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It is beautiful that Force should have Right for a master, that Progress should have Courage as a leader, that Intelligence should have Honor as a sovereign, that Conscience should have Duty as a despot, that Civilisation should have Liberty as a queen, and that the servant of Ignorance should be the Light.—VICTOR HUGO.

Christianity and Character.

MR. W. T. STEAD'S attitude towards Dr. Torrey *re* the Paine-Ingersoll slanders is one that does him great credit, and is highly satisfactory to all Freethinkers. And not the least pleasing aspect of the whole matter is that not only has Mr. Stead exposed Dr. Torrey, but he has incidentally exposed the Christian clergy, the Christian press, and the Christian public. He has shown that if not individually liars, they are, for the most part, willing that lies should be told in the interest of Christianity, and that they will stand quietly by refusing to give the slightest assistance to such as protest against such unworthy methods. Freethinkers have cause to thank Mr. Stead for the vivid light he has cast upon the nature of Christian morality, and so helping them to better realise what is the real value of Christianity as a moral force.

Mr. Stead has shown himself to be an honest man, and an honest Christian. The first is not exactly common; the second is positively rare. I do not mean that it is difficult to find a Christian who pays his debts, clothes and cares for his family, and who does not steal. Virtues such as these are easy to practice, and are more honored in the observance than in the breach. The teacher of morals, however, should be concerned with other than the almost inescapable virtues, which may almost be left to take care of themselves. Besides, the most dangerous man is not he who threatens purse or property or life. The man who is known and labelled a criminal is troublesome rather than dangerous. He may threaten an individual's purse, or even his life, but he threatens no one's character. He is not held up by people as an example, nor does he found a school and attract disciples. The really dangerous man is he who, while positively and negatively carrying out the requirements of a legal code, daily commits offences that no law can touch, but which yet make for a deterioration of character individual and social. Men who do not so much tell deliberate lies, which would argue some strength of character, but who are careless whether they tell the truth or not. People who without taking the least trouble to acquaint themselves with the facts, are ready to slander individuals and communities, and when lacking the courage themselves, will help others at their unsavory work. A press and a clergy who could introduce a man like Torrey to a London public, and when their *protégé* is branded as a liar and a slanderer do all they can to hush up the matter, not one of them having the common decency to demand from him an apology, but all trying what they can to keep him at his dirty work, are doing more to demoralise society than any band of criminals now at large. The thief, I repeat, threatens a purse only; but these others spread a moral leprosy which would be more dangerous than it is, only for our having become

somewhat immune from being subjected to the same contagion for generations.

Mr. Stead has stood forward in the character of an honest Christian—a believer that is who believes, and has said publicly, that the same rules of decency and good taste ought to obtain between Christians and non-Christians, between the clergy and unbelievers, that obtain between people in ordinary life. This is not a common attitude, and it is well to ask why the whole of Christian history shows such a strange and striking ignoring of the higher and, from the point of instruction, the more important intellectual virtues. The first and most obvious reflection is that Christianity has, both as a system of doctrines and as organised institutions, paid little or no attention to the culture of the intellect, and has very frequently positively discouraged it. The story, indeed, commences with the New Testament itself. The character of Jesus, from the purely intellectual side, stands as far inferior to that of Buddha, Confucius, or even Mahommed. And this not merely in the matter of knowledge, but in what one may call the ethics of the intellect. It is not so much that bad teachings are inculcated as it is that good teachings are omitted. The duty of criticism, of examinations, of basing a belief upon actual facts, is never ever glimpsed; while inability to accept special teachings is denounced as the greatest of crimes.

And the story is continued throughout the whole of Christian history. The opposition of the earlier Christian Churches, Catholic and Protestant alike, to intellectual independence, is too well known to need more than a mere mention. And it is well to remember that modern churches and chapels are not a bit better. The best of them do no more than tolerate a spirit of inquiry and independence they find it impossible to crush. But none of them encourage inquiry. There is hardly a preacher in the kingdom who would say to a young man or a young woman that they did right in reading a Freethinking book or listening to a Freethinking lecture in order to find out what might be said against their religion. They would all advise them to do neither one nor the other, and at best would recommend them books written by special pleaders, and intended to remove doubts and stifle inquiry rather than to awaken intellectual curiosity. None of them dream of encouraging those who look to them for guidance to carry their studies in any direction their fancy prompts them, and to hold their final belief as something that has emerged from a conflict, instead of something that exists because it has always been sheltered from attack.

The consequences of centuries of this attitude are not difficult to discover. The mind of man is subject to the same principles as is his body. It becomes more efficient with use, and less efficient with disuse. Never having been taught the duty of intellectual rectitude and independence, there ceases to exist any keen desire for it. It is not so much that lies are told as it is that truth is forgotten. Never having been taught the importance of exactitude, wild and exaggerated statements are made and accepted with perfect ease. That a particular belief forms part of "my religion" is accepted as adequate justification for not listening to anything that may be said against it, and for preventing the saying

if that be possible. Above all, that there are rules of conduct superior to all religious considerations, is something that is either not held at all, or held very tentatively. It is thus that Mr. Stead stands out as the only Christian, who is at the same time a public man, honest enough to tell a convicted liar that he is a liar, and that Christianity is disgraced by this man's tactics. Thousands of the clergy know that Dr. Torrey is a liar quite as well as does Mr. Stead. But they remain silent, or silently mutter "What if he is?"—he is lying on the right side, and that is enough. Truly if the ethics of the pulpit were applied to life social existence would become an impossibility.

The modern Christian, in fact, is suffering from an atrophy of certain functions, that results from the whole of his heredity and education. And this has been brought about both by the influences just touched upon, and even more powerfully by the process of artificial selection carried on in ancient and modern times by the Christian Churches. It is one of the inevitable consequences of all punishment for opinion that only honest men suffer. Not all the power of the Church at its strongest could ever punish the coward, the liar or the hypocrite, who would express any opinion that brought profit, and refrain from expressing opinions that brought inconvenience in any form. The only ones that can be punished are those who are sufficiently brave to *speak* and defy the consequences. The men whose speech gives at least evidence of earnestness, honesty, and character somewhat above the average are killed at one period, imprisoned at another, boycotted at a third, and at all times excluded, as far as is possible, from public life. The result has been, and is, that for nearly fifty generations organised Christianity has been engaged in the task of killing off all the bravest and more independent minds, and conversely cultivating a cowardly and hypocritical type. It does not need any great reflection, once the nature of the process is realised, to see the effect this has had in lowering the mental character of the race. If a religion had set itself deliberately and consciously to breed an inferior mental type, it could have gone to work in no manner better calculated to achieve its end than the one adopted by Christianity. Demoralised physically by the Christian preaching of celibacy, which withdrew from the work of perpetuating the race the very men who were best fitted for the task, and degraded mentally by the suppression of the mentally independent and the cultivation of an opposite type, our wonder ought not to be that we are as we are, but that, with such an heredity, honesty and sincerity survives at all. Happily human nature is stronger than the religions it gives birth to; and honesty is still to be met with, although the way we praise a really honest character in a Christian country is a witness to its comparative rarity. But the canker has bitten deeply, and we are not likely to remove in a generation a taint that centuries of Christian nurture has implanted

C. COHEN.

Christianity and Science.

ONCE more Arthur T. Wilkinson, Esq., B.A., B.Sc., M.D., of the Manchester Royal Infirmary, appears upon the scene as a Christian apologist. On the present occasion he contributes the thirtieth and last of a series of Manchester Lectures on "What is Christianity?" and entitles it "Christianity and Science." Great is Science, in Dr. Wilkinson's estimation, and innumerable are its uses. Last year he assured us, in confident tones, that Physical Science is an eloquent witness to the Triune God. This year he waxes bolder, and informs us that Science is an unequivocal witness to the truth of the Christian Religion. Indeed, Science, according to him, is included in Christianity: Christianity "swallows the scientist as well as his science." Yes, great and glorious is Science; but infinitely greater and more glorious still is Christianity.

What strikes us first and most in this lecture is Dr. Wilkinson's omniscience. Nothing is beyond his ken. Other men are more modest, and speak with bated breath of the Riddle of the Universe; but to him there are no riddles. The Universe lies before him like an open book, and he reads it right through to the end without a pause. And he knows the high art of reading between the lines. God's thoughts, words, and acts are more familiar to him even than his own; and he speaks of them with the utmost cocksureness, as if he had seen and heard and witnessed them all.

Hand-in-hand with omniscience, of course, goes dogmatism. All Dr. Wilkinson's utterances are *ex cathedra*. He has the truth, and all who venture to differ from him are in grievous error. "What we need to-day," he says, "is the definite proclamation of truth. Truth commends itself; it bears its character in its face; it finds a response in the deepest instincts of our nature, if there be no wilful moral obliquity, and we turn our faces to the light." There is an air of infallibility about all his sentences.

Dr. Wilkinson falls foul of Sir Oliver Lodge because this great scientist dared to charge theologians with glibly using "in a serious and solemn sense the awful term God" when speaking of Christ. "These attempted identifications of the Messiah with the Most High," observed Sir Oliver, "verge on the blasphemous." Dr. Wilkinson retorts thus: "We use words advisedly when we say that Christ is God. It was his own estimate of himself..... Make Christ less than God, and Christianity dwindles down to a chapter in the history of scientific evolution." If this is not the language of infallibility, pray, what is it? Here is another sample:—

"Christianity is not a mere scheme of thought that can be lightly set aside, but a personal God and Savior, the rejection of whom entails infinite loss—intellectual, moral, spiritual—and shuts the door on a heavenly universe of light, and joy, and love."

How our hearts ought to bleed for the millions upon millions of poor and benighted people in the world who are not believers in the divinity or proper deity of Jesus Christ! For all of them alike their unbelief "shuts the door on a heavenly universe of light and joy and love"! Before them all lie the horrors of eternal woe! The thought is cheek-blanching and heart-breaking in the extreme! And yet Dr. Wilkinson can eat his dinner every day!

Dr. Wilkinson is nothing if not orthodox. He is a firm believer in the Virgin Birth, in the evidential value of the miracles, and in the Resurrection and Ascension. This is orthodoxy in all its glory. Dr. Wilkinson advocates man's original perfection and his consequent sad fall and expulsion from paradise. "The glory of Christianity is that by it earth's greatest problem and profoundest mystery is solved, and solved for every one of us. God knew we could not help ourselves and regain our lost estate. Therefore it was when literature and philosophy in Greece, and law and wealth and empire in Rome, had done their best and failed, that God, having in his wisdom shown the moral powerlessness of man, brought forward his own great solution of the problem of sin, Jesus Christ and Him crucified; and what a marvellous solution it is."

