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PRICE TWOPENCE

What an ornament and safeguard is humor!.....It is a genius itself, and so defends from the insanities.
—EMERSON.

Gladstone's Foolish Friends.

A MEMORIAL of the late William Ewart Gladstone has just been unveiled in Hawarden parish church. It was designed by Sir W. Richmond, R.A., and shows the effigies in white Carrara marble of Gladstone and his wife lying in a boat with two prows, which is represented as ploughing its way through the sea of life. The prows are winged, according to a reference in Homer. An owl represents the great statesman's wisdom, and the hands of the figures rest on the Cross, symbolising the faith of the devoted couple. A figure of Jesus Christ typifies peace. At the four ends of the Cross are the emblems of the four evangelists, while an angel, with outstretched arms, supports the cushion on which the heads of the figures rest. So far the memorial is satisfactorily Christian, except for that owl, which, of course, is borrowed from the Grecian mythology. But the niches at the corner of the tomb contain figures of Homer, Aristotle, and King David; who, we are told, are "fruitful types of manhood admired by Mr. Gladstone." Of the King David we say nothing. If that was Gladstone's taste it is hardly worth discussing now. Homer and Aristotle, however, were both Greeks; so that two out of three of Gladstone's "fruitful types of manhood" belong to the race to whom the gospel of Christ was "foolishness." And this is a highly important fact in view of what we shall have to say presently.

The central panel of the memorial bears a simple record of Gladstone's name, and of the dates of his birth, marriage, and death; together with one quotation from the Psalms, and two from his own utterances. The first of these is a declaration of his attachment to "the divinity of our Lord"—the second is as follows:—

"Be inspired with the belief that life is a great and noble calling, not a mean and grovelling thing that we are to shuffle through as best we can, but an elevated and lofty destiny."

Unfortunately this quotation is only too characteristic of Gladstone's thought and style. The matter is essentially commonplace, and the manner is pretentiously futile. The whole sentence is an example of how *not* to write or speak. Every clause of the sentence has its two adjectives for each substantive, simply because Gladstone was an "orator" who dealt in rounded mouthfuls. "Great" in the first clause includes all that can be meant by "noble" in such a connection, "mean" is only more sonorous in "grovelling," and "elevated" and "lofty" are obviously tautological. Yet this unfortunate sentence is placed as "an overlasting record" on the G. O. M.'s tomb, and has actually been quoted with admiration and reverence by Mr. John Morley, who must have recognised it as shoddy composition if he had not been under the glamor of Gladstone's strangely magnetic personality.

The Bishop of Stepney was the preacher at Hawarden church on Sunday morning, and he pronounced a singular eulogy on the lost Liberal leader.

We take the following sentences from the summary report in the *Daily News*:—

"His faith in Jesus Christ, God, and man was the great master-conviction of his life. Legislators had been more successful and permanent in their results, there had been leaders of great parties as commanding and skilful, masters of Parliament as brilliant and as resourceful, orators as cogent and persuasive, but he doubted whether in the whole course of English statesmen there had been one who lived so near to the eternal world of God, of Christ, and of life to come."

This reminds us a good deal of the "poor but honest" parents of the gentleman in the story. It even recalls the criticism of one who, on being informed that a popular versifier was a Christian poet, replied "Oh, yes, he's a Christian."

Will the fact that Gladstone was a Christian statesman carry his name down to posterity? Byron, in the *Vision of Judgment*, could say almost as much as that of George III. That monarch had a good stock of the common Christian virtues, but as a ruler he was "mad and blind," and the nation suffered accordingly. The eulogists of Charles I. never tire of praising his virtues as a husband and a father; but he was a shuffler and a liar in public life. Something more than that he was a Christian must be said of any man to convince the world that he was worth remembering; and the Bishop of Stepney seems to stake everything on Gladstone's Christianity.

Our contemporary, the *Daily Chronicle*, which is nearly as pious now as the *Daily News*, devoted a leaderette to the Gladstone memorial, and delivered itself as follows:—

"Gladstone was fashioned in an heroic mould. How empty and trivial the political arena became when his mighty figure disappeared! Someone has finely said that the poor man confronts the world with a proud and elate look when he thinks of Robert Burns. So the oppressed of every race and every clime thrilled at the name of Gladstone. Liberty has never had a truer or more unflinching champion. One of Gladstone's characteristics was fearlessness. The secret of his splendid courage was to be found in his Christian faith."

Undiscriminating praise like this can be supplied by the yard in Fleet-street. What, after all, was Gladstone's contribution to human liberty? He went to Naples in his younger days, he visited the dungeons of some of the political prisoners there, and he wrote a pamphlet declaring that King Bemba's government was a negation of God. No very great courage was needed to do this, and Naples was a long way off. There were many Chartists and Freethinkers in English prisons, and we never heard that Gladstone said a word for one of them; but several Chartists were indebted to the good services of Disraeli. Many years afterwards, when Gladstone headed the movement for throwing his great political rival out of power, he waxed wonderfully eloquent over the "Bulgarian atrocities." They were bad enough, it is true, but what moved the great Liberal leader, apart from party policy, was the fact that the perpetrators of the atrocities were Mohammedans and their victims were Christians. His passion for humanity in that case was largely a matter of religious partizanship. All the other atrocities in the world, particularly those in Russia, where the best men and women of the nation were treated with incredible brutality, quite escaped his attention. In the great American war between North and South he started by taking the wrong side. His conversion

to Home Rule was at the eleventh hour of his life, when he saw it was easier to work with the Irish party than against them. India, with its three hundred millions of people, and its long story of wrongs and suffering, did not elicit any protest from this "unflinching champion of liberty." The reputation he gained in this respect was founded upon the most absurdly trivial performance. To mention him as a champion of liberty in the same breath with Mazzini and Garibaldi, for instance, is little less than sacrilege. What did Gladstone ever sacrifice? Mazzini and Garibaldi gave all they had to liberty; they gave *themselves*—which was the greatest of gifts.

Had the *Chronicle* writer thought while he wrote, he would never have represented the political arena as empty and trivial after Gladstone's disappearance. What a compliment to the living Liberal leaders whose praises are sung in the *Chronicle* every day! And there is just the same lack of thought in the reference to the secret of Gladstone's courage. If it was due to his Christian faith, how is it that the faith is common and the courage exceptional? And how is it that splendid courage is displayed by men who have no Christian faith at all? Bradlaugh was at least as brave as Gladstone. What was the secret of *his* courage? The truth is that courage has no more to do with Christianity than it has to do with the price of oysters. Courage is partly temperamental, and partly the result of social training. It was in the latter respect that the Japs excelled the Russians. Supernaturalism on either side has no bearing upon the problem. Certainly the world is not indebted to Christianity for its courage. There were men of genius in the world before Christianity arose. There were also men of the loftiest intrepidity. "There were men and nations not equalled even at the present day," as Trelawny said in the noble page on which he emphasised the atheism of Shelley.

G. W. FOOTE.

A Royal Commission on the Clergy.

It appears to have escaped general knowledge that some time ago our present Government, with its avowed interest in things religious, appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the condition, earnings, and status of the English clergy. The Commission duly set to work, made a number of inquiries, heard a large number of witnesses, and finally reported thereon. This report has not yet been issued to the public—there is, indeed, reason to believe it never will be; but having, by a curious chance, come into possession of a copy of the report, I am thus able to place the principal portions thereof before readers of the *Freethinker*.

In a kind of preamble the report says:—

"The subject of the appended inquiry deals with what was once unquestionably—if we exclude the military—the largest and most flourishing occupation in the British Isles. Although of foreign origin, its growth in these islands was very rapid, and for generations it gave employment to a large number of people—how large, there are no reliable figures upon which a calculation may be based. For many years, however, owing to the competition of an increasing number of new occupations, there has been probably an absolute, but certainly a relative, decrease in the number employed. New occupations do not, however, account for all, since it appears that the home industry has suffered severely through importations from Italy in an earlier period, and later from Germany and France. These importations, consisting of ideas totally at variance with the best interests of the clerical profession, have worked irreparable havoc among those on whom the clergy depended for support; and your Commissioners are convinced that, could a more rigid system of protection have been maintained, what is now a decaying industry might have been in a far more flourishing condition."

Under the head of "Occupation," the Commissioners report:—

"Considerable difficulty has been experienced by your Commissioners in arriving at an exact estimate of the number of persons engaged in this profession. Although

those so engaged are banded together on the usual trades-union lines, yet, owing to these being split up into a number of more or less autonomous societies, and also to the animosity existing between them, we have been unable to obtain exact figures. Still, we are convinced that between 40,000 and 50,000 would be an approximate estimate—the larger figure being probably nearest the truth. The difficulty of an exact calculation is enhanced by the fact that this particular occupation has associated therewith a large number of practitioners who have no official or trade rank. These seem attracted thereto by various motives—love of gain, dissatisfaction with more laborious methods of employment, sheer vanity, or the mistaken idea that they are specially fitted for the work. But your Commissioners have observed that there are few occupations so easy to follow, or that demand less preparation for those who adopt it.

While on the whole this occupation seems to be a fairly healthy one, we yet find associated therewith diseases and disorders of a well-defined character. These affections, while not confined to this profession, certainly manifest themselves to a quite abnormal extent. Your Commissioners feel themselves justified in assuming, therefore, that while these diseases may be produced, they are certainly and generally aggravated by the occupation in question. These maladies are very largely of a mental character, but one may cite among the more physical ones the great prevalence of myopia and other forms of ophthalmia. The majority seem quite incapable of seeing things in their right proportions or in their true relation to other things. Aphasia is also common. Under this head may be noted the prevalence of amnesia, there being a marked inability in a large number of cases to find and use the right word in describing people or things. In a series of experiments conducted by your Commissioners, in which the subjects of investigation used such words as 'Faith,' 'Miracle,' 'Inspiration,' 'Providence,' etc., it was found that there existed nothing like a common agreement as to meaning, and indeed in a large number of cases meanings quite at variance with the legitimate ones were given to the words in question. Mental disorders are deplorably common, notably various kinds of ego-mania. The delusion that they are called to their work by a supernatural power seems to be held by all; and although your Commissioners pointed out to these unfortunate people that their trade was generally selected for them by parents or guardians, that they served an apprenticeship as in other trades, the delusion seemed unshakable. An inflated egoism leading men, often of less than mediocre attainments, to publicly declare the belief that their existence is essential to the national well-being, with the refusal to look at national concerns from that of any other point of view than of their own sub-union, demonstrate the existence of mental disorders of a most distressing kind.

Your Commissioners also desire to record their conviction that most of these people appear to have brought their disorders into the trade, if these were not the actual condition of their adopting it. In this way there appears to have been a process of selection at work, by means of which people of weak or disordered intellect are deliberately kept from other professions and placed in this one. In this direction the clerical profession certainly serves a useful function, since it provides an opening for people afflicted in the manner described, and who might otherwise lower the general character of other trades, or become a burden on their friends or on the public purse. But in the course of its investigations your Commissioners have come across not a few cases where the more brilliantly endowed members of a family have been selected for other callings, leaving the less endowed for this one. It may also be noted that the conditions of the occupation tend to aggravate whatever weakness the subject starts with. The system of apprenticeship seems elaborated to this end. During the course of training to which they are subjected independent thinking is strongly discouraged, the official text-books with which the students are supplied are mostly of an antiquated kind, the students are shut off from all advanced knowledge having a bearing on their profession, all of which combine to produce a degree of weakness and helplessness painful to behold, and fatal to their helpful efficiency in after life.

