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To be capable of steady friendship or lasting love, are the two greatest proofs, not only of goodness of heart, but of strength of mind.—WILLIAM HAZLITT.

Christian Humility.

CHRISTIAN charity is often a wonderful thing—the adjective qualifying the noun in a most extraordinary manner. But we incline to think that Christian humility is still more wonderful. One of its commonest displays is made on political and social platforms. Freethinkers are expected to keep their Freethought to themselves when addressing a mixed public on other topics, especially when associated on the platform with speakers of various opinions; but your Christian speaker feels himself free to introduce his "Lord" and his "faith" whenever he chooses, and he seldom loses an opportunity (as he thinks) to do them both a good turn. He sometimes says he knows he is not exactly in order, but he hopes he may be pardoned, for he feels so deeply and has such strong convictions—just as though people who differ from him entirely on the subject of religion have not feelings as deep and convictions as strong as his own. His humility may be real in his own eyes, but in the eyes of others it is apt to look like mere affectation.

We have often had to rebuke these "humble" Christians, and we lately had to take Mr. Stephen Coleridge to task. He is an estimable gentleman who is devoted to a good cause, but he has something of the common Christian itch of mixing his religion up with the anti-vivisection cause, which he must know is supported by persons who do not share his particular religious faith. Our rebuke in this case has evidently taken effect, judging by the following extract from the April number of the *Zoophilist* :—

"The *Freethinker* has published the following strange paragraph:

"Mr. Stephen Coleridge, the well-known anti-vivisectionist, being in New York, was asked at a meeting, "How did you become an anti-vivisectionist?" He replied, "Because I am a Christian." Nonsense, Mr. Coleridge, nonsense! There are hundreds of millions of Christians who are not anti-vivisectionists. And if you take the trouble to inquire, while you are in New York, you will find that the late Colonel Ingersoll denounced vivisection, in language more eloquent than you can command, long before you were connected with the opposition to it. And he was the chief opponent of Christianity in the United States of America. Was it Christianity, too, that made anti-vivisectionists of Voltaire, Bentham, and Schopenhauer? Why not leave your religious bigotry outside the moral movement you represent, Mr. Stephen Coleridge? Is it because Christians cannot help being boastful and self-assertive?"

Hoity-toity, Mr. Freethinker! Mr. Stephen Coleridge is as much at liberty to say that he is an anti-vivisectionist because he is a Christian, as you, Mr. Freethinker, are to say Colonel Ingersoll was one because he was not a Christian. Why in the world should not every man's religion, such as it is, lead him to be an anti-vivisectionist? If you assert that Christianity has not, as a fact, led countless good people to become anti-vivisectionists, we hope that someone with manners similar to your own will answer you in your own pretty phrase: "Nonsense, Mr. Freethinker, nonsense."

Mr. Stephen Coleridge, or his sub-editor, does not answer what we said; he answers what we did not say. We never said that Ingersoll was an anti-vivisectionist because he was not a Christian; what we

said was that he was an anti-vivisectionist *although* he was not a Christian—which is a very different thing, the difference being easily perceptible to anyone with a moderate intelligence. Mr. Coleridge's statement as to the reason why he was an anti-vivisectionist, provokes the question, "Well, why are other people anti-vivisectionists when they do not share *your* reason?" But the vital point, after all, is *this*: What right has Mr. Stephen Coleridge to parade his personal religion when acting or speaking as an official representative of a Society which is formed for a purely moral object, and which accepts members from all sections of the community without reference to their religious beliefs? We should not object to Mr. Coleridge's talking in that way if he were a clergyman preaching from a pulpit. We object to his talking in that way when representing the National Anti-Vivisection Society. If he and the Society's committee think otherwise, let them plainly put on the front of their prospectus "No Non-Christians Admitted."

All we have to say, for the rest, is that the reference to our "manners" comes with an ill grace from one whose ill manners—*substantial* ill manners—are being corrected. We have often found that this is a Christian's last feeble effort at intellectual self-preservation. When he has nothing else to stand on he stands on his dignity. G. W. FOOTE.

Puritanism and Progress.

HISTORICAL study and the spread of the general theory of evolution have led most people to look upon the history of a people as made up of a series of stages stretching back to the most remote antiquity. Historians of English life take us back to the Germanic and other tribes, and where their story stops ethnographers take up the tale and carry us on to those migratory human movements of which the sole records are to be found in a community of legends or customs and an underlying unity of language. Judging, however, from the addresses of various Dissenting preachers, this is a mistake. The history of England really commenced somewhere about the middle of the sixteenth century with the rise of Puritanism; it reached its most interesting and fruitful period about a century later; and all that is of value in after English history is to note how far Puritanism survived. And, naturally enough, to this class of men all hope for the future centres in the consideration of how far Puritanism can be revived and re-established in a commanding position. It is this conception of history that converts a Dr. Clifford into an Oliver Cromwell, and elevates the sale of a Passive Resister's presentation teapot to the level of a heroic martyrdom.

Scores of sermons, articles, and books written by prominent Nonconformists might be cited in support of what has been said; but a recent address by the Rev. T. Phillips, of Bloomsbury Chapel, on "A Plea for Puritanism," may be taken as a text. In approved Nonconformist style he informs his hearers and readers that the enthusiasm in England for progress "is strongest where Puritanism is most deeply rooted"; "It is Puritanism that keeps the reformer's heart hot with indignation and aflame with enthusiasm for humanity." On the success of Puritanism

rests "the greatness and even the survival of England"; and finally "every young man" is exhorted: "As you value what is choice in the history of the past, as you appreciate what is solid and valuable in the English character, as you seek to see your land in the van of civilisation, hold to the stalwart Puritanism of your forefathers."

