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THE Freethinker

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Take care! You are losing your temper. Certainly, but I am gaining wrath. And now for thy blast in my pinions, O hurricane.—VICTOR HUGO.

Prayer.

WHEN a scientist of the rank of Haeckel ventures to assert that the course of modern science runs dead against the Christian theory of things, he is warned by hundreds of religious preachers that he is wading out of his depth, that as a scientist he is not qualified to express an opinion on religion, and that the sphere of religion and the sphere of science are quite distinct. But if an opinion favorable to religion is expressed by a man of science, no matter what his position may be, it is at once placarded abroad as the testimony of modern science, and the world is informed that science has repented its degeneracy under such men as Darwin, Huxley, and Tyndall, has rejected its materialism of a generation ago, and has come to see that without religion its explanation of things is doomed to be unsatisfactory and inadequate.

Just at present, a great deal is being made of one of these "scientific" testimonies to the value of prayer—although it is hardly necessary to say that what is advocated is not prayer, in the religious sense, at all. I do not know any scientific man worth bothering about who would assert the value of prayer in the sense that the churches have always taught it, and in any other sense, honestly looked at, their testimony is of no value. What the testimony is worth in this case will be seen from the following quotation. It comes from a speech delivered by Dr. T. B. Hyslop at the meeting of the British Medical Association at Leicester:—

"As an alienist and one whose whole life has been concerned with the sufferings of the human mind, I would state that of all the hygienic measures to counteract disturbed sleep, depression of spirits, and all the miserable sequels of a distressed mind, I would undoubtedly give the first place to the simple habit of prayer. Let the child be taught to believe in an anthropomorphic God the Father or in an all-pervading medium of guidance and control, or in the integrity of a cosmic whole, with its transmutations, evolutions, and indestructibility. It matters little, for they all lead in the same direction. Let there but be a habit of nightly communion.....as a humble individual who submerges or asserts his individuality as an integral part of a greater whole. Such a habit does more to clear the spirit and strengthen the soul to overcome mere incidental emotionalism than any other therapeutic agent known to me."

The *Christian World* gives a report of a portion of Dr. Hyslop's address, and heads it "The Medical Value of Prayer: A Brain Specialist's Testimony." But, as a matter of fact, save for its unfortunate phrasing, Dr. Hyslop offers no testimony at all of the medical value of prayer, so long as we speak of it in any religious connection. Substantially all that Dr. Hyslop says, and it is to be presumed all he means, is that the best preventative of a disturbed mind is the cultivation of a spirit of patience and contentment, and a feeling that we are all of us parts of an organic whole. The practice of prayer, the belief in a God, are to Dr. Hyslop only methods

of realising this result, and are of no more value than the perfectly Atheistic conception of the "integrity of a cosmic whole." That this is all Dr. Hyslop means is shown by his saying "they all lead in the same direction." In other words, Dr. Hyslop is asserting the importance of habits of mental serenity, and actually points out that religion is only one of the methods by which it may be brought about.

Now in this there is nothing of any importance for a Freethinker to object to, and there is certainly nothing for an honest and intelligent believer to congratulate himself on. It is not so much the subjective power of prayer as it is its objective value that the Freethinker's criticism is directed against. A man who believes already that, in a situation which involves some distress of mind, prayer will be beneficial, will in all probability feel better after he has prayed. So, in another case, will one feel better after a quiet hour spent in self-communion, without any thought of religion, or as the result of an open talk with a trusted friend, or an hour's quietness over a favorite book. But to pretend that this gives prayer, as prayer, a value is either dishonest or absurd.

And Dr. Hyslop is really late in the day in discovering either the truth of the above, or in his further statement that the habit of merging one's own individuality in the larger life of the race or of nature is of the utmost value in the preserving of healthy mental conditions. No one has insisted upon this truth more than Freethinkers, and no writer of any class more than Auguste Comte; while nothing has enforced this with greater strength and clearness than the scientific teaching of the last half century. Not that it needed this last for unprejudiced thinkers to realise that the most disappointing, and ultimately most unsatisfactory, pursuit in life, is the pursuit of one's own personal satisfactions to the exclusion of all else. To feel that one is working for an end larger than one's own immediate concern, or upholding an idea more permanent than one's own individuality, is the surest way of attaining a mental serenity and health that will protect one against the ills enumerated by Dr. Hyslop.

But what has all this to do with the question of prayer, and how can it be twisted into a medical testimony of the value of prayer? Dr. Hyslop might have said all he did say, in substance, without using the words "religion" or "prayer." But he is, presumably, a man with some sort of religion himself, and so clothed his ideas in a certain religious terminology. To unprejudiced readers this will be of no consequence; they will treat it as they would a poet's imagery. But all Dr. Hyslop's readers are not unprejudiced, and in the professional religious class he has a *clientele* who are only too ready to snatch at any word so long as it can by careful manipulation be made to support religious beliefs. And so, while Dr. Hyslop delivers himself of a piece of counsel that is, in substance, good, and ought to be a commonplace, he is made to subscribe to the Christian doctrine of prayer, and will doubtless be paraded as one who believes that an old woman's prayer will arrest a thunderstorm, or an old man's petition secure a good harvest.

The *Christian World* remarks that Dr. Hyslop's lecture shows "how far we have travelled from the

position of the sixties, when Tyndall and Huxley threw down their challenge to the church to experiment about the efficacy of prayer in a hospital ward." There are two errors of fact in this sentence, but they may pass. What one may note concerning this is that if Christians had to-day, or had when Tyndall's famous challenge was thrown down, any real belief in the power of prayer they would have accepted the test, or one that was analogous in character. Instead of doing this they prefer to obscure the issue by perfectly nonsensical talk concerning the subjective power of prayer, or of prayer being "man's declared alliance with the infinite." And with a dishonesty that if practiced in the commercial world would ruin anyone's credit, while asserting to the sceptic that the value of prayer lies in its subjective effects, to a religious audience they enumerate proof after proof of objective answers to the prayers of believers. Here someone is cured of a disease, there, of a bad habit, a catastrophe is averted, or a conversion is effected. Dr. R. F. Horton tells how God, in answer to prayer, helped him to find a lady's slipper in Norway; and others inform the world of the way in which money came in answer to their petitions. If these are not objective answers to prayer, what are they?

The truth is that the religious teacher or preacher is in a very awkward position. People pray, now as ever, because they believe they will get by praying something they could not otherwise obtain. The root origin of prayer is that the course of events will be modified in answer to our petitions. But this conception is becoming daily more untenable. The dullest are slowly recognising that the course of nature is not to be affected by our prayers, and that every prayer asks for the performance of a special miracle. But for the clergy to recognise this openly and honestly spells ruin. They dare not tell their congregations that nature is unaltered by their prayers, that the only thing affected is their own feelings. They dare not say, what they know to be the truth, that prayer operates precisely as does a bread pill sold by a travelling quack to a credulous purchaser. In other words they dare not be honest. The delusion must be maintained, the praying habit must be kept alive. Hence the effort to ward off the sceptic by talking of the subjective influence of prayer, while at the same time providing their congregations with examples of objective answers. Hence also, and most sickening of all, this straining after stray words by eminent men, so that by an unfair use they may be made to support a belief which has no real justification of its own to offer.

C. COHEN.

The Reasonableness of Secularism.

WE are in the twilight of Reason's Day; but it is the morning twilight, and in this we rejoice. Noon is coming in the distance. Let no honest thinker despair of the final triumph of truth. The night of superstition is almost gone. The majority of people are still asleep, and dreaming; and being asleep they take their dreams for realities. Here and there, however, a few are wide-awake and gladly greeting the rising light, and many more are in the act of waking up and losing their dreams. The great, comforting fact is that the darkness is passing and the day slowly breaking. Freethinkers are confident that there can be no return of midnight. The tyranny of unreason is being destroyed, root and branch, and the gentle reign of sanity is being established. This is history, and cannot be gained.

Of course, there is still much to discourage the lovers of reason. There are still people who pretend to be the confidants of God. They know what He can and cannot do. His purposes, his desires, his joys, and his sorrows are intimately known to them. Someone asked Dr. Campbell Morgan whether Christ's

warning to Peter about the denial and the cock-crowing (Luke xxii. 31-34) was of the nature of predestination. The famous preacher replied thus:—

"Certainly not. God never predestines to sin. It is a very luminous illustration of the difference between foreknowledge and predestination. God foreknows much that He does not predestinate. Of course, He predestines nothing that He does not foreknow. But as to our salvation, the word that takes us furthest back as to the Divine relation thereto is the word foreknowledge, which puts no limit upon human will. Predestination with regard to salvation is always, in the statements of Holy Writ, subsequent to foreknowledge. Jesus knew that Peter would deny him, and told him so. He by no means predestinated him to such action."

Is not Dr. Campbell Morgan aware that his remarks represent God as a painfully absurd and impotent kind of being? Such a doctrine of predestination is utterly irrational. If Dr. Campbell Morgan's God really existed, one would feel unspeakably sorry for him. Nominally supreme, the one absolute Sovereign, He can only predestine those good events which He foresees are going to happen, while He foresees all evil events but is powerless to prevent them. He foresees that a certain number of people will, of their own accord, believe in Christ and be saved, and then, in that foreknowledge, He predestinates or foreordains them to salvation. Thus He gets the credit for all the good that prevails in the Universe, and is not held responsible for any of the evil. And yet this same God is said to be doing according to his own will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth! Is not this the quintessence of irrationality and contradiction?

Freethinkers proudly affirm that they have no knowledge of such an inconsistent, impotent deity, and they positively refuse to believe in him. They prefer to follow their reason, knowing that it will never lead them astray, nor land them in hopeless intellectual confusions. Secularism is, therefore, highly reasonable in that it ignores supernatural beliefs, and enthrones natural knowledge, and in that it treats man as very largely the slave of heredity and environment.

Dr. Campbell Morgan is pre-eminently a Bible-student. He believes that this Book is the inspired and infallible Word of the living God. He is a consistent adherent of a notoriously inconsistent volume. But he belongs to a steadily diminishing class of theologians. The majority of his brethren have already accepted the main conclusions of the Higher Criticism, and are slowly drifting toward Secularism. Even within the Church itself reason is lifting up its head and claiming the rights so long withheld from it. In fact, the Secularists of to-day are no more heretical in the estimation of living Christians than these would have been in the eyes of their ancestors a hundred years ago. I do not think that a rational theology is even a possibility; but it is an undoubted fact that reason is seriously curtailing the theological area. In other words, theology itself is decreasing in bulk: there is less of it to-day than there ever was before.

