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The business of philosophy is to examine and estimate all those things which come within the cognisance of the understanding. Speculations on any that lie beyond are only pleasant dreams, leaving the mind to the lassitude of disappointment. They are easier than geometry and dialectics; they are easier than the efforts of a well-regulated imagination in the structure of a poem.

—LANDOR.

Campbellism.—II.

V.

WHERE is the remedy to be found for the dry-rot in the Churches and the alienation of the people from Christianity? Mr. Campbell asks this question and answers it. "The fundamentals of the Christian faith," he says, "must be rearticulated in terms of the immanence of God." "From every quarter of Christendom," he says, "a new spirit of hope and confidence is rising, born of a conviction that all that is human is the evidence of God, and that Jesus held the key to the riddle of existence."

Great is the belief in words! Savages believe that miracles can be wrought by uttering certain sounds. It is the "name" of Jesus whereby men are to be saved in the New Testament. Mr. Campbell also has his "Open Sesame." Christianity is dying; but a restatement will bring it to life again. The people are leaving it, but a restatement will bring them back. Such is Mr. Campbell's fond hope. The human race is to be "held up" with words, words, words. But we venture to think he is utterly mistaken. No religion in the world's history has ever had a second chance. They all die of being found out. Christianity has been found out. That is the plain and sober truth. Educated and thoughtful people see that its "fundamentals" are false. And no restatement, however ingenious, or however disingenuous, can make them appear otherwise.

Mr. Campbell himself, I think, is sub-consciously aware of this. He is looking round for allies. First, he lays hands upon Science:—

"The New Theology is the religion of science. It is the denial that there is, or ever has been, or ever can be, any dissonance between science and religion; it is the recognition that upon the foundations laid by modern science a vaster and nobler fabric of faith is rising than the world has ever before known. Science is supplying the facts which the New Theology is weaving into the texture of religious experience."

This is delightfully vague and even confused, like a good deal of Mr. Campbell's writing. But his object is clear enough. He wants to engage Science as a general servant in the household of Faith. He blandly assumes that she is open to an engagement. But he will probably find that she has her own business to attend to. For the present, at any rate, to say that the New Theology is the religion of science is one of those impertinences which are so characteristic of the Christian pulpit.

Mr. Campbell also goes a wooing to the Labor party. He must be credited with not repeating the nauseous old praises of the Carpenter of Nazareth. He moves with a little more subtlety. He refers to the "great social movement which is now taking

place in every country of the civilised world towards universal peace and brotherhood, and a better and fairer distribution of wealth," and he declares that "the New Theology is but the religious articulation of the social movement." This is what he says at the end of his first chapter, and he harps upon the same string at the end of his last chapter. The "only remedy" for our social ills is "a new social organisation on a Christian basis." From what follows, however, it is apparent that he is only for Socialism as long as Socialism is for Christianity. He has his own idea as to which should play second fiddle. And the Socialists will be very foolish to regard Mr. Campbell's profession of agreement with them as meaning anything more than this. "The great Labor party, perhaps more than any other, represents the social application of the Christian ideal"—and "the Labor party is itself a Church" representing "the getting together of those who want to bring about the Kingdom of God"—and "assuredly God is with these men in the work they are doing and have yet to do." Thus does the oracle of the City Temple pipe to the Labor party, and sound his most dulcet notes, in the hope of drawing them round the standard of the New Theology. But there are cleverer men than he is in the Labor party, and he may find in the end that they have made more use of him than he has made of them.

VI.

Mr. Campbell does not explain why the fundamentals of Christianity need restatement in terms of anything. Surely the fundamentals of a divine religion should have been stated once for all in terms that could not be misunderstood. But it is a strange thing that, from the very beginning until now, Christians have always been discussing what Christianity means. Mr. Campbell is giving this discussion a fresh impetus. That is all. We are constantly being told that true Christianity has never yet had a chance. The people who say this try to explain what true Christianity is. They differ dreadfully from each other, and they are not always intelligible. One is often, indeed, tempted to exclaim with Byron, "I wish they would explain their explanation."

What is meant by "divine immanence"—or rather what Mr. Campbell means by it, for the doctrine is of immense antiquity—will appear in the course of this criticism. It will also be seen what Mr. Campbell means—if he has any definite meaning—by the statement that Jesus held the key to the riddle of existence. I think it would be more just to him, and quite as well for my purpose, if I took his chapters one after another, instead of flying all over his book, here, there and everywhere. And I really want to be just to him. I do not think his agitation will be a mere flash in the pan. Christianity is clearly going to the dogs and must be rescued somehow; and as far as Christians, and would-be Christians, are concerned, Mr. Campbell is just the man for the job. His very lack of definite thinking is an advantage; his defective information is another advantage. He thinks and knows just enough to recognise that orthodox Christianity is played out and cannot be played in again; but he does not think and know enough to enable him to perceive that the doom has gone forth against every kind of supernaturalism, or that the New Theology which he advocates is as

much a castle in the air as the Old Theology which he condemns. He is very much on an intellectual level with the crowd of dissatisfied and apprehensive Christians—and he has the gift of speech. The hour has come—though it is not a great hour; and the man has arrived—though he is not a great man.

VII.

The task before me will take considerable time. I shall have to devote several articles to it. But I believe they will not be uninteresting, and that my justification will appear at the finish. In the meanwhile I may say that Christianity is a thing of Protean cunning, passing into all sorts of shapes when pressed too closely, but always (like Proteus in the Greek mythology) resuming its own shape at last. And what that shape is let nearly two thousand years of history witness. Scotching the "Galilean serpent," as Shelley called it, is of no use; it must be slain outright; and woe to the world if the champions of Reason and Humanity forget this great obligation.

VIII.

"God and the Universe" is the title of Mr. Campbell's second chapter—the first being merely introductory. Of the God of the Old Theology—that is, of historic Christianity—he has a very poor opinion. Here are some of his ideas of that personage:—

"The God of the ordinary church-goer, and of the man who is supposed to teach him from study and pulpit, is an antiquated theologian who made His universe so badly that it went wrong in spite of Him, and has remained wrong ever since. Why He should ever have created it is not clear. Why He should be the injured party in all the miseries that have ensued is still less clear.....Faugh! it is all so unreal and so stupid. This kind of God is no God at all. The theologian may call him infinite, but in practice He is finite. He may call Him a God of love, but in practice He is spiteful and silly."

This is all very true, in my judgment; in fact, I have said the same thing for the last thirty years; but it is new from the lips of a popular Christian preacher; and I am surprised at Mr. Campbell's being astonished that the ordinary theologians read his words with a certain resentment. When you exclaim "Faugh!" at those you differ from, and call their God "spiteful and silly," you ought to expect reprisals. I am not censuring Mr. Campbell's language; I have said as bad (or as good) myself; I am only smiling at the air of injured innocence with which he lectures his most plain-spoken critics. He really ought to see that he has given them ample provocation.

Here is another specimen of Mr. Campbell's attitude towards orthodoxy:—

"But how do ordinary church-going Christians talk about God? They talk as though He were (practically) a finite being, stationed somewhere above and beyond the universe, watching and worrying over other and lesser finite beings—to wit, ourselves. According to the received phraseology, this God is greatly bothered and thwarted by what men have been doing throughout the few millenniums of human existence. He takes the whole thing very seriously and thinks about little else than getting wayward humanity into line again. To this end he has adopted various expedients, the chief of which was sending His only-begotten Son to suffer and die in order that He might be free to forgive the trouble we had caused Him.....the accepted theology of the Churches to-day is pitifully inadequate as an explanation of our relationship to this great and mysterious universe."

Perfectly true. But this pitifully inadequate explanation is founded upon the Bible—which Mr. Campbell, as well as the orthodox theologians, professes to respect as the Word of God.

I have just said that the quotation from Mr. Campbell is perfectly true. I now add that only an ignorant person could regard it as new.

Thirty years ago, in *Literature and Dogma*—a brilliant book by a man of genius—Matthew Arnold likened the Christian Trinity to three Lord Shaftesburys. I quoted that passage in my trial, as editor of

the *Freethinker*, before Lord Chief Justice Coleridge in 1883; and I am sorry to say that Mr. Arnold expunged it from subsequent editions of his book. For this reason it is not generally known to present-day readers, and I will therefore quote it once more:—

"In imagining a sort of infinitely magnified and improved Lord Shaftesbury, with a race of vile offenders to deal with, whom his natural goodness would incline him to let off, only his sense of justice will not allow it; then a younger Lord Shaftesbury, on the scale of his father and very dear to him, who might live in grandeur and splendor if he liked, but who prefers to leave his home, to go and live among the race of offenders, and to be put to an ignominious death, on condition that his merits shall be counted against their demerits, and that his father's goodness shall be restrained no longer from taking effect, but any offender shall be admitted to the benefit of it on simply pleading the satisfaction made by the son;—and then, finally, a third Lord Shaftesbury, still on the same high scale, who keeps very much in the background, and works in a very occult manner, but very efficaciously nevertheless, and who is busy in applying everywhere the benefits of the son's satisfaction, and the father's goodness; in an imagination, I say, such as this, there is nothing degrading, and this is precisely the Protestant story of *Justification*."

This polished and biting satire, worthy of the author of *Friendship's Garland*, was penned by a writer of the first distinction thirty years ago. I do not say that Mr. Campbell is indebted to the *Freethinker*, but there is no harm in suggesting that he is indebted to Matthew Arnold. At any rate, what he says about the orthodox Deity is clearly not new. But the world did not begin even with the author of the nineteenth century Gospel according to Saint Matthew. There was a great writer in the eighteenth century whose book on the Christian religion was to excite hatred and persecution, and lead to the imprisonment of scores of men and women for vindicating the freedom of the press. Let us hear that great writer:—

"From the time I was capable of conceiving an idea, and acting upon it by reflection, I either doubted the truth of the Christian system, or thought it to be a strange affair; I scarcely know which it was; but I well remember, when about seven or eight years of age, hearing a sermon read by a relation of mine, who was a great devotee of the Church, upon the subject of what is called Redemption by the Death of the Son of God. After the sermon was ended I went into the garden, and as I was going down the garden steps (for I perfectly recollect the spot) I revolted at the recollection of what I had heard, and thought to myself that it was making God Almighty act like a passionate man that killed his son when he could not revenge himself any other way; and as I was sure a man would be hanged that did such a thing, I could not see for what purpose they preached such sermons. This was not one of the kind of thoughts that had in it anything of childish levity; it was to me a serious reflection, arising from the idea I had that God was too good to do such an action, and also too almighty to be under any necessity of doing it. I believe in the same manner to this moment; and I moreover believe that any system of religion that has anything in it that shocks the mind of a child cannot be a true system."

The writer of that beautiful passage—for such it is—was eight years of age in 1745, he wrote the book in which it appeared in 1798, and his name was Thomas Paine.