Concerning the earnings of this class your Commissioners have also failed in securing exact figures. Many who complained that their incomes were miserably small were found to have deducted therefrom the cost of clothing, boots, food, rent, riding, etc., and only to reckon as earnings the residuum. Some certainly

possess large incomes. Others, again, are comparatively small, although the average for the whole of the industry is certainly not insignificant. But here it is to be observed that the only satisfactory test is to take this industry in relation to other industries, and with regard to its social efficiency. So far as the last factor is concerned, we have quite failed to discover any useful function subserved by this profession. Certainly there are no social functions that would not go on as well in its absence as at present. Moreover, we have had evidence placed before us which goes to show that these persons are largely the agents of other interests in the country, and by their activity during election times, as well as on other occasions, distract public attention from issues that are of vital consequence to the well-being of the nation. And, with regard to the first, the earnings of this industry in relation to others, your Commissioners observe that, while many may possess but meagre incomes, there is no reason whatever for imagining that they would be better paid in other occupations. Thrown on the ordinary labor-market, the presumption is that their earnings would be less than they are at present."

The report contains a list of "suggestions," from which I take the following:—

"Although your Commissioners are strongly impressed with the conviction that the industry under examination is a dying one, and one impossible of permanent preservation, it does not advise any very drastic action. Much might be done by selecting the younger and healthier persons, teaching them a new trade, and thus surround them with a healthier environment. But obviously this could only be applied to a small number of people. Many having been placed in this trade because their natural qualities did not permit of their adopting with profit any other, it would be unwise to expect that the method suggested above would be of any value except in relation to a few. And, bearing in mind the large numbers engaged in this profession, very serious evils might result from throwing on to the world, destitute of either natural or other resources, a body of men incapacitated by inclination, by training, and by custom, from earning a living in other directions. Apart, too, from the financial aspect, we would point out that, in segregating a certain type of mind, the clerical profession does perform something of a social service. Of the evils resulting when this type of mind emerges in politics there is ample evidence; and therefore the letting loose of some 50,000 men in the political field could not but be productive of much injury. Probably the most satisfactory plan would be the establishment of a fund from which might be drawn yearly incomes for such as are fitted by nature for no other industry or occupation than the one in question. This would serve the purpose of keeping them from lowering the tone of other professions, and, at the same time, the inevitable growth of public education and public opinion might be trusted to make the type less numerous in future."

There are many other important passages in the report, but I have given nearly all that are of interest to readers of this journal. It is to be hoped that some member of Parliament will take the matter up, and press the Government for the speedy publication of the work of the Commission.

C. COHEN.

Why Christ Has Failed.

WE have seen that an honest reading of the facts of history in Christendom necessitates the concession that Christ has failed both as Savior and as King. In the opinion of many he has not only failed to fulfil his promise but been the means of putting back the clock of human progress. Be this as it may, it behoves us, while face to face with the fact of his failure, to search for the cause or causes of it. Why has he failed? A few months ago, the Rev. D. W. Forrest, D.D., of Edinburgh, published a volume entitled *The Authority of Christ*, which must be pronounced one of the ablest and most suggestive works on orthodox Christology and its bearings on practical life. Dr. Forrest is a ripe scholar, a comprehensive thinker, and a lucid writer. He conscientiously examines the problems, and offers what he honestly considers satisfactory solutions. This book of over

four hundred pages does not contain one dull or ambiguous sentence, nor can a single paragraph be justly characterised as disingenuous. Dr. Forrest endeavors to be fair and unprejudiced in all his arguments, although in this praiseworthy object his success is only very partial. The subject discussed throughout is the *authority* of Christ in religion, in its source, nature, and results; and after a careful perusal of the ingenious treatise the only conclusion to which we can come is that the author has signally failed to make good his case.

To begin with, Dr. Forrest's doctrine of the Incarnation is utterly irrational. To him Christ is neither pure God nor pure man, but a strange mixture of the two. When the Eternal Son of God became flesh he limited himself, and became conditioned by time and space. *Before* this happened he possessed all knowledge and all power, but *subsequent* to this event both his knowledge and his power were under the same limitations as those of ordinary men. Christ did not know whether Moses wrote the Pentateuch or not, how many, if any, psalms were composed by king David, whether the book of Jonah was history or parable. The history of the great world was as unknown to him as to any other Jew similarly brought up; and he could no more predict the future than he could fly to the moon. As this is a point of supreme importance it is but fair to give the author's own words:—

"The idea that Christ as the Incarnate Son possessed every mental quality and acquisition may be dismissed as baseless if we allow the portrait given in the Gospels to bear its own witness. The course of the world's history, apart from that of His own race, seems to have been known to Him in no other way and in no greater degree than to others of his fellow-countrymen. There is no indication of any acquaintance with the details of the story of Greece or Rome. The non-Jewish peoples are massed together in the commonly accepted designation of Gentiles.....Greek philosophy and Roman law had apparently no place in His thought. If we are told that He knew these, but had no occasion to refer to them, we naturally ask what ground there is for the supposition. And no reply can be given but the old arbitrary hypothesis that the Son of God *must* have known them."

Much more might be quoted to the same effect. Take the following as a fine specimen:—

"And just as His thought was not the omniscience proper to Deity, so His miracles were not the outcome of the omnipotence proper to Deity. Neither His words nor His acts were those of the Eternal Son in His absolute being, but of the Son speaking and acting under human conditions as Son of Man. No one can fail to see that He regarded His life as one long obedience. He was there by the will of Another, and only carried out a mission entrusted. 'As I hear I judge.' And Obedience has for its correlative Dependence. He received before He gave, and derived not only the command, but the power to fulfil it, from the Father."

Such is Dr. Forrest's theory of the Incarnation. Let us look at it. Christ possessed neither omniscience nor omnipotence; but he had previously existed from all eternity as a Being who possessed both. Then he knew and could do all things. It was by him the Universe was created, and it was in him it consisted. Then he was present everywhere, and nothing was hidden from him. Now, this Eternal Son condescended voluntarily to be born on earth in the form of a man, and at once his omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence deserted him, or, as the theologians put it, he willingly surrendered them in the service of the grand scheme of salvation. At any rate, he lost them, and appeared in the guise of an ordinary human individual. *It was a case of a complete loss of memory.* We read of many such cases among men, but the loss of memory among men is caused by some serious disease. *No man can voluntarily lose his memory without damaging his brain.* But, according to Dr. Forrest, the Eternal Son of God voluntarily surrendered his omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence without for a moment ceasing to be the Eternal Son; that is to say, he volunteered to give up his memory. *Did he retain anything?* Let the whole earth give heed; yes, he

retained his mind, but not his knowledge; his personality, but not its attributes; his identity, but not its characteristics. Let me give the author's own words here:—

"When we speak of two minds or two wills as united in His person, we are not reading from the facts: we are arbitrarily creating for ourselves a difficulty which they do not present. The person was divine, but self-restrained within the limits of humanity; His thoughts *typically* those of a human mind, His resolves those of a human will. The Incarnate retained, indeed, His consciousness of Deity, knew Himself to be the Eternal Son, but never broke through the restrictions of the human nature which He had voluntarily assumed."

The only adjective by which we can adequately describe such teaching is *preposterous*. Christ was the Eternal Son self-restrained, imprisoned by himself, within the limits of a mindless, soulless, willless, impersonal humanity. Take humanity as we know it, subtract from it will, mind, personality, and then tell me how much humanity remains. Well, it was in such a humanity that the Eternal Son chose to imprison himself.

This is a comparatively new doctrine, and Dr. Forrest adopts it in order to account for the undoubted limitations of the Christ of the Gospels, and for the impossibility of accepting him as an authority in matters of literary criticism and scientific research. As a scholar, Dr. Forrest knows full well that in such matters Christ was not superior to the average peasant of his time and race, and that to accept him as an authority with regard to them, as many still do, is the very height of absurdity. But Dr. Forrest is a *theologian* as well as a *scholar*; and as a theologian, he is bound to defend, against all attacks, the absolute authority of Christ *in all matters of religion*. "The recognition," he says, "that such was the character of the Son's incarnate state is a prime necessity for Christian faith at the present time." And just here our author lets the cat out of the bag: "For this age is pre-eminently one of historical research, bent on discovering as far as possible the actual facts of the past. Now it has been demonstrated beyond dispute that there are sayings of our Lord which, taken literally, seem to conflict with established results of biblical investigation, and that his teaching in many of its parts is colored by temporary Jewish influences." That Christ was ignorant on many points is indisputable; but Dr. Forrest asserts that his ignorance was due to a voluntary surrender of knowledge. There was a time when he knew all things, and could have made no mistakes; but on becoming flesh he forgot all he formerly knew, and had to learn like other human beings. No, replies Dr. Forrest, he did not forget *all* his previous knowledge, but only a *part* of it. "We do not claim that Christ's word is final in all spheres, but we do claim that He has embodied in His person and in the principles He has expounded the final revelation of religious truth, of 'what man is to believe concerning God, and what duties God requires of man.'"

Surely, this is unconscious sophistry glorified. Christ taught and acted in two different spheres, or, as Bishops Martensen and Gore put it, "*from two non-communicating centres*." In the one sphere, we can test his utterances with our acquired knowledge; and in this sphere, the progressive divine assures us, his word is no longer claimed as final. But in the other sphere, into which we cannot follow him with any of our critical tests, he is hailed as the "final definitive authority." In other words, in the sphere in which he has been found out to be frequently unreliable and false, his authority is being disowned, but in the sphere concerning which his statements can be neither proved nor disproved, he is declared to be the one infallible guide and absolute authority.

No wonder that thinkers like Sabatier "repudiate the Incarnation altogether as a ridiculous impossibility," and call Dr. Forrest's doctrine "the theory according to which the pre-existent and eternal Deity commits suicide by incarnating himself, in order gradually to be reborn and find himself God

again at the end of his human life." Dr. Forrest tries to parry this thrust by observing that "the Christian Church does not affirm the incarnation of God in his absolute being," as if a portion, an aspect, or a mode of the divine Personality could be broken off and made flesh.

Now, is it not clear that one reason why Christ has failed is that he has been and still is represented as an altogether impossible being? Dr. Forrest says: "To call Him God is true; to call Him man is true; to call Him either exclusively is false." Such a being is an enormity, a monstrosity, an inconceivability, and you will never get intelligent people to believe in it. Again: "The Gospels warrant the belief that He who lived and died as Jesus of Nazareth was none other than the Word made flesh; they do not warrant our ascription to Him of all the prerogatives that belong to His Godhead." Fancy God stripped of his attributes and prerogatives, and clothed with the attributes and limitations of man, and yet retaining his divine Personality! Such a being is a phantom of the theologic mind, and cannot secure the respect and work out the redemption of the world; and no wonder that, in the light of modern knowledge, the number of his followers is steadily decreasing. Dr. Forrest's Christ is an ingenious invention, a metaphysical conjecture of the subtlest sort, an interesting problem in psychical manifestation, but certainly not a being to be loved as Brother, obeyed as Master, and worshiped as God. Christ has failed because he is an impossible being. But there are other reasons for his failure, some of which are to be found in Dr. Forrest's able book.

