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Hitherto it has been considered that religion alone, with its supernatural sanctions, was strong enough to ensure the submission of the mass of the population to law and order; now philosophers and politicians are bent on satisfying this problem without the aid of Christianity.—CARDINAL NEWMAN.

Few That Find It.

CHRISTIANITY has always taught an exclusive salvation. Its divines have very rarely doubted that all non-Christians would be damned. The wisest and best of the "heathen" were all doomed to everlasting perdition. Not even in Purgatory, but in Hell, the great Christian poet, Dante, saw (or placed) Brutus, Saladin, and the mighty Aristotle, "the master of those who know." "Firmly believe, and doubt not all," said Augustine, "that not only all pagans, but also all Jews, heretics, and schismatics, that end this present life without the Catholic Church, shall go into eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels." The Church of England articles declare that "they are to be held accursed that presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to pass his life according to that law and the light of nature." The Book of Homilies admits that "Jews, heretics, and pagans do good works," that "they clothe the naked, feed the poor, and do other good works of mercy," yet because their good works are "not done in the true faith" the doers of them are "lost." Bishop Beveridge sums up the whole doctrine vigorously and logically in his treatise on the Thirty-Nine Articles. "Let a man," he says, "be never so strict a Jew, never so strict a Mahometan, never so strict in any religion whatsoever, unless he be a Christian he can never be saved. So that, though many Christians may go to hell, yet none but Christians can ever go to heaven."

Every missionary society is founded upon this doctrine. Nothing else could excuse the diversion of such vast sums of money from Christian countries, where so many people suffer destitution and misery. You might leave a hungry man for a while in order to save a man who was in immediate peril of being burnt to death; in the same way, you might leave a suffering white man, who had at least a chance of heaven, in order to save a happy black man who was going straight to hell without knowing it.

There is another consideration. If you admit that anybody but a Christian may go to heaven, you destroy the necessity of Christianity altogether. If every honest man is entitled to a seat in paradise, what is the use of all those myriads of churches and chapels, all those armies of priests, and all those multitudes of sermons? Salvation by good works subverts the very foundations of priestcraft by making churches and preachers superfluous. This is clearly understood by every denomination. The Catholic Church allows a certain efficacy in good works, but does not admit their sufficiency. The Protestant Church denies the efficacy of good works altogether, and derives salvation entirely from the free grace of God. Both Churches, therefore, assert the necessity of faith; in other words, they affirm,

by implication if not explicitly, that it is impossible to go to heaven without being a Christian.

Now if only Christians go to heaven, and many Christians go to hell, what is the real number of the saved? It cannot be a great one. Many are called, few are chosen. The way to heaven is narrow, and few there be that find it. Jeremy Taylor says in the plainest terms that the future will be "bad to the greatest part of mankind." "The greatest part of men and women," he declares, "shall dwell in the portion of devils to eternal ages." Thomas Watson, a puritan preacher much studied by Spurgeon, puts the matter most pointedly. "The Devil hath the harvest," he exclaims, "and God only a few gleanings."

What a pitiable God! One commiserates the poor Deity who is doomed to such unprofitable labor in the field of his own creation.

What reason is assigned for this extraordinary state of things? Nothing but the old story of the Fall of Man in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve sinned by eating forbidden fruit, and thus entailed "original sin" on all their posterity. Every educated person knows that the story is fabulous. The clergy know it as well as the laymen. And if the story be fabulous the doctrine must be false. It is not even true that man is fallen. According to evolution he has risen. His faults of sensuality and temper do not spring from the temptations of a devil. They spring from his strong passions, weak judgment, and lack of self-control. They are not an intrusion upon his primitive innocence; they are a legacy from his far-off animal origin, and they gradually disappear in the upward cause of his development.

If there be a God, it is inconceivable that he is eternally baffled by one of his own creatures called the Devil. It is incredible that he should desire the happiness of all his children, and yet allow this Devil to lead off the vast majority of them to everlasting misery. Those who argue that this arrangement is part of an infinitely wise and good plan, and even that God has a right to do as he likes with his own, are guilty of intellectual absurdity and grovelling immorality. That cannot be wise and good in God which is foolish and wicked in man. And the real blasphemers are not those who denounce the puerilities of theology, but those who represent their God as possessing the intelligence of an idiot and the character of a criminal.

It was inevitable that the doctrine of exclusive salvation should perish, however gradually, in the presence of modern civilisation. Men's religion is perceived to be, for the most part, a result of the geographical accident of their birth. Christians, Mohammedans, Buddhists, Brahmans, belong to their various religions because they were brought up in them. Their own personal initiative counts for next to nothing in the matter. Their parents and teachers made them what they are. Salvation which depends on this or that faith is, therefore, purely arbitrary. It has no relation to sense or justice. And it is still worse, if possible, from the point of view of humanity. People have become more tender and sympathetic. Consequently we seldom hear of hell nowadays; and exclusive salvation is at variance with the growing solidarity of mankind.

G. W. FOOTE.

Is Religion Necessary?

"BANISH religion from life," said a writer in one of the Christian papers the other day, "and you remove the great dynamic of human progress." "Dynamic" is quite a favorite word of late with religious speakers and writers, and bids fair to play the part of the more ancient "Mesopotamia." It *sounds* as though something serious would happen to everybody if they were not religious; and so long as they have this feeling it serves the purpose for which it is introduced. Religion lives to-day partly on people's feelings, but a great deal more on their fears. And although these fears are not concerned with what the gods may do—for few people nowadays expect them to do anything at all—they are expressed as regards the conduct of other people if they have not some faith in religion, and by those who often enough have little faith in it themselves. It needs little consideration to show how baseless such a belief is, and it is a serious reflection upon our mental culture that any demonstration to this end should be necessary.

The year that has just closed witnessed two things that alone would have made it famous. The long series of adventurous voyages in search of the North Pole was crowned by the triumphant achievement of Lieutenant Peary. In the same year the successful flights of Bleirot, Latham, and others established aerial navigation as something more than a dream or a toy. It became an accomplished fact, with great potentialities for future good and evil. Both enterprises demanded mental qualities of no mean order, and called for men of more than ordinary calibre. Aerial navigator and Polar explorer each took his life in his hand. Their tasks demanded courage, devotion to an ideal, faith in an idea, and an unconquerable confidence in the ability of man to subdue nature in what was apparently her most impregnable strongholds. Of the religious beliefs of Peary, Bleirot, and Latham I know nothing, and care nothing. And as it is not claimed that what they did depended on religious belief, the question is not of importance. Theirs was the courage of the individual standing alone, and at the side of their splendid audacity the courage of the mere soldier is tawdry, the faith of the religious devotee paltry. The religionist is always buoyed up with considerations of a purely selfish nature; the soldier faces death in a crowd, and derives moral and physical strength from association. But here were men ready to face death alone, and with the probability, if they failed, of earning no better epitaph than "Here lies a crank."

Consider, also, all that is implied by the existence in our midst of an army of scientific workers, ceaseless in their search for truth, and defiant in the risks they run. Here is one man deliberately exposing himself to an attack of malaria in order to vindicate a theory, or to discover a remedy for the benefit of others. Or another, in perfecting our knowledge of the mysterious X rays, contracts a disease that leaves him maimed for life. Others risk being poisoned, suffocated, or blown to pieces in a chemical laboratory—risks run far more frequently than the general public know of. Disease in all its forms is faced unflinchingly and without parade in the search for antidotes, or from sheer lust of knowledge. The perils of earth, sea, and air are braved with none of the fictitious stimulants that brace either the soldier or the religious martyr. The only reward looked for is that their names may be counted worthy of record in that long list of heroic workers who have done so much to raise the race from savagery to civilisation.

And beyond these stand the great army of men and women—mostly unknown—workers in every description of social, political, and intellectual movement. Thousands of men, after toiling hard all day for a livelihood, give their spare hours to labor for a movement from which any personal gain that may accrue is of the vaguest possible character. Two-thirds of the advanced and reforming movements in the country would collapse but for the unselfish labors of these people. Historians, deluded by the

pageantry of great names and the glitter of outstanding personalities, ignore their existence, but those who look below the surface of things may well pause to pay them the tribute of their respect. Even the sordid game of politics is redeemed largely by the unselfish labors of its unknown workers.

What, now, has religion to do with all this? What is its function in connection with this mass of idealistic endeavor. That people who profess a religion bear a part in all these movements, it would be folly to deny. It would be strange were it not so. It is enough, to commence with, that the work is not confined to religious people. Nor could it be maintained that even religious people are, in their scientific and social work, *consciously* inspired by their religious beliefs. In fact, where religion does consciously operate it will usually be found that social and intellectual movements occupy quite a subordinate position. But with the vast majority of people religion never enters into their consciousness in this connection. Their interest is excited and their work done in response to feelings which have no more real connection with religion than they have with the differential calculus.

The only truth in the religious contention is that for really good work man requires faith; but faith, not in the religious sense of a mental assent to a number of more or less unbelievable propositions, but confidence in the value of endeavor, in the power of human reason, in the ultimate triumph of a good idea over a bad, of the supreme value of justice in human actions. Given this faith and the object that calls it forth may be a matter of indifference. Politics, patriotism, love of science, anything may serve. "Never," says Balzac, "look for great things from self-interest; interests may change; but look for anything from feeling, from religious faith, monarchical faith, patriotic." And in saying this he is substantially correct. No great work ever yet sprang from self-interest, but only from devotion to an idea, and an unshakeable confidence in its value and ultimate triumph. And on this ground non-religion may challenge criticism with perfect confidence. Bacon and Galileo in their prisons, Bruno and Vanini at the stake, the long martyr roll of men and women who have risked their all in the battle for what was to them the supreme truth, are all eloquent testimony to the one end. Save by death, religion could not still their tongues, and just as little can it adequately explain the nobility of their conduct. Religiously, they should have been destitute of their lofty aspirations; actually, they were the teachers of their would-be instructors.

The suggestive truth of the matter is that, while the religious theory of human nature breaks down because it fails to include the conduct of Freethinkers, the Freethought theory covers and explains all that religion exhibits. We can explain them; they cannot explain us. Why men and women should devote their lives to an unselfish end, why they should, through disappointment and defeat, fight on for reform, is an enigma to the religious world because to it and apart from supernaturalism human nature is lacking in all that is idealistic. Right conduct being something imposed upon man from without, the removal of this external pressure naturally threatens or destroys all security for moral progress. To the Freethinker, human nature is all inclusive, containing within itself the germs of all it displays, and the capacity for continuous development. And this all inclusiveness necessarily embraces religion with all its phenomena. The impulse to great deeds displayed by religious people does not conflict with the same manifestation in the non-religious; it is attributable to precisely the same causes. While men risk life and limb, fortune and reputation, for other ends besides that of religion, it is idle to talk of devotion to truth, or of the desire for better things, as being dependent upon religious belief.