Millions of people have read the *Age of Reason*. Thomas Paine laid the broad popular foundations of English Freethought. There has always been an active Freethought movement in England since he startled the Christian Churches with that magnificent challenge. And that movement—through its Carliles, its Holyoakes, and its Bradlaughs—has created the conditions which make it possible for a Christian preacher here and there to step a few paces in advance of his fellows without the fear of anything worse than a comic-opera martyrdom. Mr. Campbell's freedom to publish his criticism of the orthodox Deity was bought for him with a great price. He does not show that he is even aware of the existence of the noble army of real martyrs who suffered ostracism, calumny, poverty and imprisonment, generation after generation; the stalwart

pioneers who made the path easy for his daintier feet. But they will have their recognition, in spite of his silence, when the impartial historian in a future age writes the true history of the nineteenth century.

Meanwhile I have simply to say that every heresy in Mr. Campbell's book has been a commonplace in Freethought literature ever since I have known it.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be continued.)

Christians in China.

Indiscreet Letters from Peking; Being the Notes of an Eye-witness. Edited by B. L. Putnam Weale.

A STORY beginning with incapacity, timidity and petty squabbling over procedure, continuing with a want of initiative and lack of resource, and concluding with a carnage of loot, lust and brutality, such as reads more like the inroad of hordes of barbarians rather than that of the doings of "civilised" soldiers belonging to the Christian nations of the world. Such, in brief, is the record of the "eye-witness" whose letters compose the volume noted above. It is a view of the Peking trouble of 1900 that all should read; and although the editor tells us that much had to be omitted, enough is said to enable any intelligent reader to picture the rest. And one may form this picture with greater ease because of the vivid word-painting of the author. Nothing appears to be set down in malice, and nothing is extenuated. It is a plain, unvarnished tale, told by one who wields a ready pen, and describes all that he saw and took part in with a candor—even a cynicism—that enables the reader to live through the scenes that are described. Mr. Weale calls the book "the psychology of the siege"—it is all that, and it is, in addition, a striking lesson in the value of Christian training when men are brought face to face with the crude realities of life.

There is no need to describe at any length the siege of the European Legations in Peking by the "Boxers" and the Chinese troops during the summer of 1900. The British press kept the public well informed, and the story lost nothing in the telling. To the average person, the outbreak came as a surprise; yet it required no great wisdom to have foreseen it, and, indeed, the causes are apparent to anyone who looks up the government papers of the last forty years, and who studies the history of the relations between the European Powers and the Chinese. The European Powers have for long looked upon China as a country to be alternately bullied and plundered. The Chinese have had, perforce, to submit, but submission under such conditions only intensifies ill-feeling and deepens the resentment. And greater—for ill—than the dealings of the secular powers with the Chinese has been the influence of a fanatical Christian propaganda. It is a mistake to assume that the Chinese are a naturally intolerant people. There is no encouragement in either Confucianism or Buddhism for persecution, and even Mohammedanism has been no obstacle to political advancement in China. But the Christian missionary, wandering all over the Empire on the strength of an interpolated clause in a half-century old treaty, outraging native customs and feelings, setting the laws of the country at defiance, and encouraging their converts to do likewise, have been the means of arousing the bitterest antagonism. And when the storm breaks, as is usual, innocent and guilty suffer alike.

"Eye-witness" opens his account just before the siege of the Legations, and closes it immediately after. It is plain from what he says that, had there been anything like the proper foresight displayed by responsible Europeans, the outbreak would never have assumed the proportions it did assume. Or, having broken out, had there been anything like intelligent or adequate organisation, it would have collapsed long before the relief party reached Peking.

As it was, with the division of counsel and general chaos that prevailed, the marvel is that the "Boxers" did not succeed in accomplishing their object—that is, if their object really was the killing of the beleaguered whites. There were over nine hundred Europeans—men, women and children—shut up within the Legations, including some four hundred sailors and marines, and exclusive of a large number of native converts. Many will remember the story told by a London paper of the massacre of the women and children by the Chinese. The story was not true; but "Eye-witness" gives us a glimpse of a danger to which the women were exposed—from the inside. A number of "buxom Chinese school-girls" had been placed within a certain area in charge of some native Christians. Beyond was stationed a guard of Russians. One dark night the guard commenced firing at an imaginary enemy, steadily falling back meanwhile. The native Christians fled. Then the men placed their rifles against the wall, and disappeared within the enclosure. But, "unfortunately for them, a strong guard, sent to investigate this unexpected firing appeared, and presently the sailors were rescued, some with much-scratched faces. The girls, cat-like, had known how to protect themselves."

The dominant note in a large portion of the book under notice is—Loot. The looting did not commence after the relief, but before—from the moment the white troops touched Chinese soil. While the British public were being treated to highly-colored pictures of the noble Christian troops rushing to the relief of women and children in danger of wholesale massacre, these same Christian soldiers were busy looting. Among the earliest performances of the relieving troops was that of trying to sell looted articles to the people they had come to save. Says the writer:—

"Great quantities of things were offered for sale as quickly as they could be dragged from haversacks and knapsacks. Everybody had things for sale. We heard, then, that everything had been looted by the troops from the sea right up to Peking; that all the men had got badly out of hand in the Tientsin native city, which had been picked as clean as a bone; and that hundreds of terrible outrages had come to light. Every village on the line of march from Tientsin had been treated in the same way. Perhaps it was because there had been so little fighting that there had been so much looting."

It was a carnival of looting, from which few abstained. Visiting the principal church, the writer and others found there was no one to be seen.

"Everyone was away, out minding the new business—that of making good the damage done by levying contributions on the city at large.....The sailors and the priests and their converts, remembering that heaven helps those who helps themselves, had sailed out, and were reprovisioning themselves and making good their losses. Indeed, the only men we could find were some converts engaged in stocking up silver shoes, or *sycee*, in a secluded quadrangle. These had become the property of the mission by the divine right of capture."

Everybody yielded to the mania for loot—even the writer himself. "It was organised plundering, and everybody winked at it." Soldiers cleared out shops and houses, and hung up notices: "No looting permitted. This show is cleaned out." Newly-arrived soldiers, furious to find that earlier comers had had their pick of the choicest objects, made up for lost time "by stripping even the meanest streets of the valueless things which remain." The armies became "mere bands of traders, eternally selling or exchanging, comparing or pricing, transporting or shipping."

Criminal vandalism went hand in hand with general robbery. The writer describes how a Russian soldier lightened an overloaded cart of loot by throwing part of his cargo overboard.

"Three beautiful porcelain vases of enormous size and priceless value suffered this fate.....What did it matter? In Prince Tuan's palace I had seen, a couple of days before, the incredible sight of thousands of pieces of porcelain and baskets full of wonderful *objets de vertu* smashed into ten thousand atoms by the soldiery.....They only wanted bullion. Porcelain painted

to all the colors of the rainbow, and worth anything on the European markets—what did that mean to them?"

Vandalism hand in hand with robbery, and lust accompanying both. Here are two pictures which tell their story without any comment. The first is concerned with Chinese—known to the writer—respectable people, who came to him with tears streaming down their faces.

"Yet, even as they wept, they were dignified in a curious way, and you felt that you were in the presence of men who had been cruelly wronged. At length they began speaking. They had lost everything.....but that they did not mind. They were bitter and beyond consolation because they had lost the intangible—their honor. Each one had had women of their households violated. One, with many hideous details, told me how.Soldiers came in and violated all his womenkind, young and old. That account was no invention. Their blanched and haggard faces showed that it was only the truth they were speaking. About such elemental tragedies no one lies."

The other is an account by a European describing to the writer how Hsu Tung, an enemy to the Europeans, was—

"Swinging from his own rafters, he and his whole household—wives, children, concubines, attendants, all..... were swinging from ropes tied on with their own hands, and with the chairs on which they stood kicked from under them. Everywhere they have acted in the same way. They call it hanging, but it is not that; it is really slow strangulation, which lasts for many minutes, because at the last moment the victims become afraid, and try to regain their footholds.....And the wells near the Eastern Gates.....where all the women and girls have been jumping in. They are full of women and young girls—quite full.....They are hauling up the dead bodies, so that the wells will not be poisoned. I have seen them take six and seven bodies from the same well, all clinging together.....The place is full of dead people, nothing but dead people everywhere, and more are dying every minute.

Then he came up to me and whispered how soldiers were behaving after they had outraged women. It was impossible to listen. He said that our own inhuman soldiery had invited him to stay and see."

Nothing in history could furnish greater barbarity than is set forth in such statements as those cited. With so much that is said, one is curious as to the nature of the portions deleted. And the worst of it is that every line of the book carries its own testimony of accuracy. And the men who did these things were the products of centuries of Christian training, setting forth with blessings of the Christian Deity on their arms, and doubtless returning thanks to him for their success. Well, they were successful; but it is a success for which one must pay sooner or later. The Europeans were relieved, the Chinese Government penalised, the missionaries compensated, and the incident closed. Aye, but was it closed? Are the Chinese likely to forget? Robbery they might overlook; but how long will it be before the Chinese forget their outraged and murdered mothers, wives and daughters? Submit they must; but no people can act as the Christian troops in China acted without having the credit of it placed to their reckoning. Mole-eyed diplomatists may forget, missionaries may circulate their carefully-prepared falsehoods; but others know that things like these are indelibly branded upon the minds of those who are their contemporaries, and are handed on in a legacy of hatred to their successors.

C. COHEN.

The Making of the Gospels.—VII.

(Continued from p. 229.)

CHRIST'S PUBLIC MINISTRY.

AS we have seen, Jesus was represented as going about the country working miracles and teaching the people. In the three Synoptical Gospels, whose contents were derived from the more primitive Gospel, the entire public ministry of Jesus, with the exception of a few days preceding his arrest and

trial, is represented as confined to the northern province of Palestine—Galilee. And here the writer's almost complete ignorance of the geography of the province named is plainly apparent. Following Matthew's account, the places in Galilee which Jesus is stated to have visited are: Nazareth (iv. 13), Capernaum (iv. 13; viii. 5; xvii. 24), "his own city" (ix. 1), "his own country" (xiii. 54), "the country of the Gadarenes" (viii. 28), "the land of Gennesaret" (xiv. 34), "the parts of Tyre and Sidon" (xv. 21), "the borders of Magadan" (xv. 39), and "the parts of Cæsarea Philippi" (xvi. 13). These are all.