J. T. LLOYD.

(To be continued.)

Thomas Lake Harris.

THERE is no end to the gullibility of mankind. There are millions of people who seem incapable of any degree of happiness unless they are the dupes of some impostor or other. Yesterday it was one form of slavery; to-day it is another; to-morrow it will be another still; but there never has been a day yet without its full quota of tyrants and slaves. In the religious world this is specially the case. For fifteen years Dr. Dowie reigned supreme in the hearts and consciences and pockets of thousands of his fellow-beings. His word was law in every department of life. His day is over. Though still alive he is utterly discredited throughout Zion as well as the world. Another notorious slave-holder has just joined the majority. Thomas Lake Harris was a more bar-faced tyrant than Dowie. Harris was an Englishman, born at Fenny Stratford, in Buckinghamshire. His family emigrated to the States when he was about five years old. When grown up, he was first a Unitarian, then a Swedenborgian, then the head of a community of Spiritualists. He was a man of parts. He wrote much poetry, and as a poet our present Laureate ranked him very high. He owned and edited periodicals, and he published many books which in certain circles created quite a stir. Fifty years ago he established himself as a preacher in London, and made a deep impression on many, upon William Howitt among the rest.

What did Harris teach? He taught that God was bi-sexual, that man's chief end is to live the life of Christ, and that he, Thomas Lake Harris to wit, was the only one who could tell what Christ's life was. He represented the Most High to the people of his generation, whose one duty was to obey him as they would God. He established communities in different parts of the world, but mostly in the United States, over which he ruled with a rod of iron.

It was a strange doctrine to teach and a stranger mode of life to enjoy. But there was a something about him, some rude strength, some magnetic force, that drew people of a certain temperament to him, and made them surrender themselves completely to

his domination. Among his disciples were Laurence Oliphant, his mother, and his wife. Laurence Oliphant was a man of the world, a brilliant journalist, a popular novelist, and a rising force in Parliament. Yet Harris threw his spell over him, and forced him to give up society, letters, and Parliament, and to hand over to this human monster all he had—mind, heart, conscience, mother, wife, and property. For a long time the Oliphants had absolute confidence in him, both as a leader and as a man. Lady Oliphant adhered to his teaching to her dying day. By and by, however, Laurence began to suspect that all was not right. Here was this man of God piling up a huge fortune, and living in great luxury and moral filth. Laurence Oliphant at last separated from him, and subsequently charged him openly with unmentionable crimes, such as seduction and murder. But, in spite of everything, Harris kept on writing books, making converts, and stealing fortunes, and so growing richer every year.

Harris was one of the most successful charlatans known to history. He taught his community a certain change in the mode of respiration, and this was to be a sign that Christ possessed them and would confer upon them immortality on earth. Harris claimed to have discovered the secret of endless youthfulness. He made the discovery late in life, when the marks of age had begun to appear, but these he said would gradually vanish. When on a visit to this country a few years ago he boasted that he *felt* young though he *looked* old, and that he would never die. Lady Oliphant did the same even after death had put in its claim. She declared that she was inexhaustibly full of vitality when the flame of life was already ominously flickering. And now Harris himself, in his eighty-third year, has had to surrender to the last enemy.

A strange personality and a curious career, you say. Yes, truly, but there is nothing inexplicable about either. As long as the belief in supernaturalism lasts, such slave-owners and such slaves will every now and then appear. You may denounce the whole thing till you are black in the face; but the supernatural is such a splendid field for the exercise of imposture that your scolding will have scarcely any effect. Our only hope of getting final rid of such monstrosities lies in the spread of natural knowledge, in the atmosphere of which supernaturalism and superstition cannot long survive.

CELTICUS.

Vivisection.

By G. R. INGERSOLL.

VIVISECTION is the Inquisition—the Hell—of Science. All the cruelty which the human—or rather the inhuman—heart is capable of inflicting, is in this one word. Below this there is no depth. This word lies like a coiled serpent at the bottom of the abyss.

We can excuse, in part, the crimes of passion. We take into consideration the fact that man is liable to be caught by the whirlwind, and that from a brain on fire the soul rushes to a crime. But what excuse can ingenuity form for a man who deliberately—with an unaccelerated pulse—with the calmness of John Calvin at the murder of Servetus—seeks, with curious and cunning knives, in the living, quivering flesh of a dog, for all the throbbing nerves of pain? The wretches who commit these infamous crimes pretend that they are working for the good of man; that they are actuated by philanthropy; and that their pity for the sufferings of the human race drives out all pity for the animals they slowly torture to death. But those who are incapable of pitying animals are, as a matter of fact, incapable of pitying men. A physician who would cut a living rabbit in pieces—laying bare the nerves, denuding them with knives, pulling them out with forceps—would not hesitate to try experiments with men and women for the gratification of his curiosity.

To settle some theory, he would trifle with the life of any patient in his power. By the same reasoning he will justify the vivisection of animals and patients. He will say that it is better that a few animals should suffer than that one human being should die; and that it is far better that one patient should die, if through the sacrifice of that one, several may be saved.

Brain without heart is far more dangerous than heart without brain.

Have these scientific assassins discovered anything of value? They may have settled some disputes as to the action of some organ, but have they added to the useful knowledge of the race?

It is not necessary for a man to be a specialist in order to have and express his opinion as to the right or wrong of vivisection. It is not necessary to be a scientist or a naturalist to detest cruelty and to love mercy. Above all the discoveries of the thinkers, above all the inventions of the ingenious, above all the victories won on fields of intellectual conflict, rise human sympathy and a sense of justice.

I know that good for the human race can never be accomplished by torture. I also know that all that has been ascertained by vivisection could have been done by the dissection of the dead. I know that all the torture has been useless. All the agony inflicted has simply hardened the hearts of the criminals, without enlightening their minds.

It may be that the human race might be physically improved if all the sickly and deformed babes were killed, and if all the paupers, liars, drunkards, thieves, villains, and vivisectionists were murdered. All this might, in a few ages, result in the production of a generation of physically perfect men and women; but what would such beings be worth,—men and women healthy and heartless, muscular and cruel—that is to say, intelligent wild beasts?

Never can I be the friend of one who vivisects his fellow-creatures. I do not wish to touch his hand.

When the angel of pity is driven from the heart; when the fountain of tears is dry,—the soul becomes a serpent crawling in the dust of a desert.

The Good Old Faith in Italy.

THERE are over one thousand churches in Rome. A large number of them are mortuary monuments, pure and simple, and were built as such, to and for the dead of some "noble" or rich family, and they serve as a burial place, monument, eulogium, and, incidentally, as a place for the common people to drop in at any hour to pray or pay for a miracle, as they all do continually. I was shown thousands of silver and gold "offerings" (these besides the ever-present money box) that are left yearly by the dupes of the system, hundreds of diamond and other rings, bracelets, watches, etc., which now decorate the various Madonnas or Bambinos (Christ child) which still perform miracles in Rome. One Bambino is carried about to people who are ill to go to it to be healed. It has a splendid "state" carriage of its own, is covered with real jewels, and is kept in a revolving glass and gold case, whence I saw it produced to "bless" and insure safety to a number of people one day. They all knelt humbly while the priest got it out and passed it around, while those on their knees—men, women, and many little children—were made to say prayers, implore its intervention in their behalf, and then they were permitted (while still kneeling) to kiss its foot! It was a wooden doll about three feet high, with a hook in its back by which it was hung up in the case when not on active duty. It had on satin and velvet clothes (red and gold, like the Pope's) and a crown of real jewels, and was simply covered with watches, rings, etc., left by devotees whom it had "cured," or whose enterprise it had miraculously made successful. All this seems too absurd, of course, to us, to be possible in 1906, but I saw it more than once, as I saw men and women, otherwise apparently sane and not always poor, ignorant ones, but those who looked as prosperous and well educated as most people one sees in any land, go through not only that mummerly, but climb, on their knees, the "sacred stairs" which are the "attraction" in another church, kissing each step before putting their knee upon it. It took one man, whom I watched, one half hour to struggle up and pray upon six steps. A woman who began later, sprinted the entire flight (twenty-six steps I believe), said all the prayers, asked all the blessings, kissed all the steps, and was out and off again in fifteen minutes!

These were only two of the many "holy attractions" in Roman churches which are known as especially good drawing cards for money and jewels. In the glass and gold case in which was kept the above mentioned Bambino, were about fifty letters which had been sent to it from various countries, including our own, begging for help, comfort or intervention, so the priest told me. He said thousands came yearly from people who are so unfortunate as to be unable to come in person, and that as the letters were addressed to the Holy Child no one else ever opened them but they were kept in the case with it until it was supposed time enough had elapsed for the request to be granted or refused by the Bambino, and then the letters were destroyed unopened. All of which he told me quite gravely and looked as if he expected me to believe him.

At the famous Capuchin monastery, where the financial "attraction" is the bones of the dead monks of the order, all made up into figures, geometric or artistic, the healthy, fat young "father" seemed surprised when we asked him what the monks of his order did to earn a living. He said, "Nothing at all; we live entirely on charity,"—and seemed proud of it!

—Helen H. Gardener, "Liberal Review" (Chicago).

Acid Drops.

Jesus Christ used to be spoken of, in Messianic language, as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. We read of his weeping, but we never read of his laughing, or even smiling. But now that long faces are going out of fashion the clergy are giving their Master a new coat of moral paint. The Bishop of Manchester told a Blackpool sands audience on Sunday that "the happiest man who ever lived was Christ." We may live long enough to see new portraits of J. C., something like Dan Leno.

Mr. John Lobb announces that he recently saw and talked with Dan Leno in the spirit world. We wish he would ask Dan, during the next interview, whether he is still of the same mind with respect to those old verses in the *Freethinker*. It was in the spring of 1903 that we printed some verses on "Dan Leno in Heaven." The poet represented Dan as having died and gone to heaven, where he was heartily welcomed by St. Peter, and asked to brighten the dull place up a bit with some of his humor. Dan obliged the celestial company, and in a few minutes they all began to cheer up, from the weary old boss down to the newest angel. This was the handsomest compliment that Dan had ever had paid him, but he resented it and demanded an apology, unless we wished to hear from his solicitor. We replied facetiously in the *Freethinker*, and Dan let the matter drop. Perhaps his solicitor told him that a compliment (even if he didn't like it) was no libel. For our own part, we owed him no grudge. Dan's head must have begun to turn, and that threatening letter to the *Freethinker* must have been one of the earliest symptoms of the dementia which afterwards killed him. But we should really like to know whether he has learnt to read those verses in a different light, and perhaps Mr. John Lobb will ask him the question.

There is a fanatical pietist in Torquay who defiles vacant walls, empty shops, and even lavatories with his crazy nonsense. Torquay claims to be extra pious, but it cannot stand this stuff. The local *Times* has given the man a leaderette, which was headed "Misusing the Scriptures." It appears that "this individual" had put up a number of Bible texts outside an empty shop in Fleet-street, which included such expressions as "Eternal Damnation" and "The Bottomless Pit." Our contemporary does well to protest against "this individual's" antics. But why does it not carry its indignation to a logical issue, and protest against the Book which supplies "this individual" with his quotations.

