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Broad ideas are hated by partial ideas; that is, in fact, the struggle of progress.—VICTOR HUGO.

Bernard Shaw's Blasphemy.

THE first master of the art of advertisement in England is General Booth. The second is Mr. Bernard Shaw. I do not say this as a reproach, but with admiration. I congratulate Mr. Shaw on his dexterity. He has certainly made the most of his rebuff at the hands of the Censor. The papers are full of Mr. Shaw and his near relation Blanco Posnet.

By a curious coincidence Mr. G. K. Chesterton's book on Mr. Shaw comes out at the very mid-hour of that gentleman's splendid advertisement. This may be a good thing for "G. K. C." I doubt whether it will be a good thing for "G. B. S." The public may sum the book up as "One freak on another." And this will be a great injustice to Mr. Shaw. I have had more than one occasion to point out what I regard as his besetting sin,—namely, the desire to live up to a fantastic reputation; but I have always maintained that he has not only astonishing intellectual subtlety but a fundamental seriousness of aim. He likes to make the world talk, but he likes to make it talk in connection with his convictions.

Mr. Shaw has favored me with copies of his privately printed Statement of Evidence prepared for the Censorship Committee, and "The Shewing Up of Blanco Posnet: a Sermon in Crude Melodrama." Both are confidential documents in the sense that they are not yet published, but I presume I may deal with them as freely as other editors are allowed to do without correction.

The first of these documents will not attract the attention it deserves. Mr. Shaw is so commonly regarded as a mere comic man, and so frequently as a mental clown, that there is a danger of this statement of the reasons of his objection to the Censorship being taken at far less than its proper value because of its great gravity. It is not dull, it is not lacking in substantial wit, but it is devoid of the quips and cranks which so many people expect in his compositions. It is in every way worthy of Mr. Shaw. He flings the cap and bells aside in stepping into the arena with his sword drawn to do battle for a serious issue with men who might easily misunderstand the impish side of his genius.

I have the honor to agree with Mr. Shaw in his opposition to the Censorship. I think he is fighting, skilfully and bravely, for a very important principle. The censorship of books, against which Milton pleaded with such magnificent eloquence, has long been abolished. Why should the censorship of plays be retained? It belongs to the same order of ideas, and the same line of policy. Its object is to keep the people as stupid as possible by shutting them off from intellectual novelties. Surely the author of a play should have the same right of access to the public as the author of a book. That theatre managers think otherwise is only natural. They take a trade point of view. Their object is primarily not art, nor the spread of new ideas, but the making of money; and, of course, they prefer to do this in the easiest way and with the minimum of

risk. If a play once passes the censorship they are relieved from all responsibility, and it would be wonderful if they did not favor such a comfortable solution.

Mr. Shaw may justly claim to be a new force in our dramatic literature. This is what he says of himself in the "Statement":—

"I am not an ordinary playwright in general practice. I am a specialist in immoral and heretical plays. My reputation has been gained by my persistent struggle to force the public to reconsider its moralities. In particular, I regard much current morality as to economic and sexual relations as disastrously wrong; and I regard certain doctrines of the Christian religions as understood in England to-day with abhorrence. I write plays with the deliberate object of converting the nation to my opinions in these matters. I have no other effectual incentive to write plays, as I am not dependent on the theatre for my livelihood."

By "immoral" Mr. Shaw means "contrary to established manners and customs." It is in this sense, and in this sense only, that his plays are "immoral." Some of us would prefer to say "unconventional." But even in the gravest argument we must expect a flash of the old "G. B. S."

Now we have no concern, in the *Freethinker*, with Mr. Shaw's economical and sexual heresies, but when it comes to religious heresies we have a very special concern. It is evident that he has an intellectual and moral contempt for orthodox Christianity. I believe it is this fact which is responsible for his latest play being banned by the Censor. "Blanco Posnet" is a melodrama; Mr. Shaw calls it "crude" at that, and I will not stop to quarrel with him, although I might; here and there it reminds one of the rollicking old farce called "Black Justice"; anyhow, it is one of the funniest things I ever read; I laughed over it till I cried—and then I almost cried till I laughed again, for the pulse of tragedy beats behind the comedy—as, by the way, it always does in life itself.

A good deal of the fun is what Mr. Justice Phillimore in all probability, and the jury for dead certain, would regard as shocking blasphemy. It is intrinsically as bad as anything in Mr. Boulter's indictment. It is wittier, and in better English, but that only makes it worse. The sharp rapier is steeped in poison. And the Christians who get into boxes and on benches in criminal courts would let Mr. Shaw know it if they had a chance. Blanco Posnet, drunkard, scoundrel—and wit, is the best character in the play, and he talks enough "blasphemy" to secure his "only begetter" twenty years' imprisonment. He begins it with "Angels ever bright and fair" to the termagants who want to lynch him, and nearly ends it with "Dearly beloved brethren" to the "boys" in court who wanted to hang him and fill him with lead. One of them says, "Same to you, Blanco," and Blanco replies, "And many of them." I am not surprised that this has been dropped as a concession to the Lord Lieutenant.

I wish I were at liberty to give more samples of Mr. Shaw's blasphemy. He hits the orthodox God hard, and his orthodox worshipers harder. But if "Blanco Posnet" is published, as I suppose it will be shortly, Freethinkers should read it. And perhaps I shall be able to give a few plums from it for the sake of those who can't afford a shilling.

G. W. FOOTE.

Religion and the State.

EDUCATED Christian apologists are to-day on the horns of a dilemma. On the one side their education teaches them that the great, the essential, factors of life are independent of religious belief. And on the other side their Christian prepossessions incite them to find for their religion a use other than that of being, to use a phrase of Newman's, the serviceable expedient of an emergency. Let them satisfy the religious side of their nature, and their better civilised selves enters an indignant protest. Let them do full justice to their knowledge of things, and their religious prejudices set up an uneasy remonstrance. If they try to satisfy both, they please neither. And so, with sufficient discernment to see the folly of the old, but without the courage to welcome the new faith, they go their way, alternately blessing and cursing the new thought, neither earning the respect of enemies nor the trust of friends. In the world of real thought such people represent a negligible quantity. On every really important and fundamental question they have, so to speak, paired with themselves. Neither for nor against—or, to be more accurate, inclining first to one side and then to the other—they swell the numbers of the opposing armies without altering the proportions in the slightest degree.

Of this class of writers "J. B.," of the *Christian World*, is not a bad specimen. One week one may read from his pen an article calculated to make the orthodox writhe. But ere long will come another equally calculated to make another class swear. A recent article by this writer on "Religion and the State" will probably please the former variety, although it is a subject which presents the easiest opportunity for a little clear thinking and plain speaking—both sadly needed from writers and speakers on religious topics.

To commence with, it would seem a simple and tolerably obvious proposition that in a State religion must be everything or nothing. Either it must be supreme, or it may be set aside as of no importance. If we believe that the proper cultivation of character depends upon religion, that morality must have a religious basis or disintegrate, that the training of good citizens cannot be adequately undertaken in the absence of religion, then for the State to ignore religion is for it to commit suicide. This is, in rough outline, the position of the Catholic Church, and so far it is logically impregnable. To argue that the State must only attend to secular matters, leaving spiritual affairs to the Churches, is, from one point of view, an evasion of the point at issue. For on this hypothesis the State can only do this if it is assured that the other part of the work will be adequately carried out by the Churches, and it thus merely hands over—in a surreptitious manner—a part of its concern to another body. From another point of view, to say that the State must not concern itself with religion is to admit all for which the non-religionist contends. It is admitting that religious belief is, after all, a matter of small importance. It is admitting that character may be developed, and good citizens produced, in the absence of religious belief. And all the preliminary flourish about the importance of religion goes for nothing.

It is true we—that is, Freethinkers and Nonconformists—talk of religion as being a private matter, one on which the State has no right to obtrude its power and presence. But this is merely because we recognise—Freethinkers consciously and Nonconformists unconsciously—that men and women may be as well off without religion as with it. For it is surely the height of absurdity to say that the State must see that all its members have a knowledge of reading, writing, geography, and similar subjects; that while the power of the State may be used in coercing citizens in a hundred and one directions, in this alleged supremely important question of religion everyone may do as they please—be religious, non-religious, or anti-religious, just as they see fit.

Historically the neutrality of the State may have resulted from the impracticability of differentiating between numerous and powerful sects, but philosophically it results in the recognition of the non-importance of any.

On this fundamental question "J. B." is silent, except so far as it is indicated by the query "Can nations do without a religion?" His answer is that they cannot; that "religion is an integral and necessary element in human nature," although nothing deserving the name of proof is given in support of the statement. What is doubtless intended for proof is a recital of the fact that nations always have had a religion—a proposition that Freethinkers will cheerfully admit since it does not touch their position. Their argument is that all nations acquire religion in the course of their development, and that in the course of social evolution religious beliefs, by their association with social and ethical feelings, gain credit for good that should be given in other directions. To quote religious writers to the contrary is absurd. "J. B." imagines he scores a point when he cites a doubtful story about Voltaire, and Rosseau's opinion on the need of religion. The obvious answer is that both these were Deists, and like all Godites they gave their deity an importance to which he had no valid claim. Again, we are treated to a quotation from Benjamin Franklin to the effect that without religion morality gives way at once, and his experience of this led him to conclude that wrong was not wrong because it was forbidden, but was forbidden because it was wrong. I do not know the quotation, and so accept it as given, but it reflects small credit upon the intelligence either Franklin or "J. B." For if the morality of certain people broke down as soon as their religious belief disappeared, the moral training received under the influence of religion could not have been of a very valuable quality. And if Franklin had failed to observe how often morality broke down *with* religion, his power of observation must have been small indeed, and his character has come down to us enormously exaggerated. Finally, the insinuation that one learns from religion that wrong is not wrong because it is forbidden, but is forbidden because it is wrong, is almost overpowering in its audacity. For it is on the legal basis of wrong that Christians have, in the main, taken their stand. They have argued, times out of number, that it was the fiat of deity that gave right and wrong their specific characters. Remove the belief in deity, they have said, and moral distinctions disappear. And as "J. B." is fond of peppering his articles with the names of great writers, I may remind him that from Spinoza to Spencer Freethought moralists have been insisting that right and wrong are independent of both legal enactments and divine commands, but owe their character to the structure of human nature and the conditions amid which it exists.