That, I repeat, is theological orthodoxy of the most rigid type, and as such I have no fault whatever to find with it. It is really very sound theology, and thoroughly biblical. The following will be a genuine refresher to many:—

"By his unique origin, 'conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,' Christ, as man, stood where the first Adam stood before the fall. Not in Eden amidst plenty, but hungry in the wilderness with the wild beasts and the devil, and again in that other garden, Gethsemane, also in the hour of the power of darkness, He, the second Adam, met and overcome our great adversary. In Christ the world has seen sinless man, God-man, man having dominion over the world and the flesh and the devil, as well as over nature. The ideal of God has been realised. A flawless, perfect life, his own judge and the world being witness, has been lived

on earth. This is one of the established facts of history. The crown of perfection lost by the first Adam was won by the Second."

That might have been written in the twelfth century, and it would have been pronounced orthodox by the great doctors of the Church. This is orthodox, I say; but evidently orthodoxy is only another name for credulity or superstition.

But here comes something truly startling. As to the Incarnation, we are told that "for science it means the introduction on earth of a new type of Being, God-man, Christ Jesus." There is not a grain of truth in that assertion. Why, the ancient world literally teemed with incarnate deities, God-men, and Savior-Gods. But Science takes no cognisance of that type of being. To Science it is all but an interesting bit of mythology. Dr. Wilkinson cannot name a single great scientist to whom Jesus Christ is identical with God. Sir Oliver Lodge and Dr. Russel Wallace are certainly dead against him, and so also are the majority of the leading theologians of the present day. Orthodox theology and Science have absolutely nothing in common.

I cannot but admire Dr. Wilkinson's theological courage; nor do I doubt the sincerity of his faith. I do not see how, as a believer in the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible, he could hold any other position. The Bible is decidedly on his side. All the Christian doctrines enunciated in this lecture can be proved to the hilt from the written Word of God. But to claim modern Science as "a minister and witness" to such dogmas is to be guilty of a serious offence against the truth. Science knows nothing of a fall in Eden, or of a virgin birth in Palestine. Science pleads total ignorance on all points of theology, confining all its activities to the sphere of the natural.

Dr. Wilkinson occasionally ventures beyond his authority. Take this as an illustration:—

"Christ also came to reveal the ideal of love, the heart of God, and in so doing solved the great problem of sin. God, says the sceptic, if there be a God, is responsible for sin. God, says the Christian, would not deny to the creature the highest privilege of being, a share in his own life, light, love, liberty, the glorious liberty of the sons of God. So He made man in his own image. He knew it meant sin and sorrow and shame and death, for the fall of man was no surprise to God. But He took it all up into his wonderful providence and made it the minister of his love. God's answer to the man who charges him with the responsibility of the sin of the world is—Calvary. He throws back the words as truth! I have, says He, taken the responsibility of the sin of the world upon myself; I have borne your sin, your shame, your penalty; I went into the darkness of death that you might not see death, but live for ever in the light."

How thoroughly illogical is the whole of that extract. To say that "the fall of man was no surprise to God" is simply to contradict Scripture. When the work of creation was finished, the Book of Genesis tells us, "God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." But when Adam fell God was angry with him and expelled him from the garden, and cursed the ground because of him; and further on we read: "And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground; both man, and beast, and creeping thing, and fowl of the air, for it repenteth me that I have made them." (Gen. vi. 6—7).

Then, again, how utterly illogical is the theological doctrine of free agency. Free agency does not exist. Could a perfectly holy God indulge in impurity? Could a truthful God tell or act a lie? If not, where would be his liberty? Can a generous man be mean, or a good man wicked or a tender-hearted man cruel? If not, where is his free agency? The only liberty we possess is the liberty to be ourselves, to obey the strongest motive, to follow the most vigorous tendency. There can be no other liberty for God, or man, or beast. Even according to the teaching of theology itself, the sinner is in bondage

to his sin, and the believer to his Savior. Where, then, is man's liberty? Dr. Wilkinson says: "A man can still choose death if he prefers it, but in order to get to the night of hell he must trample over infinite mercy and infinite love." This is like adding insult to injury. Ever since the fall in Eden every human being has been born spiritually dead—by what magic spell can an already dead man "choose death if he prefers it?" Does not the lecturer see the utter absurdity of his position? A Christian is a person whom God himself is said to have quickened out of the death of sin into the life of holiness. There is no choice here between life and death, the new birth, as it is called, being the act of God. Dr. Wilkinson demolishes one doctrine with another: "A true Christian says, not I, but Christ in me—his thoughts, his power, his love, his will, his own glorious self." For a man so filled and pressed by another being there can be no such thing as liberty of choice.

Dr. Wilkinson attempts to harmonise Genesis and Geology, but without success. Huxley's arguments against Gladstone are still unanswered. Dr. Wilkinson asks, "Is not the Christian view, that the Universe is the work of an all-wise personal God, by far the more scientific explanation?" The answer is that such a view is not scientific at all, but purely theological.

Dr. Wilkinson says that "in God's program nothing is left out"; but when and where had the lecturer the opportunity of consulting God's program? Does he possess a copy of it? God's program is not produceable. The men who wrote the Bible never saw it; and it must be said that this kind of talk is simply presumptuous.

Dr. Wilkinson's definition of Christianity from the orthodox point of view, is definite and distinct; but all his references to Science are extremely unfortunate. In one place he states that "the basal need of science is a first great cause." But that is an egregious mistake. A first cause is an assumption of metaphysics with which Science has nothing to do. In another part he admits that the standpoint of Science is that of time, earth, man, that its outlook is limited, and that its true attitude is agnostic. And yet, in another part still, he avers that no Science is worthy of the man unless it confirms and verifies the doctrines of grace. In like manner he denounces every form of theology that differs from his own, and all the theologians who are in any degree progressive.

As a sermon to the orthodox this lecture might have been most interesting and profitable, but as a contribution to modern Apologetics it is a total failure.

J. T. LLOYD.

A Defence of Thomas Paine.—III.

CHARGE III.—PROFLIGACY.

CHARGES One and Two were Dr. Torrey's canter before his great gallop. It is in Charge Three that he begins the real grim business of defamation:—

"(3) That he put away his lawful wife without giving any explanation of the cause of his trouble with her, and afterwards on several occasions lived with the wife of another man, who followed him from France on his return to America, and that at his death he did not leave his property to his wife, who was still living, but did leave it to this woman and her children."

Now the first thing I have to say about this is that it reminds me of Tennyson's lines as to the special form of lying which is the hardest matter to fight; and still more of Hare's aphorism, which expresses the same idea even better in prose, that "The most mischievous liars are those who keep sliding on the verge of truth." There are persons like the wretched Carver, a disappointed blackmailer who started nearly all Cheetham's lies against Paine, who have a knack of stating half-defensible things in a wholly-indefensible manner. "You are such a

liar," Paine wrote to Carver, "that you cannot state the truth without running it into falsehood." The same trick is practised by Dr. Torrey. Several of the statements in this third Charge against Paine are technically true if taken separately; but when put together in this way they form a colossal calumny.

Before we go any further let us see what Dr. Torrey has to say himself about this third of the Seven Charges formulated against Paine by those who, in the revivalist's naively malicious language, have "sought to expose his character." Here are Dr. Torrey's words:—

"The third charge is, as far as I know, not denied by anyone who has ever investigated the matter at all carefully. It is sometimes obscured, or not mentioned by his defenders, but I know of no one who has written intelligently on the subject who has denied it—not even those whose defences of Paine have most distorted the facts, to give them a coloring favorable to Paine."

This is cleverly written, or foolishly written, according to the view you take of Dr. Torrey's intelligence. Whether it be the one or the other, it may be pierced to the heart by one little question. What is the "it" which Paine's defenders are alleged to ignore, obscure, or explain away? There are a great many "its" in this third Charge—which is a multiplicity of charges. Which of this crowd of charges is it that is "not denied" by competent investigators? For my part, I venture to say that I have "investigated the matter" far more "carefully" than Dr. Torrey has, and I do deny the whole of the charges in the third count of this villainous indictment. That is to say, I deny them as charges. What element of truth there is in them is quite consistent with Paine's honor and integrity.

This I shall proceed to show. And the reader must not expect my defence to be as short as Dr. Torrey's libel. Milton pointed out the impossibility of such brevity in his splendid reply to Bishop Hall and his confederates. "Let them consider," he said of those who knew not him or the facts, "that a short slander will oftentimes reach further than a long apology." The truth is that more slander can be suggested in a sentence than may sometimes be refuted in a volume.

Paine married twice. His first wife died in 1760. Eleven years afterwards he married Elizabeth Ollive, the daughter of a deceased tobacconist at Lewes. Paine helped her and the widow to carry the shop on, but it was a failure, and the creditors foreclosed. What followed in the domestic sphere is told succinctly and judiciously by Mr. Sedgwick:

"At home there was no comfort. Paine's relations with his wife have never been made clear. From the first they had not lived together; and in June, 1774, by common consent, they agreed to a formal separation, Elizabeth retaining the property left her by her father. In after life Paine often sent his wife sums of money anonymously. He always spoke of her with kindness and respect, but he treated as impertinent the least allusion to the mystery which was between them."

When the friendly and admiring Rickman asked Paine the reason of the separation (this was nearly twenty years afterwards) he replied: "It is nobody's business but my own; I had cause for it, but I will name it to no one."

All the details and documents are set forth in Dr. Conway's monumental *Life of Thomas Paine*. Paine renounced all his rights in the property his wife had brought him; he left her whatever they had between them; he gave her everything but himself, which he could not give; and, nearing his fortieth year, he went forth penniless and forlorn to face the world.

Paine acted with perfect generosity on the financial side. On the other side he acted as he thought best in a matter of his own concern. The separation was by mutual consent, and was legalised by a written covenant. It was the act of both the parties concerned. What I fail to understand is how it concerns other people, even a hundred and thirty years afterwards. Personally I have always admired Paine's

reticence on this subject. In a world so full of gossips and babblers he held his tongue. Nothing ever induced him to utter a single word that could be construed into a reflection on the woman he had courted and led to the altar. Neither is it recorded that she ever uttered a word reflecting on him.

Thus it will be seen that Paine did not "put away his lawful wife." He never cohabited with her, and they parted by mutual consent. And what impertinence it is to say that Paine did not give "any explanation of the cause of his trouble with her"! To whom did he owe an explanation? Was it to Dr. Torrey?

Nothing is more amazing than the personal interest these religious zealots assume in other people's affairs, and especially in the affairs of unbelievers. Dr. Torrey carries this impudence to the point of imbecility. He declares that those who do not believe as he does—or who reject Christ, as he calls it—are sceptics because of their immorality; and when they ask him critical questions he thinks he has a right to "investigate their record."

