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THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

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PRICE TWOPENCE

*All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.*

—COLERIDGE.

The Paris Congress.

ON returning from the International Freethought Congress at Paris I hear that the English papers, or such of them as have deigned to notice it, have made a great feature of its "rowdiness." Now in writing what I have to say about the Congress I will begin at this point, and get rid of it once for all.

Of course there never was any rowdiness in England. Every public meeting in this country is perfectly peaceful. No one ever calls for the assistance of the police on such occasions. Neither has any disorder ever been witnessed in our House of Commons. Members of parliament have never shouted "Judas," never shaken their fists at each other, never stood up on the benches and yelled like drunken hooligans, and never come to blows upon the floor. Occurrences of this kind, we all know, are absolutely inconceivable in a moral, decorous, self-restrained nation like ours. Nevertheless we ought not to wrap ourselves up too tightly in the pharisaic mantle. We should rather look with tender pity upon people whom God or Nature omitted to endow with our most magnificent virtues.

What disorder there was at the Congress was of two kinds. There was the disorder arising from bad management, and there was the disorder arising from the quarrel between the Socialists and the Anarchists.

I shall have more to say about the bad management later on—for it has another and far more serious aspect. For the present I will only say that all the faults in the conduct of the Rome Congress were repeated in the conduct of the Paris Congress. And I believe they are chiefly due to two causes. In the first place, there is a general want of what the English call "business" in the arrangements. My own impression is that a vigorous despotism, under M. Furnémont, or some other capable leader, is necessary to lift the Congress movement out of chaos. Democratic methods never answer in the infancy of anything; their value comes afterwards, when the thing is set fairly going. Then there may be wisdom in the multitude of counsellors. There is little wisdom in it at the outset. Or rather it is not so much wisdom that is wanted then as a firm hand wielded by a common-sense brain. In the second place, the French, by mere force of numbers, captured the Rome Congress, and they were in a still better position to capture the Paris Congress. They have many bright and amiable qualities, but they are

too much under the impression that there is one country in the world—France; one city—Paris; and one language—French. Even if this were true it ought not to be overpoweringly in evidence at an international assembly. It is always well to remember, as the man in the street says, that "there are others."

And now for the quarrel between the Socialists and the Anarchists—which I watched with some amusement and more sorrow. The Socialists at the Congress mostly talked as though Socialism and Freethought were identical, or at least integral parts of one and the same thing. But this is a mistake on their part; and if it is persisted in it will wreck the Congress movement. The wider a wooden platform is, the more people can stand on it; the wider an intellectual platform is, the fewer people can stand on it. It may be made so wide as to afford a place for only one man; and he may feel inclined to desert it as his mood fluctuates. Surely there is enough for Freethinkers to talk about at an International Congress as Freethinkers, without bringing in foreign and divisive topics. The separation between Church and State is one of the legitimate questions; for Freethought, on the practical side, means the secularisation of life. But endless talk about the "capitalists" becomes mere jabber at a Freethought Congress. Let it have its proper place at a Socialist Congress, and let Freethought Congresses devote themselves entirely to their proper business.

Proceeding on this unwarrantable assumption, it was natural that the Socialists at the Paris Congress should look upon the Anarchists as damnable heretics. But it appears to me that a Freethought Congress should not be troubled with the question whether its members belong to this or that political faith. It should be enough that they are Freethinkers. I venture to say that an Anarchist is as eligible as a Socialist at a Freethought Congress. Otherwise men like Thomas Paine, when he wrote the *Essay on Government*—John Stuart Mill, when he wrote the *Essay on Liberty*—and Herbert Spencer, when he wrote the *Essays on Man and the State*—would have to be excluded. Which, as our old friend Euclid says, is absurd. Anarchists were not exactly excluded from the Paris Congress, but their protests were invited by the introduction of discussions in which they could only take part as Anarchists.

And there is something more to be said. The old succession of often old speakers is apt to be monotonous, and even trying. I referred to this in my account of the Rome Congress, and I could not help feeling a little sympathy with the "Anarchists" (it is a very ready word of denunciation when protests are raised) who clamored for a variety in the oratorical bill of fare. When the greybeards had done, and the sitting was formally declared at an end, I wrote: "It is not to be wondered at that some of the young and eager spirits held a meeting 'on their own.' Perhaps it satisfied them that they were still alive." On the

whole, I should like to see a very considerable change of speakers at the next Congress.

There is even something more to be said, by way of a general conclusion to this part of my criticism. Unquestionably the Latin nations, and the French especially, are more excitable than the British and the Germans. When I saw one orator working his arms, and occasionally his legs, like a maddened octopus, I wondered how he would get on before a cool and critical Scotch audience. He would probably fare badly at Glasgow—and be withered at Aberdeen. And the cream of the joke was that the orator did not say anything very exciting. It was simply a way he had. He could not have recited the multiplication table without a good deal of physical contortion. I do not mean (far from it) that the French speakers at the Congress were mountebanks. Some of them were of finished eloquence. I merely say that they have a greater tendency to excitement than their British and German comrades, and that the business of the International Freethought Congress would be immensely improved by an infusion of British and German methods into the conduct of its proceedings.

II.

The Congress itself did not open till Monday morning. There were three functions, however, on Sunday. The first was a reception of the Congressists at the Hotel de Ville, the magnificent building where the Paris Municipal Council holds its meetings and transacts its business. The vast reception hall was thronged. Congressist tickets did not appear to be confined to delegates. The Freethinkers of Paris were also present in large numbers. At one end of the room a fine band discoursed most excellent music. The *Marseillaise* was played magnificently; not as it is generally played in England, but like the great hymn of battle and defiance that it was when the raw levies of France, ill-shod, ill-dressed, ill-fed, and ill-equipped, marched forward to its strains and swept the trained armies of Europe before them like chaff before the whirlwind. The *Internationale* was also played, and sung by many in the crowd. After a while the speaking began. Senator Petitjean, on behalf of the committee of organisation, introduced the Congressists to the Municipal Council. His speech was brief and to the point. M. Paul Brousse, President of the Municipal Council, responded. My readers may like to see something of what he said:—

“Our tradition, let us never forget, is that of free thought. In our enthusiasm for science and reason we should always maintain this fundamental principle that we must try to convince men by relying solely upon their voluntary adhesion, without persecuting anyone, without ever pretending to infallibility, without claiming or imposing in the name of reason the monopoly of immutable dogmas. I do not hesitate to affirm here that this program of liberty has always been that of the Republican majority at the Hotel de Ville. The one object pursued, always, by our predecessors and by ourselves, is the secularisation of our public service.

Science does not fear discussion. She only is capable of a steady march towards certitude by employing her rigorous method of observation and experiment. Each day she justifies herself, and her progressive knowledge gradually transforms the material, the moral, and the intellectual worlds. Before her demonstrations the dreams of religion vanish like the clouds before the sun.”

The President went on to say that science was once the prisoner of religion. Slowly she freed herself, in spite of the persecutions and atrocities of a

thousand years. Now she is perhaps the new religion of mankind. Let us have confidence in her.

On Sunday afternoon there was a procession (guarded by innumerable policemen—which looked very odd to English eyes) to Montmartre, right outside the new big church of the Sacred Heart, which from its position dominates Paris. The object was a demonstration in honor of the Chevalier de la Barre, a young man of nineteen who was brutally tortured and killed by a judicial sentence in the days of Voltaire. His principal crime was not saluting a religious procession. Various other offences, including blasphemies, were alleged against him. He does not really appear to have been a Freethinker, although he was the victim of religion and ecclesiasticism. He was a martyr, as it were, by accident; and was rather unfortunate than heroic. However, a statue has been designed to his memory. It represents him stripped and tied to stake; and the pedestal bears the inscription—

au
Chevalier de la Barre
Supplicié à 19 ans
le 1er Juillet 1766
Pour n'Avoir Pas
Salué une Procession.

“To the Chevalier de la Barre, put to death at the age of nineteen, on the first of July, 1766, for not having saluted a religious procession.”

Owing to the excessive protection of the police, I and my N. S. S. comrades, did not hear the oratory on this occasion, except as a faint rumble. We were directed into a *cul de sac*, and the police barred our way at every point. A little less “protection” would have been more agreeable.

The demonstration was in a hollow right under the front of the church of the Sacred Heart. Perhaps the position was inevitable, but there seemed to be a good deal of the rather fanatical pleasure of shaking your fist in your opponent's face. One of the Freethought papers said that the priests inside the church were afraid to celebrate vespers. For my part, I have no sympathy with such a boast. Freethinkers must not fight the Church with her own bad weapons. They must not resort to terrorism. They must be true to their own principles. They must show even the Church all the tolerance and consideration they claim for themselves. They must not act one way when they are a minority, and another way when they are in a majority.

On Sunday evening the Congressists were entertained on the Eiffel Tower by the Paris Freemasons. Not being a Freemason myself, having a poor opinion of Freemasonry in England, and seeing little necessity for Freemasonry now in France, whatever may have been the case fifty or a hundred years ago, I was somewhat reluctant to attend this function, but I decided to go with my comrades. At any rate, it was an experience, and I might as well “see all I could for my money.” For we had all paid three francs for our tickets.

There was an immense crowd at the Eiffel Tower. Paris Freethinkers must have been there in force, as well as delegates from Freethought organisations. We were more than an hour getting through, although the big lifts were constantly going up and down. The first stage of the Tower was like an ants' nest.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be continued.)

Religion and Sex.—II.

(Concluded from p. 580.)

THERE was a deal of shrewdness in the remark of D'Israeli the elder that while poets are amorous and lovers are poetical, saints are both. Highly imaginative Christian literature is, often enough; but it is also extremely amorous, not to say erotic. Many of the ecstatic outpourings of female saints or devotees are far too "free" for reproduction; but the following from one of Wesley's converts, a young woman of twenty years of age, will serve:—

"Oh, mighty, powerful, happy change! The love of God was shed abroad in my heart, and a flame kindled there with pains so violent, yet so very ravishing, that my body was almost torn asunder. I sweated, I trembled, I fainted, I sang. Oh, I thought my head was a fountain of water. I was dissolved in love. My beloved is mine, and I am his. He has all charms; he has ravished my heart; he is my comforter, my friend, my all. Oh, I am sick of love. He is altogether the chiefest among ten thousand. Oh, how Jesus fills, Jesus extends, Jesus overwhelms the soul in which he lives."