The most virile people of to-day, we are told, are Christians. Christianity is the religion of the great races, and it goes on producing great races. Mohammedanism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, all lift the people they dominate to a certain level, and there leaves them. All of this is characteristically Christian, and, above all, characteristically British. For as there is only one religion that is sound—Christianity—so there is only one type of conduct that is truly moral—the British type. Nations are either moral or immoral as they approach or recede from the British standard. We devote ourselves to commerce, measuring our greatness by the volume of our trade, the extent of our territory, and the size of our Army and Navy; therefore every other country that adopts some other standard of excellence is in only a partially civilised stage. If we take our time from the meridian of Greenwich, why shall not the world take its morality from the meridian of Peckham? "J. B." and his kind will see that it does; and therefore there is to be no variation in either vice or virtue. People all over the world must be vicious as we are vicious, or there is no excuse; they

must be virtuous as we are virtuous, or there is no approbation. It is all so beautifully simple, and so incurably stupid; no wonder it commends itself to the religion-soaked minds of the British public!

To expect "J. B." to allow for all the factors that go to the moulding of a people is to expect the improbable. Yet some allowance should surely be made for geographical position, climate, race, institutions, and foreign communications. Allow for all these, and what is left for Christianity? In what of the essentials of life are the Japanese the inferiors of the Christian races? Do they not compare favorably with pious Spain and Christian Russia? What had Christianity to do with the production of Greece at its best or Rome at its greatest? And if the greatness of Greece and Rome could arise without Christianity, why must the greatness of other races be dependent upon it? Really, one might as easily put the greatness of certain races down to silk hats or trousers. For, when one thinks of it, the greatest races—according to the "J. B." standard—wear silk hats, and all the great races wear trousers. Or, while we are on the topic of nations, we may take Greece and Italy as pertinent instances. For both these countries have both a Pagan and a Christian history. Will, then, "J. B." tell us in what respect these countries benefited by Christian rule? Will he say in what respect the modern Roman or Athenian, with centuries of Christian training, is the superior of the Roman or the Athenian of nineteen centuries ago?

The power of the conquering races of the Western world is, as a matter of fact, a mere question of the application of brute force backed up by misapplied scientific knowledge. Our rule of as much of the earth's as we do rule is not the result of superior moral qualities, but the outcome of our possessing superior instruments of warfare. Because we can kill, not because we can teach, is the condition of our rule. And the truth is that the greatness of a people does not depend upon its religion, but upon the degree with which its religion is kept under control. Rome sank, not when it was less religious, but when it opened its arms to a crowd of enervating Eastern creeds, of which Christianity was the outcome. Greece, likewise, became more religious as it became more decrepit. The history of the Mohammedan world shows the same lesson. Great while its religion was held in check, weakening as its religion gained greater control, to have, in recent days, hope of regeneration aroused in one of its principal centres by a band avowedly inspired by non-religious ideals. In the history of Spain we have a repetition of the same lesson. Who would venture to compare Spain under its wisest Mohammedan rulers with Spain under its succession of Christian monarchs? And who can doubt, who studies the history of France, Germany, Britain, or America, that whatever real progress has been made has been due to the best minds being vigilantly on guard against Christian encroachments. "J. B." agrees that in Catholic countries the priest is the enemy. I pride myself on being more impartial. "Priest" covers a wider category than that supplied by the Roman Church. He is merely the most perfect specimen of a widespread species. Certainly the priest is the enemy of civilisation, but his range is as wide as that of the Christian Church, and the welfare of civilisation depends upon keeping his, and its, influence within the smallest possible limits.

C. COHEN.

Prayer.

A PERSIAN sat bare-headed against a wall, and prayed thus:—

"O God, send me a hat from thy treasury, so that I may be covered."

If one may believe Persian historians of a certain sort, it so happened that at this very moment a scavenger was removing a pile of rubbish from a house on the other side of the wall, and among the

litter he found a dirty old head-dress which, in mere whim, he tossed upwards.

The hat followed the Newtonian law of gravitation by falling, and some peculiar law unknown as yet to science by alighting precisely on the skull of the Persian who prayed.

Great was his astonishment at this abrupt reply from Heaven; great, also, at the first sensation, his delight.

Joy rapidly changed to vexation when he discovered the condition of the hat. He declined the gift, threw it towards the clouds, and exclaimed,—

"Allah! this hat suits me not. Put it on the head of the angel Gabriel if it so please thee—and perchance him!—but send me another!"

This anecdote I have extracted, with a little modification, from a repertory of Persian Wit and Humor. Now the Persians are in large measure Mohammedan; and they take their religion seriously; but, like all genuinely serious people, they are quite capable of seeing the ludicrous aspects of piety or philosophy itself. And I verily believe that the more enlightened kind of Christians to-day are as ready to perceive the absurdity of the literalism of the old doctrine of prayer as are the admirers of Voltaire or Ingersoll. I confess I have seldom laughed more at a joke in a jest-book than at this tale of a hat. But for all that I am not less disposed to attempt an analysis of the significance of prayer, so far as it has a valid psychological effect. In educated spheres, the belief in supplication as availing to get bread, money, weather, medical cure, and the rest, is as dead as a door-nail. There survives the far superior belief that in contemplating Divine attributes the worshiper takes on some of God's personal nature. This attitude of mind I understand and respect. Assuming that God is a real being, the belief is genuinely helpful, because it is always an aid to recognise and desire to become like to a nobler personality. And to me, who entirely dispense with any idea of a Supernatural God, this conception leads on to the purely human process of approaching the Noble by means of admiration.

Comte has said that it is impossible to sincerely desire to be more courageous without by that very fact becoming courageous in some larger degree than before. The prayer fulfils itself, without mystery, without miracle. But the likeliest mode of increasing one's finer elements is not merely thinking of a quality, such as great mindedness, mercy, or sincerity. It is rather by turning the eyes of the mind to a concrete example in human history and experience. This is the act of commemoration. Such commemoration is not the practice of any one school of thought and feeling. We see it illustrated in the gigantic figures of Siva and his wife Parvati sculptured in the caves of Elephanta; in the colossal monuments of the kings of Egypt; in the incomparable statues and busts (that of Cæsar in the British Museum for instance) carved by Greek and Roman hands; the lines of princes and saints that adorn the western front of many a hoary Christian cathedral; the twin figures of Schiller and Goethe at Weimar; the paintings of heroic persons in a thousand galleries of Europe. The facing of the Secular Hall at Leicester displays to the passer-by the heads of Socrates, Voltaire, Paine, and Robert Owen. Many a Freethought home is brightened by a bust of Bradlaugh. And how this habit of tender commemoration extends into private life may be indicated in the cherished portrait in the locket or the photograph which fades to the sun and never to love.

Upon commemoration ensues outpouring. The view of the admired object, whether in effigy or imagination, kindles its own passionate answer of homage. We annul the whole work of the human mind if we should stupidly affirm that this effusion of reverence does not count in the making of character. If this does not count, what does? If this does not count, nothing does. Is it possible for a boy of spirit to recall the heroism of Andreas Hofer, the Tyrolean patriot who defied the imperial power of Napoleon, and not to feel his blood warm with an

enthusiasm that can never be permanently effaced? Is it possible for a girl with a healthy nature to hear of the devotion of Joan of Arc, or the struggles of Mary Wollstonecraft, and not be "touched to finer issues" of womanhood? What young citizen is not the stronger for the story of Thermopylæ and Marathon, and the more braced for grappling with wrong by the tale of William the Silent facing the artillery of Spain amid the marshes of Holland, or of Vera Figner emerging from a Russian fortress after some twenty years of imprisonment, and forthwith appealing to the ranks of Freedom to carry on the war against Czardom and Darkness? And if youth or middle age or old age should choose less strenuous types, and summon to the stage of memory examples of gentler qualities and of purpose not less pure but more restrained and self-abnegating, let each follow natural instinct and bow before the most beloved ideal. In any case, to see the Perfect,—so far as the Perfect is relatively possible in human life,—and to reach towards its majesty is to pray. We need not quarrel as to terms. Let the word prayer, if you will, be blotted out of the vocabulary of the future, but leave us the movement of the heart, leave us the capacity for leaping nearer to the Great, leave us the invincible appetite for the heroic, leave us the consciousness that, from a footing of filth, dulness, and cowardice one may spring towards power, health, and love.

The old traditions of Rome, in that believable fiction which is called legend and which is none the less history, told how Numa the King, sagacious in counsel and valiant in experiment and war, was wont to retire to the border of a spring that sparkled through a forest, and from which rose the nymph Egeria to give him knowledge and wisdom for the governing of Romans,—a people whom only a Roman could rule. And if we knew all the biography of the men and women that make time into history and soil into fatherland, we should doubtless discover a chamber of recollections in each heart whence the doer gained energy for the doing, and the singer the theme of the music that laid a spell upon the ear of the world.

And here, finally, is a prayer made by Wordsworth, and it is well for England that, in the hour of her uprising and social transfiguration, she has in her Book of Common Prayer such words to say to such a man:—

"MILTON! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee; she is a fen
Of stagnant waters; altar, sword and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men:
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay."

F. J. GOULD.

Christian Egotism.

EGOTISM is defined as the too frequent and ostentatious use of the pronoun I, or the active and offensive manifestation of self-conceit, or the sense of self-importance, in every possible way and on every possible occasion. As thus defined, egotism is the commonest thing under the sun. Practically every living man is an egotist, and almost every nation thinks and speaks of itself as the highest and best that has ever existed. Here is a people upon whom the rest of the world looks down, characterising it as primitive, uncivilised, narrow, ignorant; but if you have the means of getting into close touch with this despised nation, you will find that it regards itself as in every essential respect superior, as possessing qualities of the utmost worth which most, if not all, other nations lack. It may be comparatively

ignorant of the arts and sciences of modern times, and of what is generally called civilisation, but it is blessed with a knowledge which transcends all other knowledges, and which confers genuine distinction and greatness upon its possessor. Thus egotism is a weakness characteristic of the human race in general. It is to Christian egotism, however, which is in such extraordinary evidence at present, that we wish to call special attention. "It is the simple truth," writes a Christian minister, "that the nations which call themselves Christian are the leaders of the world." "Say what you will of Christianity," the same special pleader continues; "here, at any rate, is the point, that the most virile peoples of to-day, the peoples whose arts, industries, ideas rule the earth, are peoples amongst whom Christianity has been the accepted faith. Against all adverse criticisms, the trainer, in answer, produces his pupil."