But let us pursue the third Charge against Paine. After the falsehood that "he put away his lawful wife without giving any explanation," Dr. Torrey declares in the very same breath that he "afterwards on several occasions lived with the wife of another man." Now this can only mean, on the face of it, that Paine left his wife to live with another woman, and that this woman was another man's wife. Dr. Torrey may wriggle as much as he pleases, but he will never get away from the plain, honest meaning of his own language. And the plain, honest meaning of it is out of all harmony with the facts. Paine lived nearly thirty-five years after the legal separation from his second wife, and not a breath of scandal touched his reputation until after his decease. Then he was accused by blackmailer Carver of having been intimate with Madame Bonneville, and this was published by his enemy Cheetham. But when this lady brought an action for slander Carver broke down in the witness-box and admitted that the allegation of intimacy was a falsehood. Cheetham was found guilty by the jury and sentenced to pay a fine, which Judge Hoffmann (his name should be remembered) made as light as possible on the ground that the slander occurred in a book in favor of religion!

Paine's name was never mentioned in connection with a woman's until the religious libellers thought death had deprived him of the means of defence. And the only woman whose name was thus coupled with his was Madame Bonneville, and Paine did not make her acquaintance until he resided in Paris nearly twenty years after he separated from his wife.

The statement that Paine lived in adultery with Madame Bonneville was branded as a lie by an American jury; and, as this is the only instance the libellers allege against him, there is an end to the whole story of Paine's profligacy.

Dr. Conway's observations on this matter will interest my readers:—

"The present writer, having perused some thousands of documents concerning Paine, is convinced that no charge of sensuality could have been brought against him by any one acquainted with the facts, except out of malice. Had Paine held, or practised, any latitudinarian theory of sexual liberty, it would be recorded here, and his reasons for the same given. I have no disposition to suppress anything. Paine was conservative in such matters. And as to sacrificing the happiness of a home to his own pleasure, nothing could be more inconceivable."

In my pamphlet on *Dr. Torrey and the Infidels*, exposing his libels on Paine and Ingersoll, I stated who Madame Bonneville was. But I will now give Mr. Sedgwick's relation of the principal facts.

Paine had great difficulty in getting away from France to America; in the autumn of 1802 he succeeded. He reached America fifteen years after he had left it. "They were years," as Mr. Sedgwick says, "such as few men may experience and live, and they had left him older than his age or infirmities could measure." Yet at that time of life, and in such

bodily conditions, suffering from an incurable abscess in the side, brought on by a long imprisonment during the Reign of Terror, he is alleged to have been seeking a mistress. Really the idea is worthy of a lunatic asylum—or a Sunday-school. And the libellers should pay a little attention to chronology. Madame Bonneville did not go to America with Paine. Here are the facts as related by Mr. Sedgwick:—

"Nearly a year after Paine's arrival, Madame Bonneville and her three sons followed him to America. Her husband Nicholas was to have come also; but he was detained in France on business, and later the surveillance of republicans, instituted by Napoleon, kept him from crossing the water for many years. Revolution does not breed conventions, and Madame Bonneville came with no thought that a malicious interpretation could be put upon her relations with an old friend of nearly twice her age. Paine owed much to the Bonneilles for their kindness and sympathy in Paris; but, although he urged their coming, the family proved no small embarrassment to him in America. The expense was serious, for the Bonneilles were without resources; and as they spoke no English and Paine almost no French, the pleasures of social intercourse were somewhat restricted. However, Madame Bonneville had a sincere respect for the old republican, and did what she could to make his house comfortable for him to live in. The boys were sent to school. The youngest lived to become General Bonneville, U.S.A. The eldest returned to France; while Paine's namesake, the second son, was made, after Paine's death the basis of an infamous libel against his memory."

There is one very important sentence in this passage, and it is easily overlooked. "Paine," it is said, "owed much to the Bonneilles for their kindness and sympathy in Paris." This is the fact which explains his subsequent relationship to the family. The libellers say a great deal about Madame Bonneville, and hardly a word about Nicolas Bonneville; yet it was Paine's attachment to him that accounts for his interest in the wife and children. Bonneville was not a mere bookseller; he was one of the leading Republicans in Paris; he and Paine had fought side by side; and when the Bonneilles needed assistance Paine rendered it out of loyal love for a companion in arms. The wife and children were, in a sense, the accidents of the situation. This point, indeed, is of so much importance that I shall venture to quote a longish passage from Dr. Conway's biography in illustration:—

"After the failure of his attempt to return to America with the Mouroes, Paine was for a time the guest of Nicolas de Bonneville, in Paris, and the visit ended in an arrangement for his abode with that family. Bonneville was an editor, thirty-seven years of age, and had been one of the five members of Paine's Republican Club, which placarded Paris with its manifesto after the King's flight in 1791. An enthusiastic devotee of Paine's principles from youth, he had advocated them in his successive journals, *Le Tribun du Peuple*, *Bouche de Fer*, and *Bien Informé*. He had resisted Marat and Robespierre, and suffered imprisonment during the Terror. He spoke English fluently, and was well-known in the world of letters by some striking poems, also by his translation into French of German tales, and parts of Shakespeare. He had set up a printing-office at No. 4 Rue du Théâtre-Français, where he published liberal pamphlets, also his *Bien Informé*. Then, in 1794, he printed in French the 'Age of Reason.' He also published, and probably translated into French, Paine's letter to the now exiled Camille Jordan—'Lettre de Thomas Paine, sur les Cultes.' Paine, unable to converse in French, found with the Bonneilles a home he needed. M. and Madame Bonneville had been married three years, and their second child had been named after Thomas Paine, who stood as his godfather. Paine, as we learn from Rickman, who knew the Bonneilles, paid board, but no doubt he aided Bonneville more by his pen."

All this is as natural as life and as lucid as daylight. Paine's condition was practically that of a bachelor. Why should he not have secured a little domestic comfort by lodging with friends? Could any but a dirty mind see anything wrong in such an arrangement?

Bonneville was in the vigorous prime of life. Paine was sixty-one. He had come through his terrible ordeal, and his long imprisonment, utterly broken in health. Dr. Conway says he was "so weak in body, so wounded by American ingratitude, so sore at heart, that no delicate child needed more tender care." What could be more ridiculous, then, than the notion that his object in living with the Bonneilles was an intrigue with the wife and mother? Do the people who suggest such things know anything of nature—or of human nature?

Paine was nursed back to some semblance of real life—after his awful year's imprisonment, with a violent death staring him in the face every day—by other ladies as well as by Madame Bonneville. Amongst them were three elect ladies to whom his sufferings in the cause of freedom had made him sacred. I refer to Mrs. Monroe, the wife of the American ambassador, Lady Smith, and Madame Lafayette. They knew Paine better than Dr. Torrey does. And he vilifies the best of women in suggesting that their loving attentions were bestowed on a dirty, drunken, adulterous scoundrel.

The peace of the Bonneville home was broken up by Napoleon at the end of 1799. Bonneville, in his paper, had described Napoleon as "a Cromwell." For that he was promptly imprisoned. When he was released he was placed under severe surveillance and his paper was suppressed. "The family," Dr. Conway says, "was thus reduced to penury and anxiety, but there was all the more reason that Paine should stand by them." He did stand by them. He stood by them to the end. And his loyal friendship was his undoing in the eyes of the Christian world, which turned his very virtue into a detestable calumny.

Paine eventually escaped the vigilance of the British cruisers and got away safely to America. After his departure the Bonneilles were completely impoverished. Paine had urged them to leave France, where liberty was becoming only a tradition, and to go to America, where it was still a reality. In their extremity it was natural that they should turn their eyes in that direction. Bonneville could not get away from France himself, but he hurried off his wife and children. They reached America in August, 1803. They knew no one but Paine, they went to him, and he gave them protection. There was food and shelter. Madame Bonneville helped to maintain herself by teaching French. The education of the three boys was paid for by Paine.

Bonneville's arrival was looked for by Paine. Writing to a friend in Paris, in March, 1804, he said: "What is Bonneville about? Not a line has been received from him?" Is this the language of a man who had taken the wife away from the husband? It was no fault of Paine's that Bonneville did not come. The explanation of his not coming is that he could not evade the surveillance of Napoleon's police—which is extremely probable. Dr. Torrey's comments on this matter are very characteristic:—

"It is said, however, that his political relations in France were such that he could not get away till then [after Paine's death]; but this is exceedingly doubtful, as there was constant going and coming during those years, even by persons who had been known as Republicans."

Surely this is very foolish. What is the use of such generalities? The fact that there was constant going and coming between France and America proves absolutely nothing. It has never been suggested that intercourse between the two countries was suspended. Nor was Bonneville simply one of the "persons who had been known as Republicans"—a category, by the way, which included more than half the population of France. Bonneville was a marked man, he had been imprisoned for "insulting" Napoleon, his paper had been suppressed, and he was watched by the secret police. Those who argue that the secret police would have been glad to see Bonneville leave the country do not understand Napoleon. The imperial eagle of France preferred to have his enemies within the reach of his talons.

And now for the last part of the third Charge, which is to the effect that Paine "at his death did not leave his property to his wife, who was still living, but did leave it to this woman and her children."

This is a fair specimen of Dr. Torrey's tactics. By suppressing the fact that Paine's separation from his wife took place thirty-five years before his death; that it was by mutual consent, and under a legal covenant; and that he gave her every bit of their common property at the time; by suppressing these facts, I say, Dr. Torrey tries to create an impression that Paine was under some sort of moral obligation to leave her his property. Every man of common sense knows he was under no such obligation. Their lives had been entirely divorced, and there were no children to cause complications. Paine was perfectly free to leave his property to whom he pleased. Circumstances had thrown the Bonneville in his way. His benefactions to the three boys had given him a kind of vested interest in their future. For it is a psychological law that benefactions endear the recipient to the giver rather than the giver to the recipient. And there is another fact. Paine was fond of children—and children were fond of him. He had come to love the Bonneville boys whom fate had cast into his hands. And they were the children of a companion in arms, by whose side he had fought in the greatest crisis of modern history. Everything conspired to induce Paine to befriend them even from the tomb.

Paine did not leave all his property to "this woman," as Dr. Torrey calls her with Christian elegance. This is one of the revivalist's lying suggestions. There was a bequest to the widow of Elihu Palmer, and a large bequest to Clio Rickman, of London. The proceeds of the sale of the north part of Paine's farm, his most considerable property, were to be equally divided between Rickman and Nicolas Bonneville. So it was not the wife, but the husband, who stood first in Paine's mind. Madame Bonneville was to receive his movable effects, money in hand, and stock in the New York Phoenix Insurance Company, worth some £300. The south part of the farm went to her in trust for her children, for "their education and maintenance, until they come to the age of twenty-one years, in order that she may bring them well up, give them good and useful learning, and instruct them in their duty to God, and the practice of morality."

