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Prejudice, vanity, interest: that is what governs the world. Whoever rules his conduct by reason, truth, and good feeling, has nothing in common with society. It is in himself that he must seek and find all his happiness.
—CHAMFORT.

Mr. Bryan's Boastings.—II.

CHINA is the least military nation in the world. Jesus Christ taught the impossible doctrine of "love your enemies," and the Christian nations are past-masters in the art of war. Confucius taught the possible doctrine of loving one's friends and giving justice to one's enemies, and China looks down upon fighting as a barbarous pastime. It was natural, therefore, that the supposed Chinaman, to whose letters Mr. Bryan is replying, should touch upon the saddest aspect of Christian civilisation. "Left to ourselves," he said, "we should never have sought intercourse with the West. We have no motive to do so, for we desire neither to proselytise nor to trade." Now these are shocking heresies to the average American mind. No missionaries and no commercial travellers! Fancy! What would the world be without them? More peaceable, the Chinaman thinks. Not so Mr. Bryan. He declares that trade is a splendid agency for promoting international goodwill—just as if there were no such things as custom-house frontiers, hostile tariffs, and lusts of exclusive dealing. "The competition for markets," the Chinaman said, "bids fair to be a more fruitful cause of war than was ever in the past the ambition of kings or the bigotry of priests." Mr. Bryan challenges this, but he only answers prophecy with prophecy. Like so many others who go no deeper than the surface of things, he looks with hopeful eye on the great Temple of Peace which Saint Andrew Carnegie is building—not at Pittsburg. "The Hague Peace Congress," Mr. Bryan says, "was suggested by Russia and was quickly endorsed by the United States, England and Japan." Alas, the American prophet of peace—*Christian* peace—has to admit that "all these nations have since been engaged in wars of considerable magnitude"—which is a very mild way of putting it. "Yet," says the indomitable prophet, "the Hague Tribunal grows in importance and the peace movement spreads." Yea, verily; but you want the prophet's eye to see it. For our own part, we look upon this peace movement initiated by the pious Czar as one of the greatest frauds of the age. We likened the first Peace Congress to a conference of burglars, considering how to diminish the costs and risks of their profession. Nobody proposed to leave off burglary. How to carry it on more cheaply and safely was all the cry. The Czar simply wanted to gain time for his Eastern Asian policy. When he found he was peremptorily crossed by the challenge of Japan, he never thought of peace and arbitration, for he expected to win in the struggle. No sooner was a peace patched up, and his army liberated from Manchuria to shoot down his own subjects at home, than this unspeakable creature sent out fresh circulars for a new Peace Congress at the Hague. And the other Christian Powers bowed solemnly, and began making preparations for another political pantomime.

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What particular good the East has derived from its intercourse with the West is not indicated by Mr. Bryan. We will indicate it ourselves. The East has learnt science from the West. It is that science which accounts for the rise of Japan, and will account for the reawakening of China. But science is not a Christian gift to the world. Christianity established itself by destroying nearly all the science there was in the world, and it has fought modern science tooth and nail at every step of its progress.

Mr. Bryan denounces the Chinaman for saying that his countrymen do not conceive themselves to "have a mission to redeem or civilise the world." That is their great defect in the American's opinion. It is so grand to have a mission in the world; especially, to all appearance, when it takes the form of meddling with the affairs of other people. "Our missionaries" represent a policy that Mr. Bryan is proud of; and he laments when they are molested by "brutal and fanatical followers of Confucius." He does not ask himself what would happen if Chinese missionaries went about in America telling the people that Christianity was all lies and offering them Confucianism or Buddhism as the only true and perfect system. Nor does he stop to consider what wickedness has been committed in China by the Christian brethren of "our missionaries." He ought to know, and if he does not he should learn, what atrocities were perpetrated by the so-called punitive expedition which the Christian Powers sent to Peking after the last Boxer rising and the farcical siege of the Legations; how men were murdered, women outraged, and the whole district desolated; with what vandalism the Christian soldiers acted during the time they were in Peking, and how much worse it would have been but for the restraining influence of the Japanese.

The American Christian gets quite angry with the Chinaman for referring to the Prophet of Nazareth as "a mild, Oriental enthusiast, unlettered, untravelled, inexperienced," whose principles of religion "are remarkable not more for their tender and touching appeal to brotherly love than for their aversion or indifference to all other elements of human excellence." Mr. Bryan answers this with a lot of gushing praise of that same Oriental enthusiast. We will pass by all that, however, and take him at the point where he tries to be critical. He ventures to contrast the teaching of Jesus with the teaching of Confucius, and he seizes upon a ridiculous illustration which has done duty in Christian Evidence circles for half a century. This is what he says:—

"Tszo-Kung asked, 'Is there not one word which may serve as a rule of practice for all one's life?' Confucius replied: 'Is not reciprocity such a word? What you do not want done to yourself, do not to others.' Christ taught, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.' These two precepts have sometimes been confused, and Confucius has even been credited with forestalling the Golden Rule. But there is a world of difference between the two doctrines. 'Do not' states the negative side and is good as far as it goes. The man who obeys Confucius will do no harm, and that is something; the harmless man stands upon a higher plane than the man who injures others. But 'Do' is the positive form of the rule, and the man who does good is vastly superior to the merely harmless man."

It is on the strength of such reasoning as this that Mr. Bryan feels justified in politely asking the Chinaman: "Can you be so blind as not to recognise the infinite superiority of the Christian creed?"

What could be more foolish and fantastic than this distinction between positive and negative precepts? A mere point of grammatical construction is transformed into a substantial argument. Mr. Bryan is not by any means a great man, but he is quite capable of seeing—if he will only give his mind to it—that whether a precept be couched in positive or negative language is simply a matter of convenience. Being to all appearance an orthodox Christian, Mr. Bryan accepts the Ten Commandments as a moral revelation. Now every one of them is expressed negatively. There are ten "thou shalt not's." And if we were to say that their negative form was an infinite and irreparable defect, Mr. Bryan might reply to us as we are replying to him. "Thou shalt do no murder" is negative; "Thou shalt respect thy neighbor's life" is positive; but they mean precisely the same thing. In the same way, "Be kind" and "Do not be unkind" are of identical significance. "Thou shalt help thy neighbor in distress" means the same thing as "Thou shalt not withhold help from thy neighbor in his distress." Sometimes the positive form may be preferable, and sometimes the negative. It all depends upon the special circumstances of the case. If a friend, for instance, were in grave danger, one might be told to stand by him; but it would probably be a stronger expression to say "You must not desert him"—for that definitely points to the back door through which one might be tempted to retreat from one's duty.

Mr. Bryan's second contrast between Christ and Confucius is even more unfortunate. Confucius taught that we should love our friends and treat our enemies with justice. Christ taught, "Love your enemies." "How this philosophy," the American politician exclaims, "transcends the codes and creeds of earth's sages!" Yes, as the clouds transcend the earth. The teaching of Confucius is practicable; the teaching of Christ is utterly impossible. If any proof be needed, look at the Christians. Their past and their present, their history and their practice, show that this teaching is impossible, and that *being* impossible it is injurious. Those who aim at the stars hit nothing, except by accident. If the Christian would stop lauding the text "Love your enemies" and practise the text "Recompense injury with justice" he would be a better man. As it is he pursues his enemies all over the planet, and gets even with them wherever he can; so that to "get your own back" is a distinctively British and American saying—and Great Britain and America reckon themselves the most Christian nations in the world.

We have only room for one other point. Mr. Bryan tells the Chinaman—as though *he* could be interested in such things—that Isaiah foretold the coming of Christ and styled him the Prince of Peace. Of course Isaiah foretold nothing of the kind. But let that pass. We have other game to fly at. Mr. Bryan proceeds to say that this Prince of Peace gave a certain commandment which "furnishes the only basis upon which lasting peace can be built"—although this wonderful personage's followers have been nearly two thousand years without building it. And what was this commandment? "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Christ gave *that* commandment, says Mr. Bryan; we tell him that Christ did *not* give it. He merely repeated it. He found it in the old Scriptures of his own nation. It had existed there, according to Christian chronology, for hundreds of years. Mr. Bryan will find it, word for word, in Leviticus xix. 18. So much for the "commandment given by this Prince of Peace." And we may add that the Christ of the Gospels was original in nothing; which is another proof that the whole story of his life, doings, and sayings is a mythological and legendary piece of patchwork, composed of materials selected from every point of the compass.

G. W. FOOTE.

Bruno.—I.

Giordano Bruno. By J. Lewis McIntyre. (Macmillan & Co.)

THE history of humanity, it has been said, might be written in the lives of great men. There is considerable truth in the statement, looked at from the proper point of view. Most students of history have nowadays freed themselves from the phase of thought that accepts the great man as a semi-miraculous creation, forcing his will on society as the Deity is supposed to have impressed his on society. All men, great and small, are the natural products of their age, and a great man is but little more than the conscious mouthpiece of forces that many imagine he has called into being. Provided this consideration is borne in mind, there is everything to be said in favor of using a personality to illustrate a period, and so present people with a concrete picture of forces too abstract to be easily grasped otherwise.

For this reason, as well as for others, one welcomes Mr. McIntyre's book on Giordano Bruno, which helps to fill a saddening deficiency in English literature. It says little, indeed, for English literature that Mr. McIntyre's work represents just one-half of the number of volumes devoted to Bruno in this country. There are, of course, a number of essays and notices; but only Mr. Frith and Mr. McIntyre have devoted a special work to one of the most daring and original thinkers of the sixteenth century. A translation of one of Bruno's works, under the title of *The Heroic Enthusiasts*, with a translation of another small essay by Toland, also exhausts the list of his writings obtainable in English. We are a practical people, and, being so, pay comparatively small attention to the greatest force in the world—the force of new ideas powerfully expressed. For this reason alone, Mr. McIntyre's work would be deserving of welcome, and is the more so since, despite a certain coldness of feeling in working out the personal side of his subject, he has given readers the fullest and clearest account of Bruno's philosophy that exists in this country.

One can only properly appreciate a man by knowing the period in which he lived. Only then do we realise his relation to the past and his influence on the future. In the middle of the sixteenth century Europe was, intellectually, at the parting of the ways. The new astronomy had only just been propounded, and the new philosophy was unborn. The earth was believed to be a plane surface, either square or oval or triangular, people were not sure which; islands were believed to exist where no one could die, or peopled with inhabitants with one eye or one leg, or wearing their heads between their shoulders. The air was full of evil spirits or beneficent angels. Disease was due to evil spirits, and the proper methods of cure were prayers, charms, or saintly relics. Earth and heaven were thronged with mythical monsters born of ignorant imagination and kept alive by boundless credulity. Chemistry had not yet separated itself from alchemy, nor astronomy from astrology. The Christian Church, in spite of Protestant outbreaks, yet retained an unbroken intellectual front. It was still able to use its dreadful engine of excommunication and to punish heresy with death. It was an age when every thinker carried his life in his hands, and the fictitious martyrdom of Jesus was reflected in the real martyrdom of men like Vanini, Campanella, Galileo and Bruno. Neither from ruler nor people could the investigator look for support. The interest of one, and the ignorance of the other, combined to bring about unity of action in intolerance at least. However much Calvinist, Romanist and Lutheran might differ on other points, they all displayed a quite unusual unanimity when it came to action against the heretic or the unbeliever.