It is almost impossible to mistake the physiological significance of such an outburst, and the quotation is only one of scores that might be given. It is certain that no decent woman would ever dream of addressing another human being in such language; nor can it be doubted that if the name of Jesus were struck out of such a passage and that of an ordinary mortal inserted, and if it formed part of a six-shilling novel there are scores of respectable booksellers who would decline to sell it on the grounds of indecency.

Nor is it without significance that the great "saints" of the Christian Church have usually been unmarried. They could not well have been otherwise. Marriage would not only have meant new duties and other interests; it would have been a channel for the satisfaction of feelings that have been ignorantly interpreted as "divine" promptings. Transport the writers of many books of devotion—particularly Roman Catholic works—into a different environment to that in which they actually moved; picture them as heads of families, with all the faculties of their nature receiving—as ought to be the case—full, free, and normal expression; and it is plain that these erotico-religious outbreaks would never have been uttered. It is not likely that the celibate life was encouraged because this misinterpretation of unsatisfied desire was consciously recognised; but the fact that religious fervor was more often associated with the single than with the married state would not fail to attract notice, and would be proportionately praised and prized.

That the extreme fervency of religious devotion is often nothing more than a misdirection of sexual impulses is recognised by many leading medical authorities, although usually it is without any attempt to dwell upon the full implications of such a fact. Thus Dr. Mercier, after noting that the development of the sexual organs brings with it an "increase of self-consciousness, craving for self-sacrifice, and craving for sympathy and interest," which "if denied the proper outlet breaks out in excessive or bizarre expression," adds:—

"In connection with normal development a large body of vague and formless feeling arises, and until experience gives it shape the possessor remains ignorant of the source and nature of the feeling. If the circumstances are appropriate for the natural outlet and expression of the activities, they are expended in affection, and are a source of health and strength to the possessor. But if no such natural outlook exists, the vague, voluminous, formless feelings are referred to an occasion that is vague, voluminous, and wanting in form—they are ascribed to the direct influence of the Deity, and assume a place as religious emotion.....Hence we find that the self-sacrificial vagaries of the rejected lover and of the religious devotee own a common origin and nature. The hook and spiky kennel of the fakir, the pillar of St. Simeon Stylites, the flagellum of the monk, the sombre garment of the nun, the silence of the

Trappists, the defiantly hideous garments of the Hallelujah Lass, and the mortified sobriety of the district visitor, have at bottom the same origin as the rags of Cardenio, the cage of Don Quixote de la Mancha, and the yellow stockings and crossed garters of Malvolio."

Dr. Maudesley is still more explicit. After pointing out that much of what passes for religious feeling is really morbid self-feeling springing from "unsatisfied instinct" or other uterine action on the mind, he says:—

"The ecstatic trances of such saintly women as Catherine de Sieune and St. Theresa, in which they believed themselves to be visited by their Savior and to be received as veritable spouses into his bosom, were, though they knew it not, little else than the vicarious sexual orgasm, a condition of things which the intense contemplation of the naked male figure, carved or sculptured in all its proportions on a cross, is more fitted to produce in young women of susceptible nervous temperament than people are apt to consider. Every experienced physician must have met with instances of single and childless women who have devoted themselves with extraordinary zeal to habitual religious exercises, and who, having gone insane as a culmination of their emotional fervor, have straightway exhibited the saddest mixture of religious and erotic symptoms—a boiling over of lust in voice, face, gestures, under the pitiful degradation of disease.....The fanatical religious sects, such as the Shakers and the like, which spring up from time to time in communities and disgust them by the offensive way in which they mingle love and religion, are inspired in great measure by sexual feeling: on the one hand there is probably the cunning of a hypocritical knave or the self-deceiving duplicity of a half-insane one using the weakness of weak women to minister to his vanity or to his lust under a religious guise; on the other hand, there is an exaggerated self-feeling, rooted often in sexual passion, which is unwittingly fostered under the cloak of religious emotion.....In such cases the holy kiss of love owes its warmth to the sexual impulse which inspires it consciously or unconsciously."

This expression of opinion is of special significance just now, with the Spaxton affair fresh before the public; nor is it less so in view of the fact that a large number of Pigott's followers seem to have been drawn from the ranks of the Salvation Army. This is obviously a body in which one would expect to find numerous examples of the cases instanced by both Dr. Mercier and Dr. Maudesley, cases in which lack of culture would so easily cause the mistaking of powerful instincts for religious inspiration. Adequate education, or adequate parental or social control, would recognise these symptoms as what they are, and regulate their expression accordingly. But in their absence, and with the prevalence of a religious system that has its sacred books and its literature filled with records of more or less disease-stricken people classified as prophets from, or messengers of, Deity, the weakness of individuals is being continually exploited, few realising either the damage done to each personally and to others who fall an easy victim to what is really a species of hypnotic suggestion.

Clear as is the evidence that the fervor of monks, nuns, and saints in the past, and of numerous religious devotees in the present, as a powerful cause in this deeply perverted sexual instinct, the evidence is still clearer when we take the converts made at revival meetings by professional exhortists. Here the evidence is simply conclusive. It is found that so closely do the years during which these "conversions" are effected coincide with the period during which the male and female reach maturity, that the number converted beyond this time is practically a negligible quantity. Conversion, as Dr. Starbuck puts it, is wholly a phenomena of adolescence. And this, being interpreted, means that the only time during which professional revivalists can convince young people that "the Holy Ghost is moving in their souls" is the period when new organs are being developed, new functions called into play, and the whole emotional nature subject to floods of feeling, and peculiarly unstable. It is then that these vague, new feelings are exploited by professional religionists, and young men and women led to interpret as

religious strivings what is really a purely physiological change. And as to the harm done by this misdirection there seems to me to be little doubt. At such a period the organism is least able to bear any strong and unusual strain. It is the period during which insanity, epilepsy, or alcoholic tendencies are most likely to show themselves, because of this. And yet it is precisely the period when, through the ignorance of parents and the force of evil example, young people are subjected to the emotional stress of religious revivals, and excited to hysterical expressions of religious ecstasy that are greeted as evidence of moral regeneration. Could the results of these gatherings be followed out in detail they would probably rank as among the most injurious of the influences that affect young people.

Right through the history of Christianity the exploitation of sexual feelings is evident. Even the constant harping upon sexual purity by Christian preachers of all ages is evidence of the unhealthy prominence of sexual feelings due to efforts of repression. Sex covers a deal of life, but it is not all; and there is nothing more dangerous, and at bottom more unclean, than a constant harping upon sexual cleanliness. A perfectly healthy mind is no more overweighted with a consciousness of sex than a healthy body is aware of the possession of organs. One becomes conscious of a liver or a stomach only when there is something wrong in their functioning. It was not cleanliness, but uncleanness, that created the obscene virtue of celibacy. A healthy recognition of sexual instincts as normal and legitimate would have averted this, just as it might have made human nature far better to-day than it is. When one remembers that the Christian efforts to crush the sexual instincts could, in the nature of the case, have been only partly successful among those who were best fitted to carry on the work of perpetuating the race, that for generations many of the spiritual leaders of society were without family interests, and in their teaching blind to the humanising influence of marriage and home life, it is not difficult to see that this must have operated in the direction of cultivating anything but an admirable type of character. The fact that Christianity, in fighting against one of the deepest instincts in human nature, and has engaged in a hopeless struggle, does not diminish the gravity of its offence. What it could do it did, and its doing in this direction was almost altogether evil.

C. COHEN.

A New Christ.

THERE have been many Christs since the commencement of our era, and every one of them has had his followers. In the language of theology, they are divided into two classes, the orthodox Christs and the heretical or false Christs. It is to be remembered, however, that every Christ is true and orthodox to his disciples, while to these, however small in number, every other Christ is more or less false. We all know how essentially different the Trinitarian Christ is from the Unitarian, and yet both sections regard themselves as being in the highest sense orthodox.

It is a well known fact that of late there has arisen a new school of theologians, which occupies a position midway between Trinitarians and Unitarians. The most characteristic feature of this school is its acceptance of the main conclusions of the Higher Criticism. It is in every sense a progressive school. Its stress is always upon the spirit, never upon the letter. It admits that much of the Bible may be literally untrue, but claims that every passage in it contains a spiritual message of priceless value to mankind. The story of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, may have had no historical basis, but still there is a higher sense in which it is perfectly true. The Patriarchs may be more or less mythical characters, but the tales told about them are as

replete with religious lessons as if they had been literally true. The same argument is now applied even to the four Gospels and the Epistles. Jesus was undoubtedly a historical person; but the Gospels cannot be accepted as strictly accurate and reliable documents, nor the Epistles as infallible interpretations of spiritual truth. In the main, however, all Biblical documents are, for practical purposes, fundamentally reliable and worthy of heartiest acceptance. Man is a spiritual being, endowed with insight, or an instinctive sense of the supernatural, and upon this sense the Bible acts as an invaluable stimulant.

But let me come to particulars. There is being issued at present "a Series of Essays on Biblical, Religious, and Theological Subjects, written in the Light of Modern Criticism, in Defence of the Christian Faith," under the general title of "Essays for the Times." They are scholarly, well written, thoroughly up-to-date theological productions, and eminently worthy of perusal and study. No. 1, is by the Rev. Allan Menzies, M.A., D.D., of St. Andrews, and its subject is "St. Paul's View of the Divinity of Christ." Dr. Menzies begins his essay thus:—

"Christianity is a historical religion; it is not, like Confucianism, a matter of moral precept only, the truth which is independent of its historical connection; nor like Shintoism, a worship of spirits which are feared rather than known, and which have no relation to human history; it is based on certain occurrences which we believe to have actually taken place in a particular country, and at a particular period of the world's chronology. It is by going back to these occurrences, contemplating them again and again, and receiving into his spirit the message with which he feels them to be charged for him, that the Christian feeds his higher life."

In as much as Christianity is a historical religion, "a certain amount of historical information is necessary to the Christian. He desires, and thinks it possible, to know the Savior as a historical person, to whose commandments he can listen in order to obey them, whose concrete example he can place before his eyes, whose presence, guided by those who were near him on earth, he can himself enter." Now, until recently, it was the unanimous conviction of Christians that this essential historical information was to be found in the Gospels. But no sooner were these documents subjected to strict scientific examination than it became clear that they are not altogether trustworthy. First of all, the historical character of the fourth Gospel had to be abandoned. Even then believers comforted themselves with the assurance that the other three were all right.