The expression "his own city" is generally said to refer to Capernaum, and "his own country" to Nazareth; but these are based only on conjecture. It is not stated in the Gospels that Jesus actually entered the towns of Tyre, Sidon, or Cæsarea Philippi—which, besides, were all three beyond the limits of Galilee—but only that he came into the neighborhood of those cities. The towns or villages which Jesus is alleged to have visited are thus limited to two—Capernaum and Nazareth—the other localities named being open tracts of country. But even this small number may be reduced to one; for "Nazareth" appears to be a purely imaginary place. The Jewish historian, Josephus, in his account of the War in Galilee and in his "Life," goes again and again over the place where the last-named town is marked on the atlas, but without ever once happening to stumble on it. The following are some of the cities and villages in Galilee incidentally mentioned by that historian:—

CITIES: *Sepphoris*, "the greatest city of all Galilee"; *Tiberias*, next in importance; *Garis*, near Sepphoris; *Scythopolis*, "the largest city of Decapolis"; *Taricheæ*, about four miles from Tiberias; *Bethmaus*, *Asochis*, *Besara*, *Zebulon Saab*, *Gishala*, *Garisme* and others.

VILLAGES: *Japhia*, "the largest village of all Galilee"; *Arbela*, *Bersobe*, *Selamis*, *Jotapata*, *Caphar-echo*, *Sigo*, *Cana*, *Capharnaum*, *Jamnia*, *Meroth*, *Achabare*, *Dabaritta*, *Chabola*, *Ruma*, *Gaharoth*, *Simonias*, *Seph*, *Meloth*, *Xaloth*, *Baca*, *Sennabris*, etc.

Now, setting aside such Gospel statements as "Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues"—which anyone acquainted with the name of a single town in that province might make—we find that only one of all these places appears to have been known to the three Synoptists—the little village of Capernaum, which they have transformed into a city of some importance. The author of the Fourth Gospel, it is true, mentions another village, *Cana*, and makes Jesus work a miracle there (the turning water into wine); but neither the miracle nor the place was known to the original Gospel-makers, otherwise the Synoptists who followed the primitive accounts would not have omitted the story in their Gospels.

If we attempt to follow the meanderings of Jesus in Galilee, as narrated in the Gospels, we soon come to an *impasse*. To take an example from the First Gospel, Jesus "entered into a boat" and arrived at "his own city" (Matt. ix. 1). After this, he "passed by from thence" (ix. 9) to some unnamed place, and again "passed by from thence" (ix. 27) to another nameless place; after which he "went about all the cities and villages" (ix. 35), etc. In reading a narrative of this character it soon becomes evident that we have nothing but a number of unconnected, undated and unlocated anecdotes clumsily pieced together; we have not a biography written by an eye-witness.

"THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD GOD."

A statement in the Book of Isaiah that "the spirit of the Lord God" was upon the writer (lxi. 1) was interpreted as a prophecy relating to Jesus Christ. In accordance with this perversion Jesus was represented as reading the passage in a synagogue in the mythical city of Nazareth.

"And he closed the book.....and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears" (Luke iv. 16-21).

As a punishment for this blasphemy the townsmen "cast him forth out of the city" in order to "throw him down headlong" from the cliffs. "But he passing through the midst of them went his way."

SPEAKING IN PARABLES.

A passage in the Book of Psalms (lxxviii. 2), which the Gospel-makers twisted into a prophecy referring to the Jewish Messiah, suggested the kind of teaching to be attributed to the Savior. This passage read:—

"I will open my mouth in a *parable*; I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us."

The word "parable" in the foregoing passage was not used to denote a short suppositional story like the "parables" found in the Gospels. It simply meant a rehearsal or recital of the wonders believed to have been wrought by the god Yahveh in leading his chosen people from Egypt. This small matter, however, had no effect upon the pious Gospel-makers. Jesus was represented as teaching by means of fictitious stories, suggested probably by Jothan's story of the Trees (Jud. ix.) or Nathan's fable of the Ewe Lamb (2 Sam. xii.). In one chapter in the first Gospel (Matt. xiii.) we find no less than seven parables arranged as delivered one after the other, namely: the Tares, the Mustard Seed, the Leaven, the Treasure hidden in a field, the Goodly Pearl and the Draw Net. After the fourth of these the Gospel writer says:—

"All these things spake Jesus in parables.....that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world."

The same writer makes Jesus tell his disciples that he speaks to the people in parables in order to fulfil a "prophecy" of Isaiah (vi. 9-10) "which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive," etc. Thus, though "God so loved the world" that he sent his only Son "to seek and to save" the whole human race, that Savior, when he came, confined his ministry to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," fed those lost sheep on parables they did not understand, and withheld from the wanderers the spiritual meaning of his allegorical teaching, lest, perchance, too many of them might repent, "and it should be forgiven them."

JESUS REJECTED BY THE JEWS.

Had Jesus really gone about working miracles of healing and raising the dead, as narrated in the Gospels, the whole Jewish nation, beyond the shadow of a doubt, would have received and welcomed him as a prophet sent by God. Recognising this fact, the Gospel-makers had to account for the rejection of their great thaumaturgus by his countrymen, and, as usual, found the answer in "prophecy." The author of the Fourth Gospel thus explains the matter:—

"But though he had done so many signs before them, yet they believed not on him; that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? For this cause they could not believe, for that Isaiah said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and he hardened their hearts; lest they should see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and should turn, and I should heal them. These things said Isaiah, because he saw his glory, and he spake of him" (John xii. 37-41).

The passages here cited (Isaiah liii. 1 and vi. 9-10) are not prophecies at all, but are statements of fact respecting the people of Isaiah's time. The blindness and hardness of heart refer to the making and worshiping of graven images (see Isaiah xli. 9-18). The "glory" which Isaiah says he saw was that of the god Yahveh (Is. vi. 1-3). Again, the veracious author of the Fourth Gospel represents Jesus as giving another reason why many of the Jews could not believe in him.

"All that which the Father giveth me shall come unto me.....No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him.....For this cause have I said

unto you that no man can come unto me except it be given unto him of the Father" (John vi. 37, 44, 65).

According to this luminous statement, only those could believe in Jesus who were incited to do so by "the Father." The "mighty works" might just as well not have been performed at all; for those whom "the Father" intended to save would have believed without them. We have now three excellent reasons why the Jews did not recognise Jesus as the Messiah: (1) "the Father" would not permit them to believe; (2) Jesus taught chiefly by parables which they did not understand; (3) "the Father" had blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts so that "they could not believe." Under these circumstances it must be a matter of profound astonishment to all except professional Christian advocates why "the Lord" sent his Son into the world at all. The only explanation I can offer is that "the Lord," if he exist, is a much-maligned personage, who was as innocent as the child unborn of the acts and inconsistencies attributed to him by the pious author of the Fourth Gospel.

ABRACADABRA.

(To be continued.)

Christian Charity.

"Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!"

So sang Thomas Hood, on a sick bed, more than sixty-two years ago, and the mournful lines are as true to-day as they were when they issued from his glowing heart. Generally speaking, Christian charity is conspicuous only by its absence. There is no denying that it is a beautiful and fascinating quality—on paper. A more splendid passage was never composed than 1 Cor. xiii. But in Christian practice we seldom see the love that "suffereth long and is kind," that "envieth not," that "vaunteth not itself," that is not "puffed up," and "doth not behave itself unseemly." In its relation to all other religions, Christianity has always been a cruel persecutor: they are all either wholly false, or so deplorably imperfect that every effort must be made to supplant them. Then think of the Christian attitude to all forms of Secularism. When a Christian minister, who is supposed to be a man of intelligence and some refinement, can write such a book as *Ithuriel's Spear*, in which Freethinkers are unblushingly calumniated, we need no further proof of the incapacity of the Church to be just to outsiders. But the lack of charity in the Church is evidenced, not only by its attitude to other religions and specially to Scepticism, but also by its attitude to those who are accounted heretics within its own borders. Catholicism persecutes Protestantism as an ungodly schism and as having no title to the covenanted mercies of heaven, and Protestantism returns the compliment by calling the Catholic Church all sorts of unchristian names.

Coming nearer home, do we find that the relation between the Church of England and Nonconformity is founded on charity? The ordination of Dissenting clergymen is often denounced as invalid; and there is many a rural district in England and Wales in which members of Nonconformist societies are shamefully ostracised and boycotted. And here again, whenever possible, the compliment is returned with compound interest. Indeed, it is safe to affirm that the uncharitableness of the Free Churches is quite proverbial. How often is it asserted on their public platform that if it had not been for their heroic testimony and brave deeds this country would have gone to rack and ruin long ago? Everybody is sick and tired of the frightful amount of self-laudation and disparagement of others indulged in at the annual meetings of the National Free Church Council.

Fixing our attention on these Free Churches we immediately learn that they are everlastingly persecuting one another. Doctrinal differences are always penalised. If a prominent man ventures to enunciate

views that are out of harmony with those held by the majority, he at once becomes a target to be riddled with envenomed shots. The present treatment of Mr. R. J. Campbell is a case in point. Nothing bad enough can be said of him. The bitterness of spirit shown towards him by such journals as the *Vanguard*, the *Christian* and the *British Weekly*, is simply disgraceful and nauseating. But to many the greatest surprise of all has been the cruel and cowardly review of Mr. Campbell's *New Theology* in the *Manchester Guardian* for April 2, by the Rev. Dr. A. M. Fairbairn, Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford. And yet, after all, there was nothing surprising about this review. This gentleman's arrows are usually well barbed. Reckless iconoclasm seems to be his particular vocation. Readers of his scholarly work, *Christ in Modern Theology*, are well aware of this characteristic. His delight is in pulling down, destroying, pulverising, not in any form of constructive work. In his famous Free Church Council sermon at Newcastle-on-Tyne, he damned *God and My Neighbor* with a cheap, delusive sneer; and many doubtless remember his slighting references to Herbert Spencer immediately after the great philosopher's death.

But let us return to his review of Mr. Campbell's book. We will hope that ere now he has had grace given him to be heartily ashamed of having ever written it. One is obliged to characterise it as bitter, spiteful, rancorous and untruthful. Dr. Fairbairn falls foul of *The New Theology* because it contains no expression of gratitude to Independence for the signal benefits which it has bestowed on the author. Surely, the critic must have taken leave of his senses when he framed that ridiculous charge. The book under review is a treatise on theology, not a chapter in autobiography, and any reference in it to the writer's indebtedness to Independency, if the indebtedness were real, would have been wholly irrelevant, as well as in bad taste.

Dr. Fairbairn declares that Independency took Mr. Campbell "to its bosom at once, and supplied him with a pulpit, without inquiring too narrowly into his credentials, which were academically inferior to what it usually requires." In point of fact, this, as it stands, is totally inaccurate. Mr. Campbell's academical career at Oxford University was exceptionally brilliant, and ended in his being placed in the second class in the Honor School of History and Political Science, and that in spite of the fact that he was seriously ill during the final honors examination. Can as much be said of the majority of Congregational ministers? Independency took Mr. Campbell to its bosom, not out of pity for a poor unfortunate man, but solely because he possessed the talents requisite to fill its empty pulpits.