Man is often described as a religious animal; and, even though we admit the accuracy of the description, a still wider truth is that he is a social animal even before he is a religious one. And man as a

social animal persists, while as a religious biped he tends to disappear. Moreover, the social aspect is not only persistent, it dominates. Sooner or later it modifies or kills religious teachings that are in conflict with fundamental social necessities. It is in the sphere of the social life that the qualities mentioned at the beginning of this article are born, although they may assume here a supernaturalistic, there a patriotic, or yet again a military covering. And just as militarism takes credit for qualities that are developed apart from its influence, so religion claims parentage for qualities of mind that originate and develop without its assistance. Religion, in fact, does not create, it utilises. And because courage and devotion, truth and justice, may have been expressed in connection with religion, the ridiculous claim is made that, without religion, these qualities would atrophy and disappear. Happily, the crust of religion is wearing thin; and it is not without significance that even supernaturalism is to-day compelled to express itself in a social guise if it would command allegiance on anything like an extensive scale. One more step, and the religious covering will have been discarded altogether.

We do not, then, banish "the dynamic of human progress" in eliminating religion. All that is really essential to human development remains. Indeed, the essentials of life are always practically indestructible. And one may fairly assert that, in claiming for human nature, as such, the powers and qualities that are attributed to religious belief, we are offering a wider and a more inspiring basis for effort than anything religion affords. It widens our sympathies with, and deepens our appreciation of, all that is great and noble in the world's history. We shall still be able to appreciate devotion and heroism, even in so mistaken a cause as that of religion; but we shall be far less oblivious than we have been to the self-sacrifice and courage of those who, in a thousand and one directions, work for the betterment of the race. And, with a saner consciousness of the source of human inspiration, we may safely hope for more sustained efforts at betterment, and far more profitable results. C. COHEN.

Nietzsche Again.

MR. A. W. HUTTY, in a letter which appeared in this journal for last week, expresses "a little surprise" that in the article entitled "Jesus and Nietzsche" the writer regarded that brilliant but eccentric German as "the coming philosopher." The wonder is, however, that, having honored the said article with two perusals, Mr. Hutty did not discover that it does not characterise Nietzsche as "the coming philosopher," but merely declares that, "despite all his extravagancies and contradictions, he has been and is a strong influence making for the intellectual emancipation and moral elevation of the race." Mr. Hutty does not attempt to controvert that declaration, or to depreciate Nietzsche's intellectual greatness and the irresistible beauty and charm of his style; but he paints his character in unlovely, forbidding colors. He says: "Nietzsche, who loves cruelty, and takes pleasure in pain, torment, and injuries to others." Then he trots out some extracts from *Thus Spake Zarathustra* and *Beyond Good and Evil* in justification of the offensive portrait, and closes thus: "I think I prefer Jesus to Nietzsche." As a matter of fact, however, Nietzsche was profoundly tender-hearted and sympathetic. On becoming a professor at Basel he had to relinquish his German nationality; but when the Franco-German war broke out he was permitted to join the ambulance corps, in connection with which he rendered a magnificent service, neglecting his own delicate health in his ardor to help and comfort the sick and wounded private soldiers. As one says, he "travelled with his ambulance on the dark roads night after night, tending the sufferers, exposing himself fearlessly to the maladies which follow in the track of

war. He nearly died of the illness contracted at this time, and some think that the causes of his final collapse may be traced back to 1870." Was that the conduct one would have expected from a cruel man, who took "pleasure in pain, torment, and injuries to others"? It is authentically related of him that he was an ideal son and brother. The bond of affection between him and his mother was perfect. "He was obedient to her slightest word."

In the light of such a record, how are we to explain the two extracts from his works which Mr. Hutty lays before us? Let us bear in mind that in spite of weak health and numerous difficulties Nietzsche found life abundantly worth living. Here are his own words:—

"No, life has not deceived me. I find it on the contrary year by year more rich, more desirable, and more mysterious—ever since the day that came to me the great liberator, the thought that life might be an experiment for the seeker after knowledge; not a duty, not a fatality, not a sham and a fraud. 'Life as a means to knowledge'—with this principle in one's heart, one can not only live bravely, but with joy and laughter. Courage says, 'Was that life?' Up! Once more."

But what is the object of life? What should be our constant aim? Here we reach the bedrock of the essential differences between Nietzsche and Wagner. At one time Wagner was a rollicksome Freethinker, a vigorous opponent of Christianity, and a strong despiser of the common people who were only fit for a life of serfdom. Having previously been a Socialist he was now all the more uncompromising in his individualism. It was during this period that he and Nietzsche met, the former being well on in his fifties, and the latter but half through his twenties. Being the two cleverest Germans of the day, they soon became fast friends, and naturally the elder exerted considerable influence over the younger. But this intimate friendship between the two geniuses was of short duration. Wagner's intellect began to deteriorate; but in proportion as his intellectual powers declined his purely musical faculty developed. By degrees he became the slave of his emotions. Instead of despising the common people he now showered weeping pity upon them; and because Christianity glorified sympathy he became a Christian. This change of attitude resulted in the production of *Parsifal*, at once intellectually the weakest and musically the finest of all his operas. Nietzsche was furiously angry with his old friend, and could not find language sufficiently strong to express the fierceness of his indignation. "I despise everyone," he said, "who does not regard *Parsifal* as an outrage on morals." "Wagner sank down," he also asserted, "helpless and disjointed, at the foot of the Christian Cross."

"But," it may be objected, "is not pity the sweetest and most beautiful of virtues? Is it not our bounden duty to help the poor and comfort the sad?" Yes, surely, as long as poor, weak, and sad people exist; but on what grounds can their continued existence be justified? A two thousand years' sympathetic treatment has left the maladies from which they suffer as rank and malignant as ever. As a remedy, pity is absolutely of no use. The question of questions is, *how to get rid of the unfit?* As long as they remain they cumber and poison the ground; and inevitably they react injuriously upon the strong and fit. Nietzsche advocated their being killed off as the only practicable way of destroying their potency for evil. Mr. Bernard Shaw appears to be of the same conviction; and there are several other prominent Britishers who believe that this is the only feasible solution of the vexed problem. The majority of us, however, are quite unable to adopt that view, although we are all agreed that, in some way or other, the unworthy should cease to be. There would also be a divergence of opinion as to what substitutes unfitness to survive. In any case, it is beyond all doubt that pity, or sympathy, or charity is not an effective panacea, and has, indeed, proved itself a miserable failure. What is wanted is an improved race—a race of superior, almost super-human,

beings; and an improved race cannot be produced without the application of intelligence to the law of breeding. Such is the teaching of Eugenics, a science of which Nietzsche was undoubtedly one of the chief founders.

But the existence of the unfit is by no means the only obstacle in the way of race-improvement. Another serious hindrance is the tyranny of Good and Evil as absolute realities. It was against this tyranny that Nietzsche fired his great guns. As Mr. Orage so well puts it,—

"Every people has thought that its morality was right, that its Good was good for ever, its Evil evil for ever. But the comparative study of moralities begun by Nietzsche already begins to demonstrate the fact that there is in reality no absolute Good, no absolute Evil. Of nothing is it any longer possible to say: 'This is Good everywhere and always; that is Bad everywhere and always.' Good and Bad must be determined on every occasion afresh, and always in relation to a definite purpose, by which alone anything can be good or bad..... Thus, in one sense, Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil* is no more than a criticism of the absolute values of these concepts. He seeks to give Morality the idea of relativity, which by this time has been given to all other human institutions: not Good and Evil, as if things were these absolutely, but Good and Bad in relation to a definitely conceived end."

It is now perfectly clear that Nietzsche denounced the conventional morality in the interest of a higher; that he praised wickedness in the absolute sense in order to prepare the way for the noblest type of goodness. The ideal at which he aimed was, "No good, no evil, but my taste, for which I have neither shame nor concealment." Here is a sentence that puts the whole truth in a nutshell: "That your self be in your action as a mother is in the child, that shall be for me your word of virtue." Consequently, "'autonomous' and 'moral' are mutually preclusive terms."

The quotation from Dr. Hermann Lürch, bearing on Nietzsche's insanity, is not pleasant reading. The sneer in the following sentence is most atrocious: "It ever remains a disgrace to the German intellectual life of the present age that, in Germany, a pronounced maniac should have been regarded as a philosopher, and have founded a school." With equal justice might a Freethinker say that it ever remains a disgrace to British religious life that, in Great Britain, a pronounced maniac like Robert Hall should have been regarded as a great preacher; but the bad taste of such a statement would be universally execrated. Unfortunately, Robert Hall was insane, and had to be confined within a lunatic asylum; but that fact does not detract in the least from his fame as one of the great preachers of the world. Neither should the fact that Nietzsche suffered from brain trouble in 1876, and went, finally, insane in 1890, be allowed to darken his reputation as a philosophical and ethical reformer. His works demand to be judged on their merits. Is his reasoning cogent and are his arguments sound? Do his appeals to our sense of truth commend themselves to us as legitimate and fair? It was his misfortune, and a terrible deprivation to the world, that his working career was so tragically cut short; but while sadly deploring his premature collapse, and while totally disagreeing with several of his views, many of us are convinced that he dealt a most crushing blow to the prevailing superstition, from the effects of which it shall never recover. We are by no means his avowed disciples, nor do we choose him as a substitute for Jesus. We only rejoice that he was so successful in his attack upon the religion which has done such havoc in the world. What Nietzsche really condemned was "the elevation of manners into morality by means of theology. Theology (we are quoting from Mr. Orage again) universalises. When once a human law has taken to itself a Divine sanction, it ceases to be capable of regarding itself as temporary, fallible, particular in its application, questionable—in short, human! Morality ceases to be human, and becomes Divine—and inhuman."

J. T. LLOYD.

The Narratives in Genesis.

THE HISTORY OF JOSEPH.

THE veracious Bible "history" of Joseph commences with Gen. xxxvii. 3, and, with the exception of chapter xxxviii. which is devoted to some of the exploits of Judah, runs on to the end of the last chapter of Genesis. The narratives relating to this mythical patriarch are almost wholly from the pen of the Yahvist and the Elohist, the Priestly writer contributing very little beyond Gen. xlv. 6 to 27.