"But the battle has now come to the synoptic Gospels too, which were thought to be so reliable, and it seems to many as if our historical information about Jesus Christ were crumbling away altogether, and as if nothing were left us that we can depend on. Even those narratives are impugned which have always been regarded as essential to the faith, and which are taken up into the creeds. Of the words of the Lord we are told that the tradition is most uncertain, the discourses are artificially put together by the evangelists; very few of the sayings can be referred with confidence to the occasion on which they were spoken; of few is the original meaning beyond doubt."

Mark, this is the criticism, not of the enemies of the faith, but of eminent Christian scholars who love truth better than all else. It is a criticism against which Dr. Menzies has not a word to utter. This is what he says:—

"From all this the conclusion has been drawn, not only in this country, but by the adherents of other religions than ours in India and other lands, and not only by those sceptically inclined, but by many open-minded people who are otherwise well inclined to religion, that the Gospels are fatally discredited as sources of historical information, and that the great structure of Christian belief thus rests on unsound foundations."

Dr. Menzies does not even attempt to prove that the Gospels are not thus "fatally discredited." His only contention is that the fact of their being fatally "discredited" will not form a permanent objection

to Christianity. Christianity is older than the Gospels. It was Christianity that made the Gospels possible; they are the offspring of Christianity. Consequently, to discredit the Gospels is not the same thing as to discredit the Christian religion. Such is Dr. Menzies' contention. When Paul became a Christian there were no Gospels in existence. That great man was converted, not by the Jesus of history, but by the Christ of heaven. Even as an Apostle he knew but little of the life and teaching of the Galilean. Neither in his sermons, so far as they are reported, nor in his Epistles, did he lay any stress upon the historical Christ, although it must have been as evident to him as it is to us that without a historical Christ there could have been no atoning death nor triumphant resurrection.

We have now reached the core of the problem under consideration. Neither the life nor the teaching of a historical Jesus is now held to be of vital importance. If necessary the Gospels may be dispensed with. It may be that even the majority of the words and deeds attributed to Jesus in these documents were never uttered and done by him. We may even suppose, says Dr. Menzies, that such is the case—what then?

"It is the object of this essay to point out that the position in which we stand at present as to our information about the life of Christ is in certain respects closely analogous to that of the Apostle Paul, who, when he carried on his Gentile mission had not only not the four Gospels, but probably no written work at all to refer to for the facts of the Savior's life and death. Though the Apostle was in this situation he made no complaints, so far as we hear, as to the inadequacy of his knowledge about Christ, nor would he allow that the apostles who had been with Jesus during his earthly ministry and possessed the living memory of his acts and sayings, were in any way better qualified than himself for knowing Christ and acting as his representatives. He claimed, in fact, that he knew Christ, in some respects, and these the most essential, better than they did. Though he had not known the Saviour as a man on earth, yet he believed that he had been enabled better than they had been to apprehend the nature of Christ's person and the object of his coming to the world. And the view which he took of Christ's person was accepted by the Church."

One more quotation and Dr. Menzies' case will be fully before us:—

"That higher knowledge of Christ, as it was not derived from the Gospels, is still, if we can hold it fast, in a large measure independent of them, and those who can rise to it need not be seriously disturbed by what criticism of the Gospels may establish or disprove."

How did the Apostle Paul obtain that higher knowledge of Christ that he claimed to possess? By a revelation or revelations from heaven. His view of Christ was imparted to him from above. That was the claim he made for himself, and which Dr. Menzies believes to have been well founded. It is not my purpose to discuss the vision vouchsafed to Paul near the city of Damascus. Visions were common occurrences in those days. The Bible is chock-full of them. Referring to Paul's conversion, one great Established Church writer said that he "became a Christian by what he believed to be the personal revelation of Jesus Christ." In what he believed to be a vision he saw the risen Lord. What did he see? According to his own account several times repeated only "a light out of heaven," "a great light round about me," "a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me." What did he hear? "A Voice." What did the voice say? Merely asked a question, answered another, and added, "Rise and enter the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Granting that the vision actually happened, the only revelation it conveyed to Paul was that Jesus was still alive and had power to speak to men in the flesh. So far as the Book of the Acts is concerned, no gospel was imparted to the convert by means of the vision. Granting that the Book of the Acts is reliable, and that the Epistles are authentic, all we can say is that Paul's gospel gradually grew from more to more. In his first Epistles, his conception of Christ is simple and immature, while in the later and more elaborate ones,

it is more perfect and complex—opening out indeed into a vast and abstruse philosophy. According to Dr. Menzies, at no time did Paul identify Christ with God as the Church did later on. To Paul Christ was a Divine Being, but by no means equal with God. But at the Council of Nicea in 325 the Church pronounced him in every respect equal with the Eternal Father. Paul's Christ was wholly different from the Christ of the early disciples, and the orthodox Church's Christ is almost another being from Paul's. The Christ of Peter and James was a man whom God accepted as the Messiah. Paul's Christ was more than man and less than God, whom the latter made a Mediator between himself and the former. The Christ of the orthodox Church is God himself in the person of his Son.

The Christ preached to-day "in the light of modern Science" is not a new Christ after all, but, if Dr. Menzies' exegesis is correct, a revival of Paul's Christ—a purely metaphysical Christ, and, in the opinion of the orthodox Church, a heretical Christ. To Freethinkers the three Christs are alike the creations of men who had the evolution of the cult of Jesus at heart. A Divine Being who is not God is, like God himself, a product of the human imagination. Neither Dr. Menzies nor another can prove the contrary. Christ does not strongly "appeal to the heart and conscience of mankind," and the divines who assert that He does are only throwing dust into the eyes of their hearers and readers. Christ only appeals to those who believe in him, and even to most of these but very feebly. To hundreds of millions of people Christ does not appeal at all.

J. T. LLOYD.

Correspondence.

PRACTICAL ETHICS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Judging from the published reports of the great Freethought Congress, it would appear that Freethought has little in common with Free-speech. It is indeed strange that chosen representatives, men of light and leading in the Freethought world, should not be able to infuse more restraint and dignity into their public deliberations.

Perhaps the most humiliating feature, not uncommon to such gatherings, is the easy and ready abandonment of all the best known principles of advanced thought, in favor of the older coercive measures of repression. Numbers, as represented by the majority, and force, as represented by the presence and protection of the police, are sorry companions of freedom. It might be urged from the standpoint of the majority, that the freedom of the individual, or group of individuals, ends where it encroaches on others. But this may be urged, with equal force, on the part of the minority. In any case, where does freedom of discussion come in?

ALFRED J. HOPKINS.

Obituary.

WE regret to announce the death of Mr. Joseph Townsend, of Southport. Deceased was an ardent Freethinker, and his principles supported him through a long and trying illness. His death occurred on Sunday, September 2. It was intended that Mr. Foote should attend Mr. Townsend's funeral, but he was at Paris, and special circumstances made it impossible for him to leave in time. Mr. H. Percy Ward, however, at Mr. Foote's request, posted off from Paris on Wednesday morning, instead of on Wednesday evening, as arranged; and by travelling right through he managed to arrive at Liverpool in time to attend the cremation at Anfield on Thursday at 2 p.m.—for which he has our sincere thanks. Mr. Townsend was about sixty years of age, during forty of which he had been a Freethinker. The cause of his death was heart trouble. His "heart of hearts," however was sound to the last. The Freethought movement will benefit by his will, which appoints Mr. Foote as one of his executors. Thus he speaks from the grave to the cause he loved.

Acid Drops

The sea-serpent and the big gooseberry have had their day. The "silly season" is now devoted to less entertaining matters. A long discussion has been going on in the *Daily Mail*, for instance, on the silly question: "Should Clergymen Criticise the Bible?" Criticism of the Bible is simply a question of more or less. There never was a preacher who believed everything in the Bible. Spurgeon pretended to, but he could not possibly believe it where it contradicted itself; and he made allowance, just like other people, for blunders in copying and for mistranslations. To say that the Bible, as we have it in English, is absolutely and literally true, is to endow the translators with the divine infallibility. Nor is there any educated person (not even Sir Robert Anderson) who believes the Creation Story literally nowadays. The literal truth of it is maintained by making it mean the exact opposite of what it says; which is nothing but intellectual thimble-rigging.

The *Daily Mail* prints an article on the controversy in closing it. In doing so it states the upshot. "There is beyond all doubt," it says, "a widespread feeling that for a clergyman to doubt the literal inspiration of the Bible, and to continue to hold office in the Church, is directly contrary to his ordination vows." Now this would suit us to a T. It means that all the well-informed and educated clergy should be swept out of the Church, and that only the ignoramuses and nincompoops should remain; in which case the Church would speedily perish amidst general contempt and disgust. But from the Christian point of view the *Mail's* conclusion is sheer silliness. The literal inspiration of the Bible is an absolutely impossible doctrine nowadays. Does the *Mail* really mean to say that every clergyman is bound to believe that Jonah was actually swallowed and entertained by a whale? That is what the literal inspiration of the Bible comes to. Does the *Mail* believe this yarn itself? We pause for a reply. And we are entitled to get it.

After scolding the "Higher Critics"—who will hardly go to the *Mail* for scholarship or accuracy—our contemporary winds up as follows:—

"There is also another reason to be glad of the discussion. It has shown clearly that, whatever be the result of the Higher Criticism applied to the Old Testament, the progress of knowledge has merely served to confirm the Church's view of the New Testament. There we have the ultimate basis of the Christian system, which for true believers the fullest criticism and discussion have failed even to disturb."

It would be interesting to know the name of the man who wrote that. Perhaps he wrote it with his tongue in his cheek all the time. One of the "blessings" of our "glorious free press" is that anonymous hired journalists may write what they believe or what they disbelieve, according to their paymasters' orders. It is not true that the Higher Criticism has not affected the New Testament. The *Mail* ought to know that the New Testament miracles are in the same danger as the Old Testament miracles. Their doom may be delayed, but it is just as certain. And the more sagacious divines see this, whether the mob of *Mail* readers see it or not.