One of the silliest and most unfair passages in this abusive review is the one in which the old Puritan, Thomas Goodwin, is summoned to curse the book and its author. In order to realise the subtle cruelty of this method of criticism, it is only necessary to bear in mind that Thomas Goodwin was the first minister of Mr. Campbell's present church. Here is the most juicy bit of the passage:—

"He [Goodwin] would have said: 'The new may be a bad theology, ill thought out and worse presented, more nearly allied to nonsense than to reason. But the proper answer to it is a better theology and arguments to commend the better to reasonable men.' He would not have named the author of *The New Theology* a 'theologian,' but would have held him too illiterate, ill-informed, and uncharitable to be so called. He would have replied: 'He may, indeed, be a preacher, a man of letters, a historian of affairs, a philosopher, or anything else in literature, but he is not enough of a scholar or original thinker to be a divine. He is, indeed, too easily provoked to be a genuine lover of truth. The only term that can describe his ignorance is a word he himself uses freely—"audacity." He may know how to speak, but how to think is an art he has still to acquire.'"

Such a veiled attack is fair neither to Thomas Goodwin nor to Mr. Campbell. Neither is it fair to in-

voke the late Dr. Parker in condemnation of his immediate successor. Mr. Henry Varley, Dr. Adamson, and Dr. Robertson Nicoll have been saying that Dr. Parker would have broken his heart had he foreseen the *New Theology*. Nonsense! Dr. Parker took to his bosom and proudly welcomed to his pulpit Henry Ward Beecher, who was as great a heretic as Mr. Campbell is; and some of the very men who are now taking his name in vain bitterly censured him for so doing.

When the divines are given to vilifying one another, when the Old Theology anathematises the New, and the New the Old, is it at all surprising that the people are beginning to ask, "What does it all mean?" Is it any wonder that many thoughtful men and women are irresistibly driven to the conclusion that theology, the New no less than the Old, is nothing but a house built upon the shifting sand of superstition? We read in the Bible that "every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation"; and nothing can be more certain than that supernatural religion, being full of internal divisions and antagonisms, is slowly tottering to its doom. Brotherly love has never been a feature of the Christian Church. Read the Epistles in the New Testament, and you will see that even the Apostolic Church was rent asunder by party strifes and animosities. Paul could not tolerate anybody that differed from him, and his rule was to deliver all such over to Satan. Dr. Fairbairn and Mr. Campbell are both Congregational ministers, and yet each pronounces the teaching of the other fundamentally erroneous; and naturally there can be no love lost between them, nor can the one be quite just to the other. Thus the people who profess to worship the God of love openly deny him in their conduct. Is it strange, then, that multitudes are being impelled to abandon religion altogether, and to make this world and this life their all in all? "Theologians are perpetually quarreling and wrangling and losing their tempers," they say, "whenever they write or talk about God and Christ and heaven, therefore we will concentrate on man and earth and time, finding therein our only abiding and absorbing interests." And who can blame them?

The tendency of the religious life is to create divisions and factions, between which no friendly, brotherly feeling can possibly exist. It would be impossible to read the history of the Church carefully and without prejudice during the various centuries, and not be powerfully impressed by this fact. We are told to day that Christianity means Socialism; but Socialism is an impossibility apart from love, and love is an impossibility between conflicting schools of theology. Whatever may be thought of Socialism as a proposed remedy for all existing social evils, it is a certainty that it cannot prevail under any form of Scriptural Christianity. What Jesus introduced was a kingdom, with himself as king, to whom all must be in absolute subjection. But now there is no agreement as to what he meant by the kingdom, or as to his own person and character as king, and the consequence is that the Church is not the home of love and harmony, but the battlefield of the creeds. In the Church, as now constituted, brotherly love cannot dwell; and thus, largely through his own fault, Paul's lofty eulogy of charity is practically worthless.

J. T. LLOYD.

Acid Drops.

Newman once reminded the Protestants that the Bible was a very large and composite book, from which passages might be quoted for or against almost anything. This was curiously illustrated in the Thaw trial. Mr. Delmas, for the defence, and Mr. Jerome, for the prosecution, both ended their last speech to the jury with a quotation from "Holy Scripture." One quotation clinched the case for the defence; another quotation clinched the case for the prosecution. Good old Book of God! No wonder Erasmus likened it to a wax nose which could be made to point any way required.

Writing on the Thaw case in the *Daily News*, Mr. C. F. G. Masterman, M.P., writes as follows:—

"New York hounded Maxim Gorki outside its borders because it could not endure the existence within them of a stranger who had brought with him the woman who was not his legal wife. It did not merely condemn him; it proscribed his existence; it refused him hotels and lodgings; it branded him through its Press, and threatened with utter ruin any individual who gave him a single night's shelter. And this week comes the news that one of the most 'respectable' New York papers—a paper with the same type of middle-class circulation as the *Daily Telegraph* in London—has pleaded guilty to the publishing for many years of a daily column of advertisements of disorderly houses and places of assignation."

This refers to the *New York Herald*, which has been fined over £6,000. Mr. Masterman does not recognise that the facts he relates are any reflection on the "Christian civilisation" of America.

Maxim Gorki is reported to be suffering from an advanced stage of consumption. He is only thirty-nine, and ought to have a long career before him. It is said that his illness was hastened by his experiences in America, which were excellently stated the other day in the "Literature" department of the *Daily News*:—

"Somehow or other it got about that the wife who accompanied him had not been married according to the rites of the Russian church. It was not stated that divorce is not recognised in Russian law; that in formally putting away his first wife he did so for the same reasons that men divorce them in this country; and that he went through a form of union with his second wife, which is socially, though not legally, recognised in Russia! Then this free city of New York, which tolerates and sometimes flatters millionaires who murder employees by slow processes, refused to receive Maxim Gorki, who, after Tolstoi, has done more than any other Russian man-of-letters in championing the cause of the poor, and in making known the true state of his country throughout Europe. No hotel in New York would receive him; he was ostracised by society; he suffered not only the bitterest disappointment and chagrin, but also actual physical exposure."

Fancy the city of the Thaw case making such a dead set at Maxim Gorki! Probably it was all the worse for him that he was discovered to be a Freethinker.

The good Christian city of New York which cast out Maxim Gorki is welcoming the Rev. C. F. Aked. This gentleman has left Liverpool, carrying with him cash presents from his old congregation, and is taking the pastorate of the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church—the millionaire gospel-shop of which the great John D. Rockefeller is a member. Answering a cable from America just before he sailed for New York, Mr. Aked said: "I am coming to America because America has drawn me. I am coming with a love of the American people in my heart. The ideals of America are my own." And the dollars of America will soon be his own too.

The way in which these men of God talk when they get a better job is enough to make a cat sick. You would fancy that they never heard of money in their lives, and couldn't tell the difference between five shillings and a sovereign.

Mr. Aked has chosen the subject of "A Ministry of Reconciliation" for his first sermon in New York. Reconciliation of past words with present actions.

"I am going to New York," said Mr. Aked in his last address, "I declare, in the presence of the living God, because in my heart of hearts I believe I can do a larger work for my master there, and a more enduring work for democracy than would be possible in this city or in this land." What a compliment to Liverpool and England! And what a monstrous flattery of himself. But the whole thing is humbug; and the declaration in the presence of the living God is one of those tricks of speech that men indulge in when they feel they may not be believed. Every sensible man knows why Mr. Aked went to New York. It was for the benefit of his health and his pocket.

With regard to Mr. Aked's "in the presence of the living God," we may say that the classic instance of that sort of thing is Peter's denying "with an oath" that he knew Jesus. There is a good story in Dr. M. D. Conway's *Autobiography* of a young Southerner who mounted one of Garrison's platforms and talked very fiercely. In the course of his defence of slavery, he twice affirmed his sincerity "as God is my witness." The second time, a very old negro woman named "Sojourner Truth," sitting on the platform, cried: "Young man, I don't believe God Almighty ever hearn tell of you." That settled him.

The *Christian World* has been celebrating its jubilee. For fifty years it has ably represented a portion of the "world" included in its title. It is what is called a Free Church paper—that is, a Nonconformist paper. True, it devotes a few news paragraphs every week to Church of England affairs, but both the Anglican and the Catholic Churches are really outside the scope of its and its readers' interest. Still, it has been, and is, one of the most liberal of the Christian papers, and is on the whole fair-minded. We say this in spite of the fact that it acted nearly as badly as the general run of Christian papers in the Torrey business. It quite understood Torrey's character; it knew that our charges against him of having grossly libelled Paine and Ingersoll were perfectly true; and it saw that Mr. Stead was doing a brave and generous thing in coming to our assistance in face of the opposition of his Christian friends; yet it never gave him a word of support, but went on puffing Torrey to the end of the chapter.

Amongst the special contributions by leading Christians to the jubilee number of the *Christian World*, is one by the Rev. R. J. Campbell, who lately declared himself a Socialist, and now says that Christianity "involves communism." Many poor people who would like to share with Mr. Campbell, for a start, will hope that this is true.

"Worse than an Infidel" was the heading of the Rev. J. H. Jowett's contribution to this jubilee number. Of course, he was quoting from Paul, but the words were an insult to thousands of men and women who were quite as good as himself. Mr. Jowett preaches at Birmingham. Our readers will not be surprised to learn that he has never said a single word for the Birmingham Secularists during their long persecution by the local authorities.

"Quartus," whoever he is, contributes an article to the *Manchester Guardian* on "The S. P. G. House." This looks like a contraction of "Sponging House," but it really means the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel—which we always thought was the special business of the Holy Ghost. It appears that this "venerable Society" is going into new premises. The foundation-stone of its new House is to be laid next Saturday (April 27); and as the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other pious and distinguished people will be present, we have no doubt that the building will always be under the particular care of "Providence." £27,000 was received from the Government on account of the old House, the site of which was wanted for public offices. Of this £14,000 was paid for a new site—the money going to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, so as to keep it in the family like, and the builder's contract is for £19,310. So there is plenty of cash in the gospel business yet. All that is wanted is converts—which are running very scarce. But "Quartus" points out that the Far East calls for conversion, and "counsel, courage and means will be required" for the job; and "the first two will not be lacking if the Church at large will supply the third." Why, certainly. Only find the "means" and you shall see Burmah, China and Japan converted in a jiffy. Now then for the first £50,000! And hurry up, please, as souls are going to—well, the wrong way—in the Far East every minute. Cheques and postal orders payable to the treasurer.

Beecham, the pill man, is dead. His domestic affairs were before the courts some time ago, and did not prejudice one in his favor. But he seems to have been a very good Christian—in spite of his vast wealth and the needle's eye. The service at the graveside was performed by a Congregational minister. We suppose that made it all right for him in Kingdom-Come.

