

# THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXIX.—No. 51

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1909

PRICE TWOPENCE

*In this restless earth, the only true happiness is to be found in acts of affection and benevolence, and in the development of our faculties.—GOETHE.*

## A Dangerous Dose.

A CURIOUS incident occurred recently at Yeovil. Mr. William Penny, a retired farmer, over eighty-five years of age, went to Holy Trinity Church and partook of the Holy Communion; and immediately afterwards he died suddenly in his pew.

Such a holy act as partaking of the Holy Communion in a Holy Trinity Church ought to have been perfectly safe. If Providence could not protect him there, where on earth, or elsewhere, *could* it protect him?

Are we to assume that there is *no* Providence? One would think so. If a Christian dies in church, could an Infidel do more? It appears that a worshipping Christian enjoys no greater security than a blaspheming Infidel. Life Assurance Companies are actually known to proceed upon this understanding. They charge Infidels no more; they charge Christians no less. They discriminate in favor of Temperance, but not in favor of Orthodoxy. The only "spirit" they trouble about is what is put up in bottles.

This providential indifference to the health and longevity of Christians and Infidels supplies a new reading to a famous passage in Ecclesiastes. The author reminded men that "they themselves are beasts,"—which doesn't sound very polite, though its bad manners disappear if we regard "beasts" as a synonym for "lower animals." Shakespeare makes Hamlet call man "the paragon of animals." Man's "glassy essence" (to quote Shakespeare again), as distinct from the life, instinct, reason, and feeling of his "poor relations," would therefore seem to be an imaginary article. This, indeed, is taught in Ecclesiastes. The author sarcastically, and even sneeringly, asks: "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, or the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?"—meaning, of course, that the man who knows any such difference between man and beast is a great deal too wise for this world. This is put still more pointedly in another verse:—

"For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast."

We have felt the force of that last sentence when we have seen a sober dog piloting a drunken man home. But this is by the way. We must get back to farmer Penny. The point is that his sudden death in church, after the supreme act of Christian devotion, gives a fresh reading to the foregoing text. What the writer says of men and beasts may be applied to Christians and Infidels. One thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a Christian hath no pre-eminence above an Infidel.

It is not strange from our point of view that the most sensible, and not the least poetic, book in the Bible was the work of a Freethinker. For this reason the Jews were careful that it did not fall into the hands of their sons before they were fairly grown up, and had got their orthodoxy too firmly established to be easily shaken.

But the orthodox Christian must view the matter very differently. He believes in special providence,—for nothing else *is* providence. He believes that God looks particularly after his dear Christians. He looks after the very sparrows, though you wouldn't think it if you knew how they perish in the cold. How much more, then, must he look after the believers? His solicitude is so extensive, and so minute, that the very hairs of their heads are all numbered,—and no doubt posted up in the heavenly ledgers, with a profit and loss balance struck on the thirty-first of December, according as each true believer has used Tatcho or experienced domestic differences.

Well now, we respectfully invite the true believers to consider the case of farmer Penny, on the basis of their own theory of divine superintendence.

God must have fixed up all the circumstances of farmer Penny's death a long while (and longer than that) before farmer Penny was born. He must have watched the old fellow going to church (without knowing it) for the last time. He must have waited eighty-five years for the joke he was going to play off on his agricultural worshiper. He got him snugly into the church, and still more snugly into the pew; he allowed him to stock himself with the body and blood of Christ; and handed him his burial ticket just as he was rejoicing over the holy operation.

We assume that farmer Penny had swallowed the blood as well as the body of Christ. We suppose that he was a Protestant. If he were a Catholic, he could only have swallowed the body of Christ, for the Catholic priests monopolise the blood of Christ. A wafer is good enough for laymen; the port wine is reserved exclusively for the holy men of God.

We hope the old man's death was not effected by the body of Christ. That would look very much like an accident. A bone wafer, which had been dropped amongst the sacred ones in a Catholic church (so the story goes), was handed out to an old Dutchman, who could make no impression upon it, and was driven to conclude that he had had the son many a time before but had now got hold of the parent. A wafer, or a bit of crust, of that consistency, might have been too much for farmer Penny's digestive apparatus at his time of life.

If it was the blood of Christ that settled the old man's hash, a legitimate complaint would lie against the wine merchant who supplied it,—unless the stuff was so cheap that nothing else could be expected. We have seen the ruddy fluid advertised of late years at remarkably low rates. A self-respecting Deity would hardly tolerate such contemptuous treatment. It may be, therefore, that the sudden death of farmer Penny is intended to call attention to the general question of Communion port. It never ought to be less than three or four shillings a bottle—in justice to the Deity and his worshipers. The matter is one of the highest importance. The Budget and the House of Lords are insignificant beside it. What is the interest of our pockets to the interest of our immortal souls?

Farmer Penny may conceivably have suffered from a first experience of the teetotal Communion port which is creeping into use in so many churches. Having been so long accustomed to the real article, the imitation may have been too much for him, and he was ready to depart and be with the Lord.

G. W. FOOTE.

## Mr. Campbell on the Future of Religion.—II.

(Continued from p. 786.)

BEING, from the standpoint of the orthodox Christian, a heretic, Mr. Campbell is not averse to emphasising the heterodoxy of educated English people. He says:—

"With rare exceptions the cultivated classes hold dogmatic theology in contempt or treat it with indifference.....The pulpit is not looked up to as it used to be; preachers are not the makers of public opinion on anything, and there is good reason to believe that their ranks are recruited from a less intelligent class than formerly.....It is widely felt, too, that there is a good deal of reserve practised in the pulpit; the preacher seldom dares to declare his whole mind, when he has a mind worth declaring, for he knows quite well that the formularies of his Church are in conflict with the modern outlook upon life. This is painful and degrading; in fact it is morally bad."

All this has been said times out of number in the columns of this journal, and very good reasons given for saying it. But Mr. Campbell is rather ingenuous in restricting the contempt or disbelief of "cultivated" people to "dogmatic theology." But there is more than this in it. The disbelief of the really cultivated classes is not only of dogmatic theology, but of those ideas that lay at their foundation. Just as dogmas are the expression of certain ideas, so their rejection is very often the negative of those ideas. There is little or no real belief among cultivated people in a personal Deity, a particular providence, or a future life such as Christianity has always taught people existed. Orthodox preachers say, with truth, that the rejection of dogma is a symptom of unbelief; and Freethinkers know that a disbelief in fundamental religious ideas is often enough disguised as a rejection of mere dogma in order to avoid the punishment that a Christianised society measures out to those who have the capacity to think and the courage to speak.

The position of the preacher, Mr. Campbell points out, is degrading and morally bad. Quite so; but, again, there is more in this than meets the eye. The position of the Christian preacher is as Mr. Campbell describes it simply because he is a Christian preacher. As a preacher he is not elected to lead his congregation on a search for truth; he is there to preach *the* truth. What he shall think is settled for him before he was elected, and in the main his congregation or his colleagues are there to watch that he does not deviate from the prescribed path. The consequence is that either men become preachers who feel no inclination to stray out of the old ruts—this involves a progressively poorer type of mind in the pulpit—or with men of keener insight but weaker moral fibre there is one long course of paltering with what they know to be true in the interests of what they are expected to believe. And the joke of the situation is, that just as a goodly number of the occupants of the pulpit are engaged in pretending to believe so as to encourage the people in the pews, an equally large proportion of these latter are pretending to believe so as not to discourage the men in the pulpit. One half the Christian world is busy inoculating the other half with hypocrisy in the fancied interests of honesty and morality. And to crown all, it is the religion which has always exerted this widespread evil influence on the better part of human nature that we are told has been the great promoter of manliness and righteous conduct.

Mr. Campbell and those with him cannot have their cake and eat it. If he is right in depicting the evils of dogmatic Christianity he must give up claiming Christianity as the great, or even as a great, instrument of Western civilisation. If he is right, all the goodness of Christianity lies in the future. Its career of beneficence will date from the introduction of the New Theology. This need not concern us now. It is a justification of what Freethinkers have said concerning the disastrous influence of Christianity on the course of civilisation. Nearly

every Christian sect has been able to see how inimical to human development has been all other Christian sects. The Freethinker alone has been able to harmonise their mutual recriminations in a single comprehensive and unimpeachable condemnation.

It is true that Mr. Campbell—under the glamor of old formulæ, one assumes—says that though the Church is now outside the current of "social idealism" there was a time when "the Church was the one democratic institution in an age of violence and oppression," and, perhaps with the notion some people have that a falsehood or an absurdity is less of a falsehood or an absurdity when put into rhyme, quotes Whittier's—

"The priesthood like a tower  
Stood between the poor and power;  
And the wronged and trodden down  
Blessed the Abbot's shaven crown."

Very pretty! But when was it true? When was the Church a democratic institution, save in the sense that it had the genius to select from all classes those who were able and willing to serve its ends? As an institution, the rule of the Church was always autocratic; it was no more of a democracy than was any monarchy that condescended to ask the advice of its vassals. Or when was it that the priesthood stood between the poor and power? If it did so it was only to prevent the levy on the poor going to the secular power instead of to the Church. If Mr. Campbell looks into the matter instead of merely dreaming about it he will find that the Church levied its toll on fishing and farming exactly as did the secular lord of the soil, with the difference that it could the more rigidly garner its dues because of the superstitious fears of its victims. What the Church really did was to cement the bonds of the poor by making obedience to the secular powers one of its most insistent teachings. In the crucial instance of slavery the Church held on to its human property to the bitter end, and was among the last to grant freedom to its slaves. The idea of the Church standing between the poor and the secular power is simply ludicrous to those who know how effectively it has always supported the most arbitrary government so long as its own claims were respected.

Equally absurd is the picture of the wronged and down-trodden blessing the priesthood. Of course, the Church gave to the poor, and equally, of course, the mass of the poor looked to the Church for doles. But it is equally true that the secular rich have given, and do give, to the poor, and the type of poor that "blessed the Abbot's shaven crown" may be found blessing anyone who distributes alms. So do the poor of our cities bless the charity of the successful manufacturer or merchant without thinking how much of their necessity is born of the policy of the people they are blessing. Mr. Campbell's Socialism must be as nebulous and as ill-digested as his theology if he sees in the blessings of the mediæval poor an indication of a desirable social state.

One might ask Mr. Campbell from whom does he imagine the enormous wealth of the mediæval Church was obtained? And what is the meaning of the constant jibes at, and satires on, the wealth and rapacity and tyranny of shaven abbot and mitred prelate in all the popular mediæval songs and ballads? How, too, does it occur that in all the revolts of serfs and peasants the Church became one of the principal objects of attack? This last phenomenon is a fairly constant one, down to our own day. The truth is, that the ancient Church encouraged poverty and distress by its passive encouragement to tyranny on the one side and its active discipline of submission on the other. The notion of a Church that once stood as the protector of the poor and against the rich is a pure superstition, belonging to the same order of false beliefs as that harking back to a supposed primitive type of Christianity distinguished for its purity and moral excellence. Good men among abbots and other ecclesiastics there were, but they were wondrous few among so large an army. The Christian Church, as an institution, was

itself one of the most powerful causes of the misery its charity is credited with mitigating. It was the cement that bound together oppressor and oppressed, the robber and the robbed, injustice and its victim, and excused the one by its supernatural pardon as it terrified the other by its supernatural penalties.

Mr. Campbell is very fond of using the word "Materialism," and usually with a sinister inflection. In this instance, he tells us, there is a danger arising from the "fierce Materialism" of the "toilers and dispossessed." Well, when people are in need of bread and the necessities of life, they are not likely to be clamoring for the higher culture and metaphysical theology. But Mr. Campbell's fear of "Materialism" is that it may lead to what happened at the French Revolution. "A moment which all lovers of liberty hailed with delight speedily became perverted into an orgy of blood and terror." And the only thing that can prevent this is "the regeneration of spiritual life and power;.....a new emphasis on the spiritual nature and destiny of man, a new vision of God"—in other words, the New Theology. If Mr. Campbell thinks that the only thing between society and a reign of terror is the gospel of the City Temple, he must take himself very seriously indeed.

