

THE Freethinker

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PRICE TWOPENCE

Wheresoever the search after truth begins, there life begins; wheresoever that search ceases, there life ceases.

—RUSKIN.

Chapel and Children.

THE English language is rich and powerful; its present-day Dictionary leaves every other speech far behind; and the Slang Dictionary is a wonderful addendum. But both these dictionaries together do not contain words strong enough to express our infinite contempt for the Nonconformists. We mean as a party. There are a few good and sound men amongst them; but, as a whole, their attitude towards the Education question, for the last thirty-seven years, has been simply loathsome.

They control the Liberal party in the House of Commons. At any moment they choose they can dictate its policy. The Liberal party, indeed, is just the Chapel party—as the Liberal newspapers, all over the country, are just Chapel newspapers. Naturally a Chapel bill was introduced by Mr. Birrell—the son of a Nonconformist minister—as a solution of the Education problem. The Church had its turn in 1902, and the Chapel had its turn in 1906. And this is what passes for statesmanship in England—with all the other civilised nations, including Japan, looking on and laughing at us.

Happily the Chapel bill, which passed the House of Commons, received its quietus in the House of Lords. Shakespeare speaks of a "soul of goodness in things evil," and this was a kind of illustration. The House of Lords did a good thing for once. Yes, and the bulk of the nation was glad of it. The more fanatical section of the Chapel party wanted to have a fierce agitation carried on against the House of Lords, but the Premier and his colleagues had the sense to see that it was impossible on such an issue. So the Chapel bill was buried, and nobody went to the funeral.

Mr. Birrell's successor brought in another bill, which had to be ignominiously dropped; and the right honorable gentleman, like a true-blue Nonconformist, used his official position as Minister of Education to harry the Church schools in the interest of the Chapel system. But that is not all, nor anything like it. There are—they boast of it!—two hundred Free Church members of the Liberal party in the House of Commons; and these gentlemen have put their heads together—for what they are worth—and have drawn up a skeleton Education bill, which they hope will help to guide the Government when it takes up the problem again in the next parliamentary session. That this is a wicked and mischievous bill might be taken for granted without a minute investigation. There is the damning fact that it has received the pontifical blessing of the Rev. Dr. Clifford, whom we have mildly and rather charitably described as the biggest hypocrite in England—and therefore, without the shadow of a doubt, the biggest hypocrite in the world; for no other country has ever been able to compete with us in the production of this variety of the religious nuisance. Dr. Clifford says:—

"On the whole, I think that this scheme is just to the State, is fair to the teaching profession and to the ratepayers, and promises efficient training to the young citizen."

Of course the exact reverse of this is the truth. The scheme is unjust to the State, and unfair to the teaching profession, and holds no promise of efficient training to the young citizen. There is nothing about "training" in it. The scheme merely provides for the establishment of Chapel religion in the nation's elementary schools. It is an effort in ecclesiasticism.

First of all, it follows Mr. Birrell's unfortunate measure in wiping all "non-provided" schools out of existence. No school is to receive support from rates and taxes unless it be provided by the local education authority. It also follows Mr. Birrell's measure at the finish by stipulating that the trustees or owners of non-provided schools may have a chance of carrying the schools on in their own way; but it makes the conditions far more rigorous than Mr. Birrell did, for it saddles the said trustees or owners with the total cost of maintenance "save for a parliamentary grant the same in amount per child as that paid to the schools provided by the local education authority." In other words, these schools are not to receive a penny from the rates; and this condition would be practically prohibitive, as of course it is meant to be.

Having thus annihilated Church (and Catholic) schools, the scheme goes on to make all the schools that are permitted to exist Chapel schools. This it does by means of the following resolution:—

"That the local education authority shall be at liberty to arrange that in all schools under their control the proceedings during the school hours of each day shall be opened and closed by the singing of a hymn, the reading of a passage from the Bible, and the repetition of the Lord's Prayer, and shall further be at liberty to arrange for such Bible teaching during school hours as does not contravene sec. 14 of the Education Act, 1870."

Note the trickery of the "shall be at liberty" clause. Dr. Clifford is strong upon "the optional character of that part of the resolution." But what is the option? The choice of whether there shall be religious teaching or none—for if there is to be any at all its character is determined over the heads of the optionists.

The new Chapel scheme simply aims at establishing Nonconformist religion—that is to say, the religion which suits Nonconformists—in the nation's schools. This "undenominational Christianity" is repulsive to Churchmen and Catholics, on one ground; and, on another ground, it is equally objectionable to all Non-Christians. But what do the Chapel party care for that? Nothing. It is one of their pretended principles that the State should not control religion. What they really mean is that the State should not control religion unless Nonconformists control the State. It is all right then. The humbugs!

In order to meet the objection of those who will not have Chapel religion for their children at any price, the scheme provides—

"That the parent of a child attending a public elementary school shall not be under any obligation to cause the child to attend at the school-house during the time allotted to religious instruction or religious observance."

This looks eminently fair. But the Chapel party know it will never be carried. It was lost last year—and it would be lost again. Plenty of the Chapel party would vote against it when it came to the sticking-place.

Now let us turn to the question of the teachers. This is what the scheme says:—

"That all teachers in a public elementary school shall be appointed by the local education authority, and such appointment shall be made without any reference whatsoever to the religious faith of the teacher. The teacher shall not be required, as part of his duties as teacher, to give any religious instruction, and shall not be permitted to give any religious instruction of a special character in the school building in which he holds an appointment, or to the children attending his school."

Now this is the greatest humbug of all. There is not an honorable word in it from beginning to end. Look at the astute discrimination in favor of Non-conformity. The teacher shall not be *required* to teach Chapel religion—but he *may*, and he will be *expected* to. On the other hand, he will not be *permitted* to teach Church or Catholic religion—whether he wishes to or not.

We repeat that the teacher will be expected to teach Chapel religion. There will be no *tests*. Oh dear no! Perish the very thought! But naturally a teacher who pleases his employers will get on better than a teacher who doesn't; and if he should confess himself an unbeliever, and ask to be exempted from giving the religious lesson, he would not be turned out, but he would soon see it was to his advantage to go—for he would never get another step of promotion.

The plain truth is, and every man fit to be at large is perfectly aware of it, that religious tests *cannot* be abolished while religion is taught in the schools. They may not be open, but they will be all the worse for being surreptitious. Every vice in the world is made worse by the addition of hypocrisy, which often turns a curable ailment into a fatal blood-poisoning. And it is this very putridity that the Chapel party is supplying.

G. W. FOOTE.

A Typical Divine Service.

TWO weeks ago to-day there was held, in a large and historic Nonconformist chapel in the West-end of London, a remarkable service, conducted by a well-known American divine, who is evidently a great "draw," the spacious building being densely packed. It was a bright, interesting, and thoroughly evangelical service, the singing, accompanied by a powerful organ well played, being specially hearty and general. It was to hear the *locum tenens*, however, that the people had assembled in such overflowing numbers on a Sunday evening in the middle of the dullest month in the year; and it is with him the present article has to do. He is a man who can afford to glory in the flesh—at least, so far as quantity is concerned. His voice is of good timbre, and under perfect control, but the enunciation is sometimes painfully indistinct, owing partly, no doubt, to a strong American accent.

One of the most amusing features of the whole performance was the long prayer. It was a great masterpiece, carefully conceived, elegantly phrased, and effectively delivered. It was an eloquent oration, punctuated by petitions. Most certainly it was not a prayer addressed to an all-knowing deity. The ignorance of the celestial listener was a distinct presupposition throughout. The present condition of the world, the nature, needs, and possibilities of human life, the vital connection between past, present, and future, the extent to which different circumstances alter cases, the real meaning of forgiveness and the blessed heritage of the forgiven, all these, and many other things, were minutely described, the object clearly being to supply the Almighty with such information as would be of service to him in the government of the Universe. It was taken for granted that God is sadly in need of enlightenment and guidance in order to the proper discharge of his obligations to the world. How is it that Christians do not perceive that

prayer is the highest conceivable form of blasphemy? Every prayer is a gross insult offered to the supreme Sovereign beyond the skies. It presupposes not only his ignorance of the state and requirements of his own creation, but also his slothfulness, negligence, indifference, callousness; or, in other words, his culpable remissness in attending to his work. Every time a Christian prays he delivers sentence of condemnation upon the God whom he professes to trust and love. There is positively no escape from this interpretation of prayer. If God exists, and is in every sense perfect, prayer is an affront to his majesty, a defamation of his character, a denial of his omnipotent and all-yearning love.

What if all the prayers offered up were to be heard and answered? What if the Deity were suddenly to awake from his eternal sleep and begin to act in accordance with all the conflicting instructions addressed to him? Hell would be let loose everywhere, and the human race would soon put an end to itself. Fortunately, prayers are *not* heard and answered; and, as the present writer listened to the prayer under consideration, nothing was more evident to him than that it was but a mere item on the program, an essential part of the performance, a thing which custom required to be done, an exercise that prepared both preacher and congregation for the coming sermon—that, and nothing more. Hymn, lesson, and prayer were but so many steps leading up to the discourse, which crowned the whole service; and it must be admitted that all the items in the performance were splendidly rendered. The sermon was worthy of all that had preceded it; it was the climax of the evening's work.

It was an address both sound in doctrine and evangelical in spirit. It was just exactly what the bulk of the people relished. The text was John v. 8, 9: "Jesus saith unto him, Arise, take up thy bed, and walk. And straightway the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked." This was the healing of the man who had been thirty-eight years a paralytic, of whose career the preacher gave a wonderfully realistic sketch. He knew precisely what sin had brought on the paralysis, he described how once the poor fellow had been surrounded with friends and servants and luxuries, and how, through his sin of selfishness, he had lost all and become a sad and lonely sufferer. But Jesus had compassion upon him, and in an instant completely healed him. Such was the miracle of grace performed upon the helpless creature. The preacher treated the narrative as if it were literal history. Jesus did that which no mere man could have done. It was a supernatural act. Jesus is always doing what to all others is impossible. That is the gist of the whole sermon. I repeat, it was a thoroughly good, rousing discourse: and the only complaint, and that a very trifling one, that can be made against it is, that there was not a single word of truth in it. The prayer that went before it has already been characterised as a mere farce; and it now becomes a solemn duty to justify a similar designation of the sermon.

The first proposition laid down was that Christ alone can effectively say, "Arise," to any man. The redemption of the world is a miracle which only the grace of God in Christ can perform. Sin is a disease that infallibly kills unless the Divine physician cures it. Sin is the world's supreme curse, and only One can remove it. Well, was not the preacher aware that in formulating that proposition he was framing an awful indictment against his loving Heavenly Father, and against the so-called Redeemer of mankind? Did he not know that he was virtually charging his Lord with deliberately and cruelly trifling with the human race? The preacher made telling quotations from Byron, and touchingly described what he called the great poet's doom; but did it not occur to him that the responsibility of Byron's damnation lies at the door of him who could have effectively said, "Arise," to him, but did not? Some allege that at the eleventh

hour Christ did snatch Oscar Wilde, the miserable convict, like a brand from the burning; but why was the word "Arise" not effectively uttered in time to prevent the helpless sensualist from bringing shame and disgrace upon himself and upon his family? The guilt of Wilde's dreadful downfall is on the conscience of him who alone could have obviated it, but neglected to do so. If I cannot save myself, and God can save me, it will be God's fault if I am not saved. An attempt to meet this difficulty is often made by affirming that God cannot redeem human souls without their consent, or against their wills; but such an affirmation fails even to touch the problem, because, according to the Old Theology, God is an infinite person whose will no finite will can resist, for he is supreme, God over all, and because, according to the New Theology, he is in all and through all, and even the need of salvation is unthinkable. Thus, from every point of view, it is positively undeniable that if anything is wrong with the world the world is not to blame, but its omnipotent Maker and Ruler, or its Divine, indwelling Soul.

The second thesis insisted upon by the preacher was, that it is Christ alone who can give a well-defined point to a man's life. Under this head much was said that was in and by itself perfectly true, but which, in its setting in the sermon, was utterly false. It is true that no man can escape from himself, that on the very point on which I was defeated yesterday I must endeavor to conquer to-day, or that uncorrected mistakes render success an impossibility; but these are facts of human life which are for ever inexplicable on the assumption that the world is governed by an all-good and all-wise Father, or is the dwelling-place of Eternal Love. "You are defeated whenever you forget God," says the pulpit; but to explain the defeat it is essential to suppose that, at the same time, God also forgets the man, which a good God could never do. Human life, as we find it, full of imperfections, blunders, follies, defeats, and corruptions, is intelligible only on the supposition that no Perfect Being presides over it. What we witness is man himself, half blind, with intelligence but inadequately developed, and emotions often injudiciously trained, working out his own salvation as best he can. His only teacher is experience, for which he has frequently to pay with his very blood.

The third point of the sermon was, that it is Christ alone who can plant the principle of progress in a man's heart. And here, again, we are confronted by two grim alternatives. The one is that the Maker and Ruler of the Universe has made a shocking mess of his own business, which no reasonable man can possibly take; and the other, that no such Being exists. Our preacher is evidently quite capable of cherishing the irrational belief that there is an infinite and almighty God, the Maker and Ruler of the Universe, and that this Being can contemplate the history of our world without one blush of shame, without the slightest qualm of conscience, without a single prick of guilt. Taking the history of Christendom alone, and judging it in the light of Christian teaching, can you point to it and say, "See, this is the glorious difference Christ has made by sowing his grand principle of progress in human hearts"? Has the preacher never studied the inner history of the tenth century, with its ghastly record of immorality and outrage—the tenth century of the reign of Christ on earth, during which no fewer than twenty-five popes and anti-popes sat on the papal chair? Has he never heard of the notorious prostitute, Theodora, and her two daughters, Theodora and Marozia, of like character to herself, who between them, disposed of the Roman See for upwards of fifty years? Has he never perused the pretty story of William Walworth, Lord Mayor of London, who, four centuries later, used to farm out brothels, "probably on behalf of the Corporation," and who, in doing so, was merely following the Christian example set by continental countries? Is he proud of the Crusades, in connection with which some nine millions of people were sacri-

ficed? Was it the spirit of progress, infused into human life, that kept slavery, with all its horrors, flourishing for sixteen hundred years? These are only a few incidents, which might be multiplied by ten thousand, all of which would make it absolutely impossible to regard Christendom as a bright jewel in the crown of the loving Heavenly Father-King revealed by Christ.

The prayer and sermon herein depicted may be reasonably looked upon as typical of Christian prayers and sermons generally. Comprehensively judged, they all alike stand condemned; and the fraud that underlies them is every year becoming more manifest to thinking people. In London alone, according to the recent testimony of a prominent clergyman, they are completely neglected by 80 per cent. of the population, and the percentage is steadily growing. The facts of history and the light of reason are slowly but surely shoving them out of existence.

J. T. LLOYD.

A Great Superstition Trust.

THERE is nothing that is at once more interesting and amusing than to watch a confirmed and unbending Protestant lecturing a Roman Catholic upon the unreasonableness of his creed. He is so keenly alive to the irrationalism of their points of difference, and so delightfully oblivious to the fact that the points of agreement in their respective faiths are equally nonsensical. He will marvel that any sane person can believe in the miracles of the Church, and defend with all his might the miracles of the Bible. The infallibility of the Church, or the special inspiration of its ministers, will set him laughing and jeering at "popish superstitions"; while the attempt to deal with the Bible in a rational or a scientific manner will be met with angry invective and stupid claims for its unique character in origin, method, and influence. He will flame out with virtuous indignation at the manner in which the Roman Catholic Church has suppressed by force those who have dissented from its teaching, and straightway exclude from the pulpit, or boycott in business, those who differ from his own interpretation of what is true Christianity. The way in which the Roman Church has worked, generation after generation, to perpetuate its faith, is proof positive of ingrained duplicity and spiritual degradation; the efforts of Protestants to prevent Freethought criticism, to force religion upon all children, to bar social and political advancement to heretics, and to keep their creeds unchanged as long as possible, are proofs of moral uprightness, concern for natural welfare, and strong evidence of great spiritual development. It is, perhaps, unthankful to blame Protestants for so acting. Progress is a slow affair at best; and those who are fighting for advancement should not be over angry with those who make the fight a little more amusing than it might otherwise be.

The truth, and therefore the explanation, of the matter is that the same fundamental type of mind does for either creed, the selection of one in preference to the other depending upon differences of mind that are superficial, or upon differences of local conditions. Which is also the reason why, given fair conditions, the choice is ultimately Freethought or Roman Catholicism, Protestantism representing a merely transitional form. But substantially the same qualities of narrowness, persecution, fanaticism, devotion to unreasonable doctrines, with a stupid fear of change, are common to both. True, they are not always expressed in the same degree by both churches, but then the conditions of operation are dissimilar; and differences in power of expression ought not to blind one to the fact of fundamental identity.

I have written the above *apropos* of a review in the *Methodist Recorder* of a recently-published book, *The Making of a Miracle*. The writer, a Wesleyan

Methodist missionary, describes how, at New Pompeii, a man and his wife have established a trust for "making merchandise of superstition," selling various articles of worship, and using a great organisation as an advertising and selling medium. The reviewer entitles his article "A Great Superstition Trust," and is shocked, in the approved ultra-Protestant manner, at a religion that can lend itself to such practices being tolerated in a civilised country; while the writer, with Protestant charity, desires to see all Roman Orders and monastic institutions driven out of England. The reviewer feels "amazement and pity" that any Protestant should object to denunciation of Roman Catholicism, and thinks it would be otherwise but that "large numbers do not know the great reasons that led to the Protestant Reformation and laid the foundations of the progress which has given them the best which they possess."

The first portion of this statement is true enough. Large numbers do not know the reasons that led to the Protestant Reformation, and amongst them are the vast majority of Protestants themselves. Nor are they ever likely to know while they feed themselves on histories written by Protestants for Protestant consumption, and while Protestant intolerance prevents an impartial writer either securing a publisher or reaching the public notice; or, if both these difficulties are overcome, punishes him by placing him on the list of "suspects," and so handicaps him in his career. I could name writers of marked ability in several departments of literature who have suffered, and continue to suffer, from this form of Protestant freedom. If conditions were different from what they are, people who were interested might soon learn that the main causes of the Reformation were not religious at all. They might learn that the people were neither hungering for the open Bible nor for a purer form of religion; but that they did desire to rid themselves of the burdensome taxes of the Church, and of the troublesome immorality of its clergy; that the battle of the Protestant Princes with the Papacy was not the struggle of holy men fighting for a higher faith, but the continuance of a long contest with the Pope for temporal supremacy in their several States, and that religion—like a mercenary troop—was utilised by them with telling effect. And, above all, they would realise that the whole of the Protestant Reformation was, broadly, an offshoot of the Renaissance, even though it tended to undo much of the good produced by that movement. But the voyages of Columbus, De Gama, Magellan, and the revolutionary work of Copernicus, with the revival of interest in the hitherto neglected Pagan literature, were the real vivifying forces of the period. Delete these, and the Reformation would have been a mere heretical outbreak, doomed to be suppressed, as many similar outbreaks had been suppressed before. Allow for their influence, and there is little indeed to thank Protestantism for.

For the latter half of the reviewer's statement, nothing would please me more than to discover what Protestantism did that laid the foundation of whatever progress we have made. We are not told, in the course of the article, and so are left in the dark. But for many years I have been looking and asking for some proofs of anything of really first rate importance that Protestantism, as such, gave to the world. But here, also, my searching and questioning have been fruitless. Necessarily, many things that were of value became entangled with Protestantism, and, as is to be expected, the latter has tried to get all possible credit from the association. It is also the custom of Protestant writers to date all progress from the Reformation, as many eulogistic writers dated recent progress from the reign of Queen Victoria, as though there existed some relation of cause and effect. But this only proves, as the writer says, how ignorant people are of the nature of the Reformation.

The Roman Catholic Church, we are told, is a great Superstition Trust. Admitted; but what are all the other Churches? Do they not all, each in their own way, seek to safeguard their own pet superstitions,

crush all opposition by fair means or foul, and by more or less honorable methods create a frame of mind that will be immune to really scientific conceptions of nature and man? Let anyone consider how the Protestant Churches clung to the belief in witchcraft so long as it was possible for them to do so. Or how scientific teachings in geology, astronomy, and biology were opposed tooth and nail because of their opposition to Biblical teaching. Or, again, how for two hundred years there has been a hard and bitter fight against the recognition of some of the truths connected with the Bible. Men and women were sent to prison time after time for no other offence than for teaching what is now regarded by most educated Christians as truisms of Biblical criticism. Or, finally, take the fight of the Churches for religious education in public schools, which is really nothing less than the attempt to so frame the mind of the child that it will become a client of the Protestant Church when it reaches maturity.

Now, what in the name of all that is reasonable is this, with much more of the same kind that might be named, but the operations of a "Trust" seeking to popularise a certain set of superstitions? Not the same superstitions as those traded in by the Roman Catholic Church; true, but that is a mere difference of stock in trade, and does not affect the question at issue. The only difference in the two cases is that, as in many other instances, there is a fuller development of certain religious phases in the Catholic Church than in the Protestant Churches, and so it is rather more revolting to the modern civilised taste. But there is no difference in kind. The Catholic Church has had greater power, greater opportunities, and so it has done more. The Protestant Churches have had fewer opportunities, but they have done what they could. Each Church has done what was possible to crush opposition. Each has imprisoned, murdered, slandered, and boycotted in order to prevent knowledge being given to the mass of the people. Each has fought against the developments of scientific discovery so long as it could, maintained it in its theological schools after it was discarded outside, and taught doctrines to children while it was ashamed to preach them to adults. Both are afraid to trust educated human reason; both realise that the region of faith is coextensive with the sphere of ignorance and helplessness; and both watch with fear the growth of a spirit they are no longer able to control, and which carries with it the certain promise of their destruction.

C. COHEN.

Danton.

DANTON, called by Carlyle the Titan of the Revolution, and certainly its greatest figure after Mirabeau, was guillotined on April 5, 1794. He was only thirty-five, but he had made a name that will live as long as the history of France. With all his faults, says Carlyle, "he was a Man; fiery-real, from the great fire-bosom of Nature herself." Some of his phrases are like pyramids, standing sublime above the drifting sand of human speech. It was he who advised "daring, and still daring, and ever daring." It was he who cried "The coalesced kings of Europe threaten us, and as our gage of battle we sling before them the head of a king." It was he who exclaimed, in a rapture of patriotism, "Let my name be blighted, so that France be free." And what a saying was that, when his friends urged him to flee from the Terror, "One does not carry his country with him at the sole of his shoe!"

Danton would not flee. "They dare not" arrest him, he said; but he was soon a prisoner in the Luxembourg. "What is your name and abode?" they asked him at the tribunal. "My name is Danton," he answered, "a name tolerably known in the Revolution: my abode will soon be Annihilation; but I shall live in the Pantheon of History." Replying to his infamous indictment, his magnificent

voice "reverberates with the roar of a lion in the toils." The President rings his bell, enjoining calmness, says Carlyle, in a vehement manner. "What is it to thee how I defend myself?" cries Danton; "the right of *dooming* me is thine always. The voice of a man speaking for his honor and life may well drown the jingling of thy bell!"

Under sentence of death he preserved, as Jules Claretie says, that virile energy and superb sarcasm which were the basis of his character. Fabre d'Eglantine, being disquieted about his unfinished comedy, Danton exclaimed: "Des vers! Des vers! Dans huit jours tu en feras plus que tu ne voudras!" Then he added nobly, "We have finished our task, let us sleep." Thus the time passed in prison.

On the way to the guillotine, Danton bore himself proudly. Poor Camille Desmoulins struggled and writhed in the cart, which was surrounded by a howling mob. "Calm, my friend," said Danton, "heed not that vile canaille." Herault de Séchelles, whose turn it was to die first, tried to embrace his friend, but the executioners prevented him. "Fools," said Danton, "you cannot prevent our heads from meeting in the basket." At the foot of the scaffold the thought of home flashed through his mind. "O my wife," he exclaimed, "my well-beloved, I shall never see thee more then!" But recovering himself, he said, "Danton, no weakness!" Looking the executioner in the face, he cried with his great voice, "You will show my head to the crowd: it is worth showing; you don't see the like in these days." The next minute, that head, the one that might have guided France best, was severed from his body by the knife of the guillotine. What a man that Danton was! With his Herculean form, his huge, black head, his mighty voice, his passionate nature, his fiery courage, his strong sense, his poignant wit, his geniality, and his freedom from cant, he was a splendid and unique figure. An Atheist, he perished in trying to arrest bloodshed. Robespierre, the Deist, continued the bloodshed till it drowned him. The two men were as diverse in nature as in creed, and Danton, killed by Robespierre, as Courtois said, was Pyrrhus killed by a woman!

G. W. FOOTE.

THE WASTE OF WAR.

Let us imagine a society, of no great extent, occupied in procuring and laying up store of corn, wine, wool, silk, and other such preservable materials of food and clothing; and that it has a currency representing them. Imagine farther, that on days of festivity, the society, discovering itself to derive satisfaction from pyrotechnics, gradually turns its attention more and more to the manufacture of gunpowder; so that an increasing number of laborers, giving what time they can spare to this branch of industry, bring increasing quantities of combustibles into the store, and use the general orders received in exchange to obtain such wine, wool, or corn as they may have need of. The currency remains the same, and represents precisely the amount of material in the store, and of labor spent in producing it. But the corn and wine gradually vanish, and in their place, as gradually, appear sulphur and saltpetre, till at last the laborers who have consumed corn and supplied nitre, presenting on a frosty morning some of their currency to obtain materials for the feast, discover that no amount of currency will command anything festive, except Fire. The supply of rockets is unlimited, but that of food, limited, in a quite final manner; and the whole currency in the hands of the society represents an infinite power of detonation, but none of existence.

This statement, caricatured as it may seem, is only exaggerated in assuming the persistence of the folly to extremity, unchecked, as in reality it would be, by the gradual rise in price of food. But it falls short of the actual facts of human life in expression of the depth and intensity of the folly itself. For a great part (the reader would not believe how great until he saw the statistics in detail) of the most earnest and ingenious industry of the world is spent in producing munitions of war; gathering, that is to say the materials, not of festive, but of consuming fire; filling its stores with all power of the instruments of pain, and all affluence of the ministries of death.—John Ruskin, "Munera Palveris."

Acid Drops.

The Purple Lotus Mother—alias Katherine A. Tingley—has arrived. Being bent on nonsense—alias Theosophy—and also having cash at command, she has had plenty of notice in the newspapers. Poverty and sense never get much advertisement—unless they are run over, or something like that. There must have been sensible people in Jerusalem when the first Christians were chortling round, but one never hears of them.

Mother Tingley confided to a *Chronicle* interviewer—perhaps a little indirectly—her opinion of Mrs. Besant; and all we want now is Mrs. Besant's opinion of Mother Tingley. The American high-priestess of Theosophy was severe on persons who theorise "without giving a practical demonstration." "That person," she said, "is not necessarily to be relied upon as a teacher or a benefactor. Ambition and love of power may be more to such an one than the claims of humanity." Poor Mrs. Besant! She will shrink away abashed after that. Of course, there is no ambition and love of power about Mother Tingley.

Mother Tingley claims to be the head of the Theosophists of the whole world. She reminds us of the Scottish minister on a certain island—was it Arran?—who used to pray for "the inhabitants of this island and the adjacent islands of Great Britain and Ireland."

Curiously enough, both the Theosophic parties have their headquarters in Avenue-road, St. John's-wood. Mother Tingley arrived at her headquarters in grand style, and shook out her feathers grandly. The rejoicings might have been heard at the other headquarters, where a *Tribune* man interviewed Miss Ward, who seems to be an important person there. "We know nothing," the lady said, "about the teaching of Mrs. Tingley, and really we are not excited about her visit to England." A touch of the sex, that! One needn't always go to a theatre to see a play.

For the twentieth time it is reported that Evan Roberts is going to start revivaling again in Wales. We shall see—what we do see. But the market is very flat, and quotations are extremely low.

Whenever the New Theologians hear what appeals to them as good sense on social questions, they instantly jump to the conclusion that the speaker must be a Christian and ought to become a preacher. Mr. Albert Dawson, editor of the *Christian Commonwealth*, who is now as exact an echo of Mr. Campbell as he previously was of Dr. Parker, paid a visit to the Fabian Summer School, near Harlech, North Wales, and heard a debate on "Should Socialists be Puritans?" The affirmative was championed by a young university graduate. The affirmative being also the side supported by Mr. Campbell. Mr. Dawson, on the conclusion of the young gentleman's speech, went up to him and offered his congratulations, saying, "Nature has meant you to be a preacher—have you any thought of entering the ministry?" The orator laughed the idea to scorn, and said that "he wasn't even sure that he was a Christian." This habit of claiming all who agree with them on social subjects, into which the New Theologians have fallen, is the most intolerable form of egotism imaginable. In olden times, even in the Puritan period, it would have been called a most despicable species of lying.

And yet the cream of the joke is in the sequel. The negative side was taken by another university graduate who, we are told, considering the inherent weakness of his case and the powerfulness of the arguments marshalled against him, "did remarkably well." When it came to the vote, however, the negative proved victorious. But Mr. Dawson does not tell us that he rushed forward and congratulated the leader of the winners, assuring him that he, too, must be a Christian and ought to enter the ministry. Oh dear, no! But he does charitably hint that the majority did not quite understand what Puritanism really means! How fine a specimen of Christian—*cheek!*

The Bishops in the House of Lords, led by "Cantuar," had another go at the infamous idea of allowing a man to marry his deceased wife's sister, but their ecclesiastical eloquence had lost its power, and the Bill passed its second reading in spite of them. We do not attach very much importance to the Bill itself, but we are glad to see the Bishops beaten—after a hundred years' fight.

There were seventeen Bishops present when the division took place, and they all voted against the Bill. They were smarting terribly from the defeat, and they tried some very artful amendments in Committee. All animals are cunning under the instinct of self-preservation.

Whatever else the Moors have forgotten since they and their civilisation were driven out of Spain by Christian fanatics, they have not forgotten their courage. Nothing could have been more magnificent, from that point of view, than their cavalry attack on the French at Casa Blanca. For nearly two miles they charged in face of a withering fire, getting within four hundred yards of the French lines. A Kaid, dressed conspicuously in red, led them; he disdained to gallop back when they broke and fled, and rode slowly out of range, so that the French soldiers could not help cheering him. How will it be when these "heathen" are properly organised and armed?

We haven't a "Limerick" competition, but we feel inclined to offer a prize to anyone who will give an intelligible exposition of the meaning of the answer to the following questions. A correspondent writes to the Rev. J. Warschauer asking:—

"(1.) Since every cause is an effect of a prior cause, does it not follow that a man cannot act at all unless he is caused to act?"

"(2.) If he can act without being caused to act, would not that fact prove that the law of causation was not universal?"

"(3.) If he cannot act unless he is caused to act, in what sense is he 'free'?"

To this, Mr. Warschauer replies that the question is confused, and proceeds to clear up the matter by saying, "The act is caused by the free choice of a causal self; in strict parlance, indeed, neither acts nor wills are free, but only human selves. The will is not self-determined, but determined by a self, and this self cannot only choose between different motives, but can attend to one set of motives to the neglect of others, and even create motives for the purpose of making a difficult decision possible." So, it appears, there are three things—self, motives, and will. Now what one would like to know is, are the motives part of the "self"? If not, where on earth do they come from, and what on earth do they do? If they are part of the "self," how does the "self" decide between one portion of itself and other portions? Or, how can the "self" ignore motives if it decides between them? Or, if the "self" decides according to the nature or quality of the opposing motives, how can it be without determination in its decision? Or, if the motives do not determine the "self," what is the use of them, anyway? Or, if the "self" is really autonomous, why does it need to create a motive to bring about a decision? Or what, again, is meant by a "causal self"? Does it mean that the "self" is uncaused? If so, then every cause is not the effect of a prior cause, and the chain of universal sequence is broken. Does it mean that the "self" merely acts as a determinant in a sequential series? If so, this is merely saying what everyone admits to be the case. Really, when a man takes a metaphysic that is misunderstood and mixes it with a theology he is half afraid to express plainly, it is hard to say what he does mean. Perhaps someone would care to puzzle it out. It might prove an interesting occupation for a rainy day; and if only one could cut it up into square chunks and sell it in boxes—like the old-fashioned Fifteen Puzzle—we fancy there's money in it.

Mr. Warschauer also believes in the immortality of the soul because he thinks it unlikely "that the Divine Artist, having taken so much trouble in the fashioning of this final work, will merely shatter it again." Well, there are two views of that question. May it not be quite as likely that the "Divine Artist," on looking over some of his results, and realising what little credit they reflect on his skill, may be only too pleased to blot them out at any cost? Personally, we never come across a crowd of poor, half-developed creatures, howling out their thankfulness that Jesus died for their salvation, without reflecting what a fortunate thing for them it is that the sacrifice occurred before Jesus had a chance of getting a good, square look at them. The world's praise of good nature is often an unconscious stricture on sanity of judgment.

Will China become Christian? The Rev. J. Ritson has no doubt whatever that it will. This gentleman has just returned from a holiday jaunt to the Missionary Conference at Shanghai, and declares that during a ten days' conference he did not meet one of the ministers there who was not certain that China would become thoroughly Christianised. After this, there is little more to say, except that outside the Conference the Chinese people seem bent on getting rid of the missionaries if it is at all possible, and were foreign pro-

tection withdrawn there would soon be a grand scuttle of missionaries home again.

That sincere Christian, Mr. J. D. Rockefeller, whose religious yearnings recently led him to purchase from England a pet parson, has been warning people against the craving for money-making. The only way to be perfectly happy, he says, is to do good to others. This has, of course, always been the aim of the Standard Oil Company, although the United States Courts take a different view of the matter. Still, we perceive herein the excellence of Christianity, which enables a man, multi-millionaire though he may be, to warn others off the path that has led to his being saddled with enormous wealth. The altruistic nature of the advice should form the text for a touching sermon by Mr. Aked, when he returns from his lengthy holiday.

Seriously, what sickening cant it is to see these too-wealthy Christians lecturing the world on the evil of seeking to make money. Why, there is positively no other people in the world who worship money like the majority of Christians. In a Christian country, money-making is the one sure test of success—the one thing before which Christendom bows. Society will forgive every crime but the crime of poverty. With money, almost any character, creed, or person may become popular. Without it, nothing attracts notice. All who work without money, as an end, are treated as cranks, lunatics, or fools. The first question a Christian audience asks itself of anyone's work is, "What does he get for it?" And over all is the cant of the evil of money-getting! It is an evil, and it is one that flourishes best where Christianity is strongest.

Rev. Cortland Myers, of New York, is one who wants but little here below, nor wants that little long. Preaching before Rockefeller the other day, he asked the Oil King to give £20,000,000 to the cause of Evangelism. Rockefeller held out his hand warmly to the preacher, after the service, but there was nothing in it. We wonder what Myers reckoned his share of the £20,000,000 would be.

Another Nonconformist grievance has just been remedied. The City of Newcastle Lunatic Asylum has hitherto been manned exclusively by Church of England ministers—we mean so far as preachers are concerned, not as regards inmates. The Free Church Council, noticing this, and believing that Nonconformists have as much right to be in the Lunatic Asylum as other people, have secured the right of preaching in the asylum chapel on Sunday afternoons, and on one night during the week. Which is as it should be. If only there were enough asylums to keep the whole of the clergy busy! Or, if only the number of clergy were such that the existing asylums would keep them from preaching elsewhere! We wonder whether the subject, "Why should not Free Church ministers be in the City Asylum?" was debated on the Newcastle Council?

Rev. Stanley Rogers, of Liverpool, is a son of the veteran Dr. Guinness Rogers, and apparently more orthodox than the "guy'nor." Writing to the editor of "The Churches" column in the *Daily News*, he says that, although the rainfall was enough to imperil the harvest, he never heard during his holidays, in any of the churches he attended, a single prayer offered for more seasonable weather. "I wonder what can be the reason," he asks, "for this seeming negligence on the part of some of my brethren in the Free Church ministry. Is it lack of faith, or is it indifference to the people's needs and wants?" Of course it is lack of faith. If the men of God thought they could change the weather by praying they would soon be on the job. It would give a great fillip to their languishing business.

The political aspects of Home Rule cannot be dealt with in the *Freethinker*. We are free to say, however, that we have always laughed at the statement that Home Rule means Rome Rule. It means the very opposite. In the present state of things, every Irish priest poses as a patriot, and this adds immensely to the strength of his spiritual hold upon the people. But this great advantage would be lost under Home Rule. If the priests took part in politics then, they would have to side with one Irish party against another Irish party—which is a very different thing from siding with nearly all Ireland against the sanguinary Saxon. Home Rule has not meant Rome Rule in France and Italy; neither would it do so in Ireland. This is as clear as daylight to any person of tolerable brains who will take the trouble to think.

We were glad to note the concluding sentence of a very interesting article by Sydney Brooks on "To-Morrow in

Ireland" in the *Westminster Gazette*. "The Catholic hierarchy in Ireland," he said, "as elsewhere, is for Home Rule only for so long as it knows it to be unattainable." They simply want to play upon and exploit the spirit of Irish Nationalism. They have done it splendidly for a long while, but they are threatened now by Young Ireland and the Sinn Féiners.

The Rev. Dr. Pierson, who is one of the chief lights at the Keswick Conventions, and who never finds rest for the soles of his feet, but is a wanderer on the face of the earth, has recently refreshed the souls of the faithful by telling them stories of answers to prayer. There was once a most godly man, who was for forty-one years pastor of one church. He was an unusually saintly man, and wrestled with God in prayer continually for the conversion of the worldly men in his congregation. Forty and one years he prayed, and pleaded, and warned, and threatened, but neither God nor the men paid any heed to his heart's desire. At last, he died, when not one conversion had taken place; but on the day of his funeral the Lord came down, and laid hold of those men, and every one of them was hauled into the ark of salvation, safe from the coming fiery deluge.

Dr. Pierson informed his enraptured audience that Mr. George Müller had all his prayers answered save one. The famous saint told him just before he died, that for sixty-two years, three months, five days, and two hours he had been praying for the salvation of two men without receiving any hint of an answer. This chosen vessel of the Lord also died—in hope; but Dr. Pierson was able to assure his credulous hearers that eventually both men were caught in the Gospel net, and are now singing the Glory Song. What a slow coach is the supreme Soul-Saver! How tantalisingly he plays with both saints and sinners. Evidently he does not take the soul-saving business seriously.

The Rev. Dr. Campbell Morgan astonished the Northfield Conference by daring to tell it that he, a man of God signally owned, loves a good cigar and a good play, and will continue smoking regardless of what people may say. So horrified were many of his brethren in the Lord that they there and then formed a pious resolution to leave their seats whenever Dr. Morgan rose to speak. Is there no limit to the silly bigotry and intolerant narrowness of the Lord's chosen ones?

In an article on "What of the Bible?" which appeared in the *Christian World* recently, "J. B." makes two startling admissions. The first is that "despite conclusions established among scholars, despite also the publication in recent years of the many excellent works in which these results have been summarised and set forth for popular use, there still exists, among the average religious minds of England, an ignorance on these questions which is simply astonishing, and which, if left undisturbed, can only in the end work disaster to faith." Many Freethinkers know, to their cost, how terribly true that statement is. But the other admission throws a lurid light on the morality of the pulpit. "J. B." says: "Worse than this, if that is possible, we have to-day popular preachers—one must say it—trading on this ignorance and covering with the awful sanctions of religion propositions which it needs the simplest inquiry to demonstrate as false. It is time for plain-speaking, and we propose here to speak plainly." This is shockingly bad, if true, and it must be true, or "J. B." himself an ordained minister, would not say it. Simple believers must be ignorant, and these popular preachers are profitably convinced that "where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise."

The conduct of the popular preachers held up to ridicule by "J. B." is despicable in the extreme; but what about "J. B.'s" own attitude to the Bible? Is it morally justifiable? He accepts the verdict of scholars, according to which the volume bristles with horrible immoralities, falsehoods, contradictions, obscenities, indecencies, absurdities, and atrocities; and yet, in spite of these undeniable blemishes, he has the audacity to make a flaunting show of his unreasoning and unreasonable "faith in the Bible, not only as the greatest literature the world contains, but as standing by itself as a special and unique organ of Divine revelation." We will not accuse "J. B." of conscious dishonesty; but we are bound to affirm that his faith in the Bible is, at best, but a survival of the orthodoxy he now repudiates. His quotations from Newman, Seeley, Edmond Scherer, Max Müller, and Heine, in fulsome praise of the book, prove nothing, and are utterly irreconcilable with the critical conclusions which "J. B." himself so heartily endorses. There is such a thing as unconscious hypocrisy, which effectually shuts out sane and balanced judgments.

The editor of *Great Thoughts*—a very ambitious title, which isn't lived up to—has been doing a series of articles on Robert Browning, and he finds that Browning is a greater teacher than Shakespeare. And why? Because he takes a Christian view of life. Shakespeare did not, and it was very unkind of him—at least the *G. T.* editor thinks so. Not that his opinion is of great importance. We only refer to it because it is at least an admission of what we have always maintained; namely, that Shakespeare was not a Christian, but a Freethinker, and in all probability an Atheist. The *G. T.* editor goes on to say:—

"As a dramatic poet Shakespeare stands alone, unrivalled and unapproached, but as a teacher he leaves much to be desired. His great fault is that he places before us, in all its mystery and perplexity, the riddle of life, without giving us any hint of the solution. In this he is more of a Pagan, or an ancient Greek, than a Christian. His Deity looks on us from afar, and is not moved by our agony, or concerned about our destiny. His ships leave harbor and sail we know not whither. He finds no heavenly pilot on the other side to bring them into port. His mightiest tragedies suggest the idea of a God-abandoned world."

A God-abandoned world! That is the scene of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies. And a God-abandoned world is a world of Atheism. *Voilà*—as the French say; or, as our old friend Euclid says, *Q.E.D.*

The Funk and Wagnalls Co. has published the *Blue-book of Missions for 1907*, edited by the Rev. H. C. Dwight, who is probably an American. The following is an extract from the editor's Introduction:—

"Perhaps the most significant fact in the foreign mission enterprise to-day is the service rendered incidentally to it by Governments seeking to extend the sphere of their commerce. Throughout the world artificial barriers have been broken down, the grip of Pagan or Mahometan absolutism has been loosed from the people, the sword has been torn from the nerveless grasp of Rajah and Sultan, Christian rulers directly or indirectly control the destiny of every non-Christian nation excepting semi-Christianised Japan, facilities of communication are steadily increased, and the whole power of the Christian Powers is exerted, if need be, to open and keep open doors of friendly intercourse."

Such is twentieth-century Christianity! Christian missions are made easier by European aggression in other parts of the world. Christian nations "control" the non-Christian nations. A good word is that same "control." It means governing them with rifles and bayonets, denying all their natural rights, and sucking them dry of wealth. In short, it is oppression and spoliation. And this is what the missionaries rejoice at. All is good that is for the good of the Church. Even in Congoland there is an open-door for the soul-savers.

The one non-Christian nation that the Christian nations can't control is Japan. They have tried it—and failed. Russia made the big final attempt, and came a terrible cropper. Now the Rev. H. C. Dwight, in his pious jubilation, fails too see that the case of Japan is—

"The little rift within the lute
That by-and-by will make its music mute."

Japan is not only an exception—she is a formidable exception; and her victory over Russia means, sooner or later, the revolt of all Asia against the usurpation of Europe. China is already pulling herself together, and when she is prepared, and really means business—as she will be in less than a generation—the European buccaneers may go home. We all know that Christ is greater than Confucius, while Christ's friends (heaven save the mark!) have rifles and guns, and the friends of Confucius are unarmed. But the case may be altered when both sides are equal in that respect.

The Dean of Manchester has been saying that "it is the spirit of Christ alone which could create peace and goodwill among men." Was he referring to the beautiful text, "I came not to send peace but a sword"?

The intellectual stupidity of orthodox preachers is simply astounding. They do not even take the trouble to understand their own text-book. On the subject of animal sacrifices, the Bible utters two distinct and contradictory voices; and no man is fool enough not to know that if the one be true the other must be false. Yet the Bible represents each as the very voice of God. The Priest declares that the Jewish sacrificial system was of Divine appointment, and that it was the people's bounden duty to strictly obey all its injunctions. The Prophet, on the other hand, assures us that the system was a flagrant violation of the will of God. This is, perhaps, the most glaring contradiction in the whole Bible, a contradiction that damns it forever as God's Book. Yet the preachers pretend not to see it, and act as if it did not exist.

The above remarks were suggested by an article we have just read, from the pen of the Rev. Trevor Davies, who is a rapidly rising star in the Wesleyan firmament. The subject is the Day of Atonement as described in Lev. xvi. 5-22. Mr. Davies correctly speaks of that day as the "highest institution of the Levitical system," but he also refers to it as being in a special and quite unique sense a day of the Lord. The cruel, senseless slaughter was in accordance with the Divine will. Does not Mr. Davies know that Hosea (vi. 6), Amos (v. 21, 25), Jeremiah (vii. 21, 22), Isaiah (i. 11-16), and the Psalmist (li. 16, 17), are of a contrary opinion, and express that opinion in the most emphatic terms? Now, both Priest and Prophet claim to deliver the word of Jehovah; and Mr. Davies does the same. Well, we recommend Mr. Davies, a twentieth century man of God, to prepare two new sermons, one on Lev. xvi. 5-22, and the other on Jeremiah vii. 21-23, and preach them on the same day and to the same congregation; and we are certain that, if he is an honest man, he would never preach again.

We understand that the Rev. A. J. Waldron's "converted Atheist" has disappeared from Bristol. We also see that a late man of God of that city—the Rev. Samuel Newman—left £7,383. Not a big fortune, but quite enough to prevent his getting through the needle's eye.

The late Mr. Edmund Mager, of Carlton-road, Tufnell-park, London, left £107,172. He was a very good Christian, for he actually left £400—yes, £400—upon trust to the vicar and churchwardens of Hogsthorpe, Lincolnshire, to apply the income at their discretion for the benefit of the deserving poor of the parish. This big legacy will be worth about £12 a year to the poor of that parish. They will be in heaven without dying.

Rev. Richard Cleary, of Bannington, Norfolk, left £22,526. "And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." So the text says, but it's all "rot." And the Rev. Richard Cleary knew it.

Kansas ministers are forming a Trade Union, their object being to regulate the scale of charges on special occasions when their services are required. They say they are principally sweated at funerals. They deliver eloquent and elaborate addresses over dead millionaires, for instance, and don't get paid in proportion to the size of the family estate. Henceforth there will be a graduated scale of charges for funeral sermons—something like the death duties. The man of God who orates over Rockefeller's coffin will be able to retire from business.

How shamefully ignorant of etymology most theologians are. A little while ago, a doctor of divinity, well known throughout the English-speaking religious world, gave a Bible-reading on "the sin, the folly, and the crime of unbelief." He started off with a palpable falsehood: "Belief is the acceptance of truth." In itself, belief is nothing of the sort; it is simply the acceptance of something as truth. That something may or may not be truth. The truth of Christianity is the one point in dispute between believer and unbelievers. This first falsehood necessitated another: "Disbelief is the denial of truth." This is by far the worse of the two errors. As every scholar is aware, the prefix *dis* denotes separation, a parting from; and it follows that disbelief signifies merely the rejection of what others accept as truth. These facts are most elementary; and yet Christian teachers have not mastered them, and in their utterances totally ignore them; and it is this real or assumed ignorance which is "the sin, the folly, and the crime," not unbelief.

We reproduce, in another column, from the *Daily Chronicle*, a report of a Trade Union meeting of protest against the "sweating" system of the Salvation Army. For many years—in fact, ever since it began its "social" business—we have been pointing out that the Salvation Army is a mischievous organisation. At first we stood alone; ours was a voice crying in the wilderness; but public criticism is now beginning to be turned upon Booth's great "social" imposture, and before many years have rolled by we believe the game will be played out. When the "General" launched his "Darkest England" scheme, we criticised it at some length in a pamphlet called *Salvation Syrup*. That pamphlet is still in print, and anyone who reads it will see how all that we said has come true.

Mr. Bernard Shaw has been explaining things for a good many years, and Mr. Holbrook Jackson now explains Mr. Bernard Shaw. He does it in a five shilling book published by E. Grant Richards. Eventually, we suppose, somebody else will write a book explaining Mr. Holbrook Jackson's explanation.

The *Academy* was humorous again last week. Referring to the Tingley-Besant rivalry, it observed that Mrs. Besant was once a "Freethinker" (it might have said *Atheist*), and—"there is a very funny delusion in some minds that 'Freethinking' implies acuteness" whereas "it usually implies quite profound dulness." For instance, Voltaire, Paine, and Ingersoll—typically dull writers. Moreover, there are Algernon Charles Swinburne and Thomas Hardy, both highly praised in last week's *Academy*—who are so terribly dull, being both Freethinkers. There is even a dull dog of a writer called Shakespeare, who, according to the said Algernon Charles Swinburne, was also a Freethinker. Yes, these Freethinkers are indeed noted for their "profound dulness." If you don't believe it, ask George Meredith.

Sir Oliver Lodge, in addressing a meeting of students lately, asked them to—"Remember that the son of a carpenter, with all the Roman Empire against him, has before now renewed the world." May we, in turn, ask Sir Oliver Lodge to "remember" that this is the romance of Christian apologetics? The Roman Empire was in no sense "against" Jesus Christ. Certainly, according to the Gospels, he was crucified, but it was after practically pleading guilty to a public charge of sedition. All through the Acts we see that the early Christians, on their own showing, were protected by the Roman authorities against bigots and persecutors. When Paul was in grave danger, he cried "I appeal unto Cæsar," and that saved him. And it is not easy to see how the world has been "renewed" by the Carpenter's Son. It wants renewing badly now.

The Rev. Dr. Len Broughton, of Atlanta, has just discovered the real causes of the wave of immorality and crime which has recently swept over New York City. They are these two: "Sabbath laxness" and "religious anarchists." In New York, on Sundays, more theatres than churches are open, and more people attend the former than the latter. This is very shocking indeed. Then there are "the religious anarchists," known in England as New Theologians, who want to "reconstruct the Gospel." Hence crime abounds in the city. Unfortunately for Dr. Broughton, the only criminal caught up to date, Colton by name, is said to be "a consistent Christian, a member of the Church, and has always been regarded as one of the strictest sort." What has Dr. Broughton to say to this?

Arithmetic is not the strong point of the Bible. Neither is it of the vicar of St. Augustine's Church, Highbury New Park, who wants to raise £1,000 between September 1 and December 1, and proposes that 1,000 persons should promise to give or collect 250 pennies each. We did not know there were so many pennies in a pound.

Rev. H. B. Freeman, vicar of Burton, gave a young man permission to ascend the church tower "to view the glorious scenery of the neighborhood." The ungrateful fellow snapped the vicar going into the only public-house in the vicinity; and the poor man of God was only seeking change for a sovereign. Shocking!

The *Manchester Guardian* congratulates all concerned on the fact that "for many years soldiers have been free to attend public worship wherever they choose." No doubt this is a Nonconformists' paradise. But it still leaves something to be desired. What about the rights of soldiers who are not Catholics, nor Churchmen, nor Nonconformists? Soldiers who happen to be Freethinkers—and we know some—are obliged to fall in and be marched off to some place of worship. They can take their choice, but they must go somewhere. Of course it is an outrage—a flat denial of the first principles of religious freedom; but, as the Nonconformist does not suffer, he cannot for the life of him see that there is anything wrong.

According to the *Yorkshire Telegraph*, a Wiltshire lady, away on her holidays, left her sick cat at the Animals' Hospital, and asked the curate to call each morning and see how pussy had passed the night. We are glad to see curates useful—sometimes.

It is reported that the Bishop of Worcester has a practical knowledge of sowing. We are not surprised. There's many an old woman on that bench.

Six hundred tracts have been stolen from the Wesleyan chapel connected with the railway camp at Pretoria. Tracts! A clear case of kleptomania.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

September 29, Stratford Town Hall.
 October 6, Glasgow; 13, Manchester; 20, South Shields; 27, Leicester.
 November 17, Birmingham.

To Correspondents.

BISHOP OF IPSWICH.—Thanks for good wishes.
 H. A. L.—AppORTIONED as directed. Thanks.
 L. DEVEREUX is "delighted to hear of the *Freethinker* circulation going up," and leaves his copy in a railway carriage every week, with the title in full view; he also hopes "a good sum will be collected" for Mr. Parris.
 ENQUIRER.—(1.) Pleased to have your entertaining and encouraging letter. It is really not so difficult to make women Freethinkers, if men would only take the trouble to try. The greatest of all reforms in front of the world is rendering women thoughtful. All the worst evils of society would disappear quite naturally. Politics is a mere game beside it. (2.) We criticised that passage from Mr. Wells a few years ago, in a leading article.
 THE TOUZZEAU PARRIS FUND.—Fourth *Freethinker* List:—R. H. Side, £1; C. Cohen, 5s.; F. Collins, 2s. 6d.; J. Baker, 1s.; Bethnal Green Branch (collection), £1 0s. 6d.; Bishop of Ipswich, 2s. 6d.; H. A. L., 5s.; John Proctor, £2; L. Devereux, 2s. 6d.; R. D. S., 5s.; G. Gompertz, 2s. 6d.; David Watt, 2s. 6d.; Birmingham Branch, 10s. 6d.; P. Fitzpatrick, 1s.; G. White, 2s.; J. Sanderson, 2s.; J. T. Horsman, 2s.; S. M. Peacock, 2s.; W. Bowie, 1s.; J. Lazarnick, 5s.
 Per E. M. Vance:—R. Lancaster, 10s.; F. W. D., 2s. 6d.; W. Tipper, 2s. 6d.; C. Quinton, 5s.
 J. BROUGH.—Let us hear if you get an answer. What hooligans the "Protestant" and "Christian Evidence" causes attract!
 G. BRADFIELD.—Too late for this week.
 R. W. DOWDING.—Headley, of Yarmouth, probably talks nonsense in saying that his wholesale agent won't supply the *Freethinker*.
 W. A. HOLROYD.—Shall be sent as requested. Thanks.
 W. N. HARRIS.—Our readers cannot send us too many likely addresses. Thanks.
 R. H. SIDE.—You are a good deal older than Mr. Parris. It is pleasant to see you bearing up so well at your age.
 F. COLLINS.—We hope we have your name right; but so many people write quite clearly in their letters, and manage to becloud their signatures. We note that you "greatly admired Mr. Parris as a scholar on the few occasions that you were lucky enough to hear him."
 F. C.—We do not know that the late Dr. George Sexton was ever "a leader" of the Freethought party. He lectured on the Freethought platform for a brief while some forty years ago.
 THE COHEN "SALVATION ARMY" TRACT FUND.—C. A. Felton, 2s.; W. J. M., 1s.
 J. CHAMBERS.—Thanks for cuttings.
 W. P. BALL.—Your batches of cuttings are always very welcome.
 G. GOMPERTZ.—Yes, every little helps; and we wish all who can give a little would remember it.
 E. W. JONES.—Newspapers are all much alike. A lusionton once said, "There's no bad beer; some's better than others." So it might be said, "There's no good newspapers; some's worse than others." The one you mention is a little fairer than the generality, but very one-sided, all the same.
 F. WENTLE.—Thanks for your efforts to promote our circulation.
 R. H. WELLINGS.—Sorry to hear that the bigotry of Wymans' agents has compelled you at last to get your *Freethinker* direct from our publishing office.
 W. KIRKPATRICK.—(1) Nobody has proved that the universe is not infinite. (2) The Catholic Church has not accepted Evolution—if you mean the Evolution of Darwin. (3) The indestructibility of matter cannot prove that it was never created. Common sense proves that. Talking about the creation of substance is "words, words, words." The human mind cannot realise "creation" except in the artistic sense of reshaping old matter.
 J. F. C. F.—In our next.
 G. PAYNE.—Thanks. Always glad to hear from you.
 G. F. DUPLAY.—You do not seem to catch the real meaning of Mr. Davidson's words. He does not mean that the whole universe, as the universe, is conscious and self-conscious; but only that it is conscious and self-conscious in man, who is an epitome of the universe, physically as well as otherwise.
 DAVID WATT.—Glad you have such pleasant recollections of Mr. Parris as a lecturer. Thank you for circulating back numbers of the *Freethinker* during your holiday in Ireland. If our readers did all they could in this line we should have a more satisfactory circulation.
 G. JACOB.—The "Old Moore" cutting is not a new one, is it? At any rate, we wrote an article on that very same passage two or three years ago.
 LETTERS for the Editor of the *Freethinker* should be addressed to 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

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

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

THE *Freethinker* will be forwarded direct from the publishing office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One year, 10s. 6d.; half year, 5s. 3d.; three months, 2s. 8d.

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Foote is booking engagements for the winter lecturing season. Unfortunately the greatest difficulty is experienced in obtaining halls for Sunday lectures in London. More than one negotiation has proved fruitless. We hope, however, that there will be more success in the near future. The Queen's Hall seems to be monopolised for a good while by that eloquent stick-in-the-mud, Father Ignatius. Unless another hall can be obtained very soon, Mr. Foote's first lecture for the season will be at the Stratford Town Hall on the last Sunday evening in September.

Mr. James Neate, secretary of the Bethnal Green Branch, sends us a glowing report of the Freethought Demonstration in Victoria Park on Sunday afternoon. Mr. Cohen being unable to attend through illness, Miss Vance was persuaded to make "a telling little speech" about the collection—woman-like! Mr. F. A. Davies spoke eloquently, and was well-applauded. Mr. John Lloyd had a fine reception, and his speech excited great enthusiasm. He read out the letter he had received from his late congregation in South Africa, wishing him to come back to his old Church; and this was cheered again and again, for everybody saw that it killed the miserable lies that the Christians have busily circulated about Mr. Lloyd's severance from their faith.

The Stratford Town Hall has been engaged for three Sunday evening lectures (Sept. 15, 22, 29) by Messrs. Foote, Cohen, and Lloyd, under the auspices of the Secular Society, Ltd.

Mr. Cohen came back from his holiday and caught a severe chill in the treacherous weather, which laid him up and prevented his being in Victoria Park on Sunday. He is much better as we write (on Tuesday morning), and expects to be all right again in a day or two.

Mr. Cohen is paying another visit to Belfast, under the auspices (we believe) of the local Ethical Society. He lectures twice to-day (Sept. 1) in the York-street Lecture Hall, his subjects being "The Shadow of the Gods" and "The Fate of Religion." Belfast "saints" will please note.

Mr. H. S. Wishart, who has been engaged in a Freethought mission at Bristol, on behalf of the N. S. S. Executive, reports that he has been successful beyond his expectations. His audiences have been large and sympathetic, and he has disposed of a fair number of *Freethinkers* and pamphlets. A Branch of the National Secular Society has been started, with some veteran members and some belonging to the new generation. A good deal of stir is going on in the city, and arrangements will be made for indoor meetings during the winter, when Bristol will be visited (if possible) by the N. S. S. leading platform speakers. Mr. Wishart is staying a third week in Bristol, in order to do fuller justice to this special effort. We should like to see a similar work undertaken at Plymouth. What do the local "saints" say? We should be glad to hear from them promptly.

Mr. Sydney A. Gimson, the honorary treasurer of the Touzeau Parris Fund, informs us that he has personally received the following subscriptions, in addition to the preliminary list acknowledged when the appeal was first published:—J. M. Gimson, £2 2s.; A. J. Gimson, £2 2s.; Mrs. S. A. Gimson, £1; Alfred Marsh, £5; W. Dodd, 10s.; Joseph Cates, £1 1s.; A. F. Dunn, £1 1s.; Miss Alice Baker, 10s. 6d.; Sidney Ball, £1 1s.; George Tayler, £1; W. B. Columbine, 10s.; Theodore Wright, £2; Mrs. Annie Besant, £5. Total, £22 17s. 6d.

It is not generally known that the *Freethinker* goes to all parts of the world. The sun never sets upon its readers. There are always some of them in the daylight, as the earth swings round before the sun. We have quite a number of readers in South Africa, and only a few days ago we received a round-robin letter from several at Kimberley, full of compliments and encouragement. Even in Dutch

Guiana we have grateful admirers. A Glasgow "saint," who has been forwarding this journal to a friend of his out there, sends us three letters that have reached him from this friend. In the first, written as far back as February, he says that we "ought to have a world-wide circulation." Writing again in May, he says he has introduced the paper to three friends, who are as much pleased with it as he is. One of them, writing to him, says: "The more I read the *Freethinker* the better I appreciate it"—which is one of the best of compliments. Writing again in July to our Glasgow friend, the Dutch Guiana correspondent complains that some numbers of this journal have not arrived, and he suspects goody-goody people in the Post Office. His three friends have all become subscribers to the *Freethinker*. One of them says: "It affords me great pleasure and enlightenment." Another says: "I have subscribed for a year and a half, and hope to live to enjoy reading every number." The other says: "I envy the talent displayed in exposing hypocrisy and ignorance by Mr. Foote and his colleagues." Altogether it is very evident that our circulation might easily be doubled—to say the least—if our friends would do their best to get us fresh readers. We appeal to them to do it.

The Touzeau Parris Fund.

THIS Fund has now been running for a month. Mr. Sidney Gimson, of Leicester—the honorary treasurer—has acknowledged through these columns the receipt of £57 12s. 6d. from persons who received copies of the Committee's circular by post. Our own "*Freethinker* List," including the subscriptions acknowledged this week, amounts to £47 0s. 6d.—for which sum I have sent Mr. Gimson a cheque.

I expressed a hope that this Fund would be brought to a close by the end of August; but the holiday season (we cannot say the summer) was in the way, and I have therefore decided to keep it open in our columns until the end of September.

We have not done as well with the "*Freethinker* List" as we ought to have done. I do not forget that Mr. Parris has been out of the lecture field long enough to make him almost unknown to the younger generation of Freethinkers, and that many of his old auditors have passed "the bourne from which no traveller returns." But enough of his old auditors remain to make up a better subscription, and the younger generation might take my word for the reality and value of Mr. Parris's former services to the movement. He was at least a trusted associate of Charles Bradlaugh during the days of the great parliamentary struggle, when the House of Commons refused to let a militant Atheist take his seat amongst them. That alone should entitle Mr. Parris to our practical sympathy in his old age and physical helplessness, when he is but the wreck and ruin of his former self.

I venture to appeal to the rank-and-file of the Freethought party to do something in this matter. I know that many of them are poor, but I never heard of a man or woman who gave anything on such occasions and missed it afterwards. I don't mind saying to "my own people" that I have sometimes parted with my last shilling to those who wanted it more than I did, and I don't believe I am any the poorer in consequence. The fact is that most of us spend all the money we ever get; it is bound to go somehow, but we have this choice left us, that we may spend our last shilling like all the rest, or let it go in another direction—the direction of our convictions and sympathies. There are scores—I might say hundreds—of Freethinkers who could manage to send me a half-a-crown, or even a shilling, for this Touzeau Parris Fund. I ask them to do it. Opening their letters, dealing with the contents, and acknowledging subscriptions, mean extra work for me; but I was born for work, and shall never be quit of it till I die. So don't mind me, but just send your subscriptions along. And if there is anything you would like to say to me, just put it in the letter you send with your postal order.

Please remember that I am waiting to hear from you.

G. W. FOOTE.

A Popular Writer on Science.

THERE are perhaps few, if any, more popular living writers on modern problems than Dr. C. W. Saleeby, author of the *Cycle of Life* and numerous monographs on scientific subjects. Certainly in the domain he has chosen I know of no wielder of the pen more fascinating and entertaining in style. Dr. Saleeby makes science as interesting as romance to the general reader. In fact, he is doing for the scientific aspect of some of our sociological problems in this country what Flammarion has done for astronomical questions in France. Of the cleverness of Dr. Saleeby there can be no manner of doubt. But it is precisely when perusing the writings of such men—men who handle abstruse and involved problems in a brilliant, facile, often semi-paradoxical way—that one is brought up short every now and then by the reflection, Is this science? Readers of the *Freethinker* are not likely to need reminding that "dulness is not profundity, neither is solemnity wisdom"; but in dealing with problems the correct solution of which (or incorrect solution of which) must be fraught with tremendous consequences to the human race we have a right to expect from the exponents of science evidence of sobriety of thought combined with caution of expression. Most decidedly the airy confidence with which some medical men nowadays deliver themselves of pronouncements on every imaginable topic is not such as to inspire unhesitating trust either in the accuracy of their observation or the logic of their deductions. Presently I shall quote one or two brief passages from Dr. Saleeby, which seem to show that he is lacking in the true scientific spirit, and rather inclined to dogmatise from insufficient data.

Dr. Saleeby's latest book, published this year by Cassell and Company, treats, in its author's characteristic fashion, of Worry, its causes, consequences, and cure. Dr. Saleeby has much that is engrossing and instructive to say regarding what he rightly calls the disease of the age, and his book might—with advantage to the readers—be fittingly placed in the hands of the many thousands who, in this age of pressure, are so busily engaged in the pursuit of the means of happiness that they are forfeiting happiness daily. There are a great many points in the book well deserving of notice, and it is impossible to be in entire agreement with the author as regards them all; but most of them do not come under the special purview of this journal. Dr. Saleeby emphasises the importance of the influence that mind and body exercise on one another in numberless cases of organic and functional disease, and indicates forcibly that mental worry is a potent predisposing forerunner of many ailments, as well as a distinct hindrance to recovery. There is, of course, nothing new in this theory; but Dr. Saleeby has brought together a great deal of very suggestive matter in connection with his theme. He examines the causes and effects of mental worry in human beings almost from the cradle to the grave, and in its relation to numerous departments of human activity. Into all this it is impossible here to follow him. It will probably appear to some of his readers that he stretches the term "worry" to cover conditions of mind to which the word "worry" is not strictly applicable.

For the purpose of this article, what I am most concerned with is Dr. Saleeby's reference to what he calls "religious worry," and its effect on the physical and psychical well-being of the race. Before entering on that, however, it may be permissible to pass one or two comments on the other parts of his book. Not the least interesting section is that dealing with the part played by drugs (including, of course, alcohol, as well as tea and coffee) in allaying or aggravating worry. Dr. Saleeby ranks alcohol as a true *sedative*, and not as a stimulant, contrary to the popular view. Personally, I think he is in error in minimising the stimulative action of alcohol to such an extent as he does. There is no disputing that an

overdose of alcohol has a soporific effect; but anyone who has had the opportunity (as I have had) of observing the action of alcohol as consumed by the working classes can have no doubt of its stimulating effect when taken in small or moderate quantities, and even when taken in what a medical man would consider excessive quantities. This, of course, quite apart from any consideration of the real value of alcohol as a regular article of consumption. This is not the place to discuss that. Let me only here remark that the very reflection which restrains Dr. Saleeby from speaking dogmatically regarding tobacco should restrain him when dealing with alcohol. He says (page 104) "nicotine appears to act in various fashions upon various persons." The selfsame statement applies to alcohol.

Two other small points may be noted. On page 28 Dr. Saleeby says that in dealing with disease we no longer believe in the pestilent influence of bad air. "Nowadays we universally accept the germ theory of disease." But surely if the air in a given locality is thickly loaded with disease germs it is no abuse of language to speak of such air as bad air! Again, on page 305 he alludes to Spinoza and Job as belonging to the same race. It is somewhat surprising if Dr. Saleeby is unaware that modern Biblical criticism has declared most emphatically (in this confirming Thomas Paine) that Job—or the author of the Book of Job—was not a Jew. Little points like this indicate that versatility is frequently inimical to accuracy.

Let me now bring forward the passages that seem to me indicative of a lack of the true scientific spirit on the part of Dr. Saleeby. On page 14 we find this:—

"If you are prepared to believe a simple assertion that you hear or read this year, pray believe me," etc.

And on page 105 this:—

"Now if the reader remembers or believes nothing else whatever that I may say here on this subject, or that I have said or may say on any other subject anywhere else, I beseech him at least to believe this:" etc.

This, I submit, is not the voice of science. This is the language of the pulpit.

Let us now turn to the chapters dealing with religious worry. All Secularists will be in agreement with Dr. Saleeby as to the injurious effect on the human mind of the older religious beliefs. Whether or not Dr. Saleeby is attached to any particular religious body I cannot say. He is sufficiently critical of the Churches to prove that he is far from being orthodox. One can appreciate his allusion to the bachelor bishop with ten thousand a year who is so anxious that other people should keep up the birth-rate. And he is perfectly right in his contention that the type of intellect out of which primitive religion took its rise persists to this day, even in civilised countries, very little modified by the progress of the centuries. There is a mental kinship between the women in Parisian gowns who resort to palmists and crystal gazers, and the Australian or South African native. "So far as mind is concerned, they might walk down Regent-street arm-in-arm." So true it is that evolution of the body is a much easier and more rapid affair than the evolution of the mind.

Yet, sad to relate, Dr. Saleeby himself affords evidence that one at least of the characteristics of the primitive religious type of mind has not been altogether eliminated from his mentality. He, of course, knows no such thing as *fear* of the invisible; but he has not emancipated himself from what I cannot but call a foolish *reverence* for the *unknown*. And he has a quite sentimental admiration for what he calls *true religion*; which, somewhat curiously for a scientific man, he contrives to identify with all the higher aspirations of human nature. For Dr. Saleeby has not escaped the modern tendency in "advanced" religious circles to claim as religious every individual who displays moral greatness. This sort of thing seems to be getting infectious, and calls for stern protest. In the bracketing of Buddha, St. Francis, Bunyan, Socrates, and Christ, we have truly a happy

family. I am not sure that he does not mean us to include Browning, Darwin, Shelley, and Keats. When one adds that references to the eternal and to the unseen reality—together with the most oblique allusions to Christ—are tricked out in capital letters, the reader will understand how much there is of the objectionable in Dr. Saleeby's method.

There is more of adverse criticism still to come. Dr. Saleeby mentions the doctrine of philosophic materialism—the doctrine that matter is the only reality, mind being but a transient phenomenon produced by it—merely to dismiss it as "essentially childish." This brushing aside of a whole school of philosophy seems a very cool proceeding. On another page we find Dr. Saleeby remarking (after quoting from Professor Höfding on the necessity of religion) that "those who fancy that science has made an end of religion, and those who welcome this supposition, may be contemptuously ignored here." One would think that the intellectual status of those who hold that science has destroyed the grounds of religion entitles them to less cavalier treatment. Of course, much depends on what is understood by the word "religion." As already noted, in the mind of Dr. Saleeby religion seems to be synonymous with all that is "deepest and highest in the nature of man." Needless to say, science has never destroyed or attempted to destroy this latter. But science is doing something else. Science is explaining it and accounting for it—which religion never has done.

In his discussion of the form of worry associated with the fear of death, it is satisfactory to observe that Dr. Saleeby drives another nail into the coffin of a venerable Christian legend. Who has not read harrowing descriptions of the death-bed of the sinner and the infidel, and sublime accounts of the passing of the just man? Yet the truth is that, so far as the actual end is concerned, practically all people die alike. Very few are conscious of death when it does arrive. Professor Osler, of Oxford, has preserved the records of about five hundred death-beds, and of these only fifteen evinced mental apprehension (the word "apprehension" is not here used as synonymous with fear) at the moment of dissolution. "The great majority gave no sign one way or the other." Dr. Saleeby says: "We have to attribute this distressing fiction largely to the base imitations of true religion." He is referring to the fable of the death-agony; and all I have to add as comment is that I see no reason for any qualification of the final substantive in the sentence just quoted. Omit the five words preceding the word "religion" and you have a statement at once more succinct and more accurate. It is somewhat curious that Dr. Saleeby, after contending so effectually that with nearly everyone the end is peace, should subsequently call attention to the fact that Bunyan died "in perfect peace," as if this were something phenomenal.

As is the case with most writers on scientific or semi-scientific subjects, Dr. Saleeby's reflections and opinions are most valuable and bear most clearly the impress of truth when he "sticks to his last." He is in thorough agreement with modern psychology and physiology in insisting on the close connection between sex and religion, between the approach of puberty and the development of what some people consider distinctively religious emotions. And one can cordially sympathise with his views on training children. He holds (as do we) that children should never be troubled with religious matters. They are born pagans, and should be allowed to remain so as long as possible. One would fain hope that the system of terrorising children into being "good" is dying out. As Dr. Saleeby reminds us, there are two ways of ruling and guiding others—through love or through fear. The latter method is too often resorted to by parents and those in authority, because it is the shortest and easiest way. To rule through love requires patience and thoughtfulness, but it is a method which in the result is repaid a thousand-fold.

The interest of Dr. Saleeby's book is not by any means exhausted, but a halt must perforce be called.

Any criticism I have ventured on is meant in a friendly spirit. I am in too close agreement with him on most points to be otherwise than friendly. But it is not out of place to warn one who has the ear of the public, and writes in a popular style, that too much may be sacrificed to popularity.

GEO. SCOTT.

Anthony Collins.—II.

BY THE LATE J. M. WHEELER,

Sub-Editor of the "Freethinker" and Author of the "Biographical Dictionary of Freethinkers," etc.

(Concluded from p. 541.)

AFTER the publication of his *Discourse*, Collins deemed it prudent to pay a visit to his friends in Holland. He was in consequence ridiculed by the very men who had been crying out for persecution. The *Guardian* (No. 3) declared "if ever man deserved to be denied the common benefits of air and water, it is the author of *A Discourse of Freethinking*." Collins soon returned to England, and in 1715, he retired to Essex, where he acted as justice of the peace and deputy-lieutenant for the same county; as he had done before in the county of Middlesex and the liberty of Westminster. In the same year, he published his *Philosophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty*. This had not only the merit of being the first regular treatise upon the subject, although the argument for philosophical necessity had been already stated by Hobbes, but it is a clear and concise statement, which from its brevity can be still recommended to inquirers into a question more than usually troubled with logomachy. It was republished in 1790, with a preface by Joseph Priestley, who preferred it to the more diffuse but masterly treatise by Jonathan Edwards.

In 1718, he was chosen treasurer for the county of Essex, to the great joy, it is said, of several tradesmen and others, who had large sums of money due to them from the said county but could not get it paid, it having been embezzled or spent by their former treasurer. Collins supported the poorest of them from his own purse, and paid interest to the others, until, in 1722, all the debts were discharged by his integrity and good management.

In 1724, appeared Collins's most powerful attack upon orthodoxy, entitled *A Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion*. The Arian Whiston, who to his high mathematical and linguistic attainments added as many "fads" as Dodwell himself, had put forward in sweet simplicity an *Essay towards Restoring the True Text of the Old Testament, and for Vindicating the Citations made there in the New Testament*. Whiston saw, what is plain enough to any reader, that the prophecies introduced in the Gospels by the words "that it might be fulfilled" did not bear the sense placed upon them by the Evangelists. He followed some of the early Fathers into the mistake of supposing that the Jews had wilfully corrupted their Scriptures in order to evade the inferences drawn from the plain words of the original. Here was a rare opportunity for the Freethinker. Collins set himself the not difficult task of showing that as Christianity consists in the belief that Jesus is the prophesied Christ, it is founded on Judaism and grounded by Jesus and the apostles on the prophecies of the Old Testament. These prophecies were evidently not literally fulfilled, and therefore they must, if Christianity be true, have been merely typical or applied only in a mystical, allegorical, or enigmatical sense. For example, Matt. i. 22-23: "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet [or rather, as the Revised Version gives it, by the Lord through the prophet] saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel." The words, as they stand in Isaiah vii.

14, in their obvious and literal sense, refer to a *young woman* in the reign of Ahaz, king of Judah, and the context shows that the child was Isaiah's own son, the prophet, in this matter, leaving nothing to the labors of his successors. The only resource is to say that the prophecy was typical, and this Collins explains as such a sense as no one could have discovered in the passages quoted in the Old Testament simply as they stand in the Old; so that prophecy was verily a light in a dark place, but not overcoming the darkness, and God must have been in the habit of talking to his prophets in riddles.

Dr. Hunt says:—

"Whatever error Collins may have made in detail, his great principle was fairly established, that the evidence for the truth of Christianity from prophecy rests on secondary or typical fulfilments."

The real purport of this admission is made plain in Leslie Stephen's acute statement that Collins's true meaning "may be brought out by everywhere substituting 'nonsense' for 'allegory.'"

The discourse was immediately attacked by a great number of books. In the preface to his *Scheme of Literal Prophecy*, published only two years afterwards, in which he replies to his opponents, principally dealing with Bishop Chandler, Collins gives a list of thirty-five of these which had already appeared. Sherlock, Samuel Clarke, Arthur Ashley Sykes, are all that are worth remembering.

Lesser fry suggested persecution. Dr. John Rogers, Canon of Wells, wrote:—

"A confessor or two would be a mighty ornament to his cause. If he expects us to believe that he is in earnest, and believes himself, he should not decline giving us this proof of his sincerity. What will not abide this trial, we shall suspect to have but a poor foundation."

No prosecution of Collins was instituted. Blount, Shaftesbury, and Collins, who were rich, escaped; but Toland, Woolston, and Annet, who were poor, were prosecuted, and the two latter severely punished for their infidelity. Surely we have seen something like this in our own day.

The health of Collins began to decline several years before his death, which occurred Dec. 13, 1729. The last work of Collins's, published in the year of his death (1729), was a *Dissertation upon Liberty and Necessity*, with remarks upon Dr. Clarke's reasonings upon the subject. William Corry, in his *Reflections upon Liberty and Necessity*, says the threatened interposition of the magistrates had hindered Collins from defending his *Philosophical Inquiry*. Prof. Fraser, in his smaller work on Berkeley, states that in his writings on this question, Collins "states the arguments against human freedom with a logical force unsurpassed by any necessitarian." Collins left behind him a considerable quantity of MSS., including a dissertation on the Sibylline oracles, showing they were forged by the primitive Christians, and a discourse on Miracles, which he mentions at the end of his *Scheme of Literal Prophecy*. These, the widow of Collins (a second wife, daughter of Sir Walter Wrottesley) purchased from Des Maizeaux for fifty guineas and suppressed. Judas Des Maizeaux afterwards repented and returned the money. The MSS., however, disappeared, like the second volume of Tindal's work, and the attack on miracles was left to the bolder, but more erratic, hands of Thomas Woolston.

THE GOLDEN AGE.

The golden age is not behind us: it is before us, it is in the perfection of social order. Our fathers have not beheld it; our children are destined to reach it. Our vocation is to prepare the way.—*Saint-Simon*.

Justice cannot be maintained except by a man who is both strong and wise.—*Cicero*.

Not because it is difficult, have we not the courage to do good; but because we have not the courage to do good, it becomes difficult.—*Seneca*.

Charges of Sweating.

SERIOUS ALLEGATIONS AGAINST THE SALVATION ARMY.

SERIOUS allegations of employing sweated labor were made against the Salvation Army at a meeting held at Chandos Hall, Maiden-lane, last night, called at the instance of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners.

Statements were made by workmen employed at the Army's joinery works in Hanbury-street that the wages received were not sufficient to enable them to buy tools and leave the establishment; that they had to pay 7s. weekly for food which was sometimes unfit for consumption, and that the clothes which the charitable public supplied to the Army had to be purchased by the destitute workers.

Mr. H. W. Harden (chairman of the Amalgamated Society of Joiners and Carpenters), who presided, remarked that cases had come to the notice of his society which were positively disgraceful. He did not wish to touch on the religious side of the Salvation Army organisation, but wished to expose a system of employing destitute men whom they professed to assist to raise from fallen circumstances under conditions of serfdom.

The men, Mr. Harden said, were penned in day after day, and had to work as many hours as the Army officials could squeeze out of them, and in return received a workhouse diet and a miserable paltry wage. And the Salvation Army placed such labor in competition with trade union labor in the district in such a way as to throw men on an over-filled labor market.

Mr. Stennett (secretary of the society) stated that joiners who worked fifty-two and a half hours per week were paid only 7s. 6d. (and of this 7s. was returned for food); that they had to subscribe 6s. 6d. each to a beanfeast fund, which cost the Army only 2s. 6d., and they had to work eighteen hours overtime to get the day's holiday; that the Army sent joiners to work on outside contracts, and while paying them only 1s. per day for food and 2d. for travelling expenses, they charged for the same work at the rate of 7½d. per hour; and that a profit of about £50 per week was made by the Army out of the seventy or eighty mechanics they employed.

Bay windows with frames and sashes complete were made at 3s. each, and skylights at 1s. One-third of the wages the men received was deducted for clothes.

One of the Army workmen described the food as abominable, and one-half of it he said was left untouched.

Mr. J. O'Grady, M.P., said they ought to raise a loud protest against the inhuman methods employed by the Salvation Army, and an appeal should be made to the philanthropic public requesting them to refuse to subsidise an institution which imposed conditions involving a profit of 1,000 per cent. The men were supposed to earn 12s. per week. Out of this 9s. was deducted for food, leaving a balance of 3s. from which further deductions were made in respect of clothes, washing, boot mending, etc.

The Army's practice of making deductions from the men's wages was, he believed, a breach of the Truck Act, while the general system was worse than that of the prison-made goods in America. The men, he said, were working under a shameful system of slavery, and an inquiry ought to be allowed by General Booth.—*Daily Chronicle*.

My Experiences with Revivalists.

It is not likely that there will be any more revivalists in Montreal in the near future. If any of them do come, it is safe to prophesy that they will be more civil to Freethinkers in the future. Dr. Torrey is not the only evangelist that I got into a corner in Montreal. Some years ago, there came to Montreal two boy evangelists from England. The youngest of the boys did the preaching, and the oldest acted as manager and made the announcements. One evening, an announcement was made that the boy evangelist would face, and of course confound, any Montreal Freethinker that would come forward next night. The next night came in due course, and I was there. It is seldom safe to challenge a Highlander in advance unless you know him personally, and then you are not sure of coming off best in a fight. The boy asked for texts from the audience, and I gave him one from Genesis xxxviii., verse 9. The other texts were all read, but when he came to this one he refused to read it, as I knew he would. During the intermission a large crowd of the audience crowded round me and wanted to know what was my text that the evangelist refused to read. I had my pockets full of printed slips with choice Bible texts on, and I distributed them, and told them it was the first on the small slip. The evangelist objected to me distributing my circulars, and threatened to have me arrested. I told him I had paid for my seat, and as I did not move from it I

did not see how he could do it. In any case, I told him, if I were arrested it would only prove my contention that the Bible was not a fit and proper book for general circulation. As there were no comments whatever on the circulars, only Bible texts, and I was willing to stand the consequences, so the matter ended there. Montreal churchmen feel very sore over the "Torrey Affair." That the most notorious infidel in Canada should get £10 of the money they collected for Dr. Torrey, and that his baggage should be seized like a common felon, was simply something awful. Many of the most sensible church-people were none too well pleased with Dr. Torrey himself. In the first place, he pretended too much. One evening he announced he was going to make the way of life as plain as day, and then he was going to tell them all about the Holy Ghost, how to get him, who ought to get him, and what to do with him when you did get him. Now they reason that a man who pretended to show others how to live a godly life should not adopt the methods of a saloon-loafer, a street-walker, or a Billingsgate fishwife. I glory in my British citizenship. I always wear a tartan plaid tied by a "Union Jack" pin, and I claim as much right to be a heathen, if I wish, as an Indian British subject in Calcutta or a Chinese British subject in Hong Kong. And the "Torrey Incident" proves that I am right. Besides, I have a very definite religion, which I claim is better than Christianity. I tell them you can have Jesus, Paul, and David, and as many dead Jews as you want, but I prefer Aristotle, Cicero, Tacitus, Herodotus, Voltaire, and Thomas Paine. Besides, the history of the old Vikings, from whom I am descended, is far more interesting to me than the history of the Jews. My name, in Gaelic "Tormaid," is called after Thor, so you see I am a descendant of the gods myself.

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A GLOOMY view the *Chicago Journal* takes of the times, which it calls "an age of unreason." Says the *Chronicle* :—

"Surely this is the era of the mountebank in religion and politics and sociology. The bigger the mountebank the bigger his following. Sensational preachers bawl blasphemies from the pulpit or write balderdash for yellow newspapers. Demagogue politicians vociferate from lecture platforms or at banquets. Wild-eyed reformers shout bedlamite denunciations of everybody and everything. All of them draw large audiences. It is an age of unreason. Mankind has had these periods of aberration before, and doubtless will have them again. It is this reflection alone which prevents sane people from despairing at the present deluge of slush."

These "periods of aberration" will recur so long as men make a religion out of their theories and propagate them on the authority of God or anything else but reason. There is required no sensationalism, no "blasphemy," no balderdash, no vociferating to announce and disseminate scientific facts. Appeals to ignorance and to the emotions are the methods of a baseless religion and the proponents of theories destitute of verification. If the *Chronicle* would see an age of reason, let it recommend to its readers a perusal of the *Age of Reason*, along with the *Rights of Man*, which will have a steadying effect on religious enthusiasts and on the mountebanks in sociology. It is the preaching method, the appeal to sentiment and prejudice, that has queered the human brain, and belief in the impossibilities promised by religion prepares people to fall readily for the schemes of demagogues. Mankind cannot be both religious and rational. Dupes of the priests, who, as Christians, have acquired the habit of belief without examination, will be caught by anybody who comes preaching and promising.—*Truthseeker* (New York).

Legends of creation, tales—

(As if the Universe could have been made
In any sense mankind can give the word!)
Fantastic myths of virgins bearing boys,
And of a desperate God who gave his son
To die upon a tree—how foul a thing!—
Of dead men come alive, and signs and shows
Of tongues and thunders, cures and stigmata:
These are no mystery, but the quaint alarm
Of ignorance that harnessed vision against
The things that be in sterile dreams of spirit,
As banal, venomous-moral, hard and fast
As Matter is mysterious, fluent, pure.

—John Davidson, "The Theatrocrat."

Cemetery.—An isolated suburban spot where mourners match lies, poets write at a target, and stonecutters spell for a wager.—*Ambrose Bierce*.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, etc.

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

LONDON.**OUTDOOR.**

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S.: Victoria Park (near the Fountain), 3.15, A. Allison, a Lecture; 5.30, James Marshall, "Christianity: a Myth of Myth."

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N.S.S.: Station-road, 11.30, Guy A. Aldred, "The Philosophy of Pantheism." Brockwell Park, Guy A. Aldred, 3.15. "The Ethics of Freethought"; 6.15, "Atheism and Agnosticism."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.: Parliament Hill, 3.30, F. A. Davies, a Lecture.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N.S.S.: Ridley-road, 11.30, a Lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S.: Outside Maryland Point Station (G.E.R.), 7, A. Allison, a Lecture.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.: Hyde Park (near Marble Arch), 11.30, a Lecture.

WOOLWICH BRANCH N.S.S.: Beresford-square, 11.30, Andrew Allison, a Lecture.

COUNTRY.**OUTDOOR.**

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S.: Wednesday, Sept. 4, at 8.15, in the Bull Ring, H. Lennard.

EDINBURGH BRANCH N.S.S.: The Meadows, 3, meets for Discussion; The Mound, 7, meets for Discussion.

HUDDERSFIELD BRANCH N.S.S.: Bradford (bottom of Morley-road), at 7, C. J. Atkinson and G. Whitehead. Market Cross, on Saturday, at 8, George Whitehead.

ADVANCED THOUGHT LECTURES.

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