It is really too much to ask sober-minded people to believe that Paine wrote those solemn words on the eve of death, knowing all the time that Madame Bonneville was a wanton, who had helped him to break up the home and happiness of a friend.

In concluding this part of the case I want to ask Dr. Torrey a question. Did he know that Paine left parts of his property to other persons than "this woman and her children"? Did he know that Paine made the largest bequest to "this woman's" husband? If he did not know it, he is inexcusably ignorant. If he did know it, and concealed it, he is an atrocious blackguard.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

Bible Promises.

PROMISES occupy much room in the Bible, and naturally they are largely used in the ministrations of the Churches. What would the priests do without the promises? They must have something to offer to the people to induce them to come to the altars with their real, substantial offerings. Promissory notes payable in the future would be useless to priests. They must have cash down, and they get it, in a liberal volume on the whole. There are, no doubt, many in the craft getting not overmuch; but on a general average they are, as a class, one of the best paid. Some of them get princely stipends, and most of them are well supplied with the wealth they

are supposed to despise, like their professed Master. They are well fed, well clothed, well housed, and well provided for, as a class, and they have access to the best society. Whoever suffer privations, it is not the priest, except in rare instances.

But in return for what they receive, the priests have nothing to give but promises of pay at some future time. It is true that the author of the letter to Timothy teaches differently. "For bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Tim. iv. 8). The first part of the verse is not true, for science and experience prove that bodily exercise profiteth much, as good health and strength is not possible without it. But what is the promise for the life that now is it is hard to discover and say. Another verse in the same letter has it that godliness with contentment is great gain. But if contentment is a great gain with godliness, it is the same without it, and there is nothing to show that godliness brings contentment. Besides, contentment is not always a gain. On the contrary, it is often a great loss. The contentment of the masses in their poverty and degradation in the midst of wealth produced by themselves is a crime against humanity as well as a great loss; and the contentment of worshipers under the teaching of errors and superstitions by the priests is also a great loss, and not a great gain.

There are promises relating to this life here on earth, especially in the Old Testament; but I think it will be found that they are all in the future tense. They are not absolute, but contingent on the future; and all the great tempting promises are to be realised and received in another world. The mansions in the house of the Heavenly Father, the crown of glory, the golden harp, and the white robe are all in the next world. By the bye, is it not plain that the Bible description of heaven and its inhabitants is taken from the great temples and the priestly worship therein? The golden throne, golden crown, golden harp, the white robe, and the singing and ceremonial of heaven is nothing but a copy of any great temple and its priestly attendants.

To ignorant, enslaved men who are badly fed, badly housed, and worse entertained, the prospect of a mansion, a throne, a crown, a white robe, a golden harp, and a share in the singing, without anything else to do, is a tempting bait. But they are all in another world. Men must die before they can be received. And we do not know if the promise of them is redeemed when the saints die, for none of them come back to tell us. One thing is certain: many of the poor saints would like to have some of the gold and happiness in this world, even at the expense of getting less in the next.

But, such as they are, all Bible promises are for the saints. There is nothing for the children of the world but the damnation of hell; and the Bible tells us that the saved are few and the lost are many: "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. vii. 13, 14); "For many are called but few are chosen" (Matt. xxii. 14). All the promises are for the few, and for the many there is nothing at all but eternal torments in hell. The priest has nothing for the many in this world or the next. And even to the few all he can promise is something after death; even to the saints he can offer nothing to be realised and enjoyed in this world. No profession or craft can compete with the priest in getting so much for so little. In fact, the priest has nothing to give in return for the wealth he receives.

Promises are proverbially uncertain. Creditors know that even with notes of hand, stamped and registered, many promises to pay are never fulfilled. Are Bible promises any better or more certain than others? Of course, those who live by proclaiming the promises of God in the Bible declare that they are all precious and certain. But I fear that those

we are able to analyse will not stand the test. Promises which are to be paid after death are beyond our reach till we cross the border. We can only deal with a few relating to this life; and of these we can only select a few as specimens. To deal with all would require a large volume.

The promises of God to his chosen people, the Jews, are very numerous in the Old Testament. In treating of these, we must not forget that the Bible is a Jew book. Whatever credit or discredit belongs to the Bible pertains to the Hebrews mainly. It is said that self-praise is no recommendation, and there is a considerable quantity of it in the sacred book. Why the Jews are called the chosen people of God it is not easy to say, unless we consider it a racial vanity of the Hebrews themselves, which is certainly the correct explanation. On the supposition that God did choose a wandering tribe and their descendants to be a peculiar people to himself, it makes God blind, partial, and unjust. There were in the world at the time other nations immensely superior to the Jews in civilisation and number. These other nations had done more service for man, and were a greater credit to God as their Father, than the Jews ever were or could be. As such, and as children of the same God, if a preference was to be made they had a stronger claim than the Jews to be the chosen people. But the idea of preference and choosing on the part of God is repugnant to our sense of justice. No good human father would be guilty of such favoritism and partiality, and to suppose that God preferred a wandering, ignorant, half-civilised tribe to all his other children, is an indictment of his wisdom, justice, and love. But in arguing with Christians we must assume the truth of an absurd legend, or discussion with them would not be possible.

R. J. DERFEL.

(To be continued.)

Acid Drops

The *Rock* is gone. We don't mean Gibraltar. We mean the English Protestant weekly. It was once the object of Matthew Arnold's feline humor. We do not know that it achieved any other distinction. When we looked into it occasionally we found it as hard as its title—and about as fruitful.

"The Bible," says a writer in the *British Weekly*, "The Bible is the Book of the world to come." Just so. And we wish it would go there.

King Edward is not partial to sermons. When he has to stand them he likes them short. He once allowed the Bishop of London five minutes. When he spent a recent week-end with the Duke of Devonshire at Compton-place, Eastbourne, he attended the adjoining church, but left before the sermon. By-and-by he will leave before the service.

Sir James Crichton-Browne, speaking at the annual dinner of the Royal Institute of Public Health, at the Hotel Cecil, said that "a good many clergymen might be better employed in concerning themselves in sanitary work on behalf of their flocks than in composing silly sermons." Many congregations will share this opinion. What a happy change it would be if the clergy left off the "silly sermons" and went round visiting with thermometers, air-testers, and bottles of Condy's Fluid! Now and then they might mind the baby while "ma" went shopping.

In his presidential address at the Congress this great medical authority referred to England's "thirteen millions on the verge of hunger and dying in multitudes before their time." What a state of things after nineteen hundred years Christianity!

Rev. Charles H. Kelly, the new Wesleyan Conference president, devoted a good deal of his inaugural address to the subject of religious teaching in schools. "Their Church," he said, "was deeply interested in national education, and they were convinced that in all day schools God's holy Word should have its recognised place. They would be grieved if by the contentions of Christian men and a few Socialists

the Word of God should be excluded from the schools." One would think the reverend gentleman had never heard of *Secularists*. But that is by the way. What we want to draw attention to is the fact that when these men of God get together, and talk between themselves, they speak of the Bible as simply the Word of God. Not a word about its being magnificent literature. That sort of thing is kept in stock to bamboozle the public with when necessary. But the real interest, and the real object, of these gentlemen is to have the Bible in the nation's schools as a *book of religion*.

The London County Council has resolved that instruction in its schools shall be given "in the principles of the Christian religion." This is what satisfies the Nonconformist Conscience. Dissenters think it is infamous for the State to teach religion to adults in churches, but perfectly proper for the State to teach religion to children in schools; although adults need never go to church and children *must* go to school. Yes, that Nonconformist Conscience is a fearful and wonderful thing.

The London County Council is going to have more religious controversy. Mr. Hardy has given notice of the following motion: "That it be referred to the Education Committee to report the basis on which they leave out from the syllabus of Bible instruction certain Books of the Old Testament." We understand Mr. Hardy is concerned about the omission of Daniel, and that he considers this book to be of immense value to children. It is one of the prophetic books; and prophecy, as old Bishop Scott said, is a subject that generally finds a man cracked or leaves him so.

"Hackney's Protest Against Priestcraft." This was the *Daily News* heading over the report of a Passive Resistance meeting. It was really a case of one form of priestcraft fighting against another. For our part, we cry "A plague o' both your houses!"

It is good to know that the Rev. E. Shepherd, of Eccles, a Passive Register of the Primitive Methodist persuasion, is "still determined." He was committed on Monday to Strangeways Prison, Manchester, to serve three days for refusing to pay what he called "the priest's rate." Under this order he was liberated on the Wednesday morning. Thus the reverend gentleman spent one whole day in prison. We admire his wonderful courage. And his determination to "do it again" fills us with awe.

Clacton Urban Council has had to protest against the abominable behavior of a religious excursion party from Clerkenwell. We understand that it was a "lion" party, and that their antics put the "roosters" to shame.

Since writing the previous paragraph we have seen that there were men as well as women in that excursion party to Clacton. The Council's resolution ran as follows: "That owing to the disgraceful and filthy behavior of the Clerkenwell Gospel Mission, numbering about 1,000 excursionists, at Clacton, the clerk be instructed to write to the G. E. R. Co. pointing out the general injury to the town caused by their visit, and asking that no facilities in the future be granted to this mission for visiting Clacton."

The Bishop of London fired off a sermon in St. Paul's on Sunday morning at the fellows, members, and friends of the Institute of Public Health. As usual he said a number of ridiculous things—for instance, that "religion and science went hand in hand." And after grieving over the slum population of London he said that "their only hope was to bring back the world to God." In other words to keep the Church going. Fancy a man being paid £10,000 a year to talk like this!

A flying machine came to grief at San Jose, California, and dropped 3,000 feet. The operator was pitched out and terribly mangled. As the machine plunged to earth Father Bell, who was amongst the crowd of spectators, raised his hands and pronounced absolution for the unfortunate aeronaut. It was very good of him. We respect the reverend gentleman's intention. He certainly meant well. But what an idea, intellectually speaking, that Father Bell's hurried words and gestures could decide the fate of John Maloney's soul!

Ingersoll once beat a retreat from the hottest part of a mine, and, when asked where he was going, said "To hell, to cool off." Many New Yorkers must have felt like that during the terrible heat-wave.

The bomb thrown at the Sultan missed him, but killed or injured several members of his suite. According to the official communication "Divine Providence miraculously preserved his Imperial Majesty." What a pity Divine Providence didn't save the other poor devils! Weren't they worth it? But if it comes to that, was *he*?