Another "silly season" discussion has just been closed in the *Daily Mirror*. The subject was "Is there a Spirit World?" All sorts of people have been giving accounts of their wonderful experiences, and the *Mirror* seems to think that these communications are of very great importance; whereas, to the scientific mind, they are of no importance at all until they are thoroughly sifted and investigated. On the other hand, our contemporary is obliged to admit that the spirits who revisit the glimpses of the moon "so seldom seem to have any sensible object in view" and "behave in a manner little calculated to inspire respect." And this, it says, is the "strongest point in favor of the delusion theory."

It was quite refreshing to come across Sir Hiram Maxim's letter in the last batch published by the *Mirror*. The level-headed man of practical science denied that there was any table-tipping "except that which is done in a perfectly natural manner by the use of the knees, hands, and feet." Then he asks this pertinent question which pricks so many bubbles: "Should we not find at least one table that actually tips before we discuss its meaning or how the spirits manage to do it?" Sir Hiram Maxim concluded as follows:—

"I deny absolutely that there is any such thing as spirit phenomenon. The man does not live that can either show or prove that anything ever took place on this planet except in strict accordance with well-known and fixed natural laws.

No spirit, disembodied or otherwise, has ever been able to move a single grain of sand; the spirit that performs all the so-called miracles is the spirit of humbuggery."

Sir Hiram, however, is "willing to investigate." But the professors of mystery will probably keep him at arm's length.

"General" Booth seems to have suffered from swelled-head and hysteria at his last Albert Hall meeting. His speech was almost incoherent, and his antics were to the last degree sensational. The way in which he made his bow to the audience proves that he still holds his place as the Grand Old Showman of England. The hall was crowded, there had been prayer and song, but where was the "General?" Suddenly an officer pulled aside a curtain, and there was William Booth sitting in a white motor-car—a model of the one in which he had toured through Great Britain. Taking off his motor coat, he advanced to the footlights—we beg pardon, the front of the platform—amidst frenzied enthusiasm. "In the case of any other man," the *Daily Chronicle* says, "the scene would have been theatrical. In the General's case it was acceptable symbolism." In other words, Booth can do no wrong.

Trust in God will not help "General" Booth much against physical exhaustion. Miracles will not be worked even for the head of the Salvation Army. The *Daily News* reporter says that a close observer can easily see that the "General" has been overdoing it. He is "using up his vitality too rapidly," and if he does not take things more easily "Nature will have her revenge." *Nature*, mind! God is left out of the matter.

The Birmingham Young Men's Christian Association has decided to let the members have a billiard table. Fancy! Yes, the world moves, as Galileo said. Can anyone imagine Peter and John playing a hundred up, with James as marker and J. C. as referee?

People who profess to see into the middle of next week seldom see much beyond their noses when they are put to the test. The father of the missing artillery lad at Aberdeen has received a number of communications from clairvoyants. Mr. and Mrs. Pincott have followed the clues with aching hearts, and the result is *nix*. Good old clairvoyants!

There was a Wesleyan Conference at Fairmount, Indiana, and a restaurant was started for the benefit of the Congressists. The caterer, a man named Norton, a rigid Wesleyan, opened the establishment with the intention of "running the business just as Christ would." Accordingly he made no charge for the meals, leaving the amount payable to each customer's conscience. But the men of God grumbled at the absence of chickens from the bill of fare, and customers fell off, and the restaurant had to be closed. Norton said that chicken was too costly. He did not recognise the imperative character of clerical gormandising.

Rev. Lewis Reynolds Hearn, vicar of Astley Bridge, fainted while kneeling at the reading-desk in church during divine service, and fell down the chancel steps, fracturing his skull, which caused his death. Jesus said that there was a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. There does not appear to be any special providence in the fall of a clergyman.

Mr. C. T. Faulkner, of 54, Prince's street, Ipswich, was in the Great Eastern railway accident, and he writes to the *East Anglian Times* expressing his "profound gratitude for God's goodness in sparing my life, while so many were without warning hurled into eternity." What an idea of his own importance this man must have! He actually thinks that God Almighty took the trouble to save him in preference to all those who were allowed to perish. There is no conceit in the world like religious conceit.

We see that another foolish person, Mr. H. T. Chivers, of Bethesda Baptist Chapel, Ipswich, has been discoursing from the text, "He careth for thee," because one of the girls attending the Sunday school had a "miraculous escape" from death in the same accident. Evidently it did not occur to Mr. Chivers to ask why God did not work a miracle large enough to cover everybody in the train. Neither did it occur to him to reflect that if God saved that particular girl God killed all who perished.

How history is written! The writer (Algar Thorold) of an interesting article in the September *Independent Review* on "The English and French Churches in Fiction," perpetrates the following sentence: "In England, too, such

hostile critics as Collins and Tindal were hardly more acrimonious and foul-mouthed than a Christian bishop like Warburton." We are not called upon to defend Warburton, whom Coleridge christened "Bully," but we are called upon to say that Algar Thorold has evidently not read Anthony Collins. Collins was a scholar and a gentleman; his style was perfectly sober and well-bred; only ignorance or malice could call him "foul-mouthed." Algar Thorold has made a bad mistake. We hope he will have the grace to correct it.

A really important article on "Poetry and Rebellion" appears in the same number of the *Independent Review* from the pen of Mr. G. M. Trevelyan. It is a review of George Brandes' *Naturalism in England*—the fourth volume of his "Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature." Mr. Trevelyan points out that it was a most odious and degrading tyranny against which Shelley and Byron carried on their great war. And the whole movement of coercion, he says, had been a religious movement. An attempt was made, with considerable success, to "eradicate the very slight traces of free thought then observable in England." It began with an attack on Paine's *Age of Reason*—which Mr. Trevelyan says was "highly moral and earnest in its tone," although "sometimes violent in its language against the ethics of the Old Testament and the miraculous elements in the New." A prosecution was started against a poor publisher named Williams, who was himself a Christian. The prosecution was started by the Society for the Suppression of Vice and Immorality—which Cobbett used to call the Vice Society. It was very much like Anthony Comstock's Vice Society in America. In the same way it played the jackal to the Churches by persecuting and calumniating Freethinkers. Williams repented and begged for mercy. He was wretchedly poor. His children were suffering from small-pox—"But the godly men were 'firm,' as Wilberforce boasts in his diary, and proceeded to ruin the family in the name of Christ." Twenty years later the bigoted game still went on merrily. Mr. Trevelyan mentions Carlyle's long imprisonment. But we wish he had given a word of praise to that indomitable fighter for the freedom of the press. Nothing could daunt that intrepid warrior of liberty. He spent nine years and seven months in English gaols for publishing the *Age of Reason*, and succeeded in wearing out the cruelty of his persecutors. A braver man never lived. We salute him across the century.

Persecution and imprisonment were not enough. The Churches and the Upper Classes knew their business. A campaign of slander, as Mr. Trevelyan observes, was carried on in the alleged interests of humanity. Every advanced man of any distinction was libelled and vilified—so that Dr. Torrey and Dr. Dixon are only travelling on a well-worn road. Even in 1799 Coleridge was accused of having "left his little ones fatherless, and his wife destitute." No wonder that Byron and Shelley were afterwards charged with every conceivable crime and vice, from the natural to the unnatural. Yet at the same time the clergy and the wealthy classes were leading shocking lives themselves. Mr. Trevelyan quotes from a Primate who had six bishops under him, three of whom he described as "the most profligate men in Europe." Such were the men who cried out for the suppression of Freethought on the ground that "the foundations of morality were in danger." Hypocrisy, as Mr. Trevelyan says, was the order of the day.

Into that corrupt and hypocritical world came the great rebels, Byron and Shelley. Byron has been called Satanic. Yes, says Mr. Trevelyan, but "there have been moments in history when the qualities of Milton's Satan are needed to save mankind." Shelley was a rebel, and something more; he was the beautiful and melodious herald of a new and better day. His life, Brandes says, was to be of "greater and more enduring significance in the emancipation of the human mind than all that happened in France" in the great month of August, 1792, which was also that of Shelley's birth. Mr. Trevelyan half, if not wholly, agrees with this judgment. And we have pleasure in quoting his final praise of Shelley:—

"Now that we can no longer raise the poor by giving them the vote, nor awaken the mind of man to truth by setting free the press; now it is that ardent and intellectual souls of many different creeds and parties find only in Shelley's poetry the atmosphere which they can truly call liberty, the zeal for the unfettered pursuit of truth and of justice and of beauty; in each fresh generation, generous youth will be forever setting out on some new voyage for which the last chorus in *Hellas* is the sailors' chant of departure."

Excellent! We commend Mr. Trevelyan's article to our readers' best attention.

He was a seaside mission orator, and he had the most monotonous melancholy whine we ever heard. And he was

evidently reciting instead of speaking; for, incidentally, he referred to "this great meeting," although about fifty persons were present—without counting those on the platform. His address must have done duty on more prosperous occasions.

The melancholy gentleman's chief appeal was to juvenile sinners. Some boys, he said, must be tired of the life they were living, and he besought them to come to Jesus and obtain rest. We did not notice any boy responding to this appeal, and every healthy boy would laugh at it. What sort of "life" did the preacher have in his mind? Fancy a mere "kid" tired of the life he was living! Is it not worthy of Bedlam?

A correspondent sends us a cutting from an old *Penny Magazine*, which contains a picture of "Tom Paine's Oak," with the following piece of information: "It was inside an old Oak at Bromley, in Kent, that Tom Paine, the Agnostic, wrote his work, the *Rights of Man*." Paine was not an Agnostic, and he did not pen the *Rights of Man* inside that oak tree. With these exceptions the statement we quote is quite accurate.

When legends like the foregoing can be gravely circulated about Thomas Paine, in the full blaze of modern publicity, is it any wonder that wilder legends were circulated about Jesus Christ, in the obscurer days of two thousand years ago?

The *Methodist Recorder* insists on two points; first, that "the teaching of religion" must not be left to parents, but must be done professionally; second, that England is drifting on to the calamity of Secular Education. We hail the second point with great satisfaction. The first point proves the truth of our old contention, that the "religious education" difficulty is not created by children's parents, but by the reverend gentlemen who subsist on the business. It is the result of a trade agitation. Simply this, and nothing more.

The following definition of a sceptic is given in the *Sunday Companion*: "A sceptic is a man who wilfully closes his eyes to the light and then blames God for not understanding." Our pious contemporary adds that this definition is worthy of an encyclopedia. We suppose it means Harmsworth's.

