

THE Freethinker

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PRICE TWOPENCE

Never let us forget that our chief purpose in holding communion with the Dead is that we may feel, think, and act more justly and more kindly towards the Living.

—J. H. BRIDGES.

Britain's Might.

THE display of British battleships in the mouth of the Thames is magnificent. I admit it. But all magnificence is relative. If you take a narrow view, a fly on your nose obscures the universe; if you take a broad view, the fly is nothing, you yourself are little more, and the earth itself is but a single mote in an immeasurable sunbeam. As a matter of fact, the mouth of the Thames is a very small spot on the map of the world; and in less than twenty years all the battleships now riding there will be scrap iron.

It is well to think of these things when the newspapers are pouring forth daily floods of maudlin verbiage, which is supposed to be patriotism. No word in the English dictionary is more abused nowadays than that same "patriotism." Properly speaking, patriotism cannot be a national virtue; it is an individual virtue; it means the subordination of the individual citizen to the national welfare. There is no patriotism in boasting of our army, or our wealth, or our empire. That is national self-complacency, to give it the very mildest name. Patriotism only comes in when a man sacrifices something—money, leisure, ambition, or what not—for the good of his country. And a patriot of that description cannot be an enemy to any other nation in the world.

But to return to the newspapers. Here is a passage from the *Daily Mirror*:

"Everybody was talking of the fleet. Sea power, naval supremacy, and similar phrases were impressing themselves upon the crowd as realities, and not mere empty terms.

Here was something solid, tangible, and powerful beyond the scope of the imagination. Here was a twelve-inch gun, which in silence spoke more eloquently than twenty politicians' speeches, than a hundred newspaper articles. This was power—material, real. This was Britain."

Having read that "patriotic" outburst, and looked out again at the battleships, I said to myself, "Nonsense!" That was *not* Britain. No intelligent man, sober, and in full possession of his senses, would offer battleships as Britain's contribution to the world's civilisation, or as the ground on which it should be judged by posterity. Battleships are marvels of construction, and they display marvels of human discipline; but behind them there is something far more precious—the inventive genius, the scientific knowledge, and the orderly character of the British people. The real Britain lies in the civilisation—imperfect as it is—which the battleships are supposed to guard from external danger. Talking about battleships being the police force, or a six-shooter bronzes being the head of the family, or the guard for burglars being the head of the family, or the vaults at the Bank of England being the gold in the vaults.

Is the voice of Britain in the world's chorus the roar of cannon? I decline to believe it. She has a

diviner voice in William Shakespeare, and that voice will speak for her ages hence, when battleships, and torpedoes, and six-inch guns, are things of the barbaric past.

Granted, if you will, that great engines of destruction are necessary to our protection; still, they are at best but a necessary evil, and are no more to be worshiped than the bolts and bars that secure our houses by night. And a nation which attaches its pride to such things is halting in the march of humanity.

It is difficult for me to look upon the rudest sailing boat without pleasure, or a ship under canvas without a thrill. I can watch with delight a great liner ploughing her majestic way through the waste of waters. I come of an old sea family, and the love of the sea is in my very blood. I daresay that some of my ancestors were banging the Spaniards about three hundred years ago. I daresay, too, that I inherit a little of their combative spirit. But reflection has indisposed me to turn it against my fellow men. And therefore I look upon that proud array of battleships in the mouth of the Thames with chastened feelings. I would rather see Jack dandling a baby than handling a cutlass, and I would rather see him arm-in-arm with his wife or sweetheart than caressing the most "exquisite" gun that was ever moulded.

Some people say that war will never cease in this world. I say that it will. I also say that it must. The war fever poisons the blood of mankind, and the cost of it is bringing all the great nations to bankruptcy. We are becoming the slaves of our Frankenstein. But the best heads and hearts are vowed to bring about a wiser and nobler state of things. The road may be long, but they will reach the goal at last. They count on sharp stones and sharper thorns, and they will never despair. The victory will be theirs in the end. Their fire of humanity will burn up all the battleships, and every gun will be melted in the flame of their ideals.

Meanwhile, one has to note that it is the Christian nations that are conspicuous in the art of war. While the two great political parties in England are discussing "Dreadnoughts," each passionately protesting that we shall have enough of them, whether the number be four or eight per annum, there is also a revival of the Blasphemy Laws, and a man is sent to prison for speaking too disrespectfully of the Christian religion. Christianity, therefore, is the dominating force in England, and it must bear the consequent responsibility. One is entitled to taunt it with its ignominious failure. It pretends to be the soul of morality, yet it does not restrain the most vulgar of human vices.

Longfellow, in his powerful lines on Springfield Arsenal, after an awful description of the horrors of war, exclaims: "I hear once more the voice of Christ say *Peace!*" Once more! When he said it first it was evidently a waste of breath. So it will be again. Religion does not unite the world. Christianity does not even unite Christians—except in hatred of unbelievers. The only unifying force is humanity. Peace will come on earth when we are all humanitarians. Then the world will be our country, and to do good will be our religion.

G. W. FOOTE.

Religion and the Struggle for Existence.—II.

(Concluded from p. 451.)

A MORE plausible argument than any of those I have examined runs as follows. An organism survives in virtue of it possessing some quality not possessed by others, or in virtue of a greater development of a quality possessed by all in common. With a change of words the same principle holds good of ideas and systems. The basis of survival is, therefore, utility. An organ or a quality may persist after its period of usefulness has departed, but so far as we can see development can only occur upon a basis of utility. Now, whether it be a good thing or an evil thing, the persistence of religion in human history is an unquestionable fact. I do not say the *development* of religion, because I hold that what people call the development of religion is really an account of its growing limitations. A thing cannot be properly said to develop when every step of its career involves a limitation of the area over which it exercises control. But religion has persisted; and those who do not agree with the religious position are called upon to explain how, if an organ only arises on a basis of utility, it can be held that religion does not play a serviceable part in the history of the race.

This difficulty has been met by some writers confining the good influences of religion to the earlier history of mankind, and to the less developed members of civilised society. At a certain stage of development man needs some large, obvious, and awe-inspiring force to make him amenable to the social yoke, and this purpose is served by religion. This was the thesis of the late Walter Bagehot's interesting *Physics and Politics*, and, in another form, of a recent work by Mr. J. G. Frazer. The objection to this position is that it assumes a condition of things that we have no reason to believe ever existed. It assumes that mankind once existed in the form of a number of isolated, lawless individuals who had to be broken in to social regulations as one breaks in a wild animal. The truth of the matter is that mankind is never met with save in a gregarious form, with all the capacities for co-operation that gregariousness implies. Moreover it is the social qualities that are transferred to religion, not religion that creates social qualities.

Another form of defence is that the essence of religion lies in neither specific doctrines nor beliefs, not even in the belief in a personal deity, but rather in the synthesising of man's highest ideals and aspirations into a single whole. This is the main thesis of a recent work by Professor G. B. Foster, of the University of Chicago, on *The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence*. Both the God idea and the belief in a soul, as ordinarily held, Professor Foster puts almost contemptuously on one side. There is no such thing, he tells us, "as a self-dependent soul freely active or interactive within an organism which we call the body, just as similarly there is no self-dependent deity freely active or inactive within that larger body which we call the cosmos. All this is a survival of primitive animism, which populated the whole world with spirits, demons, hobgoblins." Perfectly true; although it is puzzling to see in what respect Professor Foster's own deity is more than a still more refined survival of this same primitive animism. Primitive man pictured his gods exactly as he was himself. Later ages refined this conception, giving to the gods all that was most admirable in man, physical and mental. Still later ages put on one side the physical qualities, and retained the mental only, leaving God, like a cosmic vagrant, without visible means of support. Still more recent apologists, seeing that to give God human intelligence is no more justifiable than to give him red hair, drop this also, and refer to deity as though he were a mere abstract force. And now we have the process carried yet a step further, and God reduced to a subjective, although a necessary, fact. It is the same process from beginning to end. The gradual weakening of the God idea before

advancing knowledge; the last term being as fundamentally indefensible as the first.

Professor Foster reaches his conclusion by a method that is extremely fanciful and wholly wrong. He assumes that in the course of evolution certain organs arise because there exist certain "needs." Thus, the eye is developed because there is a need for sight, the ear because there is a need for hearing, and so, too, religion arises because of man's need to satisfy the idealistic aspect of human nature. But this, I repeat, is wholly wrong. An organ does not develop in response to a "need"; the "need" is the outcome of the organ being there. Function and structure are not two distinct things, one of which creates the other. They are two aspects of the same thing. The only intelligible meaning of organ is the capacity of any structure to do what its inherent properties necessitate its doing. Had this been borne in mind a deal of Professor Foster's book would never have been written.

The function of religion in the struggle for existence, we are informed, is that it preserves the higher life of man. But there is no evidence that religion has ever done this. Historically, there is scarcely an improvement in the human outlook that has not met with opposition from religion. And it is glaringly untrue if we take religion in its beginnings. "The gods were created," we are told, "for the sake of the most vital practical interests. They were created in the interest of overcoming the evils that beset the human organism and of appropriating the good that would redound to the weal of that organism.....Need is the mother of the gods." This might be accepted if one were sure that it did not attribute to early man a greater speculative power than he possessed, and if it did not assume that the gods were created as a modern, scientific inquirer frames a law to cover certain observed facts. Unfortunately Professor Foster, like all other religious apologists, insists on reading into the beginnings of religion its latest manifestations, instead of testing religion as a whole in the light of the knowledge we possess of its origin.

Now, primitive man is neither a metaphysician nor an idealist. He does not concern himself with the origin and destiny of the universe, nor even with its nature, except so far as his necessities compel him to form some conclusions as to the nature of the forces around him. His gods are in no sense a creation of an "idealising faculty," they are the most concrete matter-of-fact expressions. It is not even a question of morality. He does not say, "Let us make gods in the interest of morality and the higher life," it is the sheer pressure of facts upon an uninformed mind that leads him to believe in these extra natural beings, whose anger he is bound to placate. They are there as some of the supposed normal facts of existence. And their existence is due to nothing more nor less than the exercise of the same qualities that gradually leads to the development of science as a whole. The gods are, in brief, merely an early attempt to explain phenomena. There is no need whatever to deal with them from any other point of view than that adopted when we are examining an early theory of things in the light of later and more adequate knowledge.

The curious thing is that Professor Foster admits that improvement in the character of the gods is a reflex of the improvement in humanity itself. One question, though, whether the full importance of the fact is seen. Still, it is admitted that "morals were first achieved by the human, then they were carried over into the divine. Just as there would have been no god of thunder had there been no experience of thunder, so there would have been no god of holiness, love, and faithfulness had there been no man of holiness, love, and faithfulness." Well, if this is so, what is the value and importance of religion? Professor Foster replies that it reacts on humanity, and gives a coherence and a validity to human ideals they would not otherwise possess. If religion is a humanisation of the world, so is art, so is science.

