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THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

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PRICE TWOPENCE

What custom wills, in all things should we do't,
The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
And mountainous error be too highly heapt
For truth t' o'er-peer.

—SHAKESPEARE.

Mr. Bryan's Boastings.

Letters to a Chinese Official; being a Western View of Eastern Civilisation. By William Jennings Bryan. London: Harper Brothers.

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MR. G. LOWES DICKINSON, the author of some bright stimulating, and well-written books—including the *Meaning of Good* and the more recent *Modern Symposium*—published some two years ago a little volume entitled *Letters from John Chinaman*. The volume was anonymous, and purported to be the work of a Chinese writer, thoroughly conversant with the English language, and a keen critic of Western civilisation. We read it at the time with much pleasure, and said something about it in our unfortunate little monthly which was mourned by many good friends and died because it had not enough of them. We refer to the *Pioneer*. We could see, of course, that the little book was not really written by a Chinaman. For one thing, the writer's knowledge of English was too intimate and idiomatic. His object was to point to certain defects in European and American civilisation, and to show why a Chinaman might prefer the civilisation of his native land. This was done with considerable dexterity and psychological power; and it was this element of the volume that made it so refreshing.

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A copy of these anonymous letters fell into the hands of Mr. William Jennings Bryan, who was once the Democratic candidate for the Presidency of the United States. This gentleman was naturally offended by what he read. The unknown Chinaman, as he seemed to be, was obviously no fool; moreover, he could write effectively and even beautifully; but he considered Western civilisation inferior to that of China, without making any reservation for the case of the land of the Almighty Dollar; and he also denied the superiority of the Christian religion to the practical philosophy of Confucius. Both as an American and as a Christian, therefore, Mr. Bryan was irritated by this arrogant Celestial; and he determined to castigate him in a printed reply. There were public reasons, likewise, for pursuing this course. Mr. Bryan had everything to gain, and nothing to lose, by posing as a patriot before his countrymen; and, as every student of such matters is well aware, the meaning of the word *patriot* is now perfectly perverted, so that it has come to signify, not one who considers his country's interests higher than his own, but one who trumpets the praises of his own country (generally because he did it the honor of being born in it) as the strongest, wisest, happiest, and noblest country on the face of the earth. As a patriot of that description Mr. Bryan felt sure of a welcome from his fellow Americans. Nor was that all. In answering the Heathen Chinese he could place his own faith in Christianity beyond question; and faith in Christianity is absolutely indispensable to an American politician. We once heard Colonel Ingersoll say that he had been much struck by the admission of Mr. John Morley into Mr.

Gladstone's cabinet. Such a thing, he declared would have been impossible in America. No avowed Freethinker could expect to be elected to any political position, even the humblest, in the United States. At the present moment we have Mr. John Burns, another Freethinker, in the Liberal cabinet with Mr. John Morley; and we venture to commend this fact to the attention of those who imagine that there will be perfect religious freedom in England when the Nonconformists have been allowed to destroy the Established Church.

Mr. Bryan wrote his reply to the Chinaman while on board ship, in the course of a trip round the world—which seems to have widened his experience without expanding his mind. As he wrote the chapters he sent them to his home at Lincoln, Nebraska, for publication. Just as they were about to appear he learnt that the writer of the *Letters* was not a Chinaman but an Englishman. It is surprising that he did not discover this before, as the authorship was a fairly open secret. And when the discovery was made it must have been annoying; for it robbed Mr. Bryan of all the advantage he would have derived, however unintentionally, from the anti-Chinese feeling in America.

With regard to Mr. Bryan himself, we may state that we did not open this book with any particular prejudice against him. We never saw him, never heard him speak, and never read a line of his writing. He has the reputation of being a great orator, but only the commonplace tricks of oratory are displayed in the present volume. The swelling passion and the glowing language are not here. All the characteristics displayed are those of the ordinary type of mind; and (there is no use in blinking the fact) the quotations he makes from the Chinaman's letters only throw into greater relief the mediocrity of his own composition.

Of the commonplace tricks of oratory, combined with mediocrity of composition, we give a couple of illustrations. Mr. Bryan begins the peroration of his second chapter in this way:—

"Your people ought to know that in all that makes life valuable, that in all that promotes the welfare of the people, that in all that justifies the existence of a state, that in all that advances a genuine civilisation, the countries which you condemn are so vastly superior to China that it is difficult to make a comparison between them."

From a controversial point of view, this is sheer imbecility. It begs every question at issue; and, while it might flatter Western prejudices, it could not possibly have any persuasive effect on the mind of a Chinaman—or, for that matter, on the mind of any disinterested listener. But this is only by the way. It is the literary quality of the sentence we wish to deal with. One of the devices of cheap and facile oratory is to say nothing and keep on saying it. As far as Mr. Bryan says anything at all in this sentence, except the insolence with which it concludes, he says it in the first clause; for, clearly, what "makes life valuable" must do everything else in the subsequent clauses. The sentence, indeed, is about as bad as it could be; and the four double-sets of *that's* are worthy of the rest of the performance.

Now for the second illustration. Mr. Bryan begins the peroration of his third chapter in this way:—

"What the world needs more than anything else is sympathy—sympathy between man and man, sympathy

between class and class, sympathy between community and community, sympathy between nation and nation."

That is how some orators fill up the time. It passes on the platform, but it is nauseous in print. Mr. Bryan might have gone on much longer. He need not have stopped at *nation*. He could have easily included "continent" and "hemisphere"—and wound up with something about Mars or the Moon. Even if he wanted to employ the rhetorical artifice of repetition he might have gained terseness and strength by the following improvement:—

"What the world needs more than anything else is sympathy; sympathy between man and man—class and class—community and community—nation and nation."

"Sympathy" is thus carried along in the background of the mind, while the perceptive faculties are free to concentrate themselves on the growing aggregates of humanity.

Mr. Bryan will probably not pardon us for giving him lessons in English composition. But he wants them—and he should take them from somebody—if it is not too late.

We have referred to Mr. Bryan's *patriotism*, as the word is understood nowadays. We have to add that it does more than half the duty of his argument. If asserting the superiority of America over China could do it, Mr. Bryan has proved his case. After accusing Chinese diplomats of the awful crime of "sneering" at Western civilisation, he proceeds in this discriminating and urbane manner:—

"We must judge by the average man which Chinese environment has produced, and this average man does not approach in mental strength, moral stamina or high conception of life the product of Christian civilisation."

All this is mere boasting. It is not evidence, and it proves nothing. Yet it is repeated again and again. "I venture to say," he remarks later on, and he *does* venture, "that by any standard—physical, material, intellectual, æsthetic, moral or spiritual—the average American is far superior to the average Chinaman." One would think that repeating a statement added to its accuracy. Mr. Bryan even says, elsewhere, that America has "developed in a century and a third more great men than China has known in all the centuries of her existence." This may be true; we do not dispute it; but where is the evidence? What does Mr. Bryan know about the great men of China? But this self-assertion is not sufficient. Mr. Bryan has *ventured*, and now he *dares*:—

"In all that tends to enlarge life, infuse into it a throbbing earnestness and direct it in noble paths, I dare to believe America foremost, not only among the nations of to-day, but among the nations past as well."

With those modest words Mr. Bryan ends his fourth chapter. His enthusiasm runs away with his grammar at the finish; making him forget that America cannot possibly be "among" the nations that are past—until she too is past, when the compliment will be inopportune.

The Chinaman might obviously ask Mr. Bryan to drop the "throbbing earnestness" and "noble paths," and answer a few simple questions. Are the conditions of life more natural and satisfying in America than they are in China; is wealth better distributed; are the bulk of the people better fed, clothed, and sheltered; is social intercourse easier between the different classes of society; are children treated with greater tenderness, and parents with more respect; is there more fidelity in friendship; is there greater security of life, liberty, and property; and is there a more assured prospect of kind treatment to those who are past working for their own maintenance? Questions like these go to the root of things, and are infinitely more important than the rhetorical vaporings of "patriotic" platforms.

The self-styled Chinaman—really Mr. G. Lowes Dickinson—saw in the Western newspaper little else than a "stream of solemn fatuity, anecdotes, puzzles, puns and police court scandal." Mr. Bryan resents this description. He has been connected with what is flatteringly called "the press" all his life, and the institution *must* be better than that; so he tells

the nasty Chinaman what it *may* do. It may promote "social progress and governmental reform," call attention to the "misconduct of officials, to abuses that need a remedy, and to conditions which can be improved." "No great wrong," he says, "can long resist the attacks of a free press." Perhaps not. But where is the "free" press? It *does* exist, but in a few papers which Mr. Bryan never reads. The *Freethinker* is part of the real free press of England. This title only belongs to journals that carry on an apostolate of ideas, and that exist for no other object. The so-called free press—the spurious free press—consists of journals conducted for the sake of certain parties and certain interests; they are farmed by financiers; those who write in them are hirelings, and sometimes prostitutes; they never touch a principle, or espouse a cause, until it is winning, and has saleable copy in it; they deal with all things on the sensational side, giving whole columns of murder and outrage reports, and a few lines to an important utterance by perhaps the wisest man in the country; they present the world's affairs out of all proper proportion, and thus delude the masses of the people; they are all absolutely party organs, with the most childish methods of arguing a case before readers who need no persuasion; and they all proceed on the beautiful assumption that every man is a fool or a rogue on the other side. Such is the "free press" that Mr. Bryan praises, and the Chinaman disdains; and we rather agree with the Chinaman. It seems to us nonsense to say that "China sorely needs the newspaper," if she is to have newspapers like those of England and America. She would be wiser, saner, and probably better informed, without them. For the truth is that intellectual progress, which involves all other progress, is not by any means due to the newspapers. It is due to the discoverers and inventors, the thinkers and apostles; the individual men and women of genius, originality, or courage, who throw the light of new ideas upon the world or charge it with the electricity of a new spirit.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

An Old Story.

ONE of the most recent recruits to my "ragged regiment" of books, disinterred in all manner of out-of-the-way places, is the first two volumes of the *Quarterly Anti-Slavery Magazine*, edited by Elizur Wright, and published in New York, U.S.A. Elizur Wright was one of the band of men and women who for years carried on an unceasing warfare against one of the worst slave systems the world has seen, and which, by way of posthumous vengeance, has bequeathed to America a race problem that bids fair to become one of the most serious questions with which that country will have to deal. He was, moreover, a staunch Freethinker; a writer, in later years, on pronounced Freethought journals; and while this will not commend him to Christians, it will add to any interest taken in him by readers of this journal.

The interest of the *Anti-Slavery Magazine* is, from one point of view, a historic one only. But it has also a more *human* interest. For there is a world of difference in the *feel* of the subject to read about it in a history of the struggle, and to handle the very pages that were written by those who were in the thick of the fight. It is almost like being with them, and comparing notes on the situation. So that, although there is nothing in the pages of the *Magazine* with which students of the Abolition movement are not familiar, its contents will be full of interest to them, and certainly not less interesting to those who have yet to make complete acquaintance therewith. Some of the contents of its pages will also serve as a wholesome repast for those who are still under the delusion that it was the influence

of Christianity that led to the abolition of slavery in the Southern States of America.