At this point we beg to remind the man who holds a brief for Christians and Christianity that he is merely acting the part of a consummate egotist. He naively admits that "the fact may be explained in more ways than one"; "but," he arrogantly adds, "it is there." We will suppose that the fact is there; but why does the Christian minister systematically ignore all ways of explaining it except the Christian way? Why does he omit to mention geographical and climatic influences, which have had so much to do in the moulding of religions as well as civilisations? Now, on the assumption that the fact is there, we maintain that it is there, not to the credit, but to the dispraise of Christianity. Whatever part Christendom bears in the ruling of the world, it owes it not to Christianity, but to its practical denial of Christianity. Jesus promised the earth to the meek; but Christians are indebted for the portions of the earth which they hold, not to their meekness, but to their cruelly self-assertive strength. It is the stern old law of Natural Selection which has been fulfilled in all their conquests, while the royal law of love has been trodden under foot, and lies bleeding on all the public roads. But we assert, with confidence, that Christendom, as such, does not rule the world, and that in the future it shall rule it less and less. Take the case of the Soudan as described by Mr. Hall Caine in the *British Weekly* for August 12. Mr. Caine declares that "the rule of the Soudan, whatever other technical definitions may be made of it, is clearly, unmistakably, unquestionably Christian rule," by which he doubtless means rule by a Christian Power, namely, Great Britain; the Governor-General being always a Britisher. Well, what kind of rule is it? Mr. Hall Caine says that, when at a garden party in Khartoum, reference was made to the Mahdi, whose tomb Lord Kitchener finally demolished, and whose remains he threw into the Nile, the Governor of a distant Province remarked, "Speaking about holy men, are you? I have three of 'em in my district, and they give me the time of my life. Such fun." Then, amid laughter, he related an amusing incident in connection with one of them, and wound up, "Whip 'em all, I say! Only way." Yes, "the rule of the Soudan is clearly, unmistakably, unquestionably Christian rule." Mr. Caine does not seem to be specially proud of it, for he cannot hide it from himself that it is the rule of the weak by the strong whose chief weapon is force. The earth is not ruled by arts and industries, much less by ideas; it is ruled by the sword. In so far, then, as Christendom rules the world, she rules it to the everlasting shame and dishonor of the religion she professes.

Mr. Hall Caine has brought a hornet's nest about his ears for suggesting that it is a mistake to conduct Christian missions in Egypt and the Soudan, and that "in a country which finds itself in the circumstances in which the Soudan now is, the British Government can neither itself evangelise the people, nor allow any other one to do so." Half-a-dozen stalwart defenders of the faith have come forward to utterly demolish him in the name of the God of love. What unforgivable blasphemy it was on Mr. Caine's part even to hint that the difference between Christianity

and Mohammedanism is but small and unimportant. One reverend gentleman recommends a new book on Mohammedanism written by a Christian, while another solves the problem by quoting Watts's fervid lines

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run."

Mr. J. N. Farquar, of Calcutta, argues that the "Government wrongs the people if it excludes Christian Missions." Then we have "J. B.," of the *Christian World*, declaring, in his own interesting, oracular manner, that Christianity is the only religion of which it can be said that it is "the faith of the first-class races." Condescendingly he observes:—

"Of extant religions outside Christianity, we have Mohammedanism, Brahminism, Buddhism, Confucianism with its allied Taoism. Great faiths which have nourished millions of souls, and which our generation is learning at last to speak of with respect. They have all, in different degrees, addressed themselves to man's nobler part. They have established a morality and inspired it. They have regarded human life as a high mystery, related to the infinite and the eternal. It is impossible for us to think that the myriads who have lived and died under them were without Heaven's guidance and care."

That is a highly magnanimous and heroic attitude for a Christian minister to take up; but it is the attitude of the superior person who can afford to be generous. "J. B." proceeds thus:—

"Mohammedanism has lifted the peoples it dominated a certain stage, but has left them there. Brahminism and its offspring Buddhism, rooted as they are in pessimism, have sunk the East in a vast lethargy without movement or initiative."

Now, what "stage" does Turkey, for example, occupy as compared with Great Britain? We are asked to think of the blood-curdling atrocities permitted under Turkish rule; but are there not unspeakable horrors constantly occurring under British rule? Did a more disgraceful occurrence ever take place under any religion than the Denshawai massacre under Christianity a few years ago? Turkey has at last shown the whole world a noble example; but some of these writers have the audacity to assure us that she did it through the benign influence of Christianity. Every unprejudiced student of recent history knows better.

"J. B." calls Buddhism the offspring of Brahminism. It was nothing of the sort. It was rather the outcome of a powerful reaction against Brahminism. The Buddha found the people deep-sunk in the slough of despond. The joy of life was a thing of the past, and the deliverance offered by the priests was to take effect in some future births, but not in this life. The discovery of Buddha was that, although all life was full of sorrow, happiness was within reach here, as the reward of heroically living a virtuous life, and that the virtuous life was possible to all without any help from god or priest. Thus Buddhism, instead of being "rooted in pessimism," presented a rational way out of it into something like radiant optimism. "J. B." would do well to consult the canonical scriptures of Early Buddhism before he again brings so serious a charge against so ancient a faith. But all this depreciation of other religions is in order to give the pre-eminence to Christianity, "the religion of the foremost races."

Such is Christian egotism in the twentieth century. Every day it is being dinned into our ears how immeasurably superior Christendom is to Heathenism. Wherein this vast superiority consists it is not easy to discover. Sometimes we are pointed to the good roads, railways, telegraphs, telephones, gramophones, airships, and particularly to the splendid armies and navies which abound in Christian countries; but even granting that such things are signs of superiority, is it not beyond all doubt that they are the products, not of religion at all, but of science, much of which is anti-Christian? If you form your judgment on the basis of morality, you will soon learn that Christendom has nothing whereof to boast. The pages of its history are all

steeped in vilest corruptions, even when written by dignitaries of the Church. "J. B." refers to "the enormous growth of juvenile crime" in modern France "in its experiment of no religion." Will "J. B." kindly justify that reference by giving the official figures during the period covered by this experiment, and compare them with the official figures during an equal period when the Church ruled in education? Unless we are greatly mistaken, he will find that juvenile crime has considerably decreased under the experiment he so summarily condemns. And what has taken place in France is true of other countries in which the system of Secular Education has been adopted.

J. T. LLOYD.

James Lick: The Humanitarian and Philanthropist.—I.

By DR. I. H. BETZ.

(From the "Humanitarian Review," Los Angeles, California.)

CONNECTICUT has long been noted for the self-reliance and enterprise of its young men, among whom may be named Elisha Hammond, the inventor of the window-spring; Isaac Merritt Singer, of the Sewing Machine; Phineas T. Barnum, the showman; John Brown, of Kansas and Harper's Ferry note; Samuel Carter, the Kansas Legislator; Elihu Burritt, the learned blacksmith; Eli Terry, the pioneer Yankee clock-maker, with Leonard Jerome in the same calling, may be given as examples. It was rarely that any of our Pennsylvania German boys chose the sterner realities of life and went from home to seek fame and fortune. This doubtless arose from the fact that their parents chose for them none but the peaceful vocations of life. However, some boys, even then, made their mark on their country's history. Simon Snyder learned the trade of a tanner at York, but eventually became the governor of Pennsylvania. Joseph Ritner, from being a farm-hand also reached the gubernatorial chair. Samuel P. Heintzelman graduated at West Point, and became a major-general of volunteers during the war of the rebellion.

The subject of this sketch, James Lick, was born August 25, 1796, at Fredericksburg, Lebanon County, Pennsylvania—a small, isolated village, whose people are a sturdy, industrious, well-doing class of excellent farmers and financiers. It was among this class of people that James Lick was born.

William Lick, his grandfather, was born in the Palatinate, Germany, and settled in Montgomery Co., Pa., where he resided until his death. He was a soldier in the American revolution, and took part in many of its battles. James, his grandson, often listened to his recitals of the sufferings at Valley Forge and elsewhere. He ever remembered the impressions made by the stories upon his mind, and in his old age he had the salient facts transferred to the fine family monument he erected at Fredericksburg, Pa.

James' father, John Lick, was born in the vicinity of Morristown, in 1765, close by Valley Forge. At an early day he married Sarah Long, and later settled at Fredericksburg, where he died in 1831. He pursued the trade of a carpenter and joiner, and was considered one of the most ingenious workers in wood in the country. His wife was born 1772, and died in 1812 at Fredericksburg. The remains of John Lick and wife lie in the old Reformed and Lutheran graveyard in Fredericksburg, on a slight eminence commanding a view of the town. The monument is a splendid work of art. It was unveiled and dedicated on a beautiful April day in 1876, to his grandfather, father, mother, and sister. John Lick and wife were the parents of nine children, of whom James was the oldest.

The old house in which James Lick was born he had transferred from Fredericksburg to California, where he had it erected as a souvenir of earlier days.

James Lick, at an early day, with his father, became a worker in wood, in which he showed remarkable aptness. He only acquired such education as the primitive schools of the neighborhood afforded, the schools being chiefly conducted in the German language, and, as a rule, were subscription or parochial church schools. James was a boy of vigorous constitution, and in earlier life took an interested part in such social pleasures as prevailed in the neighborhood. These were singings, apple-butter boilings, and other social gatherings. He was not unmindful of the graces and charms of the fair sex, and paid court at their shrines in numerous cases as tradition still loves to recall. One of these anecdotes relates that he paid court to a miller's daughter, but the father of the young lady looked with

disfavor upon his suit from the fact that he was poor and had little prospect for maintaining a wife. He hinted that if the young man possessed a mill like his own the outcome might be different. Lick ever remembered the slight, and determined that some day he would erect a mill that would throw the Lebanon County mill far "into the shade." He kept his word, as we shall see later.

In 1817 James Lick attained his majority. He had become a skilful worker in wood, and concluded that he would go to Hanover, York Co., Pa., which he did in the beginning of 1818. He also had an "affair of the heart" at this time, which led to more or less serious reflection. He now worked at the calling of an organ builder, which he had selected for a vocation. He was an energetic, trustworthy workman, in whom his employers placed great confidence. At the end of the year he determined to go to Baltimore, and there he entered the establishment of Joseph Hiskey, a prominent piano manufacturer. Here he met a young man by the name of Meyer, who was in search of employment, and between the two sprang up an attachment which lasted through life. The Meyer of 1819 was the late Conrad Meyer, of Philadelphia, a celebrated piano manufacturer, who, while accumulating fame and fortune, never forgot to rejoice over the success of his friend in other and varied fields.

The following year, 1820, young Lick ventured into New York to go into business. The lack of capital, however, interfered with his success, and at the end of the year he joined an expedition to Buenos Ayres, South America. As this country had recently become independent, it promised a grand future. Although he urgently solicited his friend Meyer to accompany him, the latter declined, and Lick made the journey alone. For ten years, or until 1831, he followed the business of manufacturing pianos, and began to reap the rewards of his labors.

In 1832 he surprised his friends by a visit to his native State. He brought with him \$40,000 worth of valuable South American skins and hides. He now visited Fredericksburg, the only time he ever returned to that place after leaving it in 1818. He came loaded down with doubloons, which he carried in belts about his body. He drove to the town with a white horse and buggy, which on his departure, two weeks afterwards, he presented to his brother William, who was twelve years younger than himself.

The parents of James Lick were devout members of the Lutheran congregation of the town. The births and baptismal records of their children are still on the register. The Rev. George Lochman, of Lebanon and Harrisburg, whose son so long officiated at Christ Lutheran Church, at York, Pa., was the officiating minister at William's baptism. The sponsor or godfather of James was John Gettel.