On this one may make two comments. In the first place, no one who understands the nature of scientific conceptions questions that such phrases as force, law, cause, attraction, etc., are mere symbols. But they work, in so far as they help us to frame for ourselves a realisable conception of the universe. But once admit that "God" is a mere word, and not the indication of a positive, external existence, and religion, in any real sense, is destroyed. Next, the statement that religious beliefs react on human nature, so far as it is a mere statement of the principle of action and reaction, may also be admitted. But the important thing here is, not that it reacts, but that it reacts uniformly in the direction of a higher life. This religion does not, and cannot, do. On Professor Foster's own showing religion, having no other means of improvement than that which springs from human society, can never be in advance of human development. And, as a matter of fact, it is always behind the better aspects of human life. Admitting, for the moment, that the religion of a people represents a synthesising of that people's ideals, it is always the ideals of a past generation. Hence we have the age-long struggle of religious beliefs with progressive thought—the attempt to rule the present by the less developed ideals of the past.

And this brings me to what is really the kernel of the whole matter. Religion is, as Professor Foster suggests, largely a transplanted sociology. Man reads his mental states and social feelings into the world around him. And as a natural consequence, as society develops so the religious ideals of the past are brought into contrast with a more developed mind and feeling, with the inevitable result that on the one side we have the opposition to all that challenges inherited beliefs, and on the other an attempt to restate religion in terms of the newer and larger life. In an earlier stage of civilisation men naturally express their ideals in terms of religion, because the state of knowledge is such that religious beliefs cover a large portion of life. But as this area is limited, so men express their artistic, scientific, literary, and social ideals in their appropriate forms. It is not true, therefore, that religion, as religion, contains anything useful and with which humanity may not safely dispense. All that is claimed for it belongs really to other things with which in the course of evolution it has been associated. And some of us are optimistic enough to hope that one day mankind will realise itself for what it is, and see in itself not only the creator of all the gods, but also of necessity their executioner.

C. COHEN.

"A Daring Faith."

A POPULAR preacher, in disguise, pays a midnight visit to a slum for the purpose of delivering a sermon, or writing an article on the touching scenes he witnesses therein. Or, with a similar object in view, he spends a night in a common lodging-house. As he sits amidst creatures that were once men he feels that "if there had been no Incarnation there ought to have been one." One utterly fails to see the point of such an observation. The preacher believes and declares that there has been an Incarnation, and yet when he enters a common lodging-house he meets "creatures that once were men." Ticket-of-leave men, uncaught criminals, social derelicts, victims of economical iniquities, here they are in their thousands "on the streets every night, and their history is a sad one," despite the alleged fact, proclaimed from a million pulpits, that God became incarnate with the specific object of ridding the world of all such depressing and humiliating spectacles. It must be a daring faith indeed that can preach a Divine Incarnation with such appalling sights on every hand giving the unctuous declaration the lie direct. And yet beholding, yea even going out of his way to see, such shocking demonstrations of the non-existence, or wicked inactivity of his God, the preacher has the

temerity to say that "if there had been no Incarnation there ought to have been one."

Sometimes the Bible is amazingly candid. A New Testament writer admits that the Old Testament saints received many great and precious promises from Jehovah not one of which was fulfilled. The God in whom they believed woefully disappointed them. "These all died in faith," the author of *Hebrews* informs us; that is, though sadly deceived all through their lives, they resolutely held on to their faith till death, and even died glorying in it. It was a daring faith, for it ended, as it began, in nothing; and it was as useless as it was daring.

Faith in the supernatural is always the same. Read the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles. Jesus Christ is represented as making promises which have never yet found their fulfilment. He gained disciples by pretending to be a supernatural being who tabernacled for a season among men. These disciples he finally left with big promises on his lips. What followed is eloquently described by the Rev. Dr. Anderson, of Dundee:—

"They lived in poverty and distress; they were despised and maltreated; the whole world organised in the mighty Roman Empire was against them. They believed that they were standing on the borders of the reign of justice and of love. He in whom they believed would come on the clouds of heaven and set up his kingdom, and they, his servants, would rule the world in his name. But morning after morning dawned, year after year passed away; those who had known the Master became fewer and fewer, and finally not one was left. Yet the kingdom of heaven did not come; there was no rift in the clouds to reveal the descending and reigning Lord; the earth was not renewed: cruelty, oppression, persecution dragged along their weary length; all things continued as they were since the fathers fell asleep. In spite of all failure and disappointment they continued to believe and hope."

Dr. Anderson's interesting sketch omits one important feature of the case. It does not mention the fact that the faith of the Church was kept alive by the incessant labors of the leaders. It was the apostles and their successors in the priestly office who prevented the Christian plant from being nipped in the bud; and it is wonderful what ingenuity they displayed in doing it. As Dr. Anderson puts it:—

"They said that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Their belief and hope changed form to suit successive disappointments, but the substance of them remained. When they saw they could not be fulfilled on earth they transferred them to heaven. Thus their hope and faith triumphed over all failures of time and place. They hoped against hope, believed against evidence. They rose victorious out of every failure and defeat, and were proof against all disappointments."

Dr. Anderson's motto seems to be, "Faith against Evidence." According to him, evidence is of no value in the spiritual life. He says: "Nothing has quite succeeded in destroying the confidence of the human heart in the goodness of God. It has remained proof against all disappointments, so superior to all evidence that it can dispense with it entirely, denying all facts of experience that disproved it." Such is the sane teaching of the New Theology. We are to believe in the goodness of God, not only without evidence for it, but in spite of all evidence against it. That is the extent of faith's daring. If the facts are not favorable, ignore, deny them. Facts are of the earth, earthy, while faith is of heaven, heavenly, and destined to survive all facts. Our duty is to believe that God fills and transcends the whole Universe. Dr. Anderson is a gallant champion of the Divine Immanence at all cost.

Let us now examine the cost. Nature is said to be full of God. "No part of the Universe has value in, and for, itself alone," we are told; "it has value only as it expresses God." Where, then, does the faith described by Dr. Anderson come from? In his own words, "certainly not from Nature, for

Nature, red in tooth and claw,
With ravine shrieks against the creed."

Think of the world into which early man was put, the level antagonist of pard and panther, in which

he had to wage an incessant war with wind and waves, war with hungry mouths, war with his fellows, a fierce struggle for existence, in which only the strongest could survive." Evidently Nature has absolutely no value as an expression of the God of love. Listen:—

"Where is pity, love, gentleness? Think of the history of the earth, in which one catastrophe has followed another. Think of earthquakes destroying whole peoples. Think of death that sweeps every generation into the grave. Think how the hopes of man pitilessly perish. That anyone in the face of all this has ventured to call God Father is the greatest, the most daring thing the human spirit ever ventured. It is the greatest wonder of the world."

So it is; and it is also the most unreasonable thing ever heard of. The life of Nature sternly forbids us to believe in a God of love. So says Dr. Anderson, the New Theologian. Faith, then, "is a decision for God and against the world."

The daring of faith is unreason run mad. To believe against all evidence is to play the fool on a gigantic scale. According to Dr. Anderson's own testimony, there is no sign of a deity in Nature, and from the study of Nature none of us would be led to believe in one. And yet Dr. Anderson very quickly contradicts himself. "The logic of faith," he says, "is simply this: If there is a heart here within the human soul, there must be a heart out there in the Universe, everywhere where life is, and life is everywhere. Man finds tenderness within, so he says and believes it must be without in the life of the Universe." Was ever such silly reasoning indulged in before? Nature has no pity, love, or gentleness, she is "red in tooth and claw," and "with ravine shrieks against the creed"; and yet we are assured that there is a heart of love everywhere where life is, and a tenderness of Divine sweetness and beauty. After all, "by his own heart man discovers that Nature has a heart..... Deep down in every human soul is a firm conviction that there is a Providence of love, and no experience of pain or sorrow or death can uproot it." Dr. Anderson is doubtless a thoroughly good man, but he has no right to speak in the name of "every human soul." We know positively that there are thousands of human hearts in Great Britain which have no such conviction deep down within them, and we go further and assert that "the natural, normal condition of the human soul" is to disbelieve in God and Providence, or, rather, to be wholly ignorant and insensible of both. It is easy enough to affirm that "man can deny his faith only by denying his own nature," but the affirmation is as false as it is foolish. Dr. Anderson must know that faith is never transmitted from parent to child, and that no child has the least shred of faith until it is mechanically infused into it by its elders. It is this fact that makes it so essential to the continuance of Christianity that children should be religiously trained from the earliest possible moment. Divines acknowledge this, and utilise it as an important argument when insisting on religious instruction in the schools, but deny or ignore it whenever they are arguing for the naturalness of supernatural beliefs. And yet there are facts that cannot be controverted, the unambiguous testimony of which is that faith in God and Providence is an artificial possession of mankind; and chief among these facts is this: that unless a child is brought up religiously it never develops a religion, or that unless it is systematically taught to believe it never has faith. If Dr. Anderson doubts this, we are prepared to supply him with any amount of the most convincing evidence.

Man has a heart, and can love; but his heart and love are the greatest and best known to us. We know, and have experience, of nothing higher and nobler. In man we see Nature at her highest and best. Dr. Anderson himself admits that God is not an object of knowledge. "Faith is not knowledge," he says; but faith without knowledge can never be justified. Faith is a venture in the dark; it is also a venture in despite of all the light there is. Dr. Anderson adds that "Science is not religion"—a remark in which we fully concur. But inasmuch as

faith is not knowledge and science is not religion, does it not follow that faith and religion lack all reasonable justification? A man has no right to declare that "the Divine heart is revealed in human hearts" unless he knows and can prove it. He has no right to assert that "in man's thought and heart the ideal aim of the Universe is fulfilled and completed," unless he possesses some definite information as to what "the ideal aim" of the Universe—if it has any—really is. As a matter of fact, neither Dr. Anderson nor anybody else has any right to speak of the plan or aim of the Universe, because the Universe has kept her plan or aim—if it has any—a profound secret from all living things.

Yes, faith is very daring, but then blind, unintelligent daring is a great deal worse than useless; if actively encouraged it becomes the source of incalculable mischief.

J. T. LLOYD.

Lying About Ingersoll.

HOW HE DIED.

THE most barefaced fraud we have seen appears in the *Christian Union*, Des Moines, Ia., May 13, credited to *Church and School*. It reads as follows:—

"INGERSOLL'S DYING CONFESSION.

While in a revival meeting at St. John's, Oregon, in December, 1908, Evangelist David E. Olson secured the following affidavit:—

"I do hereby declare that Robert Ingersoll confessed to my father, Joeliel S. Berry, on his dying bed, that he did not believe the doctrine he preached.

He said these words: "Joehiel, I wish I had my life to live over again." When asked why, he said: "Because I do not believe what I have preached, and never have. I only did it for the money that was in it." His daughter then asked, "Whose life shall I live after, yours or mother's?" Mrs. Ingersoll was a strict Baptist, and a sister to my father.

Signed ARCHIE E. BERRY, St. John's, Oregon."