It is only fair to note that some of the writers in the *Anti-Slavery Magazine* were men with the title of "Reverend" prefixed to their name. But that these were in a small minority among their fellow-preachers is shown both by their replies to opponents who are as often as not clergymen, and to their labored attempts to prove that either the Bible does not sanction slavery, or, if it does, the slavery permitted was of a very mild kind with that then existing. That this defence involves an attack upon Christianity never seems to dawn upon them. That slavery should exist for so long after the advent of Christianity to power is itself a denial of the claim that that religion acts as a solvent of evil; but that there should grow up in Christian times a form of slavery worse than any that existed in pre-Christian ages is a charge of a still more serious character. It reduces Christianity to sheer impotence, or charges it with conniving at the perpetuation of a system that its opponents believed to be forcing-
bed for vice for both slave and slaveholder. As a sample of the shifts to which some of these defenders of the Bible were driven, one argument is worth quoting. The writer argues that the servants of the Patriarchs must have been voluntary laborers, and not bought slaves, inasmuch as one man often had hundreds of servants, and it would have been impossible for one person to have held hundreds of others in a forced captivity. That slaves, in the nature of the case, always are more numerous than the masters, and that exactly this phenomenon could be seen in the Southern States of America, never seems to have crossed the writer's mind.

Apart from mere opinion, however, the *Anti-Slavery Magazine* contains many interesting facts, some of which I have extracted for the benefit of my readers. First comes a batch of recent resolutions from various churches, as follows:—

THE CINCINNATI CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

"Resolved: That they are decidedly opposed to modern Abolitionism, and wholly disclaim any right, wish, or intention, to interfere in the civil and political relations between master and slave as it exists in the slave holding states of this Union."

The New York Conference went further and exacted a pledge from all candidates for the ministry that they would not preach against slavery. And there resulted no shortage of preachers. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, presided over by a slaveholder, resolved that it was not expedient for the Assembly to express any opinion on the subject as it "is not condemned by the authority of God." Perhaps the reason for this, as well as for the action of other Churches, may be found in the following which is quoted from the Rev. James Smylie, a Presbyterian Minister:—

"If slavery be a sin, and if advertising and apprehending slaves with a view to restore them to their masters, is a direct violation of the divine law, and if the buying, selling, or holding a slave for the sake of gain is a heinous sin and scandal, then, verily, three-fourths of all the Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians in eleven states of the Union, are of the Devil." And Mr. Smylie quite failed to see any harm in the matter. The above statement receives endorsement from the report of Dr. Cox, member of the board of Baptist ministers in and near London, that he found "scarcely any of the influential Baptist friends Abolitionists." This will also explain the resolution of the Charleston Baptist Association that "the Holy Scriptures have not made the fact of slaves a question of morals at all," while "The right of masters to dispose of the time of their slaves has been distinctly recognised by the creator of all things."

A number of individual testimonies to the same end might be cited; I have only space for two, both from Methodist ministers. The Rev. G. W. Langhorne wrote that he would "as soon be found in the ranks of a banditti" as associated with the aboli-

tionists. The Rev. J. C. Postell published a defence of slavery proving, first, that slavery was not a moral evil, and second, that it is supported by the Bible. The same gentleman sent a letter to *Zion's Watchman*, in which he said that the citizens of New Orleans would cheerfully pay one hundred thousand dollars for the body of Arthur Tappan, the Abolitionist, and signed his letter "the friend of the Bible and the opposer of Abolitionism." Theological correspondents are never wanting in courtesy, whether they are supporting slavery or denouncing heresy.

Much interesting matter is contained in a chapter headed by the editor "Chapter of Abominations." These consist of cases of floggings, sales, advertisements for runaway slaves, etc. A Sheriff advertises that he has captured a negro named "Josiah." He is "five feet eight inches high, his back very much scarred with the whip, and branded on the thigh and hips in three or four places, and the rim of his right ear has been bit or cut off." Evidently "Josiah" had realised the truth of the Rev. Dr. Capers' statement that slavery in America "was a blessing to both master and slave." There are also advertisements for runaway slaves, as one from a Mr. W. D. Cobb who advertises for two runaway slaves, and promises two hundred dollars reward for apprehending them, or "for the killing of them so that I can see them." After which Mr. Cobb would doubtless have been prepared to listen with warm approval to a sermon demonstrating the civilising influence of the Christian religion.

The *Magazine* also contains a choice collection of notices of sale, some of which must, for the present, close my selection. One notice chronicles the high price of negroes, as follows:—

"At Wadesborough, on Tuesday last, negro fellows, we learn, sold for 1,300 dollars, and not very likely at that.....It would be to the true interest of this country to send our slave population to the South, if anything like the present high prices can be obtained."

Another runs:—

"Negroes for Sale.—The subscriber, residing at Hamburg, S.C., at the second house from the Bridge, has on hand a likely parcel of Virginia negroes, and receives now supplies every fifteen days. Persons wishing to purchase would do well to give me a call. I also wish to purchase 50 likely young fellows, for which I will pay 1,050 dollars a head if the property is worth it."

The "50 likely young fellows" were, in all probability, required for breeding purposes. Another dealer advertises:—

"Cash for four hundred negroes, including both sexes, from twelve to twenty-five years of age. Persons having servants to dispose of will find it to their interest to give me a call as I will give higher prices in cash than any other purchaser who is now in the market."

Another notice runs:—

"A Valuable Slave.—A very beautiful girl belonging to the estate of John French, a deceased gambler at New Orleans, was sold a few days since for the round sum of \$7,000. An ugly-looking bachelor named Gouch, a member of the Council of one of the Principalities, was the purchaser. The *Picuyane* says the girl is a brunette—remarkable for her beauty and intelligence; and there was considerable contention as to who should be the purchaser."

The extent of the slave trade in America may be gauged from an estimate by the editor of the *Virginian Times* that during twelve months that State had exported no less than 120,000 slaves, representing a cash value of \$72,000,000. The truth is, that there existed farms for breeding slaves, much as horses or cattle are bred. And it was all found perfectly consistent with the most ardent belief in Christianity. Indeed, the slaveowners resented an attack upon Christianity much as the vested interests in our own country do to-day. And for the same reason. They had no objection whatever to the slaves taking an engrossing interest in Christian teachings—they rather encouraged it; with the result that the religious fervor of the Southern negro became one of his prominent characteristics. Nor is there any need to question the honesty of those who said they

saw nothing in Christianity against slavery. What other conclusion could they come to? They found it in the Bible; they saw it permitted by the New Testament; they knew it had flourished everywhere under Christian rule, and that a new and more barbarous form developed under Christian auspices. It was the spiritual perspicacity of later Christians that enabled them to discover that slavery was in complete opposition to "true Christianity"—a discovery more wonderful than any made by Copernicus or Newton. For these had at least facts to suggest the theories they propounded. But the Christians who discovered that slavery was anti-Christian not only propounded a new theory—they had to create the facts on which the theory rested.

C. COHEN.

Theology Self-Condemned.

PROTESTANTISM is virtually a revolt from supernaturalism, or an assault on the foundations of Christianity. The first Protestant was a militant Freethinker; and the history of the movement formally initiated by Luther, is but an interesting and valuable chapter in the larger history of Free-thought. Indeed, all the Protestant Churches of Great Britain at the present time may be legitimately regarded as so many undeveloped and heretical branches of the National Secular Society. The only substantial bulwark of supernaturalism is the Catholic Church. Realising this truth, the Church of England is steadily retreating from the Protestant position and getting into a growingly closer touch with Rome. The Protestant element in the Established Church is rapidly dwindling away. In England and Wales, the Protestantism of to-day is practically synonymous with Nonconformity; and in Scotland, with Presbyterianism. Presbyterianism still clings more or less tenaciously to its early faith in the Infallible Book, although several of its most scholarly professors are eloquent champions of the higher criticism. It is safe to declare, therefore, that throughout Great Britain, Protestantism is drifting anchorless on the ocean of controversy. There are a few isolated divines who maintain that it still carries the Bible as a sure anchor; but, as a matter of fact, whenever this so-called anchor is cast into the waters it fails to touch bottom and the vessel continues to be tossed about as before.

It is unquestionable that the ripest scholarship of the Protestant Church has completely discredited the Bible as a seat of religious authority. The Old and New Testaments are authoritatively declared to be alike fallible and unhistorical. No sane person will challenge this statement. We may be told that while the *letter* of the Bible is doubtless fallible, its *spirit* is infallible; but how on earth can you get at the spirit of a book except through its letter? The letter of Scripture is its spirit embodied, incarnated; and of its spirit, except thus embodied, we have absolutely no knowledge. Read Deut. xxiii. 3-6, or Ezra ix. 12, and tell me wherein the spirit differs from the letter. In those and many other passages, you are distinctly commanded to hate your enemies simply because they are your enemies; and is it not self-evident that the spirit of such a commandment is in full harmony with its letter? The same rule applies all round. If a writer does not say what he means, what he does mean is a matter of pure speculation: as a writer, he stands utterly condemned. The other day a preacher said: "The sacred writer did not mean what these words, as they stand, would lead us to suppose; what he really meant was this." There are thousands of preachers who treat the Bible in that essentially dishonest fashion. If they were straightforward they would boldly state, "That is what the Bible says, but this is what it ought to say."

Now the inevitable consequence of to-day's Protestant treatment of the Bible is, that the Protestant pulpit is constantly contradicting itself. No two preachers are in full agreement. Every sermon

delivered professes to be an interpretation of some passage of scripture, but it so happens that the interpretations are as numerous as the interpreters. For example, what Mr. R. J. Campbell characterises as "the truth of God," or the "fuller and more perfect expression of the message of Christ," Mr. Henry Varley unhesitatingly dubs "a doctrine of demons." Both these men speak in the name of the Lord and pretend to derive their message from the Word of God, and yet each denounces the gospel of the other as monstrously untrue. Between these two extremists stands Principal Forsyth, who pronounces the theology of the former amateurish and unevangelical, and repudiates the latter's doctrine of the infallibility of the Bible as contrary to reason. Now that the newspapers have seen fit to open their columns to theological discussion, we are being supplied with endless evidence that the religious world is "a kingdom divided against itself," and that being such, it is doomed to perish. How the opposing parties hate and sneer at one another! The Rev. Thomas Spurgeon, who knows he possesses "the very truth of God," is furiously angry with the minister of the City Temple, and this is how he expresses himself:—

"We desire to avoid bitterness, but when the crown rights of King Jesus are involved we cannot but feel righteous indignation. Every true man must speak boldly now, for fundamentals are at stake. Now is fulfilled the saying that was written by the Apostle Paul through the Holy Ghost, 'For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall turn their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.'"