The Belfast *Evening Telegraph* reports the inquest on John Johnston and John Maguire, who were killed by lightning. The coroner made some funny remarks. After saying that the top of the tent pole probably attracted the lightning, and that it might be thought there was wilful negligence on the part of the owners of the tent, he wound up by speaking of the occurrence as "caused by the hand of God." It is not reported that he issued a warrant against that party. What he did was to express a hope that precautions would be taken against such an accident occurring again. In other words, he advised them not to give "the hand of God" another look in.

Bishop Hamlyn, of the Gold Coast, wants a special ministry to watch the West African Christians, and prevent them from "lapsing into drunkenness and practical heathenism." That is what Christianity does for them without being watched.

In an Aberdeen divorce case before Lord Ardwell it was stated by counsel that the defender and co-defender went on the stool of repentance at church for their offence, and got absolution. Lord Ardwell said that might be very interesting, but it was not evidence. He thought the cutty stool was abolished. It appears that the church took the absolution back when it discovered that the defender was a married man. But that is absurd. An absolution is an absolution—and there's an end of it.

The Baptist Missionary Society has had a new steamer, the *Endeavor*, built for service on the Upper Congo. Considering the awful atrocities perpetrated by whites upon blacks in that part of the world, this is a very sanguinary joke. The *Endeavor* will be used in converting the blacks to the religion of their torturers and exterminators.

"An elderly female inmate of Fulwood Workhouse," the newspapers report, "has just died from the effect of a fall sustained forty years ago." This ought to cheer up those who think that Christianity, like Charles II., is an unconscionable time adying. If a lady takes forty years to die in after a fall, a great religion may well take two or three hundred years. There is no need to despair. The mortal hour will come.

The *Christian World* enters a mild protest against the nonsense talked at the Baptist Congress about the Higher Criticism, which it says is "simply an honest facing of the facts." Our contemporary continues:—

"It did not make the facts. It did not invent the divergent accounts of the Creation in Genesis, or the complete discrepancy between Joshua and Judges as to the condition of Palestine after the Jewish invasion. It did not invent the fact that Sarah in Genesis xvii. is declared to be ninety years old, while in chapter xx. Abraham is afraid of being killed on account of her beauty. It did not invent these and a thousand other problems that confront the most casual Bible reader. It simply faces them and seeks to account for them."

This shows what a happy family the household of faith really is. It is all at sixes and sevens, and is agreed about nothing except the power of the cashbox.

William Smith, aged thirty-eight, an ordained clergyman, has been sentenced at Westminster to six months' hard labor for obtaining money by false pretences. His wife and family had been practically deserted at Gorkston, and he had spent his time and means in riotous living. Of course we don't wish to dwell upon this case. It is not so uncommon as to call for notes of exclamation. All we wish to say is that all the notes of exclamation in a big printing office would be necessary if the culprit were a Freethought lecturer. That *would be* uncommon.

George Henry Hill, who battered in his wife's head and cut his own throat at Hoxton, wrote several letters. In one addressed to his friends he said "God forgive me." In another to his family he said "God bless you," and hoped to meet them all in heaven. Another of Torrey's "Atheists."

Rev. Robert Finlayson, a leading spirit among the "Wee Kirkers," committed suicide by hanging himself in his stable. A man of God more or less makes no particular

difference in Scotland, so there is no more to be said. But what a lot there would be to say if a leading Secularist were to commit suicide in this fashion!

Another clerical suicide. William Graham Keeling, a retired Church of England clergyman, seventy-one years of age, hanged himself in the bedroom of an Eastbourne hotel. The poor gentleman appears to have suffered from pains in the head. But that fact would not have prevented the Christian press from chortling if he had been a Freethought lecturer.

"Wee Kirkers" at Newton-on-Ayr were followed to and from church on a recent Sunday by a disorderly crowd who were on the side of the "Free Kirkers." Two of the said disorderly crowd were brought before the magistrates and fined. One of them brought a local parish minister's testimonial, but the presiding bailee intimated that he would not give sixpence for a hatful of such documents. Trust a Scotchman for knowing the value of sixpence!

We see a report that Dr. William Wallace, of the *Glasgow Herald*, is writing an article for the next number of the *Hibbert Journal* on "The Religion of Sensible Scotchmen." Of course it requires an honest Scotchman to state what sensible Scotchmen think. It is to be hoped that Dr. Wallace will rise to the occasion.

What is the net result of the Baptist World Congress? According to the Rev. Dr. J. N. Prestridge, of Louisville, Kentucky, editor of the *Baptist Argus*, it is "the birth of a Baptist world-consciousness." If this is all the net result, the net result is blarney.

The list of portraits for Pennsylvania's Hall of Fame at Harrisburg has been completed, with the name of Thomas Paine left out. The list includes Stephen Girard. A while ago the choice of the people of the city and county of Philadelphia in this matter was ascertained by means of votes sent to the *Philadelphia Evening Telegram*, and Paine led by an overwhelming number, but the committee ignored the election by popular suffrage. The selections by the committee have aroused considerable opposition, and the *Telegram* states that the most vigorous protestors are the champions of Thomas Paine.—*Truthseeker* (New York).

A Brighton reader sends us a picture postcard, one of the "Eden Series," which is "copyright," entitled "Monday in the Old Garden." It pokes fun at the Garden of Eden story. There is a snake in a kennel, a lot of pippins in a cottage window, and a pair of naked arms hanging out fig-leaves to dry on a clothes-line.

Little four-year-old girl bringing home account of her Holy week Scripture lesson: "They made him carry the cross himself. And Jesus was so tired and the cross was so heavy (sobs) he got—simple—Simon—to carry it for him!" Fact!

A luggage thief was before Mr. M'Connell at the Clerkenwell Sessions the other day. He handed up a long written statement to the judge, explaining that "Satan had tempted him." His first sentences ran as follows: "First of all I do not remember ever having told a lie, as I consider a liar worse than a thief. What I have written down is the truth. I mean it with all my heart, and God knows it." His worship said that "that sort of thing" made no impression upon him, and gave this odd disciple of George Washington three years' penal servitude.

ALL RIGHT.

"It's a beautiful world!" exclaimed the caddie enthusiastically.

"Yes," said Mr. Rockefeller, looking appreciatively about. "I don't know that I ever owned a better one."

When I gits ter glory,
Don't want no harp ter tune,
But des de wings ter fly, an see
Ef melons in de moon!

—*Atlanta Constitution*.

IN MORMONDOM.

HOWELL: I consulted a clairvoyant when I was in Utah.
POWELL: Was she any good?

HOWELL: She ought to have been; she was a seventy-seventh daughter of a seventy-seventh son.—*Puck*.

Mr. Foote's Lecturing Engagements.

(Suspended during the Summer.)

To Correspondents.

- C. COHEN'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—Address, 241 High-road-Leyton, Essex.—August 13, m., Camberwell, a., Brockwell Park; 20, Victoria Park; 27, Victoria Park.
- THE RIDGWAY FUND.—Previously acknowledged :—£3 5s. 0d. Received this week :—L. Devereux 2s. 6d.
- OUR ANTI-TORREY MISSION FUND.—Previously acknowledged :—£143 11s. 11d. Received this week :—G. E. Bowers 2s. 6d., W. W. Kensett 2s. 6d., Frank Allen (N. Z.) 1s. 4d., J. Vickary 10s., R. Carroll 4s. 4d., S. Edmonds 2s. 6d.
- S. HARRISON.—We cannot undertake to answer such queries by post. The 6,000 years from Creation is obtained by starting with Adam, reckoning the ages of the patriarchs down to Abraham, and taking Jewish chronology after that to the Christian era. The old Bibles used to print the date of 4,004 over the first chapter of Matthew.
- SAINT CHARLES.—Yes, you may be sure we shall keep the flag flying. Thanks.
- F. W. THOMPSON.—Sent as requested.
- A. JACOBS.—Davenport Adams's *Concordance to the Plays of Shakespeare* is the best within a reasonable compass and a reasonable price. Routledge is the publisher.
- A. WEBBER.—Thanks for your letter. Glad to hear that the jurymen, although a Christian, was so delighted with our paragraph defending his right, as well as his duty, to refuse to accede to a verdict against his judgment and conscience.
- J. SMITH.—We are much obliged to you, but we had better wait for a full report of the reverend gentleman's discourse. All the Central Hall (Manchester) lectures have been, or are being, printed, and we suppose Mr. Armstrong's will appear in due course. If your summary is anything like correct we shall have many bones to pick with him. We have no knowledge of him personally.
- W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for cuttings.
- G. SCOTT.—Received with thanks. Change of address noted.
- J. C. ALLEN.—Thanks for addresses, and for your efforts to promote our circulation. The Mr. Smith, of Devonport, you refer to, has been dead some time. He was a staunch Freethinker and a personal friend of ours.
- J. HULL.—See paragraph. Thanks.
- W. BINDON.—Omnipotence means the power to do everything and anything. A contradiction in terms is *not* anything; it is simply meaningless—that is, nonsense; and no more concerns the definition of Omnipotence than parallel lines enclose a space.
- W. H. DOWLING.—We cannot give the matter sufficient attention this week. It looks rather complicated.
- J. A. SHARPLEY.—Thanks.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 Paris Congress.

THE National Secular Society's Annual Conference decided that militant English Freethought ought to be strongly and independently represented at the Paris International Freethought Congress in September. It was also decided that a special fund should be opened to defray the cost of the delegation. Various matters have prevented me from giving this subject earlier attention in the *Freethinker*. What has to be done must now be done promptly. But that ought not to be a misfortune.

The Society's Executive meets after this number of the *Freethinker* goes to press. I cannot say, therefore, who will be appointed delegates to the Paris Congress. I can only state my own view, which I daresay will approximate more or less to the ultimate fact.

To get myself out of the way first, I suppose I shall be wanted to represent the N. S. S., and I have kept the September dates open for that purpose. Then there are important representatives like Mr. Cohen, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Roger, and Mr. Davies. I also consider that the N. S. S. secretary should look in at this Congress, so I add Miss Vance to my tentative list.

All these, if they go to Paris, will be special N. S. S. delegates. But delegates' tickets, as in the case of the Rome Congress, will be given to all N. S. S. members who join the party. All could travel together from London to Paris, and all could obtain the benefit of the arrangements by which Congressists will be entitled to travel half price on the French railways.

M. Furnémont, the general secretary of the International Freethought Federation, writes me from Brussels saying that he looks to me to secure a good representation of the English Secular movement. I have also just received a communication from Professor Emile Chauvelon, secretary to the Organising Committee of the Congress at Paris (63, Rue Claude Bernard), urging me to use all my influence to make the English delegation as numerous as possible, and I have told him that I will do my best. He assures me that the most careful precautions will be taken, this time, that each nation shall be secured a proper share in the Congress deliberations.