Into this environment Bruno was born in 1548—five years after the death of Copernicus, who bequeathed to the world a new astronomical theory, which became in Bruno's hands the starting point of much of his philosophy. Among his contemporaries were Montaigne and Charron in France, and

Galileo in Italy. Other great names in England we shall meet, in his company, later. His birthplace was Nola, one of the oldest towns in Italy, and one that was strongly reminiscent of Greek philosophy and culture. There is little to tell of his early years; his education was evidently not neglected, for at the age of eleven he was sent from Nola to Naples to receive the higher education of his day. Three or four years later he entered the Dominican Order, changing his baptismal name of Filippo for that of Giordano. Much ingenuity, as Mr. McIntyre remarks, has been spent in trying to account for Bruno taking this step. The motives, however, lie upon the surface. The Church, the army, and perhaps the law, were the chief professions open. The pedantism of mediæval law would have been wholly unsuitable; and although fearless enough in character, the career of a soldier was equally so. So also would have been the Church under other conditions. But with Naples under the dominion of Spain, and the kingdom troubled with plague, brigandage and famine, to say nothing of the threatening danger of a Turkish invasion, one of the great religious orders held out the only prospect of leisured study. And if a religious order was attractive for this reason, the Dominicans, a strong order under any conditions, but specially strong then as being the chosen order of Spain, was most attractive of all. There is, however, something piquant in Bruno, the arch-heretic, joining an order that was specially selected by the Church as an instrument for the suppression of heresy.

That Bruno was ever seriously attracted to the teachings of the Church is highly improbable. Submission to authority, the first duty of the monk, was the last thing likely to appeal to his nature. One simply cannot picture him as a docile priest. Nor were the proofs of his unsuitability for the monastic profession long in accumulating. During the thirteen years he remained with the Dominicans there were no less than two distinct processes brought against him. The first was brought against him while he was yet in his noviciate, and seems to have been of little importance. The second was a more serious matter, since it opened Bruno to the charge of being a lapsed heretic. The charges were chiefly concerned with the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception, the Trinity and Transubstantiation. Bruno never knew the details of this charge; but having been warned of what to expect, left Naples for Rome. The Dominicans, unwilling to lose a victim, threatened him here with a third process of 180 articles, with the result that Bruno dropped for ever the monastic habit, escaped from Rome, and commenced his sixteen years of wandering, teaching and publishing, that only ended with his martyrdom in the first year of the seventeenth century.

From Rome, Bruno went to Genoa, staying there a few months, earning a living by teaching grammar, astronomy and cosmography. Thence to Venice, staying only six weeks, but managing to get a little treatise on *The Signs of the Times* printed in the meantime. From Venice, with one or two brief halts by the way, he went to Geneva, where, if he anticipated greater liberty, he was doomed to disappointment. For a time he earned a scant livelihood correcting the press, then bigotry began its work. One may guess something of Bruno's feelings when he was given to understand, in various ways, that residence in Geneva would be impossible unless he formally professed the faith of Calvin. He did not sign the Calvinistic Confession of Faith, and in addition, fell foul of one of the Professors of the Academy. His offence had a dual aspect. He not only was suspected as a Christian, but he fell foul of Aristotle. Geneva, he said, was as fully convinced of the all-wisdom of Aristotle as Rome. In the end, Bruno left Geneva, pausing awhile at Lyons, where "he could not make enough to keep him alive," to make a stay of some two years and a half at Toulouse. Here he was elected to a chair in the University, but finally his doctrines and disputes sent him once more on his way, this time to Paris. His journey across France

could only have strengthened him in his heretical opinions. It was an age of religious warfare. France was "one long bleeding wound," and, in Paris itself, crowds paraded the streets, crying, "The Mass or Death!" Nevertheless, Bruno declined a lectureship offered him in Paris because it involved attendance at Mass. He began to teach privately; but neither his abilities nor temperament would permit his being buried amid the crowd. He found favor with the King, Henry III., and was granted a lectureship extraordinary, which dispensed with attendance at Mass. In the end, however, partly in consequence of "tumults," partly, perhaps, because of the attraction of England, he left Paris, reaching London in 1583, and bringing with him letters of introduction to some of the foremost people of the time.

What the exact effect of this seven years of wandering had been is difficult to estimate exactly, but it must have been considerable. For wherever he went, Bruno wrote, discussed, and more remarkable still, published. There was enough that was startling in his teachings to arrest attention, but teaching less innovating, put forth with Bruno's sincerity and skill, combined with a striking personality such as his, would have commanded notice. And whatever the consequences—and more than once in that seven years Bruno was in imminent danger of imprisonment or death—the attack on authority went on. Few men have worked under more discouraging conditions than Bruno worked: none with more courage or persistency. His own conception of his mission was, "The Nolan has set free the human mind and its knowledge that was shut up within the narrow pent house of the atmosphere, whence it could only with difficulty, as through chinks, see the far-distant stars..... But he, in the eye of sense and reason, with the key of unwearied enquiry, has opened those prison doors of the truth which man might open, laid bare nature that was covered over and veiled from sight, given eyes to the moles, enlightened the blind, loosened the tongue of the mute that could not, and dared not, express their inmost feelings."

And if ever the right to speak in this strain belonged to any man it belonged to him who, in sixteen years of weary wandering, never paltered with the truth nor drew back from his self-imposed task.

(To be continued.)

C. COHEN.

An Irresistible Inference.

WHEN everybody is thinking and talking about the "new theology" as championed by Mr. R. J. Campbell, it may be useful to call attention to a few of the theological graces which the public discussion of it has brought into such vigorous play. The most prominent of them all is *misrepresentation*, or *lying*. A theologian seems incapable of telling the truth about an opponent. Secularists know to their cost that their views are never correctly stated by religious people; and now the advocates of the theological liberalism of the day are experiencing the same fiery baptism. There is no such thing as *conscience* in theological controversy. The alleged heretic may be vilified with impunity. A conscientious divine is a rarity under the sun. This appears to be true of the highest as well as of the lowest members of the tribe. In literary culture and Biblical scholarship Dr. Robertson Nicoll and Mr. Henry Varley may be as far apart as the poles; but in the brutality of their attack on Mr. Campbell they stand shoulder to shoulder. Indeed, as far as mere nastiness and spitefulness are concerned, Dr. Nicoll easily takes the biscuit. He *deliberately* misrepresents his "dear brother's" views, and then holds them up to public ridicule.

Another Christian grace that shines with peculiar brightness just now is that of *infallibility*. The wide publicity which the Press has given to the City Temple teaching has proved a perfect God-send to

the preachers throughout the length and breadth of the land. Nothing brings such a crowd together as an expected assault on the new theology. Mr. Campbell has filled two-thirds of all the Churches of Great Britain the last two or three Sundays, and for doing so he has been hotly anathematised in the name of the Lord. All his opponents declare, by the word of the Lord, that his teaching undermines Christianity, and is more to be feared than Atheism itself. Even Ian Maclaren, at a public dinner given in his honor at Liverpool, could not refrain from dogmatically asserting that the Christian Church stands or falls with the doctrines of the deity of Christ and the Atonement, which he described, not as *dogmas*, but as the great underlying *facts*. The Rev. John Thomas, of Liverpool, is absolutely certain that Mr. Campbell is an apostate, and this is his *ex cathedra* judgment:—

"This matter is far too grave for neutrality, or to be airily dismissed as a newspaper sensation. Those who treat it as an ordinary difference of theological opinion do not understand the issue. If Jesus spoke truth, the issue is one between life and death, Divine truth and human falsehood, Christ and Anti-Christ. At every step the teaching of Jesus Christ and his inspired apostles is flatly contradicted, and philosophical conjecture is substituted as the guide of men for time and eternity..... Yet he (Paul) is worth considering, and he claimed to have direct revelations from his risen Lord. Paul wrote, 'Though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema.' If Paul got that as a message from his Lord, it is a very terrible sentence."

Mr. Thomas *knows* that he and his orthodox friends are right; and this is the charitable conclusion to which his infallibility brings him: "For those who are loyal to the glory of Christ, his (Paul's) word of command is plain, 'Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them which are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling contrary to the doctrine which ye learned; and *turn away from them.*'" This clearly shows that if the orthodox Church possessed the power it once did, the promulgators of the new theology would speedily be burned at the stake, as so many of their forerunners actually were.

A third Christian grace glorified at present is *brotherly love*. All Christian ministers are in the service of the same Master; and their one aim is to make their hearers Christians. Without faith in Christ, they all tell us, salvation is impossible. And yet they are still quarrelling among themselves about the personality and work of the Savior. They are all agreed that he is the Savior; but as to who and what he is in himself, and as to the nature of the salvation he accomplishes, their divergences are endless. These differences prove that, in reality, nobody knows who and what Christ is, or what sin and salvation signify. They all employ the word *atonement*, but scarcely any two of them are agreed as to its meaning. Even those who pride themselves upon their orthodoxy are not of one mind. Professor Harnack reminds us that, according to Dr. Van Dyke, a distinguished American divine of the Presbyterian persuasion, a hundred Christians may have a hundred theories of the Atonement. And yet, in spite of these undoubted facts, every preacher assures his hearers that all who differ from him are in error, that his theory of the Atonement is the only true one, and that full salvation is only possible to those who accept his doctrine. Mr. Campbell is condemned as an arch heretic because he believes that love in God is the same in its nature as love in man, and that every man is a potential Christ. Because he has the audacity to differ from Dr. Robertson Nicoll, as well as from the late Dr. Parker, he is said to have no right to remain in the City Temple pulpit. "Dr. Parker's heart," we are told, "would have been broken if he had known that from his pulpit such sentiments could be delivered." Who was Dr. Parker? Judged by the Westminster Confession, he was as great a heretic as Mr. Campbell is. Has Dr. Nicoll forgotten that Thomas Goodwin, a member of the Westminster Assembly, was once minister of the City Temple

Church, and that the heart of the grand old Puritan would have been broken had he known that such a man as Dr. Parker would have been allowed to occupy his pulpit? Indeed, after an American divine had delivered an exceptionally orthodox sermon from the City Temple pulpit, Dr. Parker is said to have observed that the building required to be thoroughly fumigated. Behold, therefore, how fervently Christ's servants love one another! Readers of such religious journals as *Streams of Gladness*, the *Vanguard*, the *Christian*, and the *British Weekly*, need not be told that preachers are great experts in the art of reviling one another.

Now there are those who endeavor to belittle the present theological controversy by calling it "a storm in a tea cup." That may be a true description, much truer than its author, Canon Hensley Henson, imagined. Take these four ministers of the Gospel of Christ, Dr. Nicoll, Principal Forsyth, Canon Henson and Mr. Campbell, and you will find that no two of them are agreed as to what the way of salvation really is; and yet each of them preaches as if he alone accurately interprets the mind of the Master. Mr. Campbell, for example, referring to his critics and opponents, says: "With all solemnity and deliberation, I say these men are liars, like their predecessors in the days of old." That may be true enough; but what guarantee have we that Mr. Campbell is not likewise a liar? He charges the popular Christianity with being utterly false; but what proof can he adduce that the Christianity he proclaims is not equally false? He contends that God and man are identical in being; but as he knows only the latter, by what authority does he speak for the former? He has no doubt whatever but that orthodox people deplorably misrepresent God and Christ and the scheme of salvation; but what evidence can he produce that he himself is not open to the same charge? Does it never occur to him that, as a matter of fact, he is quite as ignorant of God and eternity as his friend, Mr. Bernard Shaw, admits himself to be? He is everlastingly urging his hearers to live the life of God; but is the life of God anything but Mr. Campbell's own conception of what the life of man ought to be? He is a firm believer in the saving, transforming efficacy of love; is not that the reason why he calls God love? Henry Ward Beecher used to say that every man paints his own picture of God; but the great preacher was wrong. Many people have neither God nor his picture, while most believers are quite satisfied with borrowed pictures of him. But the pictures of the Divine Being in existence are so numerous and so unlike one another that one is perfectly justified in pronouncing them all purely imaginary. No one has ever seen the original; no one can tell whether there is an original or not. It is Mr. Campbell's opinion that there is; but then "Mr. Campbell's opinion is simply Mr. Campbell's opinion, and not necessarily infallible."