Mr. Campbell says we ought not to forget what happened at the French Revolution, and I agree with him. Only let us remember what really happened, and not delude ourselves with a Sunday-school version of that event. A society Christianised for many centuries had left France with a mere handful of privileged people devouring the very life of the peasantry and threatening the well-being of the rest of the nation. Nearly a fifth of the land of France belonged to the Church. Out of a taxation of sixty millions sterling, the Church received six millions, and for it supported a monarch and an aristocracy that took nearly a half of what remained. No man's property was secure, no man's liberty was safe. A nation of twenty-five millions was living under a system of injustice and robbery that one hundred thousand privileged persons might exist in luxury. The poor, doubtless true to Mr. Campbell's ideal, "blessed the abbot's shaven crown" for the doles received. But others, wiser than they, saw no cause for blessing, but every cause for condemnation and action. The movement of 1789 developed and was, as is usual in such cases, very largely due to the work of heretics. It gave to France, to the whole of Europe, a conception of State duties and individual rights that has been at the foundation of most of the good work since done. And what is more to the point, the Revolution became an accomplished fact, cleared France of its most glaring abuses, and marked the road for its future development without the shedding of scarce a drop of blood. The real originators of the much exaggerated "Terror" were the Christian nations of Europe, who, in combination with the religious nobility of France, sought to force the French people back to a state of slavery from which they had just emerged. Christian influences turned a war of humanitarianism into a war of conquest, just as it partly paralysed the efforts, and for a time suspended, the work of the guiding free minds of France, by letting loose the lower passions of a people brutalised by centuries of Christian superstition and Christian rule.

C. COHEN.

(To be concluded.)

### Did God Become Man?

ALL Christendom is now preparing for the due celebration of what is called the fact of the Incarnation in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and the religious press is replete with dogmatic expositions of the alleged event. What strikes us most forcibly with regard to these explanations is that no two of them agree, and that most of them destroy one another. What one theologian blesses as the most precious truth another anathematizes as a diabolical heresy.

One assures us that the Incarnation signifies "the union of the second person of the Godhead with manhood in Christ," another that it implies that "Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin," while yet another declares that the Incarnation only means that in Jesus the God who was already immanent in humanity "flashed forth in grace, truth, and glory." According to the latter the Incarnation denotes, not the clothing of Deity with human flesh, but the outshining of Deity through the flesh of Jesus. But, in one sense or another, this is the season for the observance of the festival of the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ; and it is certain that the majority of Christians take it for granted that what they are commemorating is God's infinite condescension in becoming man. Taking the miracle in this sense, the question which naturally suggests itself is, Did God ever become man? Many professing Christians will be putting this question both to themselves and to one another at this time, and not a few of them will be dissatisfied with the conventional answer to it. Even within the various churches, nominally joining in the loud hosannahs, there will be those whose minds are not at rest, but wistfully inquire, Is it all true?

Did God become man? Is the Incarnation a historical fact? Before dealing with this question, we should boldly face a prior one, namely, Is there a God to become man? Not long ago, a distinguished divine said that had it not been for Jesus the world would never have known God. In the fourth Gospel, Jesus himself is reported as claiming that he was the revealer of the Father. "The world knew thee not," he averred, "but I knew thee." It is noteworthy that in those words Jesus does not claim that he *is* God, but that he *knew* him, and knowing declared him unto his own. Many of his followers, however, maintain that he was so very like God that they have no hesitation in calling him God. Now, it stands to reason that no one could have recognised God in Jesus Christ had he not been previously known in some other way; and had he been previously known there would have been no need for Jesus to reveal him. It is true that Jesus is represented as contending that he had revealed him; but that representation is found only in the fourth Gospel, which, according to several Christian scholars, is not a historical document. The question is, Was there a God whom Jesus could be and make known? The existence of a supernatural, Divine person is simply an assumption of the imagination; and there is no means whatever of verifying it. On close examination it is always found that the people who speak in God's name are only venting their own opinions, convictions, or prejudices. Not long ago, a clergyman totally disapproved of Maud Allan's dancing; but he denounced it in the name of God, and warned the people who flocked to witness it that God was angry with them and would certainly punish them. It was the same with the Old Testament prophets. They fathered their own political and moral principles on Jehovah in the hope that thereby their utterances would be all the more authoritative. They projected their own ideals, likes and dislikes, sympathies and aversions into space, clothed them with the attributes of personality, and called them Lord, God, Almighty. No one can read the Old Testament thoughtfully without perceiving how eminently true this is, because nothing is more undeniable than that the character of God rises and falls with the characters of the people who speak and act on his alleged authority. This is why the gods of mankind have been such a countless host, and it is the realisation of this that accounts for the prevailing Atheism of to-day.

Now the God of the Gospel Jesus was not the God of Joshua and king David, but of the prophet Isaiah. Whatever differences can be traced between Jesus's conception of the Divine Being and that of Isaiah, it will be seen that they are identical with the differ-

ences between the two men. As an idea that is constantly changing, God is most real; but of his existence as a personal Being there is absolutely no proof. When, therefore, it is stated that Jesus either was or revealed God we affirm that the Deity of and for whom he spoke was only an imaginary projection of himself. The fourth Gospel (xiv. 8-11) tells us that on one occasion Philip said unto him, "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus met that most reasonable request in this significant fashion: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." On another occasion he said, "I and the Father are one." He never indulged in a truer observation. Jesus and God were one and the same person. Beyond and above the man Jesus there was no Deity. He was not God become man, but a man who identified himself with God. There is no doubt but that the author of the fourth Gospel wished his readers to believe that Jesus was God manifest in the flesh; but it is equally certain that, judged in the light of the teaching ascribed to him, Jesus was only a man of a dreamy, visionary temperament, whose ideals were of such a nature that they could never be converted into actuals.

That Jesus was not God become man is now frankly admitted by the New Theologians. The Rev. Dr. Orchard, though a minister of the highly orthodox Presbyterian Church, is yet sufficiently heterodox to repudiate the proper Deity of his Master. Speaking of the orthodox view of the Incarnation in an article in the *Christian Commonwealth* for December 8, he says:—

"As commonly understood, it necessitates that God can unite himself with human nature only if that nature is first separated from its inherited corruption by means of an immaculate conception miraculously secured; with the result that we get only an abnormal and superhuman personality. It implies that if God wishes to come into intimate contact with human nature it entails an abruption from its natural course, and a forcible injection from without. This is religiously unsatisfactory, for it necessitates the notion that the Incarnation of God in man has not really yet taken place.....It is historically incredible, for the Jesus of the Gospels lives so natural and human a life that various theories of the self-emptying of Deity have had to be manufactured in order to account for the absence of the essential attributes of the Deity, such as Omniscience and Omnipotence."

Coming from such a source, that extract furnishes positive evidence that Christianity is really breaking up. When a minister who denies the superhuman and supernatural character of the person of Jesus is yet permitted to teach in a church which was founded on the doctrine that "the Lord Jesus Christ, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever," one is justified in affirming that the world is really progressing, that the ancient superstitions are passing, and that reason is slowly mounting her throne. At the same time, Freethinkers must be on their guard against cherishing too optimistic a spirit, for in another religious journal for the same week, Professor Sir William Ramsay, of Aberdeen, accepts the story of the birth of Jesus literally, as related by Matthew and Luke. He swallows the Virgin Birth with amazing relish, and then looks the world in the face as if he had done nothing extraordinary. Listen to this:—

"The time came at last when the story should be made known; but it was kept secret throughout the lifetime of Jesus, and probably for some time after his death. Mark tells the story of the public life of Jesus, but not of his family circumstances and home life. John and Paul lay strong emphasis on his pre-existence and his voluntary choice of an earthly life (which implies that his Birth and Life were quite different from mere human existence); but only Matthew and Luke tell the story of his Birth, and they select different details out of the story."

The fact that such a scholarly gentleman as the Professor of Humanity at the Aberdeen University still clings to such fairy-tales, and distinguishes between them and all similar tales by taking them

literally as they stand, and building upon them a whole system of superstitious theology, shows conclusively that the advocates of Freethought have still much hard work before them, and cannot afford to rest on their oars as if the victory were already theirs. The champions of orthodox Christianity are both numerous and powerful, and as blindly dogmatic as ever. Of course, once it is taken for granted that the Birth and Life of Jesus "were quite different from mere human existence," there is no difficulty in believing the story of the miraculous birth; but we are profoundly convinced that, taking the life of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels, there is nothing in it to justify his isolation from the great host of Incarnate Deities of whom we read in different mythologies. He has exerted no greater power on the world than many of them have done, while it cannot be denied that much of his influence through his Church has been for evil. The history of Christianity does not yield a single scrap of argument in favor of the claim that he was God made flesh for the world's redemption. Whether God and sinners are, through him, reconciled or not, it is beyond controversy that his alleged reign has not succeeded in reconciling man with man. "Peace on earth and mercy mild" have never followed in his train. What history makes clear is that belief in God, incarnate or otherwise, has been utterly impotent except as the cause, or at least the occasion, of innumerable bitter strifes and bloody wars. Whenever there is peace in Christendom it is the outcome, not of the triumph of the spirit of Jesus, but of the existence of armies and navies of enormous destructive capacity. The brotherhood of man, the reign of righteousness and love, the practical realisation of the essential unity of the race, these are realities yet to come.

J. T. LLOYD.

### Only One Reason.

A GOOD many years ago, when I was a Board-school teacher in the shabby recesses of Bethnal Green in East London, I had a pleasant chat with the brisk, business-like, shrewd, and genial clergyman then in charge of the local Church of England Settlement. I said to myself prophetically:—

"This man will be a Bishop; perhaps Archbishop."

He is now the Bishop of London, and if unhappy accident should remove the Archbishop of Canterbury from his throne, we may see our Metropolitan shepherd rise, like William of Orange in Rubens's picture, towards a more exalted station. Peace be with him as a prelate, and I shall be charmed if, some day, I eat a bun with him, and ask him how he likes the Reformed House of Lords.

But his dreadful doctrines!

His lordship delivered an Advent address before a large gathering of City men, who met in the Royal Exchange during the luncheon hour. He asked the City men "to try to realise the awful crash which death brought into the life of anyone, if there was nothing beyond death."

Well, there cannot be a crash after death, if there is nothing beyond death. And whether there is a crash before death is a matter open to general inspection. Disbelievers in the egoistic conception of a purely personal immortality do not appear to be subject to a succession of crashes during life. Apparently, therefore, the excellent preacher means that a crash is sure to arrive in the last hours. I have seen a considerable number of Freethinkers on their dying beds, and have never witnessed a crash. Apart from that experience, however, and assuming that the crash is a normal consequence of studying Biblical criticism, or accepting Buddhism, I find it difficult to comprehend what sort of a God he can be who complacently allows these horrid collapses of the dying souls. Upon my word, I cannot readily conceive that the Universe—with all its faults, a very wonderful Universe—is under the government of a cad. In some species of Hell I could manage

to believe, and could resign myself to the existence of a variety of Devils, feeling fairly sure that they would annihilate themselves sooner or later by merely practising the principles of anarchy. But it is beyond me to imagine seriously that a God could meanly and spitefully make the "crash" a regular institution in the final consciousness of people who did not happen to recognise him (so to speak) when they met him in the cosmic street. The Agnostic does not raise his hat to the Deity, and the Deity has so little in common with an ordinary gentleman that he lets the incident rankle! The journalists say that the City men were much impressed by the Bishop of London's statements on this subject. It may be so; but I am sorry they never learned a better code of manners.

The amiable Bishop observed that when a dying boy looked up in his face and asked "Where am I going?" he had only one reason to give the boy for believing in another world, and that was, that Jesus Christ came here and preached immortality and proved it by rising again.

I am confident that dying boys are not in the habit of asking where they are going. I can certainly answer for a dying girl. My little daughter—ever living as an integral part of my own life and remembrance, and therefore sharing to-day in all my better self—asked in her dying moments, for a toy, and murmured words about a box that she had played with; and, when she could no longer speak, she looked into the faces of her mother and father, and her eyes expressed no thought but just the familiar household thoughts, with perchance some questioning as to when she might be able to run to school again, and draw such pictures as she loved. The chamber, with us three in it, was quiet enough, and I can assure the Bishop there was no crash. Tears indeed there were; but tears come in strenuous and self-assertive crises of life as well as in the day of death. No name of God or Christ was repeated in our Eva's ear. Love watched then, and remembers now, and that suffices.

