spoken three times in two hours—no speech lasting longer than three minutes! The "spirit" surely hath assigned him an easy job! His "spiritualistic" insight into the minds of his hearers is clearly a farce, for in the main his allegations are such as might with safety be made by any knave or fool who stood upon a platform facing so great a number of people. When he becomes more personal and definite, we see the ghastly hollowness of it all in the newspaper reports of the wind-up of that evening's proceedings. Is he a poor deluded youth played upon by the old salvation-mongers? Or is he a poor actor, unable to maintain effectually the rôle he has taken upon himself? Perhaps time will show!

A. M.

Nature is only to be commanded by obeying her.—Bacon.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, etc.

Notices of Lectures, etc., must reach us by first post on Tuesday and be marked "Lecture Notice," if not sent on postcard.

LONDON.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (61 New Church-road: Good Friday, Annual Ball.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Town Hall, Stratford): 7.30, C. Cohen, "Holy Russia: Religion in the Modern State."

OUTDOOR.

BATTERSEA BRANCH N. S. S. (Battersea Park Gates): 11, W. Ramsey.

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

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S.: Station-road, at 11.30, F. A. Davies; Brockwell Park, 3.15, F. A. Davies.

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Coffee House, Bull Ring): Thursday, April 27, at 8, Members' Meeting.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (110 Brunswick-street): Easter Sunday. No meeting.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Humberstone Gate): 6.30, J. H. Bonner, "Is Vaccination Dangerous and Useless?"

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 3, H. Percy Ward, "Spiritualist Mediums: an Exposure"; 7, "An Atheist's Sermon on Easter."

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.

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

BIBLE HEROES.

By G. W. FOOTE.

Adam—Noah—Abraham—Jacob—Joseph—Joseph's Brethren—Moses—Aaron—Joshua—Jephthah—Samson—Samuel—Saul—David—Solomon—Job—Elijah—Elisha—Jehu—Daniel—The Prophets—Peter—Paul.

200 pages, cloth, 2s. 6d.

The Freethought Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

9s. 6d.

TROUSERS TO MEASURE.

We have just secured a Manufacturer's Stock of Odd Lengths in the Latest Goods.

GREY STRIPE WORSTED TROUSERINGS.

Light, Medium, and Dark Shades.

We are making them up to measure

AT **9s. 6d.** PER PAIR.

Usual price 15s.

They are all Fine, Smart, and Fashionable.

We Guarantee the Latest West-end Cut and Make.

Fill up this Self-Measurement Form:—

Width round waist
Width round seat
Length inside leg
Length outside leg
Width round thigh
Width round knee
Width round bottom
Lined or unlined
Side or cross pockets
Your height
Your weight

Fit and Satisfaction Guaranteed.

CASH WITH ORDER.

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

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.

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

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.

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

Take a Road of Your Own

Or, Individuality and Mental Freedom

By COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL

PRICE ONE PENNY

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

VOLTAIRE'S ROMANCES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE SECULAR SOCIETY,

(LIMITED)

Company Limited by Guarantee.

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

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

Secretary—E. M. VANCE (Miss).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT

By G. W. FOOTE.

First Series, cloth 2s. 6d.

Second Series, cloth 2s. 6d.

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

The Freethought Publishing Co., Ltd. London.

Introduction to the History of Civilisation in England

By H. T. BUCKLE.

New and Revised Edition with Annotations and an Introduction by JOHN M. ROBERTSON.

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

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

WANTED, Situation, by Young Man, aged 29, in any capacity; used to warehouse; total abstainer; good references from members N. S. S. and other employers.—X., c/o Secretary, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

Thwaites' Liver Pills.

The Best Family Medicine in the World.

Will cure Liver, Kidney, and all Stomach Diseases effectually.

Good for Heart Troubles and Cardiac Complaints, Female Ailments, Anæmia.

1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. per Box.

Post free 14 or 33 stamps. Directions with each box.

G. THWAITES, Herbalist,

2, Church Row, Stockton-on-Tees, and

24, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough.

THWAITES' LIVER PILLS are not Sugar-coated or got up to deceive, nor factory made, but are made from Herbs by a Herbalist of nearly 40 years' experience in curing disease with Herbs and preparations from them.

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*.