It is claimed that the new theology is going to win the world to Christ. That is not an over-bold prophecy. Human gullibility is altogether unfathomable. Magnetic personalities never lack disciples. But it would be also safe to predict that the new theology is sure to win not a few people to Secularism. Dr. Robertson Nicoll declares that Mr. Campbell's "printed sermons have made no impression on the public"; but the noted journalist is in error. These printed sermons have made a deep and lasting impression on many. One correspondent says of them: "They helped to turn me from the Christian religion." Another admits that the perusal of them has made him a confirmed Secularist. Of course, such testimonies prove nothing either for or against the new theology, because there are those upon whom orthodox discourses have had the same effect. The merit of the new theology is that it has already compelled many people to think who never thought before; and honest thinking generally lands the thinker in unbelief.

J. T. LLOYD.

An Objectionable Service.

SOME apology may be offered, at least, to women for exposing a positively offensive ceremony like the "Form of Marriage," as prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer. And while truly anxious not to offend a modest mind, it must be pointed out that only by analysis and exposure of the obnoxious is it possible to secure a conviction of its impropriety.

Unmarried persons who deem the reference to such sentences offensive to delicacy will certainly refuse to be so addressed at any altar, while those clergymen protesting against these quotations as conducive to immodesty, must remember never to use like expressions again.

The priest does say most objectionable things to a bride when performing *his* part at the marriage. And these rude remarks cannot be omitted except at the risk of imperfectly uniting the young couple in "holy" wedlock. For instance, he tells those about to be wed, and those attending the ceremony, that the married state is not to satisfy carnal appetites, but that it is a remedy against unlawful sexual intercourse; and such who have not the gift of self-restraint *might* marry.

Admonitions like these insinuate that even the most chaste, intelligent and refined men and women may be marrying "*wantonly*" to satisfy themselves "like brute beasts"! Here is also an intimation that young persons are about to be joined together by God, to *avoid* fornication, which might otherwise be committed by them.

The warning and expository clauses evidently convey these expressions, or the language is meaningless.

Then the blushing bride is made to vow that "*she will forsake all other men and keep only to her husband.*" This not only assumes improper relations with other men, or else she could not *forsake* them, but it also expresses suspicion of her future virtue and fidelity. If not, why compel her to publicly promise faithfulness *always* to her husband?

The parson—probably a tender bachelor, fresh in orders—is allowed to omit the prayer for "fruitful procreation of children" when "the woman is past child-bearing."

But how shall the reverend young clerk decide this delicate physiological question, whether the bride is unfit to become a mother or not? Should he omit the prayer, the lady may be insulted, and to petition for "fruitful procreation" for a venerable dame would be laughable and absurd in the highest degree.

No huge effort, surely, is required to convince self-respecting persons of the distastefulness of the episcopal marriage service, an "accustomed duty" for which must be paid—in cash.

At one time, all were obliged to be married by this "most disgusting" method, or not at all. But this necessity, happily, no longer exists. Many men and women have availed themselves of the new law, and more men and more women will do likewise, when they reflect.

W. THORN.

Some Reflections on a Vital Question.

THEODORE JORAN, in his latest work, *Autour du Feminisme*, makes a fierce onslaught on the party of advanced thinkers who are fighting the battle of women's suffrage in France. As is usually the case with writers who deal with social movements from a theological point of view, M. Joran allows himself to drift into what, from a more reasonable standpoint, must appear inaccuracies. For instance, he writes:—

"Another conclusion to which I have come in connection with this movement, and one which I do not mention lightly, but in all seriousness, is that the affinity between Feminism and anti-clericalism, is exceedingly close. Whether one likes the idea or not, there is no doubt that Feminism directs its most violent attacks

against the fortress—both Apostolic and Catholic—of marriage. It is in the name of 'Free Thought' that the evil geniuses of the party demand the emancipation of woman—Free Thought to them being the equivalent of 'Free Love.' It is very seldom that one hears of a woman who is legitimately married, and who leads a reputable life, complain of that part of the Civil Code which relates to marriage. The majority of those who deafen our ears with their yells are either those who hope that the change would legalise certain private relationships, divorced women, or disappointed spinsters. I know, too, of a man who is ardently wishing for the success of the 'Reform' movement in order to force the world to accept the 'faux ménage' he has set up with his mistress. In theological sequence, Feminism is nothing more nor less than the glorification of instinct."

The writer here falls into a common error among theologians in supposing that marriage is inextricably bound up with the Church; that the Church is the inventor and sole patentee of marriage, and that all infringements of her "rights" are fraudulent and worthless imitations. Now in a theological vista there is considerable excuse for this absurd error, and the false constructions placed upon woman's emancipation, and what, for want of a better name, is called "Free Love." A species of mock modesty causes Freethinkers, generally, to refrain from dealing exhaustively with the marriage phase of social life, and when one or other does treat of the matter, however superficially—witness Mr. H. G. Wells—he is immediately dubbed "a pestilent propagandist of promiscuity," or a "humorist." The remedy therefore lies in our expressing our convictions thoroughly, and with the earnestness which that demands. It is not surprising that Christians should not see eye to eye with us regarding the inevitable changes which the existing marriage laws would have to undergo in an ideal social state. This difference of view is due fundamentally to the erroneous belief that marriage is a product of the Church, and cannot very well exist without it. It is undoubtedly the case that most Churches have, from their very conception, recognised the importance of the institution; but the empty ceremonies which they fathered upon it added nothing material—or immaterial, for that matter—to its greatness. Marriage remained with the Church exactly what it was without it—the culmination of a natural desire. Polygamy, polyandry and monogamy, have been tried by both man and the Church, and in each case monogamy has triumphed. Polygamous peoples, Church or no Church, have had to go down in what Herbert Spencer calls the "struggle for existence"; whereas the monogamous have survived, and if it be in their favor, at present dominate the world. There is no reason, then, why monogamy should fail to hold its own in the future ideal social state. We cannot kick against the fruits of history with impunity. We must bow to the inevitable, or go under. We, at least, prefer the former; and the Christian who supposes otherwise is a pitiable creature indeed. We are confident, at any rate, that the prostitution of "Mutual Selection" in Utopia would appear as moonshine to the glaring practical polygamy at present sanctioned by the Protestant Churches in the United States of America.

J. H.

Heretical Opinions of Six Historic Americans.

"SIR, Washington Was a Deist," was the answer of Dr. Abercrombie to a question by Dr. Wilson. Washington and his wife used to attend Dr. Abercrombie's church, but on an evil occasion the doctor undertook to reprove those dignified by age and position who "turned their backs upon the celebration of the Lord's Supper." Washington had been in the habit, on communion Sundays, of leaving the church with the bulk of the congregation, his wife staying to "commune" with the saints. Washington is said to have admitted to a friend the justness of the reproof, and said he would not give cause for a repetition of it. He kept his word. Says Rev. E. D. Neill, in the *Episcopal Recorder*, "After that he never came to church with his wife on Communion Sunday."

ALL RELIGIONS ALIKE.

I have recently been examining all the known superstitions of the world, and do not find in our particular superstition (Christianity) one redeeming feature. They are all alike founded upon fables and mythologies.—*Thomas Jefferson, in letter to Dr. Woods.*

RELIGIOUS TESTS.

I think they (religious tests) were invented not so much to secure religion as the emoluments of it. When a religion is good, I conceive that it will support itself; and when it does not support itself, and God does not take care to support it, so that its professors are obliged to call for help of the civil power, 'tis a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one.—*Benjamin Franklin, "Works" viii. 506.*

THOMAS PAINE'S CREED.

I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life.....I trouble not myself about the manner of future existence. I content myself with believing, even to positive conviction, that the power that gave me existence is able to continue it in any form and manner he pleases, either with or without this body.....I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish Church, by the Roman Church, by the Greek Church, by the Turkish Church, by the Protestant Church, nor by any church that I know of. My mind is my own church.....To do good is my religion.—*Thomas Paine, in "Age of Reason."*

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S RELIGION.

No man had a stronger or firmer faith in Providence—God—than Mr. Lincoln, but the continued use by him late in life of the word "god" must not be interpreted to mean that he believed in a personal god. In 1854 he asked me to erase the word "god" from a speech which I had written and read to him for criticism, because my language indicated a personal god, whereas he insisted that no such personality ever existed.—*Hon. W. H. Herrdon, in "Life of Lincoln."*

It was one of the peculiarities of Mr. Lincoln to hide these religious (Christian) experiences from the world.....Who had never in their whole lives heard from his lips one word of all these religious convictions and experiences.....They (his friends) did not regard him as a religious man.....All this department of his life he had kept carefully hidden from them.....There was much of his conduct that was simply a cover to these thoughts—an effort to conceal them.—*Rev. Dr. Holland, in "Life of Lincoln."*

GENERAL GRANT.

Grant was not a believer in Christianity as a revealed religion, and none of his language applying to the point goes further than to mean that he accepted the moral teachings of Christ and the Bible as beneficial to mankind.—*Colonel Ingersoll.*

It is not on record that he (Grant) spoke at any time of the Savior, or expressed his sense of dependence on his atonement and mediation.—*Christian Statesman.*

Dr. Newman asked him what the supreme thought of his mind was when death seemed so near. To this interrogatory came the prompt answer: "The comfort of the consciousness that I have tried to live a good and honorable life."—*John E. Remsburg, in "Six Historic Americans."*

Acid Drops.

Dr. Clifford did well to stand up for his friend, the Rev. R. J. Campbell, in that Thursday sermon of his at the City Temple. But, after all, there is no serious danger to either of them. They do not risk death, they do not risk imprisonment, they do not risk the loss of a penny. Still, there is something in orthodox clamor, and we repeat that Dr. Clifford did well in standing by his friend.

In the course of that Thursday sermon Dr. Clifford said that "no man ever made a mistake in doing as Jesus said." Well, to put it politely, he is mistaken. Some of the Peculiar People have made a mistake in following Jesus, and done time for it. And we never heard of Dr. Clifford's saying a single word on their behalf. It appears to us that nobody, outside a prison or a workhouse, attempts to "do as Jesus said." We cannot see that Dr. Clifford does. And he hasn't much time left to make a beginning.