Is not the conclusion irresistible that all theologies and the gospels founded upon them are alike untrue? I may be reminded that there is a precious truth behind and under them all, of which they are but imperfect expressions; but how can anybody perceive such a truth? Who has the authority to assure us that it exists at all? Take the doctrine of the Atonement, which according to all Trinitarians is the central doctrine of Christianity. How does anybody know that there is such a thing as Divine Atonement? If Paul was right in believing that his doctrine came to him as a revelation from the Holy Ghost, no other doctrine can be tolerated for a moment. But was Paul right in that belief? Mr. Campbell maintains that he was self-deceived and had no right to be dogmatic. Paul gave the world, not revealed truth, but his own opinion, and "Paul's opinion is simply Paul's opinion, and not necessarily infallible." Then it follows that what Mr. Campbell communicates to his hearers and readers is nothing but his own opinion about God, and Christ, and immortality; and yet he claims to present them with the Lord's own truth. If Mr. Campbell is right in his estimate of Paul's teaching, then we are correct when we characterise Mr. Campbell's teaching as merely a cluster of opinions; and any man's opinions may be false. All theologies and all gospels rest on unverified and unverifiable assumptions, and are of value only as intellectual speculations. When Principal Forsyth says that "the first feature in the Christian atonement is that it is offered, not to God, but by God," he is only indulging in a bit of speculation; and yet he persists in speaking of that bit of speculation as "a theology of grace," in which lies the world's only hope of eternal redemption. Mr. Campbell may be an amateur in theology; but what constitutes a theological expert? Does Principal Forsyth know more about the supernatural than Mr. Campbell; or is it the truth that they are both only idle speculators concerning it? If they both possess real but unequal knowledge of it, how did they obtain it, and what accounts for the inequality? And if they possess any knowledge of it at all, why are so many doomed to total ignorance even of its very existence?

At Tynemouth Mr. Campbell stated that if the Virgin Birth meant that Jesus was born without an earthly father then it was untrue. Dr. Clifford

asserted that such a statement was wrong, because science tells us that virgin births are not only possible but actual; but Dr. Clifford must be aware that, although Parthenogenesis is frequently to be met with among low species, there is not one instance of its occurrence among any of the higher animals. The declaration of science on this point is so emphatic and decisive that Mr. Campbell was perfectly justified in asserting that any story of a virgin birth in the human family is untrue. Of course, if Dr. Clifford's God exists, he can effect a virgin birth whenever he likes; but what an *if* to build a scheme of the universe upon? And yet it is upon such an *if* that all supernatural religions repose. God has never been discovered, nor has ever revealed himself; he has just grown out of an *if*, and is himself but a stupendous *if* in capitals.

All theologies are equally unreasonable. What is the use of rejecting miracles when you accept the supernatural? To an omnipotent Being such miracles as we read of would be a child's play, a kind of holiday exercises indulged in for health's sake. On the assumption that such a deity exists, however, the supreme miracle is, not resurrection, but death; not birth without a human father, but birth itself; not salvation, but sin; and these are miracles of which an infinitely good and loving God would never be guilty. That is to say, the most momentous events in the history of life would be unthinkable on the supposition of the active existence of an all-perfect Being. In other words, the facts of life are such as to render any theology profoundly unreasonable. The difficulty experienced by thoughtful people to-day is, not whether to accept this or that theory as to the person of Christ, this or that interpretation of the Atonement, this or that view of immortality, but to believe in the existence of anything beyond and above Nature. Nature blunders so continuously and on so gigantic a scale, is so utterly reckless, unfeeling, and improvident in all her ways, that they find it impossible to believe that her activities are under the directive influence of infinite Intelligence, which is working out some infinitely beneficent purpose of its own, and which theology calls our loving Father in heaven. The theologians aver that the universe is a manifestation of the All-Father, and yet, even according to their own admission, the universe, as a whole, is unaware of the wondrous fact. Of all the myriads of different species of living things with which the world abounds, only one, the human species, and by no means the whole of this, recognises its Divine parentage. Such an idea is untenable, being unutterably preposterous. The God who could see in all existing things a manifestation or image of himself and be satisfied with the spectacle, would be but another name for a fiend of the lowest type. Perhaps Mr. Campbell will live long enough to realise that Mr. Bernard Shaw was not far wrong when, in the *City Temple* itself, he made merry over the conception of a God of love as superintendent of Nature's processes.

J. T. LLOYD.

The Crises of Modern Science.—II.

(Concluded from p. 52.)

IN diphtheria, the workings of the disease have been so far recognised as efforts towards cure that they have been imitated in the modern treatment of the malady. In this wise: The horse can be inoculated with diphtheria, but, being little susceptible to the bacterium, is hardly made ill by the incident. The toxin of diphtheria is injected into the horse, and as a result, the blood of the animal at once develops, for protective purposes, an anti-toxin. Repeated and increasing doses of the poison are introduced, each inoculation being followed by an augmented formation of anti-toxin in the blood. At last the serum of this much-infected horse is so potent in anti-toxins that, when drawn off and injected into the body of any child suffering from diphtheria, it is possible for

the disease to be stayed. The child, on its part, is laboring with infinite effort to produce the anti-toxin. The horse's blood having been inoculated with the bacterium, in attenuated form, is rendered poison-proof, and thereby provides the child with the antidote it is inadequately manufacturing.

We will now examine the experiments of Dr. Weichardt to see how very closely he has approached the conjecture of Metchnikoff, that some cyto-toxins might be found which would reinforce the ageing cells, and stimulate them to renewed youth. He took test animals, guinea-pigs, for example, put them on a miniature treadmill and worked them until they fell dead from exhaustion. Then he expressed or concocted from the fatigued muscles of these animals a juice or sap. When this sap was injected into the veins of unworked guinea-pigs they immediately exhibited all the outward signs of fatigue—could support no effort, their eyes stuck out from their heads; at the end of twenty to forty hours they died. The sap concocted from the fresh, unworked animal showed no such effect. Prolonged muscular activity, then, produces in the muscles a poison which, circulating through the body of the animal, causes its death. This poison is a definite substance, which, injected into other animals, produces identically the same effects. It is in its action, evidently, much the same as the poisons elaborated by bacteria. Following the nomenclature in vogue, Dr. Weichardt calls this an *ermüdnungs-toxin*—that is, a fatigue-toxin or fatigue poison. But we have already seen how anti-toxins may be fabricated, and we know the serums injected into the body of an animal make it immune from the particular disease. It is not unreasonable to suppose that fatigue-toxins should produce a similar anti-body. Dr. Weichardt, in further experiments, has shown that they do; and, moreover, he has shown that, just as in the case of the bacterial poisons, a very little fatigue-toxin injected into the veins of an animal produces an excess of anti-poison, so that it is to-day literally possible to inoculate an animal against fatigue. The German experimenter has demonstrated that animals, and even human beings, thus inoculated are capable of a much more prolonged exertion than without it; at least, for the temporary wear, which results in muscular fatigue, Dr. Weichardt has realised Metchnikoff's idea very closely.

Prof. Metchnikoff, writing in the current number of *Harper's Magazine*, admits that the practical results of Dr. Weichardt's researches dovetail with his own theory. Furthermore, he traces the analogy between sleep and natural death, and submits that both are the effect of auto-intoxication.

Clearly, then, the outlook is optimistic, despite the pronouncement of Dr. Osler that man is worn out when he is forty. Does such an allegation, in the light of modern science, merit the attention it received from the newspapers and the public a little over a year ago? Apart from its sensational aspect, fully recognised by the Press, the nonsense had no practical value, except that it may have led people to study the best means to preserve the energy and adaptability of youth. Alcohol is undoubtedly the great destroyer of youth; the great destroyer of life. It has cut off many of the good Christians (sic) of these islands in the prime of their lives. It has been stated repeatedly that alcohol is nourishing; that it is beneficial if taken in moderation. But such is not the case. A food that produces death by starvation is one of those commodities in which we should not be sorry to see a famine. If alcoholic liquors really possessed the nourishing qualities claimed for them, Great Britain ought to be a nation of strong men indeed, considering that she spends on occasion over £170,000,000 per annum on this kind of liquid food. The "moderate drinker," of whom we hear much, but see very little, is no safer from the ravages of the poisonous drug than the drunkard. The moderate drinker, who is always moderately drinking, and who never gets more than moderately drunk, even to the scientific eye, is quite as likely to damage the delicate machinery of life as he who is always soaking in the

products of the mash-tun or the pot still. A grain of sand may disturb the mechanism of a fine chronometer, whereas two or three might not at once greatly impair the constitution of an eight-day clock. In other words, the finer the nervous organisation and the more delicate the mental balance of the individual, the more easily is it upset by alcohol.

The principal characteristic of the action of alcohol is its selection of the brain and nervous tissues. First it produces stimulation, then, if still taken, maniacal excitement, followed by coma and death. It clogs the nerves and blood-vessels and ruins the brain, which becomes sluggish. In plain language, a man under the influence of alcohol will be slower to notice a fly on his nose, and take longer to brush it away with his hand, than a sober man. The neurasthenia of the chronic alcoholic is due to the degenerative changes in the protoplasm of his brain cells. It is noteworthy that whilst alcohol affects almost all the tissues of the body, it acts preferentially upon the brain. Even after alcohol has ceased to be taken, for some months in fact, its mental effects may vividly appear.

The idea that work is done more rapidly with the help of alcoholic stimulants is partially true. Certain parts of the brain are excited to greater efforts, but the reasoning centres are numbed, with the result that the work is much worse in quality, though perhaps greater in quantity. The sum of brain damage done by alcohol cannot be estimated, for impairment of intellectual power may just stop short of that degree which would justify the sufferer being certified as insane. But that there are more mentally hazy people outside asylums than in them is a matter of every day observation.

J. H.

THANKFUL.

"You should thank God that you have to struggle along for your daily bread and thus avoid the temptations and responsibilities that the possession of wealth and power create or produce."—JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JUNR.

I have to work to earn my bread,
But I am thanking God for that;
I own no roof to shield my head,
But I am thanking God for that;
When snow drifts in beneath my door
I have to rise at half-past four
And hop out on a rugless floor,
But I am thanking God for that.

I have to toil till late at night,
But I am thanking God for that;
My hands are rough, my purse is light,
But I am thanking God for that;
I may not give to those who sigh
For succor as I hurry by,
For they possess as much as I,
And I am thanking God for that.

The ones I love may sit in want,
But I am thanking God for that;
My hopes are dead, my frame is gaunt,
But I am thanking God for that;
I have to toil, or well or ill,
In sorrow I must labor still,
And dreams of work my slumbers fill,
But I am thanking God for that.