"The Blood of Christ" has caused ructions at Hampstead. The chaplain of the workhouse complained of the unfermented wine provided by the Guardians for the paupers' sacrament. He called it "syrup," and applied for leave to use "a certain proprietary wine," which more effectively symbolised the sanguinary fluid that "flowed from Immanuel's veins." This application was opposed by the tectotal members of the Board, who gave way, however, when they were assured that the contemplated new beverage contained no more alcohol than a bottle of ginger-beer. But there was a lady member on that Board, and like a true daughter of Eve, she was curious; so she got the borough analyst to analyse a bottle of the new brand, and he certified that it contained 28 per cent. of proof spirit—which probably endeared it to the workhouse communicants. Theroupon the Guardians ordered a return to the "syrup." This order the chaplain disregarded. He provided the wine himself, diluting it with water, so that it must have been of tolerable strength; and when he was ordered to desist, he said that

the responsibility was his, and appealed to the Local Government Board. And there the matter rests for the present. But the funny thing is that none of these good Christians thinks of asking Jesus—whose blood is in question—how he thinks it ought to be "taken." We suggest that the Hampstead Board of Guardians should hold a prayer-meeting and get the question settled. Whatsoever ye ask, believing, that ye shall receive—the Bible says; and the Board should ask the Lord to decide between their "syrup" and the parson's port.

Laboring in the Lord's vineyard has its advantages. Dr. Clifford, for whom £7,000 was recently subscribed, has gone off till June for a holiday. We suppose his church salary goes on all the time. Pastor Thomas Spurgeon, whose health has been indifferent of late, has gone away for twelve months' rest. His salary goes on all the time, too. Lucky servants of the Lord!

Grimsby police must have a lot of time on their hands. They have been prosecuting a local tradesman for selling milk chocolate on Sunday. The stipendiary magistrate, however, decided that the milk chocolate was a refreshment, and dismissed the summons. We suggest that the Anti-Sabbatarians of Grimsby should present the Chief Constable with a box of milk chocolate—"For Sundays."

We once heard a clerical relative of the famous Prophet Cumming talking with rather more of "Scotch" on board than was good for his discretion. He ridiculed the doctrines he had to preach, especially the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer. "You may pray to God for a beefsteak till you're black in the face," he said, "but you'll never get one, if you're ever so hungry, unless you go round to old —, the butcher's, and plank down tenpence." That was the only way your prayer would be answered.

What that clerical said in his tipsy facetiousness, the Rev. Dr. Warschauer says in sober earnest. In last week's *Christian Commonwealth* he answered a correspondent who was anxious about prayer. "God," the reverend gentleman said, "will give us waving corn if we ask aright—that is, by tilling the ground." God gives us, that is to say, all that we get for ourselves. This is the sort of stuff with which the men of God fancy they can coax thinking men into the folds of their faith!

Dr. Warschauer forgets that God doesn't always give us waving corn if we ask aright by tilling the ground. Crops are sometimes spoiled by bad weather—sodden with wet, blighted with cold, or parched with heat. Where is the answer in that case? The fact is, that nature, takes it course, whether man profits or suffers; and all the talk of the theologians is no more than the dust on the driving wheel of a railway engine.

There was one really good thing in last week's *Christian Commonwealth*. It was a reference to "the great and growing mass of people who are coming to regard the Christian Church with cynical amusement."

Gartsherrie Parish Church, Coatbridge, has been struck by lightning. According to the *Glasgow Evening Times*, the Rev. Adam Maxwell, an eye-witness, says that after the "fire ball" struck the building it was "enveloped in flames and smoke" and he thought the whole structure was wrecked. But it turned out that only the ornamental turrets were destroyed; and no doubt some of the good Scottish Puritans will regard the fact as a sign of God's displeasure against pagan gimeracks on Christian churches. Some of the other Christians may wonder (they ought to) why "Providence" attacked one of its own houses in the thunder-storm.

Sir William Treloar, the Lord Mayor of London, entertaining a large company at what is known as the Easter banquet, referred to the "Spital sermon" which he had attended at Christ Church, Newgate. "Those who attend the service," Sir William said, "are rewarded by hearing the preacher offer a special prayer for the Court of Aldermen. As head of that body I have no hesitation in saying that no men in the world more require that service. My experience is a wide one, and I do not think that a prayer for them once a year is often enough. However, it has been going on for some hundreds of years now, and must have done some good, though I confess that I have not yet discerned it." Sir William was joking, of course; but many a true word is spoken in jest. City of London aldermen have been specially prayed for, at least once a year, for many centuries; yet the Lord Mayor is unable to see that it has done them any

good; and if he can't, who can? The less said about the efficacy of prayer after this the better.

There is no end to the folly of theologians. The Dean of Manchester (Bishop Welldon) recently lectured to a large audience in the John Rylands Library on "The evidence for the authenticity of ancient literature, both classical and sacred." Another theologian, the Rev. Dr. Moulton, occupied the chair; so we may take the lecturer's observations as perfectly deliberate. Bishop Welldon, of course, was really talking in the interest of "sacred" literature. It is pretty safe to say that he had no other object. He pointed out what scanty evidence there is for the authenticity of some of the most famous classical writings, including those of Aristotle and Tacitus; and he asked (the *Manchester Guardian* says) why sceptics "will accept secular literature based on slight evidence, and will reject sacred literature based on stronger evidence." Could anything be more ridiculous? We have other evidence of the existence of Aristotle and Tacitus; we have no other evidence of the existence of the alleged Gospel writers. Moreover, nothing in particular hangs to the authenticity of the disputed classical writings, while everything hangs to the authenticity of the disputed Gospels. The Gospels contain tremendous, supernatural statements, which ought to have the highest conceivable verification before they are believed; the writers of them are not so much authors as witnesses; we want to be sure that we have what they actually wrote, and that they were in a position to know it was true. Bishop Welldon fails to distinguish between the evidence of a primary witness in a most important case, where awful issues are at stake, and common statements about certain old writings in which nobody has any vital interest whatever. And the very fact that a man of Bishop Welldon's position and training and abilities can employ such arguments in support of his faith, shows what a hopeless plight it is in, and how surely it is doomed in the presence of educated human intellect.

Father Higley, of the Stepney Board of Guardians, seems a decent body. He has been complaining of the distribution of religious tracts in the infirmary. Some of them, he said, were extraordinary things. For his own part, he preferred a novel. Tracts made him swear. He objected to being asked "Are you saved?" How did he know? And how did the people who asked the question know either? Some of them might be disappointed when they got to the other side of Jordan.

Rev. R. J. Campbell must be getting a good profit from his *New Theology*—unless he is a worse business man than we take him to be. The book is a dear one, being printed on thick, common paper to make it bulk large; and as the publishers say it is selling very rapidly—all the big first edition being ordered before the day of publication—there ought to be a tidy little balance accruing to the author. This fact struck a Bristol man, who got up at a Conference in the David Thomas Congregational Church, and asked Mr. Campbell what he meant to do with the money? Would he devote the profits of his book to the "submerged tenth"? According to the *Daily News* report, there were cries of "Shame" and "Personal," and Mr. Campbell evaded the question. He said that he had no money in the world except his insurance, and if he left any when he died they might desecrate his grave. But all this is great nonsense. Mr. Campbell should have declined to answer the question at all, or have answered it straightforwardly.

The more orthodox section of Jews resented the presence of Rabbi Jacob Meir as the Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem. He appears to have been supported by the Reform parties, and the Sultan was requested to shift him—which he did. Rabbi Jacob Meir was deposed and Rabbi Elyahu Panisiel was appointed in his place. The new Chief Rabbi had to be escorted into Jerusalem by a force of soldiers and mounted police. How religionists love one another!

The Birmingham Watch Committee have had to consider the "disgraceful scenes" which are witnessed in Bull-street on Sunday nights, when the thoroughfare is thronged with disorderly young people. We submit that the Birmingham authorities would be better employed in keeping their city decent than in chivvying the Secularists from pillar to post. Secularists are deliberately deprived of the opportunity, which other bodies enjoy, of holding Sunday meetings in public buildings. Were they allowed the common rights of citizenship, they would probably get some of those "disorderly young persons" to listen to a lecture. But perhaps the authorities think they had better be vicious than thoughtless—or, at any rate, better be disorderly in the public streets than listening to a Secular lecture in a hall.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, April 21, Queen's (Minor) Hall, Langham-place, London, W., at 7.30, "What Did Shakespeare Think?"

April 28, Manchester.
May 5, Liverpool.

To Correspondents.

C. COHEN'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—April 21, Workman's Hall, Stratford; 28, a. Victoria Park, e. Workman's Hall, Stratford.

J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—April 21, Failsworth.

J. F. GARRETT.—Glad to hear that, although you are not having Sunday meetings at Mountain Ash at present, you are doing your best by the "Underground System" to spread Freethought in your district. Probably this will be the best method for some time to come in Wales. Thanks for your kind enquiry. Mr. Foote is very much better.

F. S.—See paragraphs. Thanks.

V. PAGE.—Compelled to shorten.

F. CARSTON.—Thanks for the hint; but would it prevent *burking*? Pleased to hear from a reader at such a distance.

H. H. MORRIS.—It must be very annoying to find that you cannot get your *Freethinker* till eight or ten days after date. But the fault must lie with your local newsagent or with the wholesale agent who supplies him. The *Freethinker* is obtainable by all wholesale agents at our publishing office late on Wednesday and early on Thursday, and is on sale in many newsagents' shops hundreds of miles distant from London on Thursday evening. Put pressure on your newsagent, and, if need be, get him to put pressure on his wholesale agent.

CASTOR.—Thanks for cuttings.

W. DAY.—Pleased to hear that you so enjoy reading the *Freethinker* and that your Catholicism is now left far behind.

FALKIRK SECULARIST.—We have no room for more paragraphs this week, but will deal with the cutting in our next. Glad you relish our "Acid Drops." They are meant to be tasty, but also nutritious.

"SHADOW OF THE SWORD."—You are right. Andrew Carnegie's reference to the combined action of the Great Powers, including America, for "a certain purpose" in China, was remarkably unfortunate. That combined action meant unlimited murder of men and violation of women. If that is the way in which "peace" is to be enforced, it would be better to have open, and therefore more honest, war. The great Saint Andrew should really choose better illustrations.

T. A. KING.—We keep your generous letter by us for the present. The whole question will be dealt with presently. We have been waiting for the psychological moment to speak plainly about the financial aspect of the *Freethinker*, and it is just arriving.

W. H. DEAKIN (Bombay).—Year's subscription received and placed to your credit. You appear to have overlooked our assurance that your *Freethinker* will never be stopped until you order it to be so. Your remittance for the Symes Fund arrived too late for acknowledgment in the list, and Mrs. Symes had already left for Melbourne; but we shall enclose the amount when we write to her on other matters. Thanks for your kind enquiries and good wishes.