Rev. J. Cockin, of the United Methodist Free Church chapel, Truro, seems a refreshingly plain-spoken gentleman. A local paper prints "plain words" from a recent sermon of his on "Campbell of the City Temple." The preacher put in a good word for Mr. Campbell, and declared that people were getting tired of many things nowadays, many of them preferring an Almighty Father to an Almighty Conjuror—

which is not a bad description of the orthodox God. Mr. Cockin went on to say that what the world wanted was better morality and higher character; and he exclaimed that he would rather go to hell with an unbeliever like John Stuart Mill than to heaven with "some of your religious bigots." Then the preacher put his tongue to work on Truro, and this is what he said:—

"Now to Truro. I have many revelations to make when the time comes. Two dead Aldermen, two dead Mayors of this city, both of them close friends of mine, one belonging to the Anglican Church and the other to a Nonconformist Church—and the one that belonged to the Anglican Church came to me and said when we were going down to Falmouth: "I saw your local preacher playing cards for money and I saw the money pass. Do you think that is right?" No, it is of the Devil. But he could be Mayor of the City of Truro, and Alderman of the City of Truro. And then the other side. Mr. So-and-So was drunk last night; I saw him drunk. When I discussed these matters with the canon, learned and true, he said: 'Mr. Cockin, it is simply heart-breaking. Your local preachers in Truro drink on Saturday and proclaim the glorious Gospel of Gethsemane and Calvary on Sunday. You have had Mayors so drunk that they could not find their own way in their houses. I have been there, and I have seen it with my own eyes.' It is not a question of speculation this, but it is a question of reality. I prefer to go to hell with the speculative thinker whose soul is pure, and whose life is true, than go to heaven with the hypocrite who takes the Sacrament, gambles and swears on the same day. I part company with this practical infidelity and this orthodoxy."

If this sort of thing goes on we shall have only one religion in England presently—the religion of all good men; the one that Thomas Paine foreshadowed when he said: "To do good is my religion."

America has broad-minded men, of course, even in the field of theology, but her narrow-minded ones are narrow-minded, and some of the orthodox preachers she sends over here are good old staggerers. Moody's orthodoxy was like a moist blue gorgonzola; Torrey's was like an old piece of that German cheese which is warranted to secure the man who carries it a whole railway compartment to himself every time he travels. Pretty nearly as much may be said of the orthodoxy of the American preacher who was not far from succeeding Spurgeon at the famous Tabernacle. Dr. Arthur T. Pierson is now visiting England again, and he lectured the other night at Exeter Hall on "The Bible and Spiritual Life." He argued that the Bible could not possibly be a human book: the fulfilment of prophecy proved that. Ah, but when were the fulfilled prophecies written? Ay, there's the rub. Those that were fulfilled were written *after*, instead of *before*, the event; and those that were not fulfilled prove that the prophets had a false tip and were not inspired. Prophecy, indeed, is a played out subject for all except the silly, ignorant crowds that gape at old Prophet Baxter's wonderful bills. Educated, thinking people take no stock in it. They feel it is one of those subjects which (to use Bishop Smith's words) either find a man cracked or leave him so.

At the close of his lecture Dr. Pierson had a go at the "New Theology." He said it was an appalling fact that the occupants of Evangelical pulpits were undermining the faith they ought to underpin. This went home to an Exeter Hall audience, and there were loud cries of "Shame!" If they pulled the Bible to pieces they could not put it together again. It was a solemn thing to live in these times, when even India sent over a protest against the Higher Criticism. He wished there could be a great Conference held in Exeter Hall, and that it might "show with unanimous voice to an unbelieving world that tens of thousands of believers still held to the inspiration of the Bible, the miraculous Birth and miraculous Resurrection of Christ, and the all-sufficiency of his atoning blood." This was greeted with loud applause. Of course it was. But what was the use of it? A demonstration to prove that lots of people believe such nonsense is quite unnecessary. We all know that they believe it. But lots of other people don't believe it, and the proposed Exeter Hall demonstration will not alter their opinions. What is wanted is evidence and argument; and Dr. Pierson seems to be devoid of the one and incapable of the other.

A meeting for prayer was held in connection with Dr. Pierson's discourse at Exeter Hall. One of the smaller rooms was large enough to hold those who saw any use in praying against the "New Theology." There's some consolation in that.

Mr. Henry Nevison, special correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle*, contributed a striking article to Monday's issue of that journal. Referring to the devastation deliberately wrought by Russia in Georgia of late, Mr. Nevison said:—

"Here, under Holy Russia, as in Macedonia, under the Turks, women have been violated, men murdered, wealth

plundered, villages destroyed, and the whole population left to starve. And all this has been done with the direct authority and approval not only of the officers, but of the Central Government at St. Petersburg. I have myself seen the bloodthirsty orders issued by General Vorontzeff Dashkoff, the Czar's Viceroy in Tiflis, and it was from the Czar and his ministers that he received them."

All that the Holy Russian scoundrels respected was the churches; but that was not humanity, it was bigotry. The churches were Christian, and the Holy Russian scoundrels were Christian too.

While this terrible report was on its way from Mr. Nevison in Russia, the Rev. Campbell Morgan was replying to the Rev. R. J. Campbell at Westminster, and mouthing a long list of social and political virtues by which real Christianity would be known. It is a pity he did not include amongst them the bloody deeds of Holy Russia under the rule of her pious Czar. Christian Evidence mongers talk about the awful crimes of Nero; but what was Nero in comparison with Nicholas II.?

An elderly man was brought before Mr. Fordham, the North London magistrate, charged with acting as a pedlar without a certificate. He refused to give his name and address; in fact, he said that when he left his family he was told he had no right to the name, and he had not used it since. Mr. Fordham told him, however, that he must be known by some name. "What name would you like to have on your tombstone, for instance?" asked the magistrate. This caused laughter in court. But the nameless man got the best of it, after all; he said that he had lived without a name and it would not matter when he was dead.

Paul says that the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church. But it doesn't look so well in practice as it does in theory. Mr. Plowden, of the Marylebone Police-court, the other day, told a poor henpecked man who had been turned out of doors by his wife that he was "a craven sort of a person," and that "every man should be master of his own house." "Yes," said the man, "I did try to be master, and I was brought down here and bound over to keep the peace for six months." So much for Mr. Plowden's advice. And what price Paul?

Chinamen, being heathen, have no virtues. Christians possess them all. Such is the theory—but what are the facts? Look at this one. During the hurricane of September 18, a Chinaman was blown off the principal landing stage in Hong Kong into the sea. Nobody was able to help him until an Englishman, named Bevan, came along and dived in and got hold of the drowning Celestial, when they were both pulled to the steps together. Being a mere heathen, the rescued man ought to have felt no gratitude; but he presented Mr. Bevan with a silver cup of beautiful design, bearing a commemorative inscription. Heaps of Christians would have done worse.

Bambaata, the Zulu chief, who was killed in the recent rebellion, was at loggerheads with his brother-in-law, Zungu, and just before his death threatened him with dire vengeance. Zungu was recently killed by lightning, and the natives believe that his death was the work of Bambaata's spirit. These Zulus are almost as superstitious as if they had been brought up on the Bible.

"United" is a common part of the name of football teams. It is not a usual part of the name of any religious combination. Christians may be this, that, or the other, but they are never "united." The jury who are trying the Thaw murder case in New York wanted to go to church on the first Sunday morning, but they couldn't agree on any particular church, and they were taken for a drive instead. They could unite in recreation but not in worship.

Some people have said that the *Daily Mail* ought to be called the *Daily* something else—a word with the same number of letters. Now the *Daily Mail* has published a sixpenny "Year Book," which we are not going to review, as it was not sent us with that object. We bought a copy and looked through it, and in doing so we paused at one of the brief biographies, which we shall reproduce in full, in order that the reader may understand what we have to say about it:—

"HAECKEL, PROF. ERNST, a. 73; a great scientist whose works on philosophy and religion are widely read in England in 6d. editions. One of the earliest champions of Darwin in Germany. Is Professor of Zoology at Jena University. His life by Bölsche has just been published. His belief is that 'Our monistic God the all-embracing essence of the world is identical with the eternal all-inspiring energy, and is one in

eternal and infinite substance with space-filling matter.... The will of God is at work in every falling drop of rain and every growing crystal, in the scent of the rose and the spirit of man."

That is the whole paragraph. Let us look at it closely.

The writer who is responsible for that paragraph is either grossly ignorant or shockingly dishonest. He does not quote, even ostensibly, from any of the sixpenny reprints of Haeckel. He quotes from Joseph McCabe's translation of a much more expensive book—the *Last Words on Evolution*, published by Owen & Co. In the course of these Berlin lectures Haeckel reaffirms his chief positions in the *Riddle of the Universe*. He repudiates belief in God and Immortality as unscientific and unphilosophical. But at the close he refers to the Pantheism of Goethe and Spinoza, and hints that his own Monism means all that they really meant, when stripped of its "religious" wrappings. He puts it very pleasantly, probably in order not to hurt people's feelings unnecessarily; but his words, for all that, are clearly an Atheistic declaration. Here they are in full—so that it may be seen how the *Daily Mail* man garbled them:—

"Our Monistic god, the all-embracing essence of the world, the Nature-God of Spinoza and Goethe, is identical with the eternal, all-inspiring energy, and is one, in eternal and infinite substance, with space-filling matter. It 'lives and moves in all things,' as the Gospel says. And as we see that the law of substance is universal, that the conservation of matter and of energy is inseparably connected, and that the ceaseless development of this substance follows the same 'eternal iron laws,' we find God in natural law itself. The will of God is at work in every falling drop of rain and every growing crystal, in the scent of the rose and the spirit of man."

The *Daily Mail* scribe begins by printing Monistic with a small m and god with a big G, whereas the book before him gave monistic with a big M and God with a small g. He also garbles the whole passage, and omits all the words that would show Haeckel's real meaning; thus changing an Atheistic into a Theistic declaration. What the Great German says is much the same that Holyoake said long ago—"The God whom we seek is the Nature which we know."

Bölsche's *Life of Haeckel* being referred to, we may advise the *Daily Mail* man to turn to its last page, where he will find that Haeckel's first motto was: "Let us march on fearlessly," and his last is: "The good, the true, and the beautiful, are the ideals, yea the gods, of our Monistic philosophy." Not much Theism in that!

Nothing equals the fatuity of your Christian exhorter. He fancies that his "I believe" is perfectly good evidence for all the rest of the world, and that the more often he repeats it the more impressive and convincing he becomes. There is the Bishop of Birmingham, for instance, the gentleman with the frightful name, which he ought to have changed as soon as he arrived at years of discretion—and with the curious shaped head, which, whatever it is, is certainly not the head of a thinker. Bishop Gore, in his Lenten pastoral, states that "the spirit of social reform must come from warm centres of Christian faith." We suppose this is intended to mean something, but the Lord only knows what. The Bishop is more intelligible when he makes the following declaration: "I am persuaded, after repeated study, with all the openness of mind that I can give to the matter, that it is those who doubt or disbelieve the bodily resurrection of Christ who do violence to the evidence." What a rigmarole! Fancy people talking and writing like that in the ordinary affairs of life! All the Bishop really means is that he still believes the bodily resurrection of Christ, and that those who disbelieve it are wrong." Stated in that way, what does it amount to? Nothing. Of course the Bishop believes. He has many reasons for doing so, which don't operate in the case of unbelievers. For instance, his social position and big salary.

A poor curate was once taken to task by his rector on account of the inadequate orthodoxy of his sermons. "Well, sir," the curate replied, "you can hardly expect me to be as orthodox as you are. You are paid to believe at the rate of twelve hundred a year, and you pay me to believe at the rate of eighty."