Were there Jews in the Royal Exchange audience? Jews do not usually accept the accounts of Christ's rising. Had the estimable Bishop offered them an assortment of reasons for believing in immortality, they would possibly have agreed to all but one, and declined that one with thanks. But he narrowed them down to that "only one reason," as who should say:—

"Gentlemen, so singularly is this cosmos constructed, and so secretly are its processes planned, that there is positively nothing at all in earth or heaven to prove the continuity of our being after death except a record in a few documents dating from the days of the ancient Britains and of Plutarch."

The Bishop's discourse was entitled "Redemption." The newspaper says that many admiring comments were made by the City men—presumably including the Jews. It is also reported that the speaker declared, in an impassioned voice:—

"If I did not believe thoroughly and absolutely in Redemption, I would not remain a Bishop for another day."

Which meant that he would not care to earn his living except honestly, and, after all, we expect as much as that from an errand-boy or window-cleaner. The City men, however, were greatly moved by this intimation; and philosophers may, if they choose, speculate on the emotion of which the Royal Exchange was witness.

As I said just now, the Universe is a very wonderful vision. When I survey its scenery—the many-colored land and sea-scapes of the rolling earth, the circling spheres of the Solar System, the nebulae, comets, and immense starry spaces beyond, it seems to me a place which is worthy of the best intellect we can devote to its study and explanation. The wretched theory of crashes at death-beds hardly seems to me good enough for a race that could produce a Cæsar, an Aurelius, a Sophocles, a Galileo, a Descartes, a Montaigne, a Shakespeare, a Goethe, a Shelley. It

may suit the peculiar tastes of ill-educated Ranters, or perhaps some of the lower orders of the African savage; and it may evoke admiring comments from London City men; and, in all three cases, one is bound to observe an attitude of charitable respect. But somehow, I hardly feel it would be a right thing to converse with the shade of Æschylus or Plato and tell him that this brave show of stars and ethereal distances is bound up with the creed professed by the Bishop of London. I would not like to say:—

"Plato, I assure you, that life would not be worth living, and death would be accompanied by a most horrible crash (so the Bishop of London says), unless the man Jesus had risen from his grave at Jerusalem some four centuries after you wrote your *Republic*."

He would probably smile, and reply that the alleged resurrection appeared irrelevant to the problem of how to realise the True, the Beautiful, and the Good. Plato would largely absorb the science and philosophy added to the treasury of Humanity since he lent a lustre to the Academy. He would, I will be sworn, agree that the world contained a sufficiency of noble things to enkindle noble motives without the aid of the Bishop's only reason. Our race has a history that is not, on the whole, devoid of dignity and inspiration; and it is well worthy of service. The earth we dwell on is a stage meet for great acting; and the vast environment that encircles our habitation is a stately enough setting for the dramatic mission of life and progress.

One summer week, I loitered from hill to hill, and from one fair meadow to another, down the Valley of the River Duddon, and, having seen the cascades over the boulders and the dark pools under arched bridges, I stood at the peaceful spot where the Duddon melts into the sea. It was there that Wordsworth wrote the lines that musically sum the whole duty of man, and I commend the manly equanimity of them to our worthy Bishop:—

"We men, who in our morn of youth defied  
The elements, must vanish. Be it so!  
Enough, if something from our hands have power  
To live, and act, and serve the future hour;  
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go, [dower,  
Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent  
We find that we are greater than we know."

The faith is a faith that rises above the petty creed of theism to a stable conviction of man's power to harmonise his life with a world-order, and the hope is a hope that the love now glowing in the hearts of the nobler members of our race will become the master-builder of the general republic.

F. J. GOULD.

## THE DEVIL.

Take the Devil from our religion and the entire fabric falls. No Devil, no fall of man. No Devil, no atonement. No Devil, no hell.

The Devil is the keystone of the arch.

And yet for many years the belief in the existence of the Devil—of evil spirits—has been fading from the minds of intelligent people. This belief has now substantially vanished. The minister who now seriously talks about a personal Devil is regarded with a kind of pitying contempt.

The Devil has faded from his throne and the evil spirits have vanished from the air.

The man who has really given up a belief in the existence of the Devil cannot believe in the inspiration of the New Testament—in the divinity of Christ. If Christ taught anything, if he believed in anything, he taught a belief in the existence of the Devil. His principal business was casting out devils. He himself was taken possession of by the Devil and carried to the top of the temple.

Thousands and thousands of people have ceased to believe the account in the New Testament regarding devils, and yet continue to believe in the dogma of "inspiration" and the divinity of Christ.—*Ingersoll*.

## Acid Drops.

We have always said that the great fight of the future will be between Catholicism and Freethought. Protestantism is an illogical compromise, an impossible reconciliation of faith and reason, and is therefore but temporary. It has been breaking up ever since it first appeared. Sects multiply, doctrines fade away into nothingness, and at last we get the New Theology, which is really nothing but Deism under the disguise of Christianity. The Catholic Church, however, holds on to the old dogmas and the old worship. It makes no concessions to the modern spirit. And it thus satisfies all those to whom the modern spirit is alien and hateful. That, indeed, is the main secret of its strength. It really represents the past—with all its superstitions and traditions. Recognising, then, as we do, that the Catholic Church is the great and final enemy of Freethought, we still propose to stand by our own principles in fighting it. Our worst temptation is the temptation to resort to our enemy's tactics. The Catholic Church lies and falsifies—but we must not; the Catholic Church persecutes—but we must not; the Catholic Church murders—but we must not. If we were to slay a Cardinal, for instance, in revenge for the execution of Ferrer, we should be false to our own ideas; and what is the use of winning in a war only to find in the hour of victory that you have lost all that you started fighting for? What is the use of reaching the goal if you arrive there with the wrong principles? How have you triumphed over the enemies of liberty and light if you have adopted all their vices in the course of the struggle?

When the Separation war was raging in France we pointed out that it was a violation of Freethought principles to disestablish and disendow the Catholic Church and yet try to keep it under the control of the State. If you reduce the priest to the position of an ordinary citizen you must allow him the full rights of an ordinary citizen. That you hate his religion, his attitude, and his methods is nothing to the purpose. He hates your ideas and policies with equal intensity. You have no more right to oppress him than he has to oppress you. That is the whole case in a nutshell. If you deny it, you affirm that might is the measure of right. You use your power to persecute the Catholic, just as he used his power to persecute you, and one side is just as bad as the other. Nay, you are the worse of the two, for the Catholic is at least true to his own principles, and you are false to yours.

The State in France has gained supreme control over Education. That is right, because the State builds the schools, maintains them, and pays the teachers. But a State which prohibits rivalry in Education is simply a tyranny. Every citizen should be free to carry on educational efforts at the expense of himself and his voluntary associates. The only just condition imposable upon him is that the secular instruction, in which alone the State is legitimately interested, shall be adequately imparted. All the rest belongs inalienably to the individual conscience. And this freedom does not cease because the person who claims and exercises it is a priest. For if you secularise the State you can only take cognisance of a priest as a person belonging to a certain profession—like a doctor, a lawyer, a dentist, or a bus-driver. Moreover, a priest has the same right of free speech, the same right of criticising the action of the State, as other citizens. To gag him, or to place him under any special restraint, is persecution. Those who gag or restrain him may dignify their action with whatever fine names they choose to select, but that does not alter the facts. It is persecution to impose conditions on other men which you do not accept for yourselves. It is persecution when Catholics do it, and it would be persecution if Freethinkers did it.

Now let us apply this to a situation which is arising in France. Freethinkers, in the old days, before the absolute divorce between Church and State, used to criticise quite freely the religious teaching of the Catholic Church in colleges and schools as well as in places of worship. They had a right to do this, they did it, and they did it thoroughly. On what principle, then, can they claim the right to prevent Catholics from doing the same now that the tables are turned? We maintain that Catholics are as much entitled as Freethinkers are to criticise and object to books which are used in public colleges and schools. Yes, and even to boycott such books as far as possible. Dr. Clifford and the other Passive Resisters go far beyond this in England. They refuse to pay the Education rate because it includes the cost of certain religious teaching of which they disapprove, and which some of them regard as simply damnable. Yet these Nonconformists, who deliberately resort to the

methods of political anarchy, display cynical contempt for the action of their Catholic fellow Christians in France. The rights of French Catholics are nothing to English Nonconformists—and very little to English Churchmen. It was only the *Freethinker* that stood up for equal liberty all round during the Separation war in France.

For some time past circular letters have been sent by Cardinals, Archbishops, and Bishops to the Catholic priests and their flocks, denouncing a number of class-books as Atheistic, immoral, unpatriotic, insulting to the Church of Rome, false to the facts of history, and directing the heads of families to reject such works under pain of ecclesiastical censure and excommunication. Great umbrage was taken at this by school teachers, authors, and municipal councillors all over France; and the feeling of resentment has passed into overt action. On Thursday, December 9, a summons was issued against the Archbishop of Paris to appear the next week before the Civil Tribunal of the Seine on a charge of boycotting certain class books used by the public authority in the national schools, and thereby subjecting the authors of the works in question to serious loss. Now, on the face of it, the Archbishop of Paris has done no more than Dr. Clifford and his friends do every day in England. He has expressed his opinion of certain teaching carried on in the public schools, and he is doing his utmost to get such teaching abolished. Dr. Clifford and his friends do that and more. Freethinkers, also, express their opinion of the Bible and religious teaching in English public schools, and do their utmost to get such teaching abolished. It makes no real difference that the Catholic Church threatens ecclesiastical pains and excommunication. That is a private affair when Church and State are entirely separated. The Catholic Church in France is as much a voluntary association as Nonconformist Churches are in England. It is as much a voluntary association as the National Secular Society is. It has a perfect right to its own discipline, and to wipe any name it pleases off its members' roll. People who don't like its rules and regulations have their own remedy. They can walk out, and practise religion alone, or in association with some other body. As for the authors, one would like to know why their books should not be discommended and rejected as well as adopted and praised. What commercial interests can they have except such as belong to the producers and sellers of other commodities? It appears to us that the French government is once more taking a false step. The only wise, just, and safe rule is equal liberty for all. Freethinkers are at liberty to criticise and oppose the Catholic Church and all its works. Catholics should also be at liberty to criticise and oppose Freethought and all its works. For our part, we will not be satisfied with less than liberty, and we disdain the idea of accepting more.

The Campbellite organ has published a Christmas Number. One of its principal features is "A Christmas Prayer," by Mr. Hall Caine—a novelist who has exploited Jesus Christ as much as any writer of the present age, not even excepting Miss Marie Corelli. This prayer of Mr. Caine's fills a column of small type; it is addressed to the Lord; and if the Lord has the patience to listen to it from beginning to end he has more of that commodity than we have—although we once waited twelve months for a door to open. But the New Theology is in raptures; it praises the "deep feeling and passionate fervor" of Mr. Caine's long-drawn composition, and ranks it with Kipling's "Recessional"—which is a poor compliment to Kipling, who has at least a certain strength of expression.

Mr. Caine's "Christmas Prayer," as our eyes glanced down the long column, struck us as replete with unconscious humor. "Thou didst show us Lazarus in Abraham's bosom," he says. Yes, but what about the other fellow? Why not say, "Thou didst show us Dives in hell"? And how about poor old Abraham, condemned to hold that scabby beggar inside his shirtfront through all eternity? One would like the old chap's honest view of his situation. And then Mr. Caine tells the Lord, who must be pretty familiar with the fact, that—"Thou didst teach us to lay up our treasure in heaven, to sell all and give to the poor, to go forth in thy name without purse or scrip or second coat, trusting to our Father for our food, even as the birds of the air, and for our raiment, even as the flowers of the field." The humor of this is immense. Mr. Caine reminds Jesus Christ of this teaching; whereas it is Jesus Christ who ought to remind Mr. Caine. When did Mr. Caine sell all and give to the poor? When did he travel without a purse or an overcoat? When did Mr. Campbell do it? When did any of the tribe do it? They are really playing a pantomime with long faces, like clown and pantaloon. All they want is a colombine to make up their blessed trinity.

Mrs. Pethick Lawrence also writes in the New Theology Christmas Number. The lady evidently fancies she lives in Russia. She says that the Government is trying to crush down the agitation for woman suffrage with brute force. But while Mr. Asquith hardens his heart like Pharaoh, he will be forced to obey "a King mightier than Pharaoh, who rules the world from generation to generation." So our old friend Jehovah is the real President of the Women's Political and Social Union!