In chapter xxxvii. the Yahvistic portions are the following: verses 3 and 4, 12 to 18, 25 (omitting first seven words), 26, 27, 28 (ten words), 31 to 35. The remaining portions of the chapter are by the Elohist, who is responsible for the story of Joseph's dreams and the putting him into a pit. The narrative is continued in Gen. xxxix., xliii., xlv., etc., by the Yahvist, and in Gen. xl., xli., xlii., xlv., etc., by the Elohist. It may be interesting to compare the narratives of these two writers separately—at least in the opening chapter (xxxvii.), which is rather mixed.

The Yahvist commences by stating that the patriarch Jacob "loved Joseph more than all his other children, because he was the son of his old age." Now, according to the earlier narratives (Gen. xxix. 27; xxx. 26; xxxi. 41; etc.), all the sons of Jacob, except Benjamin, were born during his second term of seven years' service with his uncle Laban. Jacob's wife Leah gave birth to Zebulun in the same year that Rachel gave birth to Joseph; Asher and Issachar were only one year older than Joseph; while Reuben, the eldest, was but six years his senior. Yet the inspired Yahvistic writer represents Joseph as little more than a lad, and the other ten sons of Jacob as men of mature years. The "son of Jacob's old age" was not Joseph, but Benjamin (Gen. xxxv. 18). The Yahvist, to be consistent with the earlier stories, should have said that "Jacob loved Joseph more than his other children because he was the son of his"—favorite wife Rachel.

Continuing the Yahvist narrative, Joseph was hated by his brothers because of their father's open partiality for him; so that when, one day, they saw him coming to inquire after their welfare "they conspired against him to slay him." This they would doubtless have done, but Reuben "delivered him out of their hands," and just then "beheld a company of *Ishmaelites*" appeared, and by the advice of Judah they "sold Joseph to the *Ishmaelites* for twenty pieces of silver," and the latter carried him down to Egypt, and sold him to "Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard" (xxxix. 1).

According to the Elohist's narrative, Joseph had dreams which indicated that he should at some future time exercise sovereignty over his brethren, and these being narrated to his father and brothers, the latter hated him; consequently, when they perceived him coming towards them "they said one to another, Behold this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him.....and we shall see what will become of his dreams." Hereupon Reuben interposed, and counselled the casting him into a pit, intending later on "to deliver him out of their hand, and restore him to his father." This advice was acted upon, and Joseph having been disposed of, the brothers "sat down to eat bread." While thus engaged "there passed by *Midianites*, merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit," and, Reuben being absent, they sold him to these merchantmen, who "brought Joseph into Egypt." Later on, "the *Midianites* sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard."

In verse 10 the Elohist represents Jacob as saying to his son Joseph: "Shall I and thy mother, and thy brethren, indeed, come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?" The words italicised imply that Joseph's mother Rachel—who was symbolised in his dream by "the moon"—was then alive; and it is quite clear that the Elohist writer intended those words

to be so understood. But as a matter of fact—or of consistent fiction—Joseph's mother had been dead some time, and Jacob had "set up a pillar upon her grave" (Gen. xxxv. 19). The latter event, which is recorded by the Yahvist, was evidently unknown to the Elohist when he sat down to concoct the story of Joseph's dreams. The matter is of no particular importance, except as serving to indicate the character of the narratives in Genesis. Of course, if the stories which precede this chapter be historical, Jacob could not have said what the Elohist has represented him as saying—which fact disposes of the dream story. The same remarks apply to the "Ishmaelites" of the Yahvist's narrative and the "Midianites" of the Elohist's. It is quite certain that the Ishmaelites were not Midianites, and *vice versa*; but this is a mere detail which is not likely to trouble the pious and uncritical reader.

Resuming the Bible history of Joseph, that young man in the house of Potiphar was advanced to a position of trust. Though but a youth, and without business experience of any kind, his new master "made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had." And here an event occurred which renders his name proverbial. Being "comely and well-favored," his master's wife conceived a passion for him, and made certain overtures which, as a virtuous young man, he rejected. In revenge, the lady falsely accused him to her husband, and Joseph was cast into prison. Here, however, "the Lord was with him," and gave him power to foresee future events. Having interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh's chief butler and baker, he was afterwards sent for to interpret a dream of Pharaoh, which having satisfactorily performed, he was made ruler "over all the land of Egypt." In this exalted position his brothers, several years later, came and bowed themselves down before him, as prefigured in his dreams. So runs the story: but one word that is several times employed in it suffices to show its fictitious character. This is the word italicised in the following passages:—

Gen. xxxix. 14.—Potiphar's wife says to the men of her house: "See, he hath brought in an *Hebrew* unto us to mock us," etc.

Gen. xxxix. 17.—Potiphar's wife says to her husband: "The *Hebrew* servant which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me," etc.

Gen. xli. 12.—The chief butler says to King Pharaoh: "And there was there a young man, an *Hebrew*, servant of the captain of the guard," etc.

Now, every one of the foregoing statements implies that Joseph belonged to the Hebrew nation. The expression "an Englishman," or "an English servant," presupposes the existence of an English nation, and could not be used before such a nation had arisen. So the term "a *Hebrew*," or "a *Hebrew* servant," clearly implies that the Israelites were at that time a nation. The name is employed, too, as if the nation to which Joseph belonged was well known to the Egyptians. Potiphar's wife had heard of it; Potiphar himself had a knowledge of it; the butler knew that there was such a nation; so did Pharaoh. Yet, it is scarcely necessary to say, there was no Hebrew nation in existence at that time. We have, moreover, a further proof of fabrication. Joseph is represented as saying to Pharaoh's butler:—

"For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the *Hebrews*," etc. (Gen. xl. 15).

From this statement we can form a just estimate of the word "indeed." There was no "land of the Hebrews" in Joseph's time; there was no "land of the Hebrews" even in the time of Moses, who is said to have been the writer of the story. We know, furthermore, from the Egyptian monuments that at the time when Joseph is supposed to have lived, Canaan was called "the land of the Amorites." We also know from these inscriptions that "Joseph," like his reputed father "Jacob," was the name of a Canaanitish deity worshiped in Palestine as early as 1600 B.C. There can therefore be no doubt whatever that the stories related of these two patriarchs are pure fiction.

With regard to the Bible narrative of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, it may not be out of place to refer to a somewhat similar story called the *Tale of the Two Brothers*, an Egyptian work of fiction composed by a scribe named Enna about 1400 B.C.—that is to say, several centuries before the fictitious history of Joseph was written. In this ancient fairy-tale a man named Anpu, working in the fields one day with his younger brother Bata, sent the latter to his house to fetch some "seed-corn." Upon entering the house "the younger brother found the wife of his elder brother occupied in braiding her hair." Having loaded himself with corn, he was about to leave the premises when "she rose up and laid hold of him, and said to him, Come, let us enjoy an hour's rest.....And he spoke to her and said, O woman, thou hast been to me like a mother, and thy husband like a father.....Why hast thou spoken to me of so great a sin?" In the evening, upon her husband's return, the lady falsely accused the younger brother, as in the case of Joseph. Believing his wife's story, Anpu caught up a knife and went in search of Bata; but the latter having been warned of his danger by the cows, whose language he understood, escaped. Later, the elder brother, having learned the truth, cut his wife in pieces, and gave her remains to the dogs. The younger brother, after this, lived in a hut under a cedar tree, and received from the gods a beautiful wife, which lady, after a time, left him to marry the king. Bata then transformed himself into an Apis bull, and afterwards into a tree. Lastly, he was born as the son of his former wife, and when grown up became king of Egypt.

There can, I think, be little doubt that the Hebrew sacred writer had heard this wonderful story, and that it suggested to him the incident he relates of Joseph and Potiphar's wife. Assuming this to be the case, the writer simply made selections from the story in the same way as was done in the case of the two Babylonian Creation stories, rejecting all the most obviously fictitious portions. Though the two stories are in many ways dissimilar, the following sentences appear to show that the writer of the Bible story had seen the other:—

Bata (to his brother's wife): "Why hast thou spoken to me of so great a sin?"

Joseph (to Potiphar's wife): "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

Whether this be so or not, there can be no doubt, as already stated, that the whole Bible "history" of Joseph is, from beginning to end, a collection of "cunningly devised fables."

ARRACADABRA.

A Superman in Homespun.

MR. EDEN PHILLPOTTS has given the reading public two distinct surprises. First, when the capital short stories which made the magazines unwonted sources of laughter were collected and issued over his signature, and later and greater, when the ingenious historian of the human boy dropped the cap and bells, and, in *The Secret Woman*, contributed the most powerfully written novel of it's year to our wonder and amazement. In his latest book, *The Thief of Virtue*, Mr. Phillpotts has given his admirers yet another surprise. He has translated the philosophy of Nietzsche into the vernacular of the West country and given us a convincing picture of the superman in homespun. The story deals with elemental passions, and Mr. Phillpotts very wisely lays the scene amid the immensities of nature. The tragic-comedy is staged amid the august surroundings of Dartmoor. There passion is not partially covered by culture and entangled by passing conventions. Interest is solely concentrated on the drama of the emotions.

The story is a moving one. The hero is Philip Ouldbroom, a Dartmoor farmer of middle age, who is passionately in love with Unity Crymes, a young woman of half his years, who is already engaged to

Henry Birdwood, a shepherd. Unity has never given Philip any encouragement; but the man is determined to win her.

Philip makes the woman accept him; but the marriage is a failure. Both husband and wife eagerly desire children, and no little ones are born to them. After some years a son is born; but the child is that of Henry Birdwood, although Philip knows nothing of this.

This child, Martin, is the pivot of the tragedy. Philip centres all his hopes on the boy and he disappoints everyone.

Characteristically, the boy is the opposite of Philip. He is the perfect example of the saintly prig, and he it is who gives the ironic title to the book. Like the half-bred "nigger," the boy inherited the worst qualities of both parents, and added a few still worse of his own.

To conceive a world of such creatures as Martin would be worse than the Sabbaths without end of the popular hymn. Even a jelly-fish would have roused itself to violent action in such circumstances. Philip was little likely to cloak his antipathy. "He's a mountebank of virtue, a thief of virtue; stole it without paying for it; about as virtuous as my grandfather's clock, ticks good time and nothing else. That's not virtue, 'tis machinery."

This intense dislike corrodes the older man's soul, and in the end breaks his heart. The martyrdom of Philip is conceived in the highest spirit of tragedy.