After all, the Rev. F. B. Meyer is setting England right. Long accounts of his famous tour appear in all the religious newspapers. In one week he delivered "about sixty distinct addresses." He always spoke "on the impulse of the moment," and "by an almost miraculous instinct, here and there the right word came to be spoken, and in the right tone." Marvellous! He held most of his services in the open air. Here is a sample of what usually happened: "In the village street he publicly catechised the minister and his flock. 'Do you have prayer-meetings?' was his favorite question. 'Do the women pray?' 'Do the men pray long?' 'Do you get answers to your prayers?' Once he asked whether the minister preached the Gospel." This question naturally put the minister to the blush. Then he told the people to look after their ministers, and keep them up to the standard. Mr. Meyer is one of the Nonconformist popes, who really consider themselves quite as infallible as the Pope of Rome. And Mr. Meyer knows the full value of advertisement.

There is no limit to the audacity—some would say the impudence—of Christian exhorters. This same Rev. F. B. Meyer, for instance, preaching in his own House of God last Sunday, referred to the proceedings of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and to the many speeches made on behalf of peace. "How extraordinary," he exclaimed, "that these Old Testament ideals, enshrined in a Book which so many were now attempting to discredit, should become the guiding stars of the march of the human race." This is one of the

richest things we ever came across. We are perfectly aware that there are some pretty things about peace in one or two of the later Prophets, after the Jews had been practically wiped out as a nation, and could no longer strut round as the cocks of the walk in their part of the world. But taking it altogether the Old Testament is by far the bloodiest book in the world. And to speak of peace principles broadly as "Old Testament ideals" is—well, it is worthy of an apostle of the miserably miscalled Prince of Peace.

Monday's newspapers reported a South London demonstration of the League of the Blind. Many of the clergy ought to join that League.

"Infidel" France does not allow details of divorce cases to be printed in the newspapers. Christian England allows all the tit-bits of such cases to be served up for the delectation of all newspaper readers—including school-children.

The Imperial Cancer Research Fund has a laboratory, and from the report of its general superintendent, Dr. Bashford, that 100,000 mice have been "examined" in four years. These "experiments" were very promising, but they "would require to be carried much further before it could be ascertained if they have a bearing on the treatment of mankind." Sir William Church, in moving the adoption of the report at the annual meeting after hearing Dr. Bashford's report, mentioned that "radium had not given encouraging results during the past year," and added that "none of the so-called cancer cures had conferred any benefits." As far as we understand the newspaper account of Dr. Bashford's report, medical science appears to be working on the good old "hair of the dog that bit him" plan. Confessedly this does not help human beings who suffer from cancer, and assuredly it must be very rough on the poor mice, and other highly sensitive animals, that are experimented upon. But we live in a Christian country, and anything is tolerable which even only promises to keep a few Christians out of heaven.

Russell Sage, the stupid old American millionaire, who spent all his time in making money, and died worth tons of it, is going to be carefully and solidly buried, so that thieves may not make him travel in his last sleep. His copper coffin is hermetically sealed, and is placed in a chilled steel case, four inches thick, rivetted with steel bolts, and weighing three tons. There will be electrical connections giving immediate alarm if any attempt is made to tamper with the body. A terrible fuss over a lot of rotten meat! Why didn't they cremate the stupid old fellow's carcase and save all that trouble? Besides, being fixed up in such a fashion, what chance will he have of getting out and joining the crowd when Gabriel blows the resurrection trumpet?

There is a woman with remarkable powers of language at Chiswick. According to another woman giving evidence against her in the local Court, her language was so strong that "the poor old lady next door, who came out to listen to it, fell down dead." This woman ought to have assisted in writing some parts of the Bible—the cursing psalms, for instance. They are pretty warm as they are, but she would have given them the last perfecting touches.

How changeable is the religious fashion! Only a few years ago it was the fashion to say that morality without religion was worthless, and that all merely moral people would go to hell when they died. Then the fashion changed, and the pulpit announced that morality is an admirable thing in itself, but not sufficient, faith in Christ alone being the condition of salvation. To-day another fashion reigns, and the pulpit exclaims, "Morality is religion." So said the Rev. S. O. Tattersall at Birmingham the other day, but no sooner had he said it than he glaringly contradicted himself by adding that the two do not always go together. Of course, morality and religion are two different things, and they do not always go together.

Mr. Tattersall has evidently much to learn. He said that "the religious man must be a good man." There is no such *must* in the case at all, some of the most religious men being incorrigibly bad, and some of the best men being without religion. No fact can be more patent than this; and in spite of his contrary assertion Mr. Tattersall himself sorrowfully admits that it is a fact.

To prove that "religion means morality" Mr. Tattersall quotes the text, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Had this preacher studied the history of Bible words, he would have known that at the time God is supposed to have uttered that command, holiness did not mean goodness, but a ceremonial

relation. To be holy then signified to be bodily clean, or to be set apart for the service of Jehovah in the sanctuary; and things as well as persons were characterised as holy and unholy, clean and unclean. This is a simple etymological fact which present-day apologists dare not honestly face.

Preaching at Mansfield College, Oxford, on the text, "And he shall reign for ever and ever," the Rev. Dr. McAdam Muir admitted that, owing to various reasons, Christ has never yet truly reigned on earth, but asserted that ere long now his kingdom will be universal. Why, preachers have been saying the same thing for the last two thousand years; and yet even to-day the glowing prophecy is no nearer fulfilment than it was at the start. Ever since Tennyson's famous line appeared the pulpit has been singing the praises of "the Christ that is to be." It is a safe policy, but scarcely a straightforward one.

The Rev. Harold E. Brierly, son of "J. B." of the *Christian World*, who holds the fort at Highbury Quadrant Congregational Church, London, is an eloquent preacher. Preaching on Prayer a few days ago, he said: "Prayer is work, and prayer does work. Prayer moves God. God does more than hear prayer. He is moved by prayer; but not to change his will, but to effect it." Mr. Brierly speaks with the assurance of one who knows; but does he know? When did prayer move God? Is God so lethargic that he requires to be urged and coaxed by his creatures to do his own proper work? Such talk is sheer twaddle! If there is a God, it is certain that he has not authorised Mr. Brierly, or any other man, to speak for him. And yet this man has the audacity to assert that he is an assistant to the Almighty! "My prayer," he says, "has enabled me to help him to fulfil his will." Rubbish! Mr. Brierly knows nothing about God and the execution of his will.

Mr. Brierly has no patience with Agnostics. He looks down upon them from a great altitude—and pities them. He is a knower, forsooth, and cannot tolerate *ignoramuses*. He refers to the utterance of the Agnostic, "Oh God, if there is a God, save my soul, if I have a soul," and describes it by the word *impertinence*. Well, all we can say is that, if there is a God, such as Christians believe in, he must be horribly bored by the gross impertinences hurled at him under the general name of "prayers."

Once more. Mr. Brierly discerns and states fine and subtle distinctions. For example, "The secret of prayer is not persuading God to do things, but giving him the opportunity of doing them." Then God deserves our sympathy. How fearfully hampered and handicapped he must be in the attempt to do his will. The writers of the Bible declare that God's will is supreme, and that he does according to it everywhere. But Mr. Brierly knows better. Human wills stand out in potent opposition to the Divine will, and God himself cannot coerce them into loyal submission.

Mr. Silvester Horne writes an article every week for one of the press agencies, and it appears simultaneously in a multitude of provincial newspapers. In the last one contributed by him he charges Christians with "the loosening of moral restraints during the holiday season." It is a serious accusation and the people whom it concerns should lay it to heart. But what does "the loosening of moral restraints" mean? Stealing, lying, swindling, giving the reins to the appetites and passions, ruining innocent women? O dear no. It means visiting the opera, or the theatre, or the rac-course on Sunday, if on the Continent, or, if at some rural resorts in England, attending parish churches, or not going to any place of worship at all. When Nonconformists do these things they are guilty of flinging their scruples to the winds, or giving their morals a holiday!

Rev. Peter Macpherson, of Baird Church, Cumbernauld, preached lately at a "Glen Conventicle" at Castieary. A local newspaper describes his sermon as "an attractive homily" on Psalms xlii. 4. Holiday, he observed, really meant "holy day," and the holidays they got were really gifts of religion. This would have sounded very well from the mouth of a Catholic priest. Coming from the mouth of a Scotch puritan it sounds rather fantastic. The Church that the Rev. Peter Macpherson belongs to abolished the old Catholic "holy days" in Scotland—even including Christmas—as smacking of paganism and carnality. All it kept was the fifty-two Sundays in the year. But as the word "Sunday" smacked of paganism again the Scotch Kirk swapped it for the "Sabbath." And of that it made a splendid "holiday." It compelled people to go to kirk, and it forbade them all enjoyment. Even swimming, which is not only clean, but pleasant, was forbidden on the Lord's

Day. When the Puritans went over to New England they even prohibited husbands from kissing their wives on Sunday. Such a carnal practice as kissing was unholy in the eyes of the "Lord God of Sabaoth," alias the Lord of Hosts, alias Jehovah, alias the Palestine Terror. After looking at these facts it is easy to see the value of the Rev. Peter Macpherson's tribute to the holiday "gifts of religion."

The reverend gentleman got a little nearer the mark in saying: "When our forefathers left off work it was to attend divine worship." Exactly. They were obliged to. Elders went round routing out the malingerers. And we dare say the Rev. Peter Macpherson yearns in his heart of hearts for the restoration of the good old times.

This "Glen Conventicle" preacher believes (or affects to) that human beings would never have found out that they wanted a holiday if religion had not told them so. Bless his innocence! There are plenty of people, including some of his own countrymen, who believe that they never want anything else. Moreover, if men had the wit to discover that their horses and asses needed a rest, they surely had wit enough to discover that they needed a rest themselves. No doubt the Rev. Peter Macpherson discovers this annually and gets the customary vacation, without assigning any but a natural reason for his application for leave of absence. His congregation give him a rest; yea, and he giveth his congregation a rest also.

Christianity did not invent Sunday. Judaism did not invent the Sabbath. The weekly day of rest is older than either of them—and owes nothing to either of them. Neither is it true that Freethinkers want to abolish Sunday. They would rather have two Sundays a week.

Having to take up a collection for the Glasgow Western Infirmary, the Rev. Peter Macpherson took the opportunity of saying that "our noble institutions such as the Infirmary, Fresh Air Fortnight, Prevention of Cruelty Societies" owed their commencement to "people inspired by divinity, not to atheists or socialists." Why he dragged in "Socialists" passes our comprehension. Many of them, at least in this country, are professed Christians. For the rest, the reverend gentleman's statements are colossal falsehoods. Christianity did not invent hospitals, and Christianity does not support them. Money is subscribed by people of every religion and by people of no religion at all. Christianity does not support the hospitals. It nobbles them. There is no thief like your Christian thief. He gets into the public hospitals, he gets into the public schools, and "collars the blooming lot." In the hospital he sets up a chaplain, sees that the nurses are all Christians, and tramples on the rights of every citizen who does not utter his shibboleth. He does the same thing in the schools. After making all citizens pay for them, he insists on having his own religion taught at their expense, whether they agree with him or not. As for the Prevention of Cruelty Societies, the cream of the joke is that they are only needed in Christian countries. Tell a Japanese that a big society is necessary in England to protect children from cruelty, and he would think you were "having" him. His country is a children's paradise. He cannot conceive of their being ill-used. But then he is only a heathen. He never sat under the Rev. Peter Macpherson.