These might seem to be matters of minor import, but it must be remembered that the most trifling incidents in early life become matters of interest when men attain fame and distinction. They have become so in the lives of Jackson, Lincoln, Grant, McKinley, and a host of others.

As a matter of record, the horse that James Lick gave to his brother died soon afterwards. The buggy was sold, and the proceeds, one hundred dollars, were given later to James Lick's natural son John, who was born June 30, 1818, and who attained his majority in 1839. This was one-third of the sum with which the latter started in business. His education was paid for by one of his uncles, possibly from funds placed in his hands.

James Lick's return to Pennsylvania gave him for a moment a desire to remain in his native State. He rented a house on Eighth-street, Philadelphia, with the intention of going into business in that city. But his ardent temperament could not brook the quiet life which this step promised. His thoughts doubtless reverted to the freedom and wider scope of action which the southern hemisphere afforded, and he relinquished his leased premises and again left for South America. In a few months after arriving at Buenos Ayres, he settled up his business and sailed for Chile.

In 1833 his home was at Valparaiso, and he was hard at work at his old trade, in addition to engaging in new enterprises. In 1837 his tireless spirit looked out towards other scenes of conquest in his line, and he selected Peru as the place of his future operations.

Pursuing the even tenor of his way, he was about given up for dead by his friends in Pennsylvania, when his friend Meyer received a package from him containing \$1,400 in gold doubloons, and an order for the inside work, or action, for twelve pianos, which he wished forwarded to Lima, Peru.

(To be continued.)

What can the Church do for a people? Look at Spain.
What can a country do without the Church? Look at regenerated France.—M. M. Mangatarian.

Acid Drops.

Roman Catholics are not fond of toleration. We know it, and we reckon with it—always. But those who think the Protestants are any better, where they have a good chance, are very much mistaken. They are, if anything, a bit worse than the Roman Catholics at Liverpool. They have also been holding their own in the Portadown and Lurgan riots. Mr. Birrell in the House of Commons, replying to a question by Mr. MacVeagh, said: "Whether the Nationalists conducted themselves properly in insisting upon going on an excursion on Sunday, I cannot say. But the police say they went quite quietly, without any signs or symptoms of agitation, without bands, flags, or what are called regalia, and that if only they had been left alone nothing would have happened." Thus the Protestants were the aggressors. And if their only grievance was that the Catholics were not Sabbatarians they proved themselves to be unmitigated bigots.

We see in the newspaper reports that at the Bannview weaving factory the Protestant workmen demanded the dismissal of all the Roman Catholic employees. This pious demand was refused by the management. Even the "vile capitalist" can sometimes be more tolerant than the "honest working man"—especially when the latter is drunk with religion. We see, also, that many Roman Catholic workmen stayed away from other factories through fear of the Protestant "hands"—and something in them.

The special correspondent of the *Daily News* admitted that the worst part of the rioting at Lurgan was provoked by the Protestants. "There can be no question," he wrote, "that the appearance of a Protestant band at half past eight was the immediate cause of the outbreak. A large crowd had collected in North-street, a Nationalist quarter of Church-place, and the situation grew serious when a number of excited men in a Protestant crowd in Church-place began to smash the windows of several shops." Then the fun began. Both mobs went for the police who tried to keep them from each others throats.

Mr. George Wise, of Liverpool, has a name that he does not live up to. A writer praising him in last week's *Christian World* says that "very likely he has often been indiscreet with his processional invasions of Roman Catholic quarters of the city." "Indiscreet" is a mild word for such provocation. Surely these Christians are a funny lot of people. When they deliberately provoke each other to breaches of the peace it is only an "indiscretion." When a Freethinker quite unintentionally provokes them, by uttering his views at a place devoted to public discussions, they call it "blasphemy"—and send him to prison for it.

Mr. Harrold Johnson is not a revolutionary person, but one of his poems in *The Bridge Builders* is found fault with in the *Christian Commonwealth*. Our pious contemporary advises him to omit the poem "Ecco Homo" from the next edition of his volume. "I can speak for our readers," the editor says, "when I say that it grates upon the finer feelings." The idea that the "finer feelings" specially belong to our pious contemporary's readers is too rich for description. We are not acquainted with the peccant poem, but we suppose its references to J. C. are not hysterical enough for the New Theology organ.

The same reviewer, noticing a new volume of verse by a lady, says that she brings us "the fragrance of her sex." Which particular fragrance does he refer to? There are so many of them sold at Rimuel's.

Mr. Campbell conducts the "Correspondence Column" of the New Theology weekly, and he undertakes, apparently, to answer anybody on anything. His motto might be "Let 'em all come." Last week he answered questions about matter, time, and space, and we humbly venture to suggest that he got out of his depth. He seems to accept Berkeley's metaphysics, and believes that matter does not exist apart from consciousness; in fact, he says that if all consciousness came to an end "the whole structure of things would terminate." Now, it is not a very wise thing to start an argument with "ifs," but allowing for that Mr. Campbell's remark is sheer nonsense, and dogmatic nonsense no. Berkeley may have been acute enough to see—and discreet enough to hold his tongue about it—that the very argument he used against the existence of matter can be used against the existence of mind. The "thing in itself" cannot be got at on one side or the other. If all that is positively known in states of consciousness, we are shut off from all entities,

including both matter and mind. So there is an end of God—as well as everything else.

Miss Mansfield, the lady traveller in Africa, is of opinion that the Christian missionaries are worse than useless, their converts being the worst of the black population. This opinion is protested against by Miss M. Blunt, B.A., who says that the missionaries are "true empire builders." Exactly! But was it wise to say so?

Miss Mansfield seems to have been safer amongst the African negroes than she would have been amongst the skin-proud whites of Europe. She went into villages that had never seen a white man or woman before. And was she molested? Did any big nigger try to kidnap her? Did any grinning darkie invite her into the bush? Nothing of the sort. "Although I was absolutely alone," she says, "with all these men—big, strong, healthy, happy savages, who could neither read nor write, and knew nothing of crime—they treated me with wonderful chivalry." No wonder she thinks it "a great pity" for missionaries to "interfere with their religion or morals." But the missionaries will never be satisfied until every white woman in the Dark Continent has police protection—and needs it.

Mr. Herbert Gladstone, M.P., the present Home Secretary, has very little but the family name to recommend him to the British public. His mind is cast in the small, pedantic, official mould. We have complained of his sanctioning the revival of the Blasphemy Laws—a thing which a Tory Home Secretary would not have permitted, for the Tories know that they have nothing to gain by such proceedings. We have also complained of his allowing an obscure policeman in North London, who happens to be a fanatical amateur missionary, to send men from his division all over the metropolis to attend outdoor meetings and watch the lips of Free-thought lecturers. We have likewise complained of his justifying the police in seizing copies of *Justice* because it dealt in an unflattering manner with the Czar. But there was something worse in his refusal of the request of Dhingra to see his friend Mr. J. S. Masters. The unhappy young man had to pay the penalty of his rash act; that was what he expected, and it was, of course, inevitable, in spite of his political motive. His forlorn situation, however, might have appealed to a more human heart than Mr. Gladstone's. He was practically a dying man from the moment of his sentence, and a dying man's wish, even a convict's, has a certain sacredness in it, which most men are ready to recognise. Dhingra had to spend his twenty-one dying days in the hands of foreigners and enemies, as he considered them; and he had the fortitude to remain what the newspapers chose to call "cold and callous" to the last. His one wish, apparently, was to see his friend, Mr. J. S. Masters, who applied for leave to pay him a visit. Mr. Gladstone instructed his Under-Secretary to express his "regrets" (vile official word!) that the application could not be granted. Such a refusal is a meanness which humiliates the whole nation. Yet we are sorry to say that it is quite characteristic of our unimaginative Home Secretary.

Mr. Harold Cox, M.P., reminded the House of Commons, in the debate on the "color" question in South Africa, that no founder of a great religion had been of European descent. This is quite true. Buddha was an Asiatic, Mohammed was an Asiatic, Jesus Christ himself was an Asiatic. And as the Europeans declare that religion is the most important thing in the world, they ought to recognise their inferior position. But they don't. They call Asiatics "damned niggers." They would call Jesus Christ so if he came again.

How the good Christians squirm when they meet with opposition! There has been a Commercial Travellers' Christian Association for a long time in existence, and well-stamped, though not well-thumbed, Bibles are placed in the bedrooms of commercial hotels. But an alarm is raised when a Commercial Travellers' Socialist Society is formed. "A veteran member" of the United Kingdom Commercial Travellers' Association (real or imaginary) told an *Express* interviewer that he had "no words strong enough to express his condemnation of this new society"—which is an extraordinary admission for a gentleman in that profession. He said that "it has hitherto been an unwritten law among commercial travellers never to introduce either their religious or political creeds into their business." Well, if business means booking orders, they are not introducing it now; and if it doesn't mean that, the "veteran member's" statement is—well, inaccurate. The only way to oppose the C. T. Socialist Society is to start a C. T. Anti-Socialist Society.

Rev. John Lewis, for thirty-nine years vicar of Ford, Prebendary of Hereford, and rural dean of Pontesbury, left £73,945. The figure is "gross," but the discount won't afford him much relief when he joins Dives in complaining of the drought.

The Very Rev. Edward Neville Crake, of Hans court, London, S.W., and late of Withersdane Hall, Wye, Kent, left £18,422. He kept out of heaven till he was eighty-three. That is, if he has gone there. According to the New Testament, he went to a different destination.

Rev. Arthur Sutton Valpy, of the Close, Winchester, and of Hereford House, Park-street, London, W., Senior Canon of Winchester Cathedral, left estate valued at £216,686. "Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven." It is the biggest joke in the world.

The *Leeds Mercury* must behave itself. It takes exception to Canon Valpy's legacy of £10,000 to build a church at Winchester (which may not take effect on account of "the Budget"! "Most people," it says, "think that we have quite enough of churches already, and that the £10,000 will be far more good when spent in the way that the Government will expend it than if laid out upon another useless place of worship. Better make Britain habitable than lay up treasure in heaven." This would be all right in the *Freethinker*, but it is shocking in the *Leeds Mercury*.

Some foolish people have compared General Booth with Oliver Cromwell, Napoleon, John Knox, John Wesley, and even the Duke of Wellington. At least, so the General himself is reported, in the *Burton Daily Mail*, to have told an audience in that town. But the arch-showman was not satisfied with such mean comparisons. He preferred to think of himself as a royal personage, even if a "second-hand" one. He does everything to get money. Whenever he smiles, he asks how much it is worth. He smiled on the Mayor of Burton, and wondered how much it would fetch him. What superb self-advertisement.