Notwithstanding that this is an affidavit, the author of it lied when he affirmed that Ingersoll confessed to Joeliel S. Berry, or any other person; he lied when he attributed the words of the alleged confession to Ingersoll; he lied when he repeated the purported conversation between Ingersoll and his daughter; he lied when he said that Mrs. Ingersoll was a strict Baptist, and finally in saying that she was a sister of his father. Mrs. Ingersoll was, and is, a Freethinker, and her maiden name was not Berry. Her religious life being the same as her husband's, the question attributed to the daughter, Miss Maud Ingersoll, the one living at home at the time of her father's death, and who is also a Freethinker, is, in the circumstances, absurd as well as false. An identical fiction is related of Ethan Allen and his daughter, so that the affidavit-maker cannot be esteemed as even an original liar. The inventiveness of these fabulists does not equal their mendacity, and they plagiarise from their unvarnished predecessors while imitating their dishonesty in forging dying confessions for Freethinkers.

It is a commentary on the regard for truth entertained by Christians—for only Christians would seek to libel eminent Freethinkers—that Ingersoll's family found it necessary to prepare, and have printed for circulation, a sworn statement of affidavit detailing the exact circumstances of his death. The perversion of fact by the followers of Christ almost passes belief. The Catholic Church adopted the policy of spreading the story that Ingersoll sent for a Catholic priest, who was introduced by a back way. Ignorant Catholics believe this. The statement of the members of the family who were present is as follows:—

"State of New York }
County of New York. } ss.

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

THE TRUE STORY OF HIS ILLNESS AND DEATH.
On November 16, 1896, while on a lecture trip, at Janesville, Wis., Colonel Ingersoll had a cerebral hemorrhage. He continued to lecture for a few days.

but at the solicitation of his family went to Chicago and consulted Dr. Frank Billings, who advised him to return home and rest for two months, which he did. He then, January 24, 1897, resumed lecturing, which he continued up to the time of his death. It was at this time, early in 1897, that he developed angina pectoris, from which he suffered greatly and which was the cause of his death. Since his death we have learned that he knew exactly his condition. In other words, his physicians had told him that he was likely to die at any moment, but acceding to his earnest entreaties they did not tell his family. In spite of the fact that death was ever beside him he was always very cheerful, and when asked as to his health invariably replied, 'All right.' During the night of July 20, 1899, he had an attack of acute indigestion and slept very little; but he came to breakfast the next morning, and afterwards sat on the piazza, as he was wont to do, reading and talking with his family. At about 10.30 he said he would lie down and rest a little, and would then come down and play pool with his son-in-law. Mrs. Ingersoll accompanied him to their bedroom, and remained with him while he slept. At about 11.45 he arose and sat in his chair to put on his shoes. Miss Sue Sharkey came into the room, followed by Mrs. Sue M. Farrell. Mrs. Ingersoll said, 'Do not dress, papa, until after luncheon; I will eat upstairs with you.' He replied, 'Oh, no; I do not want to trouble you.' Mrs. Farrell then said, 'How absurd, after the hundreds of times you have eaten upstairs with her.' He looked up laughingly at Mrs. Farrell, as she turned to leave the room, and then Mrs. Ingersoll said, 'Why, papa, your tongue is coated; I must give you some medicine.' He looked up at her with a smile, and as he did so closed his eyes and passed away without a struggle, a pang, or even a sigh. No one else was present. It is said that he recanted. This is a cruel and malicious falsehood, without the slightest foundation in fact. His convictions on the subject of religion remained absolutely unchanged. He died as he had lived, an Agnostic.

EVA A. INGERSOLL,
SUE SHARKEY,
SUE M. FARRELL.

Severally affirmed to before me this 17th day of March, 1906.

JOHN H. HAZELTON, Notary Public.
New York County, No. 59."

Duplicates of this document have been executed, and their safety and preservation provided for. Future historians will need them, for it is not to be supposed that pious Christians have told their last lie about the man whom they cannot truthfully answer or asperse. Of the makers of the affidavit Eva A. Ingersoll is the widow of Robert G. Ingersoll, Sue M. Farrell is her sister, and Sue Sharkey is a member of the family and of the Roman Catholic faith.—*Truthseeker* (New York).

W. M. Rossetti on Swinburne's Religion.

IN the recent article by Mr. Foote on "Swinburne as a Freethinker," it will be remembered that Mr. Foote wrote, "I do not say that Swinburne ever called himself an Atheist. I only say that he sang of Atheism." That Swinburne never publicly proclaimed his Atheism, appears to be a fact. But now we find in his letters to Stedman (printed in the *Times*) that he professed not only Atheism (*i.e.*, without Godism) but Antitheism (*i.e.*, against Godism). Of course, we didn't have to wait for the Stedman letters to discern Swinburne's Atheism or Antitheism. It was patent to all thinking people from the publication of *Atlanta in Calydon* in 1865. As early as 1866, W. M. Rossetti gave an interesting side-criticisms of Swinburne's religious opinions, in his brilliant man of letters, and was an intimate friend of Swinburne. What he has to say is, therefore, of some importance. In the work referred to above, Rossetti discusses the various currents of influence

under which Swinburne wrote. He refers, first, to the "Classic or Antique" influence thus:—

"His mind and his sympathies receive nurture from the antique past. He is a manifest Pagan; neither believing in a Christian revelation, nor entering kindly, though he can enter with truth of artistic perception, into a Christian dispensation, and modes of thought and life." (P. 21).

Then of the "Heterodox, or Religiously Mutinous" influence, he says:—

"Swinburne's mind appears to be very like a *tabula rasa* on moral and religious subjects, so occupied is it with instincts, feelings, perceptions, and a sense of natural or artistic fitness and harmony.....On these moral and religious subjects he seems to have no 'innate ideas,' no preconceptions, no prejudices. He has no sense of what moral philosophers call a 'sanction'.....Swinburne might have remained neutral enough on such matters, but that others will insist upon knowing all about them, upon proselytising and evangelising; and Swinburne, when he finds that he cannot be left alone and unconcerned, flies from neutrality to antagonism, resents what he would naturally leave out of count, and volleys forth 'winged words' of the most audacious aim and the least stinted virus." (Pp. 17-18).

"Swinburne, as we have said, is, in intellectual sympathy and culture, a Pagan. This gives a positive direction to his thought on religious subjects, which otherwise seems to amount to little beyond negation—Materialism, and the absence of faith in a beneficent Providence." (P. 23).

Rossetti then makes an examination of Swinburne's ideas, and concludes by saying that the poet held the same opinions as Hume's Epicurus in the *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. "If," continues Rossetti,—

"readers, only still further scandalised by our summary of the Swinburnian theory, declare that such theory is flat Atheism, we shall not concern ourselves to contest the phrase; indeed, our own opinion about the theory is nearly enough the same." (P. 25).

The recent excerpts in the *Freethinker* from the Stedman letters, omitted an interesting reference of Swinburne to Trelawny. Swinburne says:—

"Last summer I made and enjoyed the acquaintance of Mr. Trelawny (the friend of Shelley, of Byron, and of Greece); a triad of Titans, of whom one was a giant of genius.....To hear him speak of Shelley is most beautiful and touching; at that name his voice (usually that of an old sea-king, as he is) *always* changes and softens unconsciously. 'There,' he said to me, 'was the very Best of men, and he was treated as the very Worst.' He professes fierce, general misanthropy, but is as ardent a republican (and atheist) as Shelley was at twenty; a magnificent old Viking to look at."

H. GEORGE FARMER.

IMPORTANCE OF SECULAR ETHICS.

Now that moral injunctions are losing the authority given by their supposed sacred origin, the secularisation of morals is becoming imperative. Few things can happen more disastrous than the decay and death of a regulative system no longer fit, before another and fitter regulative system has grown up to replace it. Most of those who reject the current creed appear to assume that the controlling agency furnished by it may safely be thrown aside, and the vacancy left unfilled by any other controlling agency. Meanwhile those who defend the current creed allege that in the absence of the guidance it yields, no guidance can exist: divine commandments they think the only possible guides. Thus, between these extreme opponents, there is a certain community. The one holds that the gap left by the disappearance of the code of supernatural ethics need not be filled by a code of natural ethics, and the other holds that it cannot be so filled. Both contemplate a vacuum, which the one wishes and the other fears. As the change which promises or threatens to bring about this state, desired or dreaded, is rapidly progressing, those who believe that the vacuum can be filled, and that it must be filled, are called on to do something in pursuance of their belief.—*Herbert Spencer*.

Certain winged natures, savage yet calm, are made to battle the winds—souls of the tempest: such exist.—*Victor Hugo*.

* Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads*. By W. M. Rossetti. London: 1866.

Acid Drops.

The London newspapers did justice—sometimes almost pious justice—to the naval display off Southend. A *Daily Chronicle* man perhaps took the cake for maudlin eloquence. He went into pious hysterics over Sunday morning's "divine service" on the *Dreadnought*. "These keen, strong, fighting men," the Fleet-street scribe says, "hedged round with death-dealing guns, and all the armaments of war, are upon this sunny morning simultaneously offering up praise and prayer as simple-heartedly as children." And why not? Fighting men have usually been religious. Nevertheless, the word "simultaneously" may express a physical rather than a psychological fact. A good many Jack-tars would absent themselves from "divine service" nowadays, if they were allowed to; for Freethought has spread into the Navy, and indifference has crept in too—as it has crept in everywhere else. But the men are not allowed to absent themselves from "divine service." They've got to have it,—whether they want it or not.

Anglicans and Kensitites had a pious struggle at Raynes Park on Sunday. It was carried on with the usual temper of the "peace on earth and good will amongst men" people when they differ from each other. Christian women joined in the struggle. It was too exciting to be missed.

It is a singular irony that the *Academy* should be engaged in a crusade against immorality and irreligion. Our pious contemporary—for such we may (and must) call it—is grieved and shocked at Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son's selling "a blasphemous paper like the *Freethinker*." "It is true," our pious contemporary groans, "that you cannot buy the *Freethinker* at Messrs. W. H. Smith's stalls. On the other hand, you can buy it at their Strand house for twopence—we have ourselves purchased it there for the last three weeks—and if you order it at Smith's bookstalls your order will not be refused." Terrible news, to be sure! It is a wonder that the Strand, especially in the neighborhood of 186, is not desolated by an earthquake. The delay of the catastrophe makes one wonder, with Othello, whether there are "no stones in heaven, but what serve for the thunder."

We are glad to see that the editor of the *Academy* is reading the *Freethinker*. It ought to do him good. That he buys it, is his own confession; that he reads it enough to judge it "blasphemous," is also his own confession. But we have evidence that he reads it even more attentively. He devoted a paragraph to Mr. Clodd's *Fortnightly Review* article on "George Meredith: Some Recollections." It was a curiously foolish paragraph. It doubted Meredith's being really a man of genius, simply because he sneered at "the Christian fable." The passage thus referred to, however, was not quoted from Mr. Clodd's article at all. It was quoted from our own article on Mr. Clodd's article. This is proved by the *Academy's* referring to Mr. Clodd's article as entitled "George Meredith Again." That was the title of our article—not the title of Mr. Clodd's. So it is easy to see what the editor of the *Academy* had been reading.