Rev. A. J. Waldron is getting on. "I have met young men," he says, "who, after listening to a clever atheistic lecturer, have left their churches and chapels, and never returned—especially this has been the case when by the side of the atheist platform has the Christian position been disgraced by vulgar personalities and weak argument." This is much like Satan rebuking Sin. But the door should never be closed to the repentant.

The Bishop of Carlisle, addressing at the annual meeting of the Diocesan Church Extension Society at Penrith, spoke as follows, according to the report in the *Daily Telegraph*:—

"So far as he knew never before had a great victor in a great war accepted such wonderful and generous terms of peace. (Cheers.) The whole career of the Government and the army of Japan during the war had been a magnificent object lesson to Christian nations. (Cheers.) Profound admiration would be felt for their magnificent moral courage, which placed Japan in the very first rank among the ethical nations of the world. Japan had led him to believe that at last there had arisen a nation who understood something of the Sermon on the Mount. (Cheers.) Without Christianity Japan had done that great and glorious thing; what might she do with Christianity? (Cheers.)"

From an intellectual point of view, this is about as organic as a rice-pudding. The notion that Japan, having beaten the Christian nations in humanity, would beat them still more in that line by turning Christian herself, is worthy—well, it is worthy of a bishop. And there's no more to be said.

"We have shown the world," Baron Kaneko says, "that pagan treatment of prisoners is as humane as that of Christian nations." He might easily have said "humaner."

The "Bishop's Tavern" started by Bishop Potter in New York has proved a failure. It was opened with the singing of the Doxology, and was intended to improve the morals of the boozers who might frequent it. The late Mr. Spurgeon smoked to the glory of God, and it was apparently hoped that the frequenters of the "Bishop's Tavern" would drink to the same purpose. But the place is now turned into a simple grog shop.

A church dispute got before the magistrates at Aberayron. It arose out of a difference as to who should play the

harmonium. While the bench were considering the matter in private, one of the parties cried, "You sing like a calf," and the other replied, "You play like a monkey." Let brotherly love continue.

Rockefeller, the most millionaire of American millionaires, attends a Baptist church on Sundays, and delivers a prayer, which is published on Monday morning. One pities the poor God who has to listen to this sort of thing.

The proprietor of a fried fish and chipped potato shop at Blackburn was convicted by the magistrates for carrying on his business on Sunday. Appeal was made to the High Court and the conviction was quashed by the Lord Chief Justice on the ground that the exemption in favor of "meat" must be held to apply also to "fish." Which is a set back for the Sabbatarians.

A correspondent points out in the *Daily Telegraph* that, although Paul says "If a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him," every known picture gives long hair to Jesus Christ and his disciples.

Who says that the clergy are slow coaches? The Rev. John Robbins, vicar of St. George's, Campden-hill, W., has been fined £5 and costs for driving a motor-car at a speed exceeding twenty miles an hour. We never heard of a parson driving at that rate to heaven.

The Bishop of London thanks God for the peace in the far East. Unfortunately, he says, science in the civilised world is devoted to the invention of engines of destruction and "Christendom is torn with strife, rivalry, and bitterness." He also praises the Japanese for their "nobility and generosity, their patience, courtesy, self-restraint, and courage, which has never been surpassed." After this the Bishop of London should decline to attend missionary meetings—unless it be a meeting for inviting Japanese missionaries to England.

When the treaty of peace was signed at Portsmouth all the Christian Churches, including the Russian Orthodox, joined in thanks to God. It was rather rough on Roosevelt—who has our sympathy.

Good Christians are worrying the wicked Jews again in Russia. At Kertch, in the Crimea, they burned to death the two-year old son of a Jewish pedlar. Good Christians! Tender souls! Devotees of the religion of love!

The appalling earthquake in Italy is another sample of the ways of "Providence." The victims are numbered by the thousand. Three hundred corpses have been counted at Parghelia, two hundred at Stefanconi, and so on through the long and melancholy list. Even the Lord's own houses have been wrecked. The historic cathedral of Santa Severina, in Sicily, with all its precious art treasures, has perished, together with all the other churches in the vicinity. "He doeth all things well." Especially earthquakes.

Amongst the 7,000 buildings destroyed in the great fire at Adrianople were churches, convents, and mosques. "Providence" let religious edifices burn with most divine impartiality. Perhaps we ought to say divine indifference.

More "Providence." Damage estimated at £1,000,000 has been done by a flood at Shanghai.

A verdict of "temporary insanity, caused by religious mania," was returned over the dead body of Elizabeth May, a cook, aged forty-five, who drowned herself in the canal at Clapton. She had once been amongst the Agapemonites, and of course the coroner and other persons had a lot to say against that little sect. That is the result of being a small minority. Catholic priests, or blatant Protestant revivalists, are allowed to drive people mad at pleasure. Belonging to a big gang of rogues makes you quite respectable.

Miss Edith Allanby, head mistress of St. Anne's National School, Lancaster, who committed suicide by drinking carbolic acid, in order to give a better chance of publication to a book she had written called *The Fulfilment*. In a letter to her sister she referred to it as "sacred" and as "God's gift to the world." Evidently the lady was no Atheist—as she ought to have been on the Talmage and Torrey theory.

A real live Atheist has, apparently, committed suicide at last. All the Christian suicides will now be forgotten, and

there will be tremendous joy in the Torrey camp over this single incident. According to the newspapers, Joseph Wade, a Bradford hawker, put an end to his life by means of a dose of laudanum. Before doing so he wrote a letter to the coroner and jury, setting forth his reasons for the act—and a very manly letter it was, too. The poor fellow said that influenza had left him a physical wreck, that he could not earn his living, and that he had decided to die "rather than burden the public with his maintenance and have years of trouble and pain." "I desire to be buried," he concluded, "without any religious ceremony, as I am an atheist, and conclude with respect to all." Whether suicide is justifiable or not, this man's last words were a dignified leave-taking of his fellow men.

The Resurrection of Jesus—An Historical Inquiry.

BY THE REV. JOSEPH C. ALLEN.

[Reprinted from the *Open Court* (Chicago) as a sign of the disintegration that is going on in orthodox theology.]

WHAT occurred, after the death of Jesus, to give rise to all the New Testament stories of His resurrection? The problem is tremendously complicated, and no answer has yet been given that has satisfied the majority of those students even that are able to put aside theological presuppositions and the real or supposed interests of religious faith.

In passing, it is worth while, however, to point out that the question of the immortality of the human soul is not at all involved in this historical problem. If a human body became alive again after it had been dead three days, that would have no bearing on the immortality of the soul. If such a thing should occur, quite a number of times, it would be evidence that the immortality of the body is a possible achievement for the race. But if it occurred only once in human history, it would indicate only that the body concerned was different from that of all other. In neither case would physical resurrection have any bearing on the immortality of the soul. Nor would it, in case the resurrection were a solitary occurrence in all history, prove anything as to the soul or personality of the possessor of such a body. The divinity or deity of Jesus is not proved by his rising from the grave, nor is it disproved if the resurrection be refuted. No rational foundation of Christian faith can be shaken by an unbiased enquiry into this historical problem. But it is complicated enough, when we have laid hopes and fears aside, and are ready to consider it in the dry light of reason, and with no purpose but to ascertain the actual fact.

These stories of the resurrection of Jesus are so abundant that we cannot brush them aside as baseless and inconsequential. They are, however, at the same time so strange, and so contradictory one of another, that we are compelled to regard most of them as far from accurate, and all of them as somewhat suspicious. Did the risen Jesus appear to the disciples in and near Jerusalem alone, as Luke declares, or (except for the appearance to the women near the grave) in Galilee alone, as Matthew states? Was the first appearance to Peter (1 Cor. xv. 5; Luke xxiv. 34, and by inference from Mark xvi. 7), to Mary Magdalene alone (John xx. 14), or to Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" (Matt. xxviii. 9)? Did He forbid to be touched before He ascended into heaven (John xx. 17), or, before this ascension had taken place, did He invite the disciples to handle Him (Luke xxiv. 39; cf. 50 f.)? Again, when did Jesus ascend into heaven? Luke places this event on either the evening following the resurrection, or possibly very early the next morning. The same author, writing some years later, dates His ascension forty days after His rising from the tomb (Acts i. 3 f.). John's account of the appearance to Mary Magdalene, and of that to the eleven eight days later, imply that Jesus has ascended to heaven in the time intervening. No description of the ascension is given anywhere but in Luke and Acts, and the appendix to Mark. Mark's evidence is unfortunately lost, as we have not the genuine ending of his gospel. Neither Matthew nor Paul mentions the ascension. Paul appears to think of the resurrection and ascension as one and the same event, and to hold that Jesus either showed Himself from heaven, or came down to earth occasionally to meet His disciples.

Such glaring contradictions do not, however, indicate that the stories are baseless. On the contrary, they are evidence that something startling occurred, and that those who saw it were so moved by the experience that they were not able to remember and report it accurately.

(To be continued.)

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, September 17, Stanley Hall, near the "Boston," Junction-road, London, N., 7.30, "Why the 'Yellow Monkeys' Won: an Object Lesson to Christians."

September 24, Stratford Town Hall.

October 1, Queen's Hall; 8, Queen's Hall; 15, Glasgow; 22, Birmingham; 29, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

November 5, Manchester; 12, Liverpool.

December 31, Leicester.

To Correspondents.

C. COHEN'S LECTURING ENGAGEMENTS.—Address, 241 High-road, Leyton, Essex.—September 17, Liverpool; 24, Stanley Hall, North London. October 1, Stratford Town Hall; 8, Glasgow; 15, Queen's Hall; 22, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

PARIS CONGRESS FUND.—Previously acknowledged:—£26 1s. 0d. Received this week:—P. W. Madden £2 2s., C. T. Beesley 5s., W. P. Murray 1s. 6d., G. Newman 2s. 6d., John Green 2s. 6d., Joseph Cleworth 2s. 6d., W. Dodd 5s., R. Taylor 2s. 6d., W. Palmer 1s., John Roberts 5s., J. Brierley 5s., M. J. Charter 2s. 6d., F. J. Voisey 10s. 6d. *Per Miss Vance*: H. T. (Plymouth) 10s., H. C. 10s., H. Good 3s., M. Dye 1s., B. and T. 1s., T. T. 1s.

OUR ANTI-TORREY MISSION FUND.—Previously acknowledged:—£148 6s. 1d. Received this week:—F. H. W. 2s. 6d., R. T. (per F. S.) 5s., H. Good 3s.