The apostle Paul has fallen on evil days. After a long reign as supreme monarch in the world of theology, he is now being rapidly dethroned. He is no longer a man who spoke and wrote what came to him as a revelation from heaven. In a recent sermon, Mr. R. J. Campbell, who according to many is doing his utmost to undermine Christianity, vehemently repudiated the orthodox doctrine of the Fall. "There has been a tendency," he said, "to speak of it [the world] as the subject of utter reprobation, a city of destruction, and the only hope of humanity as being that some souls might be snatched from it as brands from the burning. We know where Christians got this doctrine. They learned it from St. Paul. St. Paul got it from his rabbinical training. He received it as a religious dogma." Mr. Campbell is quite right; he is doing an excellent work in a remarkably effective manner: he is undermining what the world has always regarded as genuine Christianity.

Dr. Campbell Morgan is a great preacher, and always draws enormous crowds, who are spellbound by his eloquence. Preaching is said to be the work of God, for which, Dr. Morgan tells us, "nothing short of the immediate, direct personal illumination of the Spirit is sufficient equipment." Now, every clergyman is supposed to have the Holy Ghost, and to be endowed with power. Can Dr. Morgan inform us why every preacher thus endowed or

ondued is not as popular as himself, and also why some preachers are more popular even than he? A straight answer to this question would clear up a good many dark points. Is the Holy Ghost a respecter of persons, favoring some of his servants more than others?

As a matter of fact, preaching is an art, and success in it depends alone upon the preacher. Eloquence and personal magnetism ensure success, and the absence of these spells failure. No man ever transcends himself, or bursts the limits of his own individuality. Vain is all the talk about divine illumination and endowment with power from on high. Vain is all the boasting of men that they represent God and deliver the message he gives them. They only deliver what they themselves laboriously think out and arrange in their studies, and what poor, silly stuff it mostly is! If there were a Holy Ghost, it would make him shudder with disgust to hear it.

A religious journal informs us that "it is when the Spirit is poured out from above that righteousness has its rightful place in the earth." Then why is it that the Spirit has never been poured out from above? Why is the gracious downpour withheld? How easily things could be set right if the Spirit only came! Why does he not come? And echo answers, *Why?*

Here is another gem: "God is a living, personal agent, who touches my life at every point." How delightful! But when and how does God touch any man's life at every point, and with what results? No living man can answer. An exceptionally eloquent preacher says: "I receive my sermons direct from the Lord." Where does the unpopular minister get his sermons from? Or does the Lord send down sermons of unequal merit? It is all a pious delusion. Every man's life is what he himself and circumstances make it.

We clip the following from the *Westminster Gazette* :—

"Another question, according to the same correspondent, at present occupies the attention of the Vatican. This is as to whether the bones of St. Peter are still in the Church of St. Peter. It is even proposed that the Pope shall allow the vault to be opened in which they are supposed to lie. Professor Marucchi, the well-known Catholic archæologist, is of the opinion that the bones of St. Peter must still be in the church, as there were only two occasions on which they could have disappeared—the capture of Rome by the Saracens in 846 and the plundering of the city by the Imperial troops in 1527. As they were found safely in the vault in 1594, when it was opened by order of Pope Clement VIII., there is no reason to suppose they have since disappeared."

This sort of nonsense shows how Christianity conduces to softening of the brain. Supposing that St. Peter is really an historical character—which is very doubtful—there is not the slightest evidence that he was ever at Rome. Where he died, if he ever lived, is not known; what became of his bones is a question as insoluble as it is unimportant. How carefully they may have been kept at Rome does not matter a straw until it is proved that they were ever found there. The whole story is a mixture of superstitious tradition and priestly imposture. The Church was bound to get St. Peter's bones, as well as St. Peter's chair, in the Eternal City; and what the Church wanted, in this way, it always obtained.

St. Peter's bones are in a vault, are they? Well, you are also told that they are inside a marvellous Benvenuto Cellini silver casket under the high altar of St. Peter's Church. You are permitted to look inside the receptacle, though not inside the casket. But you are assured that the holy martyr's bones are there; they even tell you that St. Paul's are there too; and base is the impious wretch who ventures to disbelieve.

The two following paragraphs appeared in just the same order in a recent issue of the *Daily Mirror* :—

"Some 3,000 religionists of various sects, among whom is Evan Roberts, are visiting Keswick to take part in the annual 'Convention Week.'"

"President Roosevelt will hold a great naval review off Oyster Bay, U. S. A., on September 3, in which twelve battleships, with cruisers and torpedo boats, will take part."

This is very edifying. It shows how Christianity and Peace love each other. President Roosevelt himself is a very distinguished Christian. He would be perfectly well in place either at a Holiness Convention or a Naval Review.

The Rev. Dinsdale T. Young writes that at the Wesleyan Conference recently held at Nottingham, there were many signs indicating that "the eternal Paraclete was conspicu-

ously with the brethren." Mr. Young does not say what the signs were, nor how they were interpreted. What did "the eternal Paraclete" look like, or in what manner did he make his presence known? So the brethren were not alone; but are they ever alone? The eternal Paraclete is not the only one. There is also the Eternal Spirit of Evil; and the two are constantly coming into collision in the hearts of the brethren both at Conferences and on other occasions. At least, so we read in the Bible and a few other books. What a self-denying creature is man! For all the good there is in him he gives the credit to Another, and for all the evil he puts the blame on Another. Where does the man himself come in?

Deacon Moody of the Catholic Apostolic Church, laments "the sad fact that our beloved late leader (Dr. Dowie) should have departed from God and the truths he so long taught." But there is another side to this question. Why did God let go of so valuable a servant? Ought not the Almighty to have prevented the departure of so mighty a Prophet? How is it so amazingly easy to get away from the presence of the King of kings? This is an unread riddle, an unraveled puzzle, an unsolved problem; and herein is to be found the strongest and most conclusive argument against the truth of Christianity.

The Rev. Dr. Maclaren, the distinguished Baptist orator, continues loyal to the old orthodoxy. In the *British Weekly* for July 26, he claims that Christ "did not drop down to the level of the moralists who tell us to-day that the 'service of man is the service of God.' Religion is more than philanthropy, and it is not any form of 'charity,' in its narrower sense, or every form of it, that will fit a soul to 'ascend the hill of the Lord, or to stand in his holy place.'" Then he goes on to state that it is faith in Jesus Christ and the consequent filial relation to God alone that can give a man that fitness. According to the New Testament and the Christian Church in all ages, Dr. Maclaren is right. The claim is that religion is infinitely more than morality, and that it is also the only force that can produce true morality; and without a doubt religion, in this its only legitimate sense, is on its way to extinction. There is no saving it, for the facts are dead against it.

The *Church Times* for July 27 devotes a leading article to a consideration of Mr. John Burns's recent speech in Parliament on the Problem of the Unemployed. It is, on the whole, a sensible article, and gives Mr. Burns credit for perfect honesty of purpose. But it refers to "a multitude of inefficient, resourceless men and women of low industrial value, physically unfit or morally debilitated, the outcasts and hangers-on of our industrial system," and then calls them "these brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ"—and ought to have added, "for whose salvation he died on the Cross." Now, the question that confronts Christians is, if Jesus Christ died for these people and claims so close a relationship to them, why were they permitted to deteriorate to such an extent as to become "outcasts and hangers-on"? If Jesus Christ is on the throne, is he not responsible for the inefficient, resourceless condition of those members of the Royal Family? There is something seriously wrong somewhere.

Let us ponder this wild "rhapsody of words" that comes from a well-known divine: "What the state of our dead in Christ may be we do not know; but it is glorious beyond our utmost imagination. Dream your wildest dream, and it falls infinitely short of the reality." An utterance like that can be rightly characterised by no weaker term than *balderdash*, which in plain English means *senseless jargon*. And yet the writer of it is a leader and teacher who undertakes to solve the intellectual and religious problems which puzzle and perplex intelligent young men.

The Constantinople correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* sends some frightful accounts of the Macedonian atrocities, which are all the work of Christians. "Whatever the Christians in Macedonia," he says, "suffered at the hands of the Turks, it is nothing to what they suffer at the hands of their fellow-Christians, and the most painful part of the whole thing is that nearly the whole trouble arises from the fight for supremacy between the Greek and Bulgarian Churches."

Rev. Henry F. Mallet, of Eastbourne, left estate which has been valued at £27,716. That is the result of preaching "Blessed be ye poor" in this "miserable vale of tears." What a fine profession!

Two more poor Jesusites from Monday's list of recent wills. Rev. Samuel John Heathcote, of Eastfield, Williton, Taunton, has left £19,122. Rev. Canon Charles Jopson, of Brettenham, Suffolk, has left £15,848.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

(Lectures suspended during the Summer.)

To Correspondents.

- A. T. KENNEDY.—We have already stated that a new edition of our pamphlet, *The Shadow of the Sword*, will be brought out presently by the Humanitarian League, with the figures, as far as possible, brought up to date, although these do not essentially affect the broad arguments of the case. The pamphlet will not otherwise be revised. Within its limits it might easily be injured instead of improved; for it was written in one heat, so to speak, and has an organic character which cold-blooded, critical revision might only spoil. We do not, therefore, intend to go into the question of "disarmament" in the new edition. But since you ask our opinion on that point we may as well say that we regard the idea as peculiarly foolish. Any country that keeps an army (or navy) at all, is bound in common sense to keep it as strong as is thought necessary; anything above that is extravagance, and anything below it is silliness. It is the notion of mere closet dreamers that nations can agree amongst themselves what military strength they should each maintain. To think of it seriously for five minutes is to see its utter absurdity. The problem cannot be successfully attacked at that end. It must be dealt with at the opposite end. The only possible way of escape from the present burdensome and dangerous situation is to promote the policy of arbitration, and the policy, which naturally follows that, of a permanent international tribunal.
- R. J. HENDERSON.—You will have seen that we dealt with Bishop Wilkinson's nonsense and falsehoods in our last week's leading article. Thanks for your hints as to the insomnia. The only treatment we have yet found do us much good when an attack is upon us is brain rest and unlimited fresh air.
- R. L.—See "Acid Drops." Thanks for cutting.
- GERALD GREY.—You will see that the cutting has been useful. Best wishes.
- H. P. H. (Norwich).—The case of conversion is of rather too common-place a character to be of special interest to our readers. Drunken sailors, seeing hell, and finding Jesus, belong to the lowest pathology.
- C. H. HOWSON.—We do not know that Tolstoy was ever an "infidel," nor can we help you with regard to the Bishop of London's views on Evolution, which cannot be of very much importance. Glad you were so pleased with our article on "A National Scandal."
- G. A. ALDRED.—Of course we can have no objection to your distributing copies of the pamphlet.
- A. A.—The matter has not escaped attention. You will probably see what you ask about announced during the autumn. Pleased to hear you enjoyed what you are good enough to call our "splendid article" on the Dreyfus affair.
- "JONES, NEWPORT."—We do not stand sponsor for every statement and opinion in articles reproduced from American or other distant contemporaries. Pleased to hear that a dozen old copies of the *Freethinker* given you by a friend have so altered your views.
- A. WEBBER.—We never heard of the "prominent Atheist worker" at Carlisle, called James Armstrong, whom the Rev. T. A. Chapman, of Charles Vicarage, Plymouth claims to have converted. Have any of our Carlisle readers ever heard of this James Armstrong?
- W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for cuttings.
- L.—Accept our thanks. The book may prove useful. We will look through it carefully.
- 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.
- ORDERS for literature should be sent to the Freethought Publishing Company, Limited, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., and not to the Editor.
- THE *Freethinker* will be forwarded direct from the publishing office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One year, 10s. 6d.; half year, 5s. 3d.; three months, 2s. 8d.