Mr. Phillpotts handles his subject with the ease of a master. There is no haste, no hysteria, no straining after effect. The development alike of character and events is conducted with a skill dangerously near perfection. Unity Crymes is very human. Her moods and whims are depicted with fine skill.

There are subtle interludes of humor in this tragic tale, like the sound of birds in the pauses of a tempest. Barbara Hext, the postmistress and general storekeeper, is excellent. In some respects she is the finest character in the book. As Philip's guide, philosopher, and friend, she plays a very important part. She is something of a sceptic too. When Philip is arguing with her concerning her religious views she says, "Thinking people make their own pattern of God." She is not afraid of stating her position: "Jehovah's too hard and Christ's too soft for me."

Mr. Phillpotts has done remarkably well with Barbara Hext, a character whom George Eliot would have loved to paint. Philip, too, is very artistically presented. The relation between the two friends is quite the best thing in the book, and more vitally interesting than that between Philip and Unity.

Mr. Phillpott is a profound lover of nature; but he uses his landscapes a little too often. To devote a whole chapter to pure description is too much. To introduce nature, with all the grim force of the supernatural, is an artistic triumph; but it must be brought into the tale with the unerring instinct of his rustic dialogue. It must never be more than mere embroidery to a well-spun story.

From Mr. Eden Phillpotts as a writer of delightful short stories, to the same author as the future foremost novelist of power, is a far cry; yet precedents show that such forecast is not improbable. A foremost place in English fiction is within his reach, not by favor, but by right, clear and definite, that needs neither partisans to support nor fictitious help to sustain. He who doubts has but to read Mr. Phillpotts' best work to become a champion; or an honorable foe whose personal tastes forbid allegiance. If he will pursue his art for art's sake, Time will certainly bestow the verdict in his favor; but he must distinguish between art and popularity. For contemporary fame is certainly illogical. If the plaudits of the crowd are held to confer it, a native author called Blatchford is far before Thomas Hardy, while George R. Sims wears his singing robes with a haughtier grace than William Watson.

C. E. S.

Acid Drops.

Dr. King, late Bishop of Lincoln, had been expected to retire. Considering his great age, he should have made room for a younger man; but he clung to the post, and the salary, to the very last. Indeed, there was something almost facetious in his last letter to his "dear people." He said that he had been undecided what to do, but the Lord had now sent him a clear message; by which, we suppose, he meant that he felt he was dying. At any rate, he did die only a few days afterwards. We may mention that the salary was worth sticking to—£4 500 a year, with a fine old palace rent free. He lies in a much smaller house now. His "immortal part" is in a place that never suffers from damp—if the New Testament be true.

A very laudatory account of Dr. King appeared in the *Westminster Gazette* under the heading of "A Great Bishop." It was a column long, and the last clause of the last sentence was, no doubt unintentionally, satirical: "He last preached in London at St. John the Divine, where nearly all the clergy (twelve) are Cuddesdon men, and he voted against the Budget in the House of Lords." Great and good man!

Rev. Harry Youlden is getting on. He is the preacher who succeeded Mr. Aked at Pembroke Chapel, Liverpool; and he carries on Mr. Aked's old monthly magazine called *Plain Truth*, price one penny, though it might be improved occasionally if it were "twopence colored." But we repeat that Mr. Youlden is getting on. In his sermon printed in the March number of his magazine he says:—

"History yields no support to the theory that the issues of battle depend on religious incantation—neither the God of the English, chasely invoked by surpliced clergy, nor the God of the Boers' prayer meeting, determined the result in South Africa—but the balance of numbers and such mundane forces as strategy and daring."

This is perfectly true, and we are glad to hear Mr. Youlden saying it, although he is not very original after all, for Freethinkers have been saying it for generations—and been called "wicked infidels" in consequence by the gentlemen of Mr. Youlden's profession. Some day or other, perhaps, Mr. Youlden may come to see that God doesn't answer prayers for a much better reason than the one he assigns or suggests; the real reason being that a nonentity can do nothing.

We note that Mr. Youlden, like all the New Theology people, whether they call themselves so or not, spends a lot of time in verbal jugglery, trying to prove, by the use of one word for two different things, that they have both the same meaning. For instance, he points out that the old idea of "worship by means of sacrifice" has long been dying and is nearly dead; but sacrifice still subsists in a nobler form, as in the case of "the nurse who risks her life in daily work in a pestilent air." Now it would be obvious to the preacher, if he only took the trouble to think, that these two uses of the word "sacrifice," instead of agreeing, are in diametrical opposition to each other. Sacrificing human beings or animals to the gods was always a selfish act; its object was simply to obtain something from superior powers; the worshiper did not sacrifice *himself*—he sacrificed *others*. But those who risk their lives to save others are performing an altruistic act; they sacrifice *themselves*. This is really so obvious that a child might understand it.

In one of his better and more enlightened moments, Mr. Youlden says that "Loss in theology has made gain in humanity." Quite true. That is the universal law of progress. The secularisation of life is the line of all human improvement. It is a loss in theology; it is a gain in humanity. The final stage is the death of theology, and the all-inclusive life of humanity. The gods go—man remains; and heaven and hell are here.

Beautiful Christendom! Great Britain votes an extra £5 500 000 a year for the Navy; and the Kaiser is off on a North Sea trip with a gang of Jew financiers. Christianity used to be the bloodiest thing in the world; it is now the most contemptible.

Better than a hundred "Dreadnoughts" were the words of Mme. Breshkovsky to an English newspaper representative as she was leaving the court at St. Petersburg for exile in Siberia. "I am so glad," she said, "to speak English again and to see an Englishman." The love of liberty has been the Englishman's boast. The regret is that he is losing it. It would be impossible now, we imagine, to raise another English Legion for a new Garibaldi.

Harry Ellis, a coachman, having been eighteen months out of work, committed suicide in Regent's Park. Amongst his papers one was found with the following verse :—

"Ellis is my name,
England is my nation;
Woolwich is my native home,
And London is starvation."

We are afraid that Harry Ellis did not sufficiently appreciate the advantages of living in a Christian country.

Rev. J. H. Shakespeare (Oh what a fall was there, my countrymen!) is secretary of the Baptist Union, but his head is filled with a much bigger idea than that. He wants to bring all the Nonconformist Churches of England into one United Free Church. When he has succeeded in that, we suppose he will try to bring Anglicans and Catholics into the combination. *When!* The Christian Churches have always talked about reunion, but they have never advanced a step towards it. Union, for the Church of England, means swallowing all the Dissenting sects. Union, with the Catholic Church, means swallowing all other Churches. What union means with the Nonconformists is like the peace of God—it passes all comprehension. But we guess there is *swallowing* in it, anyhow.

Gipsy Smith (we see they are calling him Mr. Gipsy Smith now) gave the Free Church Council a long account of his wonderful work in America. He appears to have made a thousand times more converts in fifteen months than Jesus Christ made in three years. But all his converts had probably been converted before. Sociologists, at any rate, don't report any particular change in the life of the United States. On the whole, it might be well for Gipsy Smith to stop singing his own praises for a while, and leave the job to others.

Dr. Clifford moved, and of course carried, the same old hypocritical resolution about non-sectarian teaching in elementary schools. The bulk of Nonconformists are incorrigible on this subject. Anglican religious teaching, Catholic religious teaching—these are "sectarian"; but the religious teaching approved by Nonconformists—even if detested by everybody else—is "non-sectarian." Really, it is enough, on one side, to make an angel weep; and, on the other side, to make a cat laugh.

Rev. Dr. Clifford laid the foundation stone of a new church at Leicester, and on being presented with the silver trowel he remarked that a short time ago he had four silver trowels, but the baliffs visited his house and his wife let them go in preference to the spoons. Well, it shows her good sense. Passive Resistance, as Dr. Clifford plays it, is comic-opera martyrdom.

How they love one another! Mrs. George Morgan, addressing the Free Church Council, at Hull, pleaded for Free Church rescue homes, "as when girls are won from a life of sin they sometimes have to be sent to Anglican or Roman Catholic institutions." What profit is there in "saving" these girls if they don't become Nonconformists?

Rev. Dr. Forsyth went tooth and nail for the New Theology at the Free Church Congress. One nasty knock was the statement that "Some people are indifferent what is taught if the place be filled." Another was that "Some churches have sold their evangelical birthright for a preacher more savory than solid." Another blow was evidently aimed at the Rev. R. J. Campbell. After a pretty long list of New Theology heresies, Dr. Forsyth declared that the man who taught all that "while he is all the time enjoying the name, the credit, and the funds" of the Christian faith "we think it dishonest and ignoble." There is some truth in this, but the disease is so general that it would be too dangerous to start applying the remedy. There are so many old-fashioned orthodox trusts that Dr. Forsyth himself would shrink from an attempt to enforce them according to the letter of the deeds. That is why the dead set against Mr. Campbell is not pushed to extremities. Those who might wield the hammer are afraid of hitting their own fingers.

Pious people are not the best judges of wit. Mr. Will Crooks's jokes wonderfully tickled the Free Church Congress. According to the *Daily News*, "the Revs. Dr. Jowett and Dr. Forsyth alike laughed till the tears came, and so did everyone else," at the following witticism. A man came up to Mr. Crooks at Montreal, and said, "I represent the *British Weekly*." "Oh, do you?" said Mr. Crooks, "that's nothing; I represent the *British daily*." What would the Rev. Sydney Smith think of the evolution of wit since he left the world?

Probably he would say "Dissenters again, Dissenters again." He always loved them—especially the Methodists.

A Coventry correspondent seems to be in a state of gratuitous anxiety about Ingersoll's earnings. He saw in the *Christadelphian* a paragraph stating that Ingersoll got 200 dollars a night for lecturing on the Mistakes of Moses, and hinting that his earnings ought to have been sudden death. Our correspondent, who "understood" Ingersoll to have been "a poorly paid speaker," wrote to the editor asking for the date and place of "this very remunerative lecture." The editor replied, in the manner of Christian editors, that he was "unable to give particulars" but he "had no doubt that the information could be procured if it were worth while." The baffled inquirer now applies to us. We reply that we cannot answer his question, and if we could it is no business of ours. Ingersoll never to our knowledge took a fee for lecturing. He lectured "on his own," taking his chance of what was left in the "house" after paying all expenses. Why he shouldn't make 200 dollars a night, or 2,000,000 dollars a night, if he could, passes our comprehension. The people who paid the money were the people who heard the lecture. If they didn't get value they had their remedy.