A. HOPKINS.—Pleased to hear you have read and re-read our Open Letter to Mr. Stead, and that you regard it as "a magnificent contribution to the cause"—though we fear the praise is too high for the performance.

A. L. COATES.—*La Raison* was suspended for several weeks, but re-appeared during the Paris Congress. We do not know whether it will continue. Its office is at 14 Rue d'Uzes, Paris. It is published at five centimes.

F. H. W.—Torrey pamphlets sent. Glad to know you "enjoy reading the *Freethinker* immensely."

P. W. MADDEN, sending subscription to the Paris Congress Fund, writes: "Yours is a splendid Open Letter to Mr. Stead. I have read its conclusion in this week's *Freethinker* with considerable pleasure, and shall await with interest Mr. Stead's reply in due course." Mr. Stead is abroad at present, and is not expected back till October.

R. AXELBY.—See paragraph. Thanks. Mr. Foote is keeping well.

F. TANNER.—Glad you liked *Bible Romances* and *Bible Handbook* "very much." Many readers have found them helpful.

C. T. BERSLEY reports that he has just obtained two new readers for the *Freethinker*. Subscribing to the Paris Congress Fund, he says: "You may take it as an expression of grateful thanks to yourself for the splendid manliness that shines through all your writings. Since starting to read your paper, and your other works, I am a better man in every way, more confident in myself, and far less selfish. I now take it as a pleasure to be able to help my fellows." Allowing for the warmth of enthusiasm, this is still very encouraging. We never valued the plaudits of the crowd, but we do value the thanks of those that we have definitely helped to a higher plane of thought and feeling. To have succeeded, however slightly, in that way, is not to have lived in vain.

H. R. C.—You don't say what paper the cutting is from.

ENQUIRER.—Mr. Foote has called himself an Atheist more times than we can tell you. See his pamphlet *What is Agnosticism?* which contains a defence of Atheism. Your other question must also be answered in the affirmative. Mr. Foote did playfully describe the Agnostic (many years ago) as an Atheist with a tall hat on. The epigram does not cover all the ground, but a good deal of it.

HARRY MOUNTAIN.—Glad you are pleased with the Paine portrait. We don't know why Julia Dawson, in the *Clarion*, referred to Miss Vance as "the late secretary of the National Secular Society." Perhaps it was a mercy that the "late" was not a little further on.

H. J. EARTHY.—Shall have attention. We admit the importance of the matter.

F. SIMMONDS.—Sorry we cannot answer your question.

W. P. BALL.—Much obliged for cuttings.

J. WEST.—We would rather have a fuller report of the Bishop's speech. We like to be fair, even to those who are seldom fair to us.

C. H. GODFREY (New Zealand).—Glad to hear the *Freethinker* has found you "hours of very delightful reading." The cutting you enclose may be useful.

DESPISER OF HUMBUGS (Sheffield).—Your letter will doubtless do good, though the reverend gentleman leaves it unanswered. We cannot work the Sheffield distribution of our Torrey pamphlets from London. It is to be hoped that the local "saints" will do their best to distribute copies at the Torrey-Alexander mission meetings.

W. P. MURRAY.—We have handed your request to Miss Vance. Thanks for good wishes.

ALFRED DELVE.—Our authority for the statement that the Wesleyan Conference, in 1841, passed a resolution that Wesleyan chapels should not be used for Temperance meetings, was the Rev. Dawson Burns' *Temperance History*, Part I., p. 190. Mr. Burns gives it as one of three resolutions on the subject, and calls them "painful facts."

JOHN TUCKWELL.—Your letter of August 31 was opened on our return from Paris, a week later. We really cannot undertake to follow you about in Victoria Park or elsewhere. We have our own work to attend to, and are nearly always engaged on Sunday. With regard to "challenges," we neither throw them out nor accept them. We never enter into public debates except with representative men, and there must be a proper committee, consisting of business men on both sides.

G. NEWMAN.—You will read what we have written on the Rome Congress.

YOUNGSTER.—Hardly up to the mark for publication yet.

W. DODD.—True believers often send us unstamped communications. They think it funny. We have had to give orders that all unstamped letters are to be refused at our office.

JAMES NEATE.—That is where it will probably go. They don't need to pray to the Lord for a good conceit of themselves.

G. PROTHEROE, 136 Court-street, Blaenclydach, Rhondda, supplies the *Freethinker* and other Secular publications.

J. TULLIN.—We do not feel justified in urging Freethinkers to throw their energies into the promotion of Sunday Lecture Societies. We prefer to see them promoting Freethought.

W. PALMER.—Thanks for your efforts to promote our circulation.

R. E. HOLDING.—It was not to be expected that the English papers would do any sort of justice to the Paris Freethought Congress.

J. BRIERLEY.—The other 5s. will be acknowledged next week, when we shall take the matter up again.

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.

Mr. Foote is now resuming his platform work. He lectures this evening at the Stanley Hall, near the "Boston," Junction-road, London, N., on "Why the 'Yellow Monkeys' Won: an Object Lesson to Christians." The admission is free, with reserved seats at 1s. and 6d. North London "saints" will doubtless advertise the lecture amongst their friends and acquaintances, and thus help to crowd the hall.

Mr. Foote opens the special course of lectures at the Stratford Town Hall next Sunday evening (Sept 24). We hope the local Freethinkers are doing their utmost to distribute the announcements of these meetings, which are arranged by the Secular Society, Limited, with the assistance of the West Ham N. S. S. Branch.

Mr. Cohen delivers two lectures to-day (Sept. 17) at the Alexandra Hall, Islington-square, Liverpool, for the local N. S. S. Branch. He will doubtless have large audiences and a hearty welcome. Mr. Ward had a fine reception there on Sunday after his return from the Paris Congress. The Liverpool Branch promises to forge ahead grandly this season.

Mr. John Lloyd delivers two lectures, afternoon and evening, in the Manchester Secular Hall to-day (Sept. 17). His speaking and his subjects should attract first-rate meetings. The "saints" of the Manchester district should do their best to fill the hall.

A new series of open-air Freethought lectures is being inaugurated in South London by Mr. Louis B. Gallagher, of the Camberwell Branch, and Mr. A. D. Howell Smith, B.A.,

who keeps the flag flying so bravely on Clapham Common. The first meeting takes place at 8 p.m., on Wednesday the 13th inst., at Rushcroft Road, Brixton (close to the Free Library), when Mr. Smith will speak. It is proposed to continue the series every Wednesday evening throughout the winter.

Mr. W. A. Vaughan reports that the London postmen say they like the *Freethinker*, and that they advised him to try to get a copy of it for use in the General Post Office library. Putting himself in communication with the Secretary, he has received a reply stating that the Committee have accepted his offer "with many thanks." This should be a rebuke to some "library" bigots in other quarters.

Room for Mirth.

For the Poor, no sweet to-morrow
Dawns for them with fruit and wine,
They are left to herd together,
Breed and rot, and starve and pine;
There in foetid dens and alleys
Poverty is overlord,
And, amid the filth and squalor,
Want sits ever at the board.

Low, and lower, are ye fallen,
While a Voice rings to the skies—
For the People equal Justice;
But the dust is in your eyes.
Ye are damned below the level
Of the common beasts, at birth.
Tell me, O ye starving millions,
Is there any room for mirth?

Mirth there is, for fiends, and fearful!
Mirth that shudders while it stings.
Life is but a dance of devils;
How the echoes roll and mount
Far along the hollow spaces
As the mocking laughter rings,
While the fulsome praise is shouted
In the leaden ears of kings;
Who indulge in idle pleasures
That are poisoned at the fount.
Jest and compliment commingle
To the twanging of a lute,
For the wine flows ripe and ruddy
Where the perfumed censer swings;
At a feast of Lords of Empire
Rags and hunger do not count—
They are busy making ready
Autocrat and titled lord
For the cult of human slaughter
And the glory of the sword.
But the grapes are turning yellow;
There's an aspick at the root,
All unheeded in the revel.
Lips partake of dead-sea fruit,
And, ere scarce the banquet's ended,
Death comes forth in sable suit.
So, these find their final level
Where the rotting darnel clings,
When the song and music ceases
Shivered on the broken strings!

WILLIAM EMSLEY.

The name of God

Has fenced about all crimes with holiness,
Himself the creature of his worshipers,
Whose names and attributes and passions change:
Siva, Buddh, Foh, Jehovah, God, or Lord,
Even with the human dupes who build his shrines,
Still serving o'er the war-polluted world,
For desolation's watch-word; whether hosts
Stain his death-blushing chariot-wheels, as on
Triumphantly they roll, whilst Brahmins raise
A sacred hymn to mingle with the groans;
Or countless partners of his power divide
His tyranny to weakness; or the smoke
Of burning towns, the cries of female helplessness,
Unarmed old age, and youth, and infancy,
Horribly massacred, ascend to heaven
In honor of his name; or, last and worst,
Earth groans beneath Religion's iron age,
And priests dare babble of a God of Peace,
Even whilst their hands are red with guiltless blood,
Murdering the while, uprooting every germ
Of truth, exterminating, spoiling all,
Making the earth a slaughter-house!

—SHELLEY, *Queen Mab*.

The Opposition of Protestantism to Science in the Nineteenth Century.

"Metamorphosis of the animal into the man. Strange that not only laymen, but naturalists even, should believe in the incarnation of God, but find the metamorphosis of the animal, the progressive development of monkey to man, incredible!"—D. F. STRAUSS, *The Old Faith and the New*, p. 11.

"Every reader who had arrived at years of reason and understanding by 1859 remembers how the clergy, as a body, railed and raved. I call to mind a sermon against Darwin that I heard as a boy, and the closing sentence rings in my ears now. It was typical of so much of the blatant, priestly outcry against the man and his works. 'Believe in Darwin!' cried the excited orator. 'Not I. I never read a word of him.'—DR. AVELING, *Darwin Made Easy*, p. 44.

"The 'descent from the ape,' which is most bitterly denied by those who are least raised by inner dignity of mind above the sensual basis of our existence."—LANGE, *History of Materialism*, vol. iii., p. 107.