Of course the Paris Congress cannot possibly be as striking as the Rome Congress. But it may be more practically useful. And it will certainly not be tame. The situation in France is propitious for the Congress. France has resolved, through her Chamber of Deputies, that there shall be an absolute separation between Church and State; and this great principle, which the Revolution has been aiming at for more than a hundred years, is to be carried into effect by a Government bill, which, while perfectly firm, tempers justice with mercy as far as the Churches and their priests are concerned. M. Furnémont justly refers to this great measure as one reason, if there were no other, why Freethinkers should congregate from all parts of the civilised world at Paris in September.

Haeckel is coming from Germany, Sergi from Rome, Denis from Brussels; and Marcelin Berthelot, one of the first scientists in the world, member of the French Academy, and perpetual secretary to the Academy of Sciences, will address the Congress.

The Congress will sit from the fourth to the seventh of September inclusive, in the great Festival Hall of the Trocadero Palace. There are many special functions, which I shall speak about next week. One must not be omitted now. It is the inauguration of a statue to the young Chevalier La Barre, who was sentenced in 1766, in the century of Voltaire, to have his hand cut off, his tongue plucked out, his head severed from his body, and the latter burnt to ashes—for the pretended crime of sacrilege.

English Freethinkers will understand that, while the Paris delegation will not be as costly as the Rome delegation, it will nevertheless require financial resources. A Paris Congress Fund is hereby opened. I invite the Freethought party to subscribe to it liberally and promptly. Subscriptions can be sent to the Secretary or direct to myself as editor of the *Freethinker*, and all will be publicly acknowledged.

G. W. FOOTE.

There is chastity in the wroth of the just against the unjust. The Imprecation can be as holy as the Hosanna; and indignation, honest indignation, has the very purity of virtue. In point of whiteness, the foam has no reason to envy the snow.—Victor Hugo.

Sugar Plums.

We understand that the Rev. C. A. Dixon, the libeller of Colonel Ingersoll, on whom the other libeller Dr. Torrey relied, is now in London, and is threatening all sorts of things on account of the reference to him in Mr. Stead's article in the *Review of Reviews*. We have said far worse things about Dr. Dixon ourselves, and shall be happy to give him our attention if he shows a coming on disposition. We shall give him *some* attention, anyhow, by having a neat little leaflet ready for him when he preaches in London in September. Dixon and Torrey seem to be a worthy pair.

The Dartmouth *Chronicle* reproduces our paragraph on the case of the juror at the Devon Assizes who was insulted by the judge because he stood out against the other eleven "good men and true." It appears that the juror in question is Mr. W. S. Atkins, a Dartmouth man. Although a Christian, he was much taken with the paragraph in the *Freethinker*. The *Chronicle* quotes this journal and the *Law Journal* together. It is enough to throw Dr. Torrey into convulsions.

Mr. Cohen lectures this afternoon and evening (July 30) in Brockwell Park. The engagement has been fixed up in a hurry, and we hope the local "saints" will give it a wide announcement, and bring as many of their friends and acquaintances as possible to the meetings.

Mr. John Lloyd lectured twice in Roath Park, Cardiff, on Sunday, and had large and very attentive audiences. No opposition was offered, although it was invited, but several questions were asked. Mr. Lloyd was obliged to speak out of doors, as it was not possible to get a hall, but he will not repeat the experiment, nor should it be expected. He tells us that the Cardiff Branch is full of fight, but has to face awkward difficulties. For instance, it is not allowed to sell literature or make collections at its meetings in Roath Park. We believe this restriction is confined to the Freethinkers.

Clerkenwell "saints" should assist Mr. Aldred's lectures for the local N. S. S. Branch by rallying round the open-air platform at Garnault-place. Some time ago the platform was "rushed" by Catholics and Nonconformists. This ought not to be allowed.

Mr. J. Partridge, 183 Vauxhall-road, Birmingham, acknowledges the following towards the Ridgway Fund:—

Previously acknowledged, £15 5s. Since received:—T. Evans 5s., W. T., 6d., Friend 1s., Reincarnation 2s. 6d., Mrs. Berkeley 2s. 6d., S. B. D. 1s., Scottish Freethinker 9s., W. H. Spivey 2s. 6d. Total £16 9s.

We should like to see this appeal more liberally responded to. The N. S. S. Branches ought to do something in the matter.

There was a mistaken announcement in last week's *Freethinker*. The annual members' meeting of the Liverpool Branch was announced for July 23, after the evening lecture in the Alexandra Hall. It should have been July 30. We are asked to state that the Branch picnic will take place on Sunday next (Aug. 6), when the party will go in brakes to Rainford. A big rally of local "saints" is expected. Dinner and tea will be provided, and the inclusive tickets are only 4s. Intending excursionists should lose no time in communicating with Mr. W. P. Pearson, secretary, 27 Ivor-road, Egremont.

The Annual Excursion of the Newcastle Branch will take place on Sunday, August 6. The place chosen this year is Shotley Bridge, and the Spa Grounds will be thrown open to the excursionists. A substantial tea has been arranged for within the grounds, and besides the natural attractions of the spot, there will be Sunday music, and for those who desire it the Zoo. Altogether the program seems to be of an attractive character, and the Secularists of Stanley and South Shields have agreed to combine towards making up a numerically strong party. Efforts are being made to get specially reduced fares from the railway company, which, if successful, would make the cost of return journey and tea, say, half-a-crown, with children about half price. A notice will appear in next week's *Freethinker* giving details as to trains, etc.

We have not heard anything for a long time of Mr. W. W. Collins, who left the English Freethought platform some eighteen years ago and went to New Zealand. We now see from the *Humanitarian Review*, published at Los Angeles,

California, is still lecturing for the Freethought Association at Christchurch, the meetings he addresses being held in the Choral Hall. "Last Sunday," we read, "he lectured and defended Thomas Paine against the calumnies levelled against that great man by Dr. Torrey, an American revivalist now lecturing in England." Thus the echo of our exposure of Dr. Torrey reverberates from the other side of the globe.

Mr. S. W. Davis, editor of the *Humanitarian Review*, rebukes "some of the British Freethought journals" for referring to Dr. Torrey as "American." He says that Old Dowie is the prince of fakirs, and he is a Scotchman. Well, now, as far as we are concerned, we will tell Mr. Davis why we refer to Dr. Torrey as "American." We do so because Paine and Ingersoll were Americans. We consider that Dr. Torrey was a "mean cuss" to cross the Atlantic and libel his own countrymen. Ingersoll was a pure American. Paine was born in England, but England outlawed him for having written the *Rights of Man*. In France he was imprisoned as a foreigner. His American citizenship was thus the only thing left. When the separation between Great Britain and America took place, Paine became an American citizen precisely like all the other rebel subjects of King George. And he died in America and was buried there.

Rev. Dr. Aked, preaching to a crowded congregation at Pembroke Chapel, Liverpool, on "The Unconquerable Goodness of Bad Men," paid tribute to the manly gospel contained in stories by Bret Harte and other "colloquial" writers of our time, and declared emphatically: "We are *not* all vile; we are *not* all miserable sinners." We quite agree with the reverend gentleman—and both of us disagree with the Bible. But that is coming not to matter. The "advanced" clergy are rapidly progressing towards Humanism.

Baron Uixkiull, a Russian delegate at the recent Baptist World Congress in London, told a *British Weekly* interviewer that amongst Russian writers of to-day no one exercises an influence to compare with Gorky's. But the Baron had to regret that Gorky's "powerful pen is not used on the side of Christianity."

Edward FitzGerald, whose "Omar Khayyam" is one of the world's poetical masterpieces, was called upon by the rector of Woodbridge, who said, "I am sorry Mr. FitzGerald that I never see you at church." "Sir," FitzGerald replied, "you might have conceived that a man has not come to my years without thinking much on these things. I believe I may say that I have reflected on them fully. You need not repeat this visit." FitzGerald was a "large infidel" (Tennyson's phrase) as well as Omar Khayyam.

Professor Bury, the learned editor of Gibbon, has just written a *Life of St. Patrick*, in the course of which there is the following suggestive passage on the chronology of the mythical:—

"It is a common fallacy that legends attach themselves to a figure only after a long lapse of time, and that the antiquity of biographies may always be measured by the presence or absence of miracles. The truth is that those men who are destined to become the subjects of myth evoke the mythopœic instinct in their fellows while they are yet alive, or before they are cold in their graves. When once the tale is set rolling it may gather up many conventional and insignificant accretions of fiction, and the presence or absence of these may indeed be a guide in determining the age of a document. But the myths which are significant and characteristic are nearly contemporary; they arise within the radius of the personality to whom they relate."

This passage is a sufficient answer (although it was not meant to be such) to those who say that a hundred years after the Crucifixion was not long enough for the growth of a "mythical" Christ. Carlyle, in his *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, argued long ago that "in thirty or forty years, were there no books, any great man would grow *mythic*, the contemporaries who had once seen him, being all dead. And in three hundred years, and three thousand years —, Thirty or forty years! Certainly there were no books within that period. The Gospels did not exist until long after. Tradition was at work all that time. And as Carlyle said: "What an enormous *camera-obscura* magnifier is Tradition! How a thing grows in the human Memory, in the human Imagination, when love, worship, and all that lies in the human Heart, is there to encourage it."

When the new light which we beg for shines in upon us, there be who envy and oppose, if it come not first in at their casements.—Milton.

The Opposition of Protestantism to Science.

"The Reformers would tolerate no science that was not in accordance with Genesis.....So far as science is concerned, nothing is owed to the Reformation. The procrustean bed of the Pentateuch was still before her.—PROFESSOR J. W. DRAPER, *The Conflict Between Religion and Science*, 1876; p. 215.

"Luther and Melancthon seemed to set out with a resolution to banish every species of philosophy from the Church."—MOSHIEH, *Ecclesiastical History*, 1838; vol. 2, p. 137.

"There is much reason to believe that the fetters upon scientific thought were closer under the strict interpretation of Scripture by the early Protestants than they had been under the older Church."—DR. ANDREW WHITE, *The Warfare of Science*, 1896; vol. i., p. 212.

"Where faith commences, science ends."—HAECKEL, *History of Creation*, 1892; vol. i., p. 9.

SCIENCE owes nothing to the Protestant Reformation which, as Hallam remarked, was merely "a change of masters." The reformers renounced the authority of the Pope and substituted that of the Bible in its place, Luther declaring that "one letter, yea, a single tittle of the Scripture is of more and greater consequence than heaven or earth."* All science that did not square with the Bible was condemned by the Reformers. When Luther heard of the great discoveries of Copernicus, he immediately tested them by the Bible and condemned them. He denounced Copernicus as "an upstart astrologer," and observes, "This fool wishes to reverse the entire science of astronomy; but sacred Scripture tells us that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, and not the earth."† His friend and fellow-worker, Melancthon, "was one of the keenest opponents of the Copernician system."‡ Lange observes that "Nowhere did ossified dogmatism seem narrower than among the German Protestants, and the natural sciences especially had a difficult position."§

"The introduction of the improved Gregorian kalendar was opposed by the Protestant clergy merely because this correction had proceeded from the Catholic Church; in the judgment of the Senate of Tubingen of the 24th November, 1583, it is said that Christ cannot be at one with Belial and with Anti-christ.