After explaining away Christmas as a Pagan sun-festival, and the Virgin Birth of Christ as ancient mythology, the New Theology weekly's last leading article wound up thus:

"We have already found that every salient feature in the story of Jesus is more or less clearly mythical, and though the process should go on, leaving nothing which can entitle anyone to belief in any tangible personality, our faith in the Christ need not suffer."

Of course not—while there's comfort and cash in it.

Rev. A. J. Waldron has been lecturing at the City Temple on "Religion, Theology, and the Union of Christendom." It was on a Thursday night, and the lecture was under the auspices of the City Temple Literary Society. Mr. Waldron said that he had been asked if he had received episcopal permission to deliver that lecture. His reply was—"I never ask for episcopal permission to do anything. I go where I like. I never allow any Bishop to interfere with my citizenship." This bombast is just like Mr. Waldron. He struts and brags when he knows he is safe. But he knows very well that while his Bishop cannot interfere with him as "a citizen" he can interfere with him as a clergyman in his diocese.

A good many of Mr. Waldron's statements in that lecture would have cost him his living forty years ago. He is lucky in enjoying the fruit of other men's labors. His orthodoxy is his own; his heresy seems pretty much what he has picked up from Freethought lecturers. He hasn't converted them, in spite of his loud boasting; they have more nearly converted him.

We are well aware that every variety of religious creed claims the Bible as its final court of appeal. The most eccentric sect that ever arose in Christendom sheltered under the authority of the Word of God. At last, a man of exceptional genius, the Rev. John Pickup, of Sheffield, has made the valuable discovery that the Suffragettes can justify their movement from the Scriptures. In Numbers xxvi. 33 are recorded the names of five Biblical Suffragettes, and in the opening verses of the following chapter is found the story of the triumph of their revolutionary movement. They won their case, however, because the Lord actively took their part. But we fear that, after all, the reverend gentleman's discovery is not genuine. On examining Numbers xxvii. 1-11, we find that those five sisters agitated, not for political privileges, but for a share of their father's inheritance. Mr. Pickup must try again.

What utter nonsense preachers do talk about the Bible. The Rev. J. Sarvent, of Newhall, is reported to have said, at a meeting of the United Methodist P.S.A., that the only reliable evidence of the truth and Divine origin of the Scriptures is "personal experience." Fancy having personal experience of the Flood, of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, of being swallowed by a whale, of being raised from the dead, and of many other alleged marvellous occurrences. Surely the reverend gentleman didn't know what he was saying.

Dr. Campbell Morgan is nothing if not oracular. "Refuse to crown him" (that is Christ), he said the other day, "and by your influence you will corrupt society." Does the reverend gentleman really mean what he says? Has he the hardihood to stand up and declare that Herbert Spencer, Charles Darwin, Thomas Huxley, John Tyndall, John Stuart Mill, Charles Bradlaugh, and hosts of others that might be named, were corrupters of society? Is Lord Morley a corrupter of society simply because he refuses to crown Christ at a preacher's bidding? It is sheer nonsense to tell people that unless they become Christians their characters will "degenerate." Dr. Campbell Morgan knows that he is surrounded by thousands of unbelievers, many of whom are quite as noble, self-denying, and loving as the most fervent Christians on earth; and he knows also that multitudes of zealously professing Christians are anything but noble, self-denying, and loving. But preachers would be miserable failures if they were loyal to the truth in such matters.

Rev. J. E. Rattenbury exclaimed at a recent revival meeting, "The love of God, which is the love of humanity." Did

he mean that there is no God but humanity? If not, we beg to assure him that the love of God is *not* the love of humanity. Very few lovers of God are also lovers of their fellow-beings. Christians are notorious for their hatred and wilful misrepresentation of non-Christians. Not only they do not love their enemies, they cannot even be just to them.

Dr. David Smith endorses Luther's saying, "Nothing damns except unbelief." Many modern divines cannot tolerate such a brutal sentiment. Nevertheless, the saying is perfectly true: in orthodox Christianity "nothing damns except unbelief," and nothing saves but faith. In the matter of Christian salvation character is of no account. The best deeds are as filthy rags unless done in faith. Against this demoralising and degrading teaching Secularism sets itself with a heart of flint, and it shall not rest until it has driven it completely out of the field.

"M. C. L.," of the *Staffordshire Herald*, says "the Catholic knows, through common sense as well as through Divine Revelation, that the Church cannot teach error." How delightfully comforting and soothing a knowledge! The only fault about it is that it is not knowledge at all, but blind belief. The Church has taught error, and does teach error now; and of this "M. C. L." is as fully aware as we are. One puff of wind from the fields of history is enough to explode his bubble for ever.

We are glad to see that Trade Unionists and Democratic bodies do not mean to let General Booth ride off on the old high horse with respect to the Salvation Army Joinery Works in Hanbury-street, Whitechapel. A special conference was held at the Club and Institute Union, Clerkenwell, on Friday evening, December 10, to receive the report of the Anti-Sweating Committee. Mr. James Macpherson enumerated the efforts of the Committee to obtain a public inquiry into the alleged sweating. All they had been able to obtain, apparently, was the sweet assurances of the Salvation Army, but they could not accept these. Besides, they could not see any difference between sweating men competitively for a profit and sweating them for the benefit of a religious and philanthropic organisation. The Conference—representing London Trades Unions, Trades Councils, the Independent Labor Party, etc., etc.—passed a resolution that a National Conference should be called with a view to forcing the Government to grant a public inquiry into the charges of sweating and underselling against the Salvation Army. This brings the Salvation Army, as a pretended social savior, a step nearer its doom.

Mr. E. Ayres was speaking at a meeting of the Camberwell Borough Council when he was badly interrupted by the "Moderates." Turning to the Mayor, he said: "I wish you would keep these baboons a little bit quieter." The Mayor replied that he would have no member of the Council called a baboon; but he did not say whether he interfered on behalf of the members or the baboons. He called on Mr. Ayres to withdraw. Mr. Ayres refused to do anything of the kind. He wielded a heavy stick and declared that he would make it hot for anyone who tried to remove him. In the end, however, it proved a storm in a teapot, both sides expressed regret and the "baboon" incident closed. Still, we may put a question to the Mayor, who is, we understand, a very good Christian. Why does he object to Mr. Ayres calling his opponents "baboons"? Jesus Christ called his opponents worse names than that. He called them "whited sepulchres," "children of hell," and "vipers." And as the sum of all virtues is the "Imitation of Christ" it would seem that Mr. Ayres was quite in order. Objection might perhaps be taken to his stick, but Jesus Christ wielded a cat-o'-nine-tails. We are not sure about the number, but quite sure about the tails.

Mrs. Pankhurst, who has been developing piety at a rapid rate lately, might also plead the example of Jesus Christ. Returning from America, she tells us that the women over there are very angry at England's treatment of the young Philadelphian who beat Mr. Churchill with a dog-whip. If a lady can't whip any man she doesn't agree with, why call this a Christian country?

A prisoner at the South-Western Police Court, London, explained why he helped himself to some articles from a pawnbroker's shop. "I've been reading the Bible," he said, "and read that God helps those who help themselves. So I thought I would help myself." He must have been reading a version of his own. There is no such text in the Authorised or Revised version. It is totally foreign to the genius of "the blessed book."

Christians are always finding things in the Bible that are not there. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" is familiarly quoted as one of Solomon's utterances. But there is no such text as that in the Bible either. There are texts as bad, and even worse, but not that.

The gentleman who quoted the Bible (wrongly) in the South-Western Police Court was not as smart as the proprietor of the American dry-goods store, who put up the following notice in his establishment:—"God helps those who help themselves. But God help the man found helping himself here." Which recalls a notice in another place of business:—"We trust in God. Everybody else cash."

The Dean of Canterbury is a very orthodox gentleman, but he is rather weak in poetry. The following verse was sent in by the reverend gentleman to the *Times*: it refers to Mr. Lloyd George's speech at the National Liberal Club:—

"I sing a shocking tragedy,  
Lloyd George, the prince of Sinisters,  
Who once blew up the House of Lords,  
The Dukes and Tory Ministers;  
That is, he would have blown them up,  
And folk should ne'er forget him;  
But a little thing prevented him,  
Which was they wouldn't let him.  
Bow, wow, wow, etc."

Dr. Wace would hardly get sixpence a page for writing pantomimes, though his ambition seems to point in that direction. It is fortunate for him that he has an easier job—in the Church.

High Church parsons are in the habit of declaring that the Church is really independent of the State. If you say it owes everything to the State, that the State made it and can unmake it, that the State established it and can disestablish it, that the State endowed it and can disendow it, these oracular gentlemen wear an esoteric smile, and look upon you as a poor benighted Philistine. But their theory of the Church is not only belied by history; it is belied by a case just decided in the Court of Appeal. Canon Thompson refused the Holy Communion to Mr. and Mrs. Bannister on the ground that Mrs. B. was Mr. B.'s deceased wife's sister. The reverend gentleman was ordered by the Divisional Court to desist from such refusal. He went to the Court of Appeal and he has lost again. He will therefore have to let Mr. and Mrs. Bannister have the Holy Communion or take the consequences of his illegal action. But our point is this. Such a case could not be raised by Catholics or Nonconformists in the law courts. And why? Simply because their Churches are not under State control. The Church of England is under State control. There is the whole matter in a nutshell.

Bournemouth has once more decided against Sunday tramcars, but the voting was only nineteen to thirteen, and several members did not vote at all—which shows that Sabatarianism is weakening, for the non-voters must be waiting to see how the cat jumps.

The Hull magistrates appear to be good Christians. They are hypocritical, at any rate, and that is half the battle. The tradesmen who have been worried for earning a little money by selling sweets, tobacco, and lemonade on Sunday applied for summonses against the driver and conductor of a Corporation tramcar; but the pious gentlemen on the bench held that tramcars were not within the scope of the Lord's Day Amendment Act. Of course they are not. But drivers and conductors are—if they follow their ordinary avocation on the Lord's Day.

A Calcutta correspondent sends us a cutting from the *Statesman*, and asks what M. Steinberger, whose letter appeared in our issue of October 3, has to say about it. According to the *Statesman*, the highest court of justice in Austria has decided that cremation is contrary to the laws of the Empire. The matter arose through the appeal of a newly formed society for cremation, which had endeavored to obtain a concession from the local authorities in Prague for building a crematorium. The Supreme Court supported the refusal of the local authorities, on the ground that cremation was opposed to the Christian idea of burial.

Jesus Christ said, or is alleged to have said, that not a sparrow falls without God's knowledge. What about the human beings whose pieces were scattered over Hamburg by the great gasometer explosion? Were they all noted too? It seems a pity that the angelic booking-clerks were not employed to prevent the explosion. That would have been sensible and useful. But then, as the old book says, God's ways are not as our ways.

The murder of Francisco Ferrer surprised a great many people. It did not surprise us. Religious reaction, all over the world, is fighting against liberty and light with diabolical energy; and we are bound to smile contemptuously at the milk-and-water "unbelievers" who babble about the fight for freedom being over (which it is as far as they are concerned) and the victory won. The fight for freedom is never over, while it has any enemies left; any more than the fight for reason is over, while there are any friends of superstition left. The wisest of the sons of men well said that "Truth can never be confirmed enough, though doubt did ever sleep." There is no end of combat, no rest and be thankful, to the soldiers of human liberation in this world. That is one of those idle promises that are offered to credulous people in the next world. Even in America—the grand home of the noble bird of freedom, etc., etc.—the Catholic Church is making great headway, and the liberty of the press is daily meeting a fresh menace. Dr. E. B. Foote, of New York, writes us almost despondently. He doubts if the cause of Freethought is "holding its own" over there "in contention with the better organisation of the opposition." He says that "Catholic influences are working through politics in public places, influencing legislation and the action of officials" The Comstock mail law, which makes the Post Office the literary censor of the United States, becomes broader and more stringent with the new year; and the very mildest discussion of sex questions or the question of population will be penalised and suppressed. "So, after the first of January," Dr. Foote writes, "if not already, you can rejoice in greater freedom of publication than we can." What a lesson for those who exchange the divine right of majorities for the divine right of kings!

The forces of reaction are getting stronger and stronger, and more and more audacious, in England too; and the "glorious free press"—in the hands of rich and reckless scoundrels and their despicable hirelings—is strenuously engaged in the evil work of corrupting and debauching the public mind; if, indeed, one can call it a mind.