Sugar Plums.

An attempt is being made to revive the old North-Eastern Secular Federation. A meeting of delegates from the Hetton, South Shields, Stanley, and Newcastle Branches of the N. S. S. was held at Newcastle on Saturday, July 28, to promote that object. Mr. Fothergill, of Shields, was appointed treasurer, and Mr. J. G. Bartram, of Newcastle, secretary. A copy of rules, etc., will be submitted to the Branches shortly. In the meantime Mr. Bartram, whose address is 117 Morley-street, Heaton, Newcastle-on-Tyne, will be glad to hear from friends at Stockton, Middlesboro, Sunderland, Spennymoor, Hartlepool, Crook, Blyth, Bedlington, and other places in the district. It is intended to

carry on an effective Freethought propaganda, and to begin the work as soon as possible.

The annual picnic of the West Stanley Branch takes place on August 5. There will be an excursion to Marsden Rocks. Brakes will leave the West Stanley post-office at 8 a.m. punctually. The Stanley friends will be met at Marsden by "saints" from Newcastle, Shields, and Hetton. The price of the tickets is 2s. 6d. They can be had of Mr. J. W. White, 44 Mary-street, West Stanley.

Shelley was born on August 4, 1792. He was therefore about twenty-four and a half years old when he wrote the pamphlet "A Proposal for putting Reform to the Vote throughout the Kingdom" for the meeting held at the Crown and Anchor Tavern on March 17, 1817. Young as he was, he had lived through many exciting adventures, including expulsion from Oxford for Atheism. Like all that "Mad Shelley" ever wrote in the political line, this pamphlet was eminently sane; witness the concluding sentences:—

"A pure republic may be shown, by inferences the most obvious and irresistible, to be that system of social order the fittest to produce the happiness and promote the genuine eminence of man. Yet nothing can less consist with reason, or afford smaller hopes of any beneficial issue, than the plan which should abolish the regal and the aristocratical branches of our constitution, before the public mind, through many gradations of improvement, shall have arrived at the maturity which can disregard the symbols of its childhood."

How very Shelleyan, too, is the reference to the finances of the Reform movement:—

"Should any plan resembling that which I have proposed be determined on by you, I will give £100, being a tenth part of one year's income, towards its object; and I will not deem so proudly of myself, as to believe that I shall stand alone in this respect, when any rational and consistent scheme for the public benefit shall have received the sanction of those great and good men who have devoted themselves for its preservation."

Matthew Arnold spoke of Shelley as an "ineffectual angel," but he was never "ineffectual" when it came to "shelling out." Very little sufficed for his modest wants, and all the rest of his income was at the service of his fellow-men.

Shelley did not put his name to this pamphlet. He wrote it as "The Hermit of Marlow." He was not afraid—he was never afraid of anything; but his name was of no importance, and, as far as it was known, it might have done the Reform cause harm rather than good. In every way the pamphlet was a modest one, and no doubt it was very soon forgotten. And a few years later Shelley himself was dead, and most "sensible" people were quite sure that he would soon be forgotten too. But it is they that are forgotten, and it is he that is remembered. A copy of that poor little Reform pamphlet, of just a few pages, has recently been sold for £132. "And thus," as the Master himself said, "the whirligig of time brings in his revenges."

Mr. Joseph Symes, the veteran champion of Freethought, who for over twenty years has been battling for our cause in Australia, and whom we hope to welcome back to old Albion to-day (Aug. 5), delivered a farewell lecture in the Athenæum Hall, Sydney, on Sunday evening, June 10, the subject being "The Christ of the New Testament not Historical but Dramatic." This event proved the occasion for a veritable "gathering of the clans" in the harbor city, and the large hall was filled to overflowing.

Speaking of Sydney, we are reminded that there, as in nearly all other parts of what the late Sir Henry Parkes used to call "our glorious hempire," has been a recrudescence of Sabbatarianism lately. The Chief Secretary of New South Wales, the *Honorable* J. A. Hogue, recently informed the proprietor of the Palace Theatre that if he let the building to Mr. Wilson for Freethought lectures on Sunday, the licence would be cancelled. Prosecutions of fruit-vendors for Sunday trading have also been frequent lately. The result has been to consolidate the Sydney Secularists, who are in reality a very numerous body, and only require organisation to be able effectually to extinguish political lights of the Hogue brand.

A correspondent at Carnarvon reports that Freethought is spreading by leaps and bounds in that district. "Strange to say," he adds, "the Welsh revival gave it a great impetus—and the after-effects of that great fiasco were exceedingly encouraging." Of course the *Freethinker* has gained new readers there.

Joseph Symes.

MY old friend and colleague, Joseph Symes, is nearing the shores of England as I write this. Ever since June 19, when he sailed from Melbourne, he has been homeward bound; for England is his native country, and he lived here until he was turned forty-two. Where the good ship that bears him is at this particular moment I do not know; neither can I say whether she will reach London by the scheduled time. The White Star Liner, *Runic*, is timed to arrive on Sunday, August 5. More than that I cannot announce.

Although I am now residing some forty miles from London, and Sunday is a very awkward day, and waiting about for a ship is one of the dreariest occupations, I shall do my best to welcome my old friend and colleague back to his native shores.

There will be a meeting of the N. S. S. Executive on the Thursday before Mr. Symes's expected arrival, and the question of a public reception will then be discussed and settled. It may not be judicious to attempt anything of the kind in the hottest and most holiday month of the year, but September is not far distant, and my old friend and colleague may very well like to settle down on land a bit after his long voyage, before taking part in public functions of any kind. I do not know what his plans are. For years he had talked of visiting England some day. All of a sudden he wrote to say that he was going to sail on May 19 or June 19, and would let me know which; and this, of course, precluded the possibility of my corresponding with him on the subject.

Joseph Symes was born at Portland on January 29, 1841. His parents were pious Methodists. In 1864 he offered himself as a candidate for the ministry, and was sent to the Wesleyan College, Richmond, where one of his fellow students was the late Rev. Hugh Price Hughes. In 1867 he went on circuit as a preacher. Having come to doubt the orthodox faith, he resigned from the Wesleyan Methodist ministry in 1872. His doubts had given place to absolute unbelief when he delivered his first open Freethought lecture at Newcastle-on-Tyne, on December 17, 1876. For seven years he lectured and debated up and down Great Britain, and published several pamphlets. He was an early contributor to the *Freethinker*, which was started in 1881, and would have conducted it during my imprisonment, after Joseph Mazzini Wheeler's breakdown, if the temporary committee of management had not arranged for the interim editorship of Dr. Aveling.

It was during my imprisonment that Joseph Symes accepted an engagement as resident Freethought lecturer at Melbourne, where the Hall of Science was subsequently built, and a weekly paper called the *Liberator* started. For some years the experiment was a great success; but troubles came along in the course of time, and, although my old friend and colleague fought with invincible gallantry, the Philistines were too many for him in the end. The Hall of Science fell into alien hands, and finally the *Liberator* had to be discontinued. I cannot remember all the details of the long struggle, but I recollect that Joseph Symes was always undaunted, and I have heard from personal friends of his of the severity of some of his experiences.

The last time I saw Joseph Symes was at the end of 1883. I saw him, but I could not shake hands with him—for it was in Holloway Gaol. He had obtained a special visiting order from the Home Secretary, and he came up to see me, literally behind the bars. I was in one pen, he was in another pen several feet distant, and a warder stood in the division between us. Those were the conditions under which we bade each other farewell. And my old friend and colleague has assured me that the remembrance of that meeting in prison has often lent added force, and sometimes added bitterness, to his attacks on Christianity.

G. W. FOOTE.

Wathen Mark Wilks Call.—II.

WRITINGS IN PROSE AND VERSE.

(Concluded from p. 470.)

AS Call's writings, including contributions to periodical literature, would, if collected, fill several large volumes, only a brief survey of the more important can be attempted here.

His first publication was a small volume of verse, *Lyra Hellenica*, which appeared in 1842 and consists of metrical translations from Aeschylus and the Homeric Hymns. These compositions possess considerable merit of a certain kind, but they are hardly of any interest to those English readers who are not acquainted with Greek literature. In 1849 appeared another volume of verse, *Reverberations*, a revised edition of which with an autobiographical introduction was published in 1875. *Golden Histories* (1871) contains "Ariadne," his longest poem and one of his most ambitious efforts, as well as a few lyrics and sonnets which, it may safely be said, would not detract from the fame of the greatest names in the English poetry of last century.

The prevailing note of Call's poetry is reflective and philosophical; but his diction is nearly always clear and straightforward, with scarcely a tinge of obscurity or mysticism, and indeed, one of his characteristic merits is that he can use the simplest possible language without ever descending to the bathos of such productions as, say, the worst parts of Tennyson's "Maud" or "May Queen," or to the commonplace puerility of some of Wordsworth's "simple" poetry. As might be expected from Call's natural delight from childhood in fable and myth, from his early theological training and career, and from the fact that he was nearly all his life essentially a man of the study, his poetry is pervaded by a spirit of retrospection—by a desire to look back from time to time to what he himself calls the "vision of the morning land." Nevertheless, to quote the words of Dr. A. H. Japp, "he has not only a fine feeling for nature, but a depth of sympathy and penetration which are rare. This comes out in his classic reproductions in a very marked manner, giving them a color and a reality. They thrill with a life that is modern—he has touched them with a sense of the present-day problems that most occupied his mind." It is true, as Mr. Walter Lloyd says, that "there is nothing of the splendor or passion of Shelley" in Call's poems. But surely the gorgeous imagery and the "sense of the beauty and music of words" of that transcendent genius are not expected more than once in a century. That great literary critic, M. de Humboldt, speaking of Lamartine in 1843, said, "he is a comet whose orbit has not yet been measured"—the same words are true of Shelley in 1906, and will probably be so in 2006. Nevertheless, Call's poems contain many touches of what may be called real inspiration—they are not the mere verses of a cultured University man made readable by a few apt phrases, studied epithets, or classical allusions.