In their desperation some divines endeavor to amalgamate Christianity and Science. Knowing that the old orthodox doctrine of salvation by faith, as proclaimed by practically all the revivalists, is no longer psychologically tenable, they seek to infuse scientific truths into stereotyped theological terms, and the result is ludicrous in the extreme. Salvation is not a scientific word, and it cannot be forced to carry a scientific meaning. Salvation implies the fall in Eden; it is restoration, reinstatement, renewal. But Science, recognising no fall at the commencement of human history, perceives nothing but a wonderfully, painfully slow process of growth, development, evolution. To become a Christian is to be born anew, to receive a Divine nature; but to Science there is in the Universe but one life at different stages of development, one life in countless myriads of varying forms. The human form is the most perfect and complex this one life has yet succeeded in weaving for

itself. Beyond or higher than this there is no life-form known even to the wisest theologian on earth. According to Science man's mission is to adapt himself to his environment. If he succeeds in doing this, he survives; if not, he perishes, like all the animals below him. Nature treats all her children alike. What man may develop into in ten million years, no one can tell; but at present he is a member of the animal kingdom, with no power within him save the power to adapt himself to his surroundings. He cannot transcend his nature. Now listen to theology:—

"At conversion the will is made over to Christ, in order that the nature may be conformed to his likeness. To make over the will means that we choose Christ's way of looking at everything, even the injuries we may have received, or the ills we may be called upon to endure. Thus we must will to forgive, and will to serve, and will to love, and so on. Christ gives the power to realise that which we have chosen."

Who is Christ? A being for whom there is no category on the earth, a supernatural person, who fills and transcends the Universe, the only begotten Son of Almighty God; and to make over the will to such a being is to become his slave in the deepest sense of the word. But man has no will to hand over to anybody, much less to a being who exists only in the imagination of emotional religionists. The Eternal Christ is a creation of theology. There is absolutely no proof of his existence. All we know, however, is that man has never transcended his own evolved capacity. It is perfectly true that the strong often dominate the weak. One forceful man can control and direct the activity of a thousand weak ones; but no man, however strong, has ever overstepped the limits of his own nature. *We have never seen a single instance of supernatural power manifesting itself in humanity.* "A new life of oneness with God" is a theological phrase devoid of all actual meaning. The only new life at which we can and should aim is a life of oneness with the race, a life of service at the altar of altruism, a life of consciously adapting ourselves to our social environment. I am not aware, speaking generally, that a Christian is more successful in realising such a life than a non-Christian; and unless he is, what evidence is there that he is indwelt by a supernatural Being? His own emotion, feeling, or experience counts for nothing; it is actual life in the midst of the world that determines such a point.

It is customary with preachers to speak in glowing terms of the mighty triumphs of the Cross, of the stupendous miracles performed by Divine grace in Christendom, and of the noble type of character Christ has produced. "See the difference Jesus has made," they rapturously exclaim. Well, we have looked long and earnestly for that much-talked-of difference, and for the life of us we cannot see it. Will someone please tell us exactly where and what it is? Take Russia and tell us how it compares with ancient Rome. Or take Germany and set it side by side with classical Greece in its best days. Or take Great Britain and compare it with any great pre-Christian Power of antiquity. Now tell us where and what the difference is which Christ has made. What are the fruits of Christianity in our own land? Are our Police and Detective Forces, our costly courts of law, where criminals and querulous people are dealt with, our numerous prisons, our penitentiaries, and our convict stations, to be reckoned among them? Will you add to the list the innumerable social distinctions and antagonisms which prevail among us, rendering a happy social life impossible? Or taking Christendom as a whole, can you say that its condition is creditable to the absolutely perfect religion which is said to dominate it? If not, where is the difference Christ has made? Where is ideal brotherhood which must be accompanied by perfect love which casteth out fear and suspicion and mistrust? Shall Christendom glory in its shame and sing victorious songs in the valley of humiliation? Is not this the very height of unreasonableness, and does it not show how

hollow and hypocritical is the popular cry that Christ has conquered?

Now, Secularism does not indulge in loud professions and empty claims. It does not even pretend to be a worker of miracles. It has pinned its faith in the very heart of the natural, and patiently waits and works for slow and small results. In spite of their tall talk, Christian apologists are bound to admit, when driven to a corner, that "progress halts on palsied feet." Freethinkers have never made a contrary assertion, and so have nothing to retract. Man learns what his social duties are, and gains wisdom to do them, only by degrees. Selfishness and greed, "moods of tiger and of ape," cannot be worked out in one millennium. Progress would be materially hastened were we to put in force a thoroughly rational system of education. This we cannot do, because of the sectarian jealousy which makes it quite impossible for either Church or Dissent to accept any national scheme of secular education. Thus the difficulty which lies at the root of our educational problem, and makes a satisfactory solution of it impracticable, is a purely religious one. Religion stands in the way and keeps us back. Secularists are not so foolish as to imagine that this obstacle to social advance can be removed speedily. It may block our path for several generations yet. Meanwhile, convinced that we are right, we shall persist in expressing and disseminating our convictions, and in arguing our case before the bar of public opinion. In time, if we faint not, we shall secure secular education in all our Government-aided schools. Then, religious instruction being excluded, the main object of the training will be to develop and call into constant play the social and moral instincts and faculties of the children. Let us avail ourselves of every opportunity to advocate our principles, and, as far as possible, to put them into practice.

J. T. LLOYD.

A Defence of Thomas Paine.—V.

CHARGE V.—"DRUNKENNESS."

HAVING thoroughly disposed of four of Dr. Torrey's "Seven Charges" against Thomas Paine, I come now to the fifth, which is just as hollow as all the rest.

"(5) That while in Paris, about the time of publishing 'The Age of Reason,' he fell into habits of excessive drinking, that these habits were continued through a number of years, and that after his return to America resulted in unpleasant manners and dress. That this, along with other things, caused many of his old-time friends to withdraw their society from him."

There is the poison of malice in this statement. There is also some cleverness, which I find unusual in Dr. Torrey's utterances. But it must be remembered that the deepest instinct of some men is antipathy, and that their faculties are only sharpened by hatred.

Dr. Torrey says that Paine gave way to drink about the time of publishing the *Age of Reason*; his object, of course, being to insinuate that the two things were intimately connected. It would not have served his purpose to say that the time he refers to was one of the greatest trials to Paine, whose hope of a free Republic in France was being shattered by the course of events, while the heads of his closest personal and political friends in Paris were falling under the guillotine, and he himself was in daily danger of sharing their fate; added to which, his being a foreigner, although a Deputy, with an inadequate command of the French language, rendered him almost a helpless spectator of the tumultuous scenes around him. The hurried publication of the first part of the *Age of Reason* was compelled by his arrest and imprisonment in the Luxembourg, where he languished for eleven months under the Reign of Terror, conducted by the pious Robespierre, and where he saw and conversed with the great Danton on his way to the scaffold. Paine's manuscript was hastily handed over to a friend for

publication. His intention had been to complete the work and publish it some years later. The publication of a part of it at that time was simply one result of the tragical experience into which he was thrown.

And now look at the end of this fifth Charge. In the first part of it the *Age of Reason* is forced into the foreground; in the last part of it the *Age of Reason* is discreetly dropped out of sight, and included without a mention amongst the "other things." Paine the Republican had been acclaimed in America. Paine the Deist, the enemy of Christianity, was ostracised and libelled. It is false to assert that Paine's "drinking habits" were the cause of his being shunned. There was a sufficient cause, to begin with, in his famous, or, as the Christians would say, infamous "infidelity." And, in the next place, no man was shunned in that age on account of his drinking. There were leading statesmen in America who could have drunk Paine under the table. There were leading statesmen in England who could have given him any points he liked in a handicap. Pitt and Fox drank heavily, and Fox was also an inveterate gambler, losing thousands of pounds at a sitting, and dipping his hands into his friends' pockets to pay his "debts of honor" with. Everybody drank in that age. When the smell of whiskey seems to float over the pages of Burns's biography, we have to recollect that he but followed the fashion. Mr. Stead's observation is perfectly just that "if Paine at one time of his career drank more than was good for him, he but followed the example of the greatest statesmen of his time." What I want to know is why Thomas Paine is to be judged by an arbitrary standard, while his Christian contemporaries are to be judged by the standard of their own generation. Dr. Torrey will find, if he pushes his researches far enough, that George Washington himself was no teetotaler.

Dr. Torrey is not a wide reader. His printed addresses show his limits. But he might get hold of a book like Thackeray's *Four Georges*. Let him read what Thackeray says in the fourth lecture about the drinking habits of the "respectable" classes. Take the following sample:—

"When the Bishop of Lincoln was moving from the Deanery of St. Paul's, he says he asked a learned friend of his, by name Will Hay, how he should move some specially fine claret about which he was anxious.

" 'Pray, my lord bishop,' says Hay, 'how much of the wine have you?'

"The bishop said six dozen.

" 'If that is all,' Hay answered, 'you have but to ask me six times to dinner, and I will carry it all away myself.'"

"There were giants in those days," exclaimed Thackeray. Yes, but Paine was not one of them—in this matter.

Byron's letters bear evidence of the drinking habits of the age immediately after Paine's death. After reading an attack on himself in the *Edinburgh*, he says that he "dined and drank three bottles of claret and neither ate nor slept the less." "Like all other parties," he says of a certain one, "it was first silent, then talky, then argumentative, then disputatious, then inarticulate, and then drunk." His memory of another was "all hiccup and happiness." Such was the custom of that astonishing period. Paine's modest quart of rum per week, in old age and constant sickness, falls into utter insignificance by comparison.

Dr. Torrey has not brains enough to be tolerant, nor knowledge enough to be fair. It will probably be news to him that the Church of England Temperance Society, which, by the way, is not a teetotal body, was not formed until 1862. The Temperance movement in this country was started by men unconnected with any Churches. Even the Wesleyan Conference, as late as 1841, thirty-two years after Thomas Paine's death, passed a resolution that Wesleyan chapels should not be used for Temperance meetings. The truth is that the zeal of the Churches in the cause of Temperance is only of yesterday.

Now let us look at the *facts* in relation to this Charge against Thomas Paine. And in doing so let us bear in mind that neither Oldys (George Chalmers) nor Cheetham can be appealed to as an authority; for the latter is a convicted libeller, and the former was positively hired to defame the subject of his pretended biography.

Mr. Sedgwick's account shall be taken first:—

"In private life Paine was uncorrupted by the worst vices of his generation. He was never abstemious, and during the Reign of Terror he drank to excess; but, if there be any truth in the accounts of drunkenness in his later years, it lies in very occasional indulgence at a time when gentlemen slept under the table and awoke still gentlemen."

I have said that "Oldys" cannot be accepted as a witness against Paine. Nevertheless he may be accepted as a witness in his favor. Oldys raked up all he could against Paine, but intemperance was not included; and this is negative evidence that it could not be alleged against him in 1791, when he was already fifty-four years of age.

Paine told Rickman that he had been driven to excess in Paris during the Reign of Terror. In his own words, he was "borne down by public and private affliction." Many of his friends were guillotined, and his own life was precarious from day to day. Mr. Sedgwick's statement throws a light on Paine's unhappy condition:—

"During the first months of his imprisonment, Paine worked over the proof-sheets of *The Age of Reason*; but, as time went on, the awful strain told upon him. His health gave way completely. He was stricken with fever, and an abscess formed in his side. Dangerous as the illness was, it was merciful at such a time. The fever mounted to his brain, and for a long period he remained unconscious or wandering in his mind."