Thomas Dyer, of 11 Alfred-street, Northampton, contributes a Sabbatarian letter to the local *Echo*. He is full of Old Testament piety, and just as empty of veracity. In the course of his letter he develops a most romantic vein in relation to the great Charles Bradlaugh. Rebuking people who want recreation on Sundays for not going without it by way of respect to those who don't want it, Thomas Dyer asks them why they cannot imitate Bradlaugh, who was so careful not to offend people's religious susceptibilities. Thomas Dyer then draws upon his recollections as follows :—

"I remember that when the late lamented Charles Bradlaugh was elected member of parliament for this ancient borough he ceased to write in the infidel newspaper, to lecture in behalf of Atheism, or to be president of their Society, for, said he, I represent the constituents of Northampton, many of whom are Christians, and for me to do in this respect as I have hitherto done would be to further things to which they are utterly opposed."

How pretty!—from Thomas Dyer's point of view. But, after all, Bradlaugh was not such a fool as Thomas Dyer represents him. The whole story, in every detail of it, is quite imaginary. Thomas Dyer's memory is really nothing but Thomas Dyer's invention. Bradlaugh did not cease writing and lecturing on Atheism. He was first elected for Northampton in 1880. He was then carrying on the *National Reformer*, and he continued to carry it on without a break until the day of his death—January 30, 1891. And the policy of "Atheism" was boldly printed every week right under the title of his paper. So far from ceasing to lecture on Atheism, Bradlaugh held several public debates upon it in various parts of England, besides his Sunday discourses. The last lecture he ever delivered was a Freethought lecture; it was at the Hall of Science, and the present writer acted as chairman. Bradlaugh did not cease to be "president of their society." He was President of the National Secular Society in 1880, and he held the office until his health irretrievably broke down. His resignation took place on February 20, 1890; he remained a life member of the Society until his death, which occurred less than twelve months afterwards. Our readers will now see what an active imagination Thomas Dyer possesses. He ought to join Cook and discover the South Pole.

What a childish thing is the Creation Story in the light of modern science! And what a childish thing is Bible chronology in the light of evolution! Sir William H. Bailey, in a paper read before the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, states that Mr. Hewitt Myring has discovered in the Chincuna Valley, Peru, many hundred pieces of probably the most ancient pottery in the world. The pottery came from a cemetery of the Chimus, an ancient race who flourished before the Incas. It was the product of a lost civilisation, and was possibly 10 000 years old. It is superior to any Egyptian pottery. Startling art is shown in the modelling of the human face. How insignificant, in presence of these facts, is the old fable of the first man having been manufactured less than six thousand years ago! Behind that 10 000 is an incalculable period during which man slowly evolved from the savage, and, lower still, from the ape.

The fat is in the fire. The women are boiling the pot over. Lady McLaren has induced the Liberal Women of Lancashire and Cheshire to protest against the Church of England marriage service and demand its alteration. Her ladyship quoted the following from the marriage service

(perhaps she was afraid to say it was a quotation from the New Testament):—

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands as unto the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church."

"This," said Lady McLaren, "compares the husband to a god. I do not deny their many god-like qualities, but I do not think a man can claim to have the authority of God. If they do claim it, they don't get it." (Laughter.) Her ladyship also objected to the husband's declaration, "With all my worldly goods I thee endow." She said he didn't do it, and didn't mean to do it, and nobody expected him to do it. She called it "a great thumping lie." This is plain speaking, and we rejoice over it. The ladies will get their own way, and the Bishops will have to bring the Prayer Book more up to date, whether they like it or not. But the matter cannot rest there. The ladies will have to go for the Bible at the finish.

Dr. Lueger, leader of the Anti-Semitic party in Austria, is dead. This world has lost an inhabitant, and we don't know what one has gained another. Beyond the gift of the gab, it is difficult to discover any qualification Dr. Lueger had for public success—unless it was reckless impudence, which often carries a man a long way with the mob. For fourteen years this adventurer was Burgomaster of Vienna. His one great policy was hatred of the Jews. He picked it up long ago when he was seeking something that would lift him into notoriety and power. He found, of course, as other adventurers have found, that religious bigotry is a profitable thing to trade upon. Look at Liverpool! Look at Mr. George Wise! It is pretty safe to say that if Catholics did not hate Protestants, and Protestants hate Catholics, Mr. George Wise would be practically unknown in Liverpool.

Some people are always bent on minding other people's business. They are so bent on it that they don't wait for an invitation. We see that the Russian Holy Synod has placed Tolstoy's latest book on the Teachings of Christ, written for little children, on its Index Expurgatorius. Most of his other works were already on the same list. Tolstoy himself is excommunicated—though he isn't a penny the worse, for they dare not touch him, through fear of the public opinion of the civilised world.

There are similar busybodies in England, in their little way. Ordinary circulating libraries, conducted by men whose literary opinion is not worth inquiring after, set up a censorship of their own, and refuse to supply their subscribers with books by some of the first writers of the day. Public Free Libraries refuse to let the ratepayers read the *Freethinker* in their own buildings, maintained by their own money. The London County Council bans Mr. Foote's *Bible Romances*. That is a good testimonial, in its way, and Freethinkers should take it as a broad hint that the book should be circulated as widely as possible.

The moral influence of religion is shown by a statement of the Rev. H. R. Gamble, vicar of Holy Trinity, Sloane-street, at the recent annual meeting of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. "There was not a more incongruous spectacle," he said, "than women with plumes in a church, and he had fulminated against the custom *without any evident result.*" The words are the reverend gentleman's, the italics are ours, and no other comment is necessary.

It has often been stated in the *Freethinker*, though the rest of the "glorious free press" conceal the fact, that General Booth's "emigration scheme" is not a philanthropic agency at all, but a mere matter of business. The common notion is that he applies Salvation Army funds to sending poor people out from this country to Canada, for instance. This is absolutely untrue. Salvation Army emigrants pay their fares just like other emigrants, and General Booth pockets the usual agents' Commission from the Companies, as well as the Government grants. This is demonstrated by the Balance-Sheet of the "Darkest England Fund" to September 30, 1909 (Emigration Department). On the credit side we find the sum of £38,179 12s. 2d., being the "Amount received on account of Ocean Passages and Inland Rails." On the debit side is £38,661 3s. 4d., being "Cost of Inland Passages, Inland Rails, including Expenses connected with Emigrants and Deportation Costs." This looks as though the Salvation Army had lost £481 17s. 2d. out of pure benevolence. But that amount is really an expense of the agency, and is covered several times over by the profit on the other side of the account. The sum of £4,884 5s. 11d. is acknowledged as "Commissions earned, and Grants from Governments, etc." The Salvation Army, therefore, made a net profit of £4,402 8s. 9d. on its emigration agency. It is thus

what Mr. Manson argues that it is—a huge trading concern, in which religion and philanthropy are conspicuously absent.

There is a "Grant from Darkest England Fund" of £3,000, but that (and more) is swallowed up in "Office Expenses" amounting to the colossal figure of £6,439 19s. 4d. We presume this is nearly all expended on Salvation Army officials; and we are amazed at the economical way in which the affairs of the Salvation Army are conducted.

Philanthropic enterprises are generally carried on in the interest of religion. We are indebted to *John Bull* for a curious list of questions put to householders who wish to have a domestic servant from an institution connected with Dr. Barnardo's Homes. The first question is downright impudence: "To what denomination do you belong, and what place of worship does your family attend?" This ought to have been followed by another question: "How many attendances did you put in at your place of worship during the past twelve months?" The next question is: "Are all the members of your family resident at home total abstainers?" Another question runs: "Is family worship observed regularly in the household in the morning and evening?" Questions like these show the real spirit and intention of the conductors of Dr. Barnardo's Homes. They don't put such questions, of course, when they are inviting or receiving subscriptions.

Two poor apostles of the poor Carpenter of Nazareth chronicled in one issue of a London daily. Rev. Frederick Robert Stevenson, of Ariel Lodge, Hewlett-road, Cheltenham, left £8,672. Rev. Samuel John Abbott-Hawkes, of Old Manor House, Pontesbury, Shrewsbury, left £21,574. Where are they now? And how are they? Have they met Dives, and sent a petition to Abraham for an improved water supply?

More "Providence." New York is threatened by the rise of the Hudson River, which has already done great damage higher up. "He doeth all things well."

A snow-slide on the Canadian Pacific Railway killed ninety-two of the hundred workmen engaged on the spot. "For his tender mercies are over all his works."

"Providence" gave no hint that the dam was going to burst in the Clydach valley. Nearly all who perished were female children. A peculiar sign of that personage's tenderness.

Sunday tramcars shock the Sabbatarians at York, and a determined effort to stop them has been attempted on the City Council, but it was defeated by 20 votes to 18. The motion was that the tramcars should not be allowed to run before 2 in the afternoon. That seems the point where desecration ceases and holy observance begins.

The *Southend Catholic Magazine* has "A Chapter on Names," which contains an exquisite passage. "There is the dabbler in Atheism," the writer says, "who wills to perpetuate his misfortune and his misbeliefs by sending forth his little son into a rough world as Bradlaugh Blatchford Jones!" The Catholic scribe may know a good deal about Jones; he evidently knows very little about Bradlaugh and Blatchford.

Witnesses get into a terrible muddle over the new form of oath. One poor fellow at Newcastle succeeded in s'w'elp-ing "Our Lord God the Queen."

Another New Theologian, the Rev. K. C. Anderson, D.D., quotes with approbation the following statement by Dr. Paul W. Schmiedel, the author of some very heretical articles in the *Encyclopedia Biblica*: "My inmost religious convictions would suffer no harm, even if I now felt obliged to conclude that Jesus never lived." The New Theologians will throw Jesus or anything else overboard rather than give up the business.

Kieff is the Russian Jerusalem. It is a city of 400,000 inhabitants, and lives very largely on pilgrims who visit the remains of many distinguished saints and martyrs. The numerous monasteries and cathedral churches there are possessed of untold wealth. About £160,000 of it has disappeared lately from Trinity Monastery, and the Russian Holy Synod has instituted an inquiry into the defalcations. What would Jesus have thought of it? What would Cashier Judas have thought of it? He held the bag too soon.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, March 20, Secular Hall, Humberstone-gate, Leicester; at 6.30, "The Real Meaning of Easter."

March 27, St. James's Hall, London.

April 3, Glasgow.

To Correspondents.

J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—March 20, St James's Hall; 27, Holloway. April 10, Glasgow; 11, Falkirk.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND: 1910.—Previously acknowledged, £175 2s. Received since:—Nottingham, £3; A. D., 5s.; Leabrooks Humanitarian Society, 5s.; W. S., 5s.; A. J. Browning, £1.