Limitation of space will not permit the quotation of many passages from these poems. The following sonnet entitled "Renunciation" brings out the retrospective feeling referred to above, and it is at the same time a fine specimen of Call's exceptional skill in this form of composition:—

"Wakeful I lay all night and thought of God,
Of heaven, and of the crowns pale martyrs gain,
Of souls in high and purgatorial pain,
And the red path which murdered seers have trod:
I heard the trumpets which the angels blow,
I saw the cleaving sword, the measuring rod,
I watched the stream of sound continuous flow,
Past the gold towers where seraphs make abode.
But now I let the aching splendor go,
I dare not call the crownéd angels peers,
Henceforth! I am content to dwell below,
Mid common joys, with humble smiles and tears,
Delighted in the sun and breeze to grow,
A child of human hopes and human fears."

In the blank verse of "Manoli," the subject of which is taken from a Moldavian legend, there is a

smooth graceful lilt which has a most pleasing effect. The concluding lines may be quoted to show this:—

"'Twas so in elder years,
The splendid yesterdays our fathers knew :
'Tis so in these pale faded years of ours ;
And when these busy hands and brains are still,
And mightier builders work with lordlier aims,
The same old doom will reign, and men will die,
To crown their age with beauty, and to bring
Imperial days, while they go building on."

"Genesis"—a fine poem of nearly three hundred lines—seems designed to show that there is no Jove or Zeus in the philosopher's universe—"all your poet sees is how the One through many ranges." Only a few lines can be given here:—

" There was never yet beginning
To the Web that we behold ;
Ever weaving, ever spinning,
Nature wrought it fold on fold ;
Her mysterious shuttle throwing
Thro' the wild and restless loom
Of a chaos, dark and glowing
With old lights or ancient gloom.
Every fairy form was mated
With the grey old Proteus power,
As, self-sculptured, self-created,
Sleeps in snow the veiled snow-flower."

To pass to Call's prose writings: the bulk of his work under this head consists of contributions to the old *Leader* (edited by his friend G. H. Lewes), to the *Westminster* and the *Theological Review*, and to the *Fortnightly*—"a body of writing," says Dr. Japp, "that contains much of permanent value." From a long list of essays the two on George Eliot and Thomas Carlyle, as being comparatively light reading and dealing with matters of general literary interest, are selected for brief notice here. They appeared in the *Westminster Review* in 1881.

Call was for many years a personal friend of George Eliot's, being one of the inner circle which included George Henry Lewes, Mr. and Mrs. Bray, and others, who were not only well known in the world of letters, but were also "courageous impugners of the dogmas which form the basis of popular theology." One of George Eliot's very early writings was a magazine article entitled "Evangelical Theology," which came under Call's notice just when he was passing out of the last windings of the theological labyrinth. His own reference to this is interesting:—

"She admits the value of the true theistic conception..... This admission very powerfully impressed me in the early years of her authorship; but when, at a later period, I attempted in conversation to vindicate my own attenuated form of faith—if faith that could be called which was rather a survival of difficulties—her somewhat discomforting response affirmed the practical sufficiency of the purely human ideal. Her answer to the teleological argument was, 'The explanation is contained in a nutshell.' With Kant, though not in his words, she contended that the reflecting reason brings design into the world, and then admires a wonder created by itself. An apology for theism grounded on the distinction between the God of the people and the God of the philosophers she rejected, with the observation that the latter conception was the less reasonable of the two; glancing, probably at the common deistical notion of a sort of Dieu Fainéant, who, having made a world like a clock, sits aloft, seeing it go."

George Eliot's own theory of life was purely Secular—the doctrine of "otherworldliness" was a thing which she persistently protested against. Concerning those who declare the Secular view to be too limiting and unsatisfactory, Call says: "The question, however, is not, Is it pleasing? but, Is it true? Her reply, I believe, would have been affirmative." Lewes, her "co-inheritor" of "enduring renown," the brilliant man of letters and luminous interpreter of Comte, died in 1878, succumbing "with quiet fortitude to the great Destroyer," whilst George Eliot herself "passed calmly and painlessly away" two years later, and was buried in the "unconsecrated part of the [Highgate] cemetery, adjoining" his grave.

The review of Carlyle's life and work is not so sympathetic. Though Call had not Carlyle's command of vigorous language, he could, nevertheless,

appreciate at its proper value such "vigor" as is displayed in the following remark on Darwin's *Origin of Species*: "Wonderful to me as indicating the capricious stupidity of mankind. Never could read a page of it, or waste the least thought on it." This from the seer with an inspired mission to mankind! Later, when Darwinism was gaining ground by leaps and bounds, Carlyle "dreaded" lest it should ultimately prove true, after all. If this is not like the attitude of the silly bigots who answered Galileo by declaring, "The world shall not go round the sun," it would be interesting to know what is. And here is a fine tribute to George Eliot and George Sand by the same sworn enemy of every kind of "humbug" and "cant": "Not all the Sands and Eliots and babbling cohue of celebrated scribbling women that have strutted over the world in my time could, it seems to me, if all boiled down and distilled to essence, make one such woman" as Jane Welsh Carlyle. The truth is, Carlyle's meed of praise was rarely bestowed on any man that had not, to some extent at least, an element of the brutal in his nature. His hero or great-man theory means, largely, the honoring of Cromwells and Bismarcks. Call's summing-up is an impartial estimate:—

"He was a philosopher only in a very qualified sense. He saw some truths not very remote or difficult to discern, clearly, and gave them appropriate expression. He apprehended some few great generalisations, or traced them in detail, with a penetrating sagacity. He philosophised, without being a philosopher. His true interest lay not in analysis, but synthesis. It is not as a philosopher that Carlyle will live. It is as a poet—though his poetry has no form."

The last of Call's essays, "Final Causes: a Refutation," was published in 1891, not having previously appeared in any periodical. After tracing in a short introductory chapter the history of the doctrine of design in nature, or teleology as it is now usually called, from early Greek philosophy to our own time, Call devotes the next two chapters to "Natural Theology" and "Order and General Adaptation," examining carefully and fairly "apparent evidences of an intelligible order in nature." He says:—

"This imposing array of illustrations will be found to dazzle rather than convince. The order, indeed, which they are alleged to establish undoubtedly exists, but only in a qualified or artificial sense, as the reflection of the human mind, not as the intended production of a divine mind. Order in its final analysis appears to be the creation of our own thought. It is not, like form or color, an object of immediate perception; it is a notion and not a thing; a general term suggested by the enumeration of particular instances."

Then follow chapters on "Special Adaptations," "Singularities in Nature," "Distinctive Character of Design" and "The Eye," in which imperfect adjustments and incongruities are noted, and fallacious theistic reasonings refuted:—

"Teleology is thus discredited by its acknowledged inefficacy and misleading tendency. It is ever apologising, ever retreating. Driven from one province of inquiry, it takes refuge in another, as yet but partially appropriated by advancing science. But this is not all. The doctrine of evolution, which exposes its imperfections and limitations, supersedes it."

The short chapter on "The Limited or Constitutional Deity"—a theory favored by John Stuart Mill—is considered by Mr. Moncure D. Conway to be inadequate. To many readers, however, the three objections to the theory raised by Call will appear almost conclusive: (1) the Creator of the material universe is responsible for the material created; (2) the limitation of the Creator's power rather than of his wisdom and benevolence is arbitrary; (3) the hypothesis of an all-wise, all-good power, immeasurably great though not infinite, is inconsistent with the imperfections and destructive forces and horrors in life as known to mankind. The following words from the concluding chapter, "Christian Life and Dogma," may fittingly close this inadequate review of

the works of a fearless opponent of every form of superstition and insincerity:—

"The First Great Cause of the Deist will satisfy neither the intellect nor the heart. The personal God of the Theist will elude his grasp; the Ens of the metaphysician, infinite itself and with infinite attributes, will never make good its real existence; the Absolute, the Unknowable, the Homogeneous, the Eternal Essence, which is without limits and transcends thought, the quasi-Deity of the Evolutionary Philosophy, will prove to be little more than a glorification of that substratum, the very existence of which has been denied by profound thinkers.....As Humanity will be the sole Ideal Object to which dutiful obligation and exalted sentiment will be referred, so the world of Humanity will be the world revealed, not by divine inspiration or metaphysical intuition, but by Positive Science."

A. D. McLAREN.

Witchcraft in Early Boston.

By GILBERT PATTEN BROWN.

THERE is no spot in the American Republic where religious bigotry has existed in so high a degree as in Boston. Yet there is no city in the new world where education is at a higher standing than in this old city where settled Winthrop and his honored compeers in 1630. These men were honest in their views; their lives are lasting monuments in Anglo-Saxon civilisation.

"Evil spirits" are said to have been the cause of much trouble among the "church-goers" of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As early as February 3, 1646, James Howell, who was at one time "Historiographer Royal" to Charles II., writes: "We have multitudes of witches among us; for in Essex and Suffolk there were about two hundred indicted within the two years, and above the half of them executed.....I speak it with horror—God guard us against the Devil! for I think he was never so busy upon any part of the earth that was lightened by the beams of Christianity." This letter was published in England. It not only caused much excitement there, but copies were sent to Boston and vicinity. Howell received many letters of inquiry, and noted divines called to learn of the new issue.

This prompted one Matthew Hopkins to take up a new occupation. He became so renowned in his war upon the witches that he was named the "Witch-Finder-General." "Professor" Hopkins first played his little game, that of the "water test," in Connecticut, and the report went forth that his victims did not sink, but "swam like a cork." The people in the "Nutmeg Colony" declared that he should at once "leave the country." He soon returned to Boston, where he was warmly received, and where he most earnestly kept on "searching" and "watching" for those "possessed of the Devil."

The earliest execution for witchcraft in Boston was that of Margaret Jones, of Charlestown, on June 15, 1646. Thomas Jones, her husband, was arrested at the same time on the same charge, but, for political reasons, he was not convicted. Governor Winthrop, in his journal, credits her with having been "a strong-minded woman." She is known to have healed the sick with but simple remedies. No evidence was shown that she had "bewitched anyone," but a "public example" had to be made. The court which tried her was chiefly composed of the original founders of the Colony. John Winthrop was governor, Thomas Dudley deputy-governor, and men of no less dignity than John Endicott, Richard Bellingham, Increase Nowell, Richard Saltonstall, Simon Bradstreet, and William Hibbins sat in court. One man testified that her "imp" was seen in "the clear daylight." Winthrop's journal reads: "At this court, one Margaret Jones, of Charlestown, was indicted and found guilty of witchcraft, and hanged for it"; that she was found to have "such a malignant touch."

A contemporary, "Mr. John Gaule, Esquire," thus describes the mode of "watching a witch": "Having taken the suspected witch, she is placed in the middle of the room upon a stool or table, crossed-legged, or in some uneasy posture, to which, if she submits not, she is bound with cords. She is there watched and kept without meat or sleep for the space of four-and-twenty hours—for they say within that time they shall see her imp come and suck. A little hole is likewise made in the floor for the imps to come in at."

The hunting for witches had become a profitable enterprise for some few creed-egoists of Boston and vicinity. In those days, among the enterprising men of Springfield, there lived a sturdy tiller of the soil, a Celt, by the name of Hugh

Parsons. His wife was the second victim of witchcraft in Boston. She was executed May 9, 1651. The records of the General Court under the date of May 8, same year, read: "The court, understanding that Mary Parsons, now in prison, accused for a witch, is likely through weakness to die before trial if it be deferred, do order that, on the morrow, by eight of the clock in the morning, she be brought before and tried by the General Court." Against Mary were filed two indictments. First, for "using divers devilish practises" by witchcraft to the hurt of the persons of Martha and Rebecca Moxon." (These maidens were daughters of the Rev. George Moxon, minister of Springfield.) Second, "for murdering her own child."