The Rev. John Wesley Hill, D.D., LL.D., pastor of the Metropolitan Temple, New York, is an interesting relic of a bygone age. Preaching in London a few Sundays ago, he supplied his hearers with a novel and fascinating picture of the Divine Being. Said he, his two doctorates flashing out the while: "Between the beginning of the race and the coming of Jesus Christ, that vast stretch of 4,000 years, God seemed to stand aside and to look down upon humanity, and to say, 'Now save yourselves if you can.' He waited for the 'fulness of time'; waited for man to exhaust his schemes." Fit occupation for the loving Heavenly Father! While he thus waited and watched, the greatest orators arrived upon the scene, such as Egypt, Babylon, Greece, and Rome, each of which gradually rose, flourished magnificently, and then "rushed headlong into destruction." Not only did God see it all, he waited for it with avidity. The Maker and Ruler of the Universe, the God of unfathomable love, waited for mighty empires to sink into black ruin, sardonically saying, "Now are you convinced you cannot save yourselves?" Fancy our being expected to love and worship such a monster!

At last God said to mankind, "You have had your chance, and now I am going to show you what I can do." And so Jesus Christ came and died upon the Cross, and mankind were immediately and completely saved. At least, that is what ought to have taken place. As a matter of fact, however, for two thousand years mankind have been waiting for God to redeem himself, and waiting entirely in vain; and now at last they are giving him up, and learning to rely on themselves alone.

Mr. A. E. Fletcher is a worthy man with a good deal of learning and considerable intelligence, but he should not attempt to criticise writers like George Meredith. To put it mildly, he lacks subtlety and imagination. He sneers at "superior persons" who call Meredith a great poet on the strength of *Modern Love*. "It undoubtedly contains fine passages," Mr. Fletcher says, "but as a whole it is morbid and fantastic." Well, we venture to say that the "fine passages" are the passages that Mr. Fletcher understands, or thinks he does; and that the "morbid" and "fantastic" represent what he does not understand—and never will. Mr. Fletcher evidently believes that a great poet would not waste his time on "a lady and gentleman"—meaning a man and woman—who "find out too late that they made a mistake in getting married." People of a different order of mind from Mr. Fletcher—"superior persons" as with literal

accuracy he calls them—see in such a situation all the elements of a moral tragedy; especially when both the man and the woman possess the qualities that Mr. Fletcher lacks.

Mr. Fletcher writes as well on Shelley as he does on Meredith. In the same article he calls Shelley "the forerunner of the new theologians" and "the most inspiring interpreter of the doctrines laid down in the Sermon on the Mount." Shelley the forerunner of Mr. Campbell! It would be difficult to beat that. As for the Sermon on the Mount, the best criticism is a shrug of the shoulders, with the interior reflection that Mr. Fletcher cannot help laying his hand upon his breast every now and then, and saying to himself, "I also am, or was, a Christian."

"F. A. A.," who contributes "Impressions of America" to the *Christian World*, winds up with a handsome tribute to "the enlightened Puritanism of New England." Amongst other things, it "bans the bad book and suppresses the foul play." Which simply means that America respects the freedom of discussion less than any other civilised country in the world. A country which is governed by the police, which consents to live under Comstock laws, and fancies that Mr. Bernard Shaw's plays are obscene, has more of the name of freedom than the reality; it is the Puritan element that is chiefly responsible for these things.

Profoundly impressive and disastrously significant is the obstinate inconsistency of Christian advocates. One day, they ostentatiously declare that religion was never so much alive as it is just now; that the people are hungering and thirsting for God, for Christ, for spiritual food; and that nothing could be more utterly groundless than the assertion of the Infidels that Christianity has had its day. Another time, they bemoan the "unmistakable fact that the people are ceasing to attend the services of either church or chapel," and, as touching "the relation of the people to religion, they are occupied with the question why the one is forsaking the other, and seek eagerly for means of closing the rift which is yearly becoming wider." They also refer dolefully to "the growing Scepticism of the age." Now, it is self-evident that religion cannot be waxing and waning, growing and decaying, eagerly hungered and thirsted after and increasingly neglected, at one and the same time. Not even divines can deny that.

We read that the Chapman-Alexander mission in Australia is a great success. The Society that runs it says so, and that is enough. According to the official report, the services are "characterised by the most perfect reverence and decorum," which makes us wonder if free fights were expected. It appears, too, that "the wise methods of dealing with inquirers are calculated to secure the converts as a permanent addition to the churches." They all say that, but it never comes off. Look at the Welsh Revival. Look at the Torrey-Alexander Mission in London. All that the travelling evangelists really do is to exploit the cash-box.

The old game is being played at Müller's Orphanage. Mr. G. F. Bergin, the present director, denies that Müller ever did, or that he himself ever does, advertise; and the denial, which is printed in the religious and other papers, is better than a paid advertisement.

The dear *Daily News*, writing on the Co-operative Festival at the Crystal Palace, attributes the origin of the Co-operative movement to "the dreams of social justice nourished in the brain of Robert Owen, cotton manufacturer, and founder of Socialist colonies." The fact that Robert Owen was a Freethinker could not be mentioned to sensitive Nonconformist readers.

"The rector will be pleased to hear of any sickness or trouble in the parish." This appeared lately on the notice-board of an Eyaok church. It might have been better expressed, but we should judge the rector to be a "decent fellow." The notice was too unstudied to be insincere.

This has been an astonishing summer. Cold and rain generally, with spasms of fierce heat. People found the August heat-wave trying in England, but it was shockingly worse in New York, and the temperature on the Chinese coast half killed a lot of the Europeans, and entirely killed several of them, being nearly 120 in the shade. In South-Western Russia and North Caucasus it was from 100 to 110 in the shade for seven weeks, causing the death of hundreds of human beings and thousands of animals. These are the tendernesses of "Providence."

"Providence" has been favoring pretty nearly the whole globe of late. Report arrives from Melbourne that the August floods in Victoria have been the worst for forty years. The Laanecoorie Weir, which cost £133,876, burst and numerous bridges were swept away. It is impossible to estimate the damage done. Many thriving places are ruined. "For his tender mercies are over all his works."

The lightning played some very profane pranks during a recent thunderstorm. It set Bollington village church on fire; it struck the stone spire of the Church of England mortuary chapel in Blackpool Cemetery; and at Providence Chapel, Rochdale, it played havoc with the minister's vestry. Providence Chapel is a good name for a place where "Providence" did so much damage.

Barcelona was visited by a waterspout on Sunday, flooding all the lower quarters till they were three feet deep with water. Most excellent "Providence"!

Mr. A. Coode, of Swansea, managed to get an ugly quotation from Sir H. Johnston about African missionaries into Monday's *Daily News*. In parts of Africa, principally British possessions, the great traveller said, it is a fact that "large numbers of nominal Christians exist," but "their religion is discredited by numbering among its adherents all the drunkards, liars, rogues, and unclean livers of the colony." What an eye-opener to the party of the Nonconformist Conscience!

"Mr. John Burns in the Pit." This terrible headline appeared in Monday's *Daily News*. It gave us an awful turn. Poor John! But on reading the paragraph we found that "the pit" was not the bottomless one. It belonged to the Shakespeare Theatre, at Clapham Junction. We felt relieved.

General Booth deserved something better at the hands of "Providence." His motor-tour on the "Lord's work" was cut short by inflammation of one of his eyes, which has had to be removed. This is a very shabby way of treating an old servant. The "General" is now blind of one eye—very much (some will say) like his Boss.

"Suicide while temporarily insane" was the verdict of the coroner's jury on the death of the Rev. William Stowe Lloyd, vicar of Willerby, who put himself in front of an express train going from York to Scarborough. A petition had been lodged for his removal from his living on account of his intemperance. There is no moral, of course; these things being too common in clerical circles nowadays.

According to Talmage, Torrey & Co., Atheists are the people who should commit suicide. They ought to rush out of this world for fear they should never see another. Christians, of course, naturally keep out of kingdom-come as long as they can. Such, we suppose, is the idea; but, somehow, it doesn't work out in that way. You rarely hear of an "unbeliever" committing suicide. Christians do it every day. Here are a couple of cases in Monday's newspapers. Alfred Hofmeyer, aged twenty-three, a watchmaker of James-street, Oxford-street, London, who committed suicide on the railway near Putney, left a letter in which he prayed "God to help" those he had been a trouble to. "Say a prayer to God," he said to his sweetheart, "asking him to forgive me my sin." George Fitzwarren Bouchier, who shot himself dead in the New York Hotel, Great Russell-street, posted a letter to his wife in which he said: "Never regret me. In an hour also God will judge me." Where—oh where—are the Atheists?

We are enjoying ourselves. The Liverpool *Evening Express* is protesting lustily against the pressure put upon it by the Chief Constable—who understands liberty as Chief Constables usually do. Leonard Dunning—that is the high and mighty one's name—threatens our contemporary with all the rigors of the law for advertising such of George Wise's meetings as the said Leonard Dunning doesn't approve. Now this hits our contemporary in a tender spot. No paper can afford to lose advertisements. Our contemporary, therefore, shouts energetically for help in maintaining the freedom of the press. But why did it wait for this incident to show it that freedom was in peril in Liverpool? It never whispered a protest, that we are aware of, when the Chief Constable carried on a crusade against Secularists; preventing them from charging for admission to their lectures at one hall, and actually compelling the proprietor to close the doors of another hall against them without an hour's notice. It doesn't matter, apparently, what the police do in the way of persecuting Freethinkers. Persecution only becomes a crime when it is directed against Christians.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

September 5, 12, 19, 26, St. James's Hall, London.
 October 3, Glasgow; 10, Leicester; 17, 24, and 31, St. James's Hall, London.
 November 7, Manchester; 14, Liverpool; 28, Birmingham.

To Correspondents.

G. BRADFIELD.—A very good letter. We wish Freethinkers would utilise their local press more freely in this fashion.

T. JACKSON.—Mr. Musgrave Reade was connected with the Manchester N. S. S. Branch for a short time in the early eighties. That he was ever "a prominent Atheist leader" is a reminiscence of the swelled-head order. That he converted Robert Blatchford to Socialism is a matter about which we know nothing; and we should not be surprised if Robert Blatchford is in the same position. Glad to hear that your wife is looking forward with you to our lectures at Liverpool in November.

HILLSIDE.—"Abracadabra" is away at present. We will let him see your letter when he returns to his address.

ANDREW ALLISON.—Glad to hear, in one way that you have taken over the secretaryship of the Woolwich Branch. Sorry to hear the bigots are putting the screw on all the Branch members who work in Woolwich. Those pious creatures have the tempers of sharks and tigers.

W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for cuttings.

T. HUGHES.—We have never seen the paper you refer to, and don't know who is its editor. Glad you regard the *Freethinker* as the best paper you ever read.

F. COLLINS.—It would probably do good, as you say, but we cannot undertake the expense. "Abracadabra's" articles are always as interesting as they are informing. We note your wishes for the success of the St. James's Hall lectures.