"Kepler, the great reformer of astronomy, was warned by the Consistory in Stuttgart on the 25th September, 1612, that he must subdue his too speculative spirit, and govern himself in all things according to the Word of God and leave the Testament and Church of the Lord Christ untroubled by his unnecessary subtleties, scruples, and glosses."||

It has been said that Erasmus laid the egg of the Reformation and that Luther hatched it. But afterwards when the great humanist saw that Luther's interests were merely theological—that he was at one with the monks in his hatred of the Pagan and profane classics of ancient Greece and Rome—he "observed that he had laid a hen's egg, but Luther had hatched a crow's."¶

As Hallam has remarked, "The doctrines of Luther, taken altogether, are not more rational, that is, more conformable to what men, *a priori*, would expect to find in religion, than those of the Church of Rome; nor did he ever pretend that they were so."** It is well-known, says the same historian, "that he began his attack on indulgences with no expectation or desire of the total breach with the See of Rome which ensued."†† If the Pope had withdrawn the sale of Indulgences, Luther would never have found fault with the teachings or dogmas of the Church of Rome. Luther, writing in

the year 1545, about twenty-eight years after the beginning of the dispute concerning indulgences, declares:—

"I wish you to know, that when I began the affair of the indulgences at the very first, I was a monk, and a most mad Papist. So intoxicated was I and drenched in Papal dogmas that I would have been most ready at all times to murder or assist others in murdering any person who should have uttered a syllable against the duty of obedience to the Pope" (Milner, *Church History*, 1860, p. 684).

Luther recognised the enmity of religion and science. He says: "Let natural science alone..... It is enough that thou knowest fire is hot, water cold and moist..... Know how thou oughtest to treat thy field, thy cow, thy house and child—that is enough of natural science for thee. Think how thou mayest learn Christ, who will show thee thyself, who thou art, and what is thy capability. Thus wilt thou learn God and thyself which no natural master or natural science ever taught."* He denounced reason as the "Arch-enemy of faith," declaring that "Since the beginning of the world reason has been possessed by the devil, and bred unbelief." In another passage he describes the natural reason as the "archwhore and devil's bride, who can only scoff and blaspheme all that God says and does."† What could be hoped for from such teaching as this? Without the exercise of reason, and without science—which is the outcome of accurate reasoning—we should relapse into barbarism and savagery. Fortunately, the precepts of Luther have not been acted upon, for the simple reason that the followers of Luther never had the power to enforce their observance. "The whole history of Rationalism," says Professor Karl Pearson, "is as much opposed to Lutheranism as to Catholicism." As he well says:—

"Not from the doctrines of Lutheranism, but from the want of unity among the theologians, has intellect again won for itself unlimited freedom. To the Protestant, who asserts that all our nineteenth century culture is the outcome of Luther and his followers, the Rationalists must reply: 'Yes, but not to their teaching, only to that squabbling which rendered them impotent to suppress.'"‡

"The simple truth is," says Dr. Andrew White, "All branches of the Protestant Church—Lutheran, Calvinist, Anglican—vied with each other in denouncing the Copernican doctrine as contrary to Scripture; and, at a later period, the Puritans showed the same tendency." Melancthon, in his *Elements of Physics*, declared that it was "a want of honesty and decency to assert such notions publicly." He cites passages from the Psalms and Ecclesiastes proving that the earth stands fast and the sun moves around it. "So earnest does this mildest of the Reformers become, that he suggests severe measures to restrain such impious teachings as those of Copernicus."§ Calvin, in his *Commentary on Genesis*, condemned all who asserted that the earth is not at the centre of the Universe. And clinched the matter with the first verse of the ninety-third psalm: "The world also is established, that it cannot be moved." And asked, "Who will venture to place the authority of Copernicus above that of the Holy Spirit?"

Turretin, Calvin's famous successor, put forth the same views in his compendium of theology. Calovius, whose great learning and orthodoxy gave him the Lutheran leadership in the century after the first Lutheran Reformers, "cited the turning back of the shadow upon King Hezekiah's dial and the standing still of the sun for Joshua, denied the movement of the earth, and denounced the whole new view as clearly opposed to Scripture. To this day his arguments are repeated by sundry orthodox leaders of American Lutheranism."||

* Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, 1886, p. 337.
 † White, *Warfare of Science*, vol. i., p. 126. See also Michelet's *Life of Luther*, Bohn's Edition, pp. 289-290.
 ‡ Lange, *History of Materialism*, vol. i., p. 231.
 § *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 32.
 ¶ Hettner, *Literaturg.*, d. xviii., cited by Lange, vol. ii., p. 32.
 ** Hallam, *Introduction to the Literature of Europe*, 1882, pt. i., ch. vi., p. 359. Luther declared that "The wisdom of the Greeks, in comparison of the wisdom of the Jews, is altogether bestial." (Michelet, *Life of Luther*, p. 283).
 †† *Introduction*, p. 307.
 †† *Ibid.*, p. 295.

* Cited by Feuerbach, *Essence of Christianity*, p. 288.
 † Pearson, *The Ethic of Freethought*, 1901; p. 208.
 ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 195.
 § White, *Warfare of Science*, vol. i., p. 127.
 || *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 147.

The English Reformers were just as violent in their denunciations of the new science. Combes says:—

"In 1671, thirty years after the death of Galileo, and two years after Newton had commenced lecturing in Cambridge, Dr. John Owen, the most eminent divine among the Independents, described the Copernican System as 'the late hypothesis fixing the sun in the centre of the world—built on fallible phenomena, and advanced by many arbitrary presumptions against evident testimonies of Scripture, and reasons as probable as any which are produced in its confirmation.'"^{*}

When Newton, by mathematical calculations, discovered the laws of gravitation, he placed the copestone upon the labors of Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler. Instead of the planets spinning in their orbits by the finger of God, it was found that they were held in position by the force of gravitation. Moreover, by Newton's method it became possible to predict the position of a particular planet at a certain time, thereby doing away with the arbitrary interference of God in a region which had always been understood to be peculiarly his own. The opposition to Copernicus and Galileo is well known; but the opposition to Newton was just as violent, although the Protestant Churches had not the power to suppress his work; "though Leibnitz affirmed, in the face of Europe, that 'Newton had robbed the Deity of some of his most excellent attributes, and had sapped the foundation of natural religion.'"[†] John Hutchinson, Professor at Cambridge, took the same ground. In 1724 he published his *Moses' Principia*, "in which he sought to build up a complete physical system of the universe from the Bible. In this he assaulted the Newtonian theory as 'atheistic,' and led the way for similar attacks by such Church teachers as Horne, Duncan Forbes, and Jones of Nayland."[‡]

The leaders of the great religious upheaval of the eighteenth century, which John Morley speaks of as "the great Evangelical revival, terrible and inevitable, which has so deeply colored religious feeling and warped intellectual growth in England ever since,"[§] would countenance no science; and this was not owing to vulgar ignorance, for, as Lecky points out, "Some, indeed, of the Methodist leaders were men of no contemptible knowledge. Wesley and Berridge were distinguished members of their university. Romaine was an accomplished Hebrew scholar." The fact was, as the historian points out:—

"They believed firmly in an ever-present Divine Spirit illuminating an inspired page, and they looked with suspicion and dislike upon every voluntary pursuit which was not directly subservient to religious ends. They soon discovered, too, that the most cultivated minds were precisely those that were least susceptible to those violent and unreasoning religious emotions which they ascribed to the direct action of the Holy Ghost."^{||}

Wesley believed the Bible to be absolutely infallible. Writing in his *Journal*, August 24, 1776, he roundly declares that "if there be any mistakes in the Bible, there may as well be a thousand. If there be one falsehood in that book, it did not come from the God of Truth." He declared that the new ideas of Copernicus and Newton "tend towards infidelity."[¶] Mr. Leslie Stephen says:—

"Thus we already find in Wesley that aversion to scientific reasoning which has become characteristic of orthodox theologians. He makes in one place the remarkable statement that he is convinced, 'from many experiments,' that he could not 'study to any degree of perfection either mathematics, arithmetic, or algebra, without being a deist, if not an atheist.'.....He disbelieves altogether in the Newtonian astronomy. He doubts whether any man knows the distance of the sun or moon. He thinks that Jones (of Nayland) has totally overthrown the Newtonian principles, though he may not have established the Hutchinsonian; and that Dr.

Rogers has proved the whole framework of modern astronomy to be quite uncertain, if not self-contradictory. The scepticism of believers is at least as curious as the credulity of sceptics."^{**}

His only comment upon the treasures of art and nature recently amassed in the British Museum, says Lecky, was "What account will a man give to the Judge of quick and dead for a life spent in collecting all these?"^{††}

Romaine, who, after a distinguished university career, held for five years the post of morning preacher at St. George's, Hanover-square—at that time the very centre of rank and fashion—preached with such extraordinary power that the aristocracy found it difficult to reach their pews, on account of the crowds he attracted—and for which he was at last dismissed—was also appointed to the Gresham Professorship of Astronomy, a position he was accused of availing himself of to deprecate the very science he professed, on the ground that astronomical observations have no tendency to make men Christian. "I should be glad to know what use or what benefit these observations have been to the world?" says Romaine. "Were dying sinners ever comforted by the spots on the moon? Was ever miser reclaimed from avarice by Jupiter's belts? Or did Saturn's ring ever make a lascivious female chaste?.....The modern divinity brings you no nearer than 121 millions of miles short of heaven."^{‡‡}

Berridge, another famous preacher, "lays it down for 'certain truth' that the cultivation of 'human science' implied neglect of the Bible. 'Immorality and infidelity spread their branches equally with human science,' and when 'human science' reaches its highest pitch a nation is ready for perpetual bondage."^{§§} We shall conclude the subject with the Opposition of Protestantism to Science in the Nineteenth Century.

W. MANN.

Ossian.

"There are no traces of religion in the poems ascribed to Ossian.....But gods are not necessary when the poet has genius.....Let his religion be what it will, it is certain that he has not alluded to Christianity or any of its rites.....It was with one of the Culdees that Ossian, in his extreme old age, is said to have disputed concerning the Christian religion. The dispute, they say, is extant, and is couched in verse, etc."—JAMES MACPIERSON (translator).