For the first time in his life, and he was then verging on sixty, Thomas Paine sought the anodyne of alcohol. Look at the terrible circumstances in which he was placed—and then let braver and stronger men cast the stone of condemnation. Will he be buried, think you, under a mountainous cairn?

Paine's "drunkenness" in America mainly rests upon the testimony of Carver, the blackmailer, who started the lie about Paine and Madame Bonneville, and unsaid it under cross-examination in the witness-box. The testimony of other persons is of a very different character. Dr. Conway's account is worth quoting:—

"Mr. Lovett, who kept the City Hotel, New York, where Paine stopped in 1803 and 1804 for some weeks, wrote a note to Caleb Bingham, of Boston, in which he says that Paine drank less than any of his boarders. Gilbert Vale, in preparing his biography, questioned D. Burger, the clerk of Pelton's store at New Rochelle, and found that Paine's liquor supply while there was one quart of rum per week. Brandy he had entirely discarded. He also questioned Jarvis, the artist, in whose house Paine resided in New York (Church Street) for five months, who declared that what Cheetham had reported about Paine and himself was entirely false. Paine he said, 'did not and could not drink much.'"

Dr. Conway adds other evidence, including that of Colonel Fellows and Judge Hurltell, who knew Paine intimately during his last years, who "saw him under all circumstances and knew that he was never intoxicated."

Dr. Torrey genially adds, in the supplement to his fifth Charge, that "in 1808 Paine's weekly supply of rum was three quarts." And he still more genially adds that "it is suggested, in order to explain this away," that Paine needed stimulants on account of the physical prostration caused by his illness. One would think that Paine's illness was only a *suggestion*, whereas it was of a shocking nature, for the abscess he had contracted in his side, during his imprisonment, had never healed; and the period referred to, in which all that rum was consumed, was the last year of his life. But was all that rum consumed? Who says so—besides Dr. Torrey? Why, a man called Hitt, with whom Paine lodged for some months? This is what

Cheetham states. We have absolutely no other proof that Hitt said anything of the kind. Dig down where you will through Dr. Torrey's slanders on Thomas Paine and you come to Cheetham at last—Cheetham the convicted liar and libeller.

"Have you read Cheetham?" Dr. Torrey once asked a correspondent. No wonder. He knew where to go for all the filth he wanted. It was from Cheetham he got the lie about Paine and Madame Bonneville, which he now professes he never uttered, although I have it in his own letters to two different gentlemen at Liverpool.

Torrey and Cheetham would be a couple of fine companions. It is a pity that nature took one out of the world before introducing the other. They would have looked so well together.

And now what is the upshot of our enquiry? Nobody says that Paine was a drunkard except his malignant enemies, such as blackmailer Carver and libeller Cheetham. All the other witnesses deny it. Paine's own admission to Rickman that he drank too much brandy for a short time during the Reign of Terror is the only real evidence against him. We have the fact recorded, and it is very important, that Paine had one quart of rum per week from Pelton's store at New Rochelle. This may have been drunk by others as well as by himself. But even if he drank it all, such a consumption of liquor would not constitute him a drunkard. Paine's age and heavy infirmities, according to the notions of the time, would necessitate the use of stimulants. Many patients in hospitals have had a larger weekly supply of spirits.

G. W. FOOTE.

[Mr. Foote has finished the Defence of Paine and it is all in type, but there is not room for it in this week's *Freethinker*: the concluding portion will appear next week.]

The Sad Case of Colonel Jallatt.

THE rather sudden death of Colonel Jallatt in Bramwich Asylum a few days ago, must assuredly have come as a relief to his best friends. Most of the newspapers merely contained the Central News paragraph that the Colonel had died after twenty years incarceration in the asylum. There was a brief leaderette in the *Daily News*, more calculated to arouse curiosity than allay it, and there was, I am told, a longer reference in the *Morning Post*. But otherwise none of the papers contained any details of his strange career, certainly none that caught my eye. And as the public memory is proverbially short it may not be amiss to recall, especially to readers of the *Freethinker*, what exactly happened to the dead soldier.

Arthur Widdicombe Jallatt Spencer Jallatt, to give him his full name, was of somewhat aristocratic descent and inherited a rich estate and a fine old country seat outside the pretty market town of Little Stenford. He married, when fairly young, a daughter of Lord Lavington by whom he had one son called John St. George Jallatt Spencer Jallatt. This child was born in India where the elder Jallatt served for many years. Indeed, at his trial there was a suggestion, though it was never more, that he had suffered from sun-stroke. However that may be, he came home somewhere in the late seventies and settled down to the ordinary life of a country gentleman and a colonel on the retired list. He devoted himself at first to horse-breeding and had a great fancy for dogs. He used often to be seen in London, was a member of several clubs, and generally enjoyed the sunny side of life. His son had entered Parliament and had made several clever speeches, which brought his name to the front. So things went smoothly and merrily until the middle of 1879. In that year a revivalist preacher—what we would call a hot gosseller—came to Little Stenford and set up a large gospel-tent. Here services were held, especially on market days, for the edifica-

tion of the villagers, and numerous conversions were alleged to be made. One day, however, whilst rambling in the neighborhood, Colonel Jallatt found himself in Little Stenford, and, from one impulse or another, entered the revivalist's tent. Mrs. Jallatt afterwards said that from that day she noticed a change in her husband's demeanor. He paid another visit to the revivalist, and another. After a little time Colonel Jallatt blossomed forth as an enthusiastic Christian; the idea that chiefly fixed itself in his mind being that we ought all "try to live like God." Naturally the gossellers were not slow to make much of so important a capture as the Colonel, and he was pushed prominently forward on a good many Christian platforms, whilst in a short while he was made vice-president of dozens of orthodox organisations. He subscribed, I believe, to the Salvation Army; he took the chair at an anti-infidel congress, and in fact his name was used for all it was worth by his new associates.

Now amongst his other offices Colonel Jallatt, after the fashion of country gentlemen, had a seat on the county bench of magistrates, of which at the time whereof I speak he had become chairman; and to his magisterial duties he used to attend most punctually. One day an important case came before him. A burglary had been committed in the neighborhood of Little Stenford, and as the result of great activity on the part of the police, the burglar had been traced and captured in Bristol. Without delay he was brought before Colonel Jallatt, who heard the case very fully, and listened attentively to the evidence. In the ordinary course the prisoner should have been returned to the assizes for trial. But, to the surprise of everyone in court, the Colonel proposed to deal with the case himself, and there and then sentenced the prisoner to three years' penal servitude. Whilst the solicitors in court (there were no barristers present) were consulting as to whether the magistrate was not exceeding his jurisdiction, a strange thing happened. The shrill voice of an old woman at the back of the court was heard addressing the bench. "Your worship," she pleaded, "let me go to prison instead of my son in the dock. In the name of Christ, who suffered for the sins of others, let me suffer for the sinner here." My readers will easily be able to form some idea of the consternation of those in court when Colonel Jallatt, instead of instantly calling on the Chief Constable to have the woman removed, began a long evangelical harangue from the Bench. Addressing the woman at the end, he said: "I have been profoundly touched by your appeal. I have freshly realised the beauty of that doctrine of the Atonement which teaches us how the Innocent One suffered for the guilt of others and how God accepted the sacrifice. We should in every earthly circumstance endeavor to be like unto God, and as He, the Heavenly Judge, accepted the sacrifice of His Innocent Son, so I, an earthly judge, accept your sacrifice. The prisoner in the dock may go free." And he forthwith committed the woman to prison for three years. It may here be remarked that these details and the text of Colonel Jallatt's remarks I have taken from a very full report in the *Stenford and Halbridge Mercury* of the next day. But readers may further be referred to the Bishop of Wyvern's article in the *Contemporary* on "Fallacious Views of the Atonement" and Professor Verbose's most learned paper on "The Atonement Considered as the Subjective Realisation of Transcendental Unity," read at the Church Congress in that year, and marked by that lucidity and precision which characterise all that Professor Verbose writes. Students will find in these papers a very exhaustive discussion of Colonel Jallatt's views.

To return, however, to the scene in the court, it is hardly necessary to describe the sensation produced by such an extraordinary incident. The county authorities immediately communicated with the authorities in London. The woman was at once liberated by order of the Home Secretary, and an order was made at the same time to inquire into the state of the Colonel's mind. The Lord Chancellor,

without waiting for the result of this inquiry, removed him from the commission of the peace. But, as a result of the influence of aristocratic friends, little beyond this happened. The doctors could not find that Colonel Jallatt was in any way dangerous, and one declined to regard him as even subject to hallucination; and, except that he no longer adorned the county Bench, his life was in no way affected. But he used frequently to complain bitterly to his friends that if you attempted to live like God in Christian England they would try and make you out to be insane.

After this affair Colonel Jallatt busied himself with the details of his estate. The religious societies, whilst willing as before to accept his donations, fought shy of his personal attentions—a fact which he was not slow to note. He was thus thrown more on his own resources, and amongst other things he began to cultivate new varieties of orchids and tulips, and he also gave much attention to his horses and dogs. In the spring of 1888 his son John, who was much attached to his father, came on a visit home. A Horticultural Show was projected in Little Stenford for the month of June, and Colonel Jallatt was full of enthusiasm at his prospect of winning prizes. In May he went up to London to attend some meetings at Exeter Hall, and was away from home for a week or two. On his return he found to his chagrin that his head gardener had either ignored his instructions or had been trying little experiments on his own account, with the result that the orchids and tulips were destroyed as prize specimens. Naturally Colonel Jallatt was intensely annoyed. His annoyance was at its height when, on going out to the stables, he found that his favorite dog had died the day before. It had carelessly been allowed to stray on some poisoned land. The Colonel came in in a state of indescribable rage. His son happened to be reading in the library, and Colonel Jallatt, seizing a sword which, as a relic of his Indian days, hung on the wall, rushed from behind on his son and struck him a fatal blow in the neck. An artery was severed, and the life-blood of the unfortunate young man gushed out in a stream, making a shambles of the room. The father, meanwhile, worked up to that level of bombastic phraseology which had marked his magisterial exploit. As Mrs. Jallatt came rushing in, he declaimed in a loud sonorous voice: "As God accepted the blood of his only-begotten Son as an appeasement of his wrath so I, Arthur Widdicombe Jallatt Spencer Jallatt, accept the blood of my only-begotten son, that through it I may forgive my servants who have grievously offended in my eyes. Now I have reached the divine heights and made my life like unto the life of God."

The sensation which was produced in the country on that May morning must, of course, be remembered by many readers. Every newspaper had its own comment, and none of them much to the point. There was the usual search for a scape-goat. Who had allowed Colonel Jallatt to be at large? Who was responsible for the first inquiry into his state of mind? An archdeacon wrote to the *Times* deploring the way in which "a section of the Press" (that was how he put it) had dragged the name of "Our Savior" into a deplorable tragedy. And everybody agreed with the Archdeacon. In those days the Harmsworth press had not yet been born, but there were sensational papers even in such a decorous age, and they did not miss their opportunity.