I pass where others live at ease,
But I am thanking God for that;
I have but bare necessities,
And I am thanking God for that;
How sweet is poverty, how sweet
The crusts are that I have to eat!
Through life I go with weary feet,
But I am thanking God for that.

—S. E. Kiser.

SUPERSTITION.

A superstition overthrown,
May raise again its head,
But Superstition once outgrown,
Remains forever dead.

—Victor Robinsoll.

Acid Drops.

Music-hall artistes don't generally live in the odor of sanctity, but they have more human nature about them than is shown by the clergy. How finely the lights of the music-hall stage have stood by their poorer brethren in their fight against what they consider to be sweating and oppression. When the managers point to the big salaries paid to these leading lights, and ask what *they* have to complain about, they only show that what want of good feeling will sometimes lead men into very bad blunders. The more these front-rank artistes are paid, the more they forego by refusing to perform, and the more they risk in a quarrel with the managers. When one thinks of the generosity of some of these "naughty" people—as the puritans think them all, and as some of them possibly are—one recalls a really divine text in a harsh old book: "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven her, because she hath loved much."

Chicago is deeply stirred. At least the pious reports say so. Gipsy Smith has done the trick. Moody and Torrey thought they had done it, but they were mistaken. Chicago went on thinking more of pork than it did of Jesus. But all that is altered now. It is no longer necessary for Mr. Stead to ask what would happen if Christ came to Chicago. Christ has come. Gipsy Smith brought him. And it will soon be all over with the pig trade in Porkopolis. For Jesus didn't eat pork—did he? and those who would be like him must eschew it too. The only time Jesus had anything to do with pigs, he drowned a lot of them, by sending devils into them, who drove them down a steep hill into the sea. This would be very strange in Chicago. There seems to be plenty of "devil" in the pigs there; but the porkers are not wasted—they come out all right in sausages.

Mr. Campbell is off for his winter month's holiday. We wish we could follow him. But preaching real Freethought and semi-Freethought are two very different things. Still, we hope the reverend gentleman will come back refreshed for the tussle. We like to see "the enemy" divided against each other. We also like to hear religion talked about. In that way it gets understood; that is to say, found out.

Before leaving London for a more agreeable locality, at this time of the year, Mr. Campbell preached a Thursday farewell sermon from his own pulpit, in the course of which he made a very significant admission. "To-day," he said, "the churches are struggling to keep their heads above water, and it is not their doctrines, but their non-theological human sympathy, which is doing the work. That is the situation. The main stream of modern life is passing organised religion by." We have said this a thousand times in the *Freethinker*. Of course we are glad to hear Mr. Campbell saying "ditto." Christians *do* overtake us in time—though some of them take a frightful lot of it.

Rev. R. J. Campbell seems to be a "pal" of Mr. Keir Hardie. "The New Theology, as the newspapers call it," he says in the *Labor Leader*, "is simply Mr. Hardie's social gospel articulated from a definitely religious standpoint." This is a compliment to Mr. Hardie, from one point of view; it is rather rough on him, from another. For that gentleman has always been "religious" enough; indeed, it is almost his speciality amongst the Labor men. He has been chattering about Christ for the last twenty years. Mr. Campbell appears to forget this. We hope he will apologise, and give Mr. Keir Hardie proper credit for being "religious."

The social gospel of Mr. Keir Hardie, religiously articulated by the Rev. R. J. Campbell, is "the oldest of all. It is the gospel of the humanity of God and the divinity of man." God is a big man; man is a little God. We know now.

Father Vaughan has a poor opinion of Mr. Campbell's "New Theology." "There is nothing new in it," he says, "and nothing true in it; there is no Christianity, and not much theology in it. It is Campbellism pure and simple, and as religion, it is only—well—good for nothing." This is too sweeping. It is good for all Mr. Campbell's salary; it finds him a nice country house and a motor car. Is this nothing?

The inevitable North Britisher writes—all the way from Aberdeen this time—pointing out that Mr. Campbell is a long way off the orthodoxy of the Westminster Confession, which, according to the trust deed, ought to be preached from the City Temple pulpit. Mr. Campbell puts forward a

bloodless theory of the Atonement, while the Westminster Confession represents Jesus Christ as having paid the penalty of man's sin upon the cross. Mr. Campbell calls the Virgin Birth a legend; while the Westminster Confession says that: "Christ, the Son of God, became man by taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin." Yes, Mr. Campbell is a long way off the Westminster Confession; but the Westminster Confession is a long way off truth and sense; so there's something to be said for Mr. Campbell.

The Aberdeen gentleman who writes to the *Daily Chronicle* about Mr. Campbell's sad departure from the Scottish standard of divine doctrine, says that his language seems to be identical in meaning with that used by Canon Cheyne in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*: "That Christ was the son of a human father, and that not Joseph." The Aberdeen gentleman—which his name is Auchterlonie, not Annie Laurie—shrinks with "horror" from what such statements would mean "in relation to Christ, and also to Christ's Mother, if they were put in the plain language of the man in the street?" But why trouble the man in the street? Tolstoy, in his work on the Four Gospels, has frankly admitted that Christ was "a bastard." So the murderer's out, and the great Annie Laurie—we beg pardon, Auchterlonie—need not mince the matter any longer.

A Tyneside preacher, the Rev. J. W. Ogden, of Jesmond Presbyterian Church, Newcastle-on-Tyne, orating against the "New Theology," had the goodness to say that "Freethought was absolutely impossible. It was incompatible with sanity." But if it is impossible, it is neither compatible nor incompatible with anything; so that, if the reverend gentleman's first statement is true, his second statement is meaningless. With regard to the insanity of Freethought, the reverend gentleman remarked that—"The man who said he had his own opinions as to the law of gravitation, the principle of chemistry, the phenomena of electricity, was pronounced insane." Possibly, though that all depends on circumstances. For instance, a man might disbelieve the law of gravitation, and yet refrain from dropping things out of window on the heads of the passers-by. But, in any case, what has this to do with Freethought? Freethought simply means the right to think without legal or priestly interference, and the duty to think according to the best of our powers and opportunities. It does not mean freedom to believe against the evidence of one's senses or the dictates of one's intelligence. No such freedom exists. It would simply be chaos. And it is the Freethinkers who are always found declaring that everything exists under the absolute law of causation.

The newspapers give more attention to sermons in Glasgow than they do in London. The *Glasgow Herald* prints a long report of a sermon by the Rev. Dr. Ambrose Shepherd, at Elgin Place Church, on "The New Theology." The preacher said he was not quite sure that he understood the Rev. R. J. Campbell, but "I speak for myself," he added, "when I say that what I have seen and can understand of the recent deliverances of the minister of the City Temple as touching these truths—so far as they deny, if reports can be trusted, that the death of Christ was an atonement made for the sin of the world; or, that the world needs such an atonement; if this be the teaching of these deliverances, that teaching shall be to me anathema." Mr. Campbell knows now what he has to face if he goes to Glasgow.

"The sacrifice of Christ on the Cross is the centre of all truth," cried the Rev. Ambrose Shepherd. That is what he thinks. There are others who regard it as nearer the centre of all falsehood.

Rev. Silvester Horne, the oracle of Whitefield's Tabernacle, went for his "friend" Mr. Campbell on Sunday. Amongst other conundrums, he asked how the "New Theology" explained the sinlessness of Jesus. There had been only one man in history without sin; and—"How then can you say that the divine in man and the divine in Christ is only a difference in degree?"

Mr. Horne could not maintain in open debate this "sinlessness of Jesus." It is quite inconsistent even with the Gospel record. Jesus said, for instance, that it was a sin to call a brother man a fool; yet he himself called people fools. Whoever called a brother man a worthless fellow was in danger of hell fire; yet he himself called people vipers and whitewashed rotten sepulchres. These are enough. But we will give Mr. Horne more if he wants them.

Even if the Jesus of the Gospels were absolutely sinless, what would that prove but that his character had been wou-

derfully idealised by his biographers? The same sort of idealism may be perceived in every churchyard and every cemetery. According to the tombstones, all the dead were marvellously good people. You never see their failings mentioned. It may be charity, it may be affection, it may be family pride; but there it is. And it was for this reason that Charles Lamb, when a little boy, ran up to his sister, after wandering amongst the graves, and asked her, "Mary, where are all the naughty people buried?"

How these Christians love one another! In his sermon at the City Temple on Sunday morning, Mr. Campbell referred to the pious letters he had received from his Christian brethren. We take the following report of what he said from the *Daily News* :—

"He had been inundated with letters. Every crank in Christendom must, he thought, have written to him, and every epithet in the dictionary, and a few not in the dictionary, had been flung by way of insult at him by those who thought that by doing so they did service to God. Nothing showed so completely the moral powerlessness of so-called orthodoxy than the spirit shown by these defenders of the faith."

If he goes on telling the truth at this rate Mr. Campbell will soon be eligible as a contributor to the *Freethinker*.

Mr. Campbell repeated, in that very sermon, that "sin was selfishness." And we repeat that this is simply a quotation from Ingersoll.

When we took up our definite attitude towards the bad side of the Separation policy of the French Government we were prepared to stand alone for a considerable time. But we felt that we could wait with confidence. We did not pride ourselves on possessing greater natural sagacity than other English journalists, but we knew that we were standing by a great principle, and that has a tonic effect upon the mind. What we wished to see carried out was real and final Separation, not something which kept Church and State in perpetual contact and perpetual conflict. Our view was that Separation ought to bring about a state of things in which Church and State had absolutely nothing to do with each other.

We praised French statesmen for the fine and even generous way in which they had carried Separation to a certain point. But just at that point they lost sight of their own principles, and we could not help shouting "Danger ahead!" We were told that French statesmen knew better than we did what they were about, but that is only a way of begging the question at issue; so we smiled, and trusted to the logic of events. And that has been our justification.

We said that the Associations Cultuelles were a mistake. Well, the Government has admitted it by dropping them. We said that it was wrong to try to compel the Catholic Church to organise under the law of 1881. Well, the Government has admitted that too. The prosecutions have been dropped, the threats have ceased, and the Government has decided to bring in a Bill which enacts precisely what we recommended.

But before we deal with this Bill we desire to say a word in passing about our Nonconformist contemporaries. Not one of them could see that any wrong principle was involved in what was really, however it was intended, a political attack on the Catholic Church. Had it been their own case, they would have found plenty of ground for complaint—as Mr. W. T. Stead hinted in the passage we quoted last week from the *Review of Reviews*. The victims were not Nonconformists, but Catholics, and that was enough to make the Nonconformist heart rejoice. Yet now that the French Government has stepped into a new and better path, the Nonconformist papers are beginning to hedge. They don't want to be left behind as the gratuitous apologists of intolerance. Accordingly the *Daily News*, for instance, in a leaderette on "The Olive Branch," in its issue of Wednesday, January 23, turned round its rusty old weathercock in the following fashion :—

"We congratulate the French Premier on the step he has taken with regard to the conflict with the Church. The application of the Law of 1881, which makes declaration of public meeting compulsory, to the services of the Church has always seemed to us a harsh and unfortunate proceeding."