Having shot Ferrer, and some other obnoxious people, and made the most of their opportunity, the Spanish authorities are now liberating wholesale the prisoners at Montjuich and elsewhere who were arrested on account of the Barcelona riots. They can afford to do that now. But nobody will thank them. The policy of murderers is never really humane.

Mr. Joynson-Hicks seems to be a plain-spoken gentleman, and we thank him for it in the following instance. In a recent political speech, reported in the *Manchester Guardian*, he dealt with the subject of India:—

"We conquered India as an outlet for the goods of Great Britain. We conquered India by the sword, and by the sword we should continue to hold it. ('Shamo.') Call shame if you like. I am stating facts. I am interested in mission work in India, and have done much work of that kind, but I am not such a hypocrite as to say that we hold India for the Indians. We hold it as the finest outlet for British goods in general, and for Lancashire cotton goods in particular."

What a glorious mixture of ambition, rapacity, and religion! And how characteristically Christian! No other religion than Christianity ever prompted or permitted a man to talk in this way. The speaker's keen interest in missionary work is the cream of the whole joke. He is for knocking Indians down with the sword, making them buy goods in his market, and sending his missionaries amongst them afterwards to persuade them to be of the same beautiful and humane religion as himself.

A sarcasm from Captain Dickson's lecture before the Royal Geographical Society on his journeys in Kurdistan, while occupying the post of Military Consul at Van:—

"A Kurd came to the Sheikh of Shemsdinan (a certain powerful chief) and said that he had a cock which had spoken on three separate occasions, saying: 'Christ's religion is the only faith.' He asked the sheikh whether he should turn Christian or kill the cock as an infidel. The sheikh, after much thought, decided that they must keep the cock, to see which of Christ's religions it said was the true religion, and, in the meanwhile, they would continue to be Moslems."

Capital!

Sir Oliver Lodge has been speaking of man's three adventures,—birth, marriage, and death. He has tried two, and is entitled to speak of them from experience. He has not tried the third, and is no more entitled to speak of it than any other man in the same position. Where nothing is known a full head is no better than an empty one. Sir Oliver Lodge must wait till he is dead.



### Mr. Foote's Engagements.

January 9, St. James's Hall; 11, London Freethinkers' Annual Dinner; 16, St. James's Hall; 23, St. James's Hall; 30, Stratford Town Hall.

February 6, Manchester; 13, St. James's Hall; 20, St. James's Hall; 27, Birmingham Town Hall.

### To Correspondents.

C. COHEN'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—December 19, Public Hall, Canning Town.

J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—December 19, Leicester.

THE PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND: Annual Subscriptions.—Previously acknowledged, £271 17s. Received since.—T. W. Haughton, £5 5s.; W. H. B., 2s. 6d.; W. R. Angel, 2s. 6d.

F. J. VOISEY.—We had to make a rule against receiving unpaid packets by post, as a safeguard against mean Christian fanatics. Accidents will occur, of course; and we are quite sure that you would be one of the last of men to play a trick or put an affront upon us.

THOMAS MARSHALL.—Your letter is based upon a misconception. Mr. Gould did not say that his articles had been dropped in the waste-basket, but that he had not been allowed to express his opinion on certain points. It is no good laboring a false point. Is it?

ARTHUR DAVENPORT.—Objection is seldom, if ever, raised to open Secular funerals in London cemeteries, or to the use of the chapel, if required, on the "unconsecrated" side. The consecrated side is for Church of England corpses; the other side is for all other varieties. It appears that bigotry still haunts burial grounds in Staffordshire. But did the relatives *try* to have a Secular funeral, or did they merely make the formal rule the pretext for overriding the deceased man's wishes? You can obtain a Burial Service for 1d. from the N. S. S. secretary at 2 Newcastle-street, E.C.

W. H. B.—Why regret? One can't do impossibilities. Your letter alone would have been welcome.

A. HURCUM.—Cheque passed over. If you mean the Protestant martyrs, you will have to read Fox. He is very voluminous, but his "Acts" may be in your Free Library. We cannot say what particular torture was applied to the poet Southwell, a Catholic; but both sides practised the same tortures, from thumb-screwing up to burning alive. And it is a detestable subject. Writing the chapter on the Inquisition, in the first edition of the *Crimes of Christianity*, made us sick.

H. MEREDITH.—See "Acid Drops." Thanks. Pleased you think the *Freethinker* "the most constant journal in England."

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

H. B. DODDS.—We note your good wishes respecting the insomnia, but we shall never have the leisure to get quite free of it. One gets entangled in a network of obligations, and to break through it becomes impossible.

J. A. JACKSON.—Next week.

H. SMALLWOOD.—Shakespeare was a dramatist and made his characters talk in character. It will not do, therefore, to take everything he puts into their mouths as his own utterances—not even in Hamlet's. You must see the absurdity of this when it is pointed out. Shakespeare's own views have to be deduced by a deeper criticism, which we cannot very well introduce in a brief answer like this. It was introduced in the Birmingham lecture, and will be developed in a volume that we are preparing on Shakespeare.

M. E. PEGG.—Glad to hear that Mr. Cohen gave "two fine lectures" at Manchester on Sunday to larger audiences than before.

J. TOMKINS.—Thanks, though too late for this week.

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

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

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

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

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

ORDERS for literature should be sent to the Manager of the Pioneer Press, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., and not to the Editor.

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

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

### Sugar Plums.

The new year's number of the *Freethinker*—dated Sunday, January 2—will be an extra good one, if we can make it so; and we shall print an extra number in the hope that many readers will take an extra copy (or more) to give away to friends or acquaintances. Those who wish to help along our circulation will please note.

Mr. Foote opens the new course of Sunday evening lectures at St. James's Hall on January 9. He will occupy the platform for three Sunday evenings, and will be followed by Mr. Cohen and Mr. Lloyd. The subjects will be announced in our next issue.

Tickets (4s. each) are now obtainable for the London Freethinkers' Annual Dinner, under the auspices of the N. S. S. Executive, at the Holborn Restaurant on Tuesday evening, January 11—which happens to be the President's birthday. A large attendance is expected, and it will be advisable to secure tickets in good time.

Mr. J. T. Lloyd lectures in the Secular Hall, Leicester, this evening (Dec. 19). We hope the district "saints" will give him a large audience and a hearty welcome.

Mr. Cohen delivered two week-night lectures lately at Bristol. They were tolerably successful in the circumstances, but no Freethought lectures can possibly be a real success in Bristol except under better conditions. A good hall in a central situation is absolutely necessary. We are often surprised at the thought that Secularism cuts so poor a figure in such a city as Bristol. Are the difficulties of organization and propaganda really insurmountable, even with assistance from headquarters in London? What do the local "saints" say to this question?

Plymouth is another great centre of population where nothing is done now. Some time ago a number of Freethinkers there were going to do great things by calling themselves Rationalists and pursuing a policy of high "respectability." Meetings were held for a little while, and then the thing, apparently, fizzled out. We believe something could be done in Plymouth on N. S. S. and *Freethinker* lines.

"Abracadabra" is resuming his articles on "The Narratives in Genesis," which, by the way, are being reproduced from our columns in the *Searchlight*, of Waco, Texas—one of our American exchanges.

We are exchanging advertisements with the New York *Truthseeker*, the oldest and best Freethought paper in America, which has an honorable thirty-six years' history behind it, and is likely to live up to its reputation—and perhaps a bit more—under the able editorship of Mr. George Macdonald. We should like to know that a good number, or at least a good few, are subscribing to the *Truthseeker* through the advertisement which is appearing in our pages. Nobody who subscribes for that journal will regret the expenditure. We have always expressed admiration for Mr. George Macdonald's pen, from the earliest days (oh, so long ago!) when he started "Observations" under the editorship of his brother Eugene. We are pleased to see that he has a good opinion of our own pen too. "We do not know," he says, in calling attention to our advertisement, "that an abler writer than the editor of the *Freethinker* is anywhere engaged in journalism." There may be some friendship in this compliment, though Mr. George Macdonald is as far as any man from being a sentimentalist. One thing, however, we are sure of; we have put head and heart unstintedly into our work. We have given of our best—such as it is.

### DEATH TO PRIESTCRAFT.

War with the army of enslavement! Down with the seducers of childhood—the spiritual profligates who debauch the youthful mind! Banish them, with their spooks, from the school, the college, the court of justice, the hall of legislation! Let us train generations of sound minds in sound bodies, full of rich blood, and nervous energy, and frank inquiry, and dauntless courage, and starry hope; with faces that never pale at truth, hearts that hold no terms with falsehood, knees that never bend before power or mystery, heads that always keep a manly poise, and eyes that boldly challenge all things from height to depth.—G. W. Foote, "Flowers of Freethought."

## The Age of Chivalry.

"Out of this union between war and Christianity there was born that curious bastard, Chivalry."—WESTERMARCK, *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, vol. i., p. 352.

"God and the ladies!" was the favorite watchword of the knight. Devotion to both was his characteristic profession. In theory, the first place was given to the Almighty. In practice, the first place was given to the ladies, but only to those of gentle birth. To all others the grossest licence was the rule, a licence often degenerating into brutality."—DR. KNIGHTON, *Struggles for Life*; 1888; p. 155.

"Stop for a moment in the thirteenth century, the age par excellence of beautiful things, when chivalry is supposed to have been in its noble prime, when the Church exerted a calm and serene sovereignty over the kneeling nations.....a Golden Age. It was very far from a golden age. On the contrary, it was an age of violence, fraud, and impurity, such as can hardly be conceived now."—COTTER MORISON, *The Service of Man*; 1889; p. 113.

"Few men who are not either priests or monks would not have preferred to live in the best days of the Athenian or of the Roman republics, in the age of Augustus or in the age of the Antonines, rather than in any period that elapsed between the triumph of Christianity and the fourteenth century."—LÉcky, *History of European Morals*; vol. ii., p. 15.

MOST people believe that the Middle Ages, from the tenth to the fifteenth century, when chivalry prevailed, were the "good old times"—that the age of chivalry was, in fact, the fine flower of all the ages.

This is largely owing to the false glamor thrown over the characters of Richard I. and the Black Prince in the distorted history taught at school. To the romantic charm cast by the genius of Tennyson over the fables of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table; and lastly to the numerous artists who have painted romantic pictures of tournaments, and knights and ladies, so frequently reproduced in the cheaper magazines.

In this article we propose to show the real condition of Europe during the Age of Chivalry; that, so far from being the "good old times" they are popularly believed to have been, they were, as a matter of fact, about the worst times it is possible to conceive. They were ages of bloodshed and violence, of oppression and cruelty, of barbarism and general wickedness.

Kighthood was not an invention of Christianity; it was a development of the custom among the Pagan Germans of training young men to the use of arms, with exercises and ordeals of skill and courage; at the end of which they went through a ceremonial before the tribal assembly and were devoted to the public service.

It was the Christianising of kighthood which gave rise to chivalry. As Westermarck observes, "The Church knew how to lay hold of kighthood for her own purposes." The sword was said to be made in semblance of the cross, and the word "Jesus" was sometimes engraven on its hilt. It was impressed upon the knight that his first duty was to defend the Church and destroy her enemies by force of arms; and he was consecrated at a religious service held in a church, when the order of kighthood was conferred upon him, and in this church he had to watch his armor alone through the night. No doubt our readers have seen a representation of this in the popular picture (by Orchardson, I think), entitled "The Vigil."

The knight also undertook to defend the widow and all groaning under oppression and injustice; so that, as the historian points out, "In the name of religion and justice he could thus practically wage war almost at will," and "The general impression which Froissart gives us in his history is, that the age in which he lived was completely given over to fighting, and cared about nothing else whatever."\* War, as he remarks, was rendered "a fashionable accomplishment"; and as real injuries were not likely to occur every day, tilts and tournaments—which were by no means so harmless as they have been represented to be—were invented to exercise

their arms until the next opportunity for real fighting occurred.

It is true that the Church now and then made attempts to stop these performances; not, be it observed, because they were contrary to religion, or through a humanitarian horror of bloodshed, but, as Westermarck points out, "she did so avowedly because they prevented many knights from joining the holy wars, or because they swallowed up treasures which might otherwise with advantage have been poured into the Holy Land."