Mr. Balfour must have a pretty sense of humor, and he appears to have been exercising it by "pulling the leg" of "one of the most distinguished of the Welsh members of Parliament." We quote from the *Christian World*. According to this account Mr. Balfour asked, "What has become of Evan Roberts?" The person asked whether he was interested in him. "Interested," said Mr. Balfour, "why, when the revival was raging I read everything I could lay my hands on, so interested I was in its progress." He was asked his opinion of Evan Roberts. The answer was: "I regard him as a religious genius, whose work is beyond criticism." Now we can quite understand Mr. Balfour's interest in Evan Roberts. As a study in religious pathology he was interesting. But for Mr. Balfour to regard him as a religious genius beyond criticism! Well, we wonder the C. W. gave the alleged conversation publicity. Probably, however, it knows its readers better than we do.

"She had no religion, no belief in a world to come, or a God to guide her; so her conduct would sometimes seem extraordinary, she having no check as we have." So said a religious dignitary in the course of his evidence in a recent divorce. Now we know why people do wrong. It is because they do not believe in a God or a future life, and have no check such as bridles good Christians. And with calculated villainy these people without checks not only commit all the crimes, but straightway inscribe themselves in the prison records as good members of some Christian Church. Hence

these people with the moral bridles suffer from the conduct of those godless people who are without the saving belief in God and a future life.

Mr. G. K. Chesterton is becoming quite the hope of the pious: a fact which shows what a sad condition Christianity has fallen into. This journalist—for he will never be anything else—is particularly fond of standing on his head; and the religious people are proud of the new views of things, including their own faith, which he enjoys in that position. Mr. Chesterton does piety for the *Daily News*. He also does farce. His topical articles have dropped down at last to "Cheese." In his article on that common article of diet—which, like himself, is apt to be lively—Mr. Chesterton says that he can recall only two poets who have said anything about cheese—Virgil and an anonymous rhymist. Well now, Mr. Chesterton has written a book on Robert Browning, but he has forgotten the rich little poem about the big dull folio that the poet read and then dropped into the hollow trunk of a tree, to "dry rot at ease till the judgment day"; after disposing of which big dull folio the poet went back into the house and brought out a loaf, half a cheese, and a bottle of chablis, and laid on his back and

"forgot the oaf

Over a jolly chapter of Rabelais."

We make "G. K. C." a present of this reference for his revised essay on "Cheese."

Mr. G. K. Chesterton, in his eagerness to defend Christianity, forgets his facts and misrepresents the teaching of the New Testament. Christ and his Apostles not only "admit the need of rulers," but enjoin absolute "subjection to the higher powers, for the reason that there is no power but of God." Mr. Chesterton believes in revolutions, and in the permanency of their results; but the attitude recommended both by Jesus and by Paul makes revolution an eternal impossibility, because "the powers that be are ordained of God." In his noble defence of the poor, Mr. Chesterton's reasoning is most cogent; but his defence of the Christian religion is ludicrously lop-sided and unconvincing.

"Deliver us from the power of superstition" is a petition in a prayer made to order, as if the idea underlying the petition itself were not the quintessence of superstition. Prayer is superstition in full practice—a vain appeal to an imaginary being.

The Lord has been exceptionally busy of late. A crowd of his prime favorites met at Keswick for the special purpose of interviewing him on endless topics; and they will now be telling their respective congregations what they learned when closeted with God among the northern hills; and, alas, there are those who will be fools enough to believe them. The truth is that the majority of us still love to be gulled, and the more extravagantly it is done the more it is enjoyed.

"Calvin," the *Daily Chronicle* says, "would have been a Caesar or Napoleon in another clime or country." Nonsense. Look at his nose.

Our contemporary is glad that there is "no longer a Calvin at Downing-street ready to burn the man who is not quite certain about matters that cannot be proved." "Theological governments," it adds, "are so infernally certain of their conjectures. Servotus was burned alive with an appeal to Jesus, the Son of God, because he had the ideas that some four hundred years later occurred to the Rev. R. J. Campbell." This is all very well in its way, of course; it shows the progress that has been made in toleration. But it is not fair to charge the guilt of persecution on Calvin alone. No one man is responsible for that crime against humanity. The guilt lies upon the Christian religion, with its doctrine of salvation by faith, which leads by irresistible logic to persecution. For, if belief depends upon the will, coercing the will is the rational way to change belief.

Lord Gorell, who had long experience as a judge in the Divorce Division, being scandalised at the way in which poor people were debarred from the domestic relief obtainable by the well-to-do, asked the House of Lords to accept the following resolution:—

"That it is expedient that jurisdiction, to a limited extent, in divorce and matrimonial cases, should be conferred upon county courts in order that the poorer classes may have their cases of that nature heard and determined in such courts."

This was opposed, in what we cannot help regarding as hypocritical speeches, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Halifax, and other High Churchmen. These gentlemen really object to divorce altogether, but they cannot

deny it to the rich, so they comfort themselves by denying it to the poor. The Archbishop protested that he did not desire to see any distinction made between rich and poor. But it is made—by the present difficulty and cost of proceedings; and Dr. Davidson knows this as well as we do. It is easy, therefore, to understand his real motive in objecting to "any proposal for extending facilities for divorce." Of course it goes almost without saying that Lord Gorell's motion was not accepted. It was shelved in favor of an "inquiry."

Rev. J. T. Forbes, M.A., a great Baptist light in Glasgow, enjoys the distinction of having flatly contradicted the Bible. The Grand Old Book declares that God does according to his will everywhere; Mr. Forbes has just assured us that he does nothing of the sort. "Can the will of God be defeated?" he asked. "Is it done now? It is not done." We take the servant's part against the Master's dictum in his own Book. And we go further, and assert that God's will is not, has never been, and never will be, done. God's will is a theological mare's-nest.

Methodism is the most marvellous institution under the sun. Among the Churches it stands absolutely alone, shining forth with unsurpassed and unsurpassable glory. We are informed in the *Methodist Times* for July 1 that "the interpretation of all things in heaven and earth, of God, man, and the future by the primacy of love—redemptive and experimental—has been the glory of Methodism." Naturally, such superlative praise, such consummate eulogium comes from a Methodist, who is, of course, quite incapable of exaggeration. Sane people know how to characterize it.

The Bishop of Hereford says that "Surely Christian Europe is a cake unturned." He is doubtless right; but whose fault is it? Europe is a *Christian* cake; that is, a cake presumably baked by Jesus Christ, and surely it is the baker who is to blame if it is burnt on one side, and not done at all on the other. At any rate, it is undeniable that the most intensely Christian countries in Europe are socially, politically, and ethically the most backward, while the most advanced in almost all respects have practically substituted science for Christianity.

We are told in the leading article in the *British Weekly* for July 8 that "The best seeker of all is the Son of Man." Whatever he may be as a seeker, it is undeniable that as a finder he has not been a conspicuous success. Jesus claimed, or it was claimed for him, that he was the Son of God as well, even very God of very God; and yet his prediction that he would draw all men unto himself has never been, nor is likely ever to be, fulfilled. According to reliable evidence, Sakya Muni, who claimed no divinity, has been a greater success as a finder, though no Holy Ghost is said to have rendered him any assistance.

What is known in theology as "the problem of evil" is one of those puzzles created by an absurd theory, and is consequently irremovable so long as we retain the general theory of which it is a part. Mr. R. J. Campbell, as the high priest of the New Theology, offers his own explanation, but it is no more satisfactory than those he rejects. He admits that the ordinary apologetic is impossible. The theory that God could not destroy evil without destroying our moral freedom is, he says, absurd. But he believes that evil is here for a purpose, and this purpose is that "without the struggle against evil the true nature of good could never become manifest," because "there is no sublimity in human character and deed which is not born of conflict." But this is making a virtue of a necessity, and does not really reach the kernel of the question. It may be true that some—not by any means all—natures are braced by conflict. It may also be granted that, built as we are, we appreciate through difference, and therefore better appreciate goodness against a background of evil. But the same, and essential, question remains unanswered. Why, if there be a God, are we so built? Why could not the same result have been achieved in a less ruinous manner? To say how good and evil operate in the moulding of human nature is merely to outline the state of things as they are; it by no means justifies them. One might as well argue that because setting fire to a houseful of people leads to acts of heroism and kindness on the part of neighbors, therefore setting fire to the house becomes a wholly justifiable action.

To say that humanity exists, and to say that the workings of natural forces are such that there is a balance of happiness over pain, or of goodness over evil, are really identical statements. The Freethinker is one of the first to point this out, and if we remove the hypothesis of Theism no more

need be said. But if we do assume an intelligent creator, other questions naturally arise. For instance, the balance of happiness over misery is only true of the species—it is not true of individuals. Thousands of individuals, who might have gone through life in a happy, useful manner, are broken and crushed, often ending as a drunkard or a criminal by the weight of misfortune or wrong. And it is idle to pretend that the evil is of the individual's own making. It is as true now as ever that the parents eat sour grapes and the children's teeth are on edge. The law of heredity is not wholly beneficial in its working. Again, one person may suffer, and another reaps the benefit of his experience. The Theist may say that by these methods humanity advances. Maybe; but in the light of creation by a personal deity each one has the same claim for happiness and protection. To these and similar questions Theism has not, and cannot have, any satisfactory answer. It can only go on spinning ridiculous excuses in defence of a quite groundless and useless theory.

The Rev. W. L. Watkinson says that "God outmanœuvres evil." "He has his eye on the shark and devil-fish and rattlesnake, and also on the drinking den and the palace of impurity and the gutter press." And yet all the things on which he has his eye flourish amazingly; and he must be a wonderful romancer who can honestly say that evil is outmanœuvred. Mr. Watkinson's Deity is but "the baseless fabric of a vision." His impotence proves his non-existence. He "endeavors to save us," this gentleman says; but the very idea of the Almighty "endeavoring" to do things is the richest joke ever heard of. Fancy, too, a shark, with God's eye on him, swallowing one of God's children, or a rattlesnake, under the same eye, stinging a saint to death!

The New Theologians imagine that they are the only "enlightened" people on the earth, and they denounce all others as hopelessly blinded by prejudice and disastrously behind the times. What a superb example of Christian charity. And in practice their ethics is no better. A young minister of this school became the colleague of one of the old school, and so insinuated himself into the affections and confidence of the people that, ere long, the older man was forced to resign. We are sorry that such a thing should have happened, says the *Christian Commonwealth*, but God is going to fulfil himself in new ways. *Le Roi est mort, vive le Roi.* How very Christian! Yet our contemporary adds: "We have not divested ourselves of our humanity in our enthusiasm for the spread of enlightenment."

A pious exhorter warns us that the Lord will not guide us on our dying day unless we seek his leadership on election day; but he omits to tell us to which of the numerous political parties the Lord belongs, and in the absence of that information it would be sheer mockery to ask for his advice in a political crisis. If he is a Socialist, for example, only Socialists can enjoy the unspeakable privilege of being under his guidance, and it follows that Conservatives, Liberals, and Laborites, lacking his guiding light on election days, must face their dying day without the slightest hope of deriving counsel from him. The pious exhorter has only succeeded in making his Lord a laughing-stock.