We congratulate M. Clemenceau in particular, and the French Government generally, on the passing of their Bill for freeing the right of public meeting from the restrictions placed upon it by the law of 1881, which was to have been imposed upon the Catholic Church under the new order of things, but which the Church positively refused to have anything to do with. The result is that the right of public meeting in France stands now precisely as it does in England. All that the authorities have to do in connection with public

meetings is what they have to do in connection with everything else that is public—see to the preservation of peace and order. It is pleasant to recollect that the new Bill was carried in the Chamber of Deputies by 550 votes to 5.

It seems pretty evident that M. Clemenceau has still work to do in checking the fanaticism of some of his own side. The question of the use of the churches is not yet settled. The Church takes one view and the Government another. But a settlement would be much easier if the Government were to drop the notion that the Church is "insolent" in having an opinion of its own.

The frightful row in a Paris church on Sunday bears out what we have said as to the Associations Culturelles part of the Separation Law, as a means whereby the Government could carry on a political attack upon the Catholic Church and try to destroy it under religious pretences. It appears that the necessary declaration was made under the Law, and the church was handed over by the authorities for the celebration of religious worship. But when the facts leaked out it became public knowledge that the services were to be conducted by two excommunicated priests; one called Villac, hailing from Chicago, the other being the Abbé Roussin, who broke with the Church some time ago. This was an act of desecration in the eyes of the Catholics, who went to the church and prevented the service from taking place. It was a shocking scene while it lasted.

Let the reader observe our point. We don't wish to interfere between the Catholic Church and excommunicated priests. As far as their quarrel is concerned it is no business of ours, and we are not interested in it. But we also say that it is no business of the State either. We deny the right of the State to help excommunicates in fighting communicates, and *vice versa*. That is our point.

Another view of ours was that a State attack upon the Catholic Church would provoke religious reaction in France. This is an aspect of the case that has not even been glimpsed by the narrow-minded Evangelicals in England. But it is obvious enough to the *Westminster Gazette* correspondent to whom we have already referred. This writer went over to France to see for himself how the case really stood, and what he has discovered is totally at variance with what the *W. G.* has been writing on the matter. His third letter from Paris concluded with a reference to the signs of a Catholic revival which he saw with his own eyes. "It seemed to me," he said, "that there were already signs of this renaissance of faith in Paris in the crowded congregations of the churches which I visited on Sunday. The proportion of men was very striking; certainly at a Mass which I attended at Notre-Dame the men were more numerous than the women. There were also soldiers in uniform present as private worshippers at all the churches, and the reverence of the people was far greater than it used to be." This is what we feared.

We don't mean to entangle ourselves in the question of Women Suffrage, but we do mean to protest against the disturbance of public meetings. We regret to see that Miss Kenny went to Mr. Herbert Gladstone's meeting at Leicester, and was the centre of a band of "suffragette" interrupters; finally jumping on a seat and attempting to address the meeting, which led to her expulsion. An odd feature of the situation was that Mrs. Gladstone, who was sitting on the platform, is herself a "suffragette." But this fact did not keep the others quiet. They seemed to be pledged to a policy of disorder. And no doubt they think it will help them. But they ought to feel less confident after the recent Labor vote at Belfast. It was freely stated by Labor leaders that the disorderly tactics of the "suffragettes" had set a multitude of working men against them.

We take this opportunity of saying how glad we are that the working classes in this country have such a profound respect for the right of public meeting. It is one of the best features of the political situation, and one of the most hopeful auguries for the future.

The death of Miss Helen Taylor, step-daughter of John Stuart Mill, at the age of seventy-five, recalls the circumstance of her editing the philosopher's posthumous *Three Essays*. Miss Taylor was an able and cultivated woman, interested in many advanced movements, and during the nine years she sat there, an excellent member of the London School Board. But while not exactly a Christian, she had a strong bent towards Theism; and it is probable that both

she and her mother influenced Mill as far as they could in that direction. Professor Bain said that the *Essay on Theism* in that mixed volume was a surprise to Mill's friends. Not that he professed himself a Theist in it—for he never did that—but because he attached more weight to certain Theistic arguments in the *Essay* than he had been known to do in conversation with friends, before he gave way to a certain emotionalism during that long vigil by his wife's graveside at Avignon. Miss Taylor had the honesty, however, to admit that Mill had not revised the *Essay on Theism* for publication. Had he done so, he could not have left it in such a questionable condition, contrasting so unfavorably with the two earlier *Essays*, which were prepared for publication after his death.

Mill's freethought was obvious to all students of his writings who were gifted with any penetration. But he never spoke out openly. Even in the *Autobiography* he chronicled his father's Atheism, and frankly stated that he himself had been brought up without any religious belief, but he did not say how he stood in later years. He left that to be guessed at. The revelation was to come after his decease. Of course this was not heroic. Neither was Carlyle heroic in the same matter. His unbelief might easily be suspected, but the declaration of it was left for his biographer.

"Granny Craske" has just died at Sheringham, Norfolk. She had passed her hundredth birthday. It was her favorite boast that she had never ridden in a railway train. She was a Salvationist. Naturally.

Rev. Dr. Hunter doesn't approve of the "individual communion cup" movement. In a recent lecture at Aberdeen University he said that he had taken part in an "individual cup" communion once, and he would never like to do so again. "The appearance of the table," said the reverend gentleman, "with the tiers of rows of cups like dram glasses, the clinking of the glasses as they were passed round and returned, the leaning back and quaffing of the contents, together with the restless movements of the participants, seemed to savor more of a busy refreshment bar on a fair day than of a solemn service being conducted." Very likely this is all true. But what a close acquaintance the Rev. Dr. Hunter seems to have with the drinking customs of his brither Scots.

Sir Oliver Lodge is always supporting religion in the name of sciences on which he is no authority. On Sunday last, at Whitefield's Tabernacle, he told a crowded audience that "Man is the only part of the animal world which is self-conscious." Well, how does he know that? As a physicist, conversant with atoms, electrons, and so forth, what does he know about consciousness more than any other man he happens to meet when he walks down the street? For our part, we have no hesitation in saying that Sir Oliver Lodge's statement is absurd. To say, for instance, that a dog who risks his life—sometimes when men will not—to save a child struggling in the water, or who dies of grief over his master's grave, is not endowed with self-consciousness, is to invite the contemptuous laughter of persons who are less filled with human arrogance.

The Beagler Boy vol. i, No. 1, has just reached us. It professes to be "conducted by old Etonians" and is to be "published occasionally." The price of this number is twopenny, and the publisher is A. C. Fifield, 44 Fleet-street, London, E.C. Of course the thing is a well-sustained satire, concocted in all probability by some well-known friends of the Humanitarian League. One article is on "The Scriptural Sanction for Beagling" is capitally written. This is how it opens:—

"The shameless design of some secularist and agnostic politicians to drive the Bible out of our national schools, has ended, as it deserved, in ignominious failure; just as the conspiracy of a certain portion of the Dissenting Proletariat to exclude the Anglo-Catholic Catechism, was happily frustrated by the intervention of the Spiritual and Temporal Aristocracy of the realm. Fortunately we need not fear lest any attempt should ever be made to banish the Scriptures from that ancient foundation where 'Henry's holy shade' is still, and always will be, more reverently adored than 'Huxley's shady hole'—as the Science School has been jocosely, but not inappropriately designated. The Eton boy indeed—to his credit be it said—is not in the habit of parading his knowledge of the Bible to all the world; he does not wear it on his sleeve for daws to peck at; he is, it may be, content to regard it as a flower which may well be left to 'blush unseen'; but he is, nevertheless, honestly proud to preserve the simple faith of his forefathers untainted by the rationalizing theories, whether of professed freethinkers, or of those who so absurdly style themselves 'the higher critics.'"

The rest of this capitally executed skit may be read in the *Beagler Boy* itself.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, February 10, Queen's (Minor) Hall, Langham-place, London, W., at 7.30., "Rev. R. J. Campbell's New Theology."

February 17 and 24, Queen's Hall.

March 3, Glasgow; 17, Manchester.

To Correspondents.

C. COHEN'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—February 17, Camberwell; 24, Birmingham.

J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—February 10, Forest Gate; 17, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 24, Camberwell. March 10, Birmingham; 24, West Stanley.

W. O.—You are mistaken in your guess as to the gentleman referred to. Kind hearts do not belong to any one political party. We have known kind hearts at the extremes of mental opposition to each other.

W. AINSWORTH.—We hope so too.

THREE KILSYTH FREETHINKERS.—Mistakes will happen. The man who wants to be in a world without them should emigrate from this planet as soon as possible.

EDWARD STOKES.—Pleased to receive such an encouraging letter from a veteran, whose memory goes back to the tenth of April, 1848, when he joined in the Chartist procession to Kennington Common. You who saw the *Reasoner* through, and the *National Reformer* through, are still living to "admire" the *Freethinker* and wish us success in what you are good enough to call our "noble fight."

V. H. S.—Pessimism means that everything is for the worst in this world. Optimism means that everything is for the best. We do not undertake to oppose or defend opinions expressed by our contributors in the course of their articles. We have no time just now to go back upon the old article of ours which you refer to, nor even time to look it up.

KANGAROO.—We cannot think of changing the title of this journal. No doubt it is offensive to bigots, but it is difficult to get up enthusiasm for a colorless title, which is apt to be like a flag with no emblem. Your other suggestions are better worth considering. The calendar and the "Great Infidel" postcards might be valuable as propagandist agencies. Best wishes for the future of Freethought in Australia.

THE JOSEPH SYMES FUND.—Previously acknowledged, £246 10s. 11d. Since received: E. Jones, 5s.; W. Connolly, 2s. 6d.; Clifford Williams, 2s. 6d.; J. T. Haworth, 2s. 6d.; J. Pilkington, 2s. 6d.; W. Jones, 2s. 6d.; Three Kilsyth Freethinkers (2nd sub.), 2s.; A. M., 5s.; S. Hudson, 10s.; W. Cromach, 3s.; W. Ainsworth, 5s.; W. O., 2s. 6d.; N. Asworth, 2s. 6d.; Edward Stokes, 5s.; C. Watkinson, 1s.; S. Taylor, 1s.; Henry Foyster, 10s. 6d.; W. Robertson, 2s. 6d.; M. M., 2s. 6d.; Mr. Lazarnick, 2s. 6d.; Mr. Stearman, 1s.; T. Hurley, 2s. 6d.; J. T. Jackson, 3s.; Cornubia, 5s.; Ess Jay Bee, 2s. 6d.; R. Bingham, 2s.; R. Robinson, 2s. 6d.; F. and E. C., 4s.; A. Corley, 2s. 6d.; J. Roos, 2s.; Lancastrian, 5s.; S. W., 2s. 6d.; G. R. Harker, 10s.; Eli Scowcroft, 3s.; R. Jopson, 1s.; W. Barton, 1s.; Thomas Lowndes, 2s. 6d.; T. H., 2s. 6d.; Two Admirers, 2s.; G. Parr, 10s. 6d.; H. Jessop, £2; J. A. Palanque, £1 1s.; W. C., 1s.; O. T. Q., 10s.; J. S., 1s.; J. T. M., 1s.; T. C., 3s.; J. L. A., 1s.; A. G., 1s.; Norman Murray, 5s.; M. G. T., 10s.; W. W., 1s.; the F. family, 13s. 6d.; R. B. Harrison, 1s.; R. Wood, 2s. 6d.; R., 2s. 6d.; Dearden, 1s.; Tabener, 1s.; F. Sheard, 1s.; Three Worcester Freethinkers, 3s.; Briton Ferry, 5s.; T. Maesy, 1s.; R. Radford, 1s.; Savings Bank, 1s.; John Hardy, 5s.; H. D. Cheal, 1s.; J. Woodall, 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. S. Leeson, 10s.; Miss C. Leeson, 2s. 6d.; Miss E. Leeson, 1s.; S. Leeson, jr., 1s.; W. Leeson, 2s.; A. Leeson, 2s.; J. H. Hopkins, 2s.; W. Wilber, 2s.; H. Woolley, 1s.; J. Ainge, 1s. 6d.; C. Bushell, 2s.; J. Drinkwater, 1s.; A. Worley, 1s.; A. B. Taylor, 2s.; E. Pinder, 2s.; L. Smith, 1s.; J. Hardy, 1s.; W. J. Marston, 1s.; F. J. Gould, 5s.; T. Wigham, 5s.; J. Smith, 2s.; Mr. Dobbie, 5s.; Mr. Owen, 2s. 6d.; James and John McGlashan, £1; J. Harrison, 5s.; G. Paul, 5s.; Friend, 1s.; R. Turnbull, 1s.; G. Fryer, 2s.; T. Robson, 2s. 6d.; J. Robson, 2s. 6d.; W. Robson, 2s.; R. Wilson, 1s.; J. Lynn, 1s.; W. Summerbell, 1s.; W. Rhodes, 1s.; Tonyrefail Freethinkers, 5s.; A. S. Vickers, 2s. 6d.; J. E. Stapleton, 2s. 6d.