We are glad to hear it, but why didn't the *Daily News* say so before? It was left, as Mr. Stead observed, to the *Freethinker* alone, of all non-Catholic papers in England, to challenge the legal oppression of the Catholic Church in France. And, as events are now shaping, we believe the Freethinkers of this country will soon be looking back with pride on what Mr. Stead described as the "courage and

impartiality" of their own organ. But we repeat that we only went right because we stuck to the essential principle of Freethought.

And now let us get to the new Bill. Some time ago we noted that M. Flandin, a Deputy, had introduced a brief Bill abolishing the 1881 Law of Assemblies and giving all French citizens—including priests, of course—the same right of free public meeting which obtains in England, where we hold what meetings we please, without permission from any authority, and merely subject to the common law for the preservation of peace and order. M. Flandin's Bill was relegated to the usual Parliamentary Committee and favorably reported upon. At this point M. Clemenceau, who is by far the wisest man in the French Government, intervenes with the announcement that a Government Bill of a similar character will be introduced. M. Flandin accordingly withdraws, the Committee accepts the Government project, and perhaps before this paragraph meets the readers' eyes the Government Bill will be under discussion in the Chamber of Deputies. It is to consist of a single article, abolishing the law of 1881, and authorising public meetings of all descriptions, lay and clerical, to be held without any declaration.

How good it is to find a common ground of truth and justice at last! We congratulate M. Clemenceau on his sagacity and courage. No doubt he has done the right thing as soon as he could, considering the fanaticism of some on his own side. We also congratulate (though it goes against the grain) the Pope and the French clergy on their effective "passive resistance" to an absurd and intolerant policy. For the rest, we shall always say that Catholics have just the same rights as Freethinkers. We will never allow them more, and we will never concede them less.

Now for a word on another point. It will be remembered that we prophesied a religious reaction in France if the Government persisted in attacking, persecuting, and humiliating the Catholic Church. We have no power of looking into the future beyond what other men possess; but we know something of history and we know something of human nature—especially of religious history and of religious human nature; and our prophecy was therefore a process of psychological mathematics. Well now, it appears that we were right on this point too, and that the reaction has already begun.

The *Westminster Gazette*, which ought to know better, has disgraced itself on the Church question in France like any common Nonconformist rag. It has lectured the Church, and blessed the Government, at every stage of the struggle. But it has had one saving grace. It has allowed a correspondent to go to France and report what he ascertains; and, although it disowns his opinions, it publishes his letters. In the first of these the writer (whoever he is) states that the Catholic clergy are being improved in energy, self-reliance, and self-sacrifice by the storm which is raging around them. Speaking of one parish priest—a Radical as well as a Catholic—with whom he had an interesting conversation, this correspondent says:—

"He views the loss of millions of Church property with equanimity. 'Christianity,' he declares, 'does not depend on wealth or possessions.' He assures me that the faithful are rallying to the Church with most generous support. The offertories in the churches in Paris have been better than the curés expected. And, what is more, there has been a revival of faith. In his own church the increase in the number of men at the services has been phenomenal, and the increase in the number of those who go to the Sacraments has been most consoling. He believes this revival of faith to be general, for other curés tell him the same story. He even hopes that the persecution may continue, for he is convinced that the Church will pass through it purified and strengthened. There is no room for whining, no complaint in his outlook, for the curé believes that the Government is doing the work which he has most at heart, and that all the tragic results which have followed the refusal of the Pope to accept the Separation Law will end in bringing France back to the belief in the supernatural which she has so largely lost."

We call that a very important utterance. Even if we allow for a good deal of exaggeration a certain amount of truth remains, and it points exactly in the direction of our prophecy. Religious reaction is already setting in, and this is what every sensible man should expect. For if you martyrise the priests of religion you rally to their side the sympathy and assistance of myriads who, in ordinary times are indifferentists, but in such times are driven by the stimulation of their inherited religiosity into the camp of faith.

A new Kurdish sect has appeared in the Turkish empire, called the "Aolayan"—that is, the barkers. The members

meet together in public places at night, hold services in a state approaching nudity, and howl like sick dogs. The Turkish Government has issued orders to put a stop to their pious practices. They will have to howl at home in future.

Rev. William James Rodgers, of the Duke-street Mission, Workington, has been ordered to pay £140 damages to Thomas Routledge, an ironworker, for seducing his daughter Hannah. We do not cite this as an argument against Christianity; but it would be freely cited as an argument against "infidelity" if the defendant had been a Secular lecturer.

Thomas Young, charged with the theft of electrical fittings from his late employer, Mr. W. Seymour, Sloane-street, Chelsea, was stated to be "a very religious young man," a constant attendant at the Torrey-Alexander mission, and a Sunday-school teacher. Qualifications like those ought to knock fifty per cent. off the sentence, and will doubtless secure the possessor a harp in the heavenly orchestra.

After some of the big-humped camels we have lately chronicled the following is a poor little thing who may have squeezed through the needle's eye. The Rev. Arthur Joseph Truman, aged eighty-three, vicar of St. Mary, Arnold, Nottingham, who dropped dead at the altar of his church, after the morning service on Sunday, December 2, left £4,014.

William Whiteley's portrait in the newspapers was a perfect type of the smug, self-made man. We dare say he was a good sort in his way, and we understand that he was very pious; indeed, the odor of piety pervaded the whole of his big establishment. But there seems to have been something like a skeleton in the good man's cupboard.

According to an interview with Mrs. Whiteley in the *Daily Chronicle*, Mr. Whiteley had been separated from his wife for twenty-five years, all on account of Miss Somebody who was one of the assistants in his business. Apparently the pious owner of the biggest stores in London was not a Joseph. But godly men are often not that. Look at godly Scotland, and the percentage of illegitimate births.

We do not desire to anticipate the upshot of the legal investigation into this Whiteley affair, which is sure to take place at the trial of his assailant, if he survives. But we cannot help agreeing with the *Tribune* that all the evidence points to Mr. Whiteley's having had some knowledge of Horace George Rayner. It is an absurd idea that the head of a big, exacting business would not only receive an utter stranger, but be closeted with him for nearly half an hour.

The will of the late William Henry Oram Smith, of this city, which was admitted to probate a few days ago, provided as follows: "I desire that my remains shall be cremated and their disposition conducted in a simple manner without unnecessary expense or emblems of mourning of any kind. I declare my utter disbelief in any human invented creed, of which Christianity is the least acceptable to my mind, and desire that no representative of same shall be present officially when I am removed. Let only the kind words of my friends announce my departure." As generally happens when the survivors of an unbeliever do not share his views, the last request of Mr. Smith was not respected by his widow, who called in a minister to officiate at his funeral and arrayed herself in mourning garments, which she has worn ever since her husband's death.—*Truthseeker* (New York).

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, in one of his late speeches at Glasgow, said that "they could do nothing and could hope to do nothing without the blessing of Almighty God." Why did the right honorable gentleman forget to obtain the "blessing" for the Education Bill? It was a great oversight.

"Can a man read the *Clarion* and be a Christian?" This wonderful question was discussed lately at a Norwood P.S.A. It does not appear if the "crowded meeting" arrived at any decision. The principal man of God who took part in the debate tried to make out that Christians ought not to read the *Clarion*. Probably he thinks they ought not to look at the *Freethinker*. And from his point of view, he is very likely right.

"Providence" is still going strong. An island wiped out with 1,500 inhabitants, people frozen to death in the awful cold snap over Europe; such are the most striking of this party's recent performances. It is to be hoped we shall hear less of him for some time.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, February 3, Secular Hall, Brunswick-street, Glasgow: 12 (noon), "Pulling Down the Old Flag: a Review of the Rev. R. J. Campbell's New Theology"; 6.30, "Do the Dead Live?"

February 10, 17, 24, Queen's Hall.

To Correspondents.

C. COHEN'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—February 17, Camberwell; 24, Birmingham. March 3, Glasgow; 17, Manchester.

J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—February 3 and 10, Forest Gate; 24, Camberwell. March 10, Birmingham.

W. REDSHAW.—Pleased to hear from one who heard Joseph Symes lecture at Leeds thirty years ago. There have been articles on the Rev. Mr. Campbell from the pens of our able contributors. We may give him a turn presently, from a different point of view.

JOHN SANDERSON.—We shall always value the good wishes of a stalwart Freethinker like yourself.

THE JOSEPH SYMES FUND.—Previously acknowledged, £184 3s. 4d. Since received: S. M. Peacock, £2 2s.; J. Capon and Friends, 6s.; William Redshaw, 10s.; C. Howat, 2s.; P. R., £1; P. Pearce, 4s.; John Sanderson, 5s.; W. Appleby, 2s. 6d.; A. Cayford, 2s.; C. Durrant, 2s.; B. Dobell, 10s. 6d.; G. L. Alward, £5 5s.; B. Evans, 2s.; A. R. Brown, 5s.; T. W. and H. L., 4s.; W. Horrocks, 10s.; J. W., 1s.; Miss L. Pizer, 3s.; Miss J. Pizer, 3s.; Mr. Ruse, 2s. 6d.; Mr. Sweetman, 2s. 6d.; Mr. Phillips, 1s.; Mr. Rainbow, 1s.; Mr. Brooks, 1s.; J. Raiton, 2s. 6d.; T. Hibbott, 1s.; Mrs. Hibbott, 1s.; Buena Vista, 2s.; R. Speirs, 2s. 6d.; E. B., 1s.; Meyer Cohen, £2 2s.; H. M. Ridgway, £5; Felix Hermann, 10s. 6d.; C. J., £1; S. and W. Phillips, 2s.; F. H. H., 5s.; Dr. Laing, £2 2s.; J. Niven Laing, £1 1s.; T. P. W., 1s.; T. Thelwall, 10s.; S. Denison, 2s. 6d.; John Roberts, 5s.; J. Wilson, 2s. 6d.; R. Wilson, 2s. 6d.; W. Wilson, 2s. 6d.; A. J. Notley, 2s. 6d.; J. C. Goodfellow, 1s.; G. Hill, 1s.; Edmund Damon, 10s.; Michael Stitt, 10s.; A. H., 2s.; S. A. B., £1 1s.; A. Younger, 2s.; Mrs. Siger, 1s.; W. Carlile, 2s. 6d.; J. P. Hope, 1s.; J. Birkett, £1; E. Copland, 2s. 6d.; Newcastle Debating Society (collection), 5s.; Joseph Bryce, 5s.; J. G. Bartram, 1s.; J. D. Stones, 10s.; W. P. Smith, 1s.; Glong, 2s.; Halley, 2s.; Munro, 1s.; Friend, 1s.; Winton, 2s.; "Humble Efforts of an Emancipated Mental Slave," £5 5s.; E. L. G., 1s.; J. Broadfoot, 2s.; Harry Crossley, 2s. 6d.; Three Atheist Undergrads., Cambridge, £1 7s. 6d.; J. Fothergill, 2s.; P. Fitzpatrick, 1s.; J. T. Horsman, 1s.; A. J. Fincken, £1 1s.; J. W. Hartgill, 1s.; A. B. Marks, 2s. 6d.; Glasgow Secular Society, £5; Mr. and Mrs. T. Robertson, £1; J. P. Browne, 5s.; J. Wilson, 2s.; G. Scott, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Turnbull, 2s.; W. Turnbull, 2s. 6d.; Mr. and Mrs. R. Turnbull, 2s.; Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Turnbull, 5s.; T. Turnbull, 2s.; D. Turnbull, 1s.; Mr. and Mrs. Jones, 2s.; Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, 2s.; Mrs. Hunter, 2s. 6d.; Morgan, 2s. 6d.; Collected at Mr. Lloyd's Glasgow Lectures, 18s. 7d.; C. Langley, 1s.; R. Taylor, £1; S. N., 1s.; Mr. and Mrs. G. Garrett, 2s.; W. E. Hopper, 2s. 6d.; W. Hopper, £2 2s.; F. W. Thompson, 3s.; H. Porter, 1s.; G. Vickers, 1s.; J. Grundy, 5s.; W. J. Caton, 2s.; F. Gray, 2s.; F. J. Voisey, 10s. 6d.; W. H. Fletcher, 2s. 6d.; Ladies of Failsforth Secular Sunday School, 15s.; Mrs. E. Brooks, 2s.