W. T. FENN.—See "Acid Drops." Thanks.

A. D. writes: "I attended your lecture at St. James's Hall last Sunday [March 6] for the first time, and thought I never had better value in my life. I hardly expected so much humor on what I've always thought was so grim a subject. I really enjoyed it, and came out much the better for it. Your ideal of life, given towards the end of the lecture was beautiful, but it is too much to expect from modern business men, whose motto is, 'Be as honest as the world allows you to be'—which is just all that we can expect from anyone." But is that really so? There is an older motto, "Honesty is the best policy," and many men would be better off if they believed it and acted upon it. Ideals cannot be quite attained to, but they can be striven towards, and only those who make the effort can testify as to the result.

J. RIGHOUSE.—What you send us is not a Salvation Army balance-sheet; it is merely a balance-sheet of the Darkest England Fund. We have looked through it, however, and it is a document which conveys plenty of figures and no real information. We defy anybody to obtain any practical idea of what is going on from this balance-sheet. It confirms our previous opinion that there are some clever men in the Salvation Army. You will find something more in our "Acid Drops" this week.

F. R. WALDING.—A rank falsehood. See "Acid Drops."

THOMAS MARSHALL.—"Probably" is as far as you can go. On the subject of morality you can be certain; on the question of who will or won't get to heaven you cannot be certain. This is to us as plain as daylight. Sorry if you can't see it.

W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for cuttings

V. WHITTY.—Always glad to receive cuttings on which we can base an "Acid Drop."

W. P. ADAMSON.—A "glorious free press" indeed! Your vindication of Thomas Paine as the pioneer of Old Age Pensions is excellent work.

G. T. WHITEHEAD.—We also should be glad to see a revival of the Freethought movement in Huddersfield.

T. SHARP.—Tuesday is too late for next issue.

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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.

Mr. Foote visits Leicester again to-day (March 20) and lectures in the evening at the Secular Hall, Humberstone-gate. His audience at Leicester always includes a good many visitors from other towns and villages in the district.

Mr. Cohen delivered an excellent lecture at St. James's Hall on Sunday evening, and many questions were asked

and answered afterwards. Mr. Lloyd occupies the St. James's Hall platform to-night (March 20), and we hope he will have a good audience. Mr. Foote winds up this course of lectures on the following (Easter) Sunday.

The next "Social" under the auspices of the N. S. S. Executive will take place at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet-street, on Thursday evening, April 7. Members of the N. S. S., London or provincial, are free to attend and introduce a friend. Readers of the *Freethinker* who haven't yet joined the N. S. S. (we are assuming that they will do so some day) can obtain free admission tickets by applying to the secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, at 2 Newcastle-street, E.C. There will be a little dancing this time for the young folk and light-toed elders. The rest of the time will be devoted to the usual program of songs, readings, and conversation—with "a few words" from the President.

Huddersfield friends, willing to assist in forming a new Branch of the N. S. S., are invited to meet at the Trades and Friendly Club on Tuesday evening, March 29, at 8 o'clock.

We publish in this week's *Freethinker* a long and careful article on the subject of Cremation and Secular Funerals by Mr. Thomas Shore, who has lately given a good deal of time and attention to this matter. We reserve our own opinion for the present, as the whole question will probably be brought, and by Mr. Shore himself, before the National Secular Society's Annual Conference on Whit-Sunday. What we wish to say at present, after thanking Mr. Shore for all his trouble and pains, is that readers must not suppose that the article has any official character, as they might possibly be led to do by the gravity of its language. As yet it is simply Mr. Shore's scheme, for which, of course, we are all indebted to him. The official pronouncement will be made after the Conference. In the meanwhile, we invite the party's attention to the important issues raised in Mr. Shore's article.

Easter Eggs for Freethought.

EASTER is the most important Christian celebration, and the Churches are all busy in taking up offerings for the Lord. I propose that Freethinkers commemorate Easter in the same way.

We did this last year, on my initiative, and we secured an amount which, while it was not as large as it might have been, was very useful. Perhaps we shall do better this year.

Our Easter collection took the form of another Shilling Month. I invited the readers of the *Freethinker* to send me one shilling, or any larger number of shillings they could afford, for Freethought. I promised to acknowledge every subscription in these columns, week by week, and to divide the total into two halves; one half to be handed over to the National Secular Society, which is always more or less in need of the sinews of war,—and the other half to be used by me in pushing the sale of the *Freethinker* and helping me to bear the loss which it still entails upon me. That I promised, and that I did.

That invitation, and that promise, are now renewed. And I hope no one will hold back because he can only send *one shilling*. It is the rank and file of the Freethought party that I most of all want to get at on these occasions. So many of them have so little to give, and don't like giving it; but the Shilling Month gives them an opportunity of contributing without looking mean or ridiculous.

A word also to the indolent ones, who hate getting postal orders, and writing letters, and taking trouble. I would send round to collect their shillings if I could, but as I cannot I beg them to make an effort for once. May I remind them that I am always making efforts for Freethought?

Those who send me their Easter Eggs in the shape of shillings can write me a letter at the same time, if they have anything to say, and I will read their communications attentively.

We realised 1,705 Shillings last year. It ought to be 3,000 this year.

G. W. FOOTE
(2 Newcastle-street, London, E.C.).

Cremation and National Secular Society and Secular Society, Ltd.

BY THOMAS SHORE.

"That this Conference recommends the Executive to make arrangements for better securing Secular Funerals for deceased Freethinkers; and incidentally for the substitution of Cremation for Earth Burial."—Motion by Kingsland Branch, Conference, June 7, 1908.

"Considering the present scandalous state of affairs under which Freethinkers' funerals are often, against their express wishes and directions, carried out with Christian ceremonies, this Conference is of opinion that its Executive should take special steps to see what can be done to frustrate this gross abuse of power on the part of relatives and executors; and this Conference calls upon the Government of Great Britain to pass a short Bill securing civilised respect for the convictions of deceased persons in connection with their interment."—Motion by Executive, Conference, May 30, 1909.

THERE has been, for some time, a growing feeling among our members and friends that definite steps should be taken to regularise the arrangements for Secular Funerals, not only in order to encourage the cleanly and hygienic method of cremation, but also to secure more faithful attention to the expressed wishes of deceased persons in matters relating to death, funerals, and the legal direction of bequests made. These wishes are now often disregarded, even where definite assurances that they shall be respected have been given.

It is to help Secularists who may be surrounded by a circle of "religionists," and who, particularly in cases of advanced age or prolonged illness, are often purposely prevented from communicating with any Secularist organisation, that it is now proposed to formulate a scheme to secure legal protection and complete fulfilment of the directions they may give, and so to prevent the recurrence of frauds, such as are known to have been sometimes perpetrated at the expense of the Secular movement.

To take the subject of cremation first. It was in 1882 that the first human body was cremated in England, and though for some years only one Crematorium existed in the country, this method has so grown in public approval that there are now thirteen or fourteen properly appointed Crematoriums in various districts, and at Woking alone over 3,000 cremations have already been carried out.* But, in spite of this change in opinion, we must remember that "The Common Law does not recognise any property in the dead body of a human being." It follows, therefore, that a person cannot really dispose of his body by will except in the one case specially provided for by Statute (2 and 8, Will. IV., c. 75, § 8)—viz., for anatomical research. Likewise, any direction in a will as to how or where the testator's body is to be disposed of, has no binding force in law, and may be disregarded with impunity. Indeed, more often than not the will is not examined until *after* the funeral has been carried out.

But it is always open to a testator to make a gift to his executor to depend on his body being cremated or otherwise disposed of in any desired manner. In such a case the executor must, of course, be made acquainted with the conditions imposed.

"An executor has an absolute right to the possession of the testator's body, and the law casts on him the duty of disposing of it in a manner suitable to the estate the deceased leaves behind him" (*Williams on Executors*, p. 737; 10th edition).

"Every householder, however, in whose house a person dies is, if no one else undertakes the duty, bound to dispose of the body decently" (*R. v. Stewart*, 12, Ad. and E., 773).

"The word 'bury,' generally met with in cases dealing with the duties of executors, is not to be taken as confining the executor to the ordinary form of burial in the earth. Any other manner of disposing of it, not in itself illegal, is equally open to him" (*R. v. Price*, 12, Q. B. D., 247).

"Cremation is as lawful a manner of disposing of a dead body as burial in the earth" (*R. v. Price*,

ubi supra), except where the deceased has left a written direction to the contrary, as provided by Rule 12 (1) of Statutory Rules and Orders, 1903.*

The above is the opinion of a barrister-at-law, and is copied from the handbook issued under the authority of the Cremation Society of England, and may therefore be accepted with confidence.

We see, therefore, that by a very moderate amount of forethought, and by the very simple precaution of making a will and appointing an executor, the testator can make sure of almost implicit obedience to the instructions contained therein, if expressed in proper legal form. It is not even a positive condition that there should be any estate left—though this, of course, is a desirable condition.

Even when the testator has no reason to doubt the good faith of his family and successors, a great deal of anxiety might be saved them and much needless waste and extravagance might be prevented by the appointment of such an executor; and if the fact of such a will having been made is communicated to the Secular Society, Limited, they will, at the testator's death, appoint one of their trusted servants to undertake all arrangements, financial and otherwise, for cremation and Secular Burial Service, and to see that they are properly carried out. Opposition to such an arrangement would probably come only from those whose intention it was to frustrate the wishes of the testator as soon as he should have departed this life; and in dealing with such opposition an impersonal body such as the Secular Society, with its legal authorisation, would be on sure ground, and Secularism would gain an immense impetus from the fact that the Secular Burial Service would be thus legally recognised and enforced.

As many of our most earnest and active co-workers are people of only small fortunes, and some of none whatever, we have now to suggest means by which in such cases the making of a will and bequest can be legally justified.

The first and simplest is that suggested in the extract from the Cremation Society's handbook, and provided for by the Acts 2 and 8 William IV., c. 75.

If there is absolutely no estate to dispose of, the testator can ensure cremation by making a will in which he notifies to all concerned that he has sold his body to his executor for scientific purposes, the executor in turn claims the body bought, and can then take what steps he likes as to the measure of his exaction of the bond, and can, of course, use any desired service at the final disposal of the same.