G. O. WARREN.—Your interesting letter about Ingersoll's kindness shall appear in our next. He was indeed the soul of generosity. Glad you liked our first article on the New Theology, and pleased to hear you have joined the Secular Education League through its secretary. Others, we know, have done the same. Our only object in having members' forms passing through the N. S. S. office is to see who are joining, so that we may keep our own party "up to the scratch." We shall be writing you in a few days on the other matter.

OLD ATHENÆUM AUDITOR.—You say that you and some of your friends would very much like to hear Mr. Foote recite Mark Antony's speech over the dead body of *Cæsar* again. Well, without absolutely committing himself to it, he will try to oblige at Queen's Hall on Sunday evening.

J. J. WALKER.—Always glad to receive cuttings that may serve as pegs on which to hang paragraphs.

ELIZABETH LECHMERE.—Your efforts deserve success. We hope some of the papers you send to will be liberal enough to insert. The notion that Freethinkers are unhappy people is, as you say, an absurd misconception.

T. B. HALL.—See paragraph in "Sugar Plums." You will get them shortly.

THE COHEN "SALVATION ARMY" TRACT FUND.—Previously acknowledged, £16 14s. 9d. Since received: George Payne, £1 1s.; D. Stokes, 2s.; F. Reed, 1s.; G. F. Finn, 5s.; H. Jessopp, 10s.; H. N., 10s.

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

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

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

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

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Sugar Plums.

Many ladies were present at Mr. Foote's lecture at Queen's Hall on Sunday evening. They appeared to enjoy what he had to say on the subject of "Christianity and the Woman Question," and joined in the laughter and applause quite as readily as the men. At the end of the lecture Mr. Foote dealt with the Woman Question from his own point of view, carefully stating that he committed no one but himself. Certainly he carried the audience along with him in his view that the Family was in all countries, all ages, and all stages of culture, the permanent nucleus of civilisation; and that the permanent relations of men and women would have to be those which best subserved its highest evolution. Several questions were asked after the lecture, but there was no serious opposition.

Mr. Foote delivers the second (and last) of these special Queen's Hall lectures this evening (April 21). He will deal with the question, "What Did Shakespeare Think?" The mind of the greatest of men on the greatest of subjects should be interesting enough to attract another good audience. This will be an anniversary address. Shakespeare's death-day, and apparently his birthday, was the twenty-third of April, and the twenty-first is the nearest Sunday.

Mr. Lloyd delivers two lectures to-day (April 21), afternoon and evening, in connection with special services at the Failsworth Sunday School. We hope the local "saints" will muster in strong force.

Manchester friends who were disappointed at not hearing Mr. Foote some time ago, when he was prevented from lecturing by indisposition, will have an opportunity of hearing him next Sunday (April 28). He will then be speaking at the Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, All Saints, both afternoon and evening; and as his subjects are likely to prove attractive, those who want to secure seats, especially in the evening, should be in good time.

Liverpool "saints" will please note that Mr. Foote's lectures in their city on Sunday, May 5, will be delivered in the big Picton Hall, which, of course, takes some filling. The advertising of the meetings will be done on a fairly liberal scale, but there always remains a work for the "saints" to do. They should give publicity to the lectures by word of mouth in the various intercourses of daily life. By this means a hundred of them (not to say more) could easily make Mr. Foote's visit known to thousands of people.

Whit-Sunday is the date of the National Secular Society's Annual Conference, which is to be held this year in London. The business sittings will take place, morning and afternoon, as already announced; and there will be a public meeting at Queen's (Minor) Hall in the evening, which will be addressed by Messrs. Foote, Cohen, Lloyd, Davies, and perhaps other speakers. We hope Branches are making arrangements to be represented, and that a good many individual members will make it convenient to attend.

Branches and individual members of the National Secular Society will please remember that all notices of motion for the Conference Agenda must be in the Secretary's hands by Thursday, April 25, at the latest. That is the date of the Executive meeting.

Applicants for copies of Mr. Cohen's "Salvation Army Tract" who are kept waiting will have their orders attended to directly the fresh supply reaches us from the printers.

We did not see our way to put a fresh supply on order until we received more subscriptions towards the cost of production. Enough has come in since our last appeal to justify us in proceeding. This does not mean, however, that further subscriptions will not be required. They will.

The Birmingham Branch is making Mr. Foote an unusual sort of present. The members saw a published plate of the wreck of the *Berlin*; that set them thinking of Mr. Foote's article on the same subject entitled "Providence"; and they decided to frame the plate and the article suitably, and ask him to accept it as an appreciation of what the secretary is good enough to call his "splendid treatment of the subject." We understand that the picture will soon be on the way, and our editor will be honored in receiving it.

Mr. W. T. Stead, in the April *Review of Reviews*, notices the formation of the Secular Education League as "one of the outstanding portents which ought to warn both Church and Chapel of the inevitable results of their continued wranglings." "Besides the usual war-horses of the secular army," Mr. Stead says, "it has recruited various ministers of religion, including the Rev. R. J. Campbell, Silas K. Hocking, and Walter Walsh, who find themselves rubbing elbows with Mr. G. W. Foote, of the *Freethinker*, who is a member of the Executive Committee." Mr. Stead admits that "the secular system is the only logical solution of the education controversy."

Editor Moore, of the *Blue Grass Blade*, Lexington, Kentucky, died some months ago, but the paper reaches us still, and its interest is well sustained. The last number to hand opens with a reproduction of our article on "Satan," written a few weeks ago on the death of the great Italian poet Carducci. There is one very funny blunder in this reproduction. At the foot of our first column every week is the continuous number of the paper from the beginning; and the *Blade* printer (they are all demons!) has worked the number into the text. Satan is speaking, and he talks (in the *Blade*) as follows: "The heroes and martyrs of liberty and progress 1,335 in every age have drunk of the strength of my spirit." We had to wipe our eyes over that 1,335.

Mr. Frederick Rogers, writing in the *Treasury*, denies that the Labor party is irreligious. Mr. Rogers is an earnest Churchman, so he does not see more irreligion than he can help. He says he does not know a single Atheist among the Labor leaders of to-day. But who are the Labor leaders? Mr. Blatchford, Mr. Hyndman, Mr. Quelch, and even Mr. Bernard Shaw, when he speaks plainly, are all Atheists. Mr. Rogers says that most of the Labor leaders were avowed Atheists thirty-five years ago. Naturally. Those were the pioneer days. It took some real strength and courage to be a Labor leader then. No wonder they were mostly Atheists. George Odger, the first Labor leader in England, was an Atheist. Feebler persons can do the work now.

Go through the history of religions, consult the various accounts of savage and barbarous faiths at present extant, and you will find that the principle of terror, springing from the unknown, is the essential feature in which they all agree. This terror inevitably begets slavishness. We cannot be cowardly in this respect without its affecting our courage in others. The mental serf is a bodily serf too, and spiritual fetters are the agencies of political thralldom. The man who worships a tyrant in heaven naturally submits his neck to the yoke of tyrants on earth. He who bows his intellect to a priest will yield his manhood to a king. Everywhere on earth we find the same ceremonies attending every form of dependence. The worshiper who now kneels in prayer to God, like the courtier who backs from the presence of the monarch, is performing an apology for the act of prostration which took place alike before the altar and the throne. In both cases it was the adoration of fear, the debasement of the weak before the seat of irresponsible power.—G. W. Foote, "*Flowers of Freethought*."

A true soul will disdain to be moved except by what natively commands it, though it should go sad and solitary in search of its master a thousand years. The few superior persons in each community are so by their steadiness to reality and their neglect of appearances. This is the euphrasy and rue that purge the intellect and ensure insight.—Emerson (Letter to M. D. Conway).

Magic and Prayer.—II.

BY THE LATE JOSEPH SYMES.

(Concluded from p. 236.)

THE most potent charm ever used was, and is, the name of some god, the highest of them, where known.

1. Amongst the Chaldeans the name of Hea, if pronounced, was sufficient to bend everything in earth or Hades, just as that of Jesus was at a later date.

2. Amongst Hindus the pronunciation of the word *Om* or *Aum*, is said to have similar power.

The gods were very reticent formerly respecting their names; and would not, as a rule, reveal them to any. Thus Hea would impart his name to none but his only begotten son. The reason for this reticence was that whoever knew the name and pronounced it could compel the God to do his bidding.

3. The Jews say Jesus went into the temple and stole the *tetragrammaton*, or name of four letters, which was kept there. This he sewed up in a wound in his thigh, and thus escaped. With this name he performed all his miracles. The name referred to is usually translated "Lord" in the Bible, or else merely transliterated Jehovah.

4. This superstition of the divine name is seen in the Bible and runs through Christianity from first to last.

(1.) When Jacob wrestled with the man, or *el*, or angel, or ghost, he demanded his name. The wary God refused. We see his reason. If Jacob had secured his name, he could have been able to command the ghost, as Prospero did Ariel (Gen. xxii. 29).

(2.) Manoah, the father of Samson, begged the angel who announced the birth of his son to say what was his name. But the angel did not comply (Judges xiii. 18).

(3.) Moses demands the name of the God of the burning bush (Exodus iii. 13, 14); but he was put off with a senseless formula instead.

(4.) The Israelites were forbidden to take the divine name in vain. Either this meant that they were not to use the name at all, or else that they were to invoke it only on special occasions, because the God did not intend to be disturbed at common times, nor compelled to perform trivialities. By saying he would not hold guiltless the man who transgressed, he hinted that, though he performed the work for which he was invoked, it should be the worse in the long run for the man who used his name for a trifle.

(5.) Jesus promises his disciples the power to cast out devils by the use of his name; and declares that whatsoever they shall ask in his name shall be done. And his name made a lame man strong (Acts ii. 16).

(6.) In the following passage we seem to be reading of the Chaldean Hea and his Son Marduk:—"God hath given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth" (Phil. ii. 9, 10).

(7.) Divines have never been able to give any intelligible explanation of baptism and prayer in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. But it becomes perfectly clear in the light of Magic. The water of baptism was originally intended to cast out the Devil and all evil, just as now it is the standard cure for original sin. And prayer in the name of Jesus is but the Chaldean superstition reappearing, for amongst them prayers were of no avail unless offered through a mediator.

When the Egyptian gods were called by their names and did not appear or answer, the worshiper proceeded to threaten them (Lenormant's *Chaldean Magic*, p. 101), just as Prospero did Ariel. The Greeks also had their formulae for compelling the gods to assist them. And have we not traces, at least, of it in the Bible?

1. Jacob threatened that he never would let go his angel unless he blessed him. And in recent times,

Charles Wesley has expressed the same idea in his hymn upon that subject :—

"In vain thou strugglest to be free,
I never will unloose my hold !

Speak, or thou never hence shalt move."

This, I believe, is generally called "holy boldness." The reader may designate it as he pleases.