The wretched Colonel was instantly arrested on a charge of murder. Before the trial, however, the charge was altered into one of manslaughter. Everyone knew, however, that the matter could have only one ending. The man was not sane. After some inexplicable delays a committee of doctors reported that Colonel Jallatt was a dangerous lunatic. And as a result he was confined in Bramwich Asylum where he died last week, having been over twenty years an inmate. Some four or five years ago a journalist going over Bramwich was pointed out the Colonel and engaged him in talk.

Jallatt spoke freely and sensibly. "Yes," he said, "I am here because I tried to live like God. He accepted the blood of his son as an atonement for the disobedience of others and I did the same. But if you really try to live like God in Christian England, they will put you in a lunatic asylum or a gaol. The days of godliness are over." The journalist who is a friend of my own did not, for sufficient reasons, put this striking conversation in print. But he told it to me as one of the most illuminating things he had ever heard in the whole course of his professional interviewing. Perhaps the classic comment on the whole case was that of the well-known Bishop who wrote: "Good men should imitate the wondrous ways of God—at a respectful distance."

FREDERICK RYAN.

Acid Drops.

"General" Booth is having another motor-car run through England, and the "authorities" are doing their best to make it a triumph. At Dover the "General" spoke for a long time (he is good for an hour almost every time he starts) and was very autobiographical. "I preach," he said, "my children preach, my grandchildren preach—the whole blessed crew preach." Not very elegant, but very true. The "whole blessed crew" preach, preach, preach—and other people work to keep them.

"Our own correspondent" of the *Daily News* is careering round with General Booth, and is writing up the trip in fervid flashy journalese. In one letter he speaks of William Booth as "a General who has never superintended the slaughter of a single human being, who is armed with kindness and the Bible." No doubt it is quite true that this "General" has never slaughtered anybody; on the other hand, he has never exposed himself to slaughter; and what balance does that leave to his advantage? If he is armed with kindness and the Bible, he has one weapon too many. There is cruelty and terror enough in the Bible to counteract all the "kindness" he may have in stock independently.

According to this *Daily News* correspondent, the religion of the Salvation Army is "the old religion—the religion of Love." That is the text; and now for the commentary. "Ah," said William Booth at the sleepy little pious, and not too moral, town of Sandwich, "I don't suppose I shall ever see Sandwich again, but I expect to meet many in the Kingdom to come. Whether you go to Heaven in a red jersey or a black coat go there." At which "all the people in the market-place raised a joyful shout." No doubt they half fancied themselves in Paradise already. But they were just a bit "previous." The "General" did not say that he expected to meet *all* of them in Heaven, but only *many* of them—and *many* cannot mean a half. By the law of averages, therefore, every person who joined in that "joyful shout" was less likely to go to Heaven than to Hell. William Booth believes this himself. Yet he smiles and smiles, and cracks jokes, while perfectly conscious that most of his auditors will be fuel for the everlasting bonfire. And this is "the religion of Love."

"The *Daily News* is my paper," says General Booth. At least that paper makes him say so. And at the present moment the said paper is carrying on a discussion on—well, what do you think? Women's dress! It is positively sublime.

A crowd of aged paupers welcomed General Booth outside Horsham Workhouse, and the Grand Old Showman told them that "God is just as interested in your soul as in the soul of Edward VII." Perhaps so; but God will take care that Edward VII. doesn't die in a workhouse. It is poor people's *bodies* that want a little more of the divine attention.

We quite understand why William Booth has become popular with the powers that be. Support of his Army is just a sort of social insurance. Wealthy people feel safer while they know that William Booth is blarneying the poor, and keeping them from revolt in this life by telling them what God is going to do for them in the next life. This game has been going on ever since Christianity gained the upper hand. There is nothing like it for fooling the people, and prolonging the privileges of their exploiters.

"General" Booth was in his early days the Rev. William Booth of the Methodist New Connexion. He was engaged in mission work, and he found then what seems to be just as true now, namely, that the regular preachers looked upon the "revivalist" as a person to freshen up business. "A certain knot of ministers," he wrote, "are an enigma to me. They seem to have very little sympathy, and appear only to use me to *get up revivals* to push their machines, and to help them when all other means fail." That is how many men of God regard Dr. Torrey. He is a religious hustler.

One of William Booth's "officers" in the Mill Hill district of Blackburn gets himself up in a white smock-frock like a shroud, lies down in a coffin-shaped black box, and is drawn on a truck in a procession. When a crowd is attracted he jumps up and delivers "Voices from the Cemetery." This is what they call "Salvation."

There has been a rumpus at the Wesleyan Conference at Bristol. The Rev. John Findlater made an allegation of malpractices against some of his colleagues among the chaplains in India, whom he charged with travelling with second-class tickets while drawing first-class allowances from the Indian Government. This appears to have been perfectly true, and the Indian Government, while not believing it was intended dishonestly, intimates that the practice must cease. On the side of the chaplains it is contended that the money they saved by taking first-class allowance and travelling second-class was spent on religious purposes. But the Wesleyan Conference goes further than this. It has passed the following resolution:—

"Inasmuch as the Rev. John Findlater has stated in the presence of the conference that he is not prepared to withdraw the charges that he has made against the moral character of our chaplains in India, and other brethren, charges which the conference has declared to be without foundation, and further since he refuses to dissociate himself from those who have acted with him in circulating these slanderous statements, the conference is of opinion that his conduct is such as to merit exclusion from the ranks of the Wesleyan Methodist ministry."

Mr. Findlater is given a year in which to repent. If he has not done so at the end of that period he will be definitely "chucked out"—simply for telling the plain truth, which the Wesleyan Conference doesn't want to hear.

A Scotchman was once asked how much he would be asking for a fine bullock, and he replied that if it had not been the Sabbath day he should have said "twenty pounds." We fancy that Judge Lumley Smith, of the City of London Court, must belong to the same nationality. Having a case before him in which the plaintiff said that the defendant had offered him the money on Sunday, when he could not think of taking it, the Judge observed: "I should always take money, if I were you. But I will tell you how you can get out of a Sunday transaction. Take the money on Sunday, and send him a receipt on Monday."

Lady Colin Campbell contributed a letter to the "Decay of Home Life" discussion in the *Daily Chronicle*. After denouncing the craze for bridge and other forms of gambling among "Society" women, she hit out as follows in another direction:—

"And what bridge has done for the rich woman, revivals, with their utterly unhealthy hysterical excitement, have done for her poorer sister. In both there is the same passion to gain something which has not been earned; and the women and girls who stayed out all night away from their children and their homes at the Welsh revivals, indulging in orgies of hysterical excitement, are exactly on the same plane as those who sit up all night over the card-table."

It is a great pity that more persons of influence do not speak out in this way. Revivalism is simply emotional debauchery. And the "midnight meeting" craze, which Gipsy Smith and others patronise, can only help to revive the population question in an acute form.

Lady Colin Campbell's letter was followed by a brief communication from "One of a Family"—presumably a woman—which we venture to reproduce:—

"Mrs. B. Booth says her only hope for the homes of our people is a revival of religion. Does she mean a revival which takes a man out of his home five nights out of six, and on Sunday from seven a.m. until ten p.m., less meal-times, to attend Salvation Army meetings?

"For my part I would prefer the man who spends his evenings at his club, because he does spend some of his Sundays with his family; but the other, well, he drives his family out to seek pleasure elsewhere, because there is no pleasure, comfort, nor toleration—nothing but self—which does not conduce to happy home life."

This is an aspect of "Salvationism" that is too much overlooked. We have noticed a certain Salvation Army place which is kept going nearly every night until a very late hour, and we have often wondered how it conduces to the "healthy home life" that Mrs. Booth and her colleagues talk so much about.

Mrs. Jones's "lights" having ceased to attract attention, the "lights" of Mr. Evan Roberts are coming to the front. It appears that they float over the house in which he stays. We hope they will accompany him when he comes to London. The metropolis wants something novel and exciting. Dr. Torrey fell flat. Perhaps the Welsh revivalist will walk round with a halo, which would go extremely well with his smile in the photograph.

Colonel Ingersoll once visited St. Paul's Cathedral and saw the tomb of the Duke of Wellington. An attendant explained that the marble weighed so many tons, the lead coffin so much, and the oak coffin inside that so much. Ingersoll pondered for a moment or two, and then he said, "Yes, I guess you've got him."

Mr. Chauncey Depew, another famous American, though not quite of the Ingersoll brand, may say of his wife, "Yes, I guess I've got her." He married her three times—in one day; first at the American Consulate at Nice; second, in a Roman Catholic church; and, third, in a Protestant church. That matrimonial knot ought to be tightly tied, anyway.

The Lord's Day Observance Society has addressed the following protest to the Earl of Cawdor, the First Lord of the Admiralty; the writer being the Society's secretary, Mr. F. Peake:—

"I have, on behalf of my committee, to express their regret that the Sabbath-breaking policy which characterised your lordship's service as chairman of the Great Western Railway Company has now been transferred to the administration of the great national interests embodied in the Royal Navy.

"They have noted with a dissatisfaction, shared by the sober-minded portion of the nation, the visit paid by the Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet and his officers to a Sunday bull-fight in Barcelona, and the desecration of the Lord's Day by the Commander-in-Chief and the officers of the Atlantic Fleet in connection with their visits to Brest and Paris, and they now observe, with added regret, that Sunday excursions and a Sunday reception form part of the official programme of the visit of the French Fleet to England next week.

"In making a protest which may very possibly be set aside for the present, as others addressed to the same quarter have been in the past, they may be permitted to remind your lordship that though the leaders of the three great sections of the Navy in European waters—the Mediterranean Fleet, the Atlantic Fleet, and the Channel Fleet—have thus been permitted, and even encouraged, to outrage the religious feeling of this country, the high authorities who sanction such doings have no power to set aside the Supreme Authority who forbids men, whatever their official rank to do their own pleasure on God's holy day."

Mr. F. Peake and his committee ought to be in a museum of antiquities. They talk about the "Supreme Authority" as though it could not be doubted that they are in the intimate counsels of Omnipotence. What is most apparent, after their dullness, is their impudence.

Carlyle waxed very eloquent, especially in *Past and Present*, over the old monkish saying *laborare est orare*, which he read as "work is worship." Luther, however, read it the other way about as "worship is work." He regarded it as a pretence of the fat, lazy, belly-loving monks, who tried to persuade the real workers that praying and saying masses was good, and hard, work too. Very likely Luther was right. Carlyle gave the proverb a poetical meaning which was probably never intended.

The *Times* is disturbed by the fact that "two large railway companies are inviting tenders for the letting of their bookstalls," which have for very many years been exclusively in the hands of Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son. "Some grumbling," the *Times* admits there has been, but it maintains that the management of these bookstalls "has been conducted with regularity, judgment, and impartiality, to the great advantage of the public." All that we are concerned to contradict is the "impartiality." Messrs. Smith and Son have maintained a political, social and religious censorship. Some papers they have kept back; others they have completely boycotted. They have boycotted the *Freethinker*, for instance, and done their best (or worst) to ruin its circulation. Perhaps the *Times* regards this as an act of "judgment." Those who are not pinched by it often do

look at injustice in that way. There is really no moral justification for the refusal of a railway bookstall to supply *anything* which is allowed by the law of the land. It seems to us rank impertinence for the management to dictate to the British public what they shall read—or rather what they shall *not* read.