The Church had no quarrel with warfare as such if it had a religious object. Far from it; for ecclesiastics themselves "bore arms, led their vassals to the field, and fought at their head in battle."\* The Holy War, to recover the tomb of Christ, was an exclusively religious war, engineered from beginning to end by the Church. "During two centuries," says Robertson, "Europe seems to have had no object but to recover, or keep possession of, the Holy Land; and through that period vast armies continued to march thither."† And in spite of the poetry and glamor with which the Crusades have been surrounded, it remains a fact that these soldiers of the Cross were the vilest rabble ever assembled under the banner of religion. Sir George Cox, the historian, after describing some of the loathsome and disgusting practices of this Christian army, says "if we shut our eyes to these loathsome details the truth of history is gone. We are dealing with the wars of savages, and it is right that we should know this."‡

Take the character of Richard I., the famous Cœur de Lion, one of the leaders of the third Crusade, who has been surrounded with such a halo of romance. One of his exploits, at the siege of Acre, was to take 2,700 hostages he held to the top of a hill, from which all that passed might be seen from Saladin's camp, and slaughtered them in cold blood! Sir George Cox says of him:—

"As a military leader Richard I. of England is beneath contempt when compared with the first Napoleon; but he may fairly compete with him as a criminal. Alaric the Goth and Attila the Hun never professed to be sovereigns of a civilised people; but in no sense have they a better title to be regarded as scourges of mankind."§

Another great hero of the Middle Ages was Edward the Black Prince, "the Mirror of Chivalry," the hero of Crecy; held up for the admiration of every English schoolboy as the ideal knight incarnate, without reproach and without fear. But listen to the other side. The Black Prince, says Dr. Knighton—

"behaved more like a savage than a Christian knight, when the poor citizens of Limoges besought his mercy for their town, their worldly possessions, their children, their wives and sisters, and for themselves. 'It was a melancholy business,' says Froissart (iv., 103), 'to see all ranks, all ages, and both sexes casting themselves on the ground before the Prince and begging for mercy. But he was too much inflamed with passion and revenge to listen to them. All were put to the sword. The town was wholly given up to the soldiery, to do with as they pleased. The guilty and the innocent suffered alike.'

It is needless to dilate on all that is implied in this narrative of old Froissart—rapine, outrage, and death to the citizens—a fearful scene! In those days it was well to be of gentle birth, for to such only was clemency shown."||

Richard I. and the Black Prince are held up for

\* Robertson, *Works*, vol. ii., p. 412. Dean Milman says even "In the fifth century we find bishops in arms, and at the head of fighting men," and at a later date "we arrive at the Prince Bishop, or the feudal Abbot, alternately with the helmet and the mitre on his head, the crozier and the lance in his hand, now in the field in the front of his vassals, now on his throne in the church in the midst of his chanting choir" (Milman, *History of Latin Christianity*; 1883; vol. i., p. 369).

† *Works*, vol. ii., p. 14. He cites the testimony of Princess Anna Comnena—an eye-witness—that "All Europe, torn up from the foundation, seemed ready to precipitate itself in one united body upon Asia."

‡ *The Crusades*; 1889; p. 61.

§ *Ibid*, p. 111.

|| Knighton, *Struggles for Life*, p. 155.

\* Westermarck, *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, vol. i., p. 354. Froissart, the most famous chronicler of the Middle Ages, was born 1337, died 1410.

admiration as the fine flower of chivalry. What must the others have been like?

Let us now turn our attention to the condition of the people under the rule of the knight and the baron during the age of chivalry. It was the most miserable it is possible to imagine. The splendid civilisation of the Roman Empire had completely disappeared. Lecky says that under Roman rule "Magnificent roads, which modern nations have rarely equalled and never surpassed, intersected the entire empire, and relays of post horses enabled the voyager to proceed with an astonishing rapidity."\*

In the Middle Ages, after centuries of Christian rule, "The surface of the Continent was for the most part covered with pathless forests; here and there it was dotted with monasteries and towns."†

After the Fall of the Roman Empire—a fall which the Christians gloried in and helped to bring about—there was no paramount ruling power to keep order. The *Pax Romana*, the splendid Roman Peace, which brooded over the world before the establishment of Christianity, when, as Gibbon tells us in his magnificent history, "The Roman name was revered among the remote nations of the earth" and "The fiercest barbarians frequently submitted their differences to the arbitration of the Emperor,"‡ was a thing of the past. The kings and emperor had no power to enforce the laws. As Robertson, the historian, observes, in his *View of the State of Europe*:—

"A kingdom, considerable in name and in extent, was broken into as many separate principalities as it contained powerful barons. A thousand causes of jealousy and discord subsisted among them, and gave rise to as many wars. Every country in Europe, wasted or kept in continual alarm during these endless contests, was filled with castles and places of strength erected for the security of the inhabitants; not against foreign force, but against internal hostilities. A universal anarchy, destructive, in a great measure, of all the advantages which men expect to derive from society, prevailed. The people, the most numerous as well as the most useful part of the community, were either reduced to a state of actual servitude or treated as if they had been degraded into that wretched condition."§

These wars, the historian adds, "resembled the short incursions of pirates and banditti, rather than the steady operations of a regular army," with the result—

"a greater number of those atrocious actions, which fill the mind of man with astonishment and horror, occur in the history of the centuries under review than in that of any other periods of the same extent in the annals of Europe. If we open the history of Gregory of Tours, or of any contemporary author, we meet with a series of deeds of cruelty, perfidy, and revenge, so wild and enormous as almost to exceed belief" (pp. 12-13).

Even so late as the fourteenth century, says Robertson, we find the nobles of France contending for their right to settle their differences by the sword in preference to the decision of the judge.

In the twelfth century, says Henry Lea, that most trustworthy of historians—

"Germany, is described to us by an eye-witness as covered with feudal chieftains who lived a life of luxury by torturing the miserable wretches that could scarce obtain bread and water for their own existence. In Spain, the same means were understood and employed by the savage nobles of that barbarous period. In England, the fearful anarchy which prevailed under King Stephen encouraged a similar condition of affairs. The baronial castles which then multiplied so rapidly became mere dens of robbers, who ransacked the coun-

try for all who had the unfortunate reputation of wealth. From these they extracted the last penny by tortures; and the chronicler expatiates on the multiplicity and horrid ingenuity of the torments devised—suspension by the feet over slow fires, hanging by the thumbs, knotted ropes twisted around the head, crucet-houses, or chests filled with sharp stones, in which the victim was crushed, sachentages, or frames with a sharp iron collar, preventing the wearer from sitting, lying, or sleeping, dungeons filled with toads and adders, slow starvation, etc., etc."\*\*

In the year 1210, says Lea, "King John seized all the Jews in England and tortured them until they ransomed themselves heavily."

The intercourse between the divided states of Europe, says Robertson, ceased almost entirely during many centuries. Navigation was dangerous in seas infested with pirates. "Even between distant parts of the same kingdom the communication was rare and difficult. The lawless rapine of banditti, together with the avowed exactions of the nobles, scarcely less formidable than oppressive, rendered a journey of any length a perilous enterprise."†

The condition of the lower classes was pitiable in the extreme. Self-preservation compelled every man to place himself under the protection of some powerful Baron, to whose castle he could resort in time of danger, and the walls of which he helped to defend from the assaults of the enemy. From the same walls he could also see the enemy destroy his home and carry off his crops.

Even in times of peace, such was the spirit of tyranny of these Lords and Barons, says Robertson, "and so various their opportunities of oppressing those who were settled on their estates, and of rendering their condition intolerable, that many free men, in despair, renounced their liberty and voluntarily surrendered themselves as slaves to their masters. This they did in order that their masters might become more immediately interested to afford them protection, together with the means of subsisting themselves and their families."‡ And, as he remarks, "That condition must have been miserable indeed which could induce a free man voluntarily to renounce his liberty and to give up himself as a slave to the disposal of another. The number of slaves in every nation in Europe was immense."

And what was it that brought about the amelioration of the lot of the lower classes? Was it religion? No; for, as Robertson says, religion "mingled itself with every passion and institution during the Middle Ages." The holy wars on unbelievers, "the only common enterprise in which the European nations ever engaged, and which they all undertook with equal ardor, remain a singular monument of human folly."§ In all the writings of the Middle Ages pious sentiments abound; the writers would have been shocked at the Secularism which practically excludes religion from all modern literature, except the purely theological.

The real causes of the change for the better were, firstly, the growing power of the kings to control the turbulent knights and barons; secondly, the growth of commerce.

While the barons were away fighting for the tomb of Christ, the kings took advantage of their absence to strengthen and consolidate their position. Added to which, many of these warriors never returned, and, leaving no heirs, their estates reverted to the Crown, adding still further strength to the kingly power; until, instead of depending upon the barons, the king at last became strong enough to demand their services and coerce them into obedience of laws.

Another indirect effect of the Crusades was the growth of commerce. Venice, Genoa, and Pisa, who furnished the transports and contracted for the provisions and stores required by the Crusaders, became rich, and as soon as the cities of Italy saw the advan-

\* Lecky, *History of European Morals*; 1886; vol. i., p. 234.

† Draper, *The Conflict Between Religion and Science*, p. 264.

‡ *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. i.

§ Robertson, *Works*, vol. ii., pp. 11-12. William Robertson was a Scotch clergyman, author of several historical works; a friend of Hume, who thought highly of his works, as did Buckle, who places them in his list of authorities. In the Preface to the work we have cited he says: "I have carefully pointed out the sources from which I have derived information, and have cited the writers on whose authority I rely with a minute exactness, which might appear to border upon ostentation, if it were possible to be vain of having read books, many of which nothing but the duty of examining with accuracy whatever I laid before the public, would induce me to open" (pp. 5-6).

\* Lea, *Superstition and Force*, p. 418.

† Robertson, *Works*, vol. ii., p. 31.

‡ *Works*, vol. ii., pp. 382-3.

§ *Works*, vol. ii., pp. 29-14.

tages to be derived from commerce "they became impatient to shake off the yoke of their insolent lords, and to establish among themselves such a free and equal government as would render property secure and industry flourishing." They began to unite more closely together, to assume new rights and privileges, some acquired by bold and fortunate usurpations, others by purchase from the emperors, who were glad to receive large sums in return for rights and immunities they could no longer withhold.

In France, Louis le Gros granted *charters of immunity*, conferring new privileges on the towns situated within his domain, for the very purpose of creating some power to counterbalance the powerful lords who controlled the Crown. The great barons in their turn granted like immunities to the towns within their territories; they had wasted such great sums in the holy wars that they were eager to lay hold of this new expedient for raising money by the sale of these charters of liberty. Though repugnant to their policy, they disregarded the remote consequences in order to obtain relief. Thus in about two centuries the great feudal system came to an end.

It was no longer necessary to court the patronage or become the slave of some powerful baron whose castle could be resorted to for safety in time of danger. It was found that towns surrounded with walls, with inhabitants trained to arms, afforded a more commodious and safe retreat, and the nobles began to be considered of less importance.

To protect their merchandise from the pirates who infested the seas, some of these cities united in a league for mutual defence; eighty of them formed the famous Hanseatic League, the most formidable commercial confederacy known to history, waging successful wars against kings, and whose alliance was courted and enmity feared by the greatest monarchs.\*

The middle and working-class owe nothing to Church or State for their emancipation from feudalism and serfdom; they won it by their own efforts in spite of both of them.

Let the lords and nobles praise the age of chivalry, and sigh for they "good old times" if he will; it was the hey-day of their power and prosperity. But let us remember that the chivalry was entirely restricted to their own class and order. For the lower classes it was the worst the world has ever known. The mediæval castles which stud our country give rise to the poetical feelings of those who visit them; but if they could only see some of the wretched victims writhing under the barbarous and revolting tortures practised in the dungeons of these strongholds they would never view them without horror.

W. MANN.

Let us make the best of this world and take our chance of any other. If there is a heaven, we daresay it will hold all honest men. If it will not, those who go elsewhere will at least be in good company.—G. W. Foote, "*Flowers of Freethought*."