Having gone so far, one feels somewhat surprised at Mr. Phillip's moderation. There is so much left to claim that he might well have claimed more. Seeing that on Puritanism depends the future of England, that it alone makes people eager for improvement, and that there is only a real enthusiasm for progress where Puritanism is deeply rooted, why not go the whole hog and claim that all our science, art, and literature owes its being, as it will owe its preservation, to Puritanism? Denunciation of lukewarmness in a good cause was a favorite practice with the Puritans, and we would warn Mr. Phillips that he runs a risk of being suspect. Modesty was not a Puritan characteristic, and no one can accuse its surviving representatives of any innovation in this direction, so that Mr. Phillips's moderation cannot be due to this. Perhaps it is due to the feeling that if too much is claimed nothing will be granted, and that a too obtrusive pose of self-glorification may set people wondering whether all that is admirable in human nature really did begin with Puritanism. And curiosity is ever fatal to religious pretensions.

It is difficult to be serious with such farcical claims as those put forward by Mr. Phillips, but as his is quite a common case I will endeavor to deal with him in all due gravity. Mr. Phillips is naturally chary of giving exact data in support of his statements. The nearest approach is a quotation from Green's *Short History*—our preacher not, of course, realising that in Green's contradictory pages one-half of the author's statements concerning the Puritans is effectively disproved by the remaining portion. "No greater moral change ever passed over a nation," says Green, "than passed over England during the years which parted the middle of the reign of Elizabeth from the meeting of the Long Parliament. England became the people of a book, and that book the Bible." He adds that when Bishop Bonner set up six Bibles in St. Paul's "many well-disposed people" used to resort there for the purpose of hearing someone read to them. Green's "many" people is transformed by Mr. Phillips into "People flocked from all directions.....to hear the Word of God being read," as though the whole nation straightway gathered round St. Paul's to listen to the reading.

What the "moral" change consisted in, and what it was worth, we shall see later. At present it is to be noted that the description of the English as "the people of a Book" is explained by Green as due to many other causes "besides that of religion." "So far as the nation at large was concerned, no history, no romance, hardly any poetry, save the little-known verse of Chaucer, existed in the English tongue when the Bible was ordered to be set up in churches..... The mass of picturesque allusion and illustration which we borrow from a thousand books our fathers were forced to borrow from one." Thus, if the statement were wholly true, the use of the Bible must be attributed to the sheer accident of there being no other literature easily available for reading, and not to any superior quality it possessed or attractions it offered. But one may be permitted to question the accuracy of Green's picture. The Stationers' Company was formed by royal charter in 1557, and one may fairly assume that this association would never have been formed had it not appeared desirable to regulate the printing and issuing of books then being placed before the public. Erasmus's Paraphrase of the New Testament appeared still earlier. Between 1570 and 1580, volumes of sermons by Luther and Calvin were published in English. Three editions of *Piers Plowman* were issued from one press during 1550. Mr. J. Payne Collier compiled in 1849 a couple of volumes giving a very long

list of Ballads, Broad-sides, Romances, etc., all entered for publication on the Stationers' Company's books between 1570 and 1587, and this did not exhaust the entries. A regulation passed in 1587 limiting any one edition of a book to 1,250 or 1,500 copies, would also indicate a very considerable body of readers. Almanacks, books on hunting, herbals, were very plentiful, while as to ballads, these were so numerous it was said that "scarce a cat can look out of a gutter but presently a proper new ballad is indited." How numerous these were may be gathered from the fact that publishers entered them on the books of the Company in batches of thirty and forty at a time. And to the home publications we have to add those that were, for politic reasons, printed abroad. Over five hundred printers and publishers during this period are known. Later, in 1618, Taylor, the Water Poet, on the strength of his subscribers' list, printed no less than 4,500 copies of his *The Penniless Pilgrimage*. By 1632 the number of new books, new editions, and reprints are said by Masson in his *Life of John Milton* to have reached the total of over 5,000 a year.

The picture of the English people of the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century as deriving their entire intellectual nutriment from the Bible, obviously needs qualifying to a very considerable extent. In the case of Green, one may take it as illustrating the power of prepossession. In the case of Mr. Phillips, we have one more instance of that normal distorting of facts and one-sided view of life, with which all students of the Nonconformist Conscience are familiar.

The nature of the change effected by Biblical or Christian influence may be taken in connection with our modern Puritan's thesis that the power and incentive to reform was due to seventeenth century Puritanism. Of course, it is inevitable with a religion established by the State, and to which all were expected to conform, with thousands of clergymen preaching its doctrines that, under such conditions, the common speech of the people should be affected thereby. The believers would consciously use its phraseology because of their attachment to it, while others would follow suit from mere imitation. But to argue that therefore the language and the ideas indicated thereby were all powerful in people's lives, is to adopt a view of social growth that is as superficial and as worthless as it is common. Granted that the Puritans played their part in the resistance of the tyranny of the Stuarts, and in securing political freedom; but this was only carrying on a struggle that commenced before Puritanism was heard of. Parliamentary government did not commence in England with the Puritans, nor was it under Puritanism that, for the first time in English history, check was given to the King. It was to the ancient liberties, as a matter of fact, that the Parliamentary leaders appealed, and it was for the infringement of these that the King was impeached. And as for the greatness of England, this was indicated far more significantly under Elizabeth than it was at any time during the seventeenth century. Not that the reforming minds, even in politics, in the seventeenth century, were all Puritans. Haies, Chillingworth, Falkland, with many others, were as opposed to the Puritans as they were to the extreme Episcopalians. We are too ready to take the loudest voices as characteristic of the whole nation.

But even the opposition of the Puritans to the tyranny of the crown was more due to a sectarian accident than to faith in any principle of political liberty. Henry the Eighth, in assuming the headship of the English Church, was quite determined that the Calvinistic sects, equally with the Roman Catholics, should be brought to book. And Elizabeth was quite emphatic, to use her own words, "that none should be suffered to decline either on the left hand or on the right hand from the direct line limited by authority of her laws and injunctions." Some latitude, circumstances compelled her to grant in the earlier part of her reign, but as her position

became more secure so her attitude towards the Puritans became more severe. Under James the First the growing power of the Puritans called forth a continuance of repressive action; although in spite of it all, they remained monarchical in opinion. It was only after the outbreak of civil war under Charles I. that a republican party began to gain ground. Had the Crown favored their religious opinions it would have had no more zealous supporters than the Puritans.

And it is grossly unfair to credit the Puritans either with hostility to a State Church or devotion to any real principle of religious liberty. Their aim was to inaugurate the Reign of the Saints, to depose one form of religion for the purpose of establishing another. One of their earlier writers, Cartwright, says: "I deny that upon repentance there ought to follow any pardon of death.....Heretics ought to be put to death now. If this be bloody and extreme, I am content to be so counted with the Holy Ghost." That this spirit of intolerance was common, was shown by the conduct of the Puritans when power passed into their hands. Any except the authorised Prayer Book was prohibited, not only in Church but in private houses. It was made a crime for a child to read the Collect by the bedside of a dying parent. Cropping of ears, slitting of tongues, branding and mutilation, transportation and death, were punishments meted out to all who differed from the newly established form of religion. Every form of intolerance against which they had protested when directed against themselves was resorted to once the power became theirs to work their will. "Never," says Green, "had the doctrine of persecution been urged with such a blind, reckless ferocity." And he might have added, by people who had only just ceased crying out for liberty of conscience, and who might easily have learned better from their own experience.

C. COHEN.

(To be continued.)

The Origin of Life.

IF a drop of water containing a number of the motile reproductive cells of lower plant life be placed on the stage of a microscope, with a beam of light focussed on one edge of the drop, these minute organic particles suspended in the liquid move immediately towards the light. When these microscopic specks have all congregated at the illuminated section, the beam of light may be directed upon the opposite part of the drop, and we then witness the rapid movement of the zoospores towards the new source of illumination. From the fact that their motions are regulated by external stimuli we infer that these minute cells are living things.

In the course of a country ramble we may meet with an animal form lying on the ground, and doubts may arise as to its living or non-living state. To determine the truth we startle it with a stone, or stir it with a stick, confident that the animal, if alive, will respond to the stimulus. Equally with the zoospores and the highly evolved animal, the requirements of our conceptions of vitality are satisfied by those responses to external stimuli which our constant experience teaches us to associate with the phenomena of living matter. The responses made by the zoospores are probably the outcome of chemical reaction alone, but in the case of the animal encountered, the influences of sound and light, conjoined with additional sensory impressions, lead to more highly evolved phenomena. Through a comparison of two such extreme examples we realise that the degree of life possessed by the animal organism far transcends any mode of vitality characterising the zoospores.

That capacity for undergoing definite internal and external changes in response to simultaneous and successive stimuli which is termed adaptability is

universally characteristic of living matter, while the *degree* of adaptability marks the measure of life.

The earlier naturalists regarded adaptation as the result of the influences wielded by a special vital force which they supposed as entirely distinct from the energies of inorganic nature. This wholly imaginary "vital force" did not furnish any scientific or philosophical explanation of the processes of life. To assert that life is a manifestation of the principle of "vitality" is, to annex an analogy from Huxley, much as if we were to attribute the existence of water to a manifestation of "aquosity." In each instance a term is employed which may serve as a mask for ignorance, but most certainly provides nothing in the nature of an explanation.

If we recall some of the scientific advances by which the vitalistic view has been completely overthrown, this will enable us to form clearer conceptions of the philosophical principle by which it has been superseded. For this reason we will briefly survey that important and far reaching generalisation of modern science which has probably done more than any other to clarify our concepts of the processes of nature.

So late as the close of the eighteenth century, and even during the opening years of the nineteenth, physicists regarded heat as a material substance of a fluid nature which they termed "caloric." Owing, however, to the investigations of Count Rumford and Humphrey Davy, among others, it was discovered that heat is exclusively interpretable as a mode of motion. The alleged entity called caloric was proved to be non-existent, and the motion of the particles of material bodies was shown to be solely responsible for the increased temperature they displayed. The phenomena of light were also included in the same generalisation, and it was subsequently demonstrated that the modes of motion manifested as light and heat were convertible the one into the other. Out of these discoveries the question arose whether what was demonstrably true of light and heat was equally verifiable of all other forms of the forces of nature.

Through the researches of a distinguished group of scientific thinkers and investigators, the most notable of whom were Joule, Mayer, Grove, Helmholtz, and Kelvin, this interrogation has been answered in the affirmative, and the most firmly founded generalisation of modern science embraces the doctrines of the conservation of energy and the indestructibility of matter. However rigorous or critical the tests to which these doctrines have been submitted, they have invariably emerged triumphant from the ordeal. Hence the verdict of all philosophically minded men of science that, although the material sub-stratum of the universe manifests itself in multifarious forms, nevertheless all known modes of matter may be transformed one into another, and that the sum total of matter and energy in the universe is for ever constant.

This conceded, it is logically inadmissible to exclude or set apart the forces of nature which constitute living things from the rest of the Cosmos. If we ascribe the physical activity displayed by the combustion of a piece of coal to the chemical attraction of its contained carbon and hydrogen for the oxygen of the air, no less must the vital activity by which the plant originally separated those gases from the atmosphere and the soil, be traced to the chemical action of the rays of the sun. Moreover, the light and heat resulting from combustion is the exact equivalent of the amount of light and heat absorbed from the sun in building up that part of the plant consumed. There is complete correlation, both quantitative and qualitative, between physical and vital force.

Although the precise nature of the physical and chemical actions which enable plants and animals to carry on their vital activities is still hidden from us, no philosophical biologist can reasonably doubt that, were the secret recesses of nature's living laboratory open to scientific investigation, every modification which solar force undergoes in the

course of life's development might be traced, step by step, from its inception to its close. Thus is substituted for the obsolete vitalistic view that modern chemico-physical concept of life which views vital force as a transformed mode of physical force which will be ultimately retransformed into simple physical force in its turn. This presentment of the problem involves no attempt to solve the "ultimate mystery of life"; its aim and object is to include the phenomena of the organic world within a generalisation which embraces alike the living and lifeless departments of natural causation. The ultimate nature of life, like every other ultimate fact of nature, transcends any conceivable power of human intelligence.

While the physical sciences have presented us with the all-encircling doctrine of the Conservation of Energy, Geology, Astronomy, and Biology have united to establish the truth of cosmic evolution. The former sciences have demonstrated that all modes of existence are indissolubly linked in an unending chain of cause and effect; the latter sciences have proved that slow but certain development is the law which presides in the organic and inorganic worlds alike. The Nebular Hypothesis, as amended by the deductions and inductions of astro-physics, indicates the birth of solar and stellar systems from highly attenuated gases. The science of Palæontology has established the evolution of the earth's organic productions. Biology, in its turn, has traced through ever-ascending stages the constantly varying phases of animated nature which are crowned by the human race. Nature returns an evolutionary answer to every question submitted to her. Is it, then, credible that in the great chain of organic development the initial link is missing? Is it remotely probable that although the solar luminary, with all his attendant orbs, took form and substance, and that life in its simplest aspect, once present on the planet, provided the evolutionary basis for all subsequent complexities of plant and animal existence; yet between the period which witnessed the cooling of the earth's surface and the genesis of life, other powers, not previously or afterwards immediately implicated, were called into requisition? The entire range of scientific knowledge concerning the continuity of nature cries aloud against so unwarrantable a supposition. Tyndall put the case with extreme cogency when he wrote: "Holding, as I do, the Nebular Hypothesis, I am logically bound to deduce all the life of the world from matter inherent in the nebula"; and every additional fact brought to light since those words were penned strengthens and supports the position then adopted by their author.

The biological world is practically unanimous in regarding the genesis of life from a strictly scientific point of view. But although biologists take for granted the dawn of life in the far distant past as the outcome of the action and interaction of purely natural, chemical, and physical causes, they refuse to entertain the doctrine of "spontaneous generation" as advocated by one or two scientific heretics in our own day and generation.

The history of the conflict between the advocates of Biogenesis on the one side, and the champions of Abiogenesis on the other, is deeply interesting. Scientific opinion has swung from side to side with the varying fortunes of the combatants. It was an axiom among earlier naturalists that the putrefaction of a corpse produced new forms of life. The counter proposition, that living things always arise from antecedent life, has been elevated by modern biologists to the rank of a dogma. It is a circumstance of universal knowledge that decaying organic matter is invariably associated with maggots or other lowly organisms. This phenomenon was readily explained by ascribing it to spontaneous generation. In 1668, however, Redi, an Italian naturalist, threw down the gauntlet to the then orthodox supporters of Abiogenesis. Redi conducted the simple experiment of placing organic substances in jars, the necks of which were covered with a fine gauze; but although putrefaction set in, no maggots

were developed. Redi was accused of impugning the authority of the Holy Scriptures, which were stated to assert the generation of bees from the carcase of a dead lion, but, nothing daunted, he carried his researches a step further, and traced the genesis of the maggots to the eggs deposited by blow-flies which collected upon putrefying meats.

With the subsequent improvement of the microscope came the discovery of a world of micro-organisms, quite invisible to unaided vision, and vastly lower in the scale of development than the larger organisms previously regarded as the outcome of spontaneous generation. The doctrine of Abiogenesis, consequently, fell into entire disrepute.

The question was reopened by Buffon and Needham in the middle of the eighteenth century. The microscope of the period, possessing an amplification of 400 diameters with bad definition, nevertheless disclosed the existence of Infusoria in prepared organic infusions previously unknown. Needham contended that these infusions could be completely sterilised by the process of heating. If contact with the atmosphere were then prevented, no life could arise unless spontaneously generated. He therefore prepared organic infusions in sealed flasks, which were heated to the point of sterilisation. As life appeared, despite these precautions, Needham promptly challenged Redi's conclusions, and, with the assistance of Buffon, replaced Abiogenesis on its former foundation. Needham's results were then submitted to a rigorous scrutiny by the Abbé Spallanzani, who proved that if increased precautions were taken against the admission of air the development of life was thereby prevented. The problem was still in an unsettled state when the advance of chemical discovery revealed the existence of oxygen as a constituent of the atmosphere. Oxygen was shown to be a necessary factor to life, and the discussion raged as to whether Spallanzani's experiments had not so completely changed the condition of the atmospheric oxygen as to preclude the possibility of life.

In 1836-7 Schulze and Schwann carried out further investigations from this point of view. By passing all the air that reached the infusions through red-hot tubes they destroyed the contained life, the nature of the air thus remaining unchanged. Their experiments confirmed those of Spallanzani, and the previous verdict against Abiogenesis was ratified.

Pouchet's *Heterogenie* was published in 1869, and this distinguished naturalist's researches apparently substantiated the earlier results arrived at by Needham and Buffon. So vigorous was the onslaught of Pouchet, and so masterful were his methods, that the problem was again plunged into uncertainty, and the star of Abiogenesis once more dawned. In 1862, however, the renowned French chemist, Pasteur, published a paper "On the Organised Corpuscles of the Atmosphere." He refined and confirmed the results of Schulze and Schwann, and proved that not only were the organisms which communicated life to the infusions contained in the air, but that their distribution through the atmosphere was not uniform. He discovered that in the still air of the caves beneath the Paris Observatory his preparations could be safely exposed without risk of putrefaction; while in the dusty air of his laboratory they quickly grew turbid with life. Pasteur's investigations, carried out with characteristic thoroughness, overthrew the resuscitated doctrine of Abiogenesis, and it was relegated to the limbo of exploded superstitions by practically the entire biological world.

Ten years later, the problem was revived by Dr. H. Charlton Bastian. While engaged in research work upon the microscopic nature of the blood, Dr. Bastian was arrested by certain phenomena which pointed to the probability of the occurrence of spontaneous generation. He therefore determined to carry out a series of careful experiments. And this resolve was rendered all the more imperative through the circumstance that in the intervening years discoveries in pathology had enlarged the question to one of the highest practical importance.

(To be concluded.)

T. F. P.

Puritanical Godliness.

IN its origin Puritanism was a protest against priestcraft in the Church and tyranny in the State. In its earliest stages the motive-power was love of liberty and simplicity. As a protest against many existing evils Puritanism was justifiable, and there can be no doubt that it accomplished no inconsiderable good; but as a *temper*, whether individual or national, it is equally certain that it wrought incalculable mischief. One of its greatest lights was Thomas Cartwright, Margaret divinity professor at Cambridge. Against all who differed from him he fulminated with vitriolic fury, in the full belief that he was infallible. Any opinions that conflicted with his were condemned as deadly heresies, and their holders as deserving of speedy execution. A State-controlled Church was utterly abhorrent to him; but he strongly advocated a Church-controlled State, with, of course, a Puritan King or President. Now, Cartwright's characteristics became the characteristics of the whole party. It was a narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant party, a party that ardently believed in, and, when circumstances permitted, vigorously practised, persecution. Well, for this remarkable party, which once figured so prominently in British history, the Rev. Thomas Phillips, of Bloomsbury Chapel, puts in an earnest and eloquent plea, which it is the purpose of the present article to submit to fair and honest criticism. Mr. Phillips's praise of the Puritans is most extravagant. All of a sudden England found itself in love with the Bible, and the Bible made England Puritan, and Puritanism represented that "tremendous moral energy which, in the words of an American artist, has upset every wrong and tyranny under which it has managed to fasten its roots." To this general statement the reply is that for every wrong or tyranny which the Puritans removed they substituted another no less baneful.

But let us come to details. "The first mark of Puritanism," Mr. Phillips tells us, "is its deep sense of God and the Unseen. It might very well be defined as the rediscovery of God." There is a sense in which this is true, but its truth is by no means a recommendation of Puritanism. On the contrary, it sets Puritanism in a most unfavorable light. The true Puritan lived "as ever in the great Taskmaster's eye." The business of his God was to impose burdens upon, or assign tasks to, his human creatures, and then to keep his eye upon them to see whether they bent their energies to bear or do them. Life was slavery, a long-continued series of perfunctory performances, the doing of unpleasant and unnatural duties in the dread belief that the Sovereign of the Skies would be angry and inflict punishment if they were left undone. Religion consisted in a continuous but never quite successful effort to please the Heavenly Tyrant; and it is no wonder that, in the circumstances, "it became the supreme interest of life." Mr. Phillips thinks very highly of the Christianity possessed and exhibited by the Puritans. For its sake, he says, "these men faced the scaffold and the stake, the sword and the flame and the hangman's rope." But the reverend gentleman forgets two important facts. He forgets, in the first place, that multitudes of people, in all ages, have proudly sacrificed their lives on behalf of palpable errors, or from loyalty to political opinions which were out of harmony with those of the majority. He also omits to mention that whenever the Puritans were in power their opponents had to "face the scaffold and the stake, the sword and the flame and the hangman's rope." Whenever they had the chance, the Puritans became as splendid persecutors as they were martyrs at other times.

Another characteristic of Puritanism is "a sense of the seriousness of life." This is a point on which Mr. Phillips expatiates with the cocksureness of omniscience. Life can be looked at, he thinks, "either from the standpoint of duty or that of pleasure." "We are here," he asserts, "either to please ourselves or to please God." That is to say, the

Creator and his creature man are at loggerheads. The worker has fallen to squabbling and fisticuffs with the work of his own hands. He has brought into existence a being who can be a credit or an eternal disgrace to him, a state of things which, surely, can be by no means creditable to the Almighty. A creature who does not or cannot please his maker by pleasing himself is a living witness to the fact that his maker shamefully blundered in making him. And yet Mr. Phillips assures us that "we are here either to please ourselves or to please God," which is tantamount to admitting that there is no pleasure in pleasing God. Mr. Phillips says that "the Cavaliers often lived for women, wine, and song." Is this equivalent to claiming that no Puritan ever did that? Did every Roundhead completely eschew "women, wine, and song"? In the present sermon, at any rate, this Bloomsbury preacher is a Puritan of the genuine type. "The Continental ideal," he continues, "is enjoyment, pleasure; the old English ideal is duty, responsibility." How fundamentally mistaken the reverend gentleman is. Take the following sample of his teaching:—

"It is a simple thing to say, yet stupendously important, that a man either makes or mars his life as he chooses between these two ideals. Live for pleasure, and you are doomed; live for duty, and you are made. A young man who says, 'I am come to London to please myself,' commits suicide as surely and unmistakably as if he were to throw himself into the muddy waters of the Thames."

Mr. Phillips would experience extreme difficulty in finding one young man who comes to London to please anybody but himself. Even the preacher himself would be hugely amused were a young fellow to say to him: "Mr. Phillips, it was not my own wish, it was indeed against my inclination, to come up to London; I am here simply to please God." Of course, by a life of pleasure Mr. Phillips understands a life devoted to "women, wine, and song," a life whose one purpose is to gratify the fleshly appetites and passions. But surely he has not the hardihood to maintain that such a life fulfils the Continental ideal. Does he seriously think that on the Continent the sense of duty or responsibility is ignored, and the people live supremely for "women, wine, and song"? It is true that in most Continental countries, particularly in France, Germany, and Italy, religion is being abandoned by the masses, and by many among the classes, but it is not true that the standard of life is, in consequence, being lowered. It is customary with the pulpit to point the finger of scorn at France because it has largely thrown off the yoke of Christianity and adopted a system of secular education; but if the pulpit were in the habit of consulting the latest official statistics it would be shocked to discover that, looked at from a moral or humanitarian point of view, France would compare most favorably with Great Britain. If any preacher doubts this statement let him compare the latest official returns of the two countries.

Mr. Phillips eulogises the Puritans because, at the call of Oliver Cromwell, they "left everything to fight for the rights of the people"; but he must be aware that the royalists did precisely the same to fight for what they believed to be the rights of the King. There was equal heroism on both sides, and possibly, in the main, equal piety too. The life of the Puritans was not more "consecrated" than that of the Cavaliers. The rightness or wrongness of the cause does not affect the heroism or consecration of those engaged upon it. As a matter of fact, there was no more real liberty under Cromwell than there had been under Charles I. The only free people were the Puritans, and those who were not Puritans were made to suffer in various ways.

The chief merit of the Puritans was that they took such pains to safeguard the Lord's Day. "Sunday," says Mr. Phillips, "is England's bulwark. When this day goes, Puritanism goes and England itself goes." What unmitigated nonsense! In an earlier part of his discourse the preacher quotes from Milton, and calls him "the Baptist poet and

the choicest of all the Puritans." On consulting Masson's masterly and authoritative work on Milton, however, we learn that in his later years the poet "had ceased to attend any church, belonged to no religious communion, and had no religious observances in his family." His posthumous Latin *Treatise of Christian Doctrine* "shows him to have been no Sabbatarian, like the Puritans of the first wave, but most strenuously anti-Sabbatarian." In this work he even disowns the Decalogue, on which the law of the Sabbath is founded. It was his conviction that the Ten Commandments are "no longer the standard of human morality, and that human liberty is not to be bounded by their prohibitions or by any sacerdotal code of ethics founded on these." Thus we see that, in the opinion of "the choicest of all the Puritans," Sunday is not England's bulwark. But then Milton was not a minister with a church or chapel to fill. England's bulwark is the character of its people, and the character of its people is not going to be undermined, but rather fortified, by Sunday amusement and sport. Sunday cricket and tennis and parties and whist-drives and week-ends do undoubtedly empty churches and chapels and reduce their funds, but it has yet to be proved that they injure morals and ruin characters. Sunday is going, but there is no recognisable sign that England is getting ready to go.

Mr. Phillips' appeal to his hearers is profoundly pathetic. There is the sound of despair in it. I appeal to you, he says; I most solemnly appeal to you "in the name of the holy Cross to preserve what is noblest and choicest in our national history." "What is noblest and choicest in our national history," according to him, is its Puritanism, its Sabbatarianism, its insistence upon the saving efficacy of the blood of Jesus, its proclamation of the dogma that there exists a great Taskmaster in the heavens whose eye is ever upon us. But he is radically mistaken. Those things are but figments of the mind, controversies over which have been serious hindrances to national progress. But at last we are slowly learning wisdom, with the result that what Mr. Phillips declares to be noblest and choicest in our national character is passing away. Supernatural religion is being found out to be the greatest of all delusions. Christianity is being despised and rejected by the people because it blocks the way against the advance of social science and ethical culture. Puritanical godliness is becoming more and more impossible, and what is destined to take its place is self-reliant and socially helpful manliness.

J. T. LLOYD.

God in the Potteries.

SOME few years ago, that conveniently pious and patriotic paper, the *Daily Mail*, regaled its readers to a long series of articles, entitled "The Devil in the Potteries."

This delightful organ's views on vice and viciousness need not interest Freethinkers; but they did create a flutter amongst the respectable.

As I gazed on the northern end of the industrial Five Towns, with its towering chimneys belching out smoke, and the grimy haze which seems forever to hang round the place, I thought of those sadly pathetic words: "If ye have tears, prepare to shed them now."

Dante's Inferno or Milton's image of hell could not be worse than this district when all the factories, forges, and coal-pits are in full working order.

Mundane appearances give one the impression that the Devil is still very busy, yet piety flourishes, and priests are still the white man's burden.

The rotten weeds of superstition still continue to choke out the fairer bloom of Humanity.

Caste is rampant; the High Churchman, the Low Churchman, the blatant Nonconformist, the meek Little Bethelite, and numerous other sects divide the community up into a hundred jarring factions.

The Borough Elections are nothing more or less than religious duels with the buttons off, with the valiant Labor candidate using a wet towel as a weapon.

Flabby, insincere, and weak-kneed, the latter never seems to be able to leave the atmosphere of the P.S.A.; he has invariably fought his way to fame through the Bible class.

And the people! Between the millstones of priestly despotism and capitalism they pass their lives in a state of humiliated subjection.

Churches and chapels are as numerous as blackberries in September, and the black-coated army see to it that their physically half-starved flocks shall not lack spiritual nourishment.

Good food, better housing, and the flinging away of the ponderous wooden cross of superstition would accomplish more than all the sententious prayers of the parasites of the poor.

When I see how deep are the marks of poverty, I shall not heed the reproach of Materialism; the life, health, and happiness here count more than a questionable place in a doubtful hereafter.

The market day in this neighborhood is Saturday; there is more money about on this day than any other in the week, and the Salvation Army is very busy.

Their activity usually centres in the market-place, and what with the blaring of their untuneful band, their exhortations to Come to Jesus, the yells of the adjacent fishmongers and the smell of the oil-lamps, one is forced to the conclusion that neither God nor the Devil could possibly have any business here.

As I stood listening one night to a "Brother" spinning the old stock-in-trade yarns, there was a lump of human nature at my back standing near to a stall, and he was busily engaged in filling his huge mouth with tripe.

"A lost sheep," I murmured. Gross Materialist! "You cannot take it with you," shrieked the brother, meaning the filthy lucre on which they are so keen. "The lie direct," quoth I, as my Epicure put down his plate quite empty.

It was a scene that only Zola could have described.

Crowds of people with hungry, white faces surged to and fro, and I thought of the still, sad music of Humanity, and the sleek, satisfied sigh of content: "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world!"

I thought of the colorless existence of these who deserve something better, for they are a good-natured, generous, and impulsive lot, but they still fail to see why that sacrosanct house called the vicarage is always the largest, the best situated, standing in an extensive garden, with a carriage-drive up to the front door. The recognition of the reason is not going to put everything right in their world, but it will go a long way towards it.

As the train carried me swiftly through the pleasant scenery of Derby, away from the pictures of destitution which would break the heart of a Hercules, I thought of Industry, that mighty camel, lying in a desert blinded with the gad-flies of superstition.

The sun had set, leaving on the horizon a glorious purple, which melted into a lovely Naples-blue sky, and I laughed. I remembered seeing a ragged little urchin carefully leading his sister, about three, down some steps. He was singing vigorously. His song was "Christshjunnus, awake!" and he sang it with as much reverence as "Bill Bailey" receives. Happy little unspoiled son of joy! Happy little Pagan! I could have kissed him, but he would never have known the reason why.

J. W. R.

And then the consciousness itself—what is it during the time that it continues? And what becomes of it when it ends? We can only infer that it is a specialised and individualised form of that Infinite and Eternal Energy which transcends both our knowledge and our imagination; and that at death its elements lapse into the Infinite and Eternal Energy whence they were derived.—*Herbert Spencer.*

Acid Drops.

Ex-President Roosevelt, while in Rome, went to see the Coliseum. When there he gave vent to the following remarkable utterance: "Just think, here in Rome, where the world's civilisation centred." As this was telegraphed by the reporters to their newspapers, we presume it was the most striking thing the great "Teddy" had to say. It has the advantage over his famous "dirty, little Atheist" reference to Paine of being true, but in this case an untruth was not easily possible. Still, there was a little distinction in telling three lies in three words. The other remark reminds one of Charles Lamb's visitor, who volunteered the information that Shakespeare was a man of genius.

Mr. Silvester Horne has been giving his impressions of Paris. In the course of his remarks he said that one of the two evils that proved fatal to the old order in Paris (we fail to see why Paris, and not France) was the intolerance that destroyed most of the serious, sober, and intelligent section of the citizens. In England, he said, the revolution was won by men of a serious, religious, Puritan spirit. Mr. Horne's view of French history is, to put it mildly, peculiar. If intolerance had destroyed the serious, sober, and intelligent people, there probably would never have been any revolution to talk about. And how anyone can talk in this manner with the names of Voltaire, Rousseau, Condorcet, D'Holbach, Danton, Mirabeau, and the crowd of able men that emerged into public life during the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras, passes comprehension. It is probably the absence of Christian cant that has misled Mr. Horne. The comparison of the French Revolution with our own revolution in England is absurd. The conditions in the two cases were so widely dissimilar that no profitable comparison is possible. But allowing for differences, Frenchmen need not fear to contrast their own revolution with ours. And for its more regrettable aspects they might easily place a good share of the responsibility on the evil action of England and other Christian Powers.

Why will religious writers insist on saddling Freethinkers with the difficulties that are entirely due to their own unnecessary and essentially stupid theories? It is no doubt convenient to do so, but it imposes on no one but the religious themselves. Here, for example, is Mr. W. Temple, the son of Archbishop Temple, who says with an air of profound wisdom that "to declare the problem of evil insoluble is Atheism or Agnosticism." But what on earth has either Atheism or Agnosticism to do with the "problem of evil"? The question of why evil is in the world, or what is the nature of evil, presents no great difficulty to the Atheist. Why evil exists is, indeed, from one point of view, a question as fantastic as asking why anything exists. But given the world as it is, the nature of evil is plain. The problem, such as it is, is wholly a Theistic one, and owes its existence to Theistic belief. Having assumed a Creator of infinite love, power, and intelligence, the Theist has to harmonise the presence of evil with the existence of such a being. And no such harmony is possible. The best men Christianity has enlisted in its service have bitten on that file and have only succeeded in breaking their teeth. Dismiss the theory of Deity, and the problem disappears. But to say that the Atheist gives up the problem of evil as insoluble is simply childish. It has no existence for him; and he declines to be saddled with the difficulties of a theory he altogether rejects.

Mr. Temple says that, as an argument, the earthquake at Messina is no more difficult than a headache. Well, let this be admitted, it is a queer way of replying to one difficulty by pointing out that there are others equally irremovable. An individual case of suffering may, and often does, present all the essential difficulties that are offered by a wholesale catastrophe like that of Messina. But this is only a further demonstration that the Christian does not fit the facts in any of their aspects. Christians often argue that human suffering is due to human misdeeds. This is true in instances, although even then the fact of human misdoing is one that needs explaining. But suffering is often the result, not of misdoing, but of well-doing. A man may contract consumption by prowling round in inclement weather waiting for a chance to burgle a promising residence. In this case, the Christian will see the hand of God punishing the wrongdoer. But he may as easily contract consumption by going out in inclement weather to succor someone in distress, or while engaged on some other errand of charity. Nature—and if there be a God, God—cares as little about the one case as the other. Good actions may expose a man to all the risks that bad ones do. Devotion to the welfare of others may leave a man's family as helpless and as un-

provided for as though he had deliberately squandered his substance in riotous living. These are solid, indisputable facts, and while they remain as real on the Atheistic hypothesis as on the Christian, the Atheist does not stultify his own intelligence and insult that of others by pretending to see a goodness in the process that does not exist.

"Thought for the Day" in the *Hull Daily Mail* of April 5 ran as follows:—

"Look at Great Britain, Germany, the United States— all speeding forward with splendid strides, and all aggressively Christian! Analyse the progress of Japan, and we find it due to the new Christian influence. Take any corner of the world where men are being made better, and where their circumstances of living are being improved, and we find Christianity at the bottom of the work. Judged solely by the physical demonstrations, the vision of Christianity is the greatest business and building asset in the world. And these thoughts should encourage us when despair or doubts assail us."

There's many a true word spoken in jest—and many a true word spoken unguardedly. We like that phrase "aggressively Christian." It is precisely what the Christian nations have been all over the world. They have bullied and plundered every "heathen" nation exactly as long as the heathen nation couldn't help standing it. And how true that statement is about Japan! "Christian influence" has taught the Japanese to raise armies and navies and create a first-class fighting machine. That is all. Japan will have nothing to do with Christianity as a religion. And the fact is so well-known that even a *Daily Mail* should be aware of it. What the rest of the "Thought" means is difficult to say. "Physical demonstrations" are not exactly the proper criterion in such cases. Honest people would think more of "moral demonstrations." Tried by that test Christians are *not* superior to the despised "heathen." That is probably why the *Hull* paper's "Thought" doesn't refer to it. But the cream of this "Thought" lies in its opening sentence. Millions of Christians in England look upon Germany as bent on the conquest and destruction of England; millions of Christians in Germany look upon England as their country's implacable enemy; these good Christians in both countries have just religion enough to hate each other; and our pious *Hull* contemporary assures us that they are "both speeding forward with splendid strides." Yes—to Armageddon.

The *Methodist Times* remarks that "In freeing the Church from State control we have to guard against freeing the State from control of the churches, or rather of the Christian religion for which the churches stand." Well, for our own part, if it must be either the State control of religion or religious control of the State, we prefer the former. The State control of religion is bad enough, and far enough removed from the modern progressive ideal, but the harm done is simply trifling compared to what happens when the relations are reversed. Geneva and Scotland are examples of the impossibility of permitting the State to be governed by religion, while Spain is a standing example of a nation brought to ruin by allowing religion to maintain the upper hand. A secular State may be bad, but there are obvious checks to its action for evil, and equally obvious considerations that suggest restraint to the most tyrannical of secular rulers. To religious control, the only restraint that offers itself is the sheer impossibility of realising its aims.

It is often said that persecution has been the result of an alliance between Church and State. If by this is meant that the Church *could* not have persecuted without the power of the State, it may pass. But if it is meant that it *would* not have done so had it been free, and that the persecuting influence came from the secular side, then the statement is simply not true. In Spain, for example, the Church advocated the extermination or expulsion of Moors and Jews—for several generations before they were actually driven out of the country. Both the crown and the nobility realised for a long time what a blow to the welfare of the country such a step meant. And it was only by sheer religious pressure upon the State that one of the most infamous crimes was consummated. So, also, in other countries. Left alone, the Huguenots would never have been driven from France by the State. Self-interest alone would have prevented it. It is the sinister influence behind the State that has been chiefly responsible for such suicidal acts. Governments have utilised religion for their own sinister purposes, but this does not disprove or weaken what has been said. It rather clinches the argument that the less religious control we have the better.

As the legal authorities do not appear to make headway against the political and municipal corruption in Mr.

Carnegie's City of Pittsburg, the Bishop of the diocese has issued the following prayer:—

"O Lord, great and dreadful God, who keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Thee, we come to Thee confessing our own sins and shortcomings and those of this people among whom we dwell. We have indeed sinned and done wickedly, but, O Lord our God, let Thine anger be turned away from this city and people. Prosper every interest, commercial, intellectual, moral, and religious. Save this whole community from political corruption, greed, intemperance, lawlessness, desecration of the Lord's Day, violation of the sanctity of marriage, and every false way."

We do not know what on earth the Lord is expected to do, but in any case it would have been more to the point had he prevented the corruption in the first place. As it is, the petition reads, in one aspect, like "Oh Lord, we beg to remind you of your neglect of duty to poor Pittsburg," and in another, "Oh Lord, now we are found out, help us to try and amend our ways, or discover new methods of 'graft' that will not be so easily spotted." And we expect the latter is the more likely result.

The New Theologians are now at sixes and sevens among themselves. They all preach what they call the Eternal Christ, and they are all agreed that the Eternal Christ is a purely imaginary being; but a controversy is going on in their own journal as to the category in which to place the Gospel Jesus. Dr. Anderson, and a few