2. When Moses undertook the cause of the Israelites, the Lord cried, "Let me alone"; showing thereby that Moses was too powerful for him.

3. The case of Balaam is very instructive. In that story we behold the God of Israel nervous, agitated, afraid, hesitating. A curse upon Israel, if successfully pronounced, would evidently lead to serious calamity, in spite of God's efforts to frustrate its power. Hence he first appeals to Balaam not to go with the messengers of Balak; then he hesitatingly consents, on condition of his not pronouncing a curse. Then, to make sure, he sends his angel with a sword to bar the way of the enchanter. Then he reluctantly permits him to proceed.

Balaam endeavors to weave his meshes to catch Israel; to get his enchantments in order; but God succeeds in spoiling them. One after another they fail; though the contest is exceedingly severe. Jehovah is all the while in a fever; for if Balaam succeeds, he must curse whom he wished to bless, even his own chosen people! Here is the key and the only key to this great mystery, which has never been anything but a profound and insoluble one to all orthodox commentators. The gods, in ancient times, were under the control of Magic when properly conducted; the Jewish gods were no exception to the general rule, as the Bible plainly hints in the cases above referred to.

To be sure, like all superstitions, the old Magic has been wonderfully toned down and modified in process of time. But whatever its changes, its *essential nature* has never altered. Be it in the form of sacrifice, magic figures, amulets, talismans, chants, psalms, or prayers, its nature is the same; it is an appeal to the unknown, to spirits, good and bad. Weakness and ignorance are always the prompting causes. And as man becomes more and more enlightened, magic and prayer become *impossible* operations. Those performances have ceased respecting phenomena against which they were formerly specially employed. Whatever savages may do, it is not *possible* for civilised men now to employ any sort of appeal to the supernatural against an eclipse, or comet, or earthquake, or volcanic eruption. Even when prayer is at all used respecting physical phenomena, it is now used without heart and without faith. If no prayers respecting those things existed in Prayer Books, it would be totally impossible to invent them now. The world is too old to strike out anything new in superstition. It can only mumble heartlessly the formularies of the dark and dismal past; mumble them, that is, for form-sake, until the performances at last shall die of sheer inanition.

No doubt prayer *does* give satisfaction to those who have acquired an over-mastering habit in that direction and a taste for the practice. So does Magic. Any exercise, good or bad, silly or wise, rational or insane, will satisfy those who have been taught to regard it as a sacred duty. In this respect, one superstition is just as good as any other.

And lastly, the old Magic was every whit as *respectable* as the modern remnants of it still performed in churches and chapels. The reader who disagrees with the views above expressed may perhaps examine the subject for himself.

Paine's Mighty Mind.

"To the world, thou mass of civilised and uncivilised intelligence, is presented this work. It contains truths of the highest importance. The individual, whose life this is, devoted his existence to thy good."

So reads the dedication of the biography of Dr. John Walker, Graduate of the University of Leyden,

Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, London, etc., etc.

Dr. Walker was in France under the directorial government in 1797, in company with Thomas Paine and other proscribed British subjects. And at a dinner held by them, James Napper Tandy, taking his glass, called out, "Gentlemen, may the tri-colored flag float on the Tower of London and on the Birmingham Tower of Dublin Castle."

Paine, disregarding the ill-treatment he had received in losing his legislative seat by the constitution of *de l'an trois*, joined gaily in the toast, exclaiming, on seeing Dr. Walker not seconding the proposal, "Walker is a Quaker with all its follies. I am a Quaker without them."

Among the guests was Thomas Muir, recently arrived from Spain, "miserably mutilated." Thus, Paine, Tandy and Muir, formed a representation for England, Ireland and Scotland, in the metropolis of France; and no Frenchman hated more than they the then existing government of Britain.

Among the Doctor's notes is a reference to the proceedings of the council of "Five Hundred," held at the Odeon Theatre, in regard to newspaper editors, publishers and printers; many of whom were sentenced to deportation in the unhealthy climate of Cayenne.

Dr. Walker also helped Paine in translating some legislative decrees of the Cesalpine republic, which translations, Paine determined to send to Ireland, to enlighten the minds of the people previous to an expected invasion of that country.

"As a politician," says Dr. Walker—

"There can be no question that Paine was a man of the most gigantic genius and of the soundest practical knowledge. The blessings he has conferred on society by his *Rights of Man*, outweigh those of his *Age of Reason*; and there can be little doubt, when the facts now to be noticed in reference to this wonderful individual are detailed, that his disgust at the Christian system originated in the horror at the practices which, previous to that time, in the established English Church, were, and in the latter, are, solemnised under the name of Christianity."

These facts are interesting, as showing that Thomas Paine had sympathies which adorn our nature.

Dr. Walker was with Paine as a great enemy of slavery in all its forms.

One day, he enquired of Paine how it was to be accounted for that he had not yet taken up the pen to advocate the cause of the blacks.

Paine's answer offers as great a testimony to his sound judgment as it does honor to his feelings :—

"An unfitter person for such a work could hardly be found. The cause would have suffered in my hands. I could not have treated it with any chance of success; for I could never think of their condition but with feelings of indignation."

There are other facts recorded by Walker showing Paine's true moral courage and political wisdom, essential to the evolution of events in which he was intimately concerned. For instance, the counsel that Thomas Paine had the courage to offer, in the French National Convention, on attempting to save the life of Louis XVI., must be approved of by every liberal mind :—

"He proposed that the fallen king should be sent to the United States, where he would find many friends, not forgetful of the aid he had rendered them in the days of need when striving to shake off the British yoke."

On this occasion, Lord Edward Fitzgerald acted as interpreter when Paine also opposed Marat, who clamored for the King's death. Paine, however, not succeeding in this, did deliver individuals from difficulties in troublesome times.

Another instance is related showing his prudence founded on a knowledge of human nature. Young Wolstoncroft had written home, expressing the hope that the British Navy, in which he had served, would never debase its flag. The letter was intercepted by Americans, the seal broken, and the letter taken to the police. Wolstoncroft was invited to breakfast

with a "friend," was entrapped and handed over to an escort in waiting. Dr. Walker went immediately to his friend, Thomas Paine, who observed:—

"My interference at this moment would be premature. Let them alone awhile, till their fury be somewhat dissipated in the violence of their proceedings, and then I shall not find any difficulty in obtaining his liberation."

The place where Thomas Paine chose his residence was at the tree of liberty, Rue Odeon, at the house of Bonville, the printer. Here the Doctor frequently visited Paine, and the impressions from contact with this great politician were, that he was a man of gigantic practical genius, who made, while other men took baby-steps, the strides of a giant.

Dr. Walker says that he knew Paine to be a sincere man, a well-reasoned lover of truth and justice, and to have a thorough contempt for any distinctions except those founded on real merit; and when the Church and State parties could not meet his reasonings, they resorted to the foul method of attempting to blacken his character.

W. A. V.

Adam's Breeches.

BLUSH not, fair reader; nothing is coming to offend your modesty. No doubt you have seen pictures of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, dressed in the primitive costume of simple innocence, or, as Hans Breitmann says, "mit noddings on." And perhaps you felt the remarks of some thick-skinned friend at your side as rather embarrassing. But our intention is to take the Grand Old Gardener and his wife at a later stage, when they got clothes, and laid the foundation of all the tailors' and milliners' businesses in creation.

For some time, nobody knows how long, whether six hours or sixty years, Adam and Eve never discovered their nakedness. It never occurred to them that more than one skin was necessary. And as the climate was exquisite, and the very roses grew without thorns, they had no need of overcoats or sticking-plaster. But one day they ate an apple, or for all we know a dozen, and they and the world underwent a change. "My dear Adam," said Eve, "you are quite shocking; why don't you dress yourself?" And Adam replied, "My dear Eve, where is your dressing-gown?"

Necessity is the mother of invention, and when a woman wants a dress she will get it somehow. There was no linen or woollen, so they had recourse to fig leaves, which were large and substantial. Needles and thread turned up miraculously, and Eve took to them by instinct. She sat down on a grassy mound, and worked away, stitch, stitch, while Adam looked on with the ox-eyed stupidity of his sex in presence of a lady engaged in this interesting occupation. In half an hour, more or less, she produced two pairs of—well, yes, BREECHES. The Authorised Version calls them aprons, but we may believe it was a double-barreled arrangement. This at any rate was the opinion of the translators of the famous Breeches Bible, first published in folio in 1599, in which the seventh verse of the third chapter of Genesis reads—"And they sowed fig-tree leaves together, and made themselves breeches," from which translation it has been ingeniously argued "that the women had as good a title to the breeches as the men."

There is no dispute as to the color of Adam's breeches. They were green. Hence that universal wit and recondite scholar, the author of *Hudibras*, represents the knight's attendant, the worthy Ralpho, as

"For mystic learning wondrous able,
In magic Talisman and Cabal,
Whose primitive tradition reaches
As far as Adam's first green breeches."

Such was the substance and color of Adam's first unmentionables. They were soft and cool, and infinitely preferable to the coarse articles purveyed in English bathing-machines. But they were hardly calculated to stand the wear and tear of the life of labor to which Adam was doomed after the Fall, and before Jehovah evicted his tenant he took pity on the poor fellow's limited wardrobe. "Poor devils," he said to himself, "that fig-leaf arrangement won't last them long. It's sure to burst the first time Adam hoes potatoes. I'll start them with something stronger. Perhaps the lass will find out how to rig herself. There's the first pond for a looking-glass, and I guess it won't be long before she gets Adam to hold a skein of wool. But meanwhile I must do something for her dolt of a husband. Yes, he shall have a new pair of breeks."

And Jehovah made them. Not of shoddy, or good woollen, but stout leather. Adam changed his green breeches for brown ones, and when he got them on he said, "My God, ain't they hot!" Eve declared she would never wear a thing like that. "I don't waddle," she exclaimed, "and I won't look bandy." So a committee of seven archangels was appointed to find a fresh pattern.

Leaving Eve's outfit alone, and confining our attention to Adam's, we may ask a few questions about his second pair of breeches. Let no one object that such questions are frivolous. Did not England ring once with tidings of O'Brien's breeches? And shall it be thought undignified to take an interest in Adam's? Nor let any one object that such inquiries are blasphemous. They are obviously prompted by a spirit of reverence. What else, indeed, could excite our curiosity about an old pair of breeches that were worn out many centuries before the Flood?

What were the dimensions of Adam's breeches? The Bible does not tell us his altitude, but as he lived nine hundred and thirty years, and perhaps had a fourth of that time to grow in, it is not surprising that the Jews regarded him as excessively tall. His original height was incalculable; when he stood upright his head reached to the seventh heaven. But his appearance alarming the angels, the Lord flattened him down to a thousand cubits. Fifteen hundred feet, therefore, was his height before he shrank away subsequently to his expulsion from Paradise. Consequently his breeches must have been about eight hundred feet long, and the circumference proportionate. Suits might have been carved out of them for a whole regiment of Dutchmen.