MANY of the clergy of to-day have submitted to the inevitable, and are ready to admit—with many qualifications as to Soul and Spirit—the bodily descent of man from the lower animals; although they mostly keep a wary silence upon the subject while in the pulpit, under the plea that the church is not the proper place to teach science; in spite of which they are always ready to cite any point in science which they think makes for their case, and the dictum of a Kelvin or a Lodge, who countenance some vague and formless demi-semi residue of a sediment of religiosity, reverberates with monotonous iteration from pulpit to pulpit as the testimony of a "prince of science" to the truth of Christianity, in spite of the fact that their scientific compeers energetically repudiate their attempted resuscitation of the supernatural into the domain of science.

It was not so when Darwin first propounded his views, and the help of the clergy would have been of such great assistance in overcoming the prejudice with which a new truth is generally received. In fact, Darwin found all the Churches arrayed against him. They presented an unbroken front of bitter and unscrupulous hostility. It is the simple truth, as Dr. Aveling has remarked, that "not a single biologist whose views on religion have not been of a pronounced nature has opposed the ideas of Darwin." It admittedly was so in the case of the naturalist Agassiz. Of Adam Sedgwick, the geologist, it might be said, as Herbert Spencer said of Hugh Miller, that he was "a theologian studying geology." In 1844 the anonymous work, the *Vestiges of Creation*, appeared—a work written in a popular and attractive style, which was widely read, and prepared the way for the evolutionists. The teaching of the book has been described as "evolution tempered by miracle—a stretching out of the creative act through all time—a pious version of Lamarck."† However, it ignored the Bible, and that condemned it with the pious. Napier, the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, asked Sedgwick to write an article on it. In reply Sedgwick lets fly in the following fashion:—

"I do feel contempt, and, I hope, I shall express it. Rats hatched by incubation of a goose—dogs playing dominoes—monkeys breeding men and women—all distinctions between natural and moral done away—the Bible proved all a lie, and mental philosophy one mass of folly, all of it to be pounded down, and done over again in the cooking vessels of Gall and Spurzheim."

"This," says Mr. John Morley, "was the beginning

* *Darwin Made Easy*, p. 38.

† White, *Warfare of Science*, vol. i., p. 65. The work was written by Robert Chambers, who left God so little to do that it was hardly worth mentioning him at all. He ignored the Bible account of the Creation altogether. This alone was enough to condemn it with the pious. In fact, the work has never had justice done it. Even Professor Huxley went out of his way to pour contempt on it. Yet Chambers was nearer to the truth—barring miracles—than Huxley was at the time when the work was written, viz., fifteen years before Darwin—a fact, I suspect, which had something to do with the Professor's attitude. If the work did nothing besides popularising La Place's "Nebular Hypothesis"—showing how our earth, sun, and planets evolved by natural law—yet it did a good work.

of a long campaign, which is just now drawing near its close."* When Darwin published his great work on *The Origin of Species*, Sedgwick was one of its first assailants. Bain relates, in his *Autobiography*, how he was taken by Grote, the historian, to Trinity Lodge. During luncheon Sedgwick came in in a state of great excitement, and addressed Whewell to this effect: "Well, master, what do you think I've been doing all the morning? Reading Darwin's new book on *The Origin of Species*, that has just come into my hands.' He thereupon indulged in a vehement diatribe against Darwin—in which Whewell concurred—for setting aside the Creator in accounting for the Universe."† It was the "omniscient" Whewell who refused to allow a copy of *The Origin of Species* to be placed in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

Sedgwick, Whewell, and Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, brought all their influence to bear on the naturalist Owen to get him to oppose Darwin.

"When the *Origin* was published, the verdict of Owen was looked to with the greatest interest by the general public. For a time he wavered, and even expressed himself of the opinion that he had already in his published works included a considerable portion of Darwin's views. But two things seemed to have influenced him. First Wilberforce, the Bishop of Oxford, and Sedgwick and Whewell, the two best known men at Cambridge, urged him to stamp once for all, as he only could do, upon this 'new and pernicious doctrine.' Secondly, combined with his great abilities, he had the keenest personal interest in his own position as the leader of English science, and had no particular friendship for men or for views that seemed likely to threaten his own supreme position. In a very short time he changed from being neutral, with a tendency in favor of the new views, to being a bitter opponent of them. In scientific societies, and in London generally, naturally enough he constantly came across the younger scientific men, such as Huxley and Hooker, who had declared for Darwin, and he made the irretrievable mistake of for a time attempting to disguise his opposition while he was writing the most bitter of all the articles against Darwinism. That appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* in April, 1860, and the range of knowledge it displayed, and the form of arguments employed, naturally enough betrayed the secret of its authorship, although Owen for very long attempted to conceal his connection with it."‡

Sir David Brewster is an instance of which Lord Kelvin has lately given another example, of a man eminent in one branch of science delivering a verdict upon a subject upon which he was no more an authority than the man in the street. Dr. Aveling says: "It is a sad instance of how the physicist is not competent to deal with these biological questions, and least of all when his mind is warped by religion." In an article contributed to *Good Words* he denounced the speculations of Darwin, as "speculations which trench on sacred ground, which run counter to the universal convictions of mankind, poisoning the fountains of science, and disturbing the serenity of the Christian World." He cannot conceal his conviction "that the hypothesis, which he makes it the object of his life to support, has a tendency to expel the Almighty from the universe, to degrade the god-like act to which he has committed the development and appreciation of his power, and to render the revelation of his will an incredible superstition."

The *Saturday Review* declared that Darwinism "tends to trench upon the territory of established religious belief," and states "no conceivable amount of evidence derived from the growth and structure of animals and plants would have the slightest bearing upon our convictions in regard to the origin of conscience or man's belief in the Supreme Being and the immortality of his own soul." A good instance of the mulish stubbornness generated by implicit faith, against which reason and common-sense fight in vain.

The whole of the religious press arrayed themselves against Darwin. The *Evangelical Magazine* in reviewing a book against Darwinism by an obscure clergyman named Lyon, writes: "The writer of this little volume brings logic, scientific knowledge, and wit to bear in the exposition of Mr. Darwin's fallacies, and supplies an admirable refutation of his theories."

The *Christian World*, dealing with the same work, tells us that "from some previous acquaintance with the subject, I hesitate not to pronounce *Homo versus Darwin* a complete refutation of the assumptions and mischievous speculations of Darwin."*

In America, the editor of *The Christian*, urged frantically that "the battle be set in array, and that men find out who is on the Lord's side and who is on the side of the devil and the monkeys."

Bishop Wilberforce assailed Darwin in the *Quarterly Review*, 1860, declaring that Darwin's ideas were "absolutely incompatible" with the Word of God and its teachings as to man's supremacy over the earth, his free will and responsibility, his fall and redemption, "all are equally and utterly irreconcilable with the degrading notion of the brute origin of him who was created in the image of God and redeemed by the Eternal Son."

The Rev. W. Mitchell, Vice-president of the Victoria Institute, writes: "So far as I can understand the arguments of Mr. Darwin, they have simply been an endeavor to eject out of the idea of evolution the personal work of the Deity." The Rev. F. O. Morris says: "Does the good man think we are simpletons to be befooled by such trifling as this?.....This is the book that has been the Will-o'-the-wisp that has led away the weak-minded into Slough of Despond of a shallow and contemptible infidelity."

The Rev. B. G. Johns—whose words, as Dr. Aveling reminds us, "are those that the religious of twenty years ago would have endorsed almost to a man"—In a sermon entitled *Moses not Darwin*, declares "They are far more curiously anxious to prove man's nearness to the beasts that die than to accept his birth from the breath of a living God, as meant and made to be immortal. So monstrous, so incredible does this seem, that it sounds like a jest.....It is no jest, brethren, but the grave and shameful teaching of a book, now put forth by one of the men of science of this very age; calmly put forth as the inevitable and incomparable result of long, careful, and exhaustive study.....And if it be so, if the incredible boast of science be true, our text is a lie. And if the text be false, the whole book in which the words are shrined is unworthy of belief; the whole framework of the Book of Life falls to pieces, and the revelation of God to man, as we Christians know it, is a delusion and a snare." Well, "the incredible boast of science" is now admitted even by the clergy to be true, and we retort on the Christians that your "text is a lie," that the book "is unworthy of belief," that the Book of Life does "fall to pieces," and that the revelation of God to man "is a delusion and a snare."

In America, the Rev. Dr. Hodge, of Princeton University, denounced the doctrine of evolution as thoroughly "atheistic," and declared the Darwinian theory to be "utterly inconsistent with the Scriptures."† Dr. Talmage roundly declared "that the doctrines of Herbert Spencer and Darwin are "out-and-out infidelity."‡ The *Monthly Religious Magazine*, of Boston, congratulates its readers that the Rev. Mr. Burr had "demolished the evolution theory, knocking the breath of life out of it, and throwing it to the dogs."§ Even as late as 1891 at a Methodist Conference held at Washington, Bishop Keener advised his hearers to "Go home; get rid of

* *Studies in Literature* (1891), p. 322.

† *Athenaeum*, June 25, 1904.

‡ Huxley, Chalmers Mitchell (1900), pp. 115-116.

* *Darwin Made Easy*, p. 42.

† White, *Warfare of Science*, vol. i., p. 79.

‡ *Knowledge*, Feb., 1883.

§ *Warfare of Science*, vol. i., p. 80.

this doctrine of evolution that puts a bomb at the bottom of the Pentateuch and Moses that will blow you up if you don't get rid of it. If you can't get rid of the doctrine, get rid of the men and the institutions that teach it, no matter how dear they are to you. They will blow you up if you don't."

Protestants rail against the Catholics for persecuting Galileo, but it is very evident that it was only the lack of power that prevented them from treating Darwin in the same manner.

Darwin's theory is now as firmly established as that of Galileo. As Professor Haeckel says, "It is only the ignorant or narrow-minded who can now doubt their truth."* Professor De Bois Reymond terms Darwin "the Copernicus of the organic world."† Richard Proctor, the astronomer, speaks of him as "the Newton of our own time."‡ The famous Helmholtz declared that "Darwin's theory contains an essentially new creative thought." Professor Fiske says of him: "Among all the great leaders of human thought that have ever lived there are not half-a-dozen who have achieved so much as he. In an age that has been richer than any preceding age in great scientific names, his name is indisputably foremost. He has already found his place in the history of science by the side of Aristotle, Descartes, and Newton."§ Professor Ray Lankaster speaks of him as "that greatest of living naturalists—I would say that greatest of living men—Charles Darwin."|| Professor Romanes remarks that: "Of very few men in the history of our race can it be said that they not only enlarged science, but changed it—not only added facts to the growing structure of natural knowledge, but profoundly modified the basal conceptions upon which the whole structure rested; and of no one can this be said with more truth than it can be said of Darwin."¶

We cannot do better than conclude with the remark of Professor Huxley: "He found a great truth trodden under foot, reviled by bigots, and ridiculed by all the world, he lived long enough to see it, chiefly by his own efforts irrefragably established in science, inseparably incorporated with the common thoughts of men, and only hated and feared by those who would revile but dare not."**

W. MANN.

"Without the Shedding of Blood is No Remission."