The Rev. Daniel Lamont, of Edinburgh, pays Scottish Freethought a high compliment. He says "there are thousands of people in Scotland who.....feel as if a cloud had come and snatched him [Christ] away from their sight," who "have been shocked by the assaults of doubt," and whose "certainty has been weakened and hope dimmed." What a splendid testimonial to the efficacy of the leaven of unbelief that has been steadily working in that priest-ridden land. Mr. Lamont meets "the assaults of doubt," which are proving so damaging, with nothing better than dead dogmatism. "He for whom you sigh," he says, "is on the throne of the kingdom of heaven, the Lord of life and glory." It is too late in the day to bamboozle thoughtful people with such ineffable rubbish. Yet the pulpit has nothing better to offer.

Dr. Eliot, President of Harvard, drew up a list of books to fill a five-foot bookshelf, which should contain all a man might really want to read. Amongst the omissions were the Bible and Shakespeare. Being questioned on this point, Dr. Eliot explained that every bookish man or woman would have the Bible and Shakespeare already. This leads the *Daily Chronicle* to observe that, while the Bible and Shakespeare are curiously linked in some minds, they are curiously dissociated in others. Shakespeare was an actor, and "the theatre has incurred the enmity of solemn folk, from John Knox to Mr. Harry Lauder." The *D. C.* writer says that he "can apologise for two grandfathers, both of them versed in

the Bible. But neither would allow a copy of Shakespeare in the house."

When the editor of the *Freethinker* was in Holloway Prison, doing twelve months for "bringing the Holy Scriptures and the Christian Religion into disbelief and contempt," he asked the librarian, who was also the schoolmaster, for something to read. "Certainly," said the obliging officer, "what would you like?" Mr. Foote asked for a Shakespeare. But the officer had to explain that they did not keep profane literature of that kind in the prison library. No doubt the chaplain, and other pious gentlemen responsible for the prison tradition, considered that Shakespeare would corrupt a burglar—or even a parson incarcerated for one of those offences to which "the cloth" seems so unfortunately prone.

Alderman Whur, of the Paddington Borough Council, sent a letter to Councillor Waycott, who seems to have annoyed and troubled his colleagues; the said letter containing an apt quotation from "Tom Payne." Councillor Waycott replied, still calling the great Freethinker "Tom Payne." "Doubtless you know," said the uncounselled Councillor, "that Tom Payne was a notorious infidel, who believed in neither God or Devil." Such is history, and such is literature, on the Paddington Borough Council.

Dr. J. H. Moulton does not think the documents of Christianity need credentials. This is the way in which he replies to those who think otherwise:—

"Take any book ever written, the very flower of literature, and the supremest effort of human thought, translate it into 412 languages, from Sanscrit down to the rudest jargon of savages, and scatter it broadcast over the world. When that is done, and the books have sold everywhere, and brought civilisation and humanity wherever they have gone, it will be time to discuss whether there is anything unique in Christianity."

Exception *might* be taken to this on the question of fact, and the vanished Tasmanians, the disappearing Maoris, and the ill-treated natives of the Congo, might be cited as suggestive lines of evidence. But putting all this on one side, we venture to suggest that Professor Moulton's outburst needs elaborating in the interests of truth. Thus:—

"Take any book written, let it become the possession upon which a strong and unscrupulous organisation bases its claim to power. In its interest suppress all teaching and knowledge that contradicts its statements. Place it amid such a condition of things that for centuries it becomes a perfect fetish, the mere touch of which may work miracles. Let people for generations be taught that all morality, all science, all social teaching comes from its pages. Place a huge army of men in the field whose interests are bound up with the maintenance of the supremacy of this particular book. Arrange things so that to disown it invites disaster. Then translate the book into other languages and tell the people among whom it is taken that we owe our advancement to its influence. Take all the good done by medicine, practical science, commercial development, and a host of other things, and place them to the credit of this book. Carefully ignore the evil effects of making an idol of this book, and count only its assumed good influence. When this is done it will be strange if any book would not be in the same position as the Bible is to-day."

We fancy this would be far nearer the truth of the position than Professor Moulton's foolish deliverance.

Mr. Runciman's besetting sin is "cleverness." He was so very clever over his Education Bill that he fancied himself almost a God. But it came to grief all the same. "Cleverness" is only superficial. Statesmanship is a different thing. This is not realised yet by our precious Minister of Education. Having failed to solve the religious difficulty before the footlights, he decided to settle it behind the scenes. Accordingly, he issued some new regulations through the Education Department, one of which ordered all Training Colleges to force religious instruction upon the teachers. This regulation was deeply resented. A deputation from the Liberation Society and the Secular Education League waited upon Mr. Runciman; a meeting of Liberal members was held in a committee room of the House of Commons; Mr. Runciman came badly out of both ordeals, and retired as gracefully as possible from a most ridiculous position. Altogether, he seems one of those gentlemen who are "too jolly clever by half."

Not so very long ago, Mr. Runciman declared that he would never, never consent to Secular Education. We said then that "never" was a long time, and that the right honorable gentleman would probably accept Secular Education with the greatest cheerfulness whenever he found it was inevitable. In what we may call his "retiring" speech in the House of Commons, on July 16, he said that what

had just happened was "an example of how easy it was for religious rows to swallow up every other subject." He was sorry for "this unfortunate atmosphere," and he thought "the only way out of the difficulty was the road that led to absolute religious equality." He might have known that twelve months ago. His case is not one in which wisdom brings sadness; it is one in which sadness brings wisdom.

Rev. H. Russell Wakefield, writing to the *Daily News*, deploras Mr. Runciman's withdrawal of that obnoxious regulation. "We now know," he weeps, "that the Government is not strong enough to resist the pressure of those who desire a purely secular system of education.....Mr. Runciman, against his own judgment, has yielded to that section which wants no religion taught in the schools." Thanks, Mr. Wakefield, thanks!

Serious floods have devastated Western Missouri and Colorado. Houses have been swept away, farms destroyed, and numerous lives lost. Good old "Providence"! "He doeth all things well."

The Jews are Jehovah's martyrs. They have suffered untold misery for his sake. He was going to do wonderful things for them, but hitherto he has enjoyed all the benefits of the connection. We see that pogroms (Jew hunts) have taken place lately in Bessarabia. Many of the chosen people have been killed there. Jehovah seems totally unconcerned.

Tonbridge Council has an Allotments Committee, which has made a rule for the municipal allotments that "no gardening is to be done on Sundays other than cutting vegetables." Some members of the Council object to this grandmotherly regulation. One said that it curbed the liberty of men who "worked all the week and looked upon their Sunday gardening in the light of a healthy recreation." The Council, however, supported the Sabbatarian Committee, although the regulation is against the common law of the land.

At the Shoreditch Coroner's Court a boy witness was asked: "Do you know what will happen to you if you kiss that book and you don't tell the truth?" The boy witness rubbed his hands—no doubt remisscently—and answered: "I shall get the cane." He was sworn. It was as near hell as he was likely to get.

Miss Katherine Finny-Wood, residing at Morston Hall, Norfolk, was found dead in bed with a silk handkerchief knotted round her throat. She conducted a Sunday school, and acted as organist at the church. The inquest resulted in a verdict of suicide during temporary insanity. Of course there is no moral. The lady was not a Freethinker.

Father George Tyrrell, who was excommunicated for "Modernism," is not to be allowed Roman Catholic funeral rites. This is said to cause "great grief and indignation" to his many friends. We don't believe the deceased himself is troubled about the matter. He'll sleep soundly now—anywhere.

Egyptian exploration has discovered a draught-board some 5,000 years old. There is nothing now under the sun—except the dear old Bible chronology.

Another poor apostle of the poor Carpenter has gone—the Carpenter knows where. Rev. Sir Lewis Henry Palmer, of East Carlton Hall, Rockingham, left £103,913.

More of them! Rev. Robert Henry Hadden, Chaplain in Ordinary to the late Queen Victoria, left £18,158 4s. 4d. This man of God was a true-blue Protestant. By his will, he disinherits his children if they join the Roman Catholic faith or marry a person of that faith. Fancy a man stretching out his cold, dead hand from the grave over the lives of his own family in that way. What a sweet thing the Christian religion often is

ICONOCLAST CRICKET CLUB.

A most enjoyable match was played at Hanwell on Sunday last between the Thomas Henry Dey Cricket Club and the Iconoclast Cricket Club, the former club winning by an innings and 63 runs. It was a pleasant game throughout every reverse being taken in true sportsmanlike spirit by everyone concerned. The ground was graced by the presence of several ladies, who appeared to take a very lively interest in the contest.—E. HARVEY.

Mr. Foote's Engagements

(Lecturing suspended during the Summer.)

To Correspondents.

THE PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND: Annual Subscriptions.—Previously acknowledged, £228. Received since.—H. A. Hamlyn, 10s.; N. S. Nundy, 10s. 6d.; E. C. S., 5s.

A. HURCUM.—Even the suppression of "obscenity" is a more difficult problem than it looks. There are some things, of course, which are only too obviously obscene. They have no other characteristic. But there are plenty of other things which could only be decided on very disputable grounds of taste and opinion; and many people call a thing "obscene" because it relates to matters which they do not want to hear discussed. Formerly, all discussion of the population question was called "obscene." The jury found a verdict of "Guilty" against Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant, although they were exonerated from any evil intention. It was "obscene" to bring such a question into the daylight. All that is history now, but it teaches us that the suppression of "obscenity" is only too apt to mean the suppression of unpopular opinion. This is peculiarly so in America.

E. WOODHEAD.—The Church of England is not maintained by the State in the sense that its cost figures in the Budget. It is maintained by the State in the sense that its properties and revenues are created and guarded by the laws of the land. Parliament established and endowed, and still controls, the Church of England; and Parliament could disestablish and disendow it to-morrow; yes, and apply its properties and revenues to any other purpose. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who pay the Bishop's salaries, are directly appointed by the State.

THOMAS PARKER.—You reply to what was not said. We have never heard Mr. Boulter lecture, but we have read the shorthand reports of his discourses. We cannot allow our columns to be occupied with a discussion of his style of advocacy.

C. D.—(1) *The Secular Review* was started by G. J. Holyoake in 1876. (2) *The National Reformer* was founded by a Company, in the early sixties, and was soon afterwards taken over by Charles Bradlaugh, who had been editing it with Joseph Barker. (3) *The Freethinker* was started in 1881. It has always been edited by Mr. Foote. (4) It was Charles Bradlaugh who nominated Mr. Foote for the N. S. S. presidency.

A. HURCUM.—The Spanish book you refer to has not, to our knowledge, been translated into English. Glad to hear that your wife and five daughters are all Freethinkers. Our best compliments to them.

E. A. KINSLEY.—You can hardly expect "street corner work" to be taken up by the most polished speakers.

C. KING.—We quite agree with you; in fact, you say in other words what we said on the matter in last week's "Sugar Plums." A great orator may occasionally drive home a point by using the language of the man in the street, but the best English should be the staple of every Freethought speaker's discourses. Our advocates should feel under an obligation to do their best work for the cause.