If the Secular Society, Limited, is made executor the formalities demanded by the law and the authorities of the Cremation Society can be easily provided for. The following extract is from the latter Society's handbook:—

"In order to ensure cremation at death the party desiring it should communicate his (or her) wishes to his executors and friends, or the desire may not become known till after the funeral. A written request for cremation is not necessary or legally binding, but it leaves no doubt as to the testator's wishes, and relieves executors and others of the responsibility of deciding. A direction in the following form is recommended:—

"I hereby place on record my earnest desire that my body shall be cremated after death, and I hereby notify that I have made a will appointing the Secular Society, Limited, my executor, to carry out my wishes in this matter, and in the conduct of a Secular Service, and in the disposal of certain bequests which are strictly contingent on the faithful carrying out of my wishes as above recorded.

My last executed will is in the custody of the Secular Society, Limited, at the registered offices, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, E.C., and this Society should be notified as speedily as possible after my death and before any arrangements are made as to the funeral."

It is desirable that such a request should be brought to the notice of relatives at the time it is

* These are the Home Office Statutory Rules and Orders, 1903, No. 286, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Dated March 31, 1903, under Sec. 7 of the Cremation Act, 1902, part of which is set out in the appendix to this circular.

* See appended list of Crematoriums, fees, and rules.

written, but where the testator is surrounded by those of opposed views, the contents of the letter need not be divulged till after his death, though the fact of its *existence* should be made known. The uncertainty as to the conditions of the will, will almost certainly secure the immediate report of the death to the Society, and, consequently, the carrying out of the arrangements contained in such documents.

In order to prevent any possibility of foul play and illegal disposal of the dead, the law has been somewhat more stringent in connection with cremation than with ordinary burial, and the need for this with a process which might otherwise prevent the detection of very serious crimes will be readily admitted when it is realised that in one year, 1906, over 8,000 bodies were disposed of without any medical certificate being given. It has, therefore, been decided that membership of the Cremation Society shall be made, as far as possible, a condition precedent to cremation.

In the early years of the cremation movement the high fees were prohibitive to working class subscribers, but they have recently been very considerably reduced, and in time will, no doubt, be as reasonable here as they already are on the continent. At Woking the present fee is £5 5s., but at Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, and some other places, the fee is £2 2s., and at Hull only £1 1s.* At Golders Green the entire cost of cremation, including the undertaker's charges for all the funeral arrangements, is £10. From this it will be seen the cost of cremation will, in many cases, be no more than the ordinary burial charges, and the advantages which should arise from the scheme we now propose should be clear to all.

To become a member of the Cremation Society an application form must be signed and a subscription of one guinea per annum for six years, or one payment of five guineas, must be paid. This ensures life membership and, all legal forms being complied with, entitles the member to be cremated at death without any further fee at any Crematorium in Great Britain that is in working order at the time.

As the provincial fees are so much lower than those in London, and so many of our Rationalist and Secular friends reside in the country, it is proposed that the Secular Society, Limited, should approach the Cremation Society with a view of arranging for its members a commuted scale of charges for cremation anywhere in the kingdom, based on the number of our members who adhere to the scheme and the estimated death rate of the same, with the probable proportion that would be country funerals. By this means it is hoped that cremation might be brought within reach of even the poorest of our members; but even if it should be necessary for our Society to take some small financial risk, this would be compensated for by the advantage to our movement of a larger number of recognised Secular funerals.

This scheme is mainly to secure for our poorer members cremation and a Secular funeral, and to make the matter as simple as possible, the acting officers of the Society would be made responsible for the whole business. Something more would have to be done to secure to our movement the execution of the testator's wishes in cases where it is desired to make financial bequests to the Society.

When Mr. G. W. Foote, the President of the National Secular Society, planned and carried to a successful issue the legal incorporation of the Secular Society, Limited, he thereby secured a most important step in defence of the rights of Secularists, by which the movement has already gained some thousands of pounds, and will, under other wills already executed, in time secure even larger bequests.

But there is still reason to believe, just as with the simple desire for Secular burial, that other and more important wishes have been disregarded and even wills disregarded, where a testator has bequeathed money to our movement without taking

special measures to secure obedience to his wishes. Detection of such crimes must, from their nature, always be difficult. Though in the interests of domestic peace it is sometimes necessary to observe some reticence as to final disposal of property, there is no need to put off the whole of the preparations until too late to make the desires effective, especially since the State has quite recently provided means to give greater security that the wishes of deceased persons in regard to their property should be effectively carried out.

By Act 6 Edw. VII., ch. 55, 1906, called the Public Trustee Act, an immense amount of fraud, and consequent misery and suffering, will be prevented; for by this Act the difficulty of finding responsible and properly qualified persons to undertake the often very serious duties which are involved in an executorship is now wholly done away with, the opportunities of the clever fraudulent solicitor or surveyor are considerably reduced, and the now too frequent sudden failure of the revenue of widow and orphan through the carelessness or wickedness of their trustees can be prevented by the good offices of a public servant, backed by the credit of the whole nation. This Act cannot be too widely known or made use of.

In New Zealand, in a very short time, between five and six millions sterling has already been committed to the administration of the State Trustee; and in the other southern colonies the Public Trustee is rapidly displacing the private individual, to the great security of the beneficiaries. Our members in particular would do well to avail themselves of this great protection against the legal disabilities which have attached to our movement in the past. For while it is true that the Secular Society, Limited, is a legally incorporated body, and that it can in many cases act by its properly authorised officers as executor and trustee, it is easy to see that cases may arise in which it will be advisable that a quite independent agent should act; and although it may still be convenient that in the simple and passing matter of a funeral and a special burial service the agent should be an officer of our own Society, yet in the administration of a large estate, with a complexity of business interests and a number of possibly antagonistic beneficiaries, some wholly independent agent would in every way be more satisfactory.

It is believed that the Public Trustee will prove wholly impartial and unbiassed by any private considerations. He is governed by the Act, and the legal rules arising therefrom; in all law proceedings he has a status before the courts which gives him great advantage over ordinary practitioners, or any private trustees, and it seems generally admitted that the costs of administration under this Act will compare favorably with the ancient rates. The appointment of the Public Trustee under a will does not preclude the appointing of a co-trustee (widow, child, or next of kin), but the Public Trustee is responsible for maintaining the integrity of the estate, and dealing with the more serious and responsible details of either continued administration or speedy winding up of the estate. Careful consideration of every detail shows no reason to hesitate in securing the help of this Act and office on behalf of our friends and members.

To do this, the will should be drawn in the ordinary way by the testator's solicitor, and should be submitted to the Public Trustee before being executed, so as to make sure that there should be no provisions impossible or illegal. Arrangements, rules, and forms are made by the Public Trustee to facilitate this step, and the matter is at every stage treated as strictly confidential.

This consultation with, and acceptance of, the post by the Public Trustee is not an absolute necessity, but is strongly recommended as likely to save much trouble when the will becomes operative. When executed, the will can be deposited with the Trustee, or left in the charge of the solicitor, or kept by the testator, though for greater security the first course is recommended. A receipt will be given, which should be placed with the other business papers

* See Schedule in Appendix of all fees.

of the testator, together with the letter of instructions referred to earlier in this paper. This letter will act as an informal codicil, and is suggested as a means by which, without making known all the terms and conditions of the will itself, the special steps which are concerned with the cremation and the service can at once be proceeded with.

By the announcement that the rite of Cremation and the Secular Service are desired, and that the bequests are CONTINGENT UPON OBEDIENCE to that request, it is almost certain to be carried out without protest, the uncertainty of what is going to happen if that is not done being an effective deterrent to disobedience.

As the Act and regulations made for the guidance of the Public Trustee allow Co-trustees, it will be quite in order for an officer of the Secular Society, Limited, to be deputed to carry out the funeral, and his office will end with the completion of the ceremony.

The letter of instructions and the will should in all cases be prepared in triplicate, one copy of each being sent to the Public Trustee, one to the President of the Secular Society, Limited, and one to the immediate family and friends.

N.B.—No fees are payable to the Public Trustee until the will becomes operative.

LIST OF CREMATORIUMS AND FEES.

OFFICE AND SECRETARY.		FEES.		
		£	s.	d.
Woking	G. A. Noble, 324 Regent-st. ...	5	0	0
Golders Green ...	Do. do. ...	5	5	0
Manchester ...	A. E. Piggott, 57 King-st. ...	4	4	0
Liverpool	City Council	5	5	0
Glasgow	A. Craig, 142 St. Vincent-st.	2	2	0*
Hull	Town Council	5	5	0
Darlington ...	J. Broadhead, 36 Priestgate	2	2	0
Leicester	Corporation	2	2	0
Birmingham ...	N. Phelps, 115 Colmore-row	5	5	0
Ilford	Corporation of the City of London, H. M. Bates, Guildhall, E.C. ...	2	12	6
Leeds	Corporation, S. R. Dyson, Superintendent ...	4	4	0
Bradford	City Corporation, Medical Officer, Town Hall ...	5	5	0
Sheffield	City Corporation, C. Cook, Superintendent ...	2	2	0
		4	4	0

Bible Giants.

BY THE LATE J. M. WHEELER.

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

"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."—Gen. vi., 4.

UNTIL comparatively recent times the existence of races of giants was almost universally believed, and the belief was considered to be confirmed by the testimony of the Bible. The abnormally long lives of the patriarchs are given in definite figures, and it was only natural to suppose that when men lived to be from four to nine hundred years of age their period of growth and consequent bulk must have been in proportion. As late as 1718, a French Academician named Henrion published a work in which he endeavored to show by the most rigorous logic that there had been a gradual diminution of

man's height since the days of Adam, who was 128 ft. 9 ins., while Noah was 103 ft., Abraham between 27 and 28 ft., Moses 13 ft., Hercules 10 ft., etc.

In Smith's Bible Dictionary no less than six races of Bible giants are mentioned. They are as follows:—

(1) The Nephilim, translated "giants," in the passage at the head of this article. In the Revised Version the word is retained without translation, but we are referred in the margin to Numbers xiii. 33, where the sons of Anak, in whose presence the Jews appeared to be but "as grasshoppers," are also called Nephilim.

(2) The Gibborim, translated "mighty men," in the same passage (Gen. vi. 4), though the same word is used for giant in Job xvi. 14. There has been much controversy as to who were these giants, and which were the mightiest giants, the sons of God or their offspring. Dr. John Gill, in his Commentary on Genesis vi., says: "That there were giants in these early times is confirmed by the testimony of many heathen writers; such were the Titans that made war against Saturn, begotten by Ouranus, who were not only of bulky bodies, but of invincible strength, as Apollodorus relates," etc.