Per Miss Vance:—Musical Friends, 5s.; E. Thorp, 2s. 6d.; T. S., 2s. 6d.; A. Stanley, 10s.; E. Pack, 2s. 6d.; F. J. Pinnell, 1s.; H. A. Lupton, 10s.; A. E. and C. Mascall, £1; R. L. M., £2 2s.; B. L. Coleman, 10s.; T. W. Upcott, 10s.; T. Hopkins, £1; H. Good, 5s.; A. W. Shaw, 2s. 6d.; J. H. Com, 2s.; Mr. and Mrs. Pegg, £1.

THE COHEN "SALVATION ARMY" TRACT FUND.—Previously acknowledged, £113 18s. 6d. Since received: 5s.; J. Day, 6d.; G. Kemp, 1s.; J. Grundy, 1s.

J. CAPON.—"When I think of him," you say of Joseph Symes, "and men like him, it helps me to bear my own troubles with greater fortitude." You could not pay him, or men like him, a higher tribute.

G. L. ALWARD.—Pleased to hear that so good an old friend of our own has, with his family, always had the kindest regard for Joseph Symes. It is interesting to know that your son in New Zealand was one of Symes's pupils at Birmingham. We have placed the whole of your cheque to the Memorial Fund, although you authorise us to put half of it, if we choose, to the funeral expenses. We opine that the N. S. S. Executive should pay all the costs of the funeral, as it did in the case of J. M. Wheeler. Anyhow, we took the responsibility, and we shall doubtless be recouped.

H. IRVING.—We don't recollect the tribute you refer to. Certainly we should not overlook it willingly. Can you tell us its purport?

W. HORROCKS, who heard Joseph Symes lecture at Manchester on October 28, writes: "I can only say, with others interested in the Freethought movement, how much I regret his untimely death."

J. RAITON.—Glad to hear you are a "great admirer of the sound and sensible manner in which the *Freethinker* is conducted," and that you derive more pleasure from reading it than from any other paper you take.

"JAN DE BOER."—Some of them may prove useful.

T. HIBBOTT.—Always pleased to hear of freethinking wives and

A. MARTIN.—We know of no evidence that the "suppressed poem" called "The Divinity of Blunders" was written by Robert Burns. Judging by the internal evidence, we should not hesitate to ascribe it to the hand of some passable imitator. It does not contain one of those inimitable strokes that light up the authentic satires of Robert Burns. Such, at least, is our judgment. But what need is there to go outside the range of Burns's acknowledged poems for assurance that he looked upon all Bible miracles as old-wives' tales? With regard to the other matter, we are a Determinist. We wrote in favor of it more than thirty years ago, and have never wavered since. You will see presently that we do not object to Determinism, but to mistaken views of it by recent students.

JAS. NEATE.—As your list did not give initials with the surnames, we could not include them; but doubtless it will make little difference.

S. DAWSON.—Not without merit, but the subject has been treated by our best contributors.

F. HERMANN writes: "The *Freethinker* is to me what no other paper is, or I would not make it convenient to run down on Wednesday afternoons to fetch my copy, instead of waiting for it till Thursday morning." This correspondent is thanked for the cutting from the *Frankfurter Zeitung*.

R. J. HENDERSON.—Sunday Societies do some good, doubtless; they at least provide an entertainment for those who don't want to go to the church or the public-house; but they generally act as wet-blankets upon all burning questions—those in which thinking people are most profoundly interested; and they too often draw away "respectable" Freethinkers from the more difficult and more necessary work of propagating Freethought.

H. DAWSON.—We much regret to hear of the death of Mr. C. Mascall, whom we held in great respect. We are not surprised to learn from you, who were with him in his last moments, that he "died as he had lived, kind, candid, and unflinching." We had to pass your letter as to the funeral on to Miss Vance, being quite unable to attend to it personally.

W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for cuttings.

T. THELWALL.—Yes, it was no doubt the English winter, and it is a pity he came, but wisdom is easy after the event.

S. DENISON.—Glad your son has asked you to "order one for him too"—meaning the *Freethinker*.

E. MOORCROFT.—Thanks for cuttings. You say that the *Freethinker* "seems to improve with every number, if that is possible." Oh yes, it is possible; but if we go on like that we may get too good for this world—and they say we shall have no chance in the next.

EMANCIPATED MENTAL SLAVE.—Hope we have acknowledged rightly; but the names could go in next week, if we misread your instructions. Thanks.

N. D.—Shall have time for correspondence when this Symes effort is over; meanwhile thanks and best wishes.

MAIN ROAD, CLAREMONT, CAPE COLONY.—Your registered letter to hand, but, as before, you failed to complete the type-written communication by adding your name. Send it along.

J. C. GOODFELLOW.—Cuttings are handier than newspapers. Pleased to read your and your friend's tribute: "We thank you for the grand stand you have been making all along in defence of Freethought."

MICHAEL STITT.—We well understand that you admired Joseph Symes all the more for knowing him privately. Thanks for good wishes. We need them.

A. J. HOPKINS.—Sorry, but very little good in going back, and we look upon the correspondence as closed.

R. CHILD.—Against etiquette to use without the reverent gentleman's permission.

J. D. STONES.—So you knew and admired Joseph Symes at Leeds all those years ago! What ages ago it seems!

W. P. SMITH writes: "I have been a constant reader of your valuable paper for the last fifteen years, and feel proud the party has such a man as yourself to look after the widow of such a good man as the late Joseph Symes."

J. HALLIGAN.—Introduce yourself by all means.

J. BROADFOOT.—Thanks for getting us new readers.

F. J. H. CARR.—Pleased to hear of another convert we have made from Catholicism.

HARRY CROSSLEY, writing from France, says: "That your heavy duties on the *Freethinker*—accomplished so well—should go without pecuniary reward, is simply a constant martyrdom." It certainly would be if we didn't love the work.

V. H. S.—No room this week; look for answer in next.

W. H. FLETCHER.—Pleased to hear they are still talking about Mr. Cohen's lecture at Ilkeston.

T. ROBERTSON.—Glasgow's is a good list.

W. E. HOPPER.—Quite so; minorities must not be made to suffer; that is mere brutality, and as bad in democracies as it can be in kings. Mr. Foote is taking all the care possible of himself.

H. PORTER.—Both suggestions noted.

H. DAVIS.—Will send. Thanks.

N. LEVEY.—No room this week. Hope to say something about the death of Mr. Dewar in our next. Can you send us any news of the funeral?

THE SECULAR SOCIETY, LIMITED, office is at 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S office is at 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

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LECTURE NOTICES must reach 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

FRIENDS who send us newspapers would enhance the favor by marking the passages to which they wish us to call attention.

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

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Foote delivers two lectures to-day (Feb. 3) in the Secular Hall, Brunswick-street, Glasgow. His subjects are likely to attract big meetings. Those who wish to secure seats should come early.

There is to be a Preliminary Meeting of the projected Secular Education League at the *Tribune* Rendezvous on Monday evening (Feb. 4), and Mr. Foote will hurry back from Glasgow in order to attend it. The N. S. S. will be specially represented by himself and Messrs. Cohen and Lloyd, and several other members will be present. The chair is to be taken by Mr. George Greenwood, M.P., and amongst the probable speakers are Mr. J. Allanson Picton, Col. Ivor Herbert, M.P., Mr. W. P. Byles, M.P., Mr. J. Ramsey Macdonald, M.P., and the Rev. S. D. Headlam. Amongst those who have expressed sympathy with the object of the meeting are several Christian ministers, including the Rev. R. J. Campbell; scholars like Professor J. B. Bury and Professor F. J. Furnivall; and literary men like Israel Zangwill, Havelock Ellis, and William Rossetti.

London "saints" will be pleased to hear that the Queen's (Minor) Hall has been engaged for three Sunday evenings in February (10, 17, 24) for another course of lectures by Mr. Foote. On the opening night he will deal with Mr. Campbell's "New Theology." The subjects of the other lectures will be announced in due course.

It is impossible to advertise these Queen's Hall lectures by posters all over London. We appeal to the "saints," therefore, to give the meetings all the publicity they can amongst their friends and acquaintances.

Mr. J. T. Lloyd lectured at Glasgow on Sunday, and had good meetings considering the counter attractions and the inhospitable weather. His lectures were highly appreciated. We regret to hear that he was not looking very well.

Mr. Cohen delivered the second of his lectures on Sunday evening for the West Ham Branch at the Workman's Hall, Romford-road, near the Stratford Town Hall. Mr. Lloyd occupies the platform there this evening (Feb. 3). We hope to hear of another good audience.

We are glad to see some letters and other matter of a Freethought tendency in the *Pembroke County Guardian*. If this sort of thing grows we may have a *real* free press in this country.

The *Darwen News* shows its love of free discussion by inserting a very long and able letter, from the Freethought point of view, on "Religious Education in the Day Schools" from the pen of "D. D." It is followed by a humorous letter by "Haggis," who is probably a Scotsman and more than probably a sceptic. Freethinkers should try to keep the ball rolling in the local press all over the country. Why don't they?

We cut the following message to the French Government from the pages of our excellent contemporary, the *New York Truthseeker*:—

"To M. Clemenceau, Premier, and M. Briand, Minister of Public Worship, Paris, France:—

The Independent Religious Society of Chicago, in Orchestra Hall assembled, requests its lecturer, M. M. Mangasarian, to congratulate you on your determined resistance to papal political interference in the home affairs of France. Rome should be shut out of politics in every country.