W. P. BALL.—Much obliged for cuttings.

T. FISHER.—We had seen it; still, thanks.

E. ROBERTSHAW.—Your suggestions shall be considered, Mr. Foote is keeping well.

W. J. RAMSEY.—Next week.

C. HOWARD.—"C. E.'s" article on the Parables uses the terms "thieves" and "beggars" in their common acceptation. It does not invite a discussion as to other economical "thieves" and "beggars" from a Socialist point of view. "C. E." would not wish to take part in such a discussion, and it could not appear in our columns.

J. TAYLOR (W. Australia).—Passed over to the publishing department.

H. SMALLWOOD.—Shall be sent. The *Freethinker* postage is a halfpenny.

G. BRADFIELD.—"Abracadabra" was a form of words used as a charm or spell.

H. J. MATER (Milan).—Glad to have your thanks for the Meredith articles. With regard to the other matter, the explanation is that printers have a mania for getting inverted commas outside on the right hand, whether they should be there or not.

J. DAVIDSON.—We do not remember.

An anonymous donor sends us £10 for the Secular Society, Ltd. "I have admired you," he writes to us, "from the beginning of your career in the Secular movement."

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 Manager of the Pioneer Press, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., and not to the Editor.

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

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.

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.

The "Blasphemy" Defence Fund.

Previously acknowledged: £13 12s. 6d. A. Hurcum, 5s. W. R. Munton, £1; R. H. Rosetti, 1s.; J. W., 5s.; George Payne, £1 1s.; E. C. S., 5s.; A. F. P., 6d.; Mary Crawley, 1s.; R. Taylor, 2s.

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Edward Clodd, in acknowledging the copy of the *Freethinker* containing our article on "George Meredith Again," says: "They must wilfully or blindly have misread Meredith's poetry who can gather therefrom any inference as to his belief in an anthropomorphic deity, or in soul-survival."

We have lately had the pleasure of meeting Mr. M. M. Mangasarian in London. Mr. Mangasarian is the well-known Chicago lecturer and author of the excellent *New Catechism*. He presented us with copies of his most recent lectures, which we hope to introduce to our readers shortly. Mr. Mangasarian is over for his usual European summer holiday. We hope he will have fine weather and a good time.

The beautiful new St. James's Hall has been secured for Sunday evening Freethought lectures, under the auspices of the Secular Society, Ltd., during September and October. This should be stimulating news to the Freethinkers of London. A fuller announcement will appear in our next issue.

Mr. John Branston writes us: "In 'Sugar Plums' of the *Freethinker* (July 11) you refer to the discussion on Secular Education which arose at the annual conference of the Postmen's Federation, held recently in Birmingham. You credit the editor of the *Postman's Gazette*, Mr. James C. Brown, with making some much needed remarks on what is humorously called 'Simple Bible Teaching.' The man who, in this instance, had the moral courage to speak out, was not that journalist, but Mr. James Brown, the worthy president of the Glasgow Outdoor Branch of the Postmen's Federation, to whom the honor is due."

Secularists in business are once more invited to give the *Freethinker* a trial. We are prepared to meet them in a generous spirit if they will make the experiment. Even if they only succeed in getting their money back in the shape of profit on sales, they will be doing a good turn to their "own" paper, as so many readers call it. Some of them, we believe, will find that they can do better than that. We are really surprised that the "Business Cards" column is so poorly patronised.

We beg to call attention to the President's Honorarium Fund. The £300 appealed for is not yet made up for 1909. We should like the matter to be removed from our columns by the end of the summer. Will those who intend to subscribe, therefore, make an effort to do so during August, or at the latest during September? Mr. Foote has heavier burdens resting upon him than ever. He is not able to take any salary for his work on the *Freethinker*; on the contrary, he has to keep up all payments, including something for the regular contributors, and this still entails a certain absolute loss—although it is, fortunately, a diminishing loss. Considering how vital the *Freethinker* is to the Freethought movement, and how vital Mr. Foote still is to the *Freethinker*—to say nothing of all his other work for the movement—there ought to be no difficulty in finishing off that Honorarium Fund as suggested.

A special article from Mr. Foote's pen will appear in our next issue on "Freethought and the Law." It deals with the Law of Blasphemy in the light of the latest prosecution, and its bearing on the financial status of the Secular movement. We think the article will be recognised as one of considerable importance.

From Germany—and Other Places.

SINCE my last notes appeared Whitsuntide has come and gone. The festival in itself is not worthy of much comment, but it deserves a note as having called forth an extraordinary leader in the *Westfälischer Anzeiger*, from which I extract the following:—

“Christendom celebrates Pentecost as a festival to remind us of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit—to remind us of that day when Christianity first went out from its narrow bounds to grow into the world-religion, the religion for all, without distinction of race, or social position, or political divisions. On that memorable day when the followers of Christ, with tongues of fire, announced their world-message to all assembled in Jerusalem—to Christians, Jews and heathens—it was for the first time felt that the differences which separate men and nations must be overcome by a recognition of the fact that we are all to work with the same lofty aim—the moral advancement of the human race.”

I could not help laughing almost uproariously when I read it. And yet it is no laughing matter. “A religion for all without distinction of race.” Why, the history of Poland, still bleeding and prostrate between two of the greatest Christian powers on earth, must be well-known to the writer of that article. I am told that quite recently in German Poland some children were flogged for saying their prayers in Polish. And only a fortnight before the appearance of this “world-call” effusion the same paper contained an account of the substitution by the government, in the face of bitter protests from Poland, of German names for Polish place-names in Adelnau. A “world-religion” that has only succeeded in winning a fraction of the earth’s inhabitants. And of that fraction the different sections of adherents are at one another’s throats, and the nations where this “religion for all” has had undisputed sway for centuries are in a constant state of nervous readiness either to attack or to ward off their Christian brethren. The “moral advancement of the human race”—the European portion of it, at any rate—is indicated by two other items in the very issue that offers us this pap about the “world-religion.” We are told that the French government is spending 450 million francs on ironclads, and that Secretary Grey had just made a speech in the House of Commons, expressing the hope that the “extreme European tension” of the last few months would rapidly disappear.

The Evangelical School Congress held a meeting in Elberfeld on June 2. A telegram sent by the President to the Kaiser contained the usual expressions of loyalty—not for the world would I say “grovel”—and also the following:—

“Notwithstanding the many disintegrating tendencies confronting us in these times, we hold fast to the Christian faith of the Bible, handed down to us by our fathers, deeply convinced as we are that, in maintaining and furthering evangelical teaching for the young, we are rendering the greatest Service to the State and the Fatherland.”

This is quite breezy to those of us who are constantly hearing that when criticism has done its worst nothing essential has really been touched. The declaration of faith by the President of the Congress is at least honest, and we can easily imagine his view of the apologist who throws overboard from the vessel once described as “the good ship, *Orthodoxy*,” but now reported at Lloyd’s “condemned, unseaworthy,” every scrap of cargo except the collection-plate, and yet proclaims as loudly as ever that everything fundamentally Christian is still safe in the hold. We may well ask: Are any or all of the following essential—the Creation, the Fall, the Virgin Birth, the Performance of Miracles, the Resurrection? For here, even more than in England (if that is possible), Christians, or professing Christians, with any pretensions to scholarship at all, have for decades been so diluting every doctrine, so reconciling, and “re-stating essential positions,” that most of the rank and file are now in a state of utter bewilderment as to what the “essential positions”

are. A nice candidate, indeed, for world honors, this religion.

The Westphalian Evangelical Union held its twenty-second annual meeting in the quiet little town of Schwerte on June 7 and 8. Effusively loyal telegrams to the Kaiser, of course. God and King have always gone well together in double harness. But the points of special interest to us are those showing that, dreadful to relate, Modernism is making its way into beautiful Rhine-land. One of the principal speakers, Herr Zoellner, said that, in view of an ever-growing heathenism, Protestants and Catholics should try “more and more to act together in a spirit of brotherly harmony.” Will they? Not much. Still, the very proposal shows that they are “feeling it,” and if we can drive all the hosts of superstition into one camp, won’t there be a noble struggle for supremacy! Who would not rather enter the lists with a decent opponent, a “blood and iron” man, than with a New Theologian or a reverent Agnostic? Another straw showing the direction of the current—on the evening of June 8, Rev. L. Segemeier brought the proceedings to a close with a “powerful” address on “The Problems of the Union in the face of present-day Indifferentism and Materialism.” I wonder if the reverend gentleman learned at school that some problems must be given up as unsolvable.

In Dortmund a real good old heresy-hunt, worthy of Scotch Presbyterianism’s palmiest days, has been going on for some time. The principal “case” is that of Rev. Traub, who is charged by the Evangelical (*i.e.*, Protestant) Church Council with preaching doctrines contrary to the orthodox faith, and, in particular, with denying the physical resurrection, the divinity of Christ, and the performance of miracles. The *Dortmund Anzeiger* recently devoted two columns to a review of the case. “It neither concerns us,” says our contemporary, “nor is it our intention, to meddle with the theological wranglings of this or that church. It is, however, open to any one to state facts, and it is a fact that belief in miracles was inconsistent with the scientific knowledge of even a hundred years ago, and since then this view has become more and more prevalent, and has found its way even into theological circles.” It concludes by declaring that there is scarcely any room for doubt “that the Protestant Church is confronted by a grave crisis.” Is this further evidence of the pre-eminent fitness of Christianity to be considered a “world-religion”?

It’s a far-away cry from Deutschland to the Antipodes, but a batch of papers that has just reached me contains a few items that must have a word. And first of all anent the arrival of the new Chinese Consul-General. All the churches have shown quite a feverish anxiety to extend a welcome to the representative of Flowery Land. At one function a Presbyterian man of God had a lot to say about religion in general and Christianity in particular. In responding, the “heathen Chinese” was characteristically modest and neatly sarcastic. “He was not personally a professor of religion, and consequently was not able to say much about it; but he was inclined to think that all the religions—Christianity, Buddhism, Confucianism, etc.—sought generally the same ends.” This bunching of Christianity with Buddhism and Confucianism, and even so insignificant a thing as an “etc.,” has roused the vehement ire of some of the local papers. The *Southern Cross* tries hard to belittle Confucius, and reproduces from a recent number of the *Outlook* an article adversely criticising the standard of morality in China. This article says that the shadow of Confucius “darkened the intellects of hundreds of millions of people.” The statement is an absolute lie. Doubtless the fact that their views on Chinese morality are at variance with those of Dr. Gilbert Reid, Sir Robert Hart, and numerous competent critics and students, is a very small matter to the writers who retail such hog-wash to their gaping herds. But no one who has seen much of the Chinese, and of those who have lived long in their country, wants to go to university

professors or learned doctors for an opinion. Only the other day Sir Robert Hart, for many years Controller of Chinese Customs, said that the Chinaman is a lover of peace, and that China, when thoroughly awake to its full power, will turn to the European nations and say: "Gentlemen, there must be no more fighting." The average Chinaman is industrious, honest, and truthful—more so than the average European or Australian. Some years ago the head of a very large Australian firm declared that a lengthy business experience had convinced him that the most honest men in the community were Jews and Chinamen. But then the tottering creed must be propped up, and it doesn't make any difference to the defenders of the faith whether this is done by maligning the great dead or by blasphemy prosecutions.