There was a very funny thing in a recent issue of the *Darwen Gazette*. In the middle of a long report of an address on "Motive Power" by the Rev. J. Blackburn Brown—in which the wisdom and power of God are strongly emphasised—an advertisement appeared of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for "Weak Backs of Mothers." On the reverend gentleman's premises it was God who gave those mothers weak backs, and Dr. Williams who came forward to strengthen them. It really looks as though a wag in the printing office worked the advertisement into the bowels of the sermon.

During morning service recently at St. Michael's Church, Honiton, a sheep was noticed asleep under the banner near the choir stalls. It was turned out by the churchwardens. How did they know it was not the Lamb of Revelation?

The *Daily Mail* reviewed a book on *The Child and Religion* by various Christian writers; one of them, Mr. G. T. Ladd, being responsible for this sentence: "It is human to be religious; it is something less than human not to be religious." Seeing this beautiful statement, our old friend, Mr. John W. White, of Bristol, wrote to the noble Mr. Ladd, in care of the publisher, asking him for further explanation. Mr. White said that he himself regarded Christianity as a ridiculous superstition, and religion in general as a mischief to mankind. But, being an "infidel," he had saved eight persons from drowning at different periods of his life; he had three Royal Humane Society's medals; and he possessed a splendid walking-stick presented to him by the Chief Constable of Bristol for taking a loaded revolver from a foreign sailor who was in the act of firing on a policeman. Mr. White naturally wants to know why he is "less than human." He also wants to know how many times the noble Mr. Ladd has risked his own skin for the sake of others. The noble Ladd has not replied. Discretion seems by far the better part of his valor.

Rev. J. Blackburn is evidently a great philosopher. He asks, Who made matter? Who set it in motion? Let us ask, Who made the Rev. J. Blackburn? Who set him in motion? Whoever it was might have been better occupied.

Under the heading of "Faith and Finance" the *Christian World* repeats the old nonsense about Müller's Orphanage, near Bristol, which, ever since the founder's death, seven years ago, has received £202,560 "without any public or private appeal and entirely in answer to prayer." This is really one of the comedies of "faith." George Müller always had a magnificent advertisement in the religious papers as the man who never advertised. Pious editors kept printing how much money he received without asking for any. They kept telling the world that he never told anybody but God of his wants. We are rather surprised at the *Christian World* playing this farce with a straight face.

Spurgeon, the famous Baptist preacher, has been dead some fourteen years, yet his publishers are still bringing out fresh sermons of his every week, although two sermons of his were published, we believe, every week during his lifetime; and it is said that the publication of fresh Spurgeon sermons will go on for another ten years. We don't wish to deny it. What we wish to say is that the age of miracles is not quite over.

Perhaps the sale of Spurgeon's sermons may be explained on the theory that he was an *édition de luxe* of the average British religionist. Kitchen-garden Christians read them and feel like looking into a mirror and seeing their own faces.

We have looked into Spurgeon's sermons from time to time, and could never see anything in them worth the trouble of perusal. It was just one shoreless ocean of commonplace. The language was homely and lucid. That was all.

Fulham Borough Council has resolved that there shall be no "Sunday trading" in the parks under its control. Not even the harmless necessary cup of tea is to be dispensed to the thirsty, for fear of offending One who is never dry—although many of his servants are, especially in pulpits. There ought to be a Fulham Borough Council corner at Madame Tussaud's.

Somehow or other an article sent us by Mr. Joseph Symes some months ago went temporarily astray, getting buried amidst a mass of things that are only turned over occasionally. We were quite ignorant of its arrival, for the packet was never opened. We very much regret this unfortunate delay, as our old friend and colleague may wonder at our silence, and fancy we are discourteous. When he sees this paragraph (the *Freethinker* being sent to him regularly) he will understand it all. His article is in the printer's hands.

Mr. Symes's packet got buried with another one, containing a copy of *Truth*, a daily paper, and a very lively one, published at Sydney, New South Wales. This number is dated May 14, 1905, and three columns, with big headlines, are devoted to showing up Dr. Torrey, with long extracts from our *Dr. Torrey and the Infidels*, and caricature sketches by the *Truth* artist. One headline runs thus:—"Mr. Foote's Crushing Exposure of his Libels and Slanders on Paine and Ingersoll." They have a lively recollection of Dr. Torrey at Sydney, where he is generally despised, except by the ultra-Protestant traders in religion and their poor dupes. *Truth* speaks out boldly, and we congratulate it on its courage. Of course it takes the proper view when it says that "It is not necessary to approve the teachings of Paine and Ingersoll in order to disapprove lying." Men of all opinions ought to be united against liars and slanderers.

The August number of the *Westminster Review* contains a very able and deeply interesting article by Mr. Henry S. Salt on "The Faith of Richard Jefferies." Mr. Salt demonstrates the falsehood and absurdity of the story of Jefferies' death-bed return to Christianity, and convicts the *Spectator* of deliberate falsification by the exclusion of vital evidence on the subject. Nothing could be more immoral than the *Spectator's* attitude. First it relied upon Sir Walter Besant's story of Jefferies' conversion; but when Mr. Salt produced letters from Sir Walter Besant showing that he had been misled, and that he had ceased to believe the story, the *Spectator* coolly turned round and said: "What Sir Walter Besant may have thought matters nothing." Mr. Salt says towards the end of his article:—

"It is to Jefferies' *Story of My Heart*, I repeat, that his readers must look, if they wish to know his conclusions respecting the deepest problems of life. There only will they find his inner autobiography, his true confession of faith; and the faith confessed by him is one of the most beautiful that have ever been clothed in words of supreme tenderness and power."

Freethinkers who are interested in Jefferies, and especially in this matter of his real convictions, would do well to obtain a copy of Mr. Salt's article and keep it by them for future reference.

The fresh vote of the West Ham Town Council continuing the policy of refusal to lay the *Freethinker* with other papers on the Free Library tables was dealt with in our last issue. We are glad to see the following protest in the local *Express*:—

THE FREETHINKER.

"We observe that the question of the *Freethinker* came up for discussion last week before the West Ham Council. We wish to enter a protest against the action taken by the majority. If the *Freethinker* is conducted on lines which render it obnoxious to the law it ought to be dealt with in a court of law. If it is not so conducted there is no reason why it should not be treated as on an equality with other publications. Its readers are citizens who are bound by the law of the land, and also entitled to the privileges accorded to other citizens in institutions maintained by the rates. In our opinion the present position of affairs is anomalous; the action of Town Council on Tuesday, July 25, amounted to a misuse of the power of a majority; and from the religious point of view we consider that their action utterly misrepresents the Christian attitude."

CHARLES H. RIDSDALE.
CHARLES W. ALINGTON.
HUGH LEGGE.

Trinity College, Oxford, Mission.

EDWARD HOWARTH.

This is a perfectly correct attitude. These gentlemen take the same view that we expressed, namely, that the vote excluding the *Freethinker* from common rights was "a misuse of the power of a majority." It cannot be the function of an executive body, elected by all sorts of ratepayers, to say what the ratepayers shall and shall not read. The Christian majority have no more right to shut the *Freethinker* out of public institutions than a Secularist majority would have to shut the *Christian World* out of such institutions. The bigots don't see that they are inviting reprisals. This is pointed out by "Reveil" in the *Express*. And he adds that the Council should pass another resolution as follows: "The qualifications necessary to persons desirous of admission into the libraries to be: (a) medical certificate; (b) vaccination certificate; (c) written character from some reverend gentleman."

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.

OUR ANTI-TORREY MISSION FUND.—Previously acknowledged:—£144 17s. 1d. Received this week:—D. Wallwork 2s., Mountain Ash Branch 2s. 6d., E. K. 1s., A. S. Vickers 2s. 6d., J. E. Stapleton 2s. 6d.

PARIS CONGRESS FUND.—Previously acknowledged:—£2 16s. Received this week:—Major John C. Harris, R.E. £5, H. C. Byrse £1, C. Shepherd 2s. 6d., W. S. Dean 10s., G. Lunn 2s. 6d., D. J. D. 10s. Birmingham Branch: M. B. 1s., R. A. 1s., W. Jones 1s., C. Brown 1s. 6d., F. J. 1s., J. Thomas 1s., T. Webb 1s. 6d., J. P. 2s. 6d.

H. W. COLLINGTON.—Thanks for cuttings.

GUY ALDRED.—We did not suggest that there had been no interview. We said there was a mistake somewhere, and we adhere to the statement. The passage you quote from a speech of Mrs. Besant's in 1891 does not contain the phrase "driven out of the National Secular Society." Nor was that speech addressed to the National Secular Society, but to a miscellaneous Sunday evening audience at the Hall of Science; and it merely referred to a regulation that applied to all lecturers—namely, that the Sunday evening addresses were to be in a line with the N. S. S. principles and objects, while outside ideas might be advocated in the Sunday morning and Thursday evening lectures. Had you been old enough to know the facts at first hand, or had you looked at the aforesaid passage more closely, you would have seen that Mrs. Besant's claiming a right to lecture on the N. S. S. platform "against the principles and objects of that Society" is in itself a sufficient proof that she was not "driven out" of it. One who is *against* the principles and objects of a Society is outside it already, from an intellectual and moral point of view. The formal severance is only the open recognition of that fact. We do not propose to return to this subject. Our interest in it ends with the correction of an inaccurate statement.

H. B. DODDS.—Thanks for your kind offer of Rickman's *Life of Paine*, which we gladly accept. With regard to your inquiry, our health is much improved.

W. H. POWELL, of the new Mountain Ash Branch, in the very storm-centre of the Welsh revival, writes: "I must thank you for your noble defence of Thomas Paine, and the complete destruction of lies uttered by that Yankee showman, Torrey."

HARRISON, newsagent, 12 Plumstead-road, Woolwich, supplies the *Freethinker* and other Secular literature.

A. J. (Wimbledon).—You might look at Job xiv. 12, 14. The appropriateness depends on the special attitude.

A. ALDWINCKLE.—No. 2 Newcastle-street, Strand, may very well be an "empty house" for all we know. Our address, printed every week in the *Freethinker*, is 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, E.C. You see the mistake was yours. Thanks for your good wishes.

WILLIAM VILE.—Yes, but the last lines spoil it all. Thanks, all the same.

H. SWIFT (Kimberley).—Your letter has been passed over to us, after the execution of your order, and we beg to assure you that you *shall* have a supply of our pamphlets sent you if Dr. Torrey goes to South Africa.

GERALD GREY.—A good idea.

G. LUNN.—Thanks for your interesting and encouraging letter, and for your efforts to promote our circulation. Glad to hear you find Mr. Cohen's and Mr. Lloyd's articles so informing.

GEORGE JACOB.—No doubt it does "pay better to preach 'rot' than reason."

J. BROWNING (Canada).—Pleased to hear from you, but not astonished to learn that the clergy in your part of the world are as keen after cash as they are here.