What animal did Jehovah kill and flay for such an extensive skin? Even the mammoth would be ridiculously insufficient. We presume, therefore, that a wholesale slaughter of beasts took place, and that Adam's breeches were made of a multitude of skins. These were, of course, of divers colors or shades, and the garment must have borne some resemblance (to compare great things with small) to the well-mended trousers of a poor fisherman, blessed with a careful, industrious wife, who makes one pair last him her lifetime by insinuating fresh patches as the old ones wear away.

Happily the world was not then peopled, or Adam's life would have been unbearable. There were no little boys, about two hundred feet high, to pass exasperating remarks, such as "Who's your tailor?" Does the missis know you're out?" "Hullo, old Patchwork!"

How long was Jehovah employed? Did he give the breeches out in sections to the angels, and do the connections himself? According to the Bible he made them all alone, but we may well assume an omission in the narrative, and give him assistance in executing such a liberal order.

How did he kill the animals that furnished the skins? Did they die instantaneously at his order, or did he slaughter them with a knife and a polcaxe? How did he dress the skins? Were tan-pits constructed? Were the usual chemicals employed, or did Jehovah's science only extend to the use of bark?

The ingenious reader will be able to ask a number of questions for himself. Our own must be brought to a close. We have only to add that the world is impoverished by the loss of Adam's breeches. Those who have read Dr. Farrar's *Life of St. Paul* will recollect how he sheds rhetoric and tears on the Apostle's old cloak. But what was that battered garment in comparison with the subject of this article? Not only were Adam's leather breeches the first piece of tailor's-work in the world, but they were worn by the father of all of us, and made by God himself. Such an article would be better worth seeing than the coats of kings and emperors. But, alas, it is lost. Yet the voice of Hope whispers it may be found. Who knows? "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy." Adam's breeches, too dilapidated for use or decency, may have been carefully rolled up and preserved by Seth. Perhaps they were taken into the Ark by Noah. And when the regions of Mesopotamia are thoroughly explored, they will perhaps be found in some deep cave or dry well, carefully wrapped in waterproof, and accurately ticketed. Oh what joy when they fall into the hands of the Christian Evidence Society! Then will the faithful dance with glee, even as David danced before the Ark of God; then will the infidel slink away disgraced and crestfallen; and then will the Christians cry out to the Huxleys of the world, "Oh ye of little faith, who denied the existence of Adam, come and see his breeches!"

—Comic Sermons and other Fantasia. G. W. FOOTE.

In every country, my friend, the bonzes, the brachmans and the priests, deceive the people; all reformations begin from the laity; the priests point us out the way to heaven with their fingers but stand still themselves, nor seem to travel towards the country in view.—Goldsmith.

A PHYLACTERY.

Wise men I hold those rakes of old
Who, as we read in antique story,
When lyres were struck and wine was poured,
Set the white Death's Head on the board
Memento mori.

Love well! love truly! and love fast!
True love evades the dilatory.
Life's bloom flares like a meteor past;
A joy so dazzling cannot last—
Memento mori.

Stop not to pluck the leaves of bay
That greenly deck the path of glory,
The wreath will wither if you stay,
So pass along your earnest way—
Memento mori.

Hear, but not heed, though wild and shrill,
The cries of faction transitory;
Cleave to *your* good, eschew *your* ill,
A Hundred Years and all is still—
Memento mori.

—Colonel John Hay.

THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN.

The distinction and end of a soundly constituted man is his labor. Use is inscribed on all his faculties. Use is the end to which he exists. As the tree exists for its fruit, so a man for his work. A fruitless plant, an idle animal, does not stand in the universe. They are all toiling, however secretly or slowly, in the province assigned them, and to a use in the economy of the world; the higher and more complex organisations, to higher and more catholic service. And man seems to play, by his instincts and activity, a certain part that even tells on the general face of the planet, drains swamps, leads rivers into dry countries for their irrigation, perforates forests and stony mountain-chains with roads, hinders the inroads of the sea on the continent, as if dressing the globe for happier races.—*Emerson.*

Daniel De Foe, who spent his whole life, and wasted his strength, in asserting the right of the Dissenters to a Toleration (and got nothing for his pains but the pillory), was scandalised at the proposal of the general principle, and was equally strenuous in excluding Quakers, Anabaptists, Socinians, Sceptics, and all who did not agree in the *essentials* of Christianity—that is, who did not agree with him—from the benefit of such an indulgence to tender consciences.—*Hazlitt.*

Behind every earthly despotism there is a heavenly one. The rulers of mankind overawe the people by religious terrors. They keep a body of men in their pay, the black army of theology, whose business it is to frighten people from their rights by means of a ghost behind the curtain. Nobody has ever seen the bogie, but we are taught to believe in it from our infancy, and faith supplies the deficiencies of sight. Thus we are enslaved by our own consent. Our will is suborned against our interests. We wear no chains to remind us of our servitude, but our liberty is restrained by the subtle web of superstition, which is so fine as to be imperceptible except to keen and well-practised eyes, and elastic enough to cheat us with a false sense of freedom.—*G. W. Foote, "Flowers of Freethought."*

NO DIRECTING INTELLIGENCE.

In human affairs everything happens by chance—that is, in defiance of human ideas, and without any direction of an intelligence. A man bathes in a pool, a crocodile seizes and lacerates his flesh. If anyone maintains that an intelligence directed that cruelty, I can only reply that his mind is under an illusion. A man is caught by a revolving shaft and torn to pieces, limb from limb. There is no directing intelligence in human affairs, no protection, and no assistance. Those who act uprightly are not rewarded, but they and their children often wander in the utmost indigence. Those who do evil are not always punished, but frequently flourish and have happy children. Rewards and punishments are purely human institutions, and if government be relaxed they entirely disappear. No intelligence whatever interferes in human affairs. There is a most senseless belief now prevalent that effort, and work, and cleverness, perseverance, and industry, are invariably successful. Were this the case, every man would enjoy a competence, at least, and be free from the cares of money. This is an illusion almost equal to the superstition of a directing intelligence, which every fact and every consideration disproves.—*Richard Jefferies.*

OLD "NEW THEOLOGY."

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN DR. CONVERS FRANCIS AND
THEODORE PARKER.

(Reported in Dr. M. D. Conway's *Autobiography*.)

- F. "I cannot go along with you, Parker."
P. "What's the trouble?"
F. "Oh, you reject the supernatural in Christianity."
P. "Do you believe in it?"
F. "Certainly."
P. "Do you believe that a fish came up with a penny in its mouth?"
F. "Well no, not that."
P. "Do you believe that a fig-tree withered because Jesus cursed it?"
F. "Certainly not."
P. "Do you believe that a man was brought to life four days after his death?"
F. "I do not."
P. "Will you please select some particular miracle in the New Testament which you do believe?"
F. "Oh, I accept the supernatural element."

VOLTAIRE.

It may be said of him that he pierced through the conventional majesty of many great subjects, to the hidden absurdity of the plot. He laid the axe to a heap of savage abuses; pulled the corner-stones out of dungeons and inquisitions; bowed and mocked the most tyrannical absurdities out of countenance; and raised one prodigious peal of laughter at superstition, from Naples to the Baltic. He was the first man who got the power of opinion and common sense openly recognised as a reigning authority; and who made the acknowledgment of it a point of wit and cunning, even with those who had hitherto thought they had the world to themselves.—*Leigh Hunt.*

WHAT IS FREE WILL?

Volition is the power of the mind to act executively. Or, perhaps, it is the resultant of the impulses actuating a mind at any particular instant. Whatever volition is, it is the same thing in the insect as in the man. Non-human beings have been observed to pause and deliberate and to make wise and momentous decisions in the twinkling of an eye. A chased hare will decide to squat, to go straight ahead, or to do something else which the emergency demands, just as unmistakably as a human fugitive. In the sense of being the power to act differently from the manner in which a being actually does act, there is no such thing as free will. The will of the worm is just as free as the will of the judge—not in the sense that it is as varied in the directions of its activity, but in the sense that the character of its activities is determined inevitably by the character of its antecedents. All will, whether human or non-human, invariably acts in the direction of the strongest motive, just as a stone or a river invariably moves, if it moves at all, in the direction of the strongest tendency or force. It is impossible that this should be otherwise. For if the will in any case elects to overthrow this fact by arbitrarily discarding a stronger motive for a feebler, in the very motive of the election are concealed elements which transform the feebler motive into the stronger. All motion—voluntary and involuntary—the motion of bullets, beings, societies and suns—takes place along the line of least arrest. Every being is compelled to decide as he does decide and to act as he does act by the inherited tendencies of his own nature and the tendencies of the environment in which he exists. And if any being, after having passed through life, were again placed back at the beginning of life and endowed with the same nature as before, and were acted upon through life by surroundings identical with those he had previously met, he would act—that is, he would exercise his will—in precisely the same way in every particular as he had previously done. To deny these things is to assert that the conduct of living beings is without law, and that psychology and sociology are not sciences.—*J. Howard Moore, "The Universal Kinship,"* pp. 209-210.

Obituary.

I REGRET to have to announce the death of a veteran Freethinker, John Wildman, of Nelson, which took place at Lee Farm on April 6. The writer was asked by our old friend, not many weeks before his death, to read Austin Holyoake's Burial Service; and, although I acquainted his family with the fact, I was told they preferred a Christian funeral.—V. PAGE.

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.

QUEEN'S (MINOR) HALL (Langham-place, W.): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "What Did Shakespeare Think?"

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

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES HUMANITARIAN SOCIETY (Fife Hall, Fife-road): 7.30, F. A. Davies, "Whitewashing the Christian Religion."

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Workman's Hall, 27 Romford-road, Stratford): 7.30, C. Cohen, "Christianity's Collapse: The Significance of the 'New Theology.'"

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 3.30, J. Marshall, "Christianity Before Christ."

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3.15, Louis B. Gallagher, "Simple Bible Teaching" (continued).

WEST LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Marble Arch): 11.30, Messrs. H. Samuels and F. Schaller.

COUNTRY.

GLASGOW BRANCH N. S. S. (Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): J. M. Robertson, M.P., 12 noon, "The Evolution of Morals"; 6.30, "What is Religion?"

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road): 6.30, W. C. Schweizer, "The Religious Difficulty in Ireland."

NEWCASTLE RATIONALIST DEBATING SOCIETY (Lockhart's Cathedral Café): Thursday, April 25, at 8, G. T. Shyvers, "The Causes of War."

PLYMOUTH RATIONALIST SOCIETY (Foresters' Hall, Octagon): 7, Adjourned Discussion on "The New Theology."

OUTDOOR.

EDINBURGH BRANCH N. S. S. (The Meadows): 3 and 7, Lectures.

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