Per Miss Vance:—Collection Manchester Branch, £1 4s.; A. Meadowcroft, 2s. 6d.; A. Friend, 1s.; Lady Member, 5s.; A. G., 1s.; A. W., 5s.; Manchester, 3s.; Mr. and Mrs. Pegg (2nd donation), £1; W. Leat, 2s. 6d.; H. W. Parsons, £1; R. Castello, 2s. 6d.; R. E. D., 7s. 6d.; E. A., 2s.; T. M. Brown, 2s. 6d.; G. Smith, 2s. 6d.; W. E. Webber, 4s.; A. and F. Webster, 5s.; Joseph Bevons, 10s.; E. E. T., 1s.; H. G. F., 1s.; M. C., 1s.; C. S. M., 1s.; E. A. R., 1s.; W. S. M., 6d.; W. K., 6d.; J. C. E., 6d.; W. P. P., 6d.; L. B., 6d.; A. N. W., 6d.; G. F. Firm, 10s. J. A. S., 10s.; Two Friends, 1s. 6d.

[Correction.—C. Mascall's cheque for £1 has been returned "unpaid" in consequence of his decease; we are obliged, therefore, to remove it from our list of subscriptions received, for which we are personally responsible.]

EDWARD JONES.—Sorry you will miss what you were looking forward to—hearing Joseph Symes at Liverpool in the summer.

N. LEVEY.—There is no Life of Ingersoll in existence, but an authoritative one, we understand, is being prepared by the family.

J. PARTRIDGE.—We hope the Branch will not lose its opportunity by waiting too long. For the other matter, see "Sugar Plums."

THE COHEN "SALVATION ARMY" TRACT FUND.—Previously acknowledged, £14 5s. 6d. Since received: J. Dyer, 1s.; R. B. Harrison, 6d.; R. H. Sewell, 6d.

R. ROBINSON.—If it is as large as you can make it, it is a generous subscription.

W. BINGHAM.—You write "workman" under your name. Well, it is an honorable title. We are a "workman" too. So is every man who does, or tries to do, something useful; and truth and beauty, as well as goodness, are of the highest use. Many people might think it odd, but Shakespeare was the most useful man that England ever produced. The fact is that all work, at bottom, is brain work. Hands are no use without brains to make a good pair of boots, or even a kitchen chair. The common distinction between handwork and brainwork is merely fantastic. Brains have made hands what they are; changed them from front feet into dexterous instruments of industry and art. That is the teaching of Evolution.

ESS JAY BEE—a signature well-known to our readers—writes: "I was formerly a red-hot, hell-fire Christian. But in 1880 I came across a copy of the *National Reformer*, which set me thinking; and finally, in 1882, your Christmas Number of the *Freethinker*, and particularly Joseph Symes's article 'A Fairy Transformed,' caused me to throw off the yoke of Christianity for ever. I still have that copy of the *Freethinker*, and treasure it more than I can express." We remember that Christmas Number too. It cost us a year of our life—in Holloway Gaol. So if this correspondent is, in a sense, one of our converts, we may quote Scripture to him: "Ye were bought with a great price."

A. A.—It is etiquette to call a man what he calls himself. Mr. J. M. Robertson has called himself a Socialist for the last twenty years, and wrote as a Socialist in our old monthly, *Progress*. Whether other Socialists ought to think him one or not, is a domestic question for them—isn't it? Why expect us to adjudicate in such a dispute?

T. FLETCHER.—Orders for literature should not be sent to Mr. Foote, but direct to our publishers, according to the standing notice which appears in every week's *Freethinker*. Every extra bit of trouble given to Mr. Foote is a real burden.

M. B.—We do not understand that Mr. Stuart Cumberland ever professed to do his thought-reading by telepathy. Can you refer us to any document containing such a claim on his part? Pleased you think so highly of the *Freethinker* and call it a "brain nourisher." A good many papers don't recognise that their readers have any brains to nourish.

G. PARR.—As near as we can figure it out your French postal order makes 10s. 6d. You say that if you had the means of a Rockefeller the widow and orphan daughter of Joseph Symes should never want. But doesn't it occur to you that if you were a Rockefeller you mightn't even send what you do now? The Freethought millionaire isn't in sight yet.

J. A. PALANQUE (we hope we have the name correctly), subscribing to the Symes Fund, says: "I wish to take this opportunity of saying how much I admire your attitude on the question of 'Separation' in France. Even Freethinkers sometimes forget that it is easier to claim fairplay for your friends than for your enemies." Yes, and it was a much greater man than we who said that the best defence of one's own liberty was defending the liberty of others when it was attacked. His name was Thomas Paine.

X. Y. Z.—Subscriptions acknowledged separately. Hope we have done right.

J. A. DAWSON.—Bradlaugh's works still in print are published by Bonner, Took's-court, E.C., and can be ordered from our own office. There is no Life of Bradlaugh now obtainable, we believe, except the one by his daughter.

A. CORLEY.—Better late than never; *much* better.

LANCASTRIAN says: "Just a word to express my admiration for the *Freethinker*. I never read any journal before which caused me to think as your paper has. It is really an intellectual treat, and I would not miss it for a great deal."

W. BARTON.—Glad to hear you look upon the *Freethinker* as your "weekly treat."

"JAN DE BOER."—Thanks for cuttings.

R. SEWELL.—Will try to deal with it next week.

JOHN VICKERY.—The Camberwell Library is on our free list, and a copy of the *Freethinker* is forwarded regularly. There must be some mistake at the other end.

G. W. HARVEY.—Better wait for our articles.

W. H. NASH.—We have passed on your letter to Mr. Cohen.

N. LEVEY.—Thanks. We think we understand.

W. LEACH.—We shall be dealing with the matter at length presently.

BRITON FERRY.—Glad you and your friend look forward with so much pleasure to your weekly *Freethinker*.

W. P. BALL.—Cuttings very welcome.

F. J. GOULD.—The Leicester Secular Society's list of subscriptions is very welcome. Mr. Foote is better, though not quite well. Thanks.

RIDGWAY FUND.—J. Partridge acknowledges: H. W. Parsons, 10s.

ATHEOS.—The Tacitus passage is dealt with at length in our *Sign of the Cross*, a pamphlet criticising the late Wilson Barrett's play. The Pliny letter cannot be dealt with satisfactorily in an answer in this column. We may devote an article to it shortly.

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.

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

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

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

ORDERS for literature should be sent to the Freethought Publishing Company, Limited, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., and not to the Editor.

PERSONS remitting for literature by stamps are specially requested to send *halfpenny stamps*.

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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 the first of his new Queen's Hall course of lectures this evening (Feb. 10). His subject is one that is exciting much controversy at present—"Rev. R. J. Campbell's 'New Theology.'" Mr. Foote will deal, not only with the reverend gentleman's reported addresses, but also with his article in the new number of the *Hibbert Journal*. As posters of this lecture are not being printed, owing to the impossibility of billing a city like London, we hope the "saints" will do their best to give it publicity amongst their friends and acquaintances.

Mr. Foote was prevented by indisposition from fulfilling his recent engagements at Manchester and Glasgow, but he has arranged to visit both places again during the present winter season. He is to be at Glasgow on March 3 and Manchester on March 17.

South Lancashire "saints" do not often have an opportunity of hearing Mr. Cohen. We hope they will give him a bumper to-day (Feb. 10) at the Secular Hall, Manchester, where he is billed, to lecture on two very attractive subjects.

The meeting called by the Union of Ethical Societies at the *Tribune* Rendezvous, for the purpose of starting a Secular Education League, took place on Monday evening. Various advanced bodies were represented, and the hall was uncomfortably crowded. Mr. Harry Snell acted as secretary, and Mr. George Greenwood, M.P., occupied the chair. Mr. Greenwood's introductory speech was excellent, and deservedly applauded. The first resolution declaring that religious education should be banished from elementary schools and left to parents and churches was moved by Mr. J. Allanson Picton, and supported by Mr. W. P. Byles, M.P., the Rev. S. D. Headlam, the Rev. R. Evans (Leicester), and other speakers. Before it was put there were loud calls for Mr. Foote, whose speech stirred the meeting to enthusiasm. He ventured to warn some of the other speakers that there was only one ground for Secular Education—the ground of common citizenship and common justice; his remarks on this head being greeted with a storm of cheers. The *Tribune* mentioned Mr. Foote's speech; the dear *Daily News*, as usual, declined to print his name.

The resolution being carried with only one dissentient, another resolution was accepted in favor of the formation of a national Secular Education League; and a committee of twelve was appointed, with power to add to its numbers, in order to get the League into working order. The twelve included Mr. Foote, Mr. Joseph McCabe, and Mrs. Bradlaugh-Bonner.

Membership of the Secular Education League will be open to every person who is in favor of secular education without reference to his or her religious, political, or social convictions. It remains to be seen how far such persons will co-operate for this common object. Certainly a good deal of tact will be necessary to steer the League well out to sea; and we hope the Secularists will do their utmost to give it a good chance of including the widest possible body of supporters.

The members of the Edinburgh N. S. S. Branch were recently invited to Outlook Tower, where Professor Patrick Geddes gave them tea and "one of the finest intellectual treats"—as the secretary expresses it. The Professor and Mrs. Geddes wished them all to come again.

The discussion on the "New Theology" has been going on in the *Western Daily Mercury* (Plymouth) as well as in many other papers. In the midst of the reports of other gatherings we note one of the Plymouth Rationalist Society, at the weekly meeting of which Mr. G. F. H. McCluskey read a paper on "The Religion of the Future." "After a brief allusion to the rapidly changing aspect of orthodoxy," the report says, "the essayist proceeded to argue that secularism, which pertained to the moral duty of man in this life, would become the religion of the future." By-and-by Secularism will be spelt with a capital S. Meanwhile the admission of the word is something to go on with.