H. PERCY WARD.—Delighted to know you are to represent the Liverpool Branch at the Paris Congress. The rest of your letter will be dealt with later.

E. SPENCER (Bristol).—We answered your letter by post, but we print a copy of it here for the information of others:—"Dear Sir,—I did hold a debate with Mr. Logan many years ago at Bristol. Whether he 'defeated' me or I 'defeated' him is a question for fools. I certainly never acknowledged my 'defeat' in the *Freethinker*. There never was a debate, I believe, in which the Christians did not say that the representative of the other side was 'defeated.' It is so like them. They look upon a debate as a fight. Yours truly, G. W. FOOTE."

L. D. HEWITT.—Thanks; may be useful.

W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for cuttings.

JOSEPH CLOSE.—Thanks. Will look it through carefully, though a rough glance shows nothing new. Pleased you think we are doing "a grand service" to Freethought by our replies to Dr. Torrey.

N. LEVEY.—A cataract of sentimentality. Bishop Gore used to be a little more sensible.

H. HURN.—In our next.

J. S. CLARKE.—Much obliged. Yes, that is the historic number.

J. BURRELL.—Thanks for the copy of *Ethics*, but we are afraid we have no time to give to Dr. Coit's views on Atheism at present. We hope to take up "Book Chat" again after the hot weather.

J. J. TASKER.—The theory that the English are "the chosen people" is too absurd for notice.

E. G. B.—Much obliged.

H. I.—Not wasting our time at all; we thank you for your letter, which will be of use to us.

W. BINDON.—You have read our answer upside down, though it seemed plain enough.

S. J. KNULL.—May deal with it next week.

W. M.—Too late for this week, but shall not be neglected.

A. E. MERRETT.—Shall be pleased to receive the statement you suggest.

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.

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

Sugar Plums.

When this week's *Freethinker* is off his hands Mr. Foote will be going away for a week or ten days. No matter where. He doesn't want to be worried. He wants rest and quiet. He has been working very hard, harder than he meant to in the dog days, and is a bit tired. During this little vacancy he will do as little writing as possible, and next week's *Freethinker* will have less matter than usual from his pen. But the paper will still be better worth reading than ninety-nine papers out of a hundred.

The Paris Congress Fund increases but slowly. Friends need not stop sending because Mr. Foote is away. His letters will be forwarded, and urgent matters will receive attention. We hope the members and friends of the N. S. S. will treat this appeal seriously. There is only three weeks' time now in which to make up the necessary £50 or so. We should like to see that sum subscribed before Mr. Foote returns—as it easily might be.

Mr. Foote has finished his Defence of Thomas Paine, which has given great satisfaction to the "saints" all over the country. Many of them urge him to reprint the articles in a permanent form.

Miss Vance, the secretary, remains at the N. S. S. office during Mr. Foote's absence, and will be glad to hear from all who wish to join the N. S. S. party to Paris. They ought to let her know by next Monday or Tuesday. Disappointment may occur if things are left to the very last minute.

Freethinkers in London and Greater London will please note the three courses of Sunday evening lectures in September and October under the auspices of the Secular Society, Limited. The first will be at Stanley Hall, near the "Boston" in North London; the dates being September 10, 17, and 24, and the lecturers Messrs. Foote, Cohen, and Lloyd. The second will be at the Stratford Town Hall, where the West Ham N. S. S. Branch will co-operate; the dates being September 24 and October 1 and 8. The third will be at Queen's Hall every Sunday in October. The Queen's Hall meetings will be marked by a new feature, namely, instrumental music by first-class professionals, who have volunteered their services for this effort.

Freethinkers who are able and willing to circulate printed announcements of these courses of lectures are requested to communicate with the Secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, at 2 Newcastle-street, London, E.C.

The South Shields Branch holds its annual festival, the Hollywell Dean Picnic, next Sunday. Those who wish to join the brakes from North Shields at 1.30, or the public tea, should communicate at once with the secretary, Mr. R. Chapman, 30 Madras-street, Simonside. Cyclists or other visitors from a distance will be very welcome.

The Annual Excursion of the Newcastle and Stanley Branches was held last Sunday in the pleasantly situated Shotley Bridge Spa Grounds. The weather was good, and all passed off very satisfactorily, there being over seventy present. The Stanley friends had made all arrangements in a very complete manner. It is worthy of notice that the North Eastern Railway Company was quite willing to issue "Pleasure Party" tickets at reduced rates on the Blessed Sabbath.

Mr. H. Percy Ward is not easily frightened. Mr. George Wise's "Protestant Lambs" have been trying to break up the Secular meetings at St. Domingo Pit, Liverpool. Not content with shouting and yelling, they threw more palpable things at Mr. Ward, one striking him in the eye and breaking his glasses. Mr. Ward writes a polite but firm letter to the *Evening Express* on the subject. The unwise Wiseites will not put him down.

The Failsforth Secular Schools holds its anniversary services to-day (Aug. 13). Mr. Joseph McCabe is the lecturer, afternoon and evening, and there will be hymns and choruses by the choir, assisted by the Failsforth String Band. Manchester and district "saints" will please note.

Mr. W. T. Stead continues his campaign against Dr. Torrey in the *Review of Reviews*. In the August number he says that his July article brought him a great number of letters, most of them sympathetic, but no communication from Dr. Torrey. "Neither, somewhat to my surprise," he says, "has there been any discussion of the question raised by the Torrey correspondence in the religious press"—which is exactly what we predicted. Mr. Stead continues:—

"I have received many earnest appeals to publish the whole correspondence, to which I have hitherto turned a deaf ear. Dr. Torrey has not yet expressed any regret, neither has he offered any justification for his slander of Colonel Ingersoll. Neither has he made any *amende* for the abominable suggestion conveyed by the words which he used about Thomas Paine. I wait even at the eleventh hour for the tardy confession and publicly professed penitence of Dr. Torrey. And by way of convincing him how necessary is such a pilgrimage to the penitent form, I add some additional data which I venture to hope will convince him how urgently such action is required on his part."

This polite threat, for such it is, is followed by two interviews which Mr. Stead has had with Dr. Moncure Conway and the Rev. Dr. Dixon. Both interviews are very important, and we hope our readers will get the August number of the *Review of Reviews* for themselves.

Mr. Stead interviewed Dr. Conway last month in Paris, and found "the veteran biographer of Thomas Paine naturally much interested in the little controversy with Dr. Torrey as to the character of the great American." Dr. Conway said:—

"You put the case very well, but you might have put it even more forcibly. The facts as to the relation of Paine to the Bonneville were not fully known to me when I wrote his biography. Since I finished that book, information has come to me from many quarters which establish more clearly than ever how monstrous was the accusation that was brought against Paine."

Amongst other discoveries was Paine's letter to Madison which was referred to in Mr. Foote's last article in our own columns. Dr. Conway lighted upon this letter in the National Library, Paris. In it Paine approached Madison, who was then a candidate for the Presidency, asking him to forward a letter to Livingstone, the American minister at Paris, desiring him to use his influence to induce Napoleon to permit Bonneville to leave France, and to forward a letter to Bonneville imploring him to seize the opportunity, and to come to America at once. Madison forgot Paine's letter in the bustle of electioneering. He discovered it in his desk after Paine's death and sent it on to Paris, and there it now lies in the National Library, with Bonneville's endorsement on it lamenting that this great cry from the heart of his friend did not reach him until too late. Mr. Stead himself is so moved by all this that he once more calls upon Dr. Torrey to "stand up and make confession before his countrymen."

Dr. Dixon, the libeller of Ingersoll referred to in Mr. Foote's pamphlet and subsequently in Mr. Stead's article, made a descent lately upon the *Review of Reviews* office,

complained of being libelled himself, and left a long letter for publication. Mr. Stead telegraphed to Mr. Foote to be present at this interview, but unfortunately the message miscarried through a blunder in the address; otherwise Mr. Foote would have had the satisfaction of "saying a few words" to the noble Dixon face to face—and perhaps a few more words to Mr. Putterill, the secretary of the Torrey-Alexander mission. All he could do in the circumstances he did. He supplied Mr. Stead with plenty of material, which has been used with great effect in the reply to Dr. Dixon's letter. The letter itself is sheer rubbish, though animated by the most detestable spirit. Dr. Torrey relied on Dr. Dixon; Dr. Dixon in turn relies on Anthony Comstock; and Anthony Comstock, the paid secretary of the American Vice Society, is a person, who, as Mr. Stead says, "habitually confounds Freethinking with Free Love, and brackets obscenity with blasphemy." It was easy to show, from the material Mr. Foote supplied, that Comstock lied about Ingersoll, and Mr. Stead does this very effectively. He proves that Ingersoll wanted only one alteration in the so-called Comstock Laws; namely, one that should prevent their being used to "abridge the freedom of the press." All this is familiar to readers of Mr. Foote's pamphlets and of the *Freethinker*, but it will be news to the readers of Mr. Stead's magazine. Mr. Stead goes for Dixon in fine style. Freethinkers will enjoy his honest indignation. He ends by calling on both Dr. Torrey and Dr. Dixon to do an act of justice to the memory of a man whom they have "most foully libelled."

It is to be hoped that Mr. Stead will yet see the necessity of publishing the whole of his correspondence with Dr. Torrey. This need not be done if the slanderer of Paine and Ingersoll repents and cries *Peccavi*. But if he will not express regret, and seeks refuge in silence, the proper course seems to be to let the public see precisely the sort of man he is. And this correspondence is absolutely illuminating. It shows the character of both men most admirably. Mr. Stead is sincere and firm but patient. Dr. Torrey is sly, shifty, and prevaricating, and finally loses his temper in the most vulgar fashion. Yes, that correspondence ought to be published. Dr. Torrey's share of it, anyhow, is a human document of the greatest interest; although it must be admitted that the interest is largely pathological.

Meanwhile we desire to draw particular attention to Mr. Stead's admission that the religious press has chiefly followed Dr. Torrey's policy of silence. With the exception of one non-committal paragraph in the *Christian World* we are not aware of any specially Christian journal having said a word in recognition of Mr. Stead's honesty and courage, or in censure of Dr. Torrey's slanderous methods of propaganda. Evidently it is a case of "mum's the word." Christians must not show up Christians—even when they are scoundrels. Constantine said that if he saw a Bishop in the act of adultery he would throw his imperial cloak over the holy sinner rather than encourage a scandal. In a more commonplace way this is still the spirit of orthodoxy.

Our own duty with regard to Dr. Torrey is perfectly clear. We don't mean to make half a job of his exposure. If he goes up to the penitent form, and makes public confession of his sin, we shall let the matter drop, for our object will then be achieved. We shall have completely vindicated the outraged memory of Paine and Ingersoll, and shown the Christian world that Freethought will no longer take slanders lying down. But if Dr. Torrey holds on his way unrepentant we shall give him no peace while he disgraces the soil of England. We shall have a fresh edition of our *Dr. Torrey and the Infidels* pamphlet for distribution at his Plymouth and Sheffield mission meetings. This will be fortified with corroborative extracts from Mr. Stead's articles, in order to show that Dr. Torrey's methods are obnoxious to the better sort of Christians as well as to Freethinkers. And when we have done with him in England our American brethren will begin his exposure with the use of our materials. This will certainly be done in Chicago, where the revivalist reckons he is at home. "Home, home, sweet home!" and the ghosts of Paine and Ingersoll haunting him in every chamber.