THE Bible is full of blood. It is so saturated with blood that it may be truthfully called a bloody book. Is there another book in the world with so much blood in it as the Bible? There may be, for the number of books is almost numberless, and life is too short to be acquainted with all of them. But I know of no book so full of blood as the Bible. Should Christians or others object to the use of the word "bloody" they may be reminded that it is a Biblical word, and therefore must be quite legitimate.

The word "bloody" means, not only stained with blood, but also murderous cruelty, butchery. And where will you find more butchery than in the Bible? According to the Bible, God is the archbutcher of the universe. If the Bible is true, the greatest monster of eternity is God. But the Bible is not true. The deeds and words of God, as told in the sacred Book, are mostly priestly lies. But in order to argue with believers we must assume the truth of the Biblical narrative.

God delighted in blood, insisted on having blood,

and would be satisfied with nothing but blood. We can understand why the priests preferred lambs and bullocks without blemish. They liked lamb chops and beefsteaks well done or underdone. But we cannot so well understand why God demanded the blood of lambs and bullocks. But he did. It was He that ordained the sacrifices, and gave instruction how they were to be killed and their blood was to be disposed of. Thus we read: "And thou shalt cause a bullock to be brought before the tabernacle of the congregation; and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the heads of the bullock. And thou shalt kill the bullock before the Lord by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And thou shalt take of the blood of the bullock and put it on the horns of the altar with thy finger, and pour all the blood beside the bottom of the altar" (Ex. xxix. 10-12). In other parts it is directed that some of the blood was to be sprinkled on the worshippers as well. Most of the worship at first seems to consist of killing beasts, and various rites with their blood—by the priests, as a matter of course. Evidently God delighted in blood.

The tragedy of Cain and Abel is in full harmony with God's love of blood. "And in process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruits of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell" (Gen. iv. 3-5). Evidently the Lord was a bloody God—that is, he loved blood, and enjoyed the sweet savor of cooked meat; and the murder of Abel, which was a serious crime, was the result.

The Lord would accept nothing but blood as an atonement. Hear what the Lord said: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11). All the blood was for the Lord. If any Jew ate any kind of blood, his blood was to be shed, for the Lord said: "Whosoever soul it be that eateth any manner of blood, even that soul shall be cut off from his people" (Lev. vii. 27). But though the Jews were not to eat blood under pain of death, they were ordered to shed as much blood as they could, and cursed if they did not do it: "And cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood" (Jer. xlviii. 10). Meroz was cursed because they came not to help the Lord to shed the blood of his foes (Judges v. 23). What can be more bloody than the order given by God to his chosen people? "Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and children. And this is the thing that ye shall do. Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man" (Judges xxi. 10-11). A more gory ogre never existed in imagination than the God of the Jews.

The deeds of God, as well as his words, are bloody. What can be more bloody than the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah? "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground" (Gen. xix. 24, 25). The blood of old and young, women and innocent children, was shed and consumed by fire, to appease the wrath of their Heavenly Father, who is a God of love.

But that ghastly massacre pales with insignificance before the bloody drowning of the whole world except Noah and his family, and the menagerie in the ark. The deluge of water outside must have made a deluge of blood, even innocent blood, inside. However guilty the adults, men and women, might be, children and infants and unborn living souls were innocent and deserved no punishment. But the great butcher shed their blood with the guilty and spared not the beasts of the field and the birds of the air which had not sinned, and could not sin,

* *Monism*, 1895, p. 39.

† *Darwin Made Easy*, p. 48.

‡ *Contemporary Review*, May, 1878.

§ *Excursions of an Evolutionist*, p. 389.

|| *Memorial Notice*, p. 57.

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

** Introduction to *Memorial Notice*.

against him. Here is the Bible account of the RECORD BUTCHERY of the world: "All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man and cattle, and creeping things, and the fowls of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth; and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark" (Gen. vii. 22, 23). And the bloody monster who destroyed the life of a world in plants, beasts, and man is worshiped by Christians as a Heavenly Father and a God of love.

The record of blood in the Old Testament is almost inexhaustible, and all of a character with the quoted examples; and in the New Testament blood is met with throughout. The verse at the head of this article, "Without shedding of blood is no remission," indicates the importance of blood in Christianity. The teaching is plain that there is no salvation for sinners, no forgiveness of sin, without blood. And it is not spiritual blood, but real material blood, as will be seen presently. In the Old Testament it was the real blood of bullocks and lambs that made and was accepted as an atonement for souls. But in the New Testament God has advanced downwards, and demands atonement by human material blood. Nothing would appease his wrath but the blood of the Son of Man, who was the Son of God, and God himself in the flesh of man, if the Bible is true. God was so angry that he could not forgive sin without killing his only Son, and therefore killing himself, to make a bloody atonement to himself for the sin of man. The logic is positive. If there is only one God, and Jesus was God in the flesh, God killed himself when he sacrificed Jesus to make an atonement to himself for sin.

In the Old Testament the atonement by the blood of beasts and their flesh was for God and the priests. In the New Testament the blood and the flesh are for the saints. It is a descent into pure cannibalism. In the Old Testament whoever ate blood was to be put to death. In the New Testament whoever refuse to eat the flesh and drink the blood are to be damned. Here is the proof: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, how can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwell in me and I in him" (John vi. 51-56). That these words are to be taken literally is palpable. No sophistical ingenuity can make any sense in them without taking them in their literal meaning. There are many other passages that confirm that view. The Jews who heard him understood him in a literal sense, and asked how he could give his flesh to eat?

He never corrected them as he ought to have done if they mistook his meaning. Even his disciples understood him in a literal sense. "Many, therefore, of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" "From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him" (John vi. 60-66). Such saying and conduct on the part of his disciples would be inexplicable unless the words spoken were to be taken in their literal sense. Catholic Christians, who are the most numerous of all the sects, accept the words in their literal sense, and the doctrine of Transubstantiation is founded upon them and other passages attributed to Jesus.

There is really nothing new in the doctrine. The Jews, being accustomed to sacrifice beasts to their God, and being forbidden to eat their blood, were naturally shocked at the idea of eating human flesh

and drinking human blood. But it would not shock cannibals nor any devotees of ancient Pagan religions. Love Feasts, or Lord's Supper, was common to all Pagan religions from time immemorial. And in most, if not all, of them, at first, human sacrifice formed part of the supper. Human flesh was eaten and human blood was imbibed. At first it was the chief or king, as representative of their god, that was sacrificed, and his worshipers ate his flesh and drank his blood. After a long while the king gave his sons or daughters to be sacrificed as substitutes. In course of time strangers and prisoners of war were substituted for sons and daughters and near relatives. Stories of gods and sons of gods sacrificing themselves for their devotees to eat their flesh and drink their blood was common in all Pagan countries. The origin of the Christian Lord's Supper is clearly Pagan in all its details.

This doctrine of blood and cannibalism is horrible. To keep it alive by a sacrament, and dangle it before the eyes of the public as a holy emblem of God's love and mercy, is a libel on God and an outrage on decency. To sing about being washed clean in a fountain of blood is not only ridiculous twaddle, but the acme of insanity. The idea of eating human flesh and drinking human blood to save the soul is filthy and disgusting. The barbarians who originated the idea knew no better; but the intelligence of the twentieth century know that the story is a myth that ought to take a seat with the myths of Rome, Greece, Egypt, and Assyria. The idea that God would demand and accept blood, either beastly or human, as an atonement for sin and as a means to cleanse the moral filthy, is an absurdity. The doctrine is not only bloody, but beastly also. As long as priests are allowed to corrupt the minds of children with such doctrines purified humanity will be an impossibility.

R. J. DERFEL.

Revised Hymns.—No. 4.

TO THY TEMPLE I REPAIR.

To thy temple I repair,
Just to watch the fashions there,
While the prayers of saints ascend,
I can note the colors blend.

While thy ministers proclaim
Peace and pardon, joy or shame,
Through their eyes, by faith, may I
All the latest modes descry.

While I hearken to the saw
Of the parson without awe,
May his message bring to me
Visions of the styles to be!

Garments rich, of varied hue,
Gratefully I here review;
Bonnets, each one "such a love,"
Fit for saints to wear "above."

While we linger here below,
Let us to the best shops go,
And obtain a perfect fit—
Saints in church with sinners sit.

From thy home when I return,
May my heart within me burn,
And at evening let me say
"I have seen the style to day."

GERALD GREY.

The first lesson to learn is that there are other people in the world besides yourself.—*Hazlitt*.

Liberty is the nurse of all great wits.—*Milton*.

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.

STANLEY HALL (Junction-road, N.): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "Why the 'Yellow Monkeys' Won: an Object Lesson to Christians."

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Liberal Hall, Broadway, Forest Gate, E.): 7.30, W. Gregory, "First Century Christians, The New People."

OUTDOOR.

BATTERSEA BRANCH N. S. S. (Battersea Park Gates): 11.30, a Lecture.

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

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S.: Station-road, 11.30, R. P. Edwards and J. Aitken, Debate, "The Teachings of Jesus"; Brockwell Park, 3.15, R. P. Edwards. Wednesdays, at 8.30, corner of Rushcroft-road, Brixton.

CLAPHAM COMMON: 3, A. D. Howell-Smith, B.A., "The Message of Freethought."

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

COUNTRY.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): C. Cohen, 3, "The Expansion of Man"; 7, "The Non-Religion of the Future." Monday, 8, Rationalist Debating Society: J. Murphy, "The Law of Gravitation Non-Existent."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, All Saints): Sept. 24, J. T. Lloyd, "Should Freethinkers Be Miserable?" and "Do We Need a Religion?"

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

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, Market-Place): 7.30, Business Meeting.

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