The Chapman-Alexander Mission is now in full swing in Melbourne. Dr. Chapman and his assistant soul-savers have expressed very agreeable surprise to find so many leading citizens and business men taking a deep interest in the work. There is no need for the revivalists' surprise. The "deep interest" will yield deep interest of another kind. In supporting this sort of thing the wealthy classes are paying the insurance premium, and that is one of the reasons why the Freethought movement has never been able to enlist the sympathy of men with stout bank-balances. And yet—and yet we are forcing the enemy to retreat at all points, and even Fatman cannot save him.

A. D. MCLAREN.

The Narratives in Genesis.—VII.

THE ANTEDILUVIAN PATRIARCHS.

(Continued from p. 454.)

THE Priestly writer, who is great in numbers and chronology, next takes up the narrative, and, knowing nothing of Cain and his posterity, traces the lineal descendants of Adam through Seth down to Noah. According to this writer, men lived to a very great age—something short of a thousand years—before the Deluge. These long-lived ancestors of Noah, with their ages, are given as follows: Adam 930 years, Seth 912, Enosh 905, Kenan 910, Mahalalel 895, Jared 962, Enoch 865, Methuselah 969, and Lamech 777. The writer also records the number of years between the Creation and the Flood by a very simple method. Adam, he says, was 130 years of age at the birth of Seth; Seth was 105 years at the birth of his son Enosh; Enosh was 90 years at the birth of his son Kenan; Kenan was 70 years when he begat Mahalalel; Mahalalel was 65 when he begat Jared; Jared was 162 at the birth of his son Enoch; Enoch was 65 at the birth of Methuselah; Methuselah was 187 at the birth of Lamech; Lamech was 182 at the birth of Noah, and Noah was 600 years old when he entered the Ark.

By adding these figures together we get 1,656 years, the time between the Creation and the Deluge. In this way the Bible contains its own chronology. The Septuagint, the version used by the Gospels writers and early Christians, makes this period 600 years longer by representing Adam, Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, and Enoch as each 100 years older at the birth of his son—though without altering the age at death.

The reason why one of the above-named patriarchs, Enoch, is stated to have lived to the insignificant age of only 865 years is, because "the Lord" who, as we know, is no respecter of persons, had taken him up to dwell with himself and the angels when he had reached the age recorded. This translated patriarch is the "Enoch the prophet," who is said to have written a book describing and explaining various heavenly mysteries. It is true that in this Enoch's characters had not even been thought of; but that is a mere detail. It is sufficient to say that this great work was certainly known to the world about half a century before the Christian era, its authen-

ticity being fully vouched for, later on, by the apostle Jude, who, quoting from it, says (Jude 14, 15):—

"And of these also *Enoch, the seventh from Adam*, prophesied, saying, 'Behold the Lord shall come with ten thousand of his holy ones to execute judgment upon all,' etc.

The genuineness of the book is further guaranteed by another apostle, Peter, who took his information respecting certain fallen angels from it (2 Peter ii. 4). Furthermore, many of the early Christian "Fathers," whose writings are cited in support of the authenticity of the Gospels, believed this patriarch to be the author of the "Book of Enoch" in circulation in their time. Tertullian, for instance, after stating that "the scripture of Enoch was published before the Deluge," says that the book was preserved by Noah in the Ark, and so was handed down to his days.

We now come to an episode, from the pen of the Yahvist writer, somewhat similar to certain events in the mythical history of the Pagan gods and goddesses.

Gen. vi. 1-2.—"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born unto them, that the *sons of God* saw the *daughters of men* that they were fair; and they took them wives of all that they chose."

In one of the oldest Greek codices—the Alexandrian MS.—the reading is "the *angels of God* saw the daughters of men," etc. Josephus, also, had this reading in his copy of the Old Testament. There can thus be no doubt as to the meaning of the passage. Yet, though this is perfectly plain, Christian commentators and others find it expedient to pervert the words italicised. They say that the expression "sons of God" refers to men descended from Seth, and that "daughters of men" refer to women of the posterity of Cain. It would be useless to point out to these perverters that nothing is said in the passage about Cain; that it was "when *men* began to multiply.....and *daughters* were born unto them" that angels came and took some of the latter for wives; or, that all the women in the world then, as now, were "daughters of men." The writer was, of course, speaking of all the inhabitants of the earth at the period referred to—which the Christian perverters knew perfectly well.

Christians who ridicule the stories of Pagan gods being enamored of women, and of demi-gods like Hercules being born from intercourse with them, may perhaps be surprised to find that the inspired writer of this portion of Genesis had precisely the same ideas—and believed them. The Yahvist writer goes on to say of the progeny resulting from these unions that "the same were the mighty men which were of old, the men of renown."

This question of angels is settled by the Almighty himself, who asks his much persecuted servant Job (xxxviii. 4-7):—

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth.....when the morning stars sang together, and all the *sons of God* shouted for joy?"

From this rather unfair question to the patient Job, we learn that long before any of the descendants of Seth came into the world there were in existence "sons of God"—that is to say, angels—who watched "the Lord" performing all his wonderful works, and "shouted for joy" as each new creation appeared, just as if they were witnessing some sleight-of-hand tricks or a grand display of fireworks. Moreover, this story of the union of women and angels is referred to by Paul in the following passage:—

1 Cor. xi. 7-10.—"For a man indeed ought not to have the head veiled, he being the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man; for neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have authority on her head *because of the angels*."

The great Tertullian (A.D. 200), referring to the same story, says of the angels:—

"For they, withal, who instituted female ornaments are assigned, under condemnation, to the penalty of

death—those angels, to wit, who rushed from heaven on the daughters of men; so that this ignominy also attaches to women" (*On Female Dress*, ii. 2).

"But even the head which is bound to have the veil, I mean woman's.....She has the burden of her own inferiority to bear. If she ought not to appear with her head uncovered on account of the angels, much more with a crown on it will she offend those who perhaps are then wearing crowns above" (*De Corona*, 14). See Rev. iv. 4.

The fictitious story in Genesis of the amorous angels, and the equally fictitious story of Eve having brought the penalty of sin upon all mankind, are mainly responsible for the contempt and inferiority with which the early Christian teachers, Paul included, regarded the gentler sex.

Returning to the narrative in Genesis, the god Yahveh, having perceived the doings of the angels, decreed that the days of mankind in the future should be limited to "an hundred and twenty years." The Yahvist writer further says that that deity having seen "that the wickedness of man was great in the earth," decided to destroy "both man, and beast, and creeping thing, and fowl of the air"—"for it repenteth me that I have made them." The remainder of this chapter (vi.) and the whole of the next two chapters are taken up with preparations for the Flood and the details of that mythical event. Both the Priestly writer and the Yahvist have each given an account of the Deluge, which accounts have been pieced together by a later hand, the result being that we have two almost complete narratives of that wonderful event. If these accounts be marked in the margin with different colored pencils (or ink) they can easily be read separately—the deity in one case being Elohim ("God") and in the other Yahveh ("the Lord"). It may here be noted that the name "God" in Gen. vi. 5 should be "the Lord." These two narratives have been disengaged, and may be distinguished as follows:—

PRIESTLY.	YAHVIST.
Chap. vi., verses 9 to 22.	Chap. vi., verses 5 to 8.
Chap. vii., verses 6; 11; 13 to 15; 16 (omitting last 6 words); 17 (first 7 words, omitting "forty days"); 18 to 21; 24.	Chap. vii., verses 1 to 5; 7 to 10; 12; 16 (last 6 words); 17 (last 17 words); 22 and 23.
Chap. viii., verses 1; 2 (first 13 words); 3 (last 14 words); 4 and 5; 13 (omitting last 19 words); 14 to 19.	Chap. viii., verses 2 (last 7 words); 3 (first 9 words); 6 to 12; 13 (last 19 words); 20 to 22.

Of these two accounts that by the Priestly writer is the more complete; from the Yahvist narrative has been eliminated the command to build an ark, and the account of Noah and the animals coming out of the ark. Still, as the combined account stands, the repetitions are remarkable, as will be seen by the following:—

	PRIESTLY.	YAHVIST.
People wicked; to be destroyed.....	Gen. vi. 12, 13, 17	Gen. vi. 5-7
Noah commanded to build an ark.....	„ vi. 14-16	(omitted)
Noah & family to go into ark	„ vi. 18	Gen. vii. 1
Animals to be taken into ark	„ vi. 19-20	„ vii. 2-3
Noah did as deity commanded	„ vi. 22	„ vii. 5
Noah and family go into ark	„ vii. 13	„ vii. 7
Animals go into ark.....	„ vii. 14-16	„ vii. 8-9
Commencement of Flood ...	„ vii. 11, 17	„ vii. 10, 12
Waters increase greatly	„ vii. 18-20, 24	„ vii. 17
Death of every living creature	„ vii. 21	„ vii. 22-23
Abatement of the waters ...	„ viii. 1, 5	„ viii. 2-3
The earth dry again	„ viii. 13-14	„ viii. 12-13
Noah and animals come out of ark.....	„ viii. 19-20	(omitted)
Deity's promise to Noah.....	„ ix. 11, 15	Gen. viii. 21

In addition to the foregoing the Yahvist writer relates the story of a raven and a dove sent out of the ark, and an account of Noah building an altar and offering in sacrifice some "of every clean beast and of every clean fowl." In order to be able to do the latter he represented Yahveh as commanding Noah to take in seven pairs of this class of animals—a command unknown to the Priestly writer. It was on the occasion of this wholesale sacrifice of victims that the god Yahveh "smelled the sweet savor" of the burnt offerings, and "said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from

his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done." Before the Flood "the Lord" repented that he had made man; now, having destroyed all save one family, he resolved never to punish mankind in this way again, for, after all, man could not help his evil tendencies. It seems unfortunate he did not think of this before.

The two Bible stories of the Flood appear to be Hebrew versions, very much altered, of a more ancient Babylonian legend. The latter story, as recorded on the cuneiform tablets, is supposed to be told by the Chaldean Noah, whose name is uncertain.