THOMAS FOWLER.—See "Acid Drops." To get a child exempted from religious teaching you have only to notify the master or mistress that you wish him or her to be withdrawn from religious instruction. Forms for this purpose are printed, and supplied, by the N. S. S.

AGNES GOODWIN.—Don't you see the fun of it? Trying to stagger you with a quotation from a Christian book to the effect that Darwinism is all wrong! Why bother about anything that appears on this subject in *T. P.'s Weekly*? You will see that Mr. Foote is to be at Manchester in November.

NORTH LONDONER.—The gallant Douglas overlooks 1 Corinthians xv. 20. These cocksure Christians, so arrogantly meek, never know their own book properly.

F. C. C. GREGSON.—Pleased you have got the *Freethinker* placed on the table of one of your Liberal Clubs. We should be glad to hear of active Freethought propaganda at Keighley.

THE BOULTER FUND.—We have received:—F. Bonte, £1.

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

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

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

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.

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

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Foote's subjects for the four Sunday evening lectures at the beautiful St. James's Hall during September are announced on the last page of this week's *Freethinker*. The general title of all four is "The Master's Mind." And who is the Master? Shakespeare. "He was an intellectual ocean," Ingessoll said, "whose waves touched all the shores of thought." "All that can be known," Swinburne wrote, "of manhood, of womanhood, and childhood, he knew better than any other man ever born. It is not only the crowning glory of England, it is the crowning glory of mankind, that such a man should ever have been born as William Shakespeare." It is this Master to whom Mr. Foote is devoting the whole of the September course of lectures. The one lecture he delivered at St. James's Hall in the April course was highly appreciated, but it had to deal with too many

points in too summary a way. In four lectures he will be able to treat the whole subject both more freely and more critically. The ground he has mapped out is comprehensive, and he will do his best to cover it. Freethinkers should try to hear every one of these lectures. They will lose something if they don't. For the lecturer is a life-long student of Shakespeare, and he has thought for himself on this subject as well as on others. Those who like to hear Mr. Foote give poetical readings are informed that he will read liberal selections from the greatest of Shakespeare's plays in these addresses.

London "saints" are invited to assist in advertising these St. James's Hall lectures. Printed announcements, small and large, can be obtained of Miss Vance at 2 Newcastle-street, E.C. Some general advertising is being done, in newspapers and by posters, but it is too expensive a thing to cover the whole of London in this way, and the distribution of the printed announcement by the "saints" will be a material assistance.

Reserved seat tickets (1s. each) for the St. James's Hall lectures can be obtained beforehand of Miss Vance, 2 Newcastle-street, E.C. This will be a convenience to many persons.

The October course of lectures at St. James's Hall will start with two addresses by Mr. C. Cohen and Mr. J. T. Lloyd. Mr. Foote will then occupy the platform again until the end of the month.

The Lord Mayor of Birmingham has granted the local N. S. S. Branch the use of the Town Hall for four Sundays during the coming winter. His lordship's act is a bright oasis in the bleak desert of Birmingham bigotry. It illustrates the never to be forgotten truth that one man of high position is often more tolerant than a public committee, which shares out the responsibility of illiberal acts until it practically becomes nothing apiece. The new course of Town Hall lectures begins on October 31. Mr. Foote will be closing the St. James's Hall course that day, and cannot be at Birmingham too; so the opening Town Hall lectures will be delivered by Mr. Cohen, who is very well known in Birmingham now.

The Birmingham Town Hall lectures will be financed again by the Secular Society, Ltd., which is also arranging lectures in January at the Stratford Town Hall, and other important centres in the new year. During the summer grants have been made by the Board of £10 to the Manchester Branch and £25 to the reorganised Liverpool Branch. We are glad to hear that the work of the latter Branch has been going on very smoothly and successfully.

By a wretched accident the first of the last three verses of Mr. Bonte's "Thaumaturgics" dropped out from last week's *Freethinker* in the make up. We print the whole three correctly this week, so that readers interested in the poem may have the full version by them:—

Tricks like these are still performed,
 Dust is thrown in people's eyes,
 Wizards dupe them with their magic,
 Dazing them with specious lies.
 Many still grope on in darkness,
 Many fight against the light,
 Judges gag the fearless captains
 Who stand up for truth and right.
 Yet the dawn must be approaching,
 For the gloom begins to lift,
 Brighter light is surely coming,
 In the clouds we see the rift.

"Thaumaturgics" is being reprinted as a Tract for general distribution, especially at open-air meetings.

Dr. J. W. Jenkinson's *Experimental Embryology*, just published by the Clarendon Press, Oxford, contains the following on mind and matter:—

"Mind is not matter, not even living matter: rather it is the new quality constituted by an increase in the complexity of living matter, immaterial and as distinct from that matter as is 'blueness' from vibration of a certain wave-length. Dependent on and inseparable from matter, however, it is; when that matter, whether in the individual or in the race, attains a certain degree of complexity, then and then only does mind appear: and with the disappearance of that complexity it perishes."

This is plain enough to all who can understand.

"You mentioned in a recent *Freethinker*," Mr. H. George Farmer writes us, "that you would like to know a *Daily*

News writer's authority for saying that Thomas Paine kept a stay-maker's shop in Woolwich. It is mentioned in the *Records of Woolwich* by Mr. W. T. Vincent. Some years ago I asked the author for his authority for this, and he told me the information was based upon a contemporary newspaper." This looks circumstantial, but it is really no evidence as it stands.

We are happy to state that the *Freethinker* has held its own remarkably well during the summer, when a drop is usual in the circulation of advanced periodicals. This is relatively an increase. And we trust it will continue. To secure this end we once more invite the co-operation of our readers. They can pass on their weekly copy into other hands when they have done with it, or they can take an extra copy or two, if they are able to afford it, for the same purpose. They can also send us the names and addresses of persons to whom we may send the *Freethinker* for six consecutive weeks gratuitously. We do not want addresses at mere hazard, of course, but only of persons who are in some degree likely to become regular readers of the paper if it is only brought direct to their attention. Such addresses should be sent direct to our shop manager, Mr. W. A. Vaughan, 2 Newcastle-street, E.C.

Some of last year's subscribers to the President's Honorarium Fund have not renewed their subscriptions. We venture to ask them to do so, if they intend to, with the least possible delay. We should like to give the Fund a rest in the *Freethinker* for two or three months prior to 1910. Moreover, it might be remembered that the President has now been carrying on the *Freethinker* and its adjuncts for twelve months, after discharging all the trade liabilities of the Freethought Publishing Company, amounting in all to about £180. He has sustained all the loss of the past year himself, regularly keeping up with all demands, and avoiding debt. But this has necessarily made an inroad on the Honorarium Fund, and no editorial salary is included in the year's accounts. In a sense, therefore, and a very real sense, contributors to the Honorarium Fund are supporting the *Freethinker*—and much besides.

Men who profess themselves adepts in mathematical knowledge, in astronomy, or jurisprudence, are generally as well qualified as they would appear. The reason may be, that they are always liable to detection, should they attempt to impose on mankind, and therefore take care to be what they pretend. In religion alone, a profession is often slightly taken up, and slovenly carried on, because forsooth candor and charity require us to hope the best, and to judge favorably of our neighbor, and because it is easy to deceive the ignorant, who are a great majority, upon this subject. Let a man attach himself to a particular party, contend furiously for what are properly called evangelical doctrines, and enlist himself under the banner of some popular preacher, and the business is done. Behold a Christian! A Saint! A Phoenix!—in the meantime, perhaps his heart, and his temper, and even his conduct are unsanctified; possibly less exemplary than those of some avowed infidels. No matter!—he can talk,—he has the Shibboleth of the true church,—the Bible in his pocket, and a head well stored with notions.—*William Cowper (Letter to William Unwin, 1782).*

The true family is the result of the true marriage, and the institution of the family should above all things be preserved. What becomes of the sacredness of the home, if the law compels those who abhor each other to sit at the same hearth? This lowers the standard, and changes the happy haven of home into the prison cell. If we wish to preserve the integrity of the family, we must preserve the democracy of the fireside, the republicanism of the home, the absolute and perfect equality of husband and wife. There must be no exhibition of force, no spectre of fear. The mother must not remain through an order of court, or the command of a priest, or by virtue of the tyranny of society; she must sit in absolute freedom, the queen of herself, the sovereign of her own soul and of her own body. Real homes can never be preserved through force, through slavery, or superstition. Nothing can be more sacred than a home, no altar purer than the hearth.—*Ingersoll.*

There may or may not be beings superior to us. But I cannot think so ill of any possible supreme being as to accuse him of the guilt and folly of the voluntary creation of such a world and of such lives as ours. I cannot accuse a possible Devil of this, much less a possible God.—*James Thomson ("B. V.")*

Blasphemy.

A CHAPTER IN LEGAL EVOLUTION.

THE *Daily Telegraph* of March 27 last thus reports a case that had just been heard in the Criminal Appeal Court:—

"A conviction of sacrilege and sentence of twelve months' hard labor on John Verney was quashed..... Counsel quoted a case where fourteen young women pleaded guilty to witchcraft and were all burned. Mr. Justice Darling remarked that nowadays they would all be put in a lunatic asylum."

Within about ten weeks the same judge sentenced an accused to one month's imprisonment for blasphemy. Why, my lord, would the young "witches" be treated differently to-day? Because the leaven of Freethought is working in society, and though it has not yet leavened the whole, it is forcing your religion to be a little more bearable. Undoubtedly the learned judge would himself be the first to admit that as a jurist he stands far behind Chief Justice Holt, whose great decisions over two centuries ago practically settled English law on some questions. Yet this eminent judge declared, when sentencing two women to be put to death for witchcraft, that there were "such things as witches, for their existence was clearly implied in Scripture." It is perhaps easy for those unregenerate ones, whose eyes are too gross to look upon things spiritual, to hold up their hands in astonishment. And yet, though they may not think it, there are among us to-day men of reputation as scientists who believe in ghosts and the spirit-world. Indeed, "truth is stranger than fiction," as even the least credulous will be obliged to admit if he spends a day among the old statutes and judicial decisions, and especially the reports of the State Trials, to be found in a good law library. Of all the extraordinary stories, however, to be traced in those musty tomes, surely the most extraordinary is the history of the evolution of the English law relating to blasphemy. The following rapid survey, incomplete as it is, may be of interest.

Before the time of William I. certain ecclesiastical dignitaries had always sat on the bench; but the stern Norman declared the system entirely bad, thus curiously anticipating the low opinion of the clergy's judicial capacity held by a well-known nineteenth century authority on criminal law. A few years ago Mr. Montague Williams, Q.C., expressed his utmost contempt for clergymen as arbiters in temporal matters—as justices of the peace they showed themselves narrow and wanting in humanity. So Williams established a separate Court to deal with spiritual affairs, its jurisdiction being limited to such offences as those mentioned by Chaucer in his account of the "erchedeken"—

"That boldly did execution
In punysching of fornicacioun,
Of witchcraft and eek of bauderye,
Of diffamacioun and avowterye."