(3) The Rephaim (Gen. xiv. 5; Deut. ii. 10). Og, king of Bashan, whose conquest is often referred to in the Old Testament, is said to have been of the remnant of the Rephaim of giants (Joshua xiii. 12). Numerous are the marvels related by the Rabbinical writers of Og, whose bedstead (or rather coffin) of iron was, according to Deut. iii. 11, nine cubits in length and four in breadth, or 13½ ft. by 6. We do not know if these were the somewhat unusual proportions of the giant, but if one of the Rabbis is to be believed who modestly asserts that Og's legs were three miles long he must have tucked himself up somewhat when he retired to rest. During the Middle Ages there was said to have been found near Jerusalem a mighty cavern inscribed in Chaldaic letters, "Here lies the giant Og." Nothing was found in it, however, except a large tooth, weighing four pounds and a quarter. The precious relic was offered to the Holy Roman Emperor, as a favor, at two thousand dollars, but he had his doubts and did not close with the bargain. It is curious that the *rephaim*, translated "giants" in several places, is in Job xxvi. 5, translated "dead things."

(4) The Anakim or sons of Anak. Numbers xiii. relates how, when the chosen people came to their country, they found the grapes so large that a single cluster had to be borne on a staff between two men, while the giants themselves were so prodigious that "we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight"—a tale that forcibly reminds us of the early travellers' tales of the Patagonians, who are found to be but slightly above the average height. Goliath of Gath, "whose height was six cubits and a span" (1 Sam. xvii. 4), or 9 ft. 6 ins., and whose coat weighed five thousand shekels of brass, is said to have been of the Anakim and also Ishi-benob, "which was of the sons of the giant, the weight of whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of brass in weight" (2 Sam. xxi. 16). Saph, and the "man of great stature that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes" (2 Sam. xxi. 20) were of this race.

(5) The Emim (Gen. xiv. 5; Deut. ii. 10) were also "great, many, and tall, and accounted giants."

(6) The Zanzummin (Deut. ii. 20, 21) are also said to have dwelt in the land of the children of Ammon, that also "was accounted a land of giants."

Josephus, in his *Antiquities of the Jews* (bk. 5, ch. 2, § 3), says, speaking of the conquest of Canaan, "There were till then left the race of giants, who had bodies so large and countenances so entirely different from other men, that they were surprising to the sight and terrible to the hearing. The bones of these men are still shown to this very day." Josephus here gives us the clue to the origin of the fabulous legends; for that they are fabulous everything tends to prove. Human bones could not bear the weight of the bulk of the supposed giants; the evidence of ancient mummies, ancient armor, and ancient

* Working classes.

measures, as well as all evidence from anthropoid apes, prove that man has not diminished in size. The most stunted tribes are at least four feet, while the tallest, the people of Paraguay, do not exceed six feet and a half. The few abnormal exceptions that are occasionally exhibited do nothing to prove there was ever a race of giants. They are invariably sterile or have smaller offspring.

Three causes may be assigned as giving rise to the legends—1st, exaggeration and mistake; 2nd, giant graves; 3rd, large animal remains. There can be little doubt that the Jews, who boasted of having killed five hundred thousand chosen men in a single day (2 Chron. xiii. 17), and who made Samson slay a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass, did not underrate the size of their adversaries. It is quite possible that some of the stories of giants and dwarfs found in most mythologies are connected with traditions of hostile tribes, the weak being stigmatised as puny and the strong described as gigantic. The old custom of burying chiefs with their wives, slaves, and provisions, and erecting over them huge cairns or burrows, has given rise to many such traditions of giants. Even more important has been the discovery from time to time of huge animal remains. St. Augustine, for instance, (*De Civ. Dei*, xv. 9) in proof of the former existence of giants, appeals triumphantly to a tooth he had seen, a hundred times larger than ordinary teeth. Probably it was from the jaw of an elephant. A huge jaw and teeth found in excavating the Hoe at Plymouth were recognised as belonging to the giant Gogmagog, who in old time fought his last fight against Corineus, the hero of Cornwall. The passage in Josephus suggests that when the Hebrews, in ploughing up the earth, came across any huge animal remains, they ascribed them to the ancient gigantic inhabitants of the land, who were destroyed by their valiant forefathers. The stories of giants, like those of witches, devils, gods, and sons of gods, must be classed in the vast category of Bible superstitions.

Lines Written to Truth.

O'er all the creeds and idols thou art proudly King:
Among the things of beauty peerless thou.
So mighty is thy power that crafty priests
And snaky rulers tremble at thy voice. And yet
How gentle is thy touch!.....What wonder then
That brave men, overwhelmed with Mankind's
surging woe—
Sad heritage of ages swayed by torment, fear, and
lies—
Sink at thy foot to rest? So in my wretchedness
did I.
When Faith's harsh fetters chained my heart and
cramped my thoughts,
I too was sick, life-weary, desolate; but then
I turned my face towards the morning, seeking thee
In all thy golden loveliness. And then my heart
Was filled with strength to work for thee
Till over Life and Death steals thy enduring peace.

THOMAS MOULT.

A God-Fearing Anecdote.

Mr. J. H. Rivett-Carnac, C.I.E., late of the Indian Civil Service, has just published, through Messrs. Blackwood, an entertaining volume of reminiscences under the title of *Many Memories*. One anecdote in particular will specially interest our readers, and we had better let the author tell us it in his own way:—

"My father [Admiral John Rivett-Carnac], an amiable man, save when the gout was upon him, had brought ashore with him much of the discipline, and some of the language, of the quarter-deck.....Two rules had to be scrupulously observed—punctual attendance at morning prayers, and full dress at all meals.....He was an eminently God-fearing man, and exemplary in all the relations of life. But the custom of those days, among sailors at least, recognised the employment of certain expressions that are hardly considered Parliamentary in these times. I am sure that he intended no harm in it, but an exceedingly respectable old lady staying in the house was, it is related, much scandalised on hearing the Admiral one morning hailing the ship's company in the nursery and school-room with—'Why the Hell don't you all come down to prayers!'"

E. B.

A Note on George Meredith.

"Meredith in Memory" was the heading of an article by Mr. Edward Clodd in the *Daily Chronicle* of Saturday, March 12. It contains some interesting points. Mr. Clodd refers to Meredith's being a Radical "in the days when the term was as opprobrious as is still the term Freethinker." It was perhaps "the pagan in him" that attracted him to the Emperor Julian whom Christians sweetly call "Julian the Apostate." Meredith wouldn't look at Firth's monogram on Constantine the Great. He called the first Christian Emperor that "criminal opportunist." The description hits the bullseye. Newman called Constantine a pattern to succeeding monarchs through all ages. He called him so because Constantine was the political founder of Christianity. In the light of that fact, his vices and crimes did not matter. Meredith, like Gibbon, and still more like Shelley, judged Constantine from a very different standpoint.

Meredith told Mr. Clodd that Stevenson's *Essays*, good as they were, would find no permanent place in the struggle for existence, and that "of his fiction only the unfinished *Weir of Hermiston* is likely to keep him remembered among the novelists." Rossetti's ballads he "ranked high," but did not admire his pictures. A friend of Meredith's, his oldest friend, expresses to Mr. Clodd the opinion that "Meredith was right about the future of his work. It will be his verse, not his prose, that will survive and keep his name before posterity." Prophecy is a dangerous pastime, but if this one be true it will alarm no Freethinker—as a Freethinker; for it is in Meredith's verse, far more than in his prose, that his Freethought is expounded. All his convictions are set forth in his poetry, and as he was hundreds of years in advance of the average of his generation he is, merely on that ground, sure of a considerable longevity. Of course there are other grounds. He was a true, and even a great poet, with a province and a style entirely his own. The work of no English poet was ever more individual.

Meredith as a Freethinker is a subject on which I have a good deal to say. I am waiting for the right moment to speak. Copies of all Meredith's letters to me, from 1876 to 1909, have been placed in the hands of his son, with such slight introductions and marginal explanations as seemed advisable. They are for the use of the editor (I understand it is Lord Morley) of the collection of Meredith's Letters which is being prepared for publication. Mr. Meredith, junior, calls them "a very important series." We shall see what use is made of them when the collection appears. My own duty, at any rate, is perfectly clear. I know what I am called upon to do, though I must not violate the laws of courtesy in doing it. I intend that Meredith's attitude towards militant Freethought shall be put on record for the information of future ages. It is a duty that I owe to Meredith; it is a duty that I owe to Freethought.

G. W. FOOTE.

May modern science be a beacon to lighten the nation and not a fire to consume them! May modern industry, with its immense resources, be the means of life and hope and joy to the millions that toil, and not the instrument of their oppression and degradation! Let us never forget that all knowledge, wealth, and power are useful and honorable only so far as they are devoted to the service of Man; and all nations and all individuals are but elements of Humanity, and can only be justified in so far as they are her true servants. It is in the progress of Humanity, its growing knowledge and power, the ever-widening scope of human duty, that we may find comfort and support in the sorrows and trials of each generation. In spite of all, Humanity advances.—*S. H. Swinny.*

A NEW PRAYER FOR CHILDREN.

Our Humanity, which art everywhere, Beloved be thy name.

Thy reign of Reason come, Thy gentle will be done in this, and in all other lands.

We give unto thee this day our daily service.

We do pray for forgiveness, but invoke thine impartial justice.

Lead us in the ways of honor, and deliver us from meanness.

The welfare of Humanity be our reward, and the consciousness of having deserved its gratitude, our glory, forever, Amen.—*M. M. Mangasarian.*

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.

ST. JAMES'S HALL (Great Portland-street, London, W.): 7.30, J. T. Lloyd, "Spiritualism and Freethought."

ISLINGTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Church-street, Upper-street, N.): 7.30, Rev. A. Hyatt, "An Evening with the Poets."

MILDMAY RADICAL CLUB (Newington Green, N.): Wednesday, March 23, at 8.30, J. T. Lloyd, "Ruskin and Social Reform."

OUTDOOR.

ISLINGTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Highbury Corner): 12 (noon), Sidney J. Cook and Walter Bradford.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12 (noon), Class—Mr. Dunn, "The Ideal"; 6.30, David Ross, "The Rise and Fall of Man."

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone-gate): 6.30, G. W. Foote, "The Real Meaning of Easter."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, Miss Muriel Matters, "Woman Suffrage."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road All Saints): 6.30, Fred Morgan, Miscellaneous Dramatic Recital Musical Selections.

NEWCASTLE RATIONALIST DEBATING SOCIETY (Vegetarian Café Nelson-street): 7.30, G. A. Leman, "The Evolution of the Family."

NOTTINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Cobden Hall, Peachey-street): 7.30, G. Watts, "Ethics and Religion."

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