Some time ago we stated that the Birmingham Branch's resolution of protest against the action of the Sites Committee of the City Council in refusing to allow it, like other bodies of citizens, the use of a public school building for Sunday lectures, appeared in the *Daily Mail*, but was refused insertion in the *Daily Post*. We made this statement on the authority of Mr. J. Partridge, the Branch secretary. Mr. Partridge now writes us that he was mistaken. He does not know how he overlooked the resolution in the *Daily Post*, but the fact remains that he did so, and he wishes to express his regret for an act of unintentional injustice. Of course we also regret that the blunder was published in our columns, and we desire to apologise to our contemporary for having innocently misrepresented it.

Personal.

I REGRET to say that I was unable to fulfil my engagement at Glasgow on Sunday. I had made some improvement, and might, perhaps, have managed to get through the lectures, without any additional tax; but I was advised not to run the risks of travelling in such weather in that unsatisfactory condition; and it may interest some readers to know that I should have had to leave home at the latest at half-past nine in the morning in order to reach Glasgow by half-past ten at night.

Happily there was no absolute breakdown at Glasgow. I asked Mr. Cohen if he would go for me, and he promptly consented to do so. For this I beg to tender him my warmest thanks. He relinquishes the Sunday he was himself booked to be at Glasgow, and I am taking it in order to meet my Glasgow friends again this winter.

I was able to attend the Secular Education League meeting at the *Tribune* Rendezvous on Monday evening, and the Freethinkers present were very glad that I did so. My voice was still a little husky, but I believe it will be all right for the lecture at Queen's Hall. My friends need have no apprehension about that lecture. There is no travelling to speak of in connection with it.

And now a word with regard to Mrs. Symes. She has been ill with pleurisy since her husband's death, and is but slowly recovering; her daughter, too, has been ill, and it is pretty certain that it would be better for her to return to her native air. All things considered, Mrs. Symes is undoubtedly wise in deciding to go back to Melbourne. Her passage is already booked. I will not trust myself to say more at the moment.

The party has responded generously to my appeal, and I consider the subscription to be now practically over. Driblets are sure to come in still, and I shall not return them, but I am making no further appeal. I say now, as I said at first, that it was an occasion for a short and sharp effort; and I thank the party for taking me at my word.

G. W. FOOTE.

"Pious Fraud."

By THE REV. A. KAMPMEIER.

From the "Open Court," Chicago.

THE term "pious fraud," often used by advanced thinkers when attacking traditional religious belief, is of course repudiated by those yet holding to traditional religion as entirely unjustified, as only springing from hatred and as being a mean way of attacking religion. But this term is also considered as too hard and strong a term and as an impolitic one by just such advanced thinkers as those using it.

Is the term "pious fraud" then unjustified? I think the term is fully justified in many cases, and will give a few striking examples from the Bible.

The second epistle of Peter, in the New Testament, pretends not only to have been written by Peter, the intimate disciple of Jesus, but it even says, referring to the story of the transfiguration of Jesus on the mount: "The voice: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, we ourselves heard come out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount." (Chap. i. 18.)

It has long been known that this epistle is entirely spurious. Even in the fourth century it was believed by some to be spurious, and these doubts have again and again turned up, till now no unprejudiced Biblical scholar accepts it as authentic.

The general belief in its authenticity, and for which it was taken up into the canon, was very probably due, besides the mention of the name of Simon Peter in the address to the readers, to the before cited words in that epistle, by which the writer fully asserts himself to have been an eye-witness of that miraculous event of the transfiguration related in the Gospels.

Sincere believers in Christianity thus argued: "Would a man have been such a liar as to call himself an eye-witness of that event if he had not been—a man who wrote an epistle of such religious earnestness and spirituality?" Sincere believers in the truth of Christianity instinctively felt that the writer of the epistle, if he had not been an eye-witness, would have been a liar. Rather than accept such an immoral act on the part of the author of the epistle, the writing was accepted as authentic in spite of its many contradictions.

It is a well-known fact now that the first centuries were full of such literary productions ascribed to immediate disciples of Jesus and others of his contemporaries, which have deceived people even to our own time, and the so-called second epistle of Peter is one of them.

That this epistle is still accepted as authentic by the majority of Christians is only due to its fortunate admission into the canon, and the reason that it is a writing of earnest admonitions only, an epistolary writing, instead of a narrative. In a narration of incidents, proofs for unauthenticity could have been found much more easily, as any one knows is the case with regard to the apocryphal Gospels which are outside of the New Testament canon. But let us take another example. The book of Daniel, in the Old Testament, expressly claims to have been written by a certain Daniel living in the time of the Babylonian Exile. It is well known now that this book was written almost 400 years later, during the time of the Maccabees. This was even proven to be so by the neo-Platonist Porphyry as early as the third century, for which reason his books were later burned by order of the Emperor Theodosius, in order that his criticism of the book of Daniel should not become generally known. Since the beginning of the last century, however, the authenticity of the book has been given up more and more, and no unprejudiced Bible scholars accept it any longer. And yet that book has misled the most eminent men since it was written, because it exerted such an enormous influence in the formation of Christianity, by being the first of the books of the Old Testament to give prominence to the idea of a kingdom coming from heaven through

the appearance of the "Son of Man" in the clouds. We may almost say, Christianity is based upon this book alone. If it had not been for this book, and the reverence in which it was held in the time of Jesus on account of its supposedly genuine prophecies, Jesus would very probably never have been moved to his career. We may say that Jesus, in believing in the divine character of this book was deluded by it, as many others have been since his time. Even such eminently acute minds as Isaac Newton were so misled by the apparently genuine prophecies of the book, which predicted the most minute historical details four hundred years ahead, that he spent much time on this book and considered his calculations based thereon of more value than any of his scientific discoveries. And what an amount of useless work was spent by other men on that book, as well as on the book of Revelation which is based upon it! And all this was because the unknown author of that book played his part so well in fabricating fictitious prophecies without the least foundation of truth.

Another example: We all know that Deuteronomy came out about 650 B.C., in the reign of the Jewish king Josiah (that is, the essential part of it), in order to influence King Josiah to begin that radical reform which made the temple in Jerusalem the only place of worship, and abolished all other places of worship throughout the limits of the kingdom of Judah and those of the former kingdom of Israel. That book was given to King Josiah as a writing which had come down from Moses himself, who had forbidden any other place of worship but the one which Jehovah had chosen, and declared that all the evils had come upon the Hebrews because they had transgressed that command—Deuteronomy being filled with curses predicting in detail what ills would come as a consequence of disobeying this command of Jehovah through his servant Moses.

Until the time of the appearance of Deuteronomy, even the most pious Hebrews and prophets had worshiped Jehovah without any scruples in other places outside Jerusalem. They never knew of any such command given by Moses as to worship only in one place and no other. Now with one stroke a matter was introduced, which had never been known before. A book purporting to have been written by Moses was suddenly discovered and brought to light. If this wasn't pious fraud, what was it?

Another example: The Fourth Gospel of the New Testament purports to be a writing of John, a disciple of Jesus, and his most intimate one. Although it does not say this expressly, it is written in such an ingenious way, that any reader receives the impression that that Gospel has come from the most intimate personal connections with Jesus. This book, on account of its seemingly greater spirituality than the other Gospels (though in fact it is very materialistic, as witness the resurrection of Lazarus, already in a state of decomposition), and on account of the very mysterious and mystical air surrounding it, has played its part so well, that it has charmed all but the most cool and impartial critics. Only these have seen through its unhistorical garb, and the so-called Gospel of John is more and more accepted as a most ingenious fiction on the person of Jesus, with perhaps very little historical fact underlying it.

Now what are we to call such writings as I have mentioned, and which every unprejudiced man now knows to be unauthentic?

Can we say, that the pretention of being written by men like Moses and Daniel centuries ahead, and prophesying things to happen many centuries later, or pretending to be eye-witnesses, as the author of 2 Peter and the Fourth Gospel, is only an innocent device, which the author has used to express his thoughts and is of no importance at all? Can we say that those unknown writers had to use some external machinery or frame, by means of which, and in which, to set forth their ideas? Are we to think that the authors of these books thought that the garb of their books was of no importance at all, but only the religious and moral ideas uttered in them? Surely not.

It was not for this reason alone, *i.e.*, to have a suitable frame in which to set their ideas as novelists and poets do, that they chose their special garb, but they knew very well that just the pretence of being genuine prophecies relating events from eye-witnesses, would have a most convincing influence upon the reader; that in fact this seeming genuineness so ingeniously worked out would be the most important thing to the reader.

And if this is so, what else can we call this proceeding but pious fraud? I, at least, do not know of any other term which would describe it more correctly and strikingly.

Most believers in these books believe in them because they sincerely consider them as authentic as they appear to be, and because their minds have not been critically trained. But as soon as they discover their unauthenticity, and are convinced of it after thorough study, their former sincere belief will change into the very natural attitude of righteous anger, because of having been deluded by only apparent truth, and that not only of an insignificant kind but of a kind from which, as long as it seemed to be fact, the most far-reaching and most important inferences were to be drawn.

If, then, the term "pious fraud" is used by advanced thinkers, let us be careful how we condemn them; let us consider that it is the righteous anger of honest, upright and truth-loving minds which leads them to use this expression.

I truly believe that if the Jewish religion, and the Christian also, had not made use of such devices as I have shown by the examples selected, they would have been of the greatest benefit to the cause of true religion, and would have prevented much of that bitter controversy between religious tradition and the progress of science.

If there ought to be the most scrupulous conscientiousness anywhere, it is in the field of religion. There, more than anywhere else, "honesty is the best policy." According to my opinion, religious mystification is most to be condemned. To teach religion which pretends to be true with equivocal means is dangerous. The great majority of Christians believe in the Bible, not in the first place on account of the religious and moral truths in it, but on account of the seemingly divine inspiration found in it. An uncritical mind, for instance, does not know that the whole Hebrew history as represented in the Old Testament as having taken place under the special divine guidance of God, and entirely different from the natural development of any other people, as well as the host of prophecies found in the Old Testament which later were fulfilled, were only a makeup of the Jewish priests after the Exile. I am here referring especially to those many prophecies occurring in the historical books, the Pentateuch, etc., for instance, the prediction of the Macedonian empire already in the time of Moses. (Num. xxiv. 24.)

If the origin of these historical books, as the science of Biblical criticism teaches it, would be known to the great majority of Christians, there would be nothing but the unanimous outcry of "pious fraud," and this outcry would be fully justified as things are.

We must admit that the ancient Jewish mind, though deeply religious, lacked an essential of the true religious spirit. Else it would have recoiled from using equivocal means in teaching religious truths. One of the essential things of true religion is scrupulous truthfulness, to teach truth in a straightforward way.