"It would have been much more beautiful and perfect had the author discovered some knowledge of a Supreme Being, etc."—DR. BLAIR (prefatory critic).

From Time's old hills thy flood of music ran
With rush of battle. Freedom found strange breath
In woman's love, and from the hate of man:
Lips sealed in kisses—wounds agape in death.
Thou knew'st not God, counting it coward, wrong
To love poor Christ—to hate the world beside.
But who, e'er singing our brave human song
Gives tears to trinities—to gods that died?
Thy harp, attuned with most lovely things,
Sobbed sweeter monodies of wayside flowers.
From star to star thy genius swept the strings [showers.
Of heav'n's bright bow strung high with pearline
Swift as the lightning 'thwart a realm of black,
Thy light of eye silvered o'er sea and stream.
As thunder shaken from the sudden track
Thy voice rolled down the forests' ripest theme.
Thy hymn of flame like a proud moon doth go
O'er war-like songs, above their foamy river.
Yet in thy sadness, as mid whiter snow
Lost star-beams fade, their sadness dies for ever.
When dark woods sigh of thee o'er slumb'ring fern [beam.
Thy ghost's thin cloud drifts 'neath the moon's cold
I think, through our dear islands' brook and burn,
From thine old veins still runs thy life's fair stream.
Nature took back the honest breath she gave.
I think thy heart lost it's harmonic quiver
To trembling insects' wings. It's passionate wave
'Throbs through the ocean of men's hearts for ever.

GEORGE ELLIS WOODWARD.

* George Combe, *Science and Religion* (1872), p. 17.

† Draper, *The Conflict Between Religion and Science*, p. 281.

‡ White, *Warfare of Science*, vol. i., p. 148.

§ Morley, *Voltaire*, p. 94.

|| Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (1878), vol. ii., p. 640.

¶ *Warfare of Science*.

* Leslie Stephen, *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century* (1881), vol. ii., pp. 412-413.

† *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii., p. 530.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 662.

§ Leslie Stephen, *English Thought* vol. ii., p. 430.

A THEOLOGICAL DISPUTE.

You're coming to that point the Swedish queen
 Push'd, as she sat two Jesuit monks between,
 Who tried—but couldn't—to convert Christine.
 If all things here be ordered for the best,—
 A dogma by the first divines expressed,
 And by all Churches held, both east and west,—
 Your house in order set, your mind at rest ;
 The ultimate difference, it must be confessed,
 'Tween those supposed extremes of good and evil,
 So nice a point—would pose the very devil.
 These being—good and evil—on the whole,
 The terminations, as 'twere either pole.
 Of the same central force, which all pervades,
 The world of substance, and the world of shades ;
 For good may active now, now passive be,
 But evil always in activity :
 And better 'twere, it seems, we evil see,
 Than good alone, without its agency.
 The monks, not liking this encounter keen,
 Conferred one moment, then implored the queen.
 Her high and mighty majesty Christine,—
 Protesting that these views they saw great harm in—
 To read the works of Cardinal Bellarmine.
 Her Majesty did nothing of the sort,
 But strode her steed, and clattered out of court.
 The conversation thus cut somewhat short.
 Left by themselves, the pair, no more to do,
 Monk number one winked at monk number two.
 Says one, I wonder where she got that view ;
 Says t'other, blame me—if I thought she knew.

—P. J. Bailey.

PLATO ON HUMANIST EDUCATION.

"We would not have our Guardians grow up amid images of moral deformity, as in some noxious pasture, and there browse and feed upon many a baneful herb and flower, day by day, little by little, until they silently gather a festering mass of corruption into their own souls. Let our Artists rather be those who are gifted to discern the true nature of the beautiful and graceful: then will our youth dwell in a land of health, amid fair sights and sounds, and receive the good in everything; and beauty, the effluence of fair works, shall flow into the eye and ear, like a health-giving breeze from a purer region, and insensibly draw the soul from earliest years into likeness and sympathy with the beauty of reason."

"There can be no nobler training than that," he replied.

"And therefore," I said, "Glaucon, musical training is a more potent instrument than any other, because rhythm and harmony find their way into the inward places of the soul, on which they mightily fasten, imparting grace, and making the soul of him who is rightly educated graceful, or of him who is ill-educated ungraceful; and also because he who has received this true education of the inner being will most shrewdly perceive omissions or faults in art and nature, and, with a true taste, while he praises and rejoices over and receives into his soul the good, and becomes noble and good, he will justly blame and hate the bad, now in the days of his youth, even before he is able to know the reason why: and, when reason comes, he will recognise and salute the friend with whom his education has long made him familiar."

WORKING MEN AND THE CHURCH.

It is an admitted fact that the working people have stopped going to church in the same number or with the same interest that they once did. Jesus is held up as a working man—Savior—and yet the working men do not seem to want him. What is the trouble? The people are too tired to go to church, is one of the careless explanations offered. But if the rush and push of modern industrialism do not seem to prevent them from reading more than ever, from going to club or society meetings, the theatre, the library, the art or science museums (it is admitted the people's interest in all these institutions has increased in spite of the press and stress of business), why should it excuse their indifference to sermons? They are too poor, too ill clad to go to church, is another clumsy excuse. The working men were never better provided with the means of existence. When they were poorer and under oppression and less presentable than they are to-day, they were better church-goers. They are too prosperous, says another, and we need "hard times" to drive the people to church. To try to answer this would be to make an ill use of paper and ink. Another excuse: Our schools are godless, our science is sceptical. But why has the church lost control of the education of the people? Too many economic and sociological movements have alienated the working man's affection. But why cannot the church successfully compete with her rivals?

Because church people do not live up to their professions, says still another. Well, why don't they? If the church has no power over the "professors" how does she expect to convert the non-professors of religion? In our modest opinion the reason lies in the fact that the working man has outgrown the church. Why does he not wear his baby clothes or read his primer any more? He has advanced beyond them. If he goes to church to be taught, he discovers that the priest or the preacher is in greater need of instruction than himself. Everywhere he hears the language of practical common-sense, but in church the "tra-la-la" of the times of ignorance. He expects to take his reason with him into every undertaking of life, but in church he is told "they that believe not shall be damned." He is told further that "no man, by searching, can find out God," but if this is an argument that we should accept the creed upon authority, why may we not also accept the Chinese or the Moslem creed? Whatever may be the force of the social and economic considerations, the most potent obstacle is an intellectual one, for, after all, the deepest instinct in us all is the desire to be rational.—*Liberal Review* (Chicago).

A RESUSCITATED GOD.

Immanuel Kant has pursued the path of inexorable philosophy; he has stormed heaven and put the whole garrison to the edge of the sword; the ontological, cosmological, and physico-theological bodyguards lie there lifeless; Deity itself, deprived of demonstration, has succumbed; there is now no All-mercifulness, no fatherly kindness, no other-world reward for renunciation in this world, the immortality of the soul lies in its death-agony—you can hear its groans and death-rattle; and old Lampe is standing by with his umbrella under his arm, an afflicted spectator of the scene, tears and sweat-drops of terror dropping from his countenance. Then Immanuel Kant relents and shows that he is not merely a great philosopher but also a good man; he reflects, and half good-naturedly, half-ironically, he says: "Old Lampe must have a God, otherwise the poor fellow can never be happy. Now, man ought to be happy in this world; practical reason says so;—well, I am quite willing that practical reason should also guarantee the existence of God." As the result of this argument, Kant distinguishes between the *theoretical reason* and the *practical reason*, and by means of the latter, as with a magician's wand, he revivifies Deism, which theoretical reason had killed.—*Heine*.

Reader, the heaven-inspired melodious Singer; loftiest Serene Highness; nay thy own amber-locked, snow-and-rosebloom Maiden, worthy to glide sylphlike almost on air, whom thou lovest, worshippest as a divine Presence, which, indeed, symbolically taken, she is,—has descended, like thyself, from that same hair-mantled, flint-hurling, Aboriginal Anthropophagus! Out of the eater cometh forth meat; out of the strong cometh forth sweetness. What changes are wrought, not by Time, yet in Time! For not Mankind only, but all that Mankind does or beholds, is in continual growth, re-gensis, and self-perfecting vitality.—*Carlyle*.

Correspondence.

A DENIAL.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—The announcement that Mrs. Williams, Cardiff-road, Aberaman, supplied the *Freethinker*, etc., and which you were good enough to insert in the *Freethinker*, has caused her so much anxiety, that she begs me to ask you to give it a denial. Somehow or another it became known to a large number of her customers, who threatened, unless she gave it a blank denial, to take their custom elsewhere. Unfortunately Mrs. Williams is a widow and has to support a grown-up son who is nearly blind.

Perhaps you will wonder how so many of her customers came to know of the announcement. About eighteen months ago I obtained permission to lay the *Freethinker* on the table of our Public Library, the committee also accepted your two splendid books *Bible Heroes* and *Bible Romances*. Now the probability is that these bigots got their information from the copy of the *Freethinker* in the Public Library.

I do hope you will see the necessity of inserting Mrs. Williams's denial. Mrs. Williams and myself deeply regret having to put you to so much inconvenience, but we hope at least, that you will understand that our intentions are honorable.

T. J. THOMAS.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, etc.

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

LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

BATTERSEA BRANCH N. S. S. (Battersea Park Gates): 11.30, F. Schaller, "Apocryphal New Testament."

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 3.15 and 6.15, R. P. Edwards, "Lessons from Japan."

CLAPHAM COMMON: 3, A. D. Howell-Smith, B.A., "Christianity and Toleration."

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S.: Station-road, 11.30, A. Forrester, "Political Priests and Priestly Politicians"; Brockwell Park, 3.15, C. Cohen; 6, C. Cohen.

FINSBURY BRANCH N. S. S.: Clerkenwell Green, 7, Guy A. Aldred, "Theosophy and Secularism." Tuesday, August 2, Garnault-place, at 8.15, Guy A. Aldred, "The Origin of the Devil."

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (Corner of Ridley-road, Dalston): 11.30, W. Thresh.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (The Grove, Stratford): 7, W. J. Ramsey, "Internal Evidences of Christianity Criticised."

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S.: Members meet at Tram Terminus, Perry Bar, 3.30, for literature distribution. Thursday, Aug. 3, Coffee House Bull Ring, 8, Miss M. Ridley, "The Basis of Theosophy."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, H. Percy Ward, "An Impeachment of Protestantism." Outdoor Lectures: 3, Islington-square; Monday, 8, Saint Domingo Pit; Wednesday, 8, Edgehill Church. *Special Notice.*—A General Meeting of Members will be held after evening lecture to-day.

MOUNTAIN ASH BRANCH N. S. S. hold meetings every Thursday at the Workmans' Institute, where all Freethinkers will be welcome.

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