"In the city of Surippak," the narrator says, "the gods were not honored: I alone was the servant of the great gods." The latter having decreed the destruction of the world by a flood, the god Ea or Hea commanded him to build a ship 600 cubits long, 60 cubits broad, and 60 cubits high, with a roof above; also, to take into this ship his family, slaves, and young men, his goods and furniture, some cattle and beasts of the field, and wine and food sufficient for all. This command was obeyed. The ship was built, fissures and leaks were stopped, bitumen was poured over the whole, inside and out. Then, when all were in the ship and the door fastened, Ea caused it to rain heavily—"the deluge of the rain-god reached unto heaven, the darkened earth was turned to waste," and all life was destroyed. "Six days and six nights, the wind, flood, and storm swept the earth; on the seventh day the rain subsided.....the sea then commenced to dry, and the wind and flood ended.....To the country of Nizir floated the ship, the mount Nizir stopped the ship; to pass over it was not able." On the seventh day a dove was sent out; it found no resting place, and came back. Next, a swallow was sent forth; it found no resting place, and came back. Lastly, a raven was sent out; it ate of the floating carrion, and did not return. Later, all the inhabitants of the ship came forth, the animals scattered to the four winds, and the Chaldean Noah built an altar and offered a sacrifice. "The gods scented the odor; the gods smelled the sweet savor: like flies over the altar hovered the gods." Here we have the Priestly writer's authority for Noah building an ark of certain dimensions, and also that of the Yahvist for Noah sending out a dove and raven, for Noah offering sacrifice, and for the god Yahveh or Yah (E-ah = Y-ah) "smelling the sweet savor."

ABRACADABRA.

(To be continued.)

HYMN TO TRUTH.

O mighty Truth! whose martyrs smile in sleep
Like children that in dreams sweet faces see,
Knowing how Time at last shall surely reap
Their loving labor's fruits and set Man free.

O noble Truth! that casteth not a stone
Even at vile falsehood breathing forth its breath,
But to thy dying devotee hath flown
To draw the poison from the wound of death.

Beautiful Truth! that hov'ring o'er a world
Deluged in sorrow, droppeth like a dove;
And, stirring the dead waves with wings unfurled,
Drowns Faith's blood-altars in a sea of Love.

Strike off man's fetters; bow his stubborn knee,
Cramped with the shackles rivetted so fast;
And lift, O lift his darkened eyes to thee,
That he may see the living light at last.
Thomas Moun.

So live thine hour; nor count it loss
To go to dwell with gods above,
Or—if there be no gods that love—
To leave a world of Chance and Force.

Thy life-voyage ended, disembark,
And either wake to happier life,
Or, freed for ever from the strife,
Be thankful for the restful dark.
—J. A. Farrer.

Religions under Freethought Government.

A QUESTION that is at present agitating the breasts of the clergy, and a large number of other people who derive "material" benefits from "spiritual" systems is, What will the attitude of a freethinking government be to our systems? Will religion be tolerated under such a régime? I confess that, to me, such questions appear to be exceedingly natural. The clergy know that the history of religious systems has been, and is, a record of intolerance. That intolerance has assumed many different forms, and has been exhibited in many different methods. The thumbscrew, the rack, and the stake have been supplanted by more subtle and ingenious instruments of torture. It is not now so much the bodies of heretics that the "faithful" seek to lacerate, as their minds and feelings. As the result of our modern system of religious persecution lunatic asylums are better filled. There are now forms of mental diseases, and what is popularly called religious mania is much more common than is generally supposed. Ignorant people with keen sensibilities, such as hysterical or highly strung servant-girls, are frequently the victims of the impressive addresses of Evangelical orators, who nowadays employ, not merely the most sensational word-painting, but who themselves, in presence of their audience, sometimes actually fall into states of collapse, and weep and howl incoherently.

There is another reason for the question I have referred to. Though the doctrine of non-retaliation is advertised as being a part of the Christian creed, it is not, in reality, regarded as having any practical importance. Orthodox people tell us that life would be impossible if these rules were literally obeyed. So long as we profess a wish to be imbued with the "spirit" of them, it is enough; but human nature is human nature, and accordingly retaliation is a necessary and inevitable thing. I take leave to say here that but for the introduction and imposition of supernaturalistic ideas human nature would have been more beautiful than it is, and there would have been to-day, among people generally, a higher standard of mutual consideration and a more general practice of mutual aid and helpfulness. But no one can deny that the Christian, when he is injured, is the first to retaliate. There are no rows like ecclesiastical rows. And of course the Christian naturally measures other people by his own ell-wand. His conception of human nature is, that if a man is hit he will hit back.

This really goes down to the very basis of Christianity, and shows how selfish and self-centred it makes people. Christianity is really a self-considering individualism. The greatest Freethinkers have always recognised the great mass of the people as a human organism, the various members of which depend upon each other, with common needs, desires, and interests. They have taught that a proper personal dignity and self-respect is compatible only with unselfish service on the part of individual members of the organism to the whole body.

On the other hand, the outstanding thing in the promulgation of Christianity is individual salvation and wellbeing. Save your own precious skin and let everybody else take his chance. No wonder that the clergy and their supporters ask if religion will be tolerated under a system of Freethought. Christianity has made men suspicious, jealous, and envious of one another; and with this view of human nature in their minds, orthodox people are apprehensive about the manner in which they will be treated when Freethought becomes general. They suppose that they will get tit for tat; that those who have suffered in material respects, or by being made the butts of Christian contumely and scorn, will want to get their own back; and they seem to see in the dim light of the future Freethinkers wielding upon the "faithful" the very instruments of torture which have been used to rack either the bodies or the minds of those who have repudiated Christianity.

It is perhaps too much to say that Freethinkers do not care what people believe. They do care; but they would be destroying their own essential principles if they used any method other than suasion to induce people to alter their opinions. The methods employed by the Churches have been political and social power. The great object of all the Churches is to catch people when they are very young and thoroughly saturate them with orthodoxy. The little creatures are taught to abhor Freethinkers as bad, dangerous, and abandoned people who are often struck down dead and sent direct to hell by apoplexy, heart disease, or lightning. That notwithstanding these grim evidences of Divine displeasure there are still Freethinkers surviving in our midst is explained by the fact that the survivors are not quite so abandoned as the others, and that there is a hope of conversion for them, to which Christians should direct their strenuous efforts; or by the fact that God in his providence retains such dreadful warnings and awful examples in life

for the use of his Church, so that we may know what to avoid. Possibly, also, life would be rather tame for some Christians if they had no Freethinkers to pitch into. If we inquire why Christians are occasionally victims of apoplexy, heart disease, or lightning, we are told that that does not matter in the least, because Christians are only sojourners and pilgrims here—that this is not their home. Heaven is their home. The seriousness of a sudden call for the heretic, without even the chance of a death-bed repentance, is that there is no "home" for him. His destination is the warmest corner of a very hot shop. Wherefore we sit silent and admire the unerring wisdom, the wonderful impartiality, and the discriminating genius of God.

But when the majority are Freethinkers we shall find more respect paid to science and to scientific truth. Strenuous efforts will be made to minimise the extent and power of bodily and mental disease, and to prolong human life—not only for the benefit of Freethinkers, but for the benefit of all. The feeling of individual responsibility will be increased, because men will not shove all their difficulties on to any unknown being. The sense of brotherhood will be more intense, because increase of knowledge means increase of sympathy. The mason will be an architect; and men and women will join hands in striving to make general the highest human happiness by banishing fear, ignorance, and superstition from human thought.

SIMPLE SANDY.

Free Thoughts.

BY LEMUEL K. WASHBURN.

When God had made up his mind to write a book, what a pity that he had not written something worth reading, something indispensable to humanity, something great and glorious and vast in its divine utterance, something that would compel higher thoughts in man and higher experiences in human life, instead of the volume of falsehood, obscenity, superstition and puerility that his priests have passed off upon a stupid world as the word of life!

Perhaps our Hebrew friends have made a mistake in supposing that they are the chosen people of the Lord God. Is it not more likely that the Lord God is their chosen Deity?

Lots of persons would not value wisdom unless they got it in a prize-package.

About all the Puritanism left in New England is Puritan hypocrisy.

Why does not the Christian Church convince the world that what it preaches is true? That is what we want to know. If we had the proof of a certain statement we could back up that statement against all the doubt and denial in the world. If we had what we say we have all we would have to do would be to produce it. Christianity has had two thousand years in which to convince the world that it tells the truth. The history of all those years shows that it has lied, and is still lying.

Revivals may come, and revivals may go, but lying goes on for ever.

If God is really in earnest, as ministers say he is, in wanting men and women to be saved, why does he not make them strong enough to save themselves, or else destroy the temptations through which they are lost?

God answers prayer without any noise, and without anything else.

People who haven't any religion don't want any.

The Bible was written by dead men, and is mostly read by them.

Ministers have succeeded in filling the theatres and emptying the churches.

It is what you do to men, not what you think or believe of God, that makes you good or bad.

No sane person has been caught following Jesus.

Knowledge may not save a man's soul, but it helps him a lot in going through life.

The truth that is outside of the Bible is worth more to mankind than the truth that is inside of this book.

It is easier for Romanism to convert a woman of money than it is to convert a man of brains.

The silliest mess of rot that is peddled by religious fanatics to-day is the stuff about what Jesus has done for men and women. These preaching idiots cannot prove that there ever was a Jesus.

After reading the Bible, read the *Age of Reason*, by Thomas Paine, to take the taste out of your mouth.

The person who believes in Jesus cannot believe in any thing sensible or modern.—*Truthseeker* (New York).

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, etc.

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

LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 3.15 and 6.15, C. Cohen, Lectures.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3.15 and 6, Lectures.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (Ridley-road). 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "The Christian Faith."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill, Hampstead): 3.30, A. Allison, a Lecture.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Marble Arch, Hyde Park): H. B. Samuels, 11.30, "The Women of the Bible"; 6.30, "Would Woman Suffrage Strengthen the Domination of Priests and Parsons?"

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford): 7, W. J. Ramsey, "God is Love."

WOOD GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Spouters' Corner): 11.30, Mr. Rowney, "The Christ Legend."

WOOLWICH BRANCH N. S. S. (Beresford-square): 11.30, a Lecture.

COUNTRY.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7. H. Percy Ward, "Holy Hooligans."

OUTDOOR.

BRISTOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Durdham Downs): 7.30, B. G. Brown, "The Church and Education."

EDINBURGH SECULAR SOCIETY: Leith Links, 2.30, a Lecture; Musselburgh, 6.20, a Lecture.

NELSON BRANCH N. S. S.: A week's mission, commencing July 25. H. S. Wishart, missionary.

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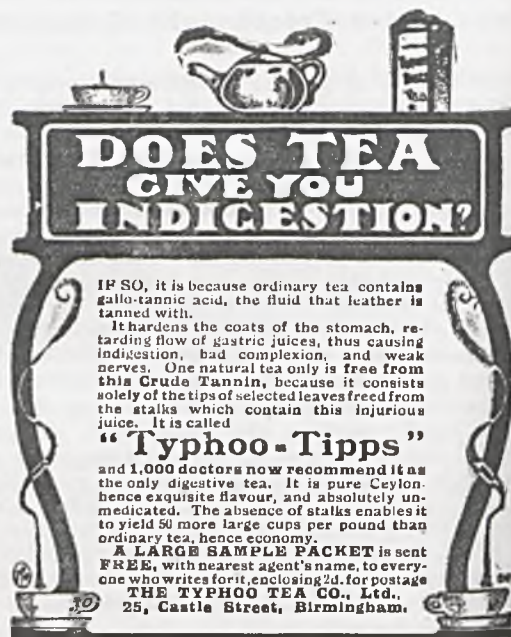
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