We trust, however, that in this struggle the principle of absolute liberty of conscience will not be permitted to suffer in any way, and that you will accord to the Catholics all the protection and justice which a civilised nation owes to her people, irrespective of race or creed."

We agree with this.

During Mr. Foote's last lecture at Leicester he had occasion to denounce the teaching of some of the crude morality of the Ten Commandments to the children of civilised parents, and especially the teaching of the command against "adultery" to boys and girls, who couldn't understand it, and were incapable of committing it. This set one of Mr. Foote's hearers thinking, and when his little boy, aged five, came home from school with the word "adultery" in his mouth, that hearer saw the advisability of putting a stop to such stuff; so he withdrew the child from religious instruction altogether. "Well," he writes to us, "the result is that our children now go to school at 10 o'clock instead of 9. So you see your lecture produced one good result, for if I had not heard it I should not have thought so much on the subject."

Personal.

WHEN I first wrote about the death of Joseph Symes I said that I had to take care of myself during the cold snap that killed him. This was putting it rather mildly. The truth was that I had a nasty cold, that I struggled against in order to go on with my work, which I could not think of leaving at that crisis, for I felt that the fate of the Symes subscription depended a good deal upon my being at the post of duty. Naturally it meant a serious addition to my regular labors, as I have no secretary, and no sub-editor now, and am obliged to do everything with my own hands. And the addition was in its very nature not cheerful but depressing. All the time I was opening letters, and making out lists of subscriptions, and incorporating useful bits in the "Answers to Correspondents" columns, I felt as if I were digging a grave. The sudden death of my old friend and colleague was an upset to me, and the daily and almost nightly (for I have been sleeping badly) preoccupation with his memory and the possible future of his wife and child, became quite an obsession. It is not wonderful, therefore, that the nasty cold made itself too well at home in my system. And when another cold snap set in last week I saw that I should be running a risk by going to Manchester on Sunday. I really was not fit to go, though I think I should have gone if it had not been for my wife's remonstrances. I gave Mrs. Pegg, the Branch secretary, a timely warning, but it was not possible to find a substitute. Mrs. Pegg tells me that my afternoon subject "attracted a great number of people," who were much disappointed at not hearing me. They passed a vote of sympathy and went home. In the evening a local gentleman kindly gave a dramatic recital to such of the audience as cared to stay, but no money was taken at the door in the circumstances. So it was a very profitable day for me, and as I don't happen to have anything coming in at present for my other work, the party will understand what a bed of roses a man in my position has to lie on.

I am somewhat better, though not exactly well, and I believe I shall be able to fulfil my Glasgow engagement; indeed, I feel pretty sure of it; and the local "saints" will doubtless help to bring people to the Secular Hall and crowd it at both lectures.

Next week I shall have something definite to say about Mrs. Symes and her future movements. Meanwhile I thank the party for taking me at my word and making the effort a "short and sharp" one. They have responded admirably to my appeal, and (except for a Rip Van Winkle or two) the last subscription will no doubt flow in by the last day in January.

G. W. FOOTE.

Independent Department.

[Some time ago we started an "Independent Department," in which we proposed to print, from time to time, valuable and interesting articles dealing with questions rather outside the official scope of this journal. Our offer was not taken advantage of to any considerable extent, and the "Independent Department" soon dropped out of sight. We revive it now, however, as the proper place in which to publish Mr. Scott's ably written article. Other contributions may appear under the same general heading in future numbers of the *Freethinker*. But it must be distinctly understood that we cannot admit articles on questions of party politics. Politics, as such, will continue to be absolutely excluded from our columns. It is the philosophical side of human affairs that might occasionally be treated with advantage in a journal like ours. Sometimes, perhaps, the line of demarcation may be difficult to draw; but we shall always form our decision in the light of the guiding principle we have laid down. All the rest that is wanted is fair-mindedness and good feeling on the part of contributors, and intellectual hospitality on the part of readers.—EDITOR.]

The Case of the Rebellious Female.

THE extremist on either side of a dispute is usually wrong, and wrong in proportion to the extremeness of his views. It must have been a sense of this fact that inspired the unknown philosopher who evolved the dictum that extremes meet. No doubt the strength of mind and depth of conviction that lead individuals to take pronounced views on any debatable question, are in themselves enviable qualities, and one is inclined to disparage the holder of moderate views, especially if such moderation seem nothing better than an attitude of sitting on the fence, or the result of intellectual indolence or impotence. But where strongly conflicting interests are involved, or where there is fair matter for dispute, there is often displayed a greater mental and moral strength by those who adopt a moderate position than by those who are at either extremity on the question. Of course there are extremists and extremists. One individual may hold strongly-marked views regarding a given question, and deliver himself forcibly concerning it, precisely because he has long and carefully considered it and been irresistibly impelled towards the conclusion at which he has arrived. Another may entertain an extreme view on a particular matter merely because he is in complete ignorance of the other side of the case. Both may be equally emphatic and uncompromising in the expression of their views, yet the one is simply a purblind bigot, while the other is something very different.

It is certainly quite natural that every advocate of a cause should be anxious to place his own side of the case in the best possible light. His opponents may be trusted to do as much for the other side of the question. And it must be admitted that even the myopic individual, who can see only one aspect of a question, has his uses. His persistent examination and presentation of the *one aspect* he regards as true must result in the bringing forward of all that can be said on the matter from that particular point of view. And that is so far good. There is this further result: that his very one-sidedness stimulates into opposing activity those who perceive there are other possible points of view in respect of the question dealt with.

But it is much to be desired that the women who are at present so clamorous in their advocacy of the female claim to the franchise did not run to such extremes. There is no need to lecture the leaders of the present suffrage agitation on the folly of their general methods. The political party papers have been doing that for many weeks, and we have no desire to re-echo their chidings. When public attention has to be called to any grievance under which a section of the people labor, there is lawful excuse to be found for methods of agitation that in some degree outrage the conventions. All reformers have disregarded established conventions in some way or other. And members of the Secular Society, as well as Freethinkers generally, will scarcely be accused of excessive respect for conventionalities. Their study of human history,

and their experience of life, does not imbue them with the idea that speech or conduct, which incurs either press or popular odium, thereby stands condemned. Human nature is very apt to turn and rend those who endeavor to stir it out of its self-complacency. And, were it only opponents who felt aggrieved at the ongoings of Mrs. Pankhurst, Miss Billington, and their colleagues, one might legitimately see in that fact justification of their methods rather than the reverse. Political or other agitation is not exactly carried on with a view to pleasing the enemy.

But there is one feature of the present feminine campaign that true sympathisers with all the aspirations of intelligent womanhood must unequivocally deplore, and that is, the interference with free speech and the right of peaceful public assembly. In this respect the conduct of some of the women agitators—who otherwise have very courageously upheld their cause—has been reprehensible. However, their error—which is something more than a blunder in policy, though it is also that—has been emphasised already in these columns, and no more than passing allusion need be made to it at this date. But it ought to be a guiding principle with all who claim to be "advanced" that general freedom cannot be promoted by infringing the liberty of others. A good many people who prate about liberty do not understand its first and most elementary principles. Those who have brought the "Votes for women" cry into such universal currency are entitled to utilise every method of outdoor and indoor demonstration, and to make use of the vehicle afforded by the press, for the purpose of keeping their demands before the public. They are not entitled to wreck the meetings convened by real or supposed enemies of their cause. Freedom of speech and the right of public meeting are more precious social assets than the franchise. And no one should more readily recognise this than the advanced reformer.

With some of the utterances of the leaders of the woman's suffrage movement we have but moderate sympathy. We refer to the attacks made by some of the women upon the male sex. Many of these attacks are envenomed, grossly prejudiced, and consequently unjust. It is here the representatives of the women exhibit that extremeness of view against which we have mildly protested in a general way earlier in this article. The exaggerated view they take of the position of woman under the present régime is grotesque in its unfairness. And the share of responsibility for the drawbacks of the female lot which they assign to the selfish and tyrannical male, is quite out of proportion to the latter's actual liability. If we took the allegations and hectorings of many of the modern female champions of women's rights without making a liberal discount for hysterical hyperbole, it might be imagined that the majority of wives had been inveigled into matrimony on false pretences, that they were the bond-slaves of their husbands—that, in short, their situation as married women was one of hideous degradation of mind and body. Some vehement ladies go the length of regarding the legal noose of matrimony as in itself a disgrace.

Now we are not disposed to deny there are brutes of men in the world, even in countries that lay claim to be considered civilised. And we are fully cognisant that there are numbers of men utterly unfit to live on terms of intimacy with any decent woman. So much we may freely concede to the denunciators of the male sex. We *know* the male sex—or, at least, some of it. But while the unfavorable estimate of the mere man entertained by female advocates in connection with the question of sex relationship may reflect credit on their powers of observation, we fear it betrays no small ignorance of their own sex. For, let the champions of female emancipation fulminate as they will against the grinding, economic conditions that force into matrimony women who would prefer to live in single cursedness, the fact remains patent to all that the average woman

becomes a man's life-partner because she likes the man, and because of the natural promptings of sex. Simply that, and nothing more.

And as regards the cramping restrictions that man is so sorely abused for having imposed upon the female sex, a little unbiassed examination will show that, in their origin, these restrictions were not devised with any sinister intent. They were devised mainly in the interest, and for the protection of woman herself, notwithstanding that female emancipators volubly repudiate the idea. Granted that the necessity for many, if not all, of these restrictive laws and customs has passed away; granted also, that evil, selfish and unscrupulous men took advantage of the necessity that existed for the protection of the weaker and naturally more helpless sex; our point is that the legal and conventional restraints which women now regard—and in the main rightly regard—as vexatious and unjust were not, as some would have us believe, imposed by a conscious and calculated exercise of brutal male dominance. Man may have egregiously blundered in his treatment of woman in the past, but at least he erred with good intentions.

In support of the contention that many checks on the unfettered action of woman originated in concern for her own well-being, we might instance the unwritten law that a woman must not be out so late at night as a man. This may seem a comparatively small matter, though the modern female demand for a latch-key indicates the existence of a desire to use it. But obviously the social convention which requires that a woman should be indoors at nightfall earlier than a man was, in its origin, dictated by the fact that it is not so safe for a woman to be out late as it is for a man. From one point of view, this invidious distinction in favor of the male may not be complimentary to him. It is doubtless matter for reproach to him that the streets should be less safe at night for a woman than for a man. But we are here merely stating the facts of the case. And the fact is, as we have indicated, that it is purely in the interest of woman herself that custom demands her timely return to the shelter of her home at night. Years back, of course, the necessity for this was much more urgent; but that the necessity still exists will not be disputed by any observer of city life.