"Diffamacioun" included all words defamatory of the Church or the blessed Saints, and all charges under this head were now left by the civil tribunal to the spiritual Courts, which dealt with them eagerly. In 1480 Ambrose de Borageos was prosecuted for having referred contemptuously to the blessed Katherino and Margaret as harlots (*meretrices*). Sentence—to offer a wax candle to the Savior. Some such penance was the only punishment that these Courts could inflict on the blasphemor or heretic, and if he refused to do penance as ordered it is not quite clear what their powers were. According to it men of God took a step which, characteristic as it was, may appear to some of our readers unconstitutional. They boldly forged an Act of Parliament, and this is still to be found as 2 Rich. II. cap. 5 in the old volumes of statutes. The "Act" gave the spiritual Courts full power to imprison offenders. When Parliament discovered the impudent fraud, the forged enactment was cancelled; but for all that heretics continued to suffer. Sawtre was the first man convicted and burned, the king having been

persuaded by the clergy to issue the writ *de heretico comburendo* (for burning a heretic). No such writ is previously heard of, and it was almost certainly illegal. A week after Sawtre's execution Parliament did really enact burning as the punishment for heresy (2 Hen. IV. cap. 15). A little later several amending statutes were also passed, giving the spiritual Courts wide powers in such cases. To the trained clerical eye these statutes presented some truly beautiful points, which may be summarised under three heads: (1) the Church decided what constituted heresy; (2) its decision on this point was subject to no appeal; (3) the punishment was burning. Several Acts for the suppression of "heretical opinions" were passed in the reign of Henry VIII., again the punishment in certain cases being the stake. Edward VI. repealed all those statutes or parts of statutes that had enacted burning for heresy; but the so-called Common Law writ *de heretico comburendo* remained in force, and in his reign one Jane Bocher was burned for "heretical opinions." Under Mary and Elizabeth, various new statutes were passed, while others were amended or repealed. James I.'s reign saw the last roasting in England for heterodoxy, the unfortunate victim in this case, I believe, holding erroneous views on the eastward position. Under Cromwell a blasphemer named Naylor was convicted. But his sentence was a mere bagatelle. He was ordered to be whipped from Westminster to the Old Exchange, to be afterwards put in the pillory and have his tongue bored with a hot iron, then to be branded on the forehead and to wind up with, to be imprisoned with hard labor for life. The "writ" *de heretico* was abolished by Act of Parliament in the reign of Charles II.; but the spiritual Courts were to retain power to punish Atheism, blasphemy, or any other "damnable doctrine or opinion," and to compel recantation. Passing to somewhat more modern times, we find Daniel Isaac Eaton in 1812 prosecuted for publishing Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason*, "a most blasphemous and impious libel." Lord Ellenborough, who presided at this trial, sentenced Eaton to eighteen months' imprisonment and two hours of pillory (State Trials xxx., 85). An eye-witness of the execution of the latter part of this sentence says:—

"I was one of those who saw Mr. Eaton stand in the pillory for what has been called an attempt to overturn the religion of his country. The manner in which the spectators behaved during the execution of this severe punishment was, in my opinion, highly creditable to the liberality of the age. I think I may venture to say there was hardly an individual present who did not sympathise with the unfortunate man; he was cheered by numbers during the whole time of the punishment, and many efforts were made to convey various kinds of refreshment to him" (*The Deist*, vol. i., p. 20).

The trial and punishment of Eaton fired the indignation of Shelley, then twenty years of age, who addressed his vigorous "Letter to Lord Ellenborough." He probably little thought that thirty years later the publication of his own works would result in a blasphemy prosecution. On June 23, 1841, Moxon, the publisher, was charged before Lord Denman and a special jury with having printed the blasphemous works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, and was found guilty, though only a nominal punishment was inflicted. Moxon was not a Freethought advocate, but a publisher of high-class and expensive literature, and the prosecution had been instigated by Henry Hetherington, "a bookseller in the Strand," as a protest against the sentence of four months' imprisonment imposed upon him by Lord Denman in the preceding December "for selling certain numbers of a work entitled *Haslam's Letters to the Clergy of all Denominations*, sold each at the price of one penny." Blasphemy at a penny a time is a very different thing from blasphemy wrapped up in gilt-edged half-guinea volumes. Closely associated with this question is the story of the struggle of the press, and particularly the life-work of the indomitable Carlile, which has been told by his daughters in *The Battle of the Free Press*. Some interesting items will also be found in an

article, "The Growth of the Free Press," by D. M. Ford, in the *English Historical Review* for January, 1889. It would be impossible here even to mention the names of all who suffered for "offensive" publications, either political or religious. When the struggle was acute, a great deal was heard (as at present) about the difference between "liberty" and "licence," and the distinction laid down by the old *Examiner* in 1827 is too neat to be omitted:—

"The licentiousness of the press is a term of the very widest range, including, as it does, everything that is offensive to anybody. The liberty of the press, on the other hand, seems to come under the mathematical definition of a point; it has neither length, breadth, nor thickness."

Until 1855 the Ecclesiastical Courts retained their jurisdiction in cases of defamation, but in that year even this power was taken away by 18 and 19 Vic. cap. 41—an Act which seems to have been passed in consequence of some farcical proceedings arising out of a decision given a few years previously. A Cambridge clergyman proceeded against a libeller in one of these Courts, and the latter was ordered to do penance by appearing in church in a white sheet. He turned up as ordered on the appointed day, but with his face blacked and carrying a fair ballast of the best "Scotch," while a number of friends, similarly laden, accompanied him. Such was the solemn decree of an English Christian tribunal in the middle of the nineteenth century.

How stands the law at present in regard to blasphemy? Men of legal lore are not in complete agreement in their answer to this question. It would be an impertinence to offer the details of *Regina v. Foote* to readers already fully acquainted with that case, and with its bearing on the state of the law. One may be permitted to say, however, that Lord Coleridge's judgment is at variance with, and over-rides, the view laid down in some of the old text-books. Christianity, it was said, is part and parcel of the law of England, and any attack upon the "word of God" is criminal (see *e.g.* 4 Blackstone 59, 1 Hawkins' Pleas of the Crown c. 5). At present, it appears, any religious doctrine, even "fundamental truths," may be attacked, provided the assailant use the proper weapon—becoming language. Otherwise, the offender is punished, not for his assault on religion, but for hurting other people's feelings. When we reach this stage in our chapter it is time to stop. We have heard a lot from one source or another about "our island story." Is there a page in that story so black, and yet, perhaps, so beautiful, as that which tells us of the great fights of the blasphemers?

A. D. McLAREN.

The Origin of the Human Race.

AFTER a prolonged fight with human pride and prejudice, the proposition that Man is a placental mammal, and the anthropoid apes his nearest relatives, has been firmly established by the arguments and efforts of scientific men. When the skeletons of apes and men were compared, the most striking resemblances of bodily structure were revealed. Nor is this recognition quite so recent as many imagine. The Nestor of Modern Botany, Carl Linnaeus, in his *Systema Naturæ* (1735), acknowledged man's structural affinity with the anthropomorphous animals most closely resembling him, and arranged them together as the highest order of Mammalia under the designation of Primates. This comparatively early recognition of man's true position in the zoological series, albeit entertained by a few choice spirits throughout the eighteenth, and during the greater part of the nineteenth century, received no general support until the appearance of the *Descent of Man* in 1871. It is true that Huxley's elaborate investigation, entitled *Man's Place in Nature*, was published a few years earlier; but the monumental array of facts and arguments of Darwin's master-

piece constituted and continues to constitute the richest storehouse of information the world possesses concerning "this question of questions to mankind." The *Descent of Man* probably had more direct and indirect influence in broadening men's minds on this all-important problem than any other work ever published, Haeckel's *History of Creation* not excepted.

What earlier evolutionists failed to achieve, Darwin was successful in accomplishing; and henceforth, at least among the intellectuals, an impartial consideration of the problem of man's origin and development was assured.

But the general public is hard to teach. When any comparison between men and apes is suggested the average man still conjures up a distorted mental picture of the unbridgable chasm subsisting between an Italian organ-grinder's monkey on one side of the gulf and a member of the human family of the stupendous genius of Shakespeare on the other. "Darwin's theory" is still commonly supposed to consist in the statement that "man came from a monkey"; and, regrettably enough, the rank and file of orthodox believers either cannot or will not admit any appreciable difference between Darwin's contention that man and monkey had one common ancestor and the proposition that the human race has directly descended from a monkey.

We have been frequently appalled by the ignorance of biology displayed not merely by the uninstructed, but by so-called "educated" men. Quite recently, for instance, an aged clergyman, speaking from a platform in the North of London, ingenuously inquired how the evolutionists imagined "the apes and monkeys about to change into men rubbed off their tails." Again, a few weeks since, two men, presumably sane, asserted in a West London park that evolution has been abandoned by every living scientific man; and incredible as this may seem, several members of the crowd applauded the statement. If this is possible in an age blessed with a free press and enlightened by popular reprints—well, as Falstaff would have said, "God help the wicked!"

There are admittedly many thoughtful and instructed people in our midst who remain at the mercy of congenital emotion and prejudice which our unscientific methods of education do little or nothing to remove. And it was probably of these that our great anthropologist was thinking when he penned the following words:—

"To many educated minds there seems something presumptuous and repulsive in the view that the history of mankind is part and parcel of the history of nature, that our thoughts, wills, and actions accord with laws as definite as those which govern the motion of waves, the combination of acids and bases, and the growth of plants and animals."*

To those, however, who are prepared to frame their judgments upon the anthropological data gathered together during the past century, in terms of pure reason only, the accumulated evidences leave no room for any fundamental difference of opinion.

Charles Darwin derived man from a hairy quadrumanous animal of the great anthropoid group, the most prominent surviving members of which are the chimpanzee, orang-outan, gibbon, and gorilla. These tailless, semi-erect, long-armed apes are readily distinguished from the lower dog-like forms. But although morphologists have demonstrated the closest similarity of the minutiae of blood vessels, nerves, muscles, and brain convolutions of the higher apes to those of man himself, it is nevertheless not for a moment contended that any of the living anthropoid species are in the direct line of human ancestry. Excluding the gibbon, which is further removed from man than the remaining anthropoid apes, no one of these latter can be claimed as standing in closest proximity to the human family. For instance, the orang-outan possesses the most man-like brain structure; the chimpanzee has the most nearly related skull; the gorilla the most human hands and feet. Moreover, the chimpanzee and

gorilla are closely akin to each other, and are confined to the continent of Africa; the orang-outan forms a separate group, and throughout his extensive range of Borneo and the adjacent islands displays marked variations, almost every district possessing a separate species. While the chimpanzee is gregarious, the orang-outan prefers the solitary life. All apes are vegetarians, devouring berries, cocoanuts, and similar foods, diversified by an occasional egg, or even small insects and birds.