Oh priests who mourn that reverence is dead,
Man quits a fading faith, and asks instead
A worship great and true.

I know that there was once a church were men
Caught glimpses of the gods believed in then:
I dream that there shall be such church again—
O dream, come true, come true.

—W. M. W. Call.

Jesus the Carpenter.

WE have in Glasgow a clergyman of some popularity who is lavish in expressions of sympathy with labor, and who preaches or lectures frequently on social subjects. He is closely related to one of our civic dignitaries. Incidentally we may mention that his worldly condition is not an unprosperous one. He has his little yacht, we believe, and has been seen out for his constitutional riding exercise on a fairly tolerable mount. In short his lines are distinctly cast in pleasant places. But he is outspoken enough in voicing the claims of those who are on the bottom rung of society's ladder, and we have no reason to doubt he means what he says. His sincerity we do not impugn. The criticism we would pass upon him is criticism to which all clergymen of his way of thinking on social questions lay themselves open. He entertains the belief—a mistaken belief, as we hold, but natural in one who wears the cloth—that only through Christianity can we hope to reach a solution of the social problems that confront us. If this be indeed so, well may we exclaim, "How long O Lord, how long!"

In one of the discourses of the clergyman above referred to, which we had the pleasure of hearing, there was much allusion to the rights and dignity of labor, and not a little scathing comment upon the prevalent attitude of the upper classes towards the proletariat. Much of what was said commanded our whole-hearted approval. It ought to have made many of the comfortable occupants of the pews squirm to some extent, but we question if any of them turned a hair. They had doubtless heard the same earnest well-meant phrases from the same quarter many a time and oft. Familiarity breeds contempt—to quote a hackneyed saying. Somehow, regular church attenders develop the happy faculty of listening quite unmoved to the most comprehensive denunciations of vice, and sin, and injustice. Perhaps just because they are so comprehensive. Each individual in the congregation complacently thinks to himself how uncomfortable and conscience-stricken some one else should be feeling. The clerical castigation seldom comes home to him personally.

The preacher, on the occasion above mentioned, amongst other things soothing and consolatory to the bruised spirit and weary body of the toiler, reminded his hearers that Jesus worked. This was what had dignified labor for all time. The Eternal Son of God had not disdained the humble toil of the carpenter's bench, thereby affixing the divine seal to the honorable estate of manual labor.

The reverend orator might have made a good deal more of this branch of his subject if he had exercised a little imagination (shall we say historic imagination?) and permitted his fancy to weave in a few details of Christ's performances as apprentice and as journeyman, for the edification of the workers amongst his audience. He might, as it were, have provided us with a mental cinematograph presentation of incidents in the working life of Christ. Picture in imagination God, in all humility, serving his apprenticeship to the joinery trade, learning which was the business end of a nail, being scolded by Joseph for allowing the glue-pot to boil dry, and, in the early stages of his experience, occasionally bringing down the hammer on his sacred thumb instead of on the head of the nail. Being on the whole perhaps a dutiful son—despite one or two questionable episodes narrated in the Gospels—we may also picture him carefully gathering and setting aside the shavings wherewith to light the fire for his mother. All these pleasing little human touches bring the actuality of Jesus so much more closely home to us.

As God, of course, Jesus would know all about the carpentry business beforehand, and would, in fact, be quite able to turn out articles much superior in workmanship to anything Joseph could produce. But as man, we suppose he would require to pretend he knew nothing about carpentry, and had never

heard, before he was born, of the various uses to which timber could be put. It is well we should never lose sight of the grand fact that God can do anything. The one incontrovertible retort of the believer in answer to all criticism is that nothing is impossible to God. Otherwise we might feel puzzled to conceive how God, when he assumed human form, managed to forget his former infinite knowledge. But in the light of the principle we have stated all is as clear as—midnight. If, on the other hand, God, in taking flesh, did not put off his omniscience, then it was a shame to bamboozle poor Joseph in such fashion and have the old man teaching him things he knew much better himself. When Joseph asked young Jesus if he knew the difference between pinewood and mahogany and Jesus said No, it must have been the first instance of a Christian practising that mental reservation which Roman Catholic casuistry subsequently brought to a fine art.

To be exact it must be said that the New Testament narrative affords us little reason to suppose that Jesus in his early years knew any more than other lads of his age—save in one particular. The answer he is reported to have given his mother in the Temple at Jerusalem when he was recovered by his sorrowing parent indicates that he knew his own father. He was then only twelve years old, and we are perhaps justified in inferring that he possessed wisdom in a greater degree than the average boy could boast, for is it not written—'Tis a wise child that knows its own father. This incident, however, happened before Jesus began to work, and may be looked upon as an instance of childish precocity. Certainly it is not on record that in later years he displayed any exceptional ability as a workman. If he had performed any miracles in woodwork we should doubtless have heard of them. Just think of the opportunities he missed. Why he might have made the fortune of Joseph by converting all the articles made out of cheap wood into solid walnut or mahogany!

But at the period when the Finding-in-the-Temple episode happened the highest achievements of Jesus in woodwork would probably consist of attempts at toy boats or miniature Noah's arks. Come to think of it, if Jesus as a young man had only allowed himself to remember what he knew and did as God he could have produced the most perfect model of Noah's ark that ever was made. For was he not (when he was one with the Father) the designer of the great and historic original? If Jesus had but left behind him on earth an exact model to scale of the wonderful floating menagerie he instructed Noah to build two thousand years previously who would be so bold as cast doubts on the Flood? The gigantic growth of scepticism on this subject might have been nipped in the bud. It would have been so easy for Jesus with the assistance of Joseph's kit of tools to show the world how Noah provided accommodation for the multifarious living creatures he saved from a watery extinction.

Let no one object that it would be impossible for the handiwork of Jesus to have lasted to our day. Apart from the consideration that the workmanship of a man who had been God, or who was God *in esse*, or who was half a God, or who was to develop into a God (One really gets lost in the contemplation of the ineffable mystery of the Incarnation) ought to prove of extra durability, have we not still extant many authentic relics connected with Christ's life on earth? There are many good Catholics who can show you a morsel of the tree on which he was crucified, and what more in the way of evidence for the Crucifixion could you desire. It is true that such evidence is on a par with that furnished by the renowned Baron Munchausen in proof of his assertion that he had climbed up to the moon. If you did not believe him he could show you the rope by which he had climbed up. Now if Jesus had only left us a reduced replica of that ark! *There* would have been evidence of the credibility of the book of Genesis if you like.

We must confess our ignorance as to the exact class of work turned out by a carpenter's shop in Palestine two thousand years ago, but is it not surprising that no specimen of Christ's carpentry work has come down to us? Especially when we consider what a number of pieces of the True Cross are still in existence, and that thorns from the famous crown, nails from the cross, and the very handkerchief with which Christ wiped his face can still be produced, not to speak of the holy coat at Treves. What should not some wealthy pope or cardinal with a taste for sacred curios have been willing to give for a sample of the handiwork of the Son of God? Yet seemingly nothing whatever has been preserved. To be sure, the popes and the cardinals in general took little stock in this class of antiques. They had probably a shrewd idea of their intrinsic value and genuineness, and preferred to collect superb specimens of pagan sculpture and other art objects the origin of which was not in doubt. This practice, while not redounding to their piety and faith as Christians and Roman Catholics, shows them to have been sensible men of the world. But from whatever cause the fact remains that we have not in existence a single specimen of God's workmanship as a carpenter. Not even a shaving remains as a witness of his many years' industry at Nazareth.

We are afraid we are allowing our imagination to run riot in considering the fascinating idea of Christ the workman as suggested by the clerical lecturer aforesaid. It will be seen that the possibilities of the subject are boundless. There is really no end to the speculations on which one might embark respecting the years of Christ's manhood which the Evangelists tell us nothing about. For instance, one would like to know how much a week Christ's skill as a tradesman was considered worth. Did Jesus make a bold stand for a living wage and for equitable conditions of labor, or was he of a blacklegging disposition? Was the firm of Joseph and Son, Nazareth, a co-partnership concern with an equal distribution of the profits annually, or did Jesus merely work for his keep and live on the premises?

Information on points like these might help to settle the vexed question as to whether or not Jesus was the first Socialist. We are reluctant to admit it, but it looks as if Jesus had been quite as thriftless as the Socialists and other riff-raff have the reputation of being. Otherwise how can we explain the fact that after working for so many years, and while still in the prime of life, Jesus should find himself without a place to lay his head? Must we blame the grasping capitalistic greed of the head of the firm—Joseph—or shall we assume that the application of Jesus to his work was not phenomenal in its intensity? Such problems may seem impossible of solution but are nevertheless interesting, and are not wholly beyond conjecture.

But we must really make a pause. The wide field opened up to our speculative vision by the preacher's conception of Christ as the model workman has lured us from our customary staid path and caused our fancy to take flights entirely un contemplated at the outset of our article. We hope to tap our clerical source of inspiration again.

G. SCOTT.

Most men in a brazen prison live,
Where in the sun's hot eye,
With heads bent o'er their toil, they languidly
Their lives to some unmeaning task-work give,
Dreaming of nought beyond their prison wall.
And as, year after year,
Fresh products of their barren labor fall
From their tired hands, and rest
Never yet comes more near,
Gloom settles slowly down o'er their breast,
And while they try to stem
The waves of mournful thought by which they are prest,
Death in their prison reaches them,
Unfreed, having seen nothing, still unblest.

—Matthew Arnold.

A Purgatorial Intervention.

YEARS ago, ye know, there used to be a place somewhere in the heart of Ireland that was known as the Entrance to Purgatory. The Entrance, ye understand, was in a small island, and the small island was in the centre of a small lough. To hear folks, who had never been there, talk about the place, ye would at once conclude that it was the devil of a spot; but it wasn't. Sure, to look at, the small island was beauty itself. But then, ye see, there's a saying that says distance lends enchantment to the view; and it was in the distance that ye got the first view of the small island.

Well, it happened that amongst the many pilgrims that were journeying to the Entrance to Purgatory in the month of June of a year that's dead this many a day there was one, Paddy O'Flaherty by name, who hailed from the tiny village of Ballymuckcross; which stood on the beautiful banks of the river Shannon. Now Paddy O'Flaherty was a character that was known for many miles around Ballymuckcross, for he was a piper, an Irish piper, ye understand, and they were the fine Irish melodies that he could play. However, Paddy wouldn't play just what ye wanted him to if he wasn't in the humor, but would play according to the temper he was in. Sometimes he'd play fighting tunes with such wildness that he'd raise the devil in his listeners, and they'd get to fighting each other so as to work the excitement off. At other times he'd play so sorrowfully that he'd make the tears come to your eyes in spite of all your efforts to stop them. But on occasion he'd play nothing but lively tunes that would set everybody dancing within hearing distance of him—dogs, pigs, and hens as well. But what made Paddy set out for the Entrance to Purgatory is more than I know, if it wasn't a certain colleen that was going in the same direction, and for whom Paddy would have lost his immortal soul rather than she should come to any harm. Anyway, Paddy joined the pilgrims, and it was the great welcome they gave him.