### Obituary.

It is with regret I report the death of Thomas Reeves, aged 67, of 12 Bridge-street, Silverdale, on November 24. He was a staunch Freethinker, and a reader of this paper for over twenty years. He entertained Charles Bradlaugh when he came to Silverdale lecturing (politically). My friend and I went to visit him on the Sunday before he died. He said there was one doctor who could do him more good in five minutes' talk than all the doctors in the world, and that was George William Foote. Speaking of Death, he said: "Of what is there to be afraid? I do not care which way it [his disease] takes; there is long rest before me." He had been a miner all his life. His wife died not long ago—she also was a Freethinker—so he said he had not much to live for. They read the Christian Burial Service over him, against his wish, of course; but they say that we cannot have an Atheist or an Agnostic burial in that cemetery.—ARTHUR DAVENPORT.

\* Robertson, *Works*, vol. ii., pp. 16, 17.

### To My Christian Mother.

WHEN night slept from mine eyes and all the sky  
Was filled with dawn's soft crimson, my new life  
Rose all about me. Then I left behind  
The warmth, the friendships of my youth, the deep  
Rich comfort of your love; and gladly turned  
My face towards the path of loneliness,  
The bitter sweet, sad road that waits for all  
Who would be free.

And so I left my home  
And set out on my journey, for the night  
Was spent. I went in silence, for I knew  
You could not understand.....Nor can you know  
How great my heart ache, or how many days  
I grieved, and paused upon the way and yearned  
To you for comfort, or how fain I was  
To stay; and yet, withal, how glad to go!

I stepped out boldly down the garden path  
Into the long white road: passing the flowers  
We two had planted; and I left the birds  
We loved so much to hear. I gave up all  
When I stepped out. Full well I knew my feet  
Had gone without an echo and could have  
No glad return; for you to even sight  
The road I chose is like the breathing deep  
Of some warm evening air grown sudden chill.

But Truth was with me as I tramped along:  
Upon his willing arm my weakness leaned,  
And learned to grow more strong. I soon found out  
What way one walks with Truth. O mother mine,  
That you could know the way one walks with Truth!

Quickly my heart did learn to love the way:  
As, under snow, the earth grows young again,  
And warming, buds, and waits upon the spring;  
So, near your coldness, soon my heart regained  
Its youth, and met Truth's spring-tide, for the road  
Had welcomed me like April flowers. And life  
Throbbled quick within me, though I missed your love  
And hungered for your sympathy.

Ah, sweet,.....  
I did not turn or look back on your house  
With all its dear, lost treasures. If I called  
You were so quick to hear and answer me,  
It well might happen you would wake to greet  
My backward glance. I did not turn again:  
The house was left for ever. I did not trust  
One look upon its walls. My steadfast eyes  
I turned towards the solemn, distant hills,  
And that way bent my steps. Maybe the brook  
Where once we wandered gladly, you and I—  
Autumn and all its gold encircling us—  
Did steal the echo of my steps, and when  
You wandered, lonely, to its edge again  
Whispered good-bye for me. Then you would know  
How very fain I was awhile to stay,  
And yet, withal, how glad I was to go.

I loved you, mother, then. I love you now;  
Always I loved you dearly. Yet I love  
Truth more: and Truth and creeds lie far apart.  
The Truth I serve. The creed you blindly hold  
Was cast out from me when I left your house.  
But you will never know nor understand  
That I have found the Truth.....

And yet before  
We two lie soundly sleeping, and our love  
And joy and pain and hopes are all forgot,  
You, too, may come that way. Such is my hope,  
My dearest wish for you, dear heart. For then  
How grand would be the glow of sunset fire,  
How sweet would be our sleep! And if my wish  
Could reach fulfilment, you would surely know  
At last that, though I longed awhile to stay,  
How good a thing it was that I should go.

THOMAS MOULT.

### The Ward Testimonial.

Mr. Lockie, £1; Greevz Fysher, 5s.; Mr. Cave, 2s.; Miss M. Ross, 2s. 6d.; J. Ross, 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. S. Allan, 5s.; W. Ross, 5s.; J. Balfour, £1; W. Balfour, £1; Mr. Roleffs, 5s.; Mrs. Roleffs, 5s.; Mr. Radcliffe, 5s.; Mr. Small, 2s. 6d.; Mr. and Mrs. Spiers, 5s.; Mr. L., 5s.; J. Applebaum, 2s. 6d.; A. Applebaum, 2s.; T. F., 1s.; A. C. B., 6d.; W. J. M., 2s.; Mrs. Wharmby, 1s.; Mr. Allan, 2s. 6d.; Mr. Jack, 2s. 6d.; Mr. Jones, 2s.; Mr. and Mrs. Green, 5s.; Mr. Martin, 10s.; G. Kirby, 10s.—J. Ross, treasurer, 18 Carlingford-street, Liverpool.

## Correspondence.

## DETERMINISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—While Mr. Cohen's very able and clear articles on Determinism are fresh in the minds of your readers it may interest them to be reminded of the different reception which the public accords to it as it is adopted and defended in the name of orthodoxy or in that of heresy.

When backed by the heretic it is a monster, hideous and repellent; but if the orthodox stands as sponsor it is quite an innocent creature, and to a host even charming and attractive.

As Calvinism, as predestination, as the will of an omniscient and omnipotent God, it gave no offence. On the contrary, Jonathan Edwards, the fervent preacher and great champion of Determinism, was acclaimed by the most orthodox of the faithful—the Calvinists—as a prince of thinkers.

But when it is advanced as a doctrine of Agnosticism and Atheism it is denounced as the embodiment of all that is evil.

Besides, as an orthodox doctrine it was tagged on to that of everlasting woe, which conjointly made the conception of God so fiendish that the "bloody Moloch was a respectable deity" in comparison. Yet the saints spoke of it in terms of greatest approbation.

The Christian name will sweeten the very gall and wormwood of dogmas as well as atone for the foulest of deeds.

KERIDON.

## DEVIL-DODGERS.

We tell these men of God, of every denomination, that they are Devil Dodgers, and when they cease to be that their occupation is going. Old Nick, in some form or other, is the basis of every kind of Christianity. Indeed, the dread of evil, the terror of calamity, is at the bottom of all religion; while the science which gives us foresight and power, and enables us to protect ourselves and promote our comfort, is religion's deadliest enemy. Science wars against evil practically; religion wars against it theoretically. Science sees the material causes that are at work, and counteracts them; religion is too lazy and conceited to study the causes, it takes the evil in a lump, personifies it, and christens it "The Devil." Thus it keeps men off the real path of deliverance, and teaches them to fear the Bogey-Man, who is simply a phantom of superstition, and always vanishes at the first forward step of courage.—G. W. Foote, "Flowers of Freethought."

There has been a slow, painful struggle upwards from the wild beast to the man, which is as yet not nearly over, and which has kindled in its course passions far more fierce than any tiger's; and the problem for wise men has been how to bring these wild desires and raging lusts into subjection; how to give the mastery to those feelings of love and union, the germs of which are found everywhere among animals no less than among men, and which only await their time and opportunity for growth.—J. H. Bridges.

## "THE BLOODY FAITH."—Shelley.

The Christian religion with the blood of Christ out of it isn't worth the paper it is written on. I believe in the blood. Ours is a bloody religion. The blood stands for the poured out life. It is a bloody gospel and a bloody world. That book is bloody. Take the blood of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus out of religion and you have nothing left. Call it a slaughter-house religion then, if you want to. Without the blood, the Bible would be a meaningless jumble and hopeless jargon of words.—Billy Sunday, *American Evangelist*, reported in "The Camera," of Boulder, Colorado.

## POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE.

There is an idea that Christianity is positive and Infidelity is negative. If this be so, then falsehood is positive and truth is negative. What I contend is that Infidelity is a positive religion; that Christianity is a negative religion. Christianity denies and Infidelity admits. Infidelity stands by facts; it demonstrates by the conclusions of the reason. Infidelity does all it can to develop the brain and the heart of man. That is positive. Religion asks man to give up this world for one he knows nothing about. That is negative. I stand by the religion of reason. I stand by the dogmas of demonstration.—Ingersoll.

## NOT EVE'S FAULT THAT TIME.

Realism rules the nursery. A certain Philadelphia matron, who had taken pains to inculcate Biblical stories as well as ethical truths in her three children, heard, the other day, long-drawn howls of rage and grief filtering down from the playroom. Up two flights she hurried to find on the floor Jack and Ethel, voices uplifted. Thomas, aged nine, sat perched upon the table, his mouth full and his eyes guilty.

"Whatever is the matter?" asked mamma.

"Bo-o-o!" came from Ethel, "we were playing Garden of Eden. Bo-o-o!"

"But what is there to cry about?"

Then Jack, with furious finger pointing at Tom, ejaculated through his tears, "God's eat the apple!"

## HAD FINE BAIT.

A Methodist bishop was recently a guest at the home of a friend who had two charming daughters. One morning the bishop, accompanied by the two young ladies, went out in the hope of catching some trout. An old fisherman, out for the same purpose, wishing to appear friendly, called out:—

"Ketchin' many, pard?"

The bishop, drawing himself to his full height, replied, "Brother, I am a fisher of men."

"You've got the right kind o' bait, all right," was the rejoinder.

## FORLORN HOPE.

"Yes, it must be a terrible thing to go through life without your limb. But you must remember it will be restored to you in the next world."

"I know it will, mum, but dat don't encourage me, for it was cut off when I was a baby, an' it won't come within a couple of foot of de ground when it's restored."

## SEEKING INFORMATION.

"Is there a preacher on this train?" asked a large, dark visaged man as he passed from one sleeper to another. At last, after he had loudly repeated his query for the fifth or sixth time, a grave-looking gentleman laid aside a book and rose up from a seat near one end of the car. "I have the privilege of being a minister of the gospel, sir," he said, "can I be of any service to you?"

"Yes," said the large passenger. "A fellow back in the dining car has bet me \$5 that it wasn't Lot's wife who got Joseph into trouble, and I thought you might have a Bible with you, so I could prove he was wrong and get the money."

## MAMA'S BUSINESS.

Little Minna was saying her prayers. When she had finished her usual petitions her mother said:—

"You have forgotten, dear, 'Make Minna a good girl,' you know."

"Oh, mother," she answered, reproachfully, "don't let's bother God about that, that's your business."

## NOT TO BE WASTED.

A gentleman lying on his death-bed was questioned by his inconsolable prospective widow. "Poor Mike," said she, "is there anythin' that wud make ye comfortable? Anythin' ye ask for I'll get for ye."

"Please, Bridget," he responded, "I t'ink I'd like a wee taste of the ham I smell a-boilin' in the kitchen."

"Arrah, go on," responded Bridget. "Divil a bit of tha ham ye'll get. 'Tis for the wake."

## SIDESTEPPING.

Rev. Fourthly: "I trust you are trying to climb the straight and narrow path?"

Knicker: "Yes; but the best way to drive up a hill is to zigzag."

## PROVIDENCE GOT A NIGHT OFF.

Bishop Potter was to preach at a certain parish in the West in the evening, and the congregation was not a little amused at the somewhat ambiguous announcement of their pastor, who said: "Remember our special service next Sunday afternoon. The Lord will be with us in the morning and Bishop Potter in the evening."

## SCRIPTURAL PRECEDENT.

Jonah stepped ashore.

"I left my records in the whale," he observed. "Anybody who wants to see them can go after them."

It was noticed that none questioned his exploit.

## 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.

#### INDOOR.

ISLINGTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Church-street, Upper-street, N.): 7.30, J. Rowney, "Holy Moses & Co."

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Public Hall (Minor), Barking-road, Canning Town): 7.30, C. Cohen, "Morality Without Religion."

#### OUTDOOR.

ISLINGTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Highbury Corner): 12 (noon) Sidney Cook, "Freethought Pioneers." Finsbury Park, 3, Sidney Cook, "Why am I an Atheist?"

### COUNTRY.

#### INDOOR.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12 (noon) and 6.30, H. S. Wishart, Lectures.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, J. T. Lloyd, "Dream Life and Real Life."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7. II. Percy Ward, "The Ethics of Atheism."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, W. Sanders, "Capitalism and Consumption."

NEWCASTLE RATIONALIST DEBATING SOCIETY (Vegetarian Café, Nelson-street): 7.30, W. Carlisle, "The Origin and Growth of Human Society."

NOTTINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Cobden Hall, Peachey-street): 7.30, J. Long, "The Family of God: a Study in Celestial Morality."