William Hibbins was one of the leading merchants of Boston. He left some wealth, dying in 1654. The widow refused to give any of the money to charity. We find that on June 19, 1656, the third execution for witchcraft took place in Boston, and that Mrs. Ann Hibbins was the unfortunate woman. A brief extract from the court records, under the date of May 14, 1656, reads: "The Magistrates not receiving the verdict of the Jury in Mrs. Hibbins, her case, having been on trial for witchcraft, it came in and fell, of course, to the General Court. Mrs. Ann Hibbins was called forth; appeared at the bar; the indictment against her read, to which she answered, 'not guilty,' and as willing to be tried by God and this court." The verdict of the Jury was "guilty," and in a few days widow Ann was executed. At the time of the death of Mrs. Hibbins, Boston was in a state of great excitement. But few women were seen upon the streets. On Sundays, all attended church for fear they would be declared to be of "evil spirits." The "Devil" was frequently mentioned in the sermon of the preacher of the day.

The fourth and last execution for witchcraft in Boston is perhaps the most interesting of this monograph. It took place November 16, 1688. There resided in the "North-end" one John Goodwin, "a grave man and a good liver." The wife of Deacon Goodwin was an ardent Christian. The children "were all remarkable for ingenuity of temper," the eldest being a girl of fourteen years at the time of family trouble. The dainty maiden appears to have charged the laundress with taking away some of the Goodwin linen. This at once aroused the mother of the laundress (whom Governor Hutchinson, in his abstract of facts, says "was one of the wild Irish"). This daughter of Erin gave the Goodwin maiden "harsh language," and in a short time the girl fell into fits. Soon one of her sisters and two brothers were also taken sick in the same manner. This thoroughly heated Boston and vicinity. The ministers of the town kept a day of "fasting," and prayed long and often at the Goodwin home. The Rev. Cotton Mather, after his visit to the modest dwelling, describes the father of the family as "a sober and pious man, whose trade is that of a mason." The "wild Irish" woman was the "Widow Glover." After she was taken for trial, a committee of ministers searched her house, and several small images, or "puppets," made of rags and stuffed with goats' hair, were found. The things were produced in court. When questioned as to the images, she stated to the court that, to keep her enemies from doing her harm, she wet her finger and stroked them. This she was required to do before the court. Upon one of the Goodwin children seeing her do this, he fell into fits. This was considered as the chief evidence against the old lady. Dr. Thomas Oakes testified that he had attended the family in their sickness, and that the children had "distempers," and, concluding, said it was "nothing but hellish witchcraft." The judge asked her if she had "anyone to stand by her." She at once looked heavenward and replied, "No, he is gone." Another witness, one Mrs. Hughes, testified that she had seen Glover "come down the chimney." While Mrs. Glover was in prison, Doctor Mather visited her twice that he might "question her" and pray for her welfare "in heaven." She informed him that she "could pray for herself." She spoke of her "spirits" or her "saints." Dr. Mather writes at length upon the shameful subject. The following concludes his narrative: "All that I have now to publish is that Prayer and Faith was the thing which drove the devils from the children, and I am to bear this testimony unto the world: That the Lord is nigh to all them who call upon Him in truth, and that blessed are all they that wait for Him." John Goodwin "and Martha, his wife," were received into Dr. Mather's church, May 15, 1690. Their eldest son, Nathaniel, on the 22nd of July, 1728, took out letters of administration on the estate of the lamented Cotton Mather.

The witches sleep in the Copp's Hill, King's Chapel, and the Granary graveyards. No costly stones mark their last resting-places. Times have changed in Boston. The pulpits of to-day preach Christianity and philosophy, and little reference is made to the days of witchcraft, when creed and race-egotism were foremost.

—Truthseeker (New York).

The Criminal Appeal Bill.

The following resolution has been passed by the Criminal Law and Prison Reform Department of the Humanitarian League, and copies have been forwarded to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. Gladstone:—

"This Committee of the Humanitarian League would earnestly impress upon his Majesty's Government the importance of passing the Criminal Appeal Bill during the present Session of Parliament, as we believe that the Bill would receive the support of an overwhelming majority of the House of Commons. We regret to see no improvement in the Criminal Department of the Home Office, whose defects as an appellate tribunal are now generally recognised. On the contrary, the number of miscarriages of justice corrected during the present year has so far been unusually small; and we submit that the creation of a properly-constituted Court to retry criminal cases ought to be regarded as a matter of the utmost urgency."

EVIL OF PURITANISM.

One great source of the sin we are considering [sensuality] is the want of other thoughts. Here puritanism comes in, as it has any time these two hundred years, to darken and deepen every mischief. The lower orders here are left with so little to think of but labor and vice. Now any grand thought, great poetry, or noble song is adverse to any abuse of the passions—even that which seems most concerned with the passions. For all that is great in idea, that insists upon man's attention, does so by an appeal, expressed or implied, to the infinite within him and around him. A man coming from a great representation of *Macbeth* is not in the humor for a low intrigue: and, in general, vice, especially of the kind we are considering, seizes hold not of the passionate, so much as of the cold and vacant mind. On this account education and cultivation are to be looked to as potent remedies. The pleasures of the poor will be found to be moral safeguards rather than dangers. I smile sometimes when I think of the preacher in some remote country place imploring his hearers not to give way to backbiting, not to indulge in low sensuality, and not to busy themselves with other people's affairs. Meanwhile, what are they to do if they do not concern themselves with such things? The heavy ploughboy who lounges along in that listless manner has a mind which moves with a rapidity that bears no relation to that outward heaviness of his. That mind will be fed; will consume all about it, like oxygen, if new thoughts and aspirations are not given it. The true strategy in attacking any vice, is by putting in a virtue to counteract it; in attacking any evil thought, by putting in a good thought to meet it. Thus a man is lifted into a higher state of being, and his old slough falls off him.—*Arthur Helps.*

People acquire certain ideas about morality, politics, religion, the family, the race, and so on, without perceiving it, and fill their minds with the ideas which pervade the surrounding atmosphere. There are religious or social principles which are irreconcilable with reason and sound human intelligence, and yet they are believed, and even regarded as mental treasures, merely because they were the beliefs of our fathers, and the most irresistible instincts are transmitted from father to son. No logic can disturb them, because they have become in a manner one with the personality.—*Dr. Liebaull.*

THE DEVIL.

I called the Devil and he came,
In blank amazement his form I scanned,
He is not ugly, is not lame,
But a refined, accomplished man.
One in the very prime of life,
At home in every cabinet strife,
Who, as diplomatist, can tell
Church and State news, extremely well.
He is somewhat pale, and no wonder either,
Since he studies Sanscrit and Hegel together.
His favorite poet is still *Pouquè*,
Of criticism he makes no mention;
Since all such matters unworthy attention
He leaves to his grandmother, *Hecate*.
He praised my legal efforts, and said
That he also when younger some law had read,
Remarking that friendship like mine would be
An acquisition, and bowed to me:—
Then asked if we had not met before
At the Spanish minister's *soirée*?
And as I scanned his face once more,
I found I had known him for many a day.
—*Heine.*

HERE AND HEREAFTER.

Poor human hearts that yearn beyond the tomb,
Wherein you all must moulder into dust!
What has the blank immitigable gloom
Of light or fervor to reward your trust?

Live out your whole free life while yet on earth;
Seize the quick Present, prize your one sure boon;
Though brief, each day a golden sun has birth;
Though dim, the night is gemmed with stars and moon.

Love out your cordial love, hate out your hate;
Be strong to grasp a foe, to clasp a friend;
Your wants true laws are; thirst and hunger sate;
Feel you have been yourselves when comes the end.

Let the great gods, if they indeed exist,
Fight out their fight themselves; for they are strong:
How can we puny mortals e'er assist?
How judge the supra-mortal right and wrong?

But if we made these gods, with all their strife,
And not they us: what frenzy equals this;
To starve, maim, poison, strangle our poor life,
For empty shadows of death's dark abyss?

—*James Thomson* ("B. V."), "*Two Lovers.*"

THE SURE HARVEST.

Ages of heroes fought and fell
That Homer in the end might tell;
O'er grovelling generations past
Upstood the Doric fane at last;
And countless hearts on countless years
Had wasted thoughts, and hopes, and fears,
Rude laughter and unmeaning tears,
Ere England Shakespeare saw, or Rome
The pure perfection of her dome.
Others, I doubt not, if not we,
The issue of our toils shall see;
Young children gather as their own
The harvest that the dead had sown,
The dead forgotten and unknown.

—*Arthur Hugh Clough.*

Liberty, what of the night?—
I feel not the red rains fall,
Hear not the tempest at all,
Nor thunder in heaven any more.
All the distance is white
With the soundless feet of the sun.
Night, with the woes that it wore,
Night is over and done.

—*Swinburne.*

If illusory ideals have succeeded in maintaining whole races in subjection, and to influence their every thought and action for thousands of years, the power of nobler and more humane ideals will strike a firmer and a deeper root; for it is one with the happiness of humanity.—*Büchner.*

DRAMATIC CRITICISM.

Here is an effective piece of dramatic criticism, said to have been printed in a rural paper in Indiana. A raw company of the "kerosene circuit" played *Hamlet*, and the next day the editor wrote: "Mr. So-and-so and his company played *Hamlet* in the Town Hall last night. It was a great social event, and all the *élite* of our fair village attended. There has been a long discussion as to whether Bacon or Shakespeare wrote the play commonly attributed to Shakespeare. It can be easily settled now. Let the graves of the two writers be opened. The one who turned over last night is the author."—*New York Tribune.*

TWO PREACHERS.

"Speck," remarked Mr. Roosevelt.
"Sire?" said Von Sternburg.
"I wonder if Wilhelm wouldn't like to exchange pulpits with me some Sunday."

NO USE.

There was an old lady of Lynn
Who was fond of original sin,
When her friends said "Be good!"
She said, "Yes, if I could."
And then she was at it again.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, etc.

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

LONDON.**OUTDOOR.**

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 3.15 and 6.15, F. A. Davies.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S.: Rushcroft-road (side of Brixton Theatre), Brixton-road, 11.30, James Rowney; Brockwell Park, 3.15 and 6.15, James Rowney.

CLAPHAM COMMON: 3, A. D. Howell Smith, B.A., "Gospel Harmony."

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (Ridley-road, Dalston): 11.30, Mr. Ramsey, "The Curse of the Cross."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill, Hampstead): 3.15 and 6.30, Lectures.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (The Grove, Stratford): 7, Louis B. Gallagher, "Christianity: What it is Not."

COUNTRY.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Milton Hall, Daulby-street): 7, W. C. Schweizer, "The Oldest Book in the World and What It Teaches Us."

PORTH BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Room, Town Hall): 6.30, "Evil Effects of God's Teaching."

SOUTH SHIELDS: United Picnic of the North-Eastern Branches at Marsden Rock. Trains leave Westoe-road Station at 2 and 3.

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