Now ye musn't suppose these pilgrims to Purgatory went on their way with long faces and looking as if they never ought to have been born. Not a bit of it. They just trudged along or rode along as if they were bound for Donnybrook Fair. They laughed, sang, cracked jokes, and made fun of each other, just as if there was no trouble in the world at all, and poor old Ireland wasn't a most distressful country.

On the evening of the day when Paddy joined them it was the fine time they had. The day had been very warm indeed and the road very dusty, a combination which made the pilgrims both thirsty and dirty; so everybody was glad when the halt was made for the night, including the donkeys. The halt was made beside a purling brook, on a stretch of grassland that felt like velvet to the foot, and the village of Ballyhooley was only half-a-mile away. Soon the cooking fires were crackling away merrily, and the pilgrims smacked their lips at the thought of the fine meal they'd have. Down at the brook many of them were washing the dust off their feet and faces, and when some of them took to splashing at each other there was fine fun, I can tell ye. At last the broth and the other good things were ready, and at once the pilgrims set to showing each other the powerful hunger they had.

Now when the villagers of Ballyhooley heard that Paddy O'Flaherty was near by they trooped out like one man and woman, bringing jars of potheen with them, the good creatures. And when they came to Paddy they told him he was the only O'Flaherty they knew any good of; whereupon they made him a throne of turfs and called him the king of the pipers, which pleased Paddy mightily, ye can guess. He was in the dancing temper that night, and he set to playing the finest jigs that ever were heard. Then the potheen was passed from one to the other, and, sure, the pilgrims thought the Ballyhooley brew the best they had ever tasted; with the exception, of course, of their own brew at home. And the colleen that Paddy would have died for sat watching him with her soul shining at him out of her eyes. "Kathleen, me dear," said Paddy to her, when the potheen was making everybody talk at one and the same time, "ye're an angel." And all Kathleen could reply was, "Pat, me darlint."

Now in every town, village, mansion, or hut there's bound to be somebody who's got more of the baste in him than the others have, and amongst the pilgrims there was one whose heart was black, who hated Paddy like poison, and who was the cousin of Kathleen. Mind ye, he didn't go about shouting to people that he hated the sight of Paddy, for Paddy was the devil's own fighting man. Michael O'Rourke hated Paddy in the black heart of him because of Kathleen. When Kathleen's father died Michael had wheedled round her mother, and got the management of the farm into his dirty hands. Kathleen's mother thought everything good of him, and hoped that he and her daughter would see fit to live together in holy matrimony. But Kathleen would

have married a Hottentot sooner than Michael O'Rourke, and she told him as much; whereat her mother railed at her as if she had done something terribly wicked, and said her nephew—who robbed her right and left—was the sole remaining comfort of her old age. So, jealous of Paddy, that same nephew had joined the pilgrims.

By this time the fun had grown fast and furious—there never was such jigging and reeling before—and the pipes of Paddy seemed as much alive as their master. 'Tis said that even the fairies came to look, and would have taken part in the dancing but for the priests that were with the pilgrims. They had their revenge, though, for they got hold of Michael O'Rourke, and him full of potheen too, and dragged him through the mud. Leastways, he appeared with mud all over him the next morning, and the fine laugh they had at him.

Two days later the party came in sight of Purgatory Island, and a great hush came over it. Even Paddy's pipes were dumb, but it wasn't because Paddy was afraid of the Entrance, mind ye; it was the priests who stopped him from playing, for they held that the sound of the pipes was a most evil thing at the Entrance to Purgatory, and might give power to the evil spirits that were hovering there in shoals. So, under instructions, the pilgrims spoke as little as possible, took the smallest convenient amount of food and drink, tried to imagine the most terrible things as being ten times worse than they really were, and there on the shores of the small lough they fasted and waited until it should come their turn to be rowed over to the island of the Entrance to Purgatory.

Now Paddy O'Flaherty had lived with the good people and knew a wrinkle or two, and by that token he didn't believe in fasting nor waiting his turn to be rowed over to the island, so he swam across to it in the night-time.

But before I tell ye any more about Paddy, I'll just have something to say about the island of the Entrance to Purgatory. Ye know, it wasn't always the Entrance to Purgatory. In the haythin times it was a different place altogether. I can't just tell ye what they called it, but it was a very holy sort of a place. So when the Christian priests found they couldn't wean the people from going to it, they asked St. Patrick to make it the Entrance to Purgatory and it's been that ever since. And they put it about that if any true believer wanted to hear from his friends departed he could do so by payment of a certain sum of money and plenty of fasting and praying. However, the more money ye paid the less praying and fasting ye'd have to do.

As I have said, Paddy swam over in the night-time with his clothes and his pipes fastened on the top of his head. After he had dressed himself he went quietly to the cell of the priest in charge of the entrance and knocked at the door. "Who's there?" says Father Riley. "Paddy O'Flaherty, if ye please, Father," says Paddy. "Enter, my son," says Father Riley, "but it's the great boldness ye have. Ye're the first piper I've seen in a hurry to get to Purgatory."

"Sure, Father, ye like your joke, but it's no joking matter I'm troubling about," says Paddy. Then he tells the holy priest all about Kathleen and himself, Kathleen's father and mother, and the villain, Michael O'Rourke. "Father," says he, "if I marry Kathleen she'll lose the farm and Michael O'Rourke will get it, and, if Michael O'Rourke isn't stopped, sure there'll soon be no farm at all. Can ye help us?"

Father Riley pondered for a minute or two, then said to Paddy. "Are ye a good mimic?" "The Devil's own," says Paddy, forgetting he was talking to a priest. "Good for ye, then," says Father Riley, and with that he does a lot of whispering in Paddy's ear. "And now, my son," he says, "I must be off to meet the first batch of pilgrims, for I can see the dawn glimmering in the sky."

The pilgrims jumped ashore, and headed by Father Riley made for the Entrance to Purgatory. The Entrance was a great, rocky opening, bare of vegetation, and the grass on the ground in front of it was dead and withered. A low, moaning sound came out of it which so frightened the pilgrims that they dropped on their knees and began to pray.

"Michael O'Rourke," cries Father Riley.

"Your rivirince," replied O'Rourke, the teeth of him rattling like castanets.

"Come with me and hear the message that is to be delivered to ye," says Father Riley.

Looking like a dead man, Michael O'Rourke tottered after the holy priest, and together they disappeared into the Entrance. The way was dimly lighted with torches until they came to what appeared to be the solid rock. At a touch from Father Riley this swung silently aside, and a rush of cold air struck more terror still into the black heart of Michael O'Rourke.

"Keep close to me," whispers Father Riley, "else ye are lost."

And now the rushing and moaning sound was terrible to hear. It leaped up towards them, then died away almost to silence. Presently Father Riley stopped. They seemed to be within a smaller cavern, and the moaning noise was heard but faintly. Then in the darkness came clearly and distinctly the voice of Kathleen's father.

"Michael O'Rourke," said the voice, menacingly, "what befalls him who robs the widow and the orphan?"

O'Rourke grovelled on the ground and whimpered.

"O ye false friend," continued the voice, ye robber of the innocent, this is my message to ye. Go ye at once to Ballymuckross and render an account of your wrong-doing to the village priest, also give up your ill-gotten gains to the widow, then put many miles in between ye and the scene of your wickedness. Fail in this and death shall smite ye in the night. Hear and obey. Bear ye witness to this, holy priest."

When Michael O'Rourke came to his senses he was on the other side of the small lough again. He raised himself on one elbow and gazed fearfully round him. What had happened! Then the remembrance of the voice of Kathleen's father came over him like a flood of terror. He struggled to his feet. Many of the other pilgrims were regarding him curiously, Paddy O'Flaherty amongst them.

"Death in the night," muttered Michael, "death in the night," and that's what he kept on muttering all the way back to Ballymuckross.

Now Father Riley went with the pilgrims as far as Ballymuckcross and had an interview with the village priest, also with Kathleen's mother. Two days later Michael O'Rourke disappeared to the devil knows where. And if ye had been travelling round there a few months later ye would have seen Paddy the piper and his wife, Kathleen, in smiling possession of the farm.

JAMES H. WATERS.

Revised Hymns.—No. 1.

FROM GREENLAND'S ICY MOUNTAINS.

From Greenland's icy mountains,
And India's coral strand,
Where Africa's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand;
From many an ancient river,
From many a palmy plain,
No call comes to deliver
Their land from error's chain.

What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,
There where the prospect pleases,
Man is by no means vile,
Nor vain with lavish kindness
Nature's rich gifts are strewn,
The "heathen" not in blindness
Bows not to wood and stone.

'Tis but the symbol blessed
Of higher truth divine,
A sign by all professed
Who worship at a shrine,
The Christian, the Agnostic,
Mohammedan or Jew;
The Hindoo, the ascetic,
Do each the truth pursue.

Proclaim the joy of nations
Truth knows no sect, no creed.
Life spent in love's relations,
Is holy life indeed!
And he whose heart so lowly
Heeds only Nature's laws,
Is peer with him who holy
Holds God as First, great Cause.

Shall they whose soul seem lighted
With "wisdom from on high,"
Shall they remain benighted
And others rights deny?
Salvation, true salvation,
The joyous sound proclaim,
Till earth's remotest nation
Has learnt of Reason's name!

Waft, waft ye winds the story,
And you, ye waters roll,
Till like a sea of glory
Truth spreads from pole to pole!
Till over human nature
The truth so clear, so plain,
Restorer, recreator,
In bliss returns to reign!

GERALD GREY.

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, A. D. Howell-Smith, B.A., "Message of Freethought."

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 3.15, F. A. Davies, "The London County Council and the Bible"; 6.15, F. A. Davies, "Christianity and Common Sense."

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

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S.: Station-road, 11.30, J. H. Davis; Brockwell Park, 3.15, C. Cohen; 6.30, C. Cohen.

FINSBURY BRANCH N. S. S.: Clerkenwell Green, Guy A. Aldred, "The Ethics of Buddhism." Tuesday, August 15, Garrault-place, "Chemistry and God."

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

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (The Grove, Stratford): 7, Mr. Marshall.

COUNTRY.

FAILSWORTH SECULAR SUNDAY SCHOOL (Pole-lane). Annual Services; 2.45, Joseph McCabe, "The Bible in the School"; 6.30, "The Riddle of the Universe." Hymns, etc., by the choir, assisted by the Failsworth String Band.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, H. Percy Ward, "Goodness Without God"; 3, Islington-square (if wet, in Hall). Monday, 8, St. Domingo Pit. Wednesday, 8, Edgehill Church (outside).

WIGAN BRANCH N. S. S.: Market-square, Tuesday, Aug. 15, at 7.45, H. Percy Ward, "Did Jesus Rise from the Dead."

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation Schools, Market-place): 7.30, Picnic, Holywell Dene, August 20, autumn lecture arrangements and other business.

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