The chimpanzee is most teachable and affectionate in captivity, and is easily initiated into the manners and fashions of men. These animals will sit at table, wear human clothing, use knives, forks, and spoons. They are remarkably intelligent, and also demonstrate their kinship with mankind by imbibing alcoholic beverages, and succumbing to their influences if they drink too much. The natives of Africa, who have the advantage of studying these animals in their natural surroundings, agree in regarding them as inferior human beings, and are firmly convinced, we are told, that they pretend to be unable to speak for the purpose of avoiding work.

A further marked resemblance to man is to be traced in the similarity of dentition; ape and man alike possess eight incisors, four canine teeth, and twenty molars. This peculiarity, however, is restricted to the Old World apes. The American apes have thirty-six teeth in all, and in other characteristics more closely approximate to lower mammalian forms. Much discussion has naturally taken place concerning the primeval home of ape-men and men-apes. Numerous naturalists, notably Ernst Haeckel, favor the view that man first appeared upon the planet in a now submerged continent of the Indian Ocean, to which the name of Lemuria has been given. There are many scientific reasons for believing that Australia, the Sunda Islands, and Madagascar represent the surviving surfaces of a once great continent. But whether man's birthplace was in Lemuria or not, the higher evolution of the race appears to have occurred in more northern latitudes. That the human or semi-human family existed in Australia before that continent was severed from Asia is rendered probable by the fact that the Sydney Museum contains a slab showing imprints of human feet which, in the opinion of Professor Klaatch, were doubtlessly made by primitive man. The same geological formation contained traces of a long-extinct bird. The present position of Australia as an isolated zoological province most distinctly favors the theory that it once formed part of a sunken continent. When discovered, it was the home of the most degraded savage race in the world. Apart from a few scattered marsupial animals, such as the opossum, still surviving in neo-tropical America, Australian animal life stands alone in presenting a fauna never subjected to those rigorous competitive conditions which on other continents led to the evolution of higher mammalian life. It contains the sole surviving remnants of the Monotreme order in the egg-laying mammals Echidna and Ornithorynchus, and practically the entire order of Marsupial or pouched animals, although these have their fossil representatives in the Tertiary deposits throughout the world. Unanimity of opinion, therefore, exists among zoologists that the higher carnivorous and herbivorous organisms are the evolutionary outcome of the lower marsupial types of past geological periods. Moreover, the manner in which European rodents and other organisms flourished after their introduction into Australia completely negatives the assumption that the native forms of life were those best fitted to the Australian climate and general environment.

In the neighboring island of Tasmania the nineteenth century was far advanced before the aborigines succumbed to the influence of the European invader. Englishmen were able to watch the natives shaping and trimming their stone implements to a convenient form for grasping in the hand. These Tasmanian savages were cunning kangaroo hunters and crafty warriors; their women mounted the

* Professor E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*.

tallest trees in search for opossums. Fishing-nets and fishing-hooks were unknown, and, indeed, swimming fish were avoided as food. These primitive people were entirely ignorant of agriculture, and had no shelters save rude huts or breakwinds of sticks or bark; they were destitute of dogs or other domestic animals. Logs and clumsy floats composed of bark and grasses enabled them to cross water when conditions were favorable. Their pictorial art was poor and childish when compared with that of the men of the Palæolithic period in Europe. The religion of these savages, when purged of the beliefs introduced by Europeans, was a simple form of animism based on the belief that the shadows cast by animals and men were souls or spirits. Their firmest belief was in the power of the ghosts of the dead; they carried the bones of dead relatives as charms against harm, and they pictured the forests as the dwellings of malignant demons. They placed weapons near the graves for the use of the souls of the dead.*

These primitive people, now extinct, were therefore, until quite recently, living representatives of the early races of mankind inhabiting pre-historic Europe, and from whom the cultured populations of modern countries have been evolved.

We may now briefly survey the evidences bearing upon the evolution of man, derived from the skulls and other bony structures discovered in various parts of the earth.

One of Germany's leading anthropologists, Professor Schötenack, of Heidelberg, is of opinion that the human species arose in or near the Indo-Australian archipelago, and he contends that the Antarctic continent was more favorably conditioned than any other for the birthplace of humanity. The absence of large beasts of prey from this region removed a great impediment to man's advance, and the plentiful supply of herbivorous animals of puny intelligence afforded every facility for the evolution of the hunting stage of man's history.

This being the part of the world to which we could most reasonably look for evidence of connecting links between man and pre-human organisms, no surprise need be expressed at the fact that this identical region has furnished most decisive anatomical evidence relating to the rise of man. In 1891-2 Dr. Daboies excavated from a Pliocene deposit at Trinil, in the island of Java, a thigh-bone, regarded by competent anatomists as human, with a markedly depressed calvaria or skull-cap bearing a marked resemblance in its proportions to the corresponding parts of the anthropoid skull. These relics furnish ample evidence to establish the former existence of ape-like men, and, as time rolls on, we shall doubtless unearth other evidences of man's place in Nature.

Pithecanthropus erectus, the semi-human creature which possessed these fossil bones, bridges the chasm previously alleged to exist between savage man and the anthropoid apes. Farther facts, however, relating to man's ancestry are furnished by the fossil skeletons and skulls preserved in our museums, which in many respects are more simian in character than those of the lowest living, or recently extinct, races of mankind.

In the year 1857 a skeleton was brought to light in a limestone cave in the Neander valley near Dornap, in Germany. Virchow, an eminent though ultra-conservative man of science, belittled the discovery, and declared that the fossil bones were probably the remains of an imbecile and degenerate individual. In direct opposition to all the leading authorities, he maintained that no certain conclusion could be drawn from the evidence presented by a single fossil. But the subsequent discovery of other skeletons and skulls of a similar type clearly demonstrated that the Neanderthal man was not an abnormal individual, but the representative of a race that dwelt in the caves of Europe in pre-historic times. The skulls of Egisheim, of Brux, and of Cannstadt

all displayed pronounced simian characters, and two skeletons discovered in 1897 near Spy, in Belgium, are related to a race very slightly removed from the Neanderthal man. And the fossils quite recently unearthed in French caves solidify and strengthen this long chain of anatomical evidence, which unmistakably points to the slow and painful ascent of man from lower, less moral, less intelligent, and more brutal ancestral forms.

T. F. P.

THEY WENT.

"Big hats must go," the preacher cried,
By millinery vexed;
And not a woman stayed inside,
To listen to his text.

NATURAL AFFINITIES.

"There seems to be a strange affinity between a colored man and a chicken."

"Naturally. One is descended from Ham and the other from eggs."

THE BEST PLACES GONE.

One of the wives of a Mormon coming downstairs one morning met the physician who was attending her husband. "Is he very ill?" she asked anxiously. "He is," replied the physician; "I fear the end is not far off." "Do you think," she asked, "I should be at his bedside during his last moments?" "Yes, but I advise you to hurry. The best places are already being taken."

TIME AND IMMORTALITY.

Joaquin Miller was once overtaken by a countryman who gave him a long ride. Tired, at length, of conversation, the poet took a novel from his pocket. "What are you reading?" said the countryman. "A novel of Bret Harte's," said Mr. Miller. "Well, now, I don't see how an immortal being wants to be wasting his time with such stuff." "Are you quite sure," said the poet "that I am an immortal being?" "Of course you are." "If that is the case," responded Miller, "I don't see why I need be so very economical of my time."

ICONOCLASTS C. C. V. KILBURN SUNDAY C. C.

Played at Hanwell on Sunday, August 22, and resulted in a victory for the Iconoclasts by 44 runs. This makes our fourth consecutive win. We won the toss, and batted first. At first our wickets fell rapidly, 8 men being out for 39 runs; but Minett and R. Harvey became associated, and put on 40. The innings closed for 79, of which Minett made a capital 24 and Harvey 17. Our opponents then went in, but Collard and Travis (F.) were in deadly form and bowled unchanged, and got them all out for 35. It was a most enjoyable game, our opponents were the best of sportsmen, and their fielding was really first class.—H. E. VOIGT, *Captain I. C. C.*

The Boulter Fund.

Previously acknowledged, £21 12s. 6d.—Clapham Common Friends, £1 9s.; E. Wilson, 10s.; H. Walsh, 5s.—N. J. EVANS (Hon. Treasurer), 122 City-road, E.C.

Obituary.

SOUTH SHIELDS.—Mr. Robert Taylor, an ardent Free-thinker and old member of the local Branch of the N. S. S., died, after an operation, in the Hospital at Hartlepool on Thursday, August 12, in his seventy-fifth year. Deceased was employed, under the N. E. Railway Company, for over fifty years, and retired from his position at Tyne Docks only a few years ago. A staunch admirer of Messrs. Bradlaugh, Foote, and other leading Freethought advocates, Mr. Taylor was always ready to defend the cause when criticised or attacked in any way, and dearly loved a good hard fight for his faith. The remains were brought to South Shields, and as permission to read the Secular Burial Service in the churchyard was refused, Mr. S. M. Peacock read Mr. Gould's at the house-door of the son, in Crofton-street, before the cortege left for Horton. Mr. Taylor was silently laid to rest beside his wife and son in St. Peter's Churchyard last Sunday afternoon.—R. CHAPMAN.

* Professor E. B. Tylor, "Anthropology," *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

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): W. J. Ramsey, 3.15, "Where Angels Dwell"; 6, "God is Love."

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (Ridley-road): 11.30, C. Cohen, a Lecture.

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

WEST LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Marble Arch, Hyde Park): 11.30 and 6.30, Lectures.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford): 7, E. C. Saphin, "Five Points of Priestcraft."

WOOD GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Spouters' Corner): 11.30, J. Rowney, "The Sermon on the Mount." Seven Sisters' Corner: 7, N. J. Evans, "Unbelief the Cause of Progress."

WOOLWICH BRANCH N. S. S. (Beresford-square): 11.30 and 7.30, Lectures.

COUNTRY.**INDOOR.**

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, H. Percy Ward, "A World without God."

OUTDOOR.

BRISTOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Durdham Downs): 7, B. G. Brown, "The Bristol Branch—Prospective and Retrospective."

EDINBURGH SECULAR SOCIETY: Leith Links, 2.30, a Lecture; The Mound, 6.30, Mr. Bowie, a Lecture; Portobello Sands, 6.30, a Lecture; Musselburgh (Hayweights), 6.30, a Lecture.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Edge Hill Lamp): Wednesday, September 1, at 8, H. Percy Ward, a Lecture.

WIGAN BRANCH N. S. S. (Market-square): Monday, August 30, at 8, H. Percy Ward, "Where is God?"

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