## BUSINESS CARDS.

Short advertisements are inserted under this heading at the rate of 2s. per half inch and 3s. 6d. per inch. No advertisement under this heading can be less than 2s. or extend beyond one inch. Special terms for several continuous insertions.

**FREETHOUGHT BADGES.**—The new N. S. S. Badge Design is the French Freethinkers' emblem—a single Pansy flower. Button shape, with strong pin. Has been the means of many pleasant introductions. Price, single, 2d., postage 1d.; three or more post free. Reduction to Branches.—N.S.S. SECRETARY, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

**ONE, TWO, OR THREE ROOMS TO LET,** furnished or unfurnished. Select house in select neighborhood. Bath-room, etc. Ten minutes to three railway-stations—Metropolitan, Tube, District.—Apply H., 157 Uxbridge-road, Shepherds' Bush, W.

**A NEW FREETHOUGHT JOURNAL**—*The Universal Reformer*. A special feature of this journal is its open columns for articles and letters on various phases of reform. Monthly 1½d., post free.—N. LEVY, 12 Hill-square, Edinburgh.

**SUITABLE FOR CHRISTMAS CARDS.** A beautiful portrait of Ingersoll on postcard, with words on Love. 9d. per dozen; sample 1½d., post free.—N. LEVY, 12 Hill-square, Edinburgh.

**HARRY BOULTER,** the Freethinker's Tailor, Leysian Offices, 108 City-road, 2nd floor, 'phone 7930 Central. All things being equal, deal with a Freethinker. Overcoats, 30/-; Suits, 37/6; Ladies' Costumes, 42/-. Doing well. Thanks.

**BLANKETS! BLANKETS!! BLANKETS!!!** All wool. Two pairs for 21s., carriage paid. Yorkshire make. Satisfaction guaranteed.—J. W. GOTT, 28 Church-bank, Bradford.

**ONE PAIR BEST SUNDAY TROUSERS** to measure, and a pair best box-calf Gent's boots for 21s., or high-class lounge suit to measure, 27s. 6d. Patterns free.—H. M. WILSON, 22 Northside-terrace, Bradford.

**AGENTS WANTED** (good commission) to take orders for my world-famed 30s. suits, to measure. Any working-man can easily add £1 weekly to his income.—J. W. GOTT, 28 Church-bank, Bradford.

## FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT

By G. W. FOOTE.

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

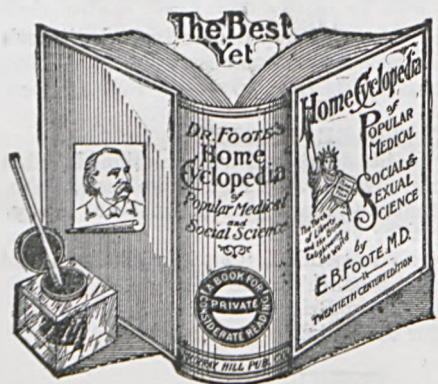
First Series, cloth . . . . . 2s. 6d.  
Second Series, cloth . . . . . 2s. 6d.

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

## A LIBERAL OFFER NOTHING LIKE IT.

Greatest Popular Family Reference Book and Sexology—Almost Given Away. A Million sold at 3 and 4 dollars—Now Try it Yourself.

Insure Your Life—You Die to Win; Buy this Book, You Learn to Live.



Ignorance kills—knowledge saves—be wise in time. Men weaken, sicken, die—not knowing how to live. "Habits that enslave" wreck thousands—young and old. Fathers fail, mothers are "bed ridden," babies die. Family feuds, marital miseries, divorces—even murders—All can be avoided by self-knowledge, self-control.

You can discount heaven—dodge hell—here and now, by reading and applying the wisdom of this one book of 1,200 pages, 400 illustrations, 80 lithographs on 18 anatomical color plates, and over 250 prescriptions.

OF COURSE YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT EVERYONE OUGHT TO KNOW.

THE YOUNG—How to choose the best to marry.  
THE MARRIED—How to be happy in marriage.  
THE FOND PARENT—How to have prize babies.  
THE MOTHER—How to have them without pain.  
THE CHILDLESS—How to be fruitful and multiply.  
THE CURIOUS—How they "grew" from germ-cell.  
THE HEALTHY—How to enjoy life and keep well.  
THE INVALID—How to brace up and keep well.

Whatever you'd ask a doctor you find herein, or (if not, Dr. F. will answer your inquiry FREE, any time).

Dr. Foote's books have been the popular instructors of the masses in America for fifty years (often re-written, enlarged, and always kept up-to-date). For twenty years they have sold largely (from London) to all countries where English is spoken, and everywhere highly praised. Last editions are best, largest, and most for the price. You may save the price by not buying, and you may lose your life (or your wife or child) by not knowing some of the vitally important truths it tells.

### Most Grateful Testimonials From Everywhere.

Gudivoda, India: "It is a store of medical knowledge in plainest language, and every reader of English would be benefited by it."—W. L. N.

Triplicane, India: "I have gone through the book many times, and not only benefited myself but many friends also."—G. W. T.

Panderma, Turkey: "I can avow frankly there is rarely to be found such an interesting book as yours."—K. H. (Chemist).  
Calgary, Can.: "The information therein has changed my whole idea of life—to be nobler and happier."—D. N. M.  
Laverton, W. Aust.: "I consider it worth ten times the price. I have benefited much by it."—R. M.

Somewhat Abridged Editions (800 pp. each) can be had in German, Swedish, Finnish, or Spanish.

Price EIGHT SHILLINGS by Mail to any Address.

ORDER OF THE PIONEER PRESS,  
2 NEWCASTLE STREET, LONDON, E.C.

**NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.**

President: G. W. FOOTE.

Secretary: MISS E M. VANCE, 2 Newcastle-st., London, E.C.

**Principles and Objects.**

SECULARISM teaches that conduct should be based on reason and knowledge. It knows nothing of divine guidance or interference; it excludes supernatural hopes and fears; it regards happiness as man's proper aim, and utility as his moral guide.

Secularism affirms that Progress is only possible through Liberty, which is at once a right and a duty; and therefore seeks to remove every barrier to the fullest equal freedom of thought, action, and speech.

Secularism declares that theology is condemned by reason as superstitious, and by experience as mischievous, and assails it as the historic enemy of Progress.

Secularism accordingly seeks to dispel superstition; to spread education; to disestablish religion; to rationalise morality; to promote peace; to dignify labor; to extend material well-being; and to realise the self-government of the people.

**Membership.**

Any person is eligible as a member on signing the following declaration:—

"I desire to join the National Secular Society, and I pledge myself, if admitted as a member, to co-operate in promoting its objects."

Name.....  
 Address.....  
 Occupation.....  
 Dated this..... day of..... 190.....

This Declaration should be transmitted to the Secretary with a subscription.

P.S.—Beyond a minimum of Two Shillings per year, every member is left to fix his own subscription according to his means and interest in the cause.

**Immediate Practical Objects.**

The Legitimation of Requests to Secular or other Free-thought Societies, for the maintenance and propagation of heterodox opinions on matters of religion, on the same conditions as apply to Christian or Theistic churches or organisations.

The Abolition of the Blasphemy Laws, in order that Religion may be canvassed as freely as other subjects, without fear of fine or imprisonment.

The Disestablishment and Disendowment of the State Churches in England, Scotland, and Wales.

The Abolition of all Religious Teaching and Bible Reading in Schools, or other educational establishments supported by the State.

The Opening of all endowed educational institutions to the children and youth of all classes alike.

The Abrogation of all laws interfering with the free use of Sunday for the purpose of culture and recreation; and the Sunday opening of State and Municipal Museums, Libraries, and Art Galleries.

A Reform of the Marriage Laws, especially to secure equal justice for husband and wife, and a reasonable liberty and facility of divorce.

The Equalisation of the legal status of men and women, so that all rights may be independent of sexual distinctions.

The Protection of children from all forms of violence, and from the greed of those who would make a profit out of their premature labor.

The Abolition of all hereditary distinctions and privileges, fostering a spirit antagonistic to justice and human brotherhood.

The Improvement by all just and wise means of the conditions of daily life for the masses of the people, especially in towns and cities, where insanitary and incommensurable dwellings, and the want of open spaces, cause physical weakness and disease, and the deterioration of family life.

The Promotion of the right and duty of Labor to organise itself for its moral and economical advancement, and of its claim to legal protection in such combinations.

The Substitution of the idea of Reform for that of Punishment in the treatment of criminals, so that gaols may no longer be places of brutalisation, or even of mere detention, but places of physical, intellectual, and moral elevation for those who are afflicted with anti-social tendencies.

An Extension of the moral law to animals, so as to secure them humane treatment and legal protection against cruelty.

The Promotion of Peace between nations, and the substitution of Arbitration for War in the settlement of international disputes.

America's Freethought Newspaper.

**THE TRUTH SEEKER.**

FOUNDED BY D. M. BENNETT, 1873.

CONTINUED BY E. M. MACDONALD, 1883-1909.

G. E. MACDONALD ... .. EDITOR.  
 L. K. WASHBURN ... .. EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTOR.

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES.**

Single subscription in advance ... ..	\$3.00
Two new subscribers ... ..	5.00
One subscription two years in advance ... ..	5.00

To all foreign countries, except Mexico, 50 cents per annum extra  
 Subscriptions for any length of time under a year, at the rate of 25 cents per month, may be begun at any time.

Freethinkers everywhere are invited to send for specimen copies, which are free.

THE TRUTH SEEKER COMPANY,  
 Publishers, Dealers in Freethought Books,  
 62 VESSEY STREET, NEW YORK, U.S.A.

**TRUE MORALITY:**

Or, The Theory and Practice of Neo-Malthusianism

IN, I BELIEVE,

**THE BEST BOOK**

ON THIS SUBJECT.

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

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

A POPULAR EDITION IN PAPER COVERS.

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

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

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

Orders should be sent to the author,

J. R. HOLMES, EAST HANNEY, WANTAGE.

**A NEW (THE THIRD) EDITION**

OF

**FROM FICTION TO FACT.**

By F. BONTE.

(Issued by the Secular Society, Limited.)

REVISED AND ENLARGED.  
 SHOULD BE SCATTERED BROADCAST.

**SIXTY-FOUR PAGES.**  
**PRICE ONE PENNY.**

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

**PAMPHLETS by C. COHEN.**

Foreign Missions their Dangers and Delusions ... .. 3d.  
 Full of facts and figures.

An Outline of Evolutionary Ethics ... 6d.  
 Principles of ethics, based on the doctrine of Evolution.

Socialism, Atheism, and Christianity.. 1d.

Christianity and Social Ethics ... 1d.

Pain and Providence ... .. 1d.

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

# London Freethinkers' Annual Dinner

AT THE

**HOLBORN RESTAURANT,**

ON

**Tuesday, January 11, 1910.**

Under the auspices of the National Secular Society's Executive.

**Chairman: Mr. G. W. FOOTE.**

SUPPORTED BY

Messrs. **COHEN, LLOYD, DAVIES, MOSS, HEAFORD,** and others.

**Tickets 4s. each, including Dinner and Entertainment**

Apply to Secretary (Miss E. M. VANCE), 2 Newcastle-street, London, E.C.

## SUNDAY EVENING FREETHOUGHT LECTURES

AT

**ST. JAMES'S HALL,**

GREAT PORTLAND STREET, LONDON, W.

From January 9 to March 27, 1910 (inclusive).

*(Under the auspices of the Secular Society, Ltd.)*

**Mr. G. W. FOOTE on January 9, 16, 23.**

Further details in next week's "Freethinker."

### CLEARANCE SALE.

To make room for fresh stock.

### WORKS BY G. W. FOOTE.

	Published at	Offered at
Will Christ Save Us? ... .. An important Essay on Christianity and Civilisation. 64 pages.	6d.	2d.
Rome or Atheism ... ..	3d.	1d.
What is Agnosticism? With a Defence of Atheism ... ..	3d.	1d.
Dropping the Devil ... ..	2d.	½d.
Ingersollism Defended ... ..	2d.	½d.
The Passing of Jesus ... ..	2d.	½d.
Comic Sermons ... .. Some of Mr. Foote's most trenchant writing.	8d.	2d.

The whole lot sent post free for 9d.

Separate orders, ½d. for postage on each, except first and last, which are 1d. each.

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

Printed and Published by the PIONEER PRESS, 2 Newcastle-street, London, E.C.