Rational scrutiny of other and much more real grievances amongst the many disabilities that modern women find so irksome would similarly reveal that they arose out of the circumstances of the case, and were not deliberately planned (as certain foolish men and women endeavor to persuade us) for the exploitation and oppression of the weaker sex by the stronger. Many advanced women look upon the marriage bond as a badge of slavery, and seek to modify its rigidity if not to sever it entirely. They do not adequately realise that, under existing economic conditions, it must inevitably be the woman who would suffer in the event of any slackening of the legal tie. A woman, in entering into relationship with a man, cannot preserve her independence simply by declining to go through the legal matrimonial ceremony. As things are, the average woman who becomes a mother is absolutely dependent for support on the father of her child, whether he is legally her husband or not. In fact, as can easily be seen, where there is no legal obligation the woman is completely at the mercy of the man in most cases. There can be no radical change in our marriage laws and customs so long as women are not on an economic level with men. The majority of women will always marry, as we have said they do now, because they want to marry; but undoubtedly there would be a great alteration in the conditions of married life were men and women economically equal. And the shrewder amongst the women themselves perceive that only through economic equality can the desired emancipation of their sex be achieved. It is surely futile to speak of equality when one of the essentials of equality is lacking. The plain truth of this matter is that at

present women are *not* the equals of men, however offensive such a statement may sound in the ears of some women we wot of. That it is highly desirable women *should* be levelled up to equality with man, so far as nature will allow, is a proposition that no inconsiderable number of men will accept. And here we must leave the subject in the meantime.

GEO. SCOTT.

City Temple Theology.

An Open Letter to the Rev. Dr. Robertson Nicoll.

SIR,—Will you allow a stranger to address a few candid words to you concerning the leading article, entitled "City Temple Theology," which appeared in your own journal, the *British Weekly*, for January 24? I may assure you, at the outset, that as a literary critic I greatly admire you, and on account of this admiration, have been a regular reader of your productions for many years. When you agree with a man or a book your criticism is always excellent in tone and often in quality as well; but as an opponent you are almost invariably the victim of prejudice, bigotry, spite; and then you become an object of pity to most of your friends and admirers. Do you remember your heartless reference to Dr. Pierson on the occasion of his coming from America to take duty at the Metropolitan Tabernacle during Mr. Spurgeon's last illness? To any impartial reader that article was intended to irritate the popular preacher and to create a prejudice against him among his hearers. It would be easy to adduce many similar instances during the last decade or two. Your review of Dr. Fitchett's book against Freethought, *Ithuriel's Spear*, was in many respects very admirable, and I was in deep intellectual sympathy with it; but its tone was one of unbroken sarcasm and bitterness. The language you employed was certainly not becoming as applied to a "brother beloved" in Christ. Now your recent tirade against Mr. Campbell's theology is disfigured from beginning to end by the same unbrotherly spirit. Of course, your attack is perhaps no worse than those of such men as Dr. Campbell Morgan and Messrs. Thomas Spurgeon and Henry Varley; but your position as editor of a journal that circulates round the civilised world renders yours all the more pitiable.

Bear in mind, I am by no means a supporter of Mr. Campbell's teaching. I emphatically repudiate all theologies, and his not a whit less than yours. I write this epistle simply in defence of fairplay. Your onslaught is anything but fair; it is the quintessence of unfairness. Take, for example, your cheap sneer at the "thunders of applause from a mob in the gallery." I happened to be present, in that very gallery, on the occasion in question, and I can honestly testify that "the thunders of applause" came, not "from a mob in the gallery," but from numerous individuals all over the building. Your reference was grossly inaccurate; but, in any case, was it worthy of the Christ whose name you bear, and of the Holy Orders in which you still stand, to characterise a number of people in a Christian congregation as "a mob," simply because they cheered views of which you disapprove? Then your allusion to Mr. Campbell's "extempore speech," "loose argument," and "desultory treatment," is surely not in good taste. It is not brotherly. There are those who will assert that it is not even founded on fact, except in relation to the *apparently* "extempore speech." From every point of view the whole description is an exhibition of shockingly bad taste.

Your chief point against Mr. Campbell is based on the inference, of the truth of which you are not quite sure, that he did not spend a certain number of years at a theological seminary before Holy Orders were conferred upon him, and that, in consequence, he is not an expert in theology; or, in Dr. Forsyth's ele-

gant phrase, that his theology "may be an amateur one." Now, Dr. Nicoll, can you tell us upon what theology is based? Can you inform us what constitutes an expert in theology? Are you an expert in theology? If so, on what grounds, and by what means? Were John and Paul experts in theology? If so, how do you explain the incontrovertible fact that on more than one fundamental point they materially differed the one from the other? Which of the two do you take as your authority on the person and work of Christ? You call them "inspired men," and if they were Divinely inspired their utterances ought to be accepted as finally conclusive on every subject. But you know as well as I do that they both fell into grievous errors. For one thing, they both believed and taught the speedy dissolution of the material universe. Paul declared that the end of the world was at the door, that it would happen in his own lifetime, and that he made such an announcement on the authority of the Lord. Let me give you his very words:—

"Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51-52).

Here is a more emphatic pronouncement still:—

"For we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as the others, which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thes. iv. 13-17).

Now do you not admit that that is the language of a man who claimed to be the spokesman of the Lord Jesus Christ? He wrote those passages at the command of his Divine Master. Not even the ghost of a doubt breathes in either. Well, Dr. Nicoll, you need not be told that either Paul was mistaken in the belief that he wrote "by the word of the Lord," or the Lord himself was mistaken in making such a communication to his servant. I care not which alternative you prefer, but you are logically and morally bound to take the one or the other, because the event, so confidently predicted as being on the eve of happening, has not transpired yet, after the lapse of nearly two thousand years. You, who believe in the Divine authority of the Apostle, are now impaled on the horns of a dilemma and cannot possibly escape.

My reason for insisting so strongly on that point is that I may compel you to notice that on one subject, at least, while confidently asserting that his declaration concerning it was given "by the word of the Lord," Paul was in absolute error. History has completely given his prophecy the lie. But if Paul's statement respecting one event, which he claims to make on the authority of the Lord, has been historically proved to be inaccurate, how can we be expected to take him as our authority on statements which are not susceptible of either proof or disproof? I am almost prepared to affirm that, since Paul's authority has utterly broken down with respect to prognostications regarding the accuracy or inaccuracy of which we can make our appeal to history, we have absolutely nothing to show that his doctrine of God, of the person of Christ, of sin and salvation, or of the future state, is any more worthy of acceptance. As to break one commandment is said to mean breaking the whole law, so, likewise, to discredit Paul's deliverance on one subject is equivalent to undermining it on every other subject. Once you have caught a man lying in one direction you can no longer trust him in any other direction. Does it not follow that Mr. Campbell is fully justified in the contention that "Paul's opinion is simply Paul's opinion?"

You charge Mr. Campbell with being a mere theological tyro, and with "cheap dogmatism"; but surely your cocksureness matches his, and is no less cheap. In relation to the supernatural, you are both wild dogmatists and nothing more. You both deal in bald hypotheses, in unverified assumptions; and though your differences are outwardly immense, each of you is fully persuaded that he delivers the "very truth of God," the "real message of Christ." *You cannot both be right, and you have no more right to say that Mr. Campbell is in the wrong than I have to declare that you are both in the wrong.* I have no title to indulge in such a declaration, because I am in possession of no verifying data; but I am justified in submitting that you are both guilty of treating assumptions, hypotheses, beliefs and metaphysical speculations as if they were so many items of direct knowledge, and that in doing this you disregard a fundamental law of human thought.

There are many other points in your fierce castigation of Mr. Campbell I should like to dwell upon, but I trust I have said enough to prove that your long article betrays a spirit not calculated to advance the cause of orthodoxy in the land, or to damage that which Mr. Campbell has at heart, and that you are both indirectly helping on the steady march of Secularism.

I remain, with much respect and not a little admiration,

Sincerely yours,

FAIRPLAY.

WHEN ONE OF US WALKS ALONE.

We have walked together, my love, my love,
Through many a weary day,
With only the ghost of a sun above
To light us upon the way.
Yet we have been happy, my dear, my dear,
More happy than we have known;
Through a good old world we have journeyed here—
But what when one walks alone?

I would miss your faith, my love, my own,
In the day that may some time be,
Or haply you'd miss the comfort you've known
In bringing your worries to me.
Oh, I am not strong, and I am not brave,
As all of my life has shown;
So I sometimes sigh o'er an unmade grave,
When one of us walks alone.

The day must come, my dear, my dear,
When one shall the shadow seek,
While the other shall wander lonely here
In grief that he cannot speak.
Then give me your hand, sweetheart, sweetheart,
In fealty we have known,
And give me your love till at last we part—
And one of us walks alone.

—San Francisco Call.

Gabriel Rossetti, poet and painter, was once visited by an East Indian prince, who said to him:

"I wish to give you a commission to paint a portrait of my father."

"Is your father in London?" asked Rossetti.

"No; my father is dead," replied the Oriental.

"Have you some photographs of him or any portrait?"

"We have no portraits of him of any kind."

"How can I paint a portrait of him, then?" asked the artist. "It is impossible. I could not think of attempting anything so absurd."

"Why is it absurd?" demanded the Prince gravely. "You paint pictures of Mary Magdalene and Christ and John the Baptist, and yet you have never seen any of them. Why can you not paint my father?"

Oh, the lover may

Distrust that look which steals his soul away;
The babe may cease to think that it can play
With heaven's rainbow; alchemists may doubt
The shining gold their crucible gives out;
But Faith, fanatic Faith, once wedded fast
To some dear falsehood, hugs it to the last.

—Thomas Moore ("Lalla Rookh")

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.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (North Camberwell Hall, New Church-road): 7.30, Conversazione for Members and Friends.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Workman's Hall, 27 Romford-road, Stratford): 7.30, J. T. Lloyd, "Secularism at the Bar of Reason."

COUNTRY.

EDINBURGH BRANCH N. S. S. (Masonic Hall, 11 Melbourne-place): 6.30, Paul, "Gospel Limericks."

FALLSWORTH SECULAR SUNDAY SCHOOL (Pole-lane): 6.30, Half-yearly Meeting.

GLASGOW BRANCH N. S. S. (Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): G. W. Foote, 12 noon, "Pulling Down the Old Flag: A Review of the Rev. R. J. Campbell's New Theology"; 6.30, "Do the Dead Live?"

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road): 6.30, Percy Redfern, "After Freethought: The Next Step."

NEWCASTLE RATIONALIST DEBATING SOCIETY (Lockhart's Cathedral Café): Thursday, Feb. 7, at 8, F. Winter, "Some Wonders of the Unseen World." With lantern illustrations.

PLYMOUTH RATIONALIST SOCIETY (Foresters' Hall, Octagon): 7, F. Daniel, "Other Worlds Than Ours." With lantern illustrations.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Captain Duncan's Navigation Schools, Market-place): 7.30, Lecture arrangements.

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