The ancient Jewish mind does not seem to have had the least scruple about manufacturing fictitious prophecies and history. And it was equally so with the early Christian writers. Fiction in the cause of religion, pretending to be true history and fact, seemed to them perfectly justifiable. This trait is also reflected to a smaller degree in another way in the New Testament. It is well known that the New Testament writings are filled to the brim with the most unhistorical and unnatural twistings of passages of the Old Testament to suit any idea that is intended

to be expressed. This rabbinical art, which to us now is nothing but pure sophistry, was not even disdained by Jesus. The saying of God to Moses: "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," is cited by him as a proof for personal immortality, although any one knows that nothing of the kind is implied in that passage. But to the times of Jesus and the first Christian centuries, such things seemed perfectly natural and right. The modern mind has evolved to the point of a greater scrupulousness in regard to straightforward methods of teaching religious truth, and this, without doubt, is due to the influence of science upon religion, for science seeks nothing but pure and naked truth and permits not the least prevarication.

The term "pious fraud" is an outflow of this modern, more truthful and scrupulous spirit. This spirit does not use the term indiscriminately for any myth or legend of ancient times, which has developed gradually and naturally, but it uses it only when intentionally a false garb has been used for the furtherance of religious purposes, by which consequences have followed which have proved dangerous for the cause of truth.

Correspondence.

WHAT IS ATHEISM?

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—May I again trespass upon your space? One of your correspondents seems to imagine I am a stickler for strict "dictionary definitions," and another refers me to the several definitions of a number of well-known Atheists and Agnostics. The English tongue is a living one, and necessarily varies from day to day, as it grows and expands. A man admires Spencer, but does not use the double negative because the poet did. Shakespeare used, amongst others, the word "let" in a sense exactly the opposite of which now prevails; none on that account objects either to Shakespeare or the modern usage. Being alive, our language alters. I wish to deal with the name-word "Atheist" in its generally accepted sense. I have ever found it has meant various things to different persons, and often it appears that the users are not very clear as to the meaning they themselves apply. Personally, I use the word "Agnostic" because it, when applied in relation to Theism, clearly expresses the idea of ignorance of God. It, perhaps, is too comprehensive, embracing those who, like myself, confess to an absence of knowledge, but think the hypothesis unnecessary and an excrescence, and also those who are without knowledge of God, but are inclined to believe he exists. Mr. Theakson mentions Mr. Bradlaugh's statement of the Atheistic position, and I take it as an example of the undesirability of the name. Mr. Bradlaugh, in dealing with this matter, always asked for a definition of God before he would say whether or no he denied his existence. So far, well and good; but he went further, and in a book which, from the title, was obviously meant to be the authoritative last word on the subject, he gave a definition—"God = x." If the formula has any meaning, it is that God exists, is unknown, but knowable; God equals an unknown quantity! Mr. Bradlaugh was an Atheist. This will be said to be a wilful misrepresentation; and certainly, having in mind the well-known views of the gentleman, it has such an appearance. However, it shows how unsatisfactory the term is. I have lately read several Christian explanations of Atheism, and generally it is stated that the Atheist is non-moral: is a lunatic as far as social faculties are concerned; some saying Atheism and immorality are synonymous. The name is open to countless objections, and I don't see why Freethinkers should wait an Isandlana before we discard a valueless flag dangerous to its carriers. A rose by any other name may *smell* as sweet; but it is equally true that the loveliest, the dog-rose, suffers from neglect on account of its name. A bad terminology has very evil results. The Society of Friends (Quakers) were accused of being Deists, and the result is that, because of this accusation, they refused a burial to Thomas Paine. Whether Bishop Barnet started this lie about the Friends' religious beliefs, or whether it was generally current at his time, I don't know; but the stigma popularly associated with the name has stuck to these usually tolerant Christians.

SOUTH DEVON.

I may know what is good; I can tell what is better; but that which is best is beyond me—it is a thing in the clouds.
—Hazlitt.

National Secular Society.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, JAN. 31.

In consequence of the President's indisposition, Mr. C. Cohen took the chair. There were also present: Messrs. J. Barry, H. Cowell, F. A. Davies, W. Leat, Dr. R. T. Nichols, S. Samuels, F. Wood, V. Roger, H. Silverstein, J. W. Marshall, F. Schindel, and the Secretary.

The minutes of previous meeting were read and confirmed, and cash statement adopted.

A letter was read from the President *re* the Joseph Symes Testimonial. The following resolution was carried unanimously:—

"That this Executive of the National Secular Society expresses its profound regret at the death of one of its Vice-Presidents, Mr. Joseph Symes, and desires to place on record its appreciation of his long and gallant service to the cause of Freethought in Great Britain and Australia, and offers its deepest sympathy to his widow and child in their affliction."

The President's action in arranging for the funeral expenses to be defrayed by the N. S. S. was heartily endorsed, and he was thanked for his promptitude in opening a subscription for Mrs. Symes.

The Secretary reported that the N. S. S. would be represented by Mr. G. W. Foote, Messrs. Lloyd and Cohen, at a meeting on Monday, February 4, called for the purpose of founding a National Organisation for Secular Education. The President's action in this matter was also endorsed.

Six new members were received. The Sub-Committee reported upon the designs for a Society badge. The Secretary reported a highly successful Annual Dinner, and was instructed to send out the usual notices to Branches who wish to invite the Conference. The meeting then closed.

EDITH M. VANCE, *General Secretary.*

STANZAS.

Often rebuked, yet always back returning
To those first feelings that were born with me,
And leaving busy chase of wealth and learning
For idle dreams of things which cannot be:

To-day, I will not seek the shadowy region;
Its unsustaining vastness waxes drear;
And visions rising, legion after legion,
Bring the unreal world too strangely near.

I'll walk, but not in old heroic traces,
And not in paths of high morality,
And not among the half distinguished faces,
The clouded forms of long-past history.

I'll walk where my own nature would be leading:
It vexes me to choose another guide;
Where the grey flocks in ferny glens are feeding;
Where the wild wind blows on the mountain side.

What have those lovely mountains worth revealing?
More glory and more grief than I can tell:
The earth that wakes *one* human heart to feeling,
Can centre both the worlds of Heaven and Hell.

—*Emily Bronte.*

DEATH.

Death cancels everything but truth, and strips a man of everything but genius and virtue. It is a sort of natural canonisation. It makes the meanest of us sacred; it instals the poet in his immortality, and lifts him to the skies. Death is the great assayer of the sterling ore of talent. At his touch the drossy particles fall off—the irritable, the personal, the gross—and mingle with the dust; the finer and more ethereal part mounts with the winged spirit to watch over our latest memory, and protect our bones from insult. We consign the least worthy qualities to oblivion, and cherish the nobler and imperishable nature with double pride and fondness.—*Hazlitt.*

That a large number of educated people still cling to the dogma of personal immortality, in spite of these luminous proofs, is owing to the great power of conservative tradition and the evil methods of instruction that stamp these untenable dogmas deep on the growing mind in early years. It is for that very reason that the churches strive to keep the schools under their power at any cost. They can control and exploit the adults at will if independent thought and judgment have been stifled in the earlier years.—*Ernst Haeckel.*

To destroy is not an end. Humanity has lived in the ancient moulds until they have become too narrow, and then has caused them to burst; but does anyone suppose that this was out of anger against these moulds? Do you suppose that when the bird breaks the shell of the egg his object is to break? No; his aim is to pass to a new life.—*Renan.*

Deal so plainly with man and woman as to constrain the utmost sincerity and destroy all hope of trifling with you. It is the highest compliment you can pay.—*Emerson.*

Eat at your table as you would eat at the table of the king.—*Confucius.*

Educate the children right and the nation will go right. Educate the children wrong and the nation will go wrong.

Heaven is gone, and where is Our Father? Science shows us a world of absolute order, in which what we call the laws of nature—the observed sequence and recurrence of phenomena—are never broken. The world was not fashioned for man's dwelling, nor is it maintained for his benefit. Towards the poles he freezes, towards the equator he burns. The rain nourishes his crops or rots them, without asking his pleasure; the sea bears him or drowns him, with equal unconcern; the lightning slays him or spares him, whether good, bad or indifferent, as he happens to be in or out of the line of its dazzling flight; famine pinches his cheek if he cannot procure food; the pestilence seizes upon his nerves and blood unless he learns the antidote to its ravages; he stands amidst the play of terrific forces, and only preserves himself by vigilance, patience, courage, and industry. If he falls the enemy is upon him, and the doom of the vanquished is death. Nature shows him no mercy. His mistakes are as fatal as his crimes.—*G. W. Foote, "Flowers of Freethought."*

Obituary.

We have to record the death of Mr. J. F. Dewar, of Edinburgh, one of the oldest Secularists in Great Britain. This fact was not referred to in the *Glasgow Weekly Mail* obituary notice (with portrait). Mr. Dewar "had lived to earn the title of Scotland's oldest naturalist" and was "one of the vice-presidents of the Scottish National Cage Bird Society." His services as a judge were in great request. We have known Mr. Dewar for thirty years. He was a convinced and ardent Secularist, and had been for some years before his death a Vice-President of National Secular Society. When it was difficult to obtain the *Freethinker* in Edinburgh, Mr. Dewar took the trouble to have copies at his shop for the "saints" who called for them.

The funeral of the late Mr. George Mascall, of Clifton, near Bedford, and formerly of Hornsey, London, took place on Thursday, January 31, in the Shefford Cemetery, when a Secular address was delivered by the present writer. Mr. Mascall lived a brave life, and died a heroic death. He was a man of remarkable intellectual powers, of deep and broad sympathies, and of unshakable principles. His loyalty to Freethought, and his never-failing readiness to serve it in every way open to him, were beyond praise, and his memory will be kept green by all who had the privilege of knowing him.—*J. T. LLOYD.*

On Monday, February 4, at Nunhead Cemetery, the funeral of the late Mr. William Lake took place. Mr. Lake was for some years a faithful follower of Mr. Bradlaugh, and is described by one who knew him well as "a splendid type of militant Freethinker," and as "keenly interested in reforms of every kind." He was sixty-six years of age, and his loyalty to Freethought never wavered for a moment.—*J. T. LLOYD.*

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, Guy A. Aldred, "The Antiquity of Campbellism."

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Workman's Hall, 27 Romford-road, Stratford): 7.30, J. T. Lloyd, "Secularism in Harness."

COUNTRY.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Prince of Wales Assembly Rooms, Broad-street): Mrs. H. Bradlaugh-Bonner, 3.15, "Votes for Women"; 7, "Conscience, Sin, and Immortality."

EDINBURGH BRANCH N. S. S. (Masonic Hall, 11 Melbourne-place): 6.30, J. D. Crawford, M.A., F.T.S., "The Unfoldment of Consciousness."

FAIRFORTH SECULAR SUNDAY SCHOOL (Pole-lane): 6.30, W. A. Rogerson, "The Religious Element in Politics."

GLASGOW BRANCH N. S. S. (Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): H. E. Abdullah Quilliam Bey, Sheikh-ul-Islam of the British Isles, 12 noon, "Buddhism in Christianity"; 6.30, "Constantinople." With lantern illustrations.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Harry Snell, "Militarism in the Schools."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road): C. Cohen, "Some Barbarisms of Civilisation"; 6.30, "The Salvation Army: A Study in Religion and Social Imposture." Tea at 5.

NEWCASTLE RATIONALIST DEBATING SOCIETY (Lockhart's Cathedral Café): Thursday, Feb. 14, at 8, R. N. Tyas, "Socialism and the Materialist Conception of History."

PLYMOUTH RATIONALIST SOCIETY (Foresters' Hall, Octagon): 7, H. Launcelot Darton, "The Right to Punish."

WEST STANLEY BRANCH N. S. S. (4 Kip-hill): 3.30, R. Robinson, "The French Revolution."

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