

THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXVIII.—No. 12

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 1908

PRICE TWOPENCE

The only true conquests—those which awaken no regret—are those obtained over ignorance. The most honorable, as the most useful pursuit of nations, is that which contributes to the extension of human intellect.
—NAPOLEON

The Logic of Persecution.

NEITHER the cruelty of tyrants, nor the ambition of conquerors, has wrought so much mischief and suffering as the principle of persecution. The crimes of a Nero, the ravages of an Attila, afflict the world for a season, and then cease and are forgotten, or only linger in the memory of history. But persecution operates incessantly like a natural force. With the universality of light, it radiates in every direction. The palace is not too proud for its entrance, nor is the cottage too humble. It affects every relationship of life. Its action is exhibited in public through imprisonment, torture, and bloodshed, and in private through the tears of misery and the groans of despair.

But worse remains. Bodies starve and hearts break, but at last there comes "the popped sleep, the end of all." Grief is buried in the grave, Nature covers it with a mantle of grass and flowers, and the feet of joy trip merrily over the paths once trodden by heavy-footed care. Yet the more subtle effects of persecution remain with the living. *They* are not screwed down in the coffin and buried with the dead. They become part of the pestilential atmosphere of cowardice and hypocrisy which saps the intellectual manhood of society, so that bright-eyed inquiry sinks into bleary-eyed faith, and the rich vitality of active honest thought falls into the decrepitude of timid and slothful acquiescence.

What is this principle of persecution, and how is it generated and developed in the human mind? Now that it is falling into discredit, there is a tendency on the part of Christian apologists to ascribe it to our natural hatred of contradiction. Men argue and quarrel, and if intellectual differences excite hostility in an age like this, how easy it was for them to excite the bitterest animosity in more ignorant and barbarous ages! Such is the plea now frequently advanced. No doubt it wears a certain plausibility, but a little investigation will show its fallacy. Men and women are so various in their minds, characters, circumstances, and interests, that if left to themselves they inevitably form a multiplicity of ever-shifting parties, sects, fashions, and opinions; and while each might resent the impertinence of disagreement from its own standard, the very multiformity of the whole mass must preserve a general balance of fair play, since every single sect with an itch for persecuting would be confronted by an overwhelming majority of dissidents. It is obvious, therefore, that persecution can only be indulged in when some particular form

of opinion is in the ascendant: and if this form is artificially developed; if it is the result, not of knowledge and reflection, but of custom and training; if, in short, it is rather a superstition than a belief, you have a condition of things highly favorable to the forcible suppression of heresy. Now, throughout history, there is one great form of opinion which has been artificially developed, which has been accepted through faith and not through study, which has always been concerned with alleged occurrences in the remote past or the inaccessible future, and which has also been systematically maintained in its "pristine purity" by an army of teachers who have pledged themselves to inculcate the ancient faith without any admixture of their own intelligence.

That form of opinion is Religion. Accordingly we should expect to find its career always attended with persecution, and the expectation is amply justified by a cursory glance at the history of every faith. There is, indeed, one great exception; but, to use a popular though inaccurate phrase, it is an exception which proves the rule. Buddhism has never persecuted. But Buddhism is rather a philosophy than a religion; or, if a religion, it is not a theology, and that is the sense attached to *religion* in this article.

All such religions have persecuted, do persecute, and will persecute while they exist. Let it not be supposed, however, that they punish heretics on the open ground that the majority must be right and the minority must be wrong, or that some people have a right to think while others have only the right to acquiesce. No, that is too shameless an avowal; nor would it, indeed, be the real truth. There is a principle in religions which has always been the sanction of persecution, and, if it be true, persecution is more than right—it is a duty. That principle is Salvation by Faith.

If a certain belief is necessary to salvation, if to reject it is to merit damnation, and to undermine it is to imperil the eternal welfare of others, there is only one course open to its adherents; they must treat the heretic as they would treat a viper. He is a poisonous creature to be swiftly extinguished. But not *too* swiftly, for he has a soul that may still be saved. Accordingly he is sequestered to prevent further harm, an effort is made to convert him, then he is punished, and the rest is left with God. That his conversion is attempted by torture, either physical or mental, is not an absurdity; it is consonant to the doctrine of salvation by faith. For if God punishes or rewards us according to our possession or lack of faith, it follows that faith is within the power of will. Accordingly the heretic, to use Dr. Martineau's expression, is reminded not of arguments but of motives, not of evidence but of fear, not of proofs but of perils, not of reasons but of ruin. When we recognise that the understanding acts independently of volition, and that the threat of punishment, while it may produce silence or hypocrisy, *cannot* alter belief, this method of procedure strikes us as a monstrous imbecility; but, given a belief in the doctrine of salvation by faith, it must necessarily appear both logical and just. If the heretic *will* not believe, he is clearly wicked, for he rejects the truth and insults God. He has deliberately chosen the path to hell, and does it matter whether he travel slowly or swiftly to his destination? But

does it *not* matter whether he go alone or drag down others with him to perdition? Such was the logic of the Inquisitors; and although their cruelties must be detested, their consistency must be allowed.

Catholics have an infallible Church, and the Protestants an infallible Bible. Yet as the teaching of the Bible becomes a question of interpretation, the infallibility of each Church resolves itself into the infallibility of its priesthood. Each asserts that *some* belief is necessary to salvation. Religious liberty, therefore, has never entered into the imagination of either. The Protestants who revolted against the Papacy openly avowed the principle of persecution. Luther, Beza, Calvin, and Melancthon were probably more intolerant than any Pope of their age; and if the Protestant persecutions were not, on the whole, so sanguinary as those of the Roman Catholic Church, it was simply due to the fact that Catholicism passed through a dark and ferocious period of history, while Protestantism emerged in an age of greater light and humanity. Persecution cannot always be bloody, but it always inflicts on heretics as much suffering as the sentiment of the community will tolerate.

The doctrine of salvation by faith has been more mischievous than all other delusions of theology combined. How true are the words of Pascal: "Jamais on ne fait le mal si pleinement et si gaiement que quand on le fait par un faux principe de conscience." Fortunately a nobler day is breaking. The light of truth succeeds the darkness of error. Right belief is infinitely important, but it cannot be forced. Belief is independent of will. But character is not, and therefore the philosopher approves or condemns actions instead of censuring beliefs. Theology, however, consistently clings to its old habits. "Infidels" must not be argued with but threatened, not convinced but libelled; and when these weapons are futile there ensues the persecution of silence. That serves for a time, but only for a time; it may obstruct, but it cannot prevent, the spread of unbelief. It is like a veil against the light. It may obscure the dawn to the dull-eyed and the uninquisitive, but presently the blindest sluggards in the penfolds of faith will see that the sun has risen.

G. W. FOOTE.

Mr. Stead on Sunday.

To the *International* for March, Mr. W. T. Stead contributes an article in defence of "Sunday Observance in England." He admits that the English Sunday is made "unnecessarily grim by the closing of public libraries, public museums, public picture galleries, and public baths," but believes that these "unnecessary excrescences and distortions" are "slowly disappearing." That the typical English Sunday is grim, no one will deny, nor will it be questioned that its more unpleasant features are slowly being eliminated. But for this last boon we have no cause to thank those who regard themselves as the champions of the British Sunday. On the contrary, every change in the direction of humanising the day of rest has been in spite of their bitterest opposition. The secularising of Sunday is really part of the general process of secularising life.

Mr. Stead thinks the fundamental principles of the English Sunday are quite sound, and are gaining ground. These principles are: "(1) Liberty to rest. (2) Opportunity for worship, public and private. (3) Leisure to eat, drink, and be merry." Now, putting on one side for the moment the question of whether these really are the "fundamental principles" of the English Sunday, one may ask whether this institution, as conceived and regulated by Christians, has actually carried out these principles? In any rational sense, it has certainly not provided an opportunity for the first. It may have provided well enough for the second; and it has only led, so

far as the third is concerned, to eating and drinking without any conspicuous degree of healthy merriment.

As a Christian institution, it has not given a day of rest. In any profitable sense of the word, "rest" is not secured by mere cessation of one's accustomed labor. Rest—healthy rest—is really change of occupation. There are very few people so strong that they can afford to—to put the matter colloquially—do nothing. One of the great faults of the treatment of criminals in our prisons has been that of not seeing that the whole of the prisoner's time was properly and profitably employed. The result has been a weakening of the intellect for good, a further depreciation of the man as a useful social asset, with the final consequence that the criminal has emerged from prison somewhat worse than when he entered. Now, the average man, although not a criminal, cannot afford to spend his day of "rest" in the manner that Christian Sabbatarianism has forced him to adopt. To spend it healthfully, he should have free access to places of healthy amusement, recreation, and enlightenment. He should not only have access to them, he should be encouraged to avail himself of all the advantages they offer. But these channels have been closed. Those who did not wish to attend church have been doomed to the same sort of demoralising inactivity to which our criminals have been condemned. Let anyone consider that for nearly three hundred years, generation after generation has grown up debarred by a Christian public opinion from spending one-seventh of their lives in a healthful manner, or if they did attempt it, the fact of their method being under a ban robbed it of a deal of its value. If we consider all that is implied by this, we shall also recognise that probably no other institution we have had has been indirectly responsible for so much demoralisation as the English Sunday.*

Part of No. 3 the English Sunday may have given the people. It may have given them leisure to eat and drink, but that is all; it certainly did not tend to merriment. Indeed, merriment was precisely one of the things that the English Sunday persistently ostracised. To be merry on Sunday was to be criminal. To laugh or play in the public streets on Sunday was to outrage public decency. Not only *was*, but is, to a very considerable extent. Let any stranger walk through the streets of an English town or city on Sunday, and if he be of an observant nature he will notice one thing almost lacking. On any other day, or on any public holiday, he will see plenty of children playing about, either in the streets or in public places. On Sunday he will find this feature almost absent. He may look almost in vain for children playing with hoop and stick, bat and ball, or making the air ring with their shouts of enjoyment. In "respectable" homes these implements of childish pleasure are laid on one side. True, one cannot altogether keep children from playing on Sunday, but it is in a subdued key; it is tolerated, not encouraged.

Still further. London has, perhaps, more public parks and recreation grounds than any other city in the world. Many, if not most, of these have open-air gymnasia attached, in which during the week one may see boys and girls reaping health and pleasure. On Sunday they are carefully closed, by order of a London County Council that was dominated by the class which regards itself as the guardian of our English Sunday. Let one consider, also, the long fight there has been to provide the people with decent musical entertainments on Sunday, how many obstacles are yet placed in the way of those who set themselves to the work, and the statement that one of the principles of the Christian Sunday is to provide an occasion to be merry reads like a grim joke.

* It is worth noting that from the commencement of the dominance of the Puritan Sunday there were complaints of the evils resulting therefrom. Thus Charles the First's *Declaration Concerning Lawful Sports to be used on Sundays*, specially notes the "filthy tipplings and drunkenness" resulting from a cessation of the Sunday sports and games.

Eating and drinking it has encouraged, undoubtedly. And because while doing this it has barred the way to higher pleasures, it has degraded this into a mere animal orgie. A day to eat and drink, *plus* other things, may be a day of social enjoyment and personal development. A day *minus* everything but eating and drinking only becomes a day of brute-like demoralisation. Personally, I have a fairly strong conviction that the character of the working class might have been higher, on the average, had people been forced to win the necessary rest, as they won a ten-hour working day and other privileges, than to have had it secured to them in a form that robbed it of the benefits it should have conferred. Mr. Stead says that the English Sunday is "the father's day for his children." Certainly it is for many; but it strikes one that parents would, in the mass, have delighted to spend what leisure time they had with their family, Sunday or no Sunday. The real question is, Has it developed family affection? On this I have my doubts. And I believe, from the little I have seen, that in those countries where the "Continental Sunday" obtains, one may see a far larger proportion of working men out with their wives and children than one can see in this country. Here the average practice seems to be for the man to go out with his friends, leaving the wife and children to stay at home by themselves, or go out alone, as they feel inclined.

The only thing that the English Sunday has clearly secured is what Mr. Stead calls his second principle, "opportunity for worship, public and private." It has provided it because this is really all that it has ever been honestly concerned with. Let us remember that the English Sunday is really an English institution—it is something peculiar to the British Isles, or, at least to the British peoples. It does not exist on the Continent, nor did it exist in Britain until the beginning of the seventeenth century. We owe this English Sunday, with all its dreariness, dinginess, and mind and moral-destroying monotony to that Puritanism which always trumpets its own value, but which no country in the world has ever been able to stand for long. And there is certainly no hint with those who were responsible for the bringing about of the English Sunday that they regarded it as a day of rest—in Mr. Stead's sense of the word, or as a day of eating, drinking, or merry-making. Their reason was a religious one, pure and simple. In England, in Scotland, and in America the last thing thought of by the creators of the "English Sunday" was that it should serve as a day of secular recreation or recuperation. This is quite a modern view, and it is now only adopted by the clergy as a cover for their real object, which is to enforce, so far as is possible, religious observance. It is the desecration of the Sabbath they are concerned with, not the necessity of a proper amount of rest for the people. The clergy could stand well enough people working long hours in factory or mine. They could stand them working under all sorts of unhealthy conditions. They could submit, without a word of protest, to the growth of the English factory system, which sacrificed the health and lives of thousands of *children* to the profit of their employers. What they could not stand was the desecration of the Sabbath, for then their own trade interest suffered.

Mr. Stead believes that "the secular mind of the Continent is slowly waking up to the fact that the English Sunday has been a Magna Charter of Labor." I do not believe it. The secular mind of the Continent is simply awakening to the necessity of securing by law a minimum amount of rest to all workers. And against this no Freethinker has anything to say. But this is a very different thing from securing an "English Sunday" for the Continent. It would indeed be curious if the Continent were to institute our seventh day of gloom and depression, just as we were managing to get rid of its more depressing features. The necessity of everybody being sure of a certain amount of leisure for recreation and enlightenment is so obvious to-day as

hardly to need discussing. Even the clergy admit it. But securing at least one day out of seven for every worker is one thing; to re-enthroned the English Sunday is quite another.

It is an unfortunate quality of a certain class of people that their good feelings should make them the catspaws of others less worthy than themselves. Mr. Stead, in his desire to secure a proper amount of rest for all, fails not only to see that if this rest is to be wholly beneficial the whole community cannot cease to labor at the same time, he also ignores the immense evil already done by allowing that day to rest on a religious basis. To a community brutally materialised by a religion that has claimed control of the higher life, the means of regeneration lies, to a considerable extent, in the fresh air, in the fields, at the sea-side, in music, in literature, and in art. Yet against these influences religion has steadily set its face. It has protested against Sunday excursions and Sunday entertainments. It has closed our museums, our art galleries, and our public libraries. It has, for three hundred years, closed all avenues of healthful recreation on the one day when the mass of the people might have availed themselves of their existence. It cries out against drink, when for generations it has left the people nothing but the tap-room during their leisure time; and it complains of the lack of lofty ideals, while all the time it has been itself a most effective agent of demoralisation. Let us, by all means, secure rest for all who labor—one cannot have too much rest from mere mechanical toil, so long as there are open means of self-development and healthful recreation. But in *their* absence, in the kind of rest desired by the supporters of the "English Sunday," rest becomes but another opportunity for national demoralisation.

C. COHEN.

Cui Bono?

THAT old question of Cato and Cassius is frequently put to Freethought lecturers and writers. Sometimes it is asked in derision by bigoted believers, and sometimes out of curiosity, if not anxiety, by people living on the borderland between belief and scepticism. The former answer it themselves in a supercilious and insulting fashion, as if they were the only people in the world competent to express an opinion on the subject. As a rule, the words they employ are barbed arrows, meant to wound to the marrow those at whom they are hurled. In their prejudiced judgment, Freethinkers, so far from doing any good, are inundating the land with the most deadly poison ever concocted either in or out of hell. These are people with whom it is impossible to reason, whose only attitude towards opponents is one of unqualified and unconsidered denunciation. Argument, however cogent, is utterly lost upon them. Secularists are a pack of wicked people whose one object in life is to lead their fellow-men straight to perdition, and if they had their deserts they would all be burnt without mercy. Generally speaking, such is the spirit in which orthodox Christians think and speak of opponents of the faith. If they had their way, the doom of all Infidels would be identical with that which Socrates received at the hands of the Athenians. As already stated, the attempt to argue with such intolerant bigots would be a culpable waste of time. The doors of their intelligence are locked and barred. Even for the New Theologian they have nothing but envenomed abuse. The only comfort is that their ranks are growing thinner and thinner, and that scarcely any recruits volunteer to fill the empty places.

Mention has been made of the New Theologian, who is supposed to be liberal-minded and tolerant, but who, as a matter of fact, is in his way quite as impervious to argument as the Old Theologian. He, too, fancies that he alone has the truth, that to him only is the Gospel of Christ known in its true inwardness and transforming power, and that it is with him, and not with the mummies of orthodoxy, the

Almighty delights to dwell. He hates the orthodox Church because God has forsaken it and taken up his abode with him. He attacks the Old Theologian because he believes too much, and at the same time he empties the vials of his wrath upon the Freethinker because he believes too little. He, too, is a bigot, a fanatic, and as bitterly hostile to Freethought as the most orthodox divine. He does not hesitate to assert that opposition to his dogmas is the vilest thing conceivable. As long as they thundered against an infallible Church, or an infallible Book, or mediæval scholasticism, or the theology of John Calvin and Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Freethinkers had some show of excuse for their propaganda, but now that the New Theology has arisen, their occupation is gone, and they can do nothing but mischief.

Coming to those on the borderland, we find that they are in a state of uncertainty, unable to believe and yet unprepared to avow their unbelief, having shaken off the shackles of the Old Theology, but not having seen their way clear to put on those of the New. To Freethinkers they say, "What good do you expect to accomplish by flogging a dead horse? Leave the wretched carcass alone, the life is all out of it." Again and again do Freethinkers meet with these inhabitants of the borderland, and are thus questioned by them as to the utility of their work. One said recently to a Freethought lecturer: "I agreed with almost everything you said, I disbelieve all the dogmas you attacked, but what is the use of such negative toil? Why raise a laugh at the expense of opinions none of your hearers hold?"

Now, a moment's reflection will show that the utility of the Freethought movement has been abundantly vindicated by its phenomenal success. It is well known to students that every age has had its quota of Freethinkers. Some of their books are to be found even between the covers of the Holy Bible. Throughout the history of the Christian Church we see them rising up and making their protest; but the Church had command of the arm of the law, and they were speedily silenced. Even to this day, in most countries, there are execrable laws by means of which they can easily be laid by the heels. And yet, in spite of everything, they have already achieved the most astounding results. Why is orthodoxy languishing on a dying bed? Because Freethought has wounded it in its vital organs. What brought the New Theology into being? Freethought. Who were the founders of the Higher Criticism which has already swept away the infallible Bible? Freethinkers. Every step that the Church has ever taken in the direction of freedom and progress has been inspired by Freethought. An infallible Church in the possession of an infallible theology could never advance an inch. Paul declared himself to be an infallible exponent of an infallible gospel received by revelation direct from the Lord; and of necessity to add to, or subtract from, or in any other way to tamper or tinker with that gospel was regarded by him as an unpardonable sin, the perpetrators of which he boldly and wholeheartedly anathematised. And Paul was entirely right. On no other ground whatsoever can theology be upheld. To make the slightest alteration in the "faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" is to insult heaven, and to be guilty of high treason against the Lord. Surely, then, the one duty of the Church is to "contend earnestly" for that faith in the very form in which it was delivered. To modify it, in the hope of bringing it into harmony with growing knowledge, is to deny its Divine origin, and to reduce it to the level of a mere human conjecture. Well, Freethought is inevitably antagonistic to the faith that claims to be a supernatural revelation, and cannot but expose the utter absurdity of taking such a claim seriously. Failing to defend such a claim on grounds of reason, the Church demanded acquiescence in it in the name of authority—that is, in her own name as the Divinely-appointed custodian of the revelation, or in the name of the Bible as the inerrant record of it. At last, Freethought has suc-

ceeded in completely discrediting the authority, whether it be the Church or the Bible, with the result that Christianity has practically ceased to count as a factor in the lives of the people. As a vital force in the world Christianity is as total a failure as if it were dead and buried. The New Theology represents a vain endeavor to revivify it by adapting it to modern requirements, or by giving it a suit of semi-scientific clothes; but in reality the New Theology only marks a stage in the process of its disintegration, for which we are indebted alone to the persistent activity of Freethought.

Is it not now beyond the shadow of a doubt that what is called the modern evolution of Christianity is a striking tribute to the effectiveness of the Freethought movement? Why are so many of the churches inserting Socialism in their program? Because the spread of Freethought has rendered it impossible for supernaturalism any longer to dominate the minds of the people. The leaders say: "We are losing touch with the masses of the population, the working-classes are rapidly drifting away from us, and in order to save our own skins we must make the movements in which the people are interested our own." To justify such a radical change of front they allege that Jesus was the first and greatest Socialist, and that they can do nothing better than follow in his steps. Such a policy may be exceedingly ingenious, but it is a virtual confession of the downfall of Christianity and of the triumph of Secularism.

No, the brave Freethinkers of the past did not live and labor and endure cruel persecution in vain. We are harvesting in the fields into which they so assiduously cast the good seed. We are entering into their labors and finding our own so much the easier in consequence. Some of them were put to death at the stake or the block; at the worst we are only clapped into prison cells for a few months; and it is the secularisation of the public mind that accounts for the difference. *Cui bono?* Verily, merely to ask such a question at this time of day is to answer it.

And yet Freethought has not triumphed. Enormous work still requires to be done before it can be said that the day of victory has arrived. We have not obtained our birthright yet. We live merely on sufferance, and any moment we may receive notice to quit. The attempt to bring Christianity into disbelief and contempt, even in this enlightened twentieth century, is legally a punishable crime. Freethought cannot be said to have won the day until religious beliefs and practices may be discussed publicly with as much freedom as art, politics, or literature, until we are at liberty to attack the doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and Immortality with as much impunity as we now denounce the political parties in which we do not believe. Every militant Freethinker is liable to prosecution for blasphemy by any Christian bigot that has the necessary cash at his disposal. Even Judge Phillimore has just declared that no unabolished law can be spoken of as obsolete; and from certain recent paragraphs in the newspapers it is fair to infer that there are not a few Christian professors about who would be only too glad to see all advocates of Freethought confined within prison walls. We are not living in a country where free speech is allowed. We are living in a country in which free speech on the subject of religion is by law distinctly not permitted; nay, in which it is in many subtle ways most abominably penalised, as many Freethinkers know to their cost. As long as the Blasphemy Laws remain on the statute books he who gives expression to sceptical views on theology thereby runs a serious risk. Shall we not, then, all unite in a grand campaign for the abolition of those barbarous laws, for the practical recognition throughout the country of the rights of free speech and of a free press, and for the speedy downfall of that system which inflicts suffering and loss on a man because of his opinions?

J. T. LLOYD.

THE
clear
Our
Blas
mean
one
pare
appr
of o
soft
rem:
own
new
the
offer
It
take
Fre
adv
our
togi
tim
of l
Evi
Chr
the
wor
on
N
kno
bec
hun
is f
ave
the
to-r
mer
mas
hir
ene
The
bec
I
the
cap
An
fro
gifi
poe
fals
the
shc
wri
pre
th
on
ag
of
div
mc
bu
to
ho
so
en
fa
th
st
go
of
ha
ha
su
th
fo
S
C
an

Principle and Method.

THE recent Blasphemy prosecution has at least cleared the air, and we now know where we stand. Our chief danger appears to me to lie less in the Blasphemy Laws than in ourselves. The plain meaning of the present discussion is that at least one section of the Freethought movement is prepared to treat with the enemy. What he does not approve of we are counselled to abjure. When one of our rank and file, who is not "blessed with the soft phrase of peace," is struck down, our duty is to remain silent until the fight is lost, and then to disown the victim through the columns of a public newspaper. This, if I understand him correctly, is the advice which my friend, Mr. McCabe, has to offer to the Freethought party at this crisis.

It is advice which I sincerely hope will not be taken. We may hold different opinions as to what Freethought involves, and as to how it should be advocated; but when the "guns begin to shoot" our business is to close the ranks and to strike together. And, in any case, I believe that it will be time enough for us publicly to denounce the methods of Mr. Boulter when the methods of the Christian Evidence Society are disowned by the leaders of Christianity. I am for allowing every man to serve the cause of progress in his own way; and as I would not allow Mr. Boulter to force his methods on me, neither will I seek to force mine upon him.

Many of the best movements the world has ever known have been weakened, and finally destroyed, because their leaders tried to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds at the same time. Nothing is gained by trying to avoid the prejudices of the average man, because the average man floats with the tide; he is one thing to-day and another thing to-morrow, and everything at random. Great movements are not either run or supported by the average man, and those who shape their doctrines to please him not only do not succeed, but they even repel the energetic minds without which no cause can live. The man who tries to please everybody is a fool, because he is playing an impossible game.

The very life of a cause is endangered when, for the sake of unity of mind and purpose, special capacities and personal equations are overlooked. An advocate, whose work stands out as distinct from that of his fellow workers who have other gifts, is often spoken of as though his work wrought false impression of the common aim. This desire that workers should subdue themselves—that they should speak as others speak, and write as others write—may hide a creed or dogma as dangerous to progress as any that the world has ever seen. All that is needed in any movement (more than this no one has the right to demand) is that there should be agreement in certain broad essentials; the method of advocating them is a matter for which the individual is alone responsible. If a man gives to a movement his best work, he gives all that he can; but to invite him to copy the methods of another is to ask him to give less than his best, to which no honorable man will ever consent.

The earnest man, in his search for truth, has sometimes to fight his own friends as well as the enemy. They affirm that he goes too quickly or too far, that his methods are harsh and provocative, and that, while he is free to wound with the polished steel, the use of a rusty nail is an offence against good taste and public manners. All these criticisms of method seem to me presumption. Each person has the right to choose his own weapon, and no one has the right to claim that the weapon which best suits him must be used by everybody. Let us take the best that each man can give, and be thankful for it.

My own experience is that, the Highbury Corner Secularist is at least the equal of the Hyde Park Christian Evidence advocate in taste and culture, and infinitely his superior in knowledge and argu-

mentative power. I do not find that the orthodox preachers of any sect are dying with anxiety to avoid hurting the feelings of Freethinkers. Nor do they hesitate to force their views upon people on occasions when their action is both cruel and outrageous. A few years ago I spent some weeks in the ward of a hospital, in which both mental and physical rest was rendered impossible by the constant intrusion of "evangelists," who desired to parade their views before the sick and suffering. No one can imagine a Freethinker forcing his speculative views upon a fellow-creature in a hospital, where the patients require undisturbed rest and every ounce of their strength in their fight for life.

Emerson expresses my view when he said: "Speak as you think; be what you are; pay your debts of all kinds. I prefer to be owned as sound and solvent, my word as good as my bond, and to be what cannot be skipped, or dissipated, or undermined, to all the *eclat* in the universe."

In the warfare against superstition there is room for all methods. Let us hear with equal pleasure and profit the poet, the dreamer, the impassioned pleader, the iconoclast, and the man of logic; and let us receive with thankfulness the best service that each can render. But it will be a bad day for Freethought when it falls down to worship the god, Respectability.

HARRY SNELL.

Who Started the "Blasphemy" Prosecution.

WE have already referred to Mr. Bottomley's question in the House of Commons as to whether the prosecution of Mr. Harry Boulter upon a charge of blasphemy was being conducted at the expense of the Treasury; and, if so, upon whose authority the proceedings were initiated. The Home Secretary's reply was as follows:—

"The proceedings were initiated by the Commissioner of Police with my approval, and the cost will be borne by the Police Fund. The case is *sub judice*, but I may I think go so far as to say that the prosecution is not undertaken in respect to matters of religious belief and opinion, but solely in respect to the decencies of public speech and in a public phraso, and the preservation of the public peace."

It will be noticed that Mr. Gladstone carefully avoids stating whether the prosecution was started with his knowledge and sanction—and we have reason to believe it was not. The expression he uses is consistent with the theory that his approval was accorded afterwards.

We have every reason to believe that the initiator of the prosecution was not the Chief Commissioner of Police, but Chief-Inspector Jenkins, of Islington. We heard this gentleman state, in the witness-box at Bow-street Police-court, that, having got his evidence against Mr. Boulter, he went to the Chief Commissioner and obtained a warrant for Mr. Boulter's arrest. This was a most unusual proceeding in the case of a misdemeanor, and we made inquiries as to Chief-Inspector Jenkins's antecedents. We felt sure, from listening to him, that he was more or less used to preaching. This proved to be the fact. Many years ago he was a sergeant at Stoke Newington (which is also in the N Division), and was well known as a local preacher. Thence he was sent to Wanstead as inspector, and was a sort of preacher on the circuit there. Subsequently he was sent to South London, and now he is back as Chief-Inspector at Islington. He is a member of a Wesleyan chapel in Northwold-road, Clapton. He has spoken within the last few months for the P. S. A. at a chapel in Rectory-road, Stoke Newington. He has also spoken at the Aveling Chapel, High-street, Kingsland. He appears to be well-known to the police force as an enthusiastic religionist. Upright in all the ordinary affairs of life, he burns with religious zeal, and looks upon all anti-Christians as very wicked people. He has a narrow fanatical head, and a nose like John

Calvin's. One could easily imagine such a head and face, two or three hundred years ago, belonging to a member of the Holy Inquisition. Such is the man who, as far as we can gather, was the real initiator of this prosecution for "blasphemy." And this very fact is one of the strongest reasons for the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws. It may be right for a policeman to deal with bad language in public thoroughfares, or other places of public resort, such as parks and open spaces, but it ought not to be possible for a policeman who happens to be a religious zealot to prosecute (at the public expense) a Freethought speaker who happens to kindle his pious resentment. He can only do this under the Blasphemy Laws, which are thus made the instrument of sectarian bigotry and personal rancor.

G. W. FOOTE.

Acid Drops.

The death of the Rev. Benjamin Waugh, secretary and founder of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, reminds us that he once prompted the Bishop of Chester to tell a public meeting that the worst ill-users of children were working-class Secularist parents. Mr. Foote took the matter up at the time (it was many years ago) and went down to Chester, where he invited the Bishop to make his statement good. One result of Mr. Foote's visit was a fairly active Branch of the National Secular Society. But the Bishop kept obstinately silent, and refused either to substantiate or retract. Mr. Waugh, however, some seven or eight years afterwards, at a meeting in Leeds, confessed that he had been mistaken, and apologised for misrepresenting a respectable section of his fellow citizens. The confession and apology were very much to his credit—considering how Christians generally act in such cases.

Mr. Waugh's Society reflected credit on himself, but great discredit on Christianity. After nearly two thousand years of the "religion of love," and in the "most Christian nation" in the world, it is necessary to protect thousands of children every year against the cruelty of their parents. Such an effort is not necessary in any "heathen" country we ever heard of. It is only in Christian countries that Mr. Waugh's Society could find a field for its operations.

One of the newspapers states that the people of the United States spend fifteen million dollars a year on chewing gum and only half that amount on foreign missions. Some good Christians think this is shocking. For our own part, we consider the gum money wasted and the mission money worse. Christian missionaries in Heathen lands are nearly all mischief-makers. Charles Dickens, in one of his later letters, written to his friend, M. De Cerjat, on November 13, 1865, took the same view of the species. "Exeter Hall," he said, "holds us in mortal submission to missionaries, who (Livingstone always excepted) are perfect nuisances, and leave every place worse than they found it."

It is admitted in the *Daily Telegraph* that "the larger portion" of the amount realised by the Salvation Army Self-Denial Week "is devoted to the financing of missionary effort in foreign lands." This fact ought to be carried home to the public mind. Most of the Self-Denial Week contributors, at least outside the Boothite body itself, are under the impression that the bulk of the money goes towards the work of "social salvation" in Great Britain.

How they agree! The Bishop of Manchester has issued a manifesto against the new Education Bill. The Bishop of Hereford has issued a manifesto in its favor. The latter right reverend father in God warns Churchmen that if this Bill be rejected "the only alternative in store for us is a system of secular schools." Which we hope is true.

Mr. A. E. Smith, M.P., addressing the St. Helens Conservative Working Men's Association, said that "The secular solution might be fair, but it was a proposal that the people of England would not accept." How does he know that? When have the people of England been invited to accept or reject the "secular solution"? The people of England represented at the Trade Unions Congress have passed resolutions in favor of Secular Education by overwhelming majorities. Might not other sections of the people of England do the same if they had the chance?

Mr. F. R. Benson is announced to preach from the pulpit of Trinity Church, Glasgow, to-day (March 22). We say *preach* because we don't know what else to call his address in a "sacred" edifice. His subject is to be "Shakespeare and the Resurrection of the Dead." We shall be pleased to see a report of Mr. Benson's remarks on this interesting topic. But it puzzles us to conceive how he will find matter for his discourse. We do not recollect that the word "resurrection" occurs in all Shakespeare's plays. There is, however, a reference to a certain case of resurrection in *Hamlet*. In the first Scene of the first Act, on that "platform before the castle" at Elsinore, Horatio says:—

"In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets."

A wonderful picture—and a wonderful piece of writing. The "squeak and gibber" is consummate. But the portents themselves, occurring before the death of Caesar, were not invented by Shakespeare; he found them in Plutarch and Lucan. And the Master must surely, with that impeccable memory and far-reaching mind of his, have noticed a resemblance between the story of the death of Caesar and the story of the death of Christ. For the narrative of "Matthew" gives the lie direct to the Apostle's statement that Christ was "the firstfruits of them that slept." This is what "Matthew" says, according to the Revised Version:—

"And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake; and the rocks were rent; and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised; and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many."

The legend is very similar in both cases. And the Master's thoughts on the similarity would have been worth having. Wouldn't they?

A discussion is being carried on in *The Fraternal*, a Baptist paper, concerning modern revivalistic missions. Some of those who take part in the discussion let out some very wholesome truths, of which the following is a sample:—

"I have unwittingly come to the conclusion that professional evangelicism is a gigantic money-making machine, sometimes manipulated by the astute statesmen of great religious organisations to enrich the common coffers. If any man thinks this statement too sweeping I advise him to try and arrange a great mission and secure the services of a great missionary, and he will find such services arranged on a sort of preferential tariff system."

The curious thing is that more are not of this writer's opinion. For the failure of these missions is obvious, and the tricks of the professional "missioner" so palpable. Year after year, these men go their rounds, they send to the papers the same kind of report, not even ringing the changes on the language used. One reads of hundreds or thousands of conversions, and of the extent to which the whole district is being spiritualised. The "missioner" leaves, and apparently everything leaves with him; for the next professional gentleman who wanders along has precisely the same story of spiritual destitution before his arrival, and of spiritual wealth during his stay. The only permanent thing about the whole business appears to be the fees of the preachers and the credulity of those who pay the piper.

The truth is, we imagine, that the mental vacuity of ordinary chapel life converts the visit of a man of the type of Gipsy Smith into a season of mental dissipation. People look forward to it much as a drunkard, who has been deprived of his drink, looks forward to the chance of having a good, prolonged "spree." There are people who go from mission to mission, getting converted at each, and revelling in the usual mental exhilaration produced by the experience. It is this class who provide the Gipsy Smiths and Torreys with their converts. Of course, these men know the character of their converts, but it is ill looking a gift-horse in the mouth, and in their reports they are worked up for all they are worth. If religious life were mentally healthier, revivals would seldom occur; being largely pathologic, revivals are the inevitable outcome.

It is officially announced that nearly 45,000 are lost every year to the Methodist Church through people removing from one district to another. Well, this only proves how much real hold religion has upon people. It is a social convention with the majority, and nothing more. So long as people remain in a social circle where they reside, religious observances are more or less adhered to. But once the social supervision is removed, the real belief, or rather the lack of belief, makes itself evident. The Methodist paper from which the above is taken advises a closer surveillance over "removing" members. Of course, if people can be kept in

a kind of mental straight-waistcoat, their adhesion to Christianity may be secured. The question is, Can it be done? We think not.

Canon Rickard, Principal of Chichester Theological College, says that there is not three-fourths of the number of candidates for ordination to-day that presented themselves twenty years ago. He also says that "the majority of the young men called at the present time had no more than the average ability, and often even less, and a small stock of actual knowledge. Some of them, but a very small number, did improve their intellectual powers by regular study, and many of them would display practical ability which would be fully as valuable to the Church as intellectual power. But, spiritually, it was deplorable that not one in ten—hardly one in a hundred—could be called a scholar or an intellectual man. Very few could write, and fewer still preach, a really good sermon. The majority of the men coming forward were not men of exceptional power, either spiritual or intellectual, but mediocre men." No one who knows the clergy will seriously question the truth of this. There are among the clergy plenty of men of bustle and energy, but, as a body, the clergy has in its ranks fewer really intellectual men than any educated body in the country.

The position is one that is not likely to improve. The conditions that would permit of the clergy representing the intellectual life of the nation no longer exist. While Christianity represented—even in a perfunctory sense—the mental convictions of the people as a whole, it was possible for men of intellectual strength to enter the profession of the priesthood. But with the weakening of the belief in Christianity, with the opening of avenues of employment in literature, science, and social life, the disinclination of men of ability to enter the priesthood became more and more marked. The Churches can no longer pick their ministers—they must be content with what they can get; and what they get is getting of poorer quality with each generation. And if only the clergy as a body could be kept out of politics it might be held that the Churches serve a useful purpose by opening an avenue of employment to a type of mind not aggressively useful in any other direction.

A young girl named Elizabeth Beatrice Gibbons, residing at Chatham, was sitting in front of the fire singing hymns when her clothing became ignited by a lighted piece of wood from the grate. Her shocking injuries were fatal, and the coroner's jury returned a verdict of "accidental death." What was "Providence" doing? Nothing—as usual. The poor girl couldn't have fared worse if she had been singing "wicked" songs instead of hymns.

M. de Larmandie, a member of the French Authors' Society, tells a fantastic story of a girl, who died in a hospital, being brought to life again, and dying a second time. He does not give the name of the girl, the name of the hospital, or the names of the three "famous" doctors who vouch for the story. Of course not. Care is always taken that such stories shall not be disproved. Next case, please!

Father Leo, the Denver priest, who was shot in his own church by an Anarchist, was found to have suffered for years a fearful, self-imposed penance. His body, next to the skin, was bound with steel chains, and to each link of the chains there was attached a small hook, sharpened to a needle's point, so that they dug into his flesh at every movement. The upper part of his body and arms were hardened and scarred, showing that when he could no longer feel the pricking of the sharp points he had moved them so that they tore into more tender flesh. What a loathsome result of religious fervor!

James Thomas, of Llanelly, has to pay £100 damages to John Joseph Hughes for tampering with his wife and necessitating a divorce. James Thomas is a Sunday School superintendent.

Matthew Arnold called History a "Mississippi of falsehood." Not because historians are necessarily liars, but because they are so often careless, prejudiced, or constitutionally inaccurate. A good many of our readers will be regarding Mr. Joseph McCabe as a good specimen of the peccant species. Since our exposure of his utterly misleading account of the prosecution and trial of George Jacob Holyoake in 1842, we have been reading his article in the *March International* on "The Freethought and Ethical Movements in England." We find it superficial and abounding in blunders—which we are not going to take the

trouble to indicate in detail. Mr. McCabe's chief object seems to be to pooh-pooh the National Secular Society and puff the Rationalist Press Association, with which he is himself connected. He affects not to have heard of the Secular Society, Limited, from which the R. P. A. was copied; or to know anything of the various work done by Mr. Foote and his immediate colleagues through the *Freethinker*. And he repeats the old nonsense about the R. P. A. work being "constructive" while that of the N. S. S. is merely "critical." Now with regard to this point we will ask a question, which, we think, will prick this "constructive" bubble. We beg Mr. McCabe, or one of his colleagues, to tell us what single point of agreement there is amongst the members of the R. P. A. except hostility to Christianity. We might invite a reply to another question at the same time. It is this. What have the R. P. A. men (including the great Joseph McCabe himself) in the way of "sound culture" which is foreign to the N. S. S. men? Is it not time to drop this pretentiousness? It really deceives nobody.

Mr. McCabe's final reference to the Secular Education League—he calls it the Secular Education Movement League—is simply fatuous, unless it is something even worse. Nobody who depended on Mr. McCabe's sentences could have the faintest idea of what the Secular Education League is, or the powerful influences represented by its General Council, which includes scores of the best names in every department of the "advanced" life of England. What is true is that the Rationalists have done next to nothing for the Secular Education League. What they did do we will tell if they wish it. We would rather say no more, but we may respond to a plain invitation.

According to the *Catholic Herald* (Liverpool) the Christian Faith appears to be on its last legs in France. A French priest is quoted as hoping that in a few hundred years some priests will come over from England "and civilise France again." "Some people here," he says, "have an idea that when they see a priest they have to go and touch some iron, if they do not want to be haunted by bad spirits. I often see boys embracing lamp-posts or seizing hold of a key when I am going through the streets." Such is the impression created by French priests upon French laymen. What they must have been up to for generations to produce it!

Priests never lacked what Cobbett called "face." Rev. Father Andrew Ivory, for instance, lecturing at Blackburn on "The Origin and History of Libraries," said that "The only savior of ancient manuscripts, classical and Christian, was the Catholic Church, which grew up and developed amidst the ruins of the old Roman Empire." It is just as if Mr. William Sikes, when the police lay hands on his hidden "swag," should claim credit for the safe preservation of many interesting and valuable articles.

That Christianity has been a means of uniting people in bonds of goodwill and brotherhood is one of those *Christian* truths we are always hearing. The row over the New Theology is supplying us with fresh evidence on this point. Mr. Campbell complains of ministers and members who are forced to leave churches because of their views. The *Christian Commonwealth* complains that the Free Church Council excludes all New Theologians from its gatherings. Twenty Congregationalist preachers issue a manifesto obliquely denouncing Mr. Campbell and all his works. And the Rev. Rhondda Williams points out that these signatories would not find *their* theology acceptable with all Christians. Roman Catholics would not recognise it as Christianity, "nor would the Anglicans. Athanasians would not have a single one of these signatories in the Church. John Calvin would burn them all. Martin Luther would consider they had sadly fallen from the faith. The founders of Congregationalism would not recognise them at all as belonging to the true faith," etc., etc. All of which helps to prove what an extremely love-compelling, amiable kind of a thing Christianity really is, once we get it into working order.

All of these people wonder how the world would manage to get along if Christianity were destroyed. As though Christianity were the only thing in the world about which people could quarrel, look ugly, or tell lies!

Six of the Hamstead Colliery miners were found lying dead side by side. They had chalked on a board "The Lord preserve us"—then followed their six names—and finally the words, "For we are all trusting in Christ." The Lord did *not* preserve them, and we know how Christ answered

their trust. Yet we dare say a thousand ridiculous "affecting" sermons have been, or will be, delivered over this incident. Preachers find "Providence" in disasters as easily as in good fortune. They play the good old game of "Heads we win and tails you lose."

A friend of ours procured an "invitation" and went to St. Michael's Church, E.C., the other day to hear the Bishop of London discourse to City men on "The Spiritual Needs of London"—the Lord Mayor being present officially. The Bishop spoke of the great difference between the rich and the poor in the metropolis, and said that something would have to be done with the problem. His only suggestion was that the "spiritual wants" of the poor should be looked after. Every child should have a chance—a chance of loving God. His lordship remarked that "God knows every child in London by name," which no one can disprove; and these children, all included in the Celestial directory, were "capable of becoming good citizens, fit for the city, and fit for heaven"—where they may even become Bishops and number English Bishops amongst their flocks. Who knows? Look at Dr. Ingram! Who would ever have believed that he would become Bishop of London? After that there's hope for all.

Bishop Ingram said, "I must give every penny I possess, all I have, before I can ask another soul to give. I can say before God I do." On the strength of that declaration, the Bishop, having got our friend's address through the "invitation," sent him a circular letter the very next day asking for an annual contribution to the "Bishop of London's Fund," which we understand is devoted to building new churches,—and, of course, fixing up new parsons. "It will be a great encouragement to me," the Bishop said, "if you can do this." Our friend couldn't make up his mind to do it; instead of that, he sent us on the Bishop's letter, with the suggestion that we might render his lordship some assistance in our "Acid Drops." We have done so, and we hope his lordship is duly grateful.

The Free Churches held a demonstration at Plymouth on March 12, the principal speaker being the Rev. Silvester Horne. Disestablishment being the theme of this gentleman's eloquence, he naturally dilated on the persecution of Nonconformists by the Church of England in past ages—without saying a word (of course) about the persecution of Freethinkers by Nonconformists and Churchmen combined. Mr. Horne also gloried in the number of Nonconformists in the present House of Commons. "The Prime Minister," he said, "is a Nonconformist. The President of the Board of Trade is a Nonconformist. The President of the Local Government Board is a Nonconformist. The Secretary for India is a Nonconformist." Mr. John Burns and Mr. John Morley being booked as Nonconformists, is part of a novel system of classification. But Christian ministers have always more or less romantic imaginations.

Rev. Eliayer Flecker, vicar of Fishlake, has to pay 40s. damages to Miss Winifred Maria Gould, head mistress of the Fishlake Endowed School, for slander. It was all over a parish meeting called by the reverend gentleman to consider the lady's alleged "infidel" teaching. It appears that she had been giving the pupils mild doses of Darwinism, and this was more than enough to upset the vicar, who admitted under cross-examination that he looked upon the Darwinian theory as "infidelity." This clerical Rip Van Winkle has got off easily this time, but he has had his lesson and may be more careful in future.

Students of theology at the Freiburg University are forbidden, under severe penalties, to read the works of Goethe or Schiller. They are free to read Jonah and Habbakuk.

The newspapers report that Russian scientists cooked and ate some frozen Mammoth flesh 100,000 years old. Nonsense! The world wasn't made then. See the Holy Bible—a book which it is "blasphemy," punishable with imprisonment, to bring into "disbelief and contempt." We call upon the police to protect the sacred volume. It is their duty to prevent newspapers from publishing chronological ridicule of its inspired contents.

A correspondent—Mr. J. Day—points out, in reference to Mr. Cohen's last article, that the case of the Poor Children's Society is really worse than he represented it. Mr. Brcton, the "founder," admitted in the *South London Press* (Feb. 7 and 14, 1908) that he "takes" £250 yearly as his "remuneration." Consequently the charity distributed is not £658

odd but £408 odd; and as this is done at a cost of £2,941 it follows that it costs £7 to give the children £1 of "charity."

Rev. E. Wilmott, curate of Witham, Essex, is reported to have issued a challenge (as a teetotaler) to fight or play any man his own weight at anything. We hope he is not too fat, or too thin, to be accommodated.

What a Cabinet Minister Thinks.

Some views of the Right Hon. John Morley, Secretary of State for India.

ON ATHEISM.

THE deepest controversy that lies before modern society is, can the social union subsist without a belief in God.—*Miscellanies*, vol. i., p. 72.

CHRISTIAN ETHICS.

There is no counting with certainty on the justice of men who are capable of fashioning and worshipping an unjust divinity, nor on their humanity so long as they incorporate inhuman motives in their most sacred dogma, nor on their reasonableness while they rigorously decline to accept reason as a test of truth.—*Voltaire*, p. 241.

ORTHODOX HYPOCRISY.

It is time that there should be an end of cant which lifts up its hands at the crimes of Republicans and Freethinkers and shuts its eyes to the crimes of kings and churches.—*Miscellanies*, vol. i., p. 111.

ATHEISM AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

The first political demonstration of Atheism was attended by some of the excesses, the folly, the extravagances that stained the growth of Christianity. On the whole, it is a very mild story compared with the atrocities of the Jewish records or the crimes of Catholicism. The worst charge against the party of Chaumette is that they were intolerant, and the charge is deplorably true; but this charge cannot lie in the mouth of persecuting churches.—*Miscellanies*, vol. i., p. 77.

FACING THE FACTS.

We shall never have real moral responsibility until every one knows that his deeds are irrevocable, and that his life depends on his usefulness. Hitherto, alas! humanity has never dared face these hard facts. We frantically scatter conscience money and invent systems of conscience banking, with expiatory penalties, atonements, redemptions, salvations, hospital subscription lists and what not, to enable us to contract-out of the moral code. Not content with the old scapegoat and sacrificial lamb, we deify human saviors, and pray to miraculous virgin intercessors. We attribute mercy to the inexorable; soothe our consciences after committing murder by throwing ourselves on the bosom of divine love; and shrink even from our own gallows because we are forced to admit that it, at least, is irrevocable—as if one hour of imprisonment were not irrevocable as any execution! If a man cannot look evil in the face without illusion, he will never know what it really is, or combat it effectually.—*G. Bernard Shaw, Preface to "Major Barbara."*

Athena is first the breeze of the mountain and the sea; and wherever she comes, there is purification, and health, and power. The sea-beach round this isle of ours is the frieze of our Parthenon; every wave that breaks on it thunders with Athena's voice; nay, whenever you throw your window wide open in the morning, you let in Athena, as wisdom and fresh air, at the same instant; and whenever you draw a pure, long, full breath of right heaven, you take Athena into your heart, through your blood; and with the blood, into the thoughts of your brain.—*John Ruskin.*

"Eh, woman," said a Scotch warrior, "oor sodgers have been victorious again." "Ah, nae fear o' oor sodgers, for they aye pray afore they engage wi' the enemy." "But do you no' think the French'll pray too?" "The French pray? Yatterin' cratures! Wha wad ken what they said?"

Just before entering on an engagement, a Scotch soldier was heard to pray: "O Lord, dinna be on oor side, dinna be on the tither side, but just stand agee frae baith for an oor or twa, an' ye'll see the toosiest fucht that was ever lochen."

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

April, — Queen's Hall, London.

To Correspondents.

A. MARTIN.—Shelley's fragmentary "Essay on Christianity" was printed in the *Shelley Memorials* volume. We do not know of its being obtainable in any other form. It is not included in Shepherd's two-volume edition of the prose writings. Presumably it is still copyright, and belongs to the Shelley family.

A. WEBBER.—See "Acid Drops." Thanks.

J. H. MATSON.—It is inadvisable to mix up such different things, and one battle at a time is enough for anyone. Besides, social ostracism is a thing that cannot be remedied by mere protests; it can only yield to the pressure of a growing toleration; and the action of the police at all points of the compass is too vast a matter for our supervision.

R. IRVING.—A new edition of our *Bible and Beer* is in the press. Your other question is answered elsewhere.

THOMAS MOSLEY.—Glad you consider the *Freethinker* "an intellectual treat." Mr. Lloyd's and Mr. Cohen's articles deserve all the praise you give them. You will find what you want presently.

T. H. ELSTON.—We had seen it, but thanks all the same.

W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for cuttings.

J. TOMKINS.—We did not quote from Holyoake's *Last Trial for Atheism* (a perfectly fantastic title), but from the verbatim report of the Trial issued by the Anti-Persecution Union. We always prefer the exact words in such cases. We quite agree, however, with the sentence you quote from the former book:—"But he who pretends to take the side of the people ought to see his way *all through*, and not incur a danger he has not weighed, and not suffer any to ascribe to him a virtue he does not mean to maintain." This is, as you say, not inappropriate at the present time.

W. P. ADAMSON.—Pleased to receive your generous tribute. We believe our action has satisfied all Freethinkers except a few (very few) who would never be satisfied with anything we did.

A. A. McDUGALL.—We are hardly able to criticise the "New Pentecost" movement at Clydebank, Glasgow. It seems a case for the Lunacy Commissioners.

J. MCINTYRE.—Thanks; will deal with it later.

M. E. PEGG.—Sorry the weather was so much against Mr. Lloyd on Sunday. He seems unfortunate at Manchester. That his lectures were "excellent" almost goes without saying.

G. ROLEFFS.—Acknowledgment next week.

E. BRACK.—Always glad to receive fresh names and addresses of persons to whom we can send the *Freethinker* for six consecutive weeks.

J. HILL.—A far too expensive proposal.

A. G. B.—Thanks for your manly letter, and the interesting comments on old "blasphemy" trials. Glad you consider that "every Freethinker worthy of the name is under a deep debt of gratitude" to us "for the exposure of the fabulous Holyoake tradition."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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

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

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Foote has been doing no platform work this month, in order to deal with his arrears of other work which accumulated during the course of the "blasphemy" prosecution. The truth is that he has so much to do ordinarily that an emergency of that kind necessarily throws him a good deal behind. Of course this means a pecuniary loss, but that is one of the perquisites of his office.

Queen's (Minor) Hall has been engaged for another course of Sunday evening Freethought lectures during April, and Mr. Foote's metropolitan friends will be able to hear him again then. A full advertisement of these April lectures will appear in next week's *Freethinker*.

Our front article this week was written for the N. S. S. Almanack for 1888. It is now printed for the first time in the *Freethinker*, and seems a fitting sequel to a good deal that has lately appeared in our columns. And this saves Mr. Foote the trouble of writing a special article this week in addition to his work on other parts of the paper. He has been suffering from a wretched cold, complicated with insomnia, during the past week, and is glad to get a little relief from the pressure of his many obligations.

Some fresh subscriptions to the President's Honorarium Fund have been received, but in the circumstances referred to in the previous paragraph the subscribers will not be surprised at formal acknowledgments being postponed for another week. Perhaps those who intend to add their names to the list in the near future will make an effort to be in time for our next issue, as it is not desirable that this Fund should be a regular standing dish in the *Freethinker*.

A final statement as to the financial side of the recent "blasphemy" prosecution will appear in our next issue.

The National Secular Society's Annual Conference will be held, as usual, on Whit-Sunday. Arrangements for it will be completed at the next N. S. S. Executive meeting, a few days after the date of the present issue of this journal. Meanwhile it is to be hoped that Branches all over the country will be preparing for representation at the Conference.

Liverpool has been for some time a very difficult place for our propaganda. It is more difficult than ever now that the police have terrorised the proprietor of the Milton Hall into refusing to let it be used any longer for the N. S. S. Branch meetings. At present the propaganda has to be carried on in the streets. But a search is being made for another hall—at least, for a lecturing visit by Mr. Foote—which would wind up our season's work in that pious and profligate city.

The West Ham Branch had another successful Concert and Dance at the Workman's Hall on March 11. Miss Alger, Mr. H. Thurlow, and Mr. Quinton junior organised the dancing, and vocal selections were contributed by Mrs. Thurlow, Miss Leslie Drysdale, Mr. Marshall, and Mr. Fredericks. These parties are found a valuable adjunct to the propaganda.

Maxim Gor'ky's article in the *March International* "Concerning Cynicism," is frankly Atheistic. "He it is," he says of Humanity, "who has created all the gods; Prometheus and Moira and the Phoenix, Christ and Satan, Faust and Ahasuerus, thousands of legends, stories, sagas, and songs." At the end of the article, Gor'ky prophesies that the feeling of respect between man and man will ultimately grow into a religion. "For the religion of humanity," he says, "must be the sublime and tragic history of its endless and splendid struggle for freedom of spirit and the supremacy over the forces of nature."

"The English Sunday," Mr. W. T. Stead says in the same magazine, in an article on "Sunday Observance in England," "is made unnecessarily grim by the closing of public libraries, public museums, public picture galleries, and public baths." When everybody legally is secured one day's rest from work in every seven, Mr. Stead says "there ought to be no hesitation in restoring to the use of the million the great treasure houses of art, science, and literature, upon the one day in all the week when they have leisure to visit them and opportunity to enjoy them."

Mr. James Douglas points out in *M. A. P.* that "highwaymen, thieves, and murderers have always been popular heroes," and that "Jack Shepherd and Dick Turpin were as popular as Mrs. Maybrick, Harry Thaw, and Raffles. Charles Peace," he continues, "was a popular hero, while Charles Bradlaugh was a popular bogey." Yes, and it was a handsome compliment to Bradlaugh.

Some of our readers, perhaps, would like to have in its accurate form the sonnet to Giordano Bruno which Mr.

Footo wrote in Holloway Prison. We regret that it was inaccurately printed in our last issue. The following is correct:—

“GIORDANO BRUNO.

O fiery-souled and daring-hearted lord
Of all the martyrs of the whole wide world;
Thou by whose hands the banner was unfurled
By priests and despots utterly abhorred,—
To which each true man dedicates his sword;
Bruno, the flames that round thy body curled,
After thy taunt was at the tyrants hurled,
Gleam through the years and make thy name adored.
They could not fright thee with the Church's ban,
Dungeon nor torture could thy spirit tame,
Nor hell on earth wring from thee plaint or cry;
No weeping women or disciples came,
None shared thy seven-years' Gethsemane;
Thou stoodst alone, against all men for Man.”

GODS.

For now we know not of them; but one saith
The gods are gracious, praising God; and one,
When hast thou seen? or hast thou felt his breath
Touch, nor consume thine eyelids as the sun,
Nor fill thee to the lips with fiery death?
None hath beheld him, none
Seen above other gods and shapes of things,
Swift without feet and flying without wings,
Intolerable, not clad with death or life,
Insatiable, not known of night or day,
The lord of love and loathing and of strife,
Who gives a star and takes a sun away;
Who shapes the soul and makes her a barren wife
To the earthly body and grievous growth of clay;
Who turns the large limbs to a little flame,
And binds the great sea with a little sand;
Who makes desire, and slays desire with shame;
Who shakes the heaven as ashes in his hand;
Who, seeing the light and shadow for the same,
Bids day waste night as fire devours a brand,
Smites without sword, and scourges without rod,—
The supreme evil, God.

—A. C. Swinburne.

Love God? Can I touch God with both my hands?
Can I breathe in his hair and touch his cheek?
He is too far to seek.
If nowhere else be love, who understands
What thing it is?
This love is but a name that wise men speak.
God hath no lips to kiss.

Let God be; surely, if he will,
At the end of days,
He can wiu love as well as praise.
Why must we spill
The human love out at his feet?
Let be this talk of good and ill!
Though God be God, art thou not fair and sweet?

—Richard Hovey.

THE REGRET.

It seems to me, dearest, if you were dead,
And thought returned to me after the tears,
The hopeless first oblivious tears, were shed,
That this would be the bitterest, not that I
Had lost for all sad hours of all my years
The joys enjoyed and happy hours gone by;
Oh no, but that while we had time to live
And love before the coming of the night,
Yet knew the hours of daylight fugitive,
Proud as a child who will not what he would,
Sometimes I did not love you as I might,
Sometimes you did not love me when you could,

—Arthur Symonds.

WHEN WE ARE ALL ASLEEP.

When He returns and finds the world so drear,
All sleeping, young and old, unfair and fair,
Will He stoop down and whisper in each ear,
“Awaken!” or for pity's sake forbear,
Saying, “How shall I meet their frozen stare
Of wonder, and their eyes so full of fear?
How shall I comfort them in their despair,
If they cry out too late, ‘Let us sleep here?’
Perchance He will not wake us up, but when
He sees us look so happy in our rest,
Will murmur, “Poor dead women and dead men!
Dire was their doom, and weary was their quest,—
Wherefore awake them into life again?
Let them sleep on untroubled—it is best.”

—Robert Buchanan.

“Christian” Socialism.

MR. COHEN'S timely pamphlet, *Socialism, Atheism, and Christianity*, will doubtless have been read with interest by most readers of the *Freethinker*. That he has rendered a signal service to the cause of Freethought by explaining the purely secular basis of Socialism, and its independence of any form of supernatural belief, will, we think, be generally admitted. And as an object-lesson in clearness of thought and fearlessness of expression, the pamphlet presents a marked contrast to the utterances of many Socialist leaders who pander to the religious prejudices of the public by employing religious phraseology when dealing with social and economic subjects. It should also serve a useful purpose in directing attention to the tactics of that section of Christendom who believe that Socialism has a successful future before it, and who are taking time by the forelock. We use the word “tactics,” but the almost frantic efforts that are being made by the social apologists of Christianity are scarcely entitled to such an appellation; because the vast mass of literature on the subject of Christian Socialism, so far from exhibiting anything like concerted effort, affords a profitable study in inconsistency and contradiction. We purpose briefly to examine some of these contradictions, and exhibit “social” Christianity as a house divided against itself.

To begin with, these so-called “social” Christians are not at all agreed as to the wisdom of using such a term as “Christian Socialism.” The Rev. Ernest Rattenbury says, “I have ceased to call myself a Christian Socialist. I prefer to say Christian and Socialist.” And the Rev. Mr. Swann, who writes in the *New Age*, says that, “properly speaking, there is no such thing as Christian Socialism.” This, of course, is equivalent to saying that “Christian Socialism” is really a *bogus* term without any corresponding object of thought—a counterfeit without any representative value. It can therefore be of no intellectual service in the discussion of ideas. The Rev. Mark Guy Pearse recently defined Christian Socialism as “the breath of brotherliness”—a definition that would include the hospitality of the Japanese or the friendship of any Jonathan and David, but is utterly useless for the purpose of identifying Christian Socialism. Other writers, with perhaps a less indefinite application, both use the term and attempt to justify its employment. But whatever disagreement there may exist respecting the use of the term, there is no mistaking the *object* of these Christian leaders with regard to the Socialist movement. To use their own phraseology, it is to “Christianise” it.

The recent clerical manifesto declared that the Christian Socialism of its signatories was identical with the economic Socialism held by Socialists everywhere. And while they did not claim to voice the opinion of all “social” Christians, it was evidently their intention to create the impression that there was, at least, no *economic* difference between Christian Socialism and the genuine article. But the Rev. Samuel E. Keeble, the author of *Industrial Day-Dreams*, who is perhaps as great an authority on the relation of Christianity and Socialism as any of the signatories, is of a directly opposite opinion. In the book just mentioned he gives as one of the differences between the Christian Socialist and the Socialist proper, that the Christian variety do *not* believe the economic basis of society to be unjust, as do the Socialists. And while Mr. Keeble affirms that Christian Socialists do not believe society to be fundamentally wrong, but that its evil conditions are due to avarice and greed, the *British Weekly*, in announcing the publication of a series of articles on Socialism, innocently assumes that “all Christians are agreed that the conditions of society cannot be perpetuated, and are in many ways fundamentally wrong.” Thus they disagree also in their diagnosis of the social trouble.

Again, a valuable asset in the apologetics of some of these social prospectors is the quotation from the *Encyclopædia Britannica* that "the ethics of Socialism and Christianity are identical." The Rev. F. Ballard, who occupies perhaps the position of chief sinner in this game of territorial extension, in his article in the *Citizen of To-Morrow*, quotes with approval from the same authority: "It is a serious mistake to suppose that there can be any real antagonism between the ethical teaching of Christianity and the principles of Socialism." Mr. Keeble, however, in his book to which we have already referred, says that besides the economic difference between the Christian Socialist and the Socialist there are also moral and religious differences. He alleges that Socialism threatens morality and religion, while Christian Socialism cleaves to both. We are not concerned with the truth or falsity of either of these positions, but only to point out the utter incompetence of these religious teachers as social guides, owing to their divergence of opinion as to what is, or ought to be, Christianity's relation to the social movement, and their failure to comprehend Socialism's aims and ideals.

As a justification for the use of the term "Christian Socialism," the Rev. Mr. Ballard urges the plea that some representative leaders of Christian thought are in favor of Socialism. What may be meant by being "in favor of Socialism" is not at all clear; there is a delightful reservation about the phrase which may be of excellent service in the event of Socialism becoming less popular than it is at present. Among the representative leaders of Christian thought who are in favor of Socialism, Mr. Ballard mentions the Rev. Dr. Horton. A brief examination, however, of the utterances of Dr. Horton is sufficient to show that the Socialism he is in favor of is—Christianity. Only that and nothing more.

Some few months ago, he contributed a four-columned article to the *Christian Commonwealth*, entitled "Our Social Conditions." And while he expressed his belief that these conditions were wrong, he yet affirmed that they were compatible with Christianity. "This very condition of things," he said—"where each man has to fight for his own as if he were in a battle or a shipwreck—not only permits the noble life, but it is the creation of the noble life." On the contrary, the Rev. Harry Bisseker says that these same social conditions not only do not permit a noble life, but that they actually render for hundreds of thousands of the workers even a life of moral purity wellnigh impossible.

At the beginning of his article, Dr. Horton has a big headline, "The Only Remedy." And this remedy, which, he says, is obvious in itself, consists in everyone in England having their own little piece of land wherewith to maintain themselves—which is more suggestive of Robinson Crusoe and his island than of a civilised social State. But towards the end of the article, having evidently forgotten all about his big headline, "The Only Remedy," he proposes a second "only" remedy: "It is Christianity alone which can alter these circumstances." And the second remedy is about as obvious in itself as the first. *Christianity alone!* That is the be-all and end-all of their belief and their efforts, and sums up the logical Christian position towards Socialism or any other movement. The very combination of the terms "Christian-Socialism" ought to be sufficient to excite suspicion as to the motives and intentions of its users. It at once indicates the parasitical nature of Christianity, and really amounts to a confession that Christianity alone has been a gigantic failure, and needs the support of some convenient movement to help it subsist. Not having any inherent social or moral vitality of its own, it is always ready to appropriate any convenient cuckoo's nest.

At a recent Conference presided over by the Rev. Mr. Keeble one of the speakers stated that "Christians had much to learn from the Socialists," and so

in turn the Socialists have much to learn from the Freethought movement, which many of them affect to despise. That light cannot dwell with darkness nor truth with superstition is a truism which they either forget or ignore. And the sooner the Socialists learn to estimate the Christian pretensions of "being in favor of Socialism" at their true value, the better it will be for the cause of social reform, and the sooner will the really important question at issue—the truth of dogmatic Christianity—receive that public attention which will impair, and tend ultimately to destroy, its injurious prestige and power.

JOSEPH BRYCE.

Blasphemy at Tankerton.

In a previous number of the *Freethinker* I gave an account of the appalling effect produced at Tankerton by the finding of a copy of this journal on a table in the Tankerton Free Library. Such a dreadful happening will never occur in Tankerton again, if the pious and nonconforming inhabitants of that enlightened town can prevent it, for every user of the library is now required to sign a declaration that he (or she) is a Christian (Nonconformist preferred) before being allowed to enter. But, in spite of this elaborate precaution, Tankerton has been again flooded with consternation. Howling BLASPHEMY has been uttered by someone in the town; blasphemy so horrible that it could only be repeated in whispers. You can just imagine the righteous indignation evoked in Tankerton by this awful impiety.

Two days after the explosion of this impious bomb in the town the leading Nonconformist minister, apparently sweating with the desire to bring the unknown infidel to punishment, called upon the Mayor of Tankerton. The meeting of these two worthies was quite dramatic.

"Severe measures!" ejaculated the Mayor, looking as fierce as a buck rabbit.

"Extreme measures, my dear sir!" bellowed the leading minister, looking as vicious as a kicking mule.

"Such obscenity!" continued the minister. "A veritable blast from hell at Christian morality! Imprisonment would be too light a punishment! Though I hate to admit it, I must say that the methods of the Holy Inquisition were the most effective in dealing with blasphemy."

"The difficulty," said the Mayor, "is that we don't know who the abominable criminal is. We can only discover that the cycle-repairer heard it from the chemist, the chemist heard it from the grocer, the grocer heard it from the milkman, the milkman heard it from the landlord of the "Red Lion," who was told it by a customer, who heard it from someone else. Between them they have been very industrious in the circulation of this vile piece of profanity. Now if the offender were a servant of the Corporation we could dispense with his services, in addition to bringing the criminal charge against him."

"Exactly so," said the leading minister "that could be managed with any employee in this town. In the case of a tradesman, we could boycott him."

"But," said the Mayor, "first we must find our blasphemer. How shall we do it?"

"I know of a way," replied the leading minister, "but it would be necessary to get the co-operation of all the other ministers of religion in the town; for, I am sorry to say that, while we do not conform to the Church of England, neither do we conform to our nonconformity."

"Most lamentable," murmured the Mayor.

"They would eagerly assent to my proposal," continued the leading minister, "if it were put to them as coming from you."

"What is your proposal?" asked the Mayor.

"My proposal," replied the leading minister, looking divinely cunning, "is that each minister should furnish a list of the names and addresses of the members of his congregation."

"An inspiration!" exclaimed the Mayor; "a stroke of genius for separating the sheep from the goat!"

And on the morrow all the ministers of religion in the holy, Nonconformist, and highly-respectable town of Tankerton received from the Mayor the following epistle:—

"DEAR SIR,—The honor of our Lord Jesus Christ and of Tankerton has been besmirched by some Atheist who is befouling us with his presence. With a view to discovering this beastly and swinish criminal, will you please furnish me with a list of the names and addresses of the members of your congregation?"

This delicate communication elicited a most excited response; the ministers themselves went to the Town Hall, and the five constables of Tankerton had all their work cut

out to prevent them from fighting over the question as to who should have precedence in handing in his list.

And, as though they were the confidential clerks of the recording angel, the leading minister, the Mayor, and the Town Clerk of Tankerton, examined those lists of congregations with a scrutiny that was well-nigh microscopic in its intensity. One thing certainly was revealed. The inhabitants of Tankerton favored every known variety of that delectable form of Christianity known as Nonconformity. I have not space enough to enumerate them all, but noticeable among them is the sect of the "Latter-Day Disciples," who let their hair grow unprofaned by scissors or water. Indeed, like hydrophobic dogs, they evince an amazing aversion for water; but they get their reward, for they speedily acquire such an odor of sanctity that other dwellers in Tankerton are made to feel quite uncomfortable in their presence. In contradistinction to these are the Neo-Baptists, who consider water the thing of primary importance. They are not content with one baptism; they must have a weekly immersion. Curious to relate, they have to lament a considerable decrease in membership during the winter weather. However, so fanatical are they regarding the saving power of water, that they constantly carry a flask of it with them; but there is some talk of discontinuing this practice, as it has elicited the malicious comment of the ungodly. Respecting the other antipathetic sections of the Christian brotherhood in Tankerton, it is sufficient to observe that they exemplify Nonconformity in all its rankness.

But to return to our sheep.

When the leading minister, the Mayor, and the Town Clerk of Tankerton had completed their examination of the lists of congregations, they discovered that there were five persons in Tankerton who were not accounted for. Scouting by the Tankerton police-sergeant revealed that these five persons were severally a shoemaker, a publican's widow, a stonemason and his wife, and an old man of independent means.

"Ah ha, a shoemaker!" exclaimed the Mayor, on receiving the sergeant's information; "I've heard say that shoemakers naturally incline to Atheism. And didn't the late Price-Hughes convert one?"

"Ah! Don't mention it too loud," replied the leading minister; "but we'll certainly visit this shoemaker. The publican's widow we'll not trouble about. You may be sure that she belongs to the Church of England. The stonemason and his wife, it seems, have recently come here from the East End of London. We must visit them, and also the old man, who is, so says the sergeant, very cantankerous."

So the following evening a baker's dozen of Nonconformist sky-pilots walked importantly through the principal street of Tankerton, each one carrying conspicuously a copy of the Word of God, and each one wearing on his face a look of intense sanctimonious ferocity.

As I have mentioned in my previous sketch of this sacred town, Tankerton, in formation, very much resembles a herring-bone—having one long, wide street, with a number of very short, narrow streets at right angles to it on either side. One of these short, narrow streets bears the name of Grand-avenue. Now, the dwellings in Grand-avenue seem as if they are weary under the weight of their highly-prententious designation. They are two rows of miserable, jerry-built constructions, which gaze hideously and woefully at each other across a few feet of ill-made roadway; and yet there is a nonconforming air about them, for they conform to none of those points which distinguish a well-built house. In one of these "highly-desirable residences" dwelt the recently-arrived stonemason and his wife.

Having reached Grand-avenue, the modern representation of the twelve apostles, *plus* Judas, gathered round the doorway of No. 14. A young Baptist minister knocked. The lady of the house, flushed, and in a very bad humor at being called from the washtub, answered the knock. Wiping her wet, steaming hands on her coarse apron, she gazed at the blackcoats with no favoring eye.

"Wot yer want?" she demanded.

Taken aback by her truculent manner, the young Baptist minister blushed violently.

"We, I—er, er—we've come to make inquiry about your husband," he spluttered. "Is he at home?"

"'E ain't. 'E's boozin' at the 'Red Lion,'" replied the woman.

"Er, er—does he ever indulge in blasphemy?" asked the confused minister.

"On'y four-ale as far as I knows of," was the reply.

"I—er—I don't mean that, my good woman. Does he ever say rude things about Jesus?"

"Rude things abaht Jesus! Never 'card 'im say rude things abaht Jesus, but I've 'eard 'im say rude things abaht Chapel blokes. 'Gawd 'elp Hingland,' 'e says, 'if the Chapel blokes do away wiv the Church. There won't be no work for poor stonemasons then,' 'e says; 'for,' says 'e, 'there's as much harchitecter abaht a Weslin chapel as there is abaht

a dog-kennel.' But you'll find my ole man at the 'Red Lion,' mister, an' 'e won't be too prahd to speak to yer. I must say Good Hevenin', 'cause my flannels are spilin' in soak."

This said, she shut the door, leaving the holy ones gazing at each other in horror.

"A product of the modern Babylon!" gasped one minister.

"A result of unchecked infidelity!" ejaculated another.

"What a frightful place London must be!" exclaimed a third. And they all said something uncomplimentary about the metropolis except a young Congregationalist minister. Mum was the word with him, for he had accepted a "call" from that awful abode of ungodliness.

"However," said the leading minister, "I think we may safely say that the blasphemy did not emanate from this woman nor from her husband. They are not intelligent enough to be blasphemous—we will now visit No. 13 Rood-walk, the shoemaker's."

No. 13 Rood-walk was a dwelling identical with No. 14 Grand-avenue; one was just as architecturally beautiful and sanitary as the other.

The stoutest man of the party, a Methodist-Wesleyan-Baptist minister was selected for interviewing the shoemaker.

"Kindly step in, sir," called the shoemaker, in answer to the knock at his open door.

The stout minister made his way in, and, dodging the rows of boots and shoes that hung from the ceiling, plumped himself on a chair. He rose again with exceeding swiftness, softly whispering the surname of his Savior as he did so.

"I beg your pardon, sir! Do excuse my carelessness in leaving rivets on this chair," and the shoemaker, distressed at the thought that he might lose a customer, became almost abjectly apologetic.

"I suppose your carelessness is in keeping with your Atheism," blurted the stout minister.

"Suppose nothing of the sort, sir," answered the shoemaker, quickly realising that he was dealing with no customer; "as I don't believe in Atheism, my carelessness is not in keeping with it. I am a Swedenborgian—the only one in Tankerton."

The stout minister regarded the shoemaker with open-mouthed astonishment, then beat a very undignified retreat.

"He's a Swedenborgian," he gasped, as he regained his colleagues; "which proves," he added, sagely, "that every shoemaker is not an Atheist."

"Well," said the leading minister, "we must now visit the reputed cantankerous old gentleman, who lives at Ashwood Cottage."

Ashwood Cottage was situated at the west end of Tankerton, and, as the heavenly thirteen ranged themselves against his front garden palings, the old man, who was in his porch, smoking, removed his pipe from his mouth, and the light of battle gleamed in his eyes.

"Blood an' hounds!" he exclaimed, "what do you pack of humbugs want here?"

"You don't belong to any place of worship in the town," ventured the young Baptist minister.

"I don't, young man," was the reply.

"Then you don't hold with our religion," said the Baptist minister, thinking that here, at least, was the blasphemer.

"Blood an' hounds! Hold with *your* religion! Why, you haven't got a religion—it's only a warmed-up hash. Thomas Archer is my name, and I belong to the Church of England, not to a tinpot caricature of it like your religion is." He spoke to them collectively, and, having spoken, stood lowering at them. They, in return, concentrated their twenty-six eyes on him, and amply showed by their expression how ferociously Christian was their love for him. Thus, for several moments, they glared at the old man, and he glared at them from under his slaggy eyebrows. Then the Dissenting crew turned slowly away from him, after the manner of mongrels turning away from a bone to well-guarded for them to take.

The Mayor of Tankerton was seriously disturbed on learning that the Atheist-hunt had proved unsuccessful. Several times he was nearly doing something wildly foolish, but finally contented himself with giving special instructions to the Tankerton constables. They followed out their instructions so zealously that a more than Christian solemnity spread over the faces of the inhabitants of Tankerton, for anyone laughing in public was threatened with arrest for inciting to disorder and obscenity.

Then, when gloom and dismay had almost driven the Tankertonites to despair, the leading minister held aloof a lighted rushlight of comfort—he began delivering sermons on Atheism. All Tankerton flocked to hear him. He depicted in glowing terms the unhappy, hopeless, wicked lives that Atheists led. "How beautifully different and superior is the life of the Nonconformist Christian," he said. "How joyously and usefully doth he spend his existence. He walketh in the favor of the Lord and doeth injustice to

no man. The life of a Nonconformist Christian," he continued, "is of the things beautiful, and in the words of a poet that some of you may have heard of, 'A thing of beauty is a source of perpetual consolation.'"

Several Sundays of this sort of talk pleased the Tanker-tonites immensely, excepting, perhaps, the other ministers of Nonconformity, who could not look with enthusiasm on their sadly diminished congregations.

And one Sunday evening as the leading minister smiled at a crowded congregation from his elevation of six feet above contradiction, he murmured unctuously to himself, "Surely the end justifies the means." Amen.

J. H. WATERS.

Correspondence.

SECULAR EDUCATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—There is in the *Freethinker* for March 8 a well-written article on Secular Education by Mr. Cohen. Nevertheless, as a Freethinker, I should like to take exception to it. The general Secular idea seems to be that, once the Bible were excluded from the Council schools, all would be well, and that Freethinkers would have nothing to complain of, just as at Rome the early Christians might have imagined that, once the Bible were included in the Roman schools, they would have been satisfied then and for ever. If we read history right we should realise that though, roughly, Freethinkers don't believe in Christ and Christians do, yet there are as many kinds of Freethinkers as there are of Christians, and once we were freed from the common enemy our divergencies would proclaim themselves aloud. For instance, there are Freethought Free Traders, Freethought specialists, and Freethought amateurs, not to mention Atheists, Rationalists, Positivists, Unitarians, Materialists, Socialists, Individualists, Stoical Pessimists, Epicurean Optimists, and Herbert Spencerians. As long as we persist in State interference and majority rule in education the old difficulty will only crop up in a somewhat different form. Continue the compulsory attendance, continue the compulsory payments levied directly and indirectly, but remove Christ. Are any of us much better off? Christians are worse off. To my mind the so-called secular solution is no solution at all. Free Trade in thought and Free Trade in education would abolish every Council school in the kingdom, and leave the question to be regulated by the laws of supply and demand, with freedom to attend or not, and to pay or not. Any other solution can only mean a succession of sectarian compromises, satisfactory to none and an abomination to many.

Mr. Cohen rightly argues: "It may be said that no law can prevent teachers introducing their peculiar opinions into the lessons which they give the children." This must ever be so. In a few years the Christian teachers will be in a minority. But Positivists, Socialists, and Individualists are similar in being bound to pervade their teaching with their own atmosphere of thought. If the present religious wrangle enabled the nation to free itself from the intolerable tyranny of State education, Christ might at last have been of some use, and the dear old Cross might yet figure on a Freethinker's mantelpiece.

ERNEST POMEROY.

WHAT THE NIECE THINKS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—My niece, a young woman of nineteen, writes to me as follows:—"Thank you so much for *Freethinker*. I have read it all through; it is most interesting. I wish, when there is something special in it, you would send it me. I take the man's part entirely. He is rather a rare joke, isn't he? with his original speech; and heavens! just because the man is rough and ready, and not of polished, refined speech, they must hit him hard. It is a pity he has given way so, and limited himself so. Can he go on speaking in a mild form now? I rather wish he had gone to prison than come to terms."

AN AUNT.

A Duty of Rationalists.

G. W. FOOTE, of the London *Freethinker*, is right in saying that it is the first duty of Rationalists to attack Christianity on the ground of its falsity. And we go further and say that it should be attacked on account of its immorality.

The whole framework of dogmatic Christianity composed as it is of the special creation of man a few thousand years ago, his fall and his conditional salvation from an endless hell, etc., is false, beyond question; and the "scheme of salvation" whereby it is held that a man may unload all his crimes on an innocent person, and thus go free of punishment himself, is as immoral as the first-mentioned dogmas are false.

Think of enacting and re-enacting and publishing throughout the world such a moral bankrupt law as this for the furtherance of morality! It says plainly to every criminally-inclined man and woman, to whom the "glad tidings" are made known: "Go on in your sins, debauch yourself and others, steal, lie, and even kill, only taking care that you 'repent' and dump all your dirty deeds on Jesus before you die, and all will be well, a crown of immortal glory awaits you." And, remember, this crime-excusing, this crime-fostering dogma is "distinctively" Christian, not being taught, so far as we know, by any of the other religions of the world.

That Jesus said some good things, that he endorsed the Golden Rule taught in substance by all moralists for thousands of years before he lived is probably true; but Jesus did not write a line of the Christian Bible or any of the Christian Creeds that have befogged the reason and benumbed the natural conscience of mankind for the past sixteen hundred years.

Dogmatic Christianity is false.

Dogmatic Christianity is unreasonable.

Dogmatic Christianity is immoral, and it should be attacked for all these reasons. We do not simply mean that it may with propriety be attacked, that its attack is justifiable, but we mean that it is a duty we owe humanity to expose its error and prevent it from being a continuous evil in the world.

—Ingersoll Memorial Beacon (Chicago).

Manifesto on Secular Education

BY

CLERGY AND MINISTERS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

The following Manifesto, signed by Five Hundred and Fifty-seven Clergy and Ministers of all denominations, is issued in order to give the signatories an opportunity of stating what they mean by Secular Education, and why they support it. While not necessarily committed to every point of view expressed therein, the Secular Education League issues it as a valuable contribution to the discussion now proceeding, and believes that it is likely to have an important bearing on the discussion of the Religious problem in National Education.

WE, the undersigned Christian Clergy and Ministers, desire to make clear the grounds upon which we support what is commonly known as the "Secular Solution" of the Education Question.

By the "Secular Solution" we mean that Religion should not be taught in the Public Elementary Schools in school hours nor at the public expense.

We have not arrived at this conclusion through underrating the importance of Religion in the education of our children. On the contrary, we consider it to be of paramount and vital importance, and we hold that education, in the truest sense, is impossible without it.

But we hold equally strongly that it is not the function of the State to impart such teaching.

We hold that it is contrary to the principles of Justice and Righteousness, either that Catholics should be forced to pay rates in support of Protestant teaching or that Protestants should be forced to pay rates in support of Catholic teaching; while it is equally unjust to force Freethinkers and Rationalists to pay rates in support of any religious teaching whatever.

The only solution of this difficulty is that no religion at all should be taught at the public expense.

But further, even were it possible, without injustice, for the State to teach Religion, we believe that the attempt would be fatal to the best interests of Religion itself.

Religion can only be effectively taught by religious people, and the only bodies qualified to give such teaching are the various Christian denominations which exist for that very purpose.

So far from the Secular Solution endangering or enfeebling Religion, we believe that its direct effect would be to awaken the Churches to a sense of the duty and responsibility which are theirs and theirs alone. We are too deeply convinced of the vitality of the Churches of this country to deem it for one moment probable that they would not rise to what would in reality be their great opportunity.

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.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Workman's Hall, Romford-road, Stratford): 7.30, W. J. Ramsey, "Why I Reject Christianity." Selections by the Band before lecture.

OUTDOOR.

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

COUNTRY.

EDINBURGH BRANCH N. S. S. (Rationalists' Club Rooms, 12 Hill-square): 3, Discussion Class.—Hall, 84 Leith-street: 6.30, a Lecture.

FALLSWORTH (Secular Sunday School, Pole-lane): 6.30, Councillor Higham, "What Capitalism has Done for the People."

GLASGOW (Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): H. S. Wishart, 12 noon, "Ballard, Blatchford, and the Bottom Dog"; 6.30, "The New Theology, a Ridiculous Fraud."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road): 6.30, J. M. Stuart-Young, "Oscar Wilde as a Force."

OUTDOOR.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Town Hall Square): Friday, March 20, at 8, H. S. Wishart, "Blasphemy, Taboo, and the Third Sex." Wednesday, March 25, at 8, "Christism, an India-rubber Religion."

TRUE MORALITY:

Or, The Theory and Practice of Neo-Malthusianism,

IS, I BELIEVE,

THE BEST BOOK

ON THIS SUBJECT.

Superfine Large-paper Edition, 176 pages, with Portrait and Autograph, bound in cloth, gilt-lettered, post free 1s. a copy.

In order that it may have a large circulation, and to bring it within the reach of the poor, I have issued

A POPULAR EDITION IN PAPER COVERS.

A copy of this edition post free for 2d. A dozen copies, for distribution, post free for one shilling.

The *National Reformer* of September 4, 1892, says: "Mr. Holmes's pamphlet.....is an almost unexceptional statement of the Neo-Malthusianism theory and practice.....and throughout appeals to moral feeling.....The special value of Mr. Holmes's service to the Neo-Malthusian cause and to human well-being generally is just his combination in his pamphlet of a plain statement of the physical and moral need for family limitation, with a plain account of the means by which it can be secured, and an offer to all concerned of the requisites at the lowest possible prices."

The Council of the Malthusian League, Dr. Drysdale, Dr. Allbutt, and others, have also spoken of it in very high terms.

Orders should be sent to the author,

J. R. HOLMES, EAST HANNEY, WANTAGE.

Thwaites' Liver Pills.

The Best Family Medicine in the World.

Will cure Liver, Kidney, and all Stomach Diseases effectually.

Good or Heart Troubles and Cardiac Complaints, Female Ailments, Anæmia.

1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. per Box.

Post free 14 or 33 stamps. Directions with each box.

G. THWAITES, Herbalist,

2, Church Row, Stockton-on-Tees, and
24, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough.

THWAITES' LIVER PILLS are not Sugar-coated or got up to deceive, nor factory made, but are made from Herbs by a Herbalist of nearly 40 years' experience in curing disease with Herbs and preparations from them.

Take a Road of Your Own

Or, Individuality and Mental Freedom

By COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL

PRICE ONE PENNY

THE BOOK OF GOD

IN THE LIGHT OF THE HIGHER CRITICISM.

By G. W. FOOTE.

"I have read with great pleasure your *Book of God*. You have shown with perfect clearness the absurdity of Dean Farrar's position. I congratulate you on your book. It will do great good, because it is filled with the best of sense expressed with force and beauty."—COLONEL INGERSOLL.

"A volume we strongly recommend.....Ought to be in the hands of every earnest and sincere inquirer."—*Reynolds's Newspaper*.

Bound in Stout Paper Covers 1/.

Bound in Good Cloth 2/.

FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT

By G. W. FOOTE.

First Series, cloth 2s. 6d.

Second Series, cloth 2s. 6d.

Contains scores of entertaining and informing Essays and Articles on a great variety of Freethought topics.

THE

MARTYRDOM OF HYPATIA;

OR, THE

DEATH OF THE CLASSICAL WORLD.

An Address delivered at Chicago by

M. M. MANGASARIAN.

Will be forwarded, post free, for

THREE HALFPENCE.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

Colonel Ingersoll's Last Lecture.

WHAT IS RELIGION ?

An Address delivered before the American Free Religious Association at Boston, June 2, 1899.

Price Twopence.

SECULAR EDUCATION.

COL. INGERSOLL'S
ADVICE TO PARENTS.

KEEP CHILDREN OUT OF CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL.

"Nothing is More Outrageous than to Take Advantage of the Helplessness of Childhood to Sow in the Brain the Seeds of Error."

A Four-page Tract for Distribution. 6d. per 100, post free. Stamped envelope for Specimen Copy, from the N. S. S. SECRETARY, 2 NEWCASTLE STREET, E.C.

THE SECULAR SOCIETY,

(LIMITED)

Company Limited by Guarantee.

Registered Office—2 NEWCASTLE STREET, LONDON, E.C.

Chairman of Board of Directors—Mr. G. W. FOOTE.

Secretary—E. M. VANCE (Miss).

This Society was formed in 1898 to afford legal security to the acquisition and application of funds for Secular purposes.

The Memorandum of Association sets forth that the Society's Objects are:—To promote the principle that human conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action. To promote freedom of inquiry. To promote universal Secular Education. To promote the complete secularisation of the State, etc., etc. And to do all such lawful things as are conducive to such objects. Also to have, hold, receive, and retain any sums of money paid, given, devised, or bequeathed by any person, and to employ the same for any of the purposes of the Society.

The liability of members is limited to £1, in case the Society should ever be wound up and the assets were insufficient to cover liabilities—a most unlikely contingency.

Members pay an entrance fee of ten shillings, and a subsequent yearly subscription of five shillings.

The Society has a considerable number of members, but a much larger number is desirable, and it is hoped that some will be gained amongst those who read this announcement. All who join participate in the control of its business and the trusteeship of its resources. It is expressly provided in the Articles of Association that no member, as such, shall derive any sort of profit from the Society, either by way of dividend, bonus, or interest, or in any way whatever.

The Society's affairs are managed by an elected Board of Directors, consisting of not less than five and not more than twelve members, one-third of whom retire (by ballot) each year,

but are capable of re-election. An Annual General Meeting of members must be held in London, to receive the Report, elect new Directors, and transact any other business that may arise.

Being a duly registered body, the Secular Society, Limited, can receive donations and bequests with absolute security. Those who are in a position to do so are invited to make donations, or to insert a bequest in the Society's favor in their wills. On this point there need not be the slightest apprehension. It is quite impossible to set aside such bequests. The executors have no option but to pay them over in the ordinary course of administration. No objection of any kind has been raised in connection with any of the wills by which the Society has already been benefited.

The Society's solicitors are Messrs. Harper and Battcock 23 Rood-lane, Fenchurch-street, London, E.C.

A Form of Bequest.—The following is a sufficient form of bequest for insertion in the wills of testators:—"I give and bequeath to the Secular Society, Limited, the sum of £— free from Legacy Duty, and I direct that a receipt signed by two members of the Board of the said Society and the Secretary thereof shall be a good discharge to my Executors for the said Legacy."

Friends of the Society who have remembered it in their wills, or who intend to do so, should formally notify the Secretary of the fact, or send a private intimation to the Chairman, who will (if desired) treat it as strictly confidential. This is not necessary, but it is advisable, as wills sometimes get lost or mislaid, and their contents have to be established by competent testimony.

WORKS BY G. W. FOOTE.

- ATHEISM AND MORALITY 2d., post ½d.
- BIBLE HANDBOOK FOR FREETHINKERS AND INQUIRING CHRISTIANS. A new edition, revised and handsomely printed. Cheap edition, paper cover, 1s. 6d.; cloth 2s. 6d., post 2½d.
- BIBLE ROMANCES. Popular edition, with Portrait, paper 6d., post 2½d. Superior edition (160 pages), cloth 2s., post 2½d.
- CHRISTIANITY AND PROGRESS. Second and cheaper edition. Recommended by Mr. Robert Blatchford in *God and My Neighbor*. 1d., post ½d.
- CHRISTIANITY AND SECULARISM. Four Nights' Public Debate with the Rev. Dr. James McCann. Paper, 1s.; cloth 1s. 6d., post 2d.
- CRIMES OF CHRISTIANITY. Hundreds of references are given to standard authorities. No pains have been spared to make the work a complete, trustworthy, final, unanswerable indictment of Christianity. The Tree is judged by its Fruit. Cloth (214 pp.), 2s. 6d., post 3d.
- COMIC SERMONS AND OTHER FANTASIAS. 8d., post 1d.
- DARWIN ON GOD. Containing all the passages in the works of Darwin bearing on the subject of religion. 6d., post 1d.
- DEFENCE OF FREE SPEECH. Three hours' Address to the Jury before Lord Coleridge. With Special Preface and many Footnotes. 4d., post 1d.
- DROPPING THE DEVIL: and Other Free Church Performances. 2d., post ½d.
- FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT. First Series, cloth, 2s. 6d., post 3d. Second Series, cloth 2s. 6d., post 3d.
- GOD SAVE THE KING. An English Republican's Coronation Notes. 2d., post ½d.
- HALL OF SCIENCE LIBEL CASE, with Full and True Account of the "Leeds Orgies." 3d., post 1d.
- INFIDEL DEATH-BEDS. Second edition, much enlarged. 8d., post 1d. Superfine paper in cloth, 1s. 3d., post 1½d.
- INTERVIEW WITH THE DEVIL. 2d., post ½d.
- IS SOCIALISM SOUND? Four Nights' Public Debate with Annie Besant. 1s., post 1½d.; cloth, 2s., post 2½d.
- INGERSOLLISM DEFENDED AGAINST ARCHDEACON FARRAR. 2d., post ½d.
- JOHN MORLEY AS A FREETHINKER. 2d., post ½d.
- LETTERS TO THE CLERGY. (128 pp.). 1s., post 2d.
- LETTERS TO JESUS CHRIST. 4d., post ½d.
- LIE IN FIVE CHAPTERS; or, Hugh Price Hughes' Converted Atheist. 1d., post ½d.
- MRS. BESANT'S THEOSOPHY. A Candid Criticism. 2d., post ½d.
- MY RESURRECTION. A Missing Chapter from the Gospel of Matthew. 2d., post ½d.
- PECULIAR PEOPLE. An Open Letter to Mr. Justice Wills. 1d., post ½d.
- PHILOSOPHY OF SECULARISM. 3d., post ½d.
- REMINISCENCES OF CHARLES BRADLAUGH. 6d., post 1d.
- ROME OR ATHEISM? The Great Alternative. 8d., post 1d.
- ROYAL PAUPERS. Showing what Royalty does for the People and what the People do for Royalty. 2d., post ½d.
- SALVATION SYRUP; or, Light on Darkest England. A Reply to General Booth. 2d., post ½d.
- SECULARISM AND THEOSOPHY. A Rejoinder to Mrs. Besant. 2d., post ½d.
- THE BOOK OF GOD, in the Light of the Higher Criticism, With Special Reference to Dean Farrar's Apology. Paper. 1s.; cloth, 2s., post 2d.
- THE GRAND OLD BOOK. A Reply to the Grand Old Man. An Exhaustive Answer to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone's *Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*. 1s.; bound in cloth, 1s. 6d., post 1½d.
- THE BIBLE GOD. 2d., post ½d.
- THE ATHEIST SHOEMAKER and the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes. 1d., post ½d.
- THE IMPOSSIBLE CREED. An Open Letter to Bishop Magee on the Sermon on the Mount. 2d., post ½d.
- THE SIGN OF THE CROSS. A Candid Criticism of Mr. Wilson Barret's Play. 6d., post 1½d.
- THE DYING ATHEIST. A Story. 1d., post ½d.
- THEISM OR ATHEISM? Public Debate between G. W. Foote and the Rev. W. T. Lee. Verbatim Report, revised by both Disputants. Well printed and neatly bound. 1s., post 1½d.
- THE NEW CAGLIOSTRO. An Open Letter to Madame Blavatsky. 2d., post ½d.
- THE JEWISH LIFE OF CHRIST. Being the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu*, or Book of the Generation of Jesus. Edited, with an Historical Preface and Voluminous Notes, by G. W. Foote and J. M. Wheeler. 6d., post 1d.
- THE PASSING OF JESUS. The Last Adventures of the First Messiah. 2d., post ½d.
- WAS JESUS INSANE? A Searching Inquiry into the Mental Condition of the Prophet of Nazareth. 1d., post ½d.
- WHAT IS AGNOSTICISM? With Observations on Huxley, Bradlaugh, and Ingersoll, and a Reply to George Jacob Holyoake; also a Defence of Atheism. 3d., post ½d.
- WHO WAS THE FATHER OF JESUS? 2d., post ½d.
- WILL CHRIST SAVE US? 6d., post 1d.

DEFENCE OF FREE SPEECH

BY

G. W. FOOTE.

Being a Three Hours' Address to the Jury before the Lord Chief Justice of England, in answer to an Indictment for Blasphemy, on April 24, 1883.

WITH SPECIAL PREFACE AND MANY FOOTNOTES.

Price **FOUR PENCE.** Post free **FIVE PENCE.**

THE PIONEER PRESS, 2 NEWCASTLE STREET, FARRINGDON STREET, LONDON, E.C.

NEW PAMPHLET BY C. COHEN. SOCIALISM, ATHEISM, AND CHRISTIANITY.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

(Postage One Halfpenny.)

A Pamphlet that should be in the hands of all Socialists and Freethinkers.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 2 NEWCASTLE STREET, FARRINGDON STREET, LONDON, E.C.

A NEW—THE THIRD—EDITION OF FROM FICTION TO FACT. By F. BONTE.

(ISSUED BY THE SECULAR SOCIETY, LTD.)

REVISED AND ENLARGED.

SHOULD BE SCATTERED BROADCAST.
Sixty-Four Pages. **ONE PENNY.**

THE PIONEER PRESS, 2 NEWCASTLE STREET, FARRINGDON STREET LONDON, E.C.

THE NEW TESTAMENT MANUSCRIPTS: OR, Christianity Completely Undermined.

WITH FAC-SIMILES OF MSS.

By JOSEPH SYMES.

A New Edition. Price **THREE PENCE.**

Post free, **THREE PENCE HALFPENNY.**

THE PIONEER PRESS, 2 NEWCASTLE STREET, FARRINGDON STREET, LONDON, E.C.