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If thou derive pleasure from the good thou hast done, and be grieved for the evil which thou hast committed, thou art a true believer.—MOHAMMED.

Religion and Ethics.

"Apart from moral conduct, all that man thinks himself able to do in order to become acceptable to God, is mere superstition and religious folly."—Kant.

KANT was a great thinker. He continued the work of Hume and carried philosophy to the point of Atheism. Heine said that he had stormed the heavenly citadel and left the Holy Trinity dead upon the ramparts. But then he experienced a soft relenting. At his elbow he perceived his manservant Lampe, who used to carry the master's umbrella when he took his daily constitutional. Poor old Lampe was no philosopher, but a good, honest, silly soul, who could not help shedding tears when he saw the objects of his worship stretched out lifeless. And the sight of his servant's trouble touched Kant to the very heart. "I can do without a God," he said to himself, "but poor Lampe cannot—so I must make him one." Accordingly, having slain the Deity in his treatise on Pure Reason, Kant brought him to life again in another treatise on Practical Reason—that is to say, a reason suited to unreasonable people. And poor old Lampe was comforted; and all his race—a numerous one—have been comforted ever since.

Kant's lead in this matter has been followed by many writers since. Mr. Mallock, in his recent books, has only carried the thing to the highest perfection in the present stage of enquiry. In one book he plays the very devil with all the arguments in favor of Theism; knocks them down, tramples upon them, and subjects them to still worse indignities. He laughs at the idea that anybody could ever have regarded them as of the slightest importance. Some of his language, indeed, is so fierce and bitter that it would have been considered rather strong even in the columns of the *Freethinker*. But in another book he seeks to prove that, although religion is intellectually untrue, when tested by science and logic, it is necessary because we cannot get on without it. Morality itself is at stake, and we shall never be able to keep it alive unless we place it under the care of religion. Which is essentially what Kant said when the sobs of Lampe frightened him out of his wits. And this is the last trump card in the theologian's hand—although we venture to say that it will not take the odd trick.

It must be said of Kant, however, that he did not lose his head entirely. After sacrificing "pure" reason to the "practical" reason of Lampe and his like, the great German philosopher tried to remedy the mistake as far as possible by refusing any value to religion except as far as it actually did assist the cause of morality. Hence the emphatic declaration of his which stands at the head of this article.

Now if the only thing that man can do to make himself acceptable to God is to conduct himself as a moral being, and if conducting himself as a moral being means acting with a view to the welfare of his fellow men, it follows that morality is the only part of religion that is worth troubling about, and that

all the creeds, revelations, and churches in the world are unnecessary and harmful, and that all the priests, parsons, and preachers in the world are costly parasites on the social organism. For it is certain that if man only wants to practise "moral conduct" the mystery-men of every denomination are the very last persons who can furnish him with guidance and enlightenment.

This bold declaration of Kant's was echoed by Thomas Paine in his finer and more poetical manner when he said that the world was his country and to do good was his religion. This was a noble utterance, and all the nobler for the hostile conditions in which it fell from the speaker's lips. Such a religion as that would have found few sceptics—outside prisons and lunatic asylums; and were it to prevail it would mean the death of all that the word "religion" has hitherto denoted; for when religion and morality lie down together, one or the other is sure to be inside. In the ages of faith religion swallows morality; in the age of reason morality swallows religion.

All that the theologians can do now, at least in the case of intelligent people, is to pretend that "moral conduct" has a certain transcendental element; in other words, that morality is not altogether a natural product. A battle has long been waging on this ground, and will yet be fought to a finish. Supernaturalism, as usual, trades upon human ignorance. Naturalism, as usual, works within the circle of knowledge. Science has been steadily showing us, with ever increasing precision, that the highest morality can be traced down to the simplest origins. Our grandest virtues may affect to commune with heaven, just as the loveliest rose may seem to be related to the skies rather than to the earth; but in reality the rose is vitally connected, through stem, and bough, and bole, with coarse roots stretched out in darkness beneath the rank soil; and in the same way all the grace and beauty of ethics is vitally connected, through a long process of complicated evolution, with the two primordial instincts of self-preservation and the continuation of the species.

Religion did not make man moral, it found him so. There is no "revelation" which does not presuppose morality as an existing power. How could a "religious" teacher have made any effective appeal to man except as an already moralised being? What would have been the use of telling man that "God is love" if he had not realised for himself that love is the most precious thing in the world? Even before Moses (or whoever it was) told the Jews "Thou shalt not murder" they must have known or felt that it was wrong; otherwise he might have delivered the commandment as effectually to sharks and tigers.

That last sentence touches the pith of the matter. Morality is, after all, nothing but the conditions of social health. Hence it varies—not in essence, but in detail—as the environment varies; for instance, it never could have been right for men to use women cruelly, but in a certain state of society polygamy may be right, while in another state of society it may be absolutely wrong. What is wanted, then, for the origin and growth of morality, is simply the presence of human society; which, in turn, depends upon the facts of sex and offspring; so that Voltaire was

justified in saying that the same elements of human society were to be found all over the earth—all that was requisite being a man to find food, and a woman to suckle a child. It was the child that made the woman a mother, and the mother and child that made the man a father; for motherhood and fatherhood are not physical but moral relationships.

Historically, too, it is clear that religion was at first merely ritual. It had no moral elements whatever; it had no relation to morality; it often stood in the way of morality; for instance, when it ordered the sacrifice of the first-born—a thing that human nature would never have consented to except under the shadow of an awful fear. In the course of time religion set up relations with morality; but that was only because it recognised morality as a thing to be exploited. Religion, indeed, has never been anything else but exploitation. It robs mankind, and then pretends that the fruit of its robbery is a gift from heaven. Religion boasts of being woman's best friend. What has it ever done for her except drawing upon her tenderness and devotion in the interest of churches operated by men?

Every civilised nation is gradually coming to see that religion is a luxury and morality a necessity. And all luxuries tend to be not only expensive, but injurious. Brutalities to natives in South Africa, or brutalities to Russian subjects by the Autocracy, go on comfortably enough under the ægis of religion. They could not go on for five minutes under the ægis of morality. The world is growing tired of the blight of superstition—and no religion is anything else. Of course it may be contended that religion in some form is indestructible. Well, it all depends on what you mean. If religion is to continue to exist it will have to

"Suffer a sea change
Into something rich and strange."

The only possible religion for the future is the Religion of Humanity.

G. W. FOOTER.

The Environment of Ideas.

A GREAT many new words have been added to the popular vocabulary since the doctrine of evolution, under the twin leadership of Darwin and Spencer, began its triumphant career. Among these "environment" is perhaps the most widely used, and of late certainly the most prevalent. It is good, of course, that new words should be added to our vocabulary, and good also that they should become popular. An increase in the range of language means new tools with which to beat out ideas and clarify conceptions. But unfortunately it is the fate of many words, good in themselves, to become in time either mere pious expressions of the Mesopotamian order, or else to be narrowed down in a quite unjustifiable manner. In this way it obstructs thought instead of aiding it. Both fates have overtaken "environment." By some it is used as a comprehensive phrase that does duty for definite thinking. By others it is narrowed down in a way that robs it of a great deal of its value. And by perhaps a larger group still it is habitually used as though all that it connotes is external physical surroundings. This meaning of the word is responsible for much of the loose thinking and speaking of those who point to the environment of certain people as being wholly responsible for whatever evil they may commit, and also of those who point to the fact of other people being without these vices as conclusive evidence that man can rise superior to the conditions amid which he is placed. Both statements contain a truth, and both suggest a falsehood, or one-sided view of the case. Exactly what that truth and falsity is it is the object of the present article to determine.

It may be noted at the outset that any view of the case that leaves the organism out of sight, or treats it as only a passive factor in the result, is bound to lead to confusion. There is no need to enter into a disquisition on the metaphysics of sensation; it is enough to point out that if it be true that the sur-

roundings affect the organism, the organism also has its part in determining the character of the environment. Our knowledge of the world being ultimately a consciousness of mental states, the capacity of the organism for receiving impressions, together with acquired experience, must largely determine the quality of the environment in relation to each. The same surroundings, for instance, will present marked differences to an artist and to one deficient in artistic susceptibilities. An environment that is positively dangerous to one subject to alcoholic cravings will be perfectly innocuous to others differently constituted. Obviously, then, one has to consider not only the operation of the environment on the organism, but also the reciprocal and transforming influence of the latter on the former.

A very casual examination is also sufficient to show that the present—unless we use the word as a summary of the past—does not account for all that is properly connoted by "environment." For man's relations and associations are not with the present only, but with his remotest past, including the whole line of animal descent. Rome was not built in a day, nor was present human nature elaborated in a generation. Its organic connections run through the whole history of the race, and can only be properly appreciated by a study of this none too legible record. It is impossible, for instance, to understand a number of existing institutions forming part of the environment to which human nature must adapt itself without a preliminary study of the historical and sociological conditions from which they spring. Our existing aristocracy, with its symbols and ceremonies, point us back to a time when the social structure was profoundly different to what it was at present. Our "Sabbath" leads us back to the ancient Chaldeans, and thence through the social, political, and religious transformations of the succeeding centuries. In these and in numerous other matters our environment includes the human nature of thousands of years ago.

This is not only a fact, but an important fact, since it is this that makes progress possible. A race that with each generation had to commence afresh would be a race incapable of development.

There seems, for example, every reason for concluding that the superiority of the present to the past does not lie so much in the possession of superior brain power as in the possession of superior tools, as represented in various inventions, elaborated institutions, and, above all, accumulated knowledge. It is not, for instance, that our present generation of seamen are as individuals more courageous or more resourceful than the Phœnicians that they are their superiors, but that each sailor has at his command to day an amount of knowledge which represents the labors of all the generations between them and us. But it is to be observed that these inventions, with the stock of accumulated knowledge, call for adaptation quite as much as do variations in climatic or other physical conditions. Natural Selection will operate—through social channels—by favoring the survival of such as vary in the direction of greater adaptability with what may be called the inherited environment; and thus by degrees a type of mind once prevalent becomes atavistic in character. In this way alone the past not only tends to become, but does become, an increasingly powerful factor in the environment of the present.

But, again, a great deal of the past comes to us in the shape of ideas. Even institutions may with a little latitude be ranged under this head, for ultimately, institutions are dependent upon ideas for their continued existence. In this way the struggle for existence may become a struggle between ideas as well as a struggle between organisms; the latter becoming of greater or lesser social value in accordance with purely mental variations. But while ideas and beliefs operate in this way, social selection again operates, within limits, in relation to ideas. The idea of celibacy, for instance, is one on which social selection sets an obvious and very peremptory check. The death punishment for heresy, so largely prevalent

in savage communities, as well as among those of a later date, can also only be persistently inflicted so long as it does not threaten the more fundamental instincts of the race. Still within these limits, ideas that are subversive of a fuller development do create an environment that operates selectively. The idea of heresy has played, and still plays, its part in favoring the survival of a comparatively orthodox type; just as other ideas—monarchy, or caste, or class play their part. On the other hand, it is easy to see how the existence and prevalence of ideas of a more advanced or beneficent order may serve to bring about a better condition of things. One need only instance such a thing as slavery. Born into an environment in which slavery is an accepted fact, it is taken as an unquestionable social phenomenon. In a later stage the idea of slavery is so repugnant that one who believes in it as an institution finds himself practically excluded from political life and social honor. All the time, then, there is being elaborated a psychical environment that reacts on the physical environment and determines the character of the survival.

At this point, however, one is reminded of Spencer's warning that ideas at variance with the environment cannot effect a lodgement, or if they succeed in this cannot survive. The warning undoubtedly conveys a truth, and this truth might be easily illustrated by pointing out how over and over again ideas have been crushed out because the environment was unsuitable to their survival. But it ignores the idealistic element in human nature; and overlooks the fact that the mere enunciation of ideas and teachings may alone effect a sufficient modification in the environment to ensure their continued existence. It has been said, and with truth, that before an institution can be altered people must look upon it as conceivably alterable, and in this way teaching may have a considerable effect on the general social structure. Moreover, the idealistic element is in itself a factor in social evolution. The more value society places on a high sense of truth and justice and the expression of human sympathies, or upon the mere desire for social improvement, the greater becomes the survival value of such individuals as possess these qualities in a marked degree. Indeed, social evolution tends to move in an increasing degree along these lines.

From all points of view, then, careful study shows that ideas are not only real factors in the environment of man, but tend to become more and more important. The story is, in truth, an old one. So long as tools have been fashioned, or traditions handed down, or institutions elaborated, the value of ideas as environmental factors have been steadily increasing. All this time the purely physical environment has been decreasing, and the psychical environment increasing in importance. Of course, the physical factor is always there, only it is held in subjection or transformed by intellectual development. If one may venture on a metaphor, one may say that modern man assimilates his environment as he does his food; and as the one is transformed by chemical means so the other is transformed by psychical means. We live, more and more, in a world of ideas, and in the long run the prize will be with the race that is most developed in this direction. And if this be so, the lesson of evolution is plain. Natural selection has been the great condition of the development of animal forms; it must also be the condition of the serviceable development of ideas. But variation is the condition of natural selection under whatever form it is found; and if there is to be a serviceable natural selection on the psychic plane, we must have an infinite variation of ideas to begin with, and a social structure that places as few obstacles as may be on the survival of the fittest. It is for this reason that societies that have prevented this have either stagnated or decayed. And for this reason Freethought, here as elsewhere, in striking at all mental fetters, makes for the further development of the race.

C. COHEN.

Which, or—None?

PROBABLY the ablest, certainly the most remarkable, of all the articles in the current number of the *Hibbert Journal* is the one contributed by the Rev. K. C. Anderson, D.D., of Dundee, and entitled "Why not Face the Facts?" It is a perfect delight to peruse it, because of the irresistible force of its logic, and the perfect lucidity of most of its statements. And yet one reads it with profound amazement, inasmuch as it comes from the pen of a Doctor of Divinity and minister of a Christian Church. It might have been written by any so-called Agnostic, almost, though not quite, by an Atheist. Dr. Anderson's courage is wonderful, and quite as wonderful is his fidelity to what he believes to be true, for both of which one is bound to admire him.

The article begins with marvellous admissions. "A friend of mine," the writer says, "after reading an elaborate apology for the *status quo* in the orthodox churches, exclaimed, 'The author is on the rock, but the rock is in mid-air,'" the meaning clearly being "that, granting certain assumptions as presuppositions, no one can deny the truth of the orthodox creed, but that these presuppositions are just the matters in dispute; that they have no real foundation; that whatever foundation they had has been undermined either by historical criticism or positive science; and that, therefore, the orthodox apologetic will commend itself only to those upon whom these two great forces of modern life have as yet had little or no effect." Dr. Anderson applies the same remark to the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed, to the Westminster Confession of Faith and all the other creeds of the Reformation. They are all alike in this—grant certain premises and you cannot deny their truth. They are all alike in this also—"the strength of each is due to assumptions which have been undermined, to presuppositions which have now nothing to stand upon." A strange admission is this from a gentleman who sports the highest degree in theology!

And here is an equally strange admission to come from the minister of a Christian Church:—

"Nothing is more patent than the disappearance of authority from the modern church. It cannot be doubted that the churches have lost their hold upon two classes of every community—the cultured classes and the industrial classes. The leadership of science and art and literature is already almost entirely in the hands of men who have broken with organised Christianity. The same may be said of the guides and pioneers in social and political reform. And it is notorious that the working men of Great Britain—notably so in England, less so in Scotland—have already left the churches. With the first class things have come to such a pass that the utterances of the pulpit on questions of doctrine are never taken quite seriously. They are usually the butt of light banter. And while the second class cannot and do not think the matter out, they feel the note of unreality. Now this is no charge of insincerity. This state of things is due simply to the fact that the presuppositions of the theology of the churches have passed out of the living mind of to-day. The modern man is not living in the world in which that theology had its being. It does not appeal to him."

Of the entire sincerity of these admissions there can be no manner of doubt, and their truth is beyond dispute. *And the churches themselves know that they are true.* They feel their own inherent weakness, and refuse to face the facts. "The one pressing duty that is before the churches to-day," says Dr. Anderson, "is to look to their presuppositions; but that is the one duty the churches will not face. They resent even being reminded of it." How very true this is.

"One party is trying to find a substitute for this duty in activity. Hence the development of 'Institutional' churches. The people care nothing for doctrine, this party thinks, so they are 'going for' the people in all kinds of ways, changing churches into literature societies, art clubs, billiard rooms, and even restaurants, but all the time the thing that matters, the message, the teaching, is left as vague as can be. The old phrases are used with as much infusion of liberal sentiment as

possible, but with no real gripping of the problems raised by our age, no sincere facing of new facts."

Dr. Anderson refers to the various forms of authority that have been insisted upon, and says their decline can be traced step by step. "Catholicism found its authority in the Church, which claimed to rule not only the conscience and the opinions, but the daily habits of all Christians. The Reformation substituted for this authority that of the Bible." Then the Higher Criticism undermined the authority of the Bible, and now the Protestant theologians are casting about for a new standard, some finding it in the historic Christ, and some in the Cross or the Reality of Grace. These latter, chief among whom is Principal Forsyth, do not rely on the Gospels, but on the Pauline Epistles, together in some measure with the Gospel and Epistles of John.

We now touch the core of the whole matter. We are solemnly told that our supreme duty is to believe in Christ; but there are Christs many—which are we to believe in? The Jesus of the first three Gospels is entirely different from the Jesus in that bearing John's name. Paul's Christ is materially different from the Christ of the orthodox Church. Dr. Anderson is most emphatic on this point. He asserts "that there is no theologian living, no matter how conservative, who accepts Paul's gospel just as Paul held it, or Paul's Christ as Paul conceived of Him..... Paul's Christ began to be; He is 'the first-born of many brethren' (Rom. viii. 29); He is to lay aside His function that God may be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 28); He is not equal to God; He might have clutched at equality with God, but it was beyond His grasp (Phil. ii. 6), Equality with God could not be possessed by Christ if it was to be gained by snatching at it. What conservative theologian accepts to-day these undoubted Pauline positions? The real truth is that the idea of Christ in the New Testament is a development which can be traced from stage to stage." That is to say, the Christ of the New Testament is to be regarded as a developing idea, not as a historic person. Freethinkers have been saying this for many generations; but now it is being boldly said by a minister of the Gospel, whereat we greatly rejoice. Christ, then, is a progressive idea.

"If you insist that there is an objective being corresponding to it, you have to say which idea of the Christ you are going to take. Are you going to take the lowly Teacher of the synoptics, or the Logos-Christ of the Fourth Gospel, or the man from heaven of Paul, or the mighty Conqueror of the Apocalypse? You cannot have all of them [the italics are the reviewer's], for it is not a harmonious character they represent."

Dr. Anderson is not prepared to affirm that any image or ideal of Christ is absolutely true. If, for example, you were to choose that of the "lowly Teacher of the synoptics," you would be "met by the difficulty of fixing on which are, and which are not, the words of Jesus." Paul's Christ, again, is declared to have arisen "out of the circumstances of his life, and the inner experiences of his soul." The same remark may be made regarding any and all ideas of Christ extant to-day. It is the fashion just now, in the pulpit of the Free Churches, to speak glibly of the Eternal or Living Christ, who gives to his disciples glowing emotions and gladsome experiences, through whom they have received the remission of their sins, and who has poured his own peace and love and strength into their hearts and lives, so that they are able to meet all emergencies with calm courage and patient hope. But such experiences do not prove that the Living Christ is the one sublime reality, because similar experiences were common in pre-Christian times, and are characteristic now of many non-Christian faiths. And Dr. Anderson reminds us that "it must be constantly borne in mind that whenever men begin to set forth their Christ, it is an ideal either of themselves or of someone they deeply revere and love," and that "it cannot be otherwise."

We have now seen what the facts are which Dr. Anderson wishes all Protestants to face. It is vain for them to seek refuge in theological obscurantism,

as Dr. Dale recommended them to do; and they have repudiated the support of ecclesiasticism, whether of Rome or of Canterbury. It is wrong for them to claim that their idea of Christ is the only right or universal one. They must not "suppose that they know Christ as they know a living friend." What then are they to do beside facing the facts? Dr. Anderson does not tell them. There is a hint here and there that he himself prefers "the lowly Teacher of the synoptics"; but there is no clear indication in any part of the article that he belongs to any theological school. Indeed, he emphasises the extreme folly of formulating any exclusive plan of salvation. The only thing he is quite sure about is the reality of salvation, whichever way it comes. People are delivered from "the manifold dangers of life," though the interpretation they give to the fact may be quite wrong.

And here Dr. Anderson, without intending it in the least, presents himself to us as a sublime egotist. Having weighed all the creeds of Christendom in the balance and found them wanting, having pronounced all the historic gospels incomplete, partial, he calmly makes the announcement that he has discovered the one true creed, the one "eternal gospel of which all partial gospels are but phases." According to him, the reports that come in from all parts of the world to-day "all unite their voices to preach one mighty Gospel, the essential goodness of the world and of life: that the Universe is cradled in love; that it is not only a unity, but a beneficent unity; that the life of man, the child of the Universe, lies embosomed in one great Life; that the essence of things is good, and the purpose and the outcome good." One would like to learn much more concerning those "reports that are coming in from all parts of the world to-day," and all uniting in making so stupendous an announcement. By whom, to whom, and by what method are they sent? I believe Vesuvius and San Francisco, a little while back, sent forth pretty loud reports—did they declare "the Father, the Eternal Goodness, the Universal Love?" Year in and year out, almost daily, reports without number, of the same cruel tenor, are coming in from all parts of the world—do all these declare that the "essence of things is good, the purpose and the outcome good?" Why, man has to be perpetually defending himself against the mother that bore him. This mother seems to take delight in slaying her offspring by the million. She burns them in her fires, drowns them in her floods and oceans, tears them limb from limb by her earthquakes, hurls them to destruction by her whirlwinds and tornadoes, and it is only those who develop superior strength and cunning that manage, as if by the skin of their teeth, to elude her insatiable cruelty. "The essential goodness of the world and of life" is a pure assumption, unsupported by the facts. We turn Dr. Anderson's question upon himself, and say, "Why not face the facts?" We challenge him to produce the reports to which he vaguely refers and read them to us.

The only gospel that is known to be true is the gospel which calls us to a life of effort, struggle, and work, to a life of proud self-assertion and self-development, yea of self-preservation in the presence and in spite of the many destructive forces of Nature. We see no sign of "the Father, the Eternal Goodness, the Universal Love" anywhere; and when asked which idea or image of Christ will you take? we unhesitatingly answer, NONE, resolved to take life as we find it and endeavor to make the most and best of it for ourselves and others.

J. T. LLOYD.

Philip the Second.

A SMALL, short man; thin legs, narrow chest, forehead broad, eye blue, nose aquiline; big mouth, hanging bottom-lip, large under-jaw; complexion fair, beard yellow, short and pointed. He is silent, solemn. When he walks alone in the woods (so admirers say) the country-people are struck by his

manner and bow. If he says little, he writes much, and will even scribble a long letter to a person who may only be in the next room. On the spiritual side, he prays often and goes much to mass. On the material side, he is over-fond of pastry, and suffers habitual pains in the stomach. This somewhat singular person is Philip II., King of Spain, Naples, the Netherlands, and immense stretches of America. Spain had become drunken with the tremendous feeling that she was God's agent, whose mission it was to defend the Cross in Europe and America, to humble the Moors and their Islam, to stamp out Protestant ideas, to oppose even the Pope if he seemed feeble in his Christian zeal. We see the soul of Spain at work in this bigoted Philip; in the courage and persistence of Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits; in the endless devotions of Saint Teresa, the mystic.

It was a good thing for the world that Spain was checked by three countries that loved freedom. These countries were France, where Henry of Navarre was king; England, where Elizabeth was queen; and the Netherlands, where William the Silent was prince.

When Philip took up his residence in Spain (for he had lived some time in Flanders), he celebrated the occasion by attending an *auto-da-fé*, or burning of heretics. Seated on a magnificent platform in an open space in Valladolid, and surrounded by crowds of pious Spaniards, he watched twelve condemned men pass to the stakes. One of them was a person of rank, and he reproached the king. Philip's reply was, "If my son were as perverse as you are, I myself would carry the faggots to burn him." Such was Philip the persecutor. On the other hand, his attention to household duties was admirable. He was fond of pictures, flowers, fine buildings—it was he who built, on the Guadarama hills near Madrid, the great Escorial palace, on which workmen were engaged for twenty years. Here, then, was a man who was honorable and conscientious in private life, but who, led away by religious pride, wasted money, time, energy, and innumerable precious lives. He and Spain made a heroic effort for God and imperialism; and they failed. His long reign of forty-two years (1556 to 1598) illustrates the struggle in four directions.

The Moors of Granada, who professed Christianity, were known as Moriscoes. They worked patiently and skilfully as farmers and artizans. Christian prejudice forbade them to possess arms; forbade them to use the warm baths which they were accustomed to; forbade them to fasten their doors; and forbade the women to wear the veils sanctioned by the tradition of centuries. The Moriscoes were driven to fury, and for two years Christians and Moors massacred each other. Awful tales are told of Moors roasting Christians to death, and of a thousand Moorish women killed in the course of one night in a Christian church by Christian hands; and other things not speakable. The end of the anarchy came when the whole of the Moriscoes of Granada were driven in gangs from their southern home to the province of Castile in the north, where they acted as slaves in Christian households. A more justifiable war was carried on in the Mediterranean against the Turks. In the year 1571, one of the great battles of history was fought off the coast of Greece. This battle of Lepanto was the clash of two large armies on ships which lay side by side. Don John of Austria commanded the galleys of Spain, Rome, and Venice. From noon to sunset one Sunday the dreadful conflict went on, and it decided that, ever after, the Turks had no power to imperil the west of Europe. So far, that was a blessing to western civilisation. Young Don John was the Nelson of his day, and people repeated the words of the Gospel—"There was a man sent from God whose name was John!"

We turn next to the Bible-reading, money-making, and freedom-loving Dutch. Philip was determined to do his duty, as he conceived it, and, by means of the Inquisition and the Duke of Alba's soldiers, to suppress heresy in the Netherlands. He told the

Pope: "Before allowing any backsliding in religion, or in the service of God, I will lose all my dominions, and a hundred lives, if I had them, for I will never be a ruler of heretics." The Dutch had their bigotry, too. They tore down images and statues from the church walls, and trampled on them and crushed them. It was a Puritan madness against everything that was lovely if it happened to be Catholic. Alba and his Spanish soldiers went to work with a coarse courage; for it was indeed courage; and they, like their victims, were ready to give up life for God's sake. Alba's war cost Holland 50,000 lives. William the Silent—a prince of French blood—intelligent, subtle, unconquerable—led the resistance of the Dutch for sixteen years. He was fighting for Europe, for modern liberty and progress. The battles in the meadows and villages of the Netherlands were incidents in a drama that concerned the world. One of the most extraordinary moments in the war was when William ordered the dykes near Rotterdam to be cut. The ocean poured over pastures and farms, making a sheet of water that gave pause to Alba and imperialism. "Better a drowned land than a lost land," ran the resolution of the Dutch people. The pistol of Balthasar Gérard ended the beating of William's heart. But the liberty of the Dutch Republic was assured. William was one of the noblest of the sons of humanity, and his name should be enrolled among the saints of history.

England, like the Netherlands, took up arms against Philip, and in the same manly and liberal temper. When Philip had annexed Portugal, and had the grand harbor of Lisbon at the disposal of his navy, he despatched the Armada—120 to 130 ships, and 20,000 to 30,000 men—either to conquer England, or at least to secure the toleration of the Catholic faith. The toleration was a worthy object, had he been ready to accord equal grace to Protestantism in Spain! The immense fleet sailed in a tour of disaster and death round the British Isles, pursued by the English naval artillery, beaten by the storms of heaven—the line of retreat marked by burning galleons, vessels wrecked, Spaniards flung on the wild Irish coast and slain by the peasants. And of all the imposing array, only half the ships and less than half the men returned to show their misery to Philip. He made no murmur. We cannot help admiring the fortitude and piety of this man. In his stately and gloomy Escorial he sat stricken, as he thought, by the hand of God—ready to see the ruin of Spain if so be it was done in the service of the Most High.

Philip failed also in France. During the last nine years of Philip's life, the king who ruled France was Henry IV. of Navarre. Henry was one of the greatest of European statesmen. Like William the Silent, he stood for the new spirit, for religious freedom. He was a heretic, a Protestant; but, as in the case of William, the particular creed was of no special importance to him. His ideal was to build up a progressive commonwealth; to develop industry; to suppress the power of the feudal nobility; to give liberty to both Catholic and Protestant. As he was noble in his aims, so also was he in his temper as a gentleman and a prince, always showing mercy to conquered enemies. Henry met the Catholic League—a league of aristocrats, reactionaries in politics—at the famous battle of Ivry in 1590. Lord Macaulay's poem has made us familiar with Henry's charge at the head of his cavalry, when his companions followed the white plume of his helmet as their oriflamme. The army which Henry defeated at Ivry contained troops sent by Philip of Spain. Philip still hoped to dominate the policy of France. Henry outwitted him. Henry saw that, unless he became Catholic, he could not unite France as a nation, or gain Paris to his side. He therefore professed the Catholic faith. "Paris," he said, "is worth a mass!" All France rallied to his support, and Spain lost the chance of establishing its rigid creed north of the Pyrenees. For, though Henry was Catholic, he permitted complete freedom of worship to the Huguenots, or Protestants.

Thus, in the Netherlands, in England, and in France, the modern spirit had triumphed. Our gratitude is due to-day to the three brave souls—William the Silent, Queen Elizabeth, and Henry of Navarre—who resisted without flinching the narrow-minded schemes and tyranny of Philip. It was really an assertion of the genius of progress against the unintellectual and repressive influence of the Middle Ages. Not that the Middle Ages were a mere dark patch on human history. But Europe must go forward in its evolution. It must not be kept back by the prayers of Philip, the ecstasies of Saint Teresa, or the self-denying and heroic piety of Loyola.

Nevertheless, there is no sense in reviling Philip as if he were a human devil. He was not a bad man. He had the supreme quality of devotion to a purpose which he believed to be for the true and eternal good of mankind. He did not understand the signs of the times. But I, for one, cannot think without pity of the sorrow of his last days. Old and sick, bearing incessant pain, brooding over the defeat of his ideal in so many spheres, he often moaned, "Thy will, O God, be done, not mine." He lay dying for fifty-three days in the Escorial—a loathsome skin-disease making a change of clothing impossible. He did not complain. He held a crucifix in his hand, biting it sometimes in his agony, yet holding it in faith and patience. One morning, as the first sun-rays touched the Guadarama hills, the choristers entered the royal chapel, and chanted prayer. The sound of the organ came up to the chamber of the King, and, as he listened, Philip of Spain breathed his last sigh and was still. His poor hands had done their best for his country, and, though we justly condemn his errors of statecraft and religion, it is certain that Spain has always revered his memory.

His remains were enclosed in the jasper vault of the Spanish kings, in an obscurity like to that which will, in a future age, enshroud the theology and imperialism which he vainly tried to establish on an invincible throne.

F. J. GOULD.

Acid Drops.

Sir Conan Doyle joined in the correspondence on "Are we becoming less religious?" in the *Daily Express*, and on the whole his letter was a good one. He denied from his own experience that going to church, or not going to church, had anything to do with morality. "Never yet," he said, "have I known a person who was good because he went to church, or evil because he did not." Ritual practices "including the ritual of going to a large stone building for the purpose of communion with the great Unseen" had no relation whatever to "true religion."

"The true tests of progress in true religion are (1) Is there a kinder and broader view of such subjects, enabling all men of all creeds to live in amity and charity? (2) Are the criminal statistics better? (3) Are the drink returns better, showing that man is acquiring greater animal self-control? (4) Are the illegitimacy returns better, showing the same thing? (5) Is there more reading, more demand for lectures, more interest in science, showing that the mind is gaining upon the body? (6) Are the savings bank returns better, showing thrift and self-denial? (7) Are the trade returns better, showing greater industry and efficiency? (8) Are there more charitable institutions, and does man show more clearly his sense of duty towards the lower animals? Such practical tests as these, which do actually for the most part show progress, are worth more than the ritual observances which may or may not go with a good life."

We should call this *ethics*. Sir Conan Doyle calls it "true religion." But why should religion get the credit of what belongs to another influence?

Thus far our criticism is largely verbal. On another point it must be substantial. We refer to the following paragraph, which came after an historical statement of how the Christian sects have hated and persecuted each other:—

"All sects have been misled by men of the same acid frame of mind, and have incurred the same blood-guiltiness. I only know four cults—the original Buddhists, the Quakers, the Unitarians, and the Agnostics—who can, I think, say that they have no blood on their hands. Certainly the

Atheists cannot, for their excesses in France—in the Revolution, and also in 1870—have been as bad as those of the Churches."

Now, in the first place, it seems rather odd to call Buddhists, Quakers, Unitarians, and Agnostics "four cults." Quakers and Unitarians are both Christians; at least, they call themselves so; and we never heard of a "cult" of Agnostics, unless Sir Conan Doyle is referring to the Positivists—who, by the way, would all repudiate the Agnostic label. And now let us turn to the Atheists.

Sir Conan Doyle is all at sea, like most people, with regard to the part played by Atheists in the French Revolution. He refers to their "excesses." What does he mean? Does he mean that their excesses were committed in the name of Atheism? Or does he mean that their excesses were committed in the ordinary course of political warfare, in common with the excesses of citizens of all other denominations? If he means the latter, his observation is nothing to the point; for it merely comes to this: that an Atheist may be frenzied with political passion as well as a Christian. If he means the former, his observation is entirely inaccurate. It is simply untrue that Atheists committed any excesses in the French Revolution as Atheists. And the reference to 1870 may be dismissed as scarcely intelligible. There was no Atheistic party in France in 1870. The Commune of Paris was not Atheistic; and its excesses, such as they were, sink into insignificance in comparison with the excesses committed upon the people of Paris by the Versailles troops, who were piously let loose upon them, and butchered them by the thousand.

The leading spirit of the Reign of Terror, when heads fell daily into the basket of the guillotine, was Robespierre. He was so fond of slaughter that he fell himself at last, under the attack of a number of politicians who felt that killing him was a mere act of self-defence. Robespierre was a Deist. He induced the Convention to decree that the belief in God and in Immortality were necessary to human society. He organised a Feast of the Supreme Being, at which he set fire to a combustible monster representing Atheism, and delivered a prophetic discourse of his own on the new religion he was setting up. This was the man who kept the guillotine busy. And it should be added that he exterminated all the Atheist politicians he could lay hands on. But, on the other hand, the Atheists were not the authors of such excesses, for they were never in power. The idea that there were crowds of them is an absurdity. They were never more than a handful. Hébert, who is usually called an Atheist, expressly denied the charge. Chaumette himself was not an Atheist. The Festival of Reason at Notre Dame, which was not arranged under the authority of the Convention, was really in no sense Atheistic. It was the fashion even for believers to talk about "Reason" in those days. And the Goddess of Reason, who is alleged to have been worshipped during the ceremony, is perfectly imaginary. There was no Goddess of Reason; there was a Goddess of Liberty; and the common statement that she was *naked* is simply a pious invention.

To sum up. There was no "sect" of Atheists operating in the French Revolution. There were a few Atheists amongst the revolutionists, and perhaps more in the early stages, amongst the Girondins, than afterwards amongst the Jacobins. Mirabeau was an Atheist, and he used all his great powers to keep the Revolution within peaceful limits. Condorcet was an Atheist, and he died rather than live any longer in a land disgraced by excesses which he was powerless to prevent. Several of the Girondins were Atheists, but they were not blood-shedders; it was their own blood that stained the streets of Paris. On the whole, therefore, we are justified in asking Sir Conan Doyle to look this subject up more carefully. He appears to have blindly accepted the commonplaces of orthodox misrepresentation. From the very beginning the people of this country were abused with pious lies about the French Revolution. Wordsworth even, who knew better, actually alluded to Robespierre, the fanatical Deist, as "the leader of the atheist crew." And when Wordsworth could say that, what limit was there likely to be to the falsehoods of the clergy and the Church-and-State politicians? Those pious lies about the French Revolution passed into popular history. They have made millions of victims—and amongst them is Sir Conan Doyle.

Dr. Francis Clarke, Head of the Christian Endeavor movement, admits that "Calvin allowed Servetus to be burnt when doubtless he might have saved him," but excuses the crime on the plea that Calvin lived in the sixteenth century, and not in the twentieth. But *Christianity* was precisely the same then as it is now, and *Christianity* allowed the burning of Servetus, and of thousands of others.

In connection with his reference to the burning of Servetus, Dr. Clark unconsciously yet most grossly insulted Jesus Christ and his religion. In justification of Calvin's conduct he said: "Abraham was a good man, better and greater perhaps than any living man to-day, but he did things that no good man can do to-day." If that is true, what difference has Christ made? If Abraham was "better and greater than any living man to-day," then Christ must have lived and died and risen again in vain. The incarnation of the Eternal Son of God was an egregious mistake, and the Christian religion has been a colossal failure.

The *Christian World* is in a perfect rage because Canon Wilson asserts that Nonconformists provide no authority in religion, or that in giving up the Bible and the Creeds they give up everything. The *Christian World* describes this as "a gigantic false assumption," and claims that "to Nonconformists the Bible is still, as it always has been, the standard of religion and belief." But the *Christian World* is wrong, and virtually admits it. It goes on to say that what Nonconformists really regard as "the authority" in religion is, not any written record, but "the living Spirit of Truth in the Church and in the minds and consciences of men." Why the quarrel with Canon Wilson then? Truth is neither a person nor a thing, nor is it living as a spirit; but in any case it is not the Bible, nor any creed. Of course the *Christian World* has no right to speak for the Presbyterians and the Wesleyan Methodists, who do have Creeds.

Mr. Silvester Horne is making rapid progress. Preaching at Dunoon the other Sunday, he waxed so irresistibly eloquent that his hearers loudly "cheered and applauded at the mention of the name of Jesus Christ presented to them in a new and irresistible light." If the cheers were loud enough for Jesus Christ to hear them how thankful he must have felt, and how proud of the brilliant Mr. Horne! But what did the preacher say about Jesus Christ to wring cheers from a Scottish audience? Well, among other things, he said that Jesus did not come to "promulgate this or that dogma, but to get things done"; and as a grand climax he related how Jesus Christ is "getting things done at Whitfield's"; nay more, chief of miracles, he "told how he believed Jesus was getting things done even among the Secularists' meeting under St. Pancras arches"; and now "the enthusiasm rose to fever heat."

It would be desirable to know something of a more definite character regarding the meetings held by Secularists under St. Pancras arches, and the method by which Jesus Christ gets things done at them. Did Mr. Horne mean that even Secularists are, without knowing it, servants of Jesus Christ, or did he mean that Jesus Christ attends those meetings and succeeds in making converts? Like Goethe on his death-bed, we cry for more light.

The Lord is rather unkind to Mr. Evan Roberts just now. He keeps the poor man waiting such a long time for his marching orders. A year or two ago the two were in closest touch, working together most harmoniously and successfully; but of late the friendship appears to have cooled off considerably. The consequence is that the revivalist has been resting in the country, not working in the coal-pit, for some months; and, at present, all he knows is that he has "permission from the Lord to take meetings at Llandrindod in August." The real truth is that the revival craze is practically dead, and that there is no longer any scope for the revivalist's play-acting.

Under the heading of "Llandrindod," a Welsh seaside resort, the *Daily Chronicle* gave the following: "Forthcoming events: Llandrindod Races, August 14; Evan Roberts's Mission, August 11-17." Comment would spoil it.

A distinguished American divine has just given England "The New Point of View on Prayer." It seems, after all, that if a man "has neglected his health, or acted foolishly and recklessly in business, he will not expect that prayer can alter the consequences of these things." Now, we are only to "ask divine aid to enable to understand God's laws, to meet and endure the consequences we have drawn upon ourselves." Again: "To pray is to be where God is." Then, if God is omnipresent, everybody prays, even "the dirty little Atheist," for no one can ever be where God is not. Such is the New Point of View on Prayer. Well, all we wish to say is, that prayer is no longer prayer, and that all Bible teaching on the subject is absolutely false.

According to the *British Weekly*, "a distinguished educationalist, now travelling in America," says: "From my own

observation, and from the answers to questions put, I find the great bulk of opinion in the States is in favor of compulsory moral training, and against the religious instruction." As to the existing law he says: "There are nine States in which the reading of the Bible in public schools is legally prescribed either in the State Constitution or in the school law. Local authorities, however, discourage it in some places owing to the heterogeneous population of these towns or cities. There are twelve States in which there is no mention of the Bible in the Constitution or in the school law, but there are decisions of Courts and State school superintendents of an authoritative character which give a legal status to the custom of Bible reading. Where it is not read in these twelve States it is prohibited by local Boards. Such cases are quite numerous."

Entering into details, this witness informs us that there are eight States in which, from various causes, the Bible is not read in the schools. The one thing made clear is that the popular tendency in all the States is toward the purely secular system, and that this tendency is the outcome of observation and experience of the actual working and results of the system.

"The Churches of Christ" have been holding an annual conference at Leicester. All the other Churches in England presumably belong to another party. Is it Satan?

There is one good thing to be said about the Churches of Christ conference. Mr. Robert Knight Francis, the chairman, in his presidential address, declared that sectarian strife had brought about the educational war, and that the logical settlement would be to provide for secular education by the State and religious education by the Churches. He added that there should be no political combinations for religious purposes, and no religious combinations for political purposes.

The newspapers announce that the law abolishing corporal punishment in military prisons in India does not legally take effect until the new year, but Lord Kitchener has ordered its immediate enforcement. "Immediate" is good. Five months' flogging abolished by the stroke of one man's pen! Of course the precisians will cavil. Let them. It is so good to come across a *man* in human affairs. And after Lord Kitchener's prompt action we hope we shall hear no more of the "cat" as an instrument of moral education; for Lord Kitchener's worst enemy never suggested that he didn't understand what he was doing.

"Before the Abyss" is the heading of some recent correspondence in the *Daily News*. One correspondent stated that he was in a good position until the collapse of his employers some time ago. For the last five months he had only earned eight pounds. His wife and daughter were ill—one feverish and in bed, the other fainting often for the need of regular and proper food. To complete his trouble he had been served with a bankruptcy notice in respect of a guarantee for which he became responsible, at the instance of a rich man who is described as "a strong Nonconformist but a very hard nut." This correspondent asks the *Daily News* what he is to do, and suggests suicide as the only way out of his misery; and he winds up with a reference to a text on the wall of the room he was writing in—"God be merciful." What a sanguinary sarcasm!

In the same number of the *Daily News* we noticed a whole column advertisement of some mysterious stuff for making fat people thin. Strange state of the world, as old Donne said, when one half lacks appetite and the other half lacks meat. And fancy a divine governor ruling it all—in this fashion!

What fairy-tales ministers do tell their people. The other day Dr. Horton said that "there is nothing in this world more dangerous than to put a stumbling-block in the way of a Christian, because a Christian is one of Christ's little ones." That is eminently comforting to a Christian, and tends to make him or her unbearably conceited. But what think you of the following; "Directly you believe in Him (Christ), up in heaven God says to some great tender spirit, 'Now, keep that child of Mine'?" How sweet! Here is another delicious morsel to roll under the tongue: "And because that guardian spirit is in heaven, considering you and me, it is very dangerous to the world to ill-treat the 'little ones' of Christ." If Dr. Horton gave himself to rational thought for a moment, he would perceive how infinitely childish such talk is. But Dr. Horton is above and beyond rational thought.

The point to be noted in Dr. Horton's discourse is that it is terribly dangerous to the world to ill-treat Christians;

but it would appear that a Christian may ill-treat a man of the world with impunity. No risk whatever is run in the latter case. Even the very humble and pious and Christ-like Dr. Horton himself does not hesitate to revile in peculiarly strong, if not elegant, language—men who differ from him in speculative opinion. For example, not long ago he was excessively ill-mannered, abusive, and insulting in his treatment of Professor Haeckel, characterising him as an “utterly unsatisfactory and essentially ignorant guide,” an “unthinking mind,” “an atrophied soul, a being that is blind on the spiritual side,” “a rude, ill-mannered, ignorant child.” Of course, Dr. Horton is one of Christ’s “little ones,” and Professor Haeckel isn’t: that makes all the difference. What intolerable cant! What immeasurable hypocrisy! No wonder that both the cultured classes and the industrial classes in every community have forsaken the Church!

Carlton Mannings was co-respondent in the recent divorce case of Hanley v. Hanley, in which the petitioner, John Hanley, of New Brighton, Cheshire, was granted a decree nisi against his wife, Mabel Annie, on the ground of her adultery. One letter from the co-respondent was produced in court, and it shows the highly beneficial effect of religion upon morals. It ran as follows:—

“My own Darling,—I write to you now before going to bed as regularly as I say my prayers or count my beads or recite my paternoster. Another day gone. As the hymn hath it, ‘One day nearer home.’ Thank heaven! I seem nearer to you than ever. Oh, that I could wake up and find myself opposite my darling sweetheart Mabel.—Yours, always yours, my darling, CARLTON.”

Darling Mabel was a wife; what is more, she was a mother; and the pious inamorato knew it. The case looks like one for Father Vaughan. He might drop “the smart set” and deal with the morals of his own Church people.

The Rev. Dr. Ambrose Shepherd, of Glasgow, advises young men thus: “Look up to God and pray, ‘Keep thou me from secret faults’; then look in upon yourselves and say, ‘By the help of God I will make it possible for God to give me the help I ask.’” Dr. Shepherd has the reputation of being a very clever man, and that advice shows that he deserves it; and it also shows that if he were not a Christian minister, Dr. Shepherd would be an excellent ethical teacher. There is the smack of piety about the advice, but in reality what it comes to is, “To thine own self be true.” God helps only those who help themselves, and they are the very ones who do not need his help.

The Rev. F. W. Orde Ward, B.A., of Oxford, is said to be an original, daring thinker, the strength of whose convictions is equalled by his hatred of theological dogmas. He has just published a collection of essays under the title of *The Keeper of the Keys*. Mr. Ward may be original and daring, but doubt may be cast upon his title to be classed with thinkers. He is merely a wild roamer through a continent of mist and confusion, seeing nothing clearly, stating nothing definitely, and affording no guidance to puzzled minds. Some of his assertions are unmitigatedly silly. Here is one: “The whole Cosmos hangs upon the Cross.” What does he know about the Cosmos? Nothing; and about the Cross he knows still less.

Here are other samples of this misty wisdom: “We capitulate to the unexplained; we are moved by the inexplicable”; “To put faith into a theological dogma is to put it into its coffin”; “The fire of the leavening Spirit.” “The fire of the leavening Spirit” is absolutely inimitable. But the whole thing is pure nonsense. Mysticism is a form of madness. Mystics are not responsible for their utterances; and yet, alas, like all mad people, they imagine that they alone are sane. They know the unknowable, they catch “glimpses of incomprehensibles,” and they commune with the unseen and intangible!! They are highly interesting, however—as *mental phenomena*.

Faith without dogma is unthinkable. To have faith is to believe what is taught; and, as is well known, dogma is only another word for doctrine—a thing taught. Therefore, you are bound to “put faith into a theological dogma,” for there is nothing else in which it can live at all. That is to say, to detach faith from dogma would be to put it into its grave. A man without theological dogmas is a man without faith and without God—an *Atheist*. A mystic’s dogmas are as numerous as bristles on a hedgehog.

Henry Ward Beecher was a great orator, and a thinker of no mean order. But he sometimes said very foolish things. In a religious journal for August 9, the following inebriately silly and contradictory quotation is made from him: “It is not truth nor philosophy to say that prayer alters nothing,

that the laws of nature are fixed, and that entreaty cannot change them.” That is thoroughly sound theology, and may be heard from a million pulpits any Sunday; but history gives theology the lie direct. The laws of Nature *are* fixed, and human entreaty does *not* change them.

Beecher, however, had fully accepted the wonderful revelations of modern Science, and he knew quite well that the laws of Nature are unalterably fixed. From this knowledge came the second sentence in the quotation, which flatly contradicts the first and itself as well: “The laws of Nature are fixed on purpose to be used for the granting of prayer.” This is arrant nonsense. Hydrogen and oxygen unite and form water: religion and science combine and constitute a glaring absurdity. It is inconceivable that a man of Beecher’s calibre, even in the heat of extemporary speech, could have framed two such utterly ridiculous sentences.

The divines cannot agree. Dr. Forrest, of Edinburgh, tells us that in Christ the Divine power was limited, in consequence of which “his miracles were not the outcome of the omnipotence proper to Deity”; but the Rev. Mr. Swanson, of Glasgow, asserts that “Jesus himself had the strength of God,” although “that did not cancel his recognition of human weakness.” Which of the two are we to believe, or are we to infer that neither knows anything about it?

The law of libel is a terrible danger to a paper like the *Freethinker*, which runs counter to so many strong prejudices, and is therefore likely to get scant justice in a court of law. We shall therefore content ourselves with begging our readers to reflect on the part played by the ex-reverend Mr. Robins in the Townshend case. The judge spoke with great plainness about Mr. Sutherst the solicitor; we wish he had spoken with equal plainness about the consecrated Mr. Robins; we might then have been able to print a sort of character-sketch of him as a judicial utterance.

The *Northern Daily Telegraph*, in the course of an article which was one half piety and one half business, referred to the sublime mission of the Anglo-Saxon race as a “co-operation with the Almighty in sweetening and elevating human life.” We hope the Almighty is sufficiently grateful for the co-operation of the Anglo-Saxon race. We shudder to think of what he would be without it.

According to a *Matin* telegram from St. Petersburg, the peasants in the Government of Samara are dying wholesale of famine, and appeals to the charity of the public are in vain. Then comes the following sweet announcement: “The monks of the famous Lavra Monastery, in Kieff, have armed themselves with revolvers that they may be able to guard the riches stored within the sacred precincts.”

British society in India, the *World’s Women’s Temperance Bulletin* says, is soaked in drink. “It is a fact,” that journal states, “that when Indians become Christian it is necessary to have a temperance society, which as heathens or Mohammedans they did not require.” We will not spoil this by adding anything of our own.

Rev. T. John, a Congregational minister, of Beaumaris, was on Bangor Pier last Sunday. This was bad enough for a man of God. But he did worse. He hurried to catch a steamer. And the Lord met him on the way. He dropped dead—of heart disease, the doctors say, but true believers know it was a judgment for Sabbath-breaking.

Councillor George Wise, of Liverpool, Protestant champion and Christian Evidence heavy-weight, has been discoursing on “Converts from Infidelity.” It appears that a large number of “infidel leaders” have written to him telling how they were led to renounce infidelity. We haven’t heard of any “infidel leaders” missing of late years; but, of course, Mr. Wise sees things with the eye of faith, and is no doubt able to perceive what to the mere “infidel” vision is quite invisible. Still, he might, in kindness, give the names and addresses of a few of these important converts. Even one would be acceptable. We are always thankful for small mercies in this direction.

Mr. Wise boasts that “infidel” societies have been extinguished in some parts of the country. Well, he hasn’t extinguished “infidelity” in Liverpool, which is the scene of his own magnificent labors. He ought to have seen the two crowded Picton Hall meetings addressed by Mr. Foote within the last year or so. It might have been a painful eye-opener, but that is better than playing the ostrich.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

(Lectures suspended during the Summer.)

To Correspondents.

E. C. CORNETT.—We have no room to answer political questions. There is no pamphlet that we know of dealing with Protestant persecutions. J. M. Wheeler wrote on the subject many years ago, but what he wrote is out of print now.

W. POWIS.—Lecture notices must reach us by the first post on Tuesday morning at the latest. Your lecture notice last week was on a postcard dated Tuesday, and stamped at Porth on Tuesday; and it reached us, of course, on Wednesday.

R. J. HENDERSON.—It is impossible for us to see every paper with our own eyes; we are thankful, therefore, when our readers send us cuttings which they think should be brought to our attention. You will see that we have dealt with Sir Conan Doyle's blunder.

READER.—Of course it is not possible for all the human races on the earth to-day to have evolved since the supposed date of Noah's Flood from one single family of eight persons. The matter is dealt with in our *Bible Romances*, which is now issued in a sixpenny edition, cheap enough for anybody. You should get it.

S. G.—Perhaps the good charitable reverend gentleman, who took a voyage to Australia, and came back and said in Victoria Park that his "old friend" Mr. Symes was "looking much worse than he did," saw him while he was still suffering from the effects of a dastardly assault in his own doorway by unknown fanatics, who nearly succeeded in killing him. The blows he received then on the back of the head have left a little permanent deafness; otherwise he feels very well and looks so too—in spite of the cheerful announcement made by the reverend gentleman to his dear fellow Christians.

D. BAXTER.—We beg to acknowledge the 10s. you forward on behalf of S. H., Cambuslang.

S. BRADBURY.—Sent as requested. Glad you have found the *Freethinker* so stimulating.

E. FENTON.—Thanks for address. Mr. Foote is making engagements for the approaching lecture season, and you will be able to hear him at Manchester some six weeks hence.

J. W. WHITE (Bristol).—Yours is only one of many letters on the Freethought side refused insertion by the *Daily Express*. Freethinkers must expect "Christian fair-play" from such journals.

J. W. WHITE.—Your letter is dated August 12, but the envelope bears the Stanley postmark 4.45 p.m., 13 Au., and reaches us too late for this week. In our next.

E. HARVEY.—Sorry we cannot afford more room for Father Vaughan.

J. BROUGH.—Thanks for cuttings and good wishes. See "Acid Drops."

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

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Sugar Plums.

Our readers will remember the very interesting series of articles entitled "From Fiction to Fact" which appeared a few months ago in the *Freethinker* from the pen of Mr. F. Bonte. This story of a conversion from Catholicism to Atheism is not at all imaginary, but strictly true in every detail. Mr. Bonte was for many years a prison minister; his mind was naturally curious and inquiring, and was marked by a certain integrity, which was probably the intellectual side of a sterling personal character. It was not under outward pressure so much as under the spontaneous activity of a keen intelligence that he slowly moved forward to the position of an uncompromising Freethinker. The inner process was approaching completion when Mr. Bonte came across a copy of our own journal, which he has read ever since; and we take it as a high compliment that he welcomed the *Freethinker* at the very outset, not only as an able and informing publication, but also as one that treated the greatest questions in theology, philosophy, and ethics with transparent honesty. The common orthodox notion, founded on a plentiful lack of knowledge, that this journal is a vulgar illiterate production, is a matter of wonder to our most educated and accomplished readers, and to none more so than to Mr. Bonte himself.

Mr. Bonte's articles were not only interesting on account of their matter, they were also extremely well-written, and it would have been a pity to let them lie buried in the back numbers of the *Freethinker*. We are glad, therefore, that he decided to print them in a more permanent form. This has taken some time, because the matter that had appeared was subjected to careful revision, and large additions were made to the text. The result is a handsome pamphlet of sixty-four pages, which Mr. Bonte fixed at the low figure of one penny; not, of course, to cover the cost of production, which it is far from doing, but to prevent the pamphlet from being distributed too indiscriminately. His object is to get it into the freest circulation without encouraging waste.

From Fiction to Fact is now procurable at our publishing office, and there ought to be a large demand for it. We should, indeed, be happy to see the first issue rapidly exhausted, and room made for a second edition. Freethinkers would do well to keep a copy of this pamphlet always by them, in order to lend it to a likely reader whenever the opportunity presents itself. Many persons would be influenced by a mental autobiography like this who might turn a deaf ear to other forms of propaganda. Freethinkers who can afford it—and many can—should purchase several copies of Mr. Bonte's pamphlet and put them judiciously into circulation amongst their more orthodox friends and acquaintances. We wish it could be placed by myriads in the hands of Roman Catholics.

We referred last week to Mr. G. K. Chesterton's nonsense about Bradlaugh. It will be remembered that Mr. Chesterton represented Bradlaugh as "having gone down at last under a rush of revolutionaries; of Cunninghame Graham and John Burns."—both of whom, by the way, are Freethinkers. Some days later this brought a communication to the *Daily News* from Mr. Cunninghame Graham himself. Mr. Graham says that Bradlaugh was "big, generous, and human," and he is glad of the opportunity of publicly thanking Bradlaugh for his kindness in doing all he could to help the Socialists who were prosecuted after "bloody Sunday" in Trafalgar-square. Mr. Graham denies that Bradlaugh became a Conservative in any unworthy sense of the word. We have pleasure in quoting the following part of Mr. Graham's letter *in extenso* :—

"'Conservative' is a term that is used indifferently (as are Christian and Agnostic) in praise and in contempt.

Applied to Mr. Bradlaugh it could have but the latter signification. Times have changed, new war-cries may have appeared before his death; but I cannot find that he retrograded, though he may have stood still. He was a doughty opponent and a generous friend, and in despite of his opinions I hope that if there be a heaven he is in it. Heaven we may suppose is a place fashioned to be agreeable to its inhabitants. I speak not of the 'angels who were born there,' but of the casual incomers.

Therefore, I imagine my ex-opponent in a glorified House of Commons, where legislation suited to his ideas is perpetually being passed, and where each time that he rises to speak a hush runs through the chamber, and the eye of the Speaker is immediately turned towards him. This, at least, used to be the case on earth, and to me the House of Commons has always looked strangely unfurnished since his departure—shall I say ascension?"

Mr. Graham is mellowing. But he was always sound at bottom. And this tribute to Bradlaugh is a grateful relief to the acerbity of too much political discussion.

To My Old British Friends.

IN sober truth, strange as it may seem, I am again in England, after an absence of almost three-and-twenty years. My uppermost feeling is one of deep regret for the many old friends who have died since I went away. I dare not repeat their names, for my tear-fountains, though so little used, are not dry. My next feeling is one of intense pleasure to find so many alive to welcome me back by personal or by postal greetings.

When I began Freethought lecturing in 1876 I met with uniform kindness from the Secularists, and that continued for seven years to the very day I left for Australia. In that distant land I have met with a most wonderfully various fortune, from ease and comparative affluence to all the discomforts disaster and poverty could afford. But never for one minute have I repented of the life I chose just upon thirty years ago. My life in Australia was one of incessant work, struggle, and battle against overwhelming odds, and with never a man with whom I could mingle on terms of equality to encourage or advise me. I do

not want to be misunderstood. Many of my Australian friends could not be surpassed in goodness or in sound sense; but they were not in my groove, not students of theology, of history, of science, of literature, with whom I could take counsel and get advice upon the subjects of most importance. Consequently I had to "paddle my own canoe"; and at times half envied the lucky lecturers in other lands who were surrounded by men and women of their own rank and occupation. Still, my life in this distant sunny South was a very happy one, taken all in all; and in spite of several disasters and knock-downs, I never once felt as if I should like to die and slink out of my troubles. I think I can say too that my rough and bitter experiences have not soured me in the least—though perhaps that had better be left to the judgment of others.

Our home voyage, though a long one, afforded far more pleasure and immensely less discomfort and weariness than I expected. The word very soon went round, I afterwards learnt, that "The Australian Bradlaugh" was on board the *Runic*; and I am half inclined to think that one or two made up their minds to give me what annoyance they could; but, if so, it came to nothing. There were only one or two passengers who gave me the cold shoulder, and they were not favorites with any. Once or twice religious animosity (pardon, I mean Christian love) flamed out for a few seconds; but in no instance was it anything worth reporting. With nearly all the passengers I was on the best of terms, and with a great many I held in all many hundreds of conversations on matters religious, on which occasions I was ever careful not to leave my companions in the least shadow of doubt as to my opinions. So well did we get on together on the voyage that I found my eyes a bit moist in saying "good bye" to them.

On Sunday morning, August 5, I was long in doubt whether anyone would meet me, for I reflected that it was Sunday, that all the lecturers might be engaged, and that everyone must be in doubt as to whether our ship would be in port by the specified time. Shall I confess it?—When I saw Mr. Foote on the wharf and had communicated with him by hat-waving, etc., I turned aside with my "heart in my mouth" and felt that I had enough to do to keep from "blubbing" aloud. However, I contrived to restrain myself, and by the time we met in the shed I was tolerably composed again. I am sorry Mr. and Mrs. Foote had to go to so much expense of time, comfort and worry to meet us, and I hereby tender them my best thanks therefor. To be sure, I would heartily do the same for them, but that does not diminish the value of their action or its gratification to me.

Miss Vance and Mr. Anderson also deserve my hearty thanks for meeting us at the docks and for their subsequent courtesy and hearty good will. I ought to say that I am more than gratified by the way in which I have been received, and have so reported to one or two Australian friends to whom I have written.

Let me add, I am come back to work, to fight, to suffer, if need be, for the defence and advancement of our principles. And I hope that my visit may be of lasting benefit to our cause.

How long I shall remain in England must depend upon the work I can find to do and my ability to stand the British winter, after living so long in a warm country. I am as willing to work as ever, and fancy I am as able—the latter may be left to the judgment of my friends.

If I should be compelled to return to Australia, I shall certainly not regard that as a personal hardship. I am quite willing and anxious to expend what energy I yet have just where and how it may be most beneficially applied to the furtherance of Freethought.

Justice bids me add that I owe much of my success in Australia, but none of my failures, to the incessant help afforded by my wife.

With heartiest good wishes to all. JOS. SYMES.

London, August 18, 1906.

The Martyrdom of Hypatia ; OR, THE DEATH OF THE CLASSICAL WORLD.

An Address at Chicago by M. M. MANGASARIAN.

(Concluded from p. 509.)

THE transference of the capital of the world and the seat of authority from Europe to Asia was not an accident. It was a logical step. Christianity, to be consistent, had to break up housekeeping in Europe and move its *menage* from Rome to Constantinople. She was homesick for the climate, the atmosphere, the peoples, the traditions, the spirit, the institutions—the *milieu* in which she was born. Unable to assimilate human thought, she pined for Asia. By the same logic, she wished to wipe out in Asia every trace of European thought and culture. When, therefore, we read of the destruction of Pagan schools, libraries and monuments, let us not look upon such acts as accidents in the history of Christianity, but as the logical unfolding of its genius. Why, you may ask, does it no longer pursue the policy of extermination? For the best of reasons: it is no longer virile enough to be logical. It has stumbled into the ways of inconsistency by reason of old age. Fifteen hundred years ago, in Alexandria, when our religion was both young and lusty, it attempted to, and succeeded in, destroying everything that reminded the world of the glory and liberty of ancient Rome and Greece.

Theodosius was at the time of which we will now speak the Christian ruler of the Empire. In reply to a request by the archbishop of Alexandria, he sent a sentence of destruction against the ancient religion of Egypt. Both the Pagans and the Christians had assembled in the public square to hear the reading of the emperor's letter, and when the Christians learned that they may destroy the gods of the Pagans a wild shout of joy rent the air. The disappointed Pagans, on the other hand, realising the danger of their position, silently slipped into their homes through dark alleys and hidden passage-ways. Yet they did not stand aside and see the temples of their gods razed to the ground without first offering a desperate resistance. Under the leadership of a zealot, Olympus, the Pagans fell upon the Christians, maddened with the cry in their ears of their leader, "Let us die with our gods!" Then came the turn of the Christians. Theophilus, the archbishop of Alexandria, with a cross in his hand, and followed by his monks, marched upon the temple of Serapis and proceeded to pull its pillars down. When they came to strike at the colossal statue of the god, for centuries worshipped as a deity, even the Christians turned pale with superstitious awe, and held their breath. A soldier armed with a heavy axe was hesitating to strike the first blow. Will the god tolerate the insult? Will he not crash the roof upon the heads of the sacrilegious vandals? But the soldier struck the thundering blow right in the cheeks of Serapis, who offered no remonstrance whatever. The sun shone as usual, and the laws of nature maintained their even pace. Encouraged by this indifference of the god to defend himself, the Christian rabble rushed upon the statue, and, pulling Serapis off his seat, dragged him in pieces through the streets of Alexandria, that the Pagans might behold the disgrace into which their great god had fallen. Thousands of Pagans, seeing how helpless their gods were to avenge this insult, deserted Paganism and joined the Christians. As soon as the ground of the temple was sufficiently cleared, a church was erected on the ancient site. The Alexandrian library was the next point of attack. Its shelves were soon cleared, and you and I, and twenty centuries, were most lamentably deprived of the intellectual treasures which our Greek and Roman forefathers had bequeathed unto us.

When the archbishop, under whose influence the monuments and libraries of Pagan civilisation were

pillaged and pulled down, died, he was succeeded by his nephew, St. Cyril, who was even more Asiatic in his sympathies and more hostile to European thought than his uncle, Theophilus. The new archbishop directed his efforts against the living monuments of Paganism—the scholars, the poets, the philosophers—the men and women who still cherished a passionate regard for the culture and civilisation of the Pagan world. The most illustrious representative of Greco-Roman culture in Alexandria about this time was Hypatia, the gifted daughter of Theon, a mathematician and a philosopher of considerable renown. It is said that Theon would have come down to us as a great man had not his daughter's fame eclipsed his.

Hypatia was a remarkably brilliant woman. Her example demonstrates how all difficulties yield to a strong will. Being a girl, and excluded by the conventions of the time from intellectual pursuits, she could have given many reasons why she should leave philosophy to stronger and freer minds. But she had an all-compelling passion for the life of the mind, which overcame every obstacle that interfered with her purpose. The example of a young woman conquering tremendous difficulties and becoming the undisputed queen of an intellectual empire ought to be a great inspiration to us faint hearts. She won the prize which was denied to her sex, and became "the glory of her age and the wonder of ours."

To pursue her studies, she persuaded her father to send her to Athens, where her earnest work, her devotion to philosophy, the readiness with which she sacrificed all her other interests to the culture of her mind, earned for herself the laurel wreath which the university of Athens conferred only upon the foremost of its pupils. Hypatia wore this wreath whenever she appeared in public, as her best ornament. Upon her return to Alexandria, she was elected president of the Academy, which at this period was the rendezvous of the leading minds of the East and West. In fact, it was in this academy that the effort of the advanced thinkers to bring about a pacification between the culture of Europe and that of Asia originated. They wished to make Alexandria, situated midway between the occident and the orient, the point of confluence of the two streams of civilisation. They wished to celebrate the marriage of the East as bride to the West as bridegroom. It was their plan to make Alexandria a sort of intellectual distillery, refining and fusing the two civilisations into one. But this amalgamation—this assimilation—Christianity, alas, helped to prevent by bringing into still bolder relief the Asiatic habits of mind, and by refusing to concede an inch to the larger spirit of the West. Christianity is responsible for the miscarriage which has ever since left Asia a widow, or, to change the simile, a withered branch upon the tree of civilisation. Christianity broke the link which scholarship and humanity were trying to forge between Europe and Asia. The world has never since been one as it came near being under the Roman Empire.

Cyril, the archbishop of Alexandria, persuaded himself that Hypatia's good name and talents were giving the cause of Paganism a dangerous prestige, and thereby preventing the progress of the new faith. Hypatia was indeed a great power in Alexandria. She was the most popular personage in the city. When she appeared in her chariot on the streets, people threw flowers at her, applauded her gifts, and cried, "Long live the daughter of Theon." Poets called her the "Virgin of Heaven," "the spotless star," "of highest speech the flower." Judging by the chronicles of the times, it appears that her beauty which would have made even a Cleopatra jealous, was as great as her modesty, and both were matched by her eloquence, and all three surpassed by her learning.

"Her beauty did astonish the survey of eyes,
Her words all ears took captive."

Her renown as a lecturer on philosophy brought students from Rome and Athens and all the great cities of the empire to Alexandria. It was one of the great events of each day to flock to the hall in the

academy where Hypatia explained Plato and Aristotle. Cyril, the Asiatic archbishop, passing frequently the house of Hypatia and seeing the long train of horses, litters and chariots which had brought a host of admirers to the female philosopher's shrine, conceived a terrible hatred for this Pagan girl. He did not relish her popularity. Her learning was rubbish to him. Her charms, temptations for the ruin of man. He hated her because she a frail woman dared to be free and to think for herself. He argued in his mind that she was competing with Christianity, taking away from Christ the homage which belonged to him. With Hypatia out of the way the people would turn to God, and give him the love and honor which they were wasting upon her. She was robbing God of his rights and she must fall for He is a jealous God. Such was the reasoning of Cyril, whom the Church has canonised a saint.

Moreover, Orestes, the prefect of Alexandria, respected Hypatia, and was a constant attendant upon her lectures. Cyril believed that she influenced the prefect and tainted him with her Paganism. With Hypatia crushed, Orestes would be more responsive to Christian influences. Ah, it is a cruel story which I am about to unfold. Generally speaking, if a man is jealous and small, no religion can make him sweet; and if he is generous and pure-minded, no superstition can altogether poison the springs of his love. Religion is strong; but nature is stronger. Unfortunately Cyril was a barbarian, and the doctrines of his religion only sharpened his claws and whipped his passion into a rage.

If we were living in those days we would have witnessed at the close of each day, when both sea and sky blush with the departing kiss of the sun, Hypatia mounting her chariot to ride to the academy, where she is announced to speak on some philosophical subject. She is followed by many enthusiastic and devoted admirers impatient to catch her eye. She is nodding to her friends on her right and on her left. She, who refused lovers that she may love philosophy, is not insensible to the appreciation of her pupils. Approaching the academy, she dismounts, walks up the white marble steps and enters the doors, on either side of which sit two solid, silent sphinxes. As we follow her into the hall, we see that it is lighted by numerous swinging lamps filled with perfumed oil; the rotunda of the ceiling has been embellished by a Greek artist, with figures of Jupiter and his divine companions, who appear to be rapt in the words which fall from his lips. The walls have been decorated by Egyptian artists, with pictures of the sacred animals, the crocodile, the cat, the cow, and the dog; and with sacred vegetables, the onion, the lotus and the laurel. Besides these there is a scene on the walls representing the marriage of Osiris and Isis. On an elevated platform is a divan in purple velvet, and upon a little table is placed the silver statue of Minerva, goddess of wisdom and patron of Hypatia. Behind the table sits the philosophic young woman, dressed in a robe of white, fastened about her throat and waist by a band of pearls, and carrying upon her brow the laurel crown which Athens had decreed to her. A musical murmur sweeps over the audience as she rises to her feet. But in a moment all is silent again save the throbbing and the trembling of Hypatia's silvery voice. She speaks in Greek, the language of thought and beauty, of the ancient world. Alas! this is her last appearance at the academy. To-morrow that hall will be a tomb. To-morrow Minerva will be childless. When Hypatia's listeners bade her farewell on that evening they did not know that within a few hours they would all become orphans!

The next morning, when Hypatia appeared in her chariot in front of her residence, suddenly five hundred men, all dressed in black and cowed, five hundred half-starved monks from the caverns of the Egyptian desert—five hundred monks, soldiers of the cross—like a black hurricane, swooped down the street, boarded her chariot, and, pulling her off her seat, dragged her by the hair of her head into a—how shall I say the word?—into a church! Some

historians intimate that the monks asked her to kiss the cross, to become a Christian and join a nunnery, if she wished her life spared. At any rate, these monks, under the leadership of St. Cyril's right-hand man, Peter the Reader, shamefully stripped her naked, and there, close to the altar and the cross, scraped her quivering flesh from her bones with oyster shells. The marble floor of the church was sprinkled with her warm blood. The altar, the cross, too, were bespattered owing to the violence with which her limbs were torn, while the hands of the monks presented a sight too revolting to describe. The mutilated body, upon which the murderers feasted their fanatic hate, was then flung into the flames.

Oh! is there a blacker deed in human annals! When has another man or woman been so inhumanly murdered! Has politics, has commerce, has cannibalism even, committed a more cruel crime! The cannibal pleads hunger to cover his cruelty—what excuse had Hypatia's murderers? Even Joan of Arc was more fortunate in her death than this daughter of Paganism! Beautiful woman! murdered by men who were not worthy to touch the hem of thy garment! And to think that this happened in a church—a Christian church!

I have seen the frost bite the flower; I have watched the spider trap the fly; I have seen the serpent spring upon the bird! And yet I love nature! But I will never enter a church nor profess a religion which can commit such a deed against so divine a woman. No, not even if I were offered as a bribe eternal life! If, O priests and preachers! instead of one hell, there were a thousand, and each hell more infernal than your creeds describe, yet I would sooner they would all swallow me up and feast their insatiable lust upon my poor bones forever and ever, than to lend countenance or support to an institution upon which history has fastened the indelible stigma of Hypatia's murder!

I wish I could live a thousand years to admire the noble spirit and delight in the courage and beauty of this sweet martyr of philosophy, Hypatia! O that my voice were strong enough to reach the ends of the world! I would then summon all independent minds to join with me in a hymn of praise to that heroic woman whose place is in the choir invisible—

"Whose music is the gladness of the world."

Honor and love to beautiful Hypatia! Pity to the monks who killed her! A delicious feeling of satisfaction, like a warm sunshine on a wintry day, spreads over me as I contemplate the privilege I am enjoying of vindicating her memory against her assassins. Fortune has smiled upon me in selecting me as one of her defenders. I congratulate myself that I have both the heart and the head to weep over her sad fate! And I tremble and shrink, as from a paralysing nightmare, when I think that, under different circumstances, I might still have been a minister of the Church whose hands are, after fifteen hundred years, still unwashed of her innocent blood! The thought overpowers me; I labor for breath! But I am free! O joy, O rapture! I am free to speak the truth about Hypatia. Let the clergy praise Peter and Paul, St. Cyril and St. Theophilus. I give my heart to thee, Hypatia!

If we, of this present generation, are responsible for Adam's sin, and deserve the penalties of his disobedience, as the clergy say we do, then the Church of to-day is responsible for Hypatia's fate. How will they take this practical application of their own dogma? It will not do for them to say: "We wash our hands clean of St. Cyril's sin"; for if Adam can, by his remote act, expose us all to damnation, so shall Bishop Cyril's dark deed cleave forever unto the religion which his followers profess. When the Church people apologise, we shall forgive them; but no apology short of discarding this Asiatic slave-creed, which in the Old Testament stoned the free thinker to death, and in the New pronounces him a "heathen and a publican," will satisfy the ends of justice!

I have intimated, by the wording of my subject, that it was the classic world which was murdered in the person of one of its last and noblest representatives, Hypatia. Hypatia embodied in her life and teaching the proud spirit, the beauty, the culture, and the sanity of Greece. With her, fell Greece; fell the intellectual world from her eminence!

Then followed the nearly ten centuries of Egyptian darkness, which, settling over Europe, paralysed all initiative. During the thousand years in which the spirit of St. Cyril and his Church managed, with undisputed sway, the affairs of religion and the State, night folded to its sterile bosom our orphaned humanity, and the chains of slavery were upon every mind. A cloud of dust rising heaven high choked the flow and stopped the fountains which had, in the days of Pericles and Cæsar, poured forth a world of living waters. The barren and lumbering theology of the Church crowded out the Muses from their earthly walks, and the world became a prison after having been the home of man. One by one the great lights went out; Athens was no more. Rome was dead. The bloom had vanished from the face of the earth, and in its place there fell upon it the awful shadow of hell.

Symond's, in his *The Greek Poets*, says that while Cyril's mobs were dismembering Hypatia, the Greek authors went on creating. "Musæus sang the lamentable death of Leander, and Nonnus was perfecting a new and more polished form of the hexameter." These authors, ignorant that the Asiatic superstition had destroyed their world, that they had themselves been stabbed to death, like a man who has been shot, but whose wound is still warm, and who does not know that he has but a few more breaths to draw, kept on singing their song. But their song was, indeed, the "very swan's notes" of the classical world. "With the story of Hero and Leander, that immortal love poem, the Muse," says the same author, "took final farewell of her beloved Hellas."

After a thousand years of night, when the world awoke from her sleep, the first song it sang was the last song of the dying Pagan world. This is wonderfully strange. In the year 1493, when the Renaissance ushered in a new era, the first book brought out in Europe was the last book written in Alexandria by a Pagan. It was the poem of Hero and Leander. The new world resumed the golden thread where the old world had lost it. The severed streams of thought and beauty met again into one current, and began to sing and shine as it rushed forth once more, as in the days of old. A Greek poem was the last product of the Pagan world; the same Greek poem was the first product of the new and renaissance world.

Between the dying and the reviving Pagan world was the Christian Church—that is to say, ten dark centuries.

If Greece and Rome made art, poetry, philosophy, sculpture, the drama, oratory, beauty, liberty classical, Christianity, the Syrian, the Asiatic cult, made, for nearly fifteen hundred years, persecution, religious wars, massacres, theological feuds and bloodshed, heresy huntings and heretic burnings, prisons, dungeons, anathemas, curses, opposition to science, hatred of liberty, spiritual bondage, the life without love or laughter, a classic!

But to-day the dawn is in the cheeks of the sky. It is day-break everywhere!

—*Liberal Review* (Chicago).

Ingersoll and Jim Corbett.

ALL sorts and conditions of men appear to have sought to meet Ingersoll. A correspondent of the *New York Sun*, writing from Atlantic City, N. J., makes a story out of a talk by James J. Corbett, the former pugilist, now an actor. It cannot be supposed that Corbett has remembered the words in which Colonel Ingersoll gave his ideas about prizefighting, but the sentiment seems to be that which we may assume

that Ingersoll entertained on the subject. The story is as follows:—

Mr. James J. Corbett, the polite vaudeville actor, who played an engagement here last week, narrated privately some experiences he had in meeting up with noted folks when he was just Pompadour Jim, the prize fighter.

"I got crushed good and hard the only time I ever met the late Col. Robert G. Ingersoll," said Corbett to his group. "This was in 1892, not long after I'd been matched to meet John L. I was in Chicago, staying at the old Grand Pacific Hotel. Colonel Ingersoll, on his way to Montana to take part in the big Davis will case, was stopping at the same hotel. I had never met Ingersoll, though I'd been wanting to meet him, for, like a good many young fellows of that day, I looked upon him as the greatest man of the time—and at that, though he gave me a pretty good stinging, I've never left off considering him a remarkable man.

There was a freak game of ball for charity between the 'Sindbad' extravaganza company and the 'Soudan' melodrama company, both outfits then in the middle of long Chicago runs, and they roped me in to pitch for the 'Sindbad' bunch. I came mighty near maiming for life, if not killing, Louis James and a lot of other members of the 'Soudan' company, and it was only a miracle that they ducked all of my crazy tosses. Colonel Ingersoll had been taken out to see that game by Paul Gore, the manager of the Grand Pacific.

That evening after dinner I was leaning on the Grand Pacific counter chatting with Paul Gore when Colonel Ingersoll swung along.

'Colonel,' said Gore, introducing us, 'this is that Corbett lad that's been matched to go against John L. You saw him throw the ball over the top of the stand a few times at that game this afternoon.'

A slow, quizzical smile crept over Colonel Ingersoll's rosy, chubby face, and he sized me up shrewdly out of his big blue eyes as he staked me to a hearty grip.

'Oh, yes, the coming baboon—I remember,' said Colonel Ingersoll in the pleasantest way imaginable and going right ahead shaking my hand. The things he said, somehow or another, didn't sound a bit raw at the time he was saying them, and I didn't feel that I'd been stung till later when I fell to thinking his remarks over. 'Er—young man,' he went on, 'was there ever a prize fight in which both sluggers killed each other in the ring?'

I told him that I couldn't recall any fights of that kind.

'Too bad, too bad,' he said, still eyeing me pleasantly. 'Too bad that all prize fights don't result that way. Do you expect to thrash Sullivan?'

I replied that I was going to make a hard stab at it.

'Stab at it,' said the Colonel, picking up my words.

'Um—that's the way it ought to be. Prizefighters ought to be armed with bowie knives when they meet in the ring. That would be the right thing for the quick elimination of the prizefighting species. Guarled war clubs wouldn't be so bad for the purpose, either. Then prizefighting would be plain out and out savagery, and therefore possess a certain primitive merit, instead of thinly veiled, hideous baboonishness, existing in a period of comparative civilisation, as it is.'

Pretty deep for me, all that. At the moment I wasn't up to it exactly whether it was all meant for a knock or a boost, particularly as Colonel Ingersoll fairly beamed upon me while he said those things. He went away presently with a kindly nod. Gore grinned.

'Just wanted to hear what he'd say,' said Gore. 'You needn't take it to heart. The Colonel's been dead ag'in prizefighting all his life—it's his pet aversion. When he comes to Chicago and the newspaper men can't get him to talk about politics or agnosticism or anything like that, they start something by mentioning prizefighting. But he's a fine old boy and he treated you bully. Don't mind what he said.'—*Truthseeker* (New York.)

GOOD OLD PALEY!

Uncontrollable literary enthusiasms are apt sometimes to become rather afflicting. I was sitting alone (writes a correspondent) at a public library this afternoon when an old clergyman, attended by a librarian who bore a many-volumed set of Paley, sat down beside me. Catching my eye as I surveyed his treasures with wonder, not, I fear, unmixed with a little secular amusement, he said, "Excuse me, sir, but have you read them?" I was forced shamefacedly to admit that my knowledge of them was mainly second-hand. "Oh, what a mistake!" he said. "Everyone ought to know his Paley by heart." I noticed that his face glowed with delight as he read, and once or twice he leaned back and murmured, "Beautiful reasoning—beautiful!"

When I rose to go (our correspondent continues), and bade him a respectful good afternoon, he rose also, as though on a sudden impulse, and restrained me. "I have a little request

to make," he said, putting his hand tenderly on my shoulder. "I want you, my dear sir, to make me a little promise—you'll excuse me, I'm sure," and he added something about age and youth. I requested him to speak out. "Well," he said, "I want you just to promise me that you'll go systematically through these books—not necessarily all at once (feeling me start), but just promise me that you'll read them *some time*—any time—little by little. It'll be so much for your good." "Well," I said hesitatingly, "there are a good many volumes—ten, I see—and I lead a rather busy life; but I'll certainly take your advice and look into them on the first opportunity." "Ah," said he sadly, resuming his seat, "young men to-day don't read the solid, serious books they did in my youth."—*Manchester Guardian*.

PRIESTS.

Where priests have much influence the gods have little; and where they are numerous and wealthy, the population is scanty and miserably poor. War may be, and certainly is, destructive; but war, as thou well knowest, if it cuts off boughs and branches, yet withers not the trunk. Priests, like ants, corrode and corrupt wherever they enter.—*Landor*.

The educated wealthy minority, having freed themselves from the Church hypnotism, believe in nothing at all, and look upon every faith as an absurdity, or as merely a useful means of keeping the masses in subjection. The immense, poor, uneducated majority—consisting of people who, with few exceptions, are really sincere—being still under the hypnotism of the Church, think they believe in what is suggested to them as a faith, although it is not really a faith, for instead of elucidating to man his position in the world it only darkens it. This situation, and the relations of the non-believing, insincere minority to the hypnotised majority, are the conditions which shape the life of our so-called Christian world. And this life—both of the minority which holds in its hands the means of hypnotisation, and of the hypnotised majority—is terrible, both on account of the cruelty and immorality of the ruling classes, and of the crushed and stupefied condition of the great working masses.—*Tolstoy*.

I have always distrusted chimeras. Nothing is less wholesome for men and nations than illusion; it stifles effort, it blinds, it is the vanity of the weak. To repose on legends, to be mistaken about all realities, to believe that it is enough to dream of force in order to be strong—we have seen well enough to what terrible disasters such things lead. The people are told to look on high, to believe in a Higher Power, and to exalt themselves to the ideal. No, no! That is language which at times seems to me to be impious. The only strong people are those who work, and it is only work that gives courage and faith.—*Emile Zola*.

PROVED BY THE PRAYER.

Mollie (aged six): "Oh! I say, do you know what my governess told me to-day? She told me that the world is round. Isn't that funny?" Dolly (aged six-and-a-half): "You silly! Of course the world is round; I could have told you that. That's why we say in our prayers, 'World without end.'"

JENNIE CAUGHT ON THE "CHRISTIAN WAY."

Mother: "Now, Jennie, I want you to divide that apple with Willie; and remember, you must divide it in the Christian way."

Jennie: "What way is that, mother? I don't know the Christian way."

Mother: "You don't know the Christian way, Jennie? Why, it means that you must cut the apple in half and then give Willie the bigger half."

Jennie: "O, mother, I can't cut it! I'll give it to Willie and let him divide it between us in the Christian way."

SPIRITUAL NEED.

George O'Donnell, the actor, tells the following story of his four-year-old niece, whose mother is the wife of a clergyman:—

One night Edith wasn't feeling very well and so was put to bed rather early. As her mother was about to leave her, she called her back.

"Mamma, I want to see papa."

"No, dear," her mother replied, "your father is busy and must not be disturbed."

"But, mamma," the child persisted, "I want to see him."

As before, the mother replied, "No; your father must not be disturbed."

"Mamma," declared her daughter, solemnly, "I am a sick woman and I want to see my minister."

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): G. A. Aldred, 3.15, "Christianity and Woman"; 6, "The Idea of God."

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S.: Rushcroft-road (side of Brixton Theatre), Brixton-road, 11.30, J. Rowney; Brockwell Park, J. Rowney, 3.15, "Some Teachings of Jesus"; 6, "Secularism."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill, Hampstead): W. J. Ramsey, 3.30, A Challenge to the Christian Evidence Society—"The Fraud of the Gospels, and a Critical Examination of Christian Evidences"; 6.30, "Noah's Water Trip."

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (Ridley-road, Dalston): 11.30, Mr. Marshall, "Following a Christian Life."

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (The Grove, Stratford): 7, a Lecture.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Hyde Park, Marble Arch): 11.30, Debate, H. B. Samuels and J. G. Lawson, "Unfulfilled Prophecies."

WOOLWICH BRANCH N. S. S. (Beresford-square): 11.30, F. A. Davies, "Christ and the Labor Party."

COUNTRY.

HUDDESFIELD BRANCH N. S. S. (No. 9 Lodge Room, Trade and Friendly Hall): Tuesday, August 21, at 8, all Freethinkers earnestly requested to attend.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Milton Hall, Daulby-street): 7, H. Buxton, "Science and Theology."

PORTR BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Room, Town Hall): 6.30, "Women and the Bible."

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation School, Market-place): 7.30, Business Meeting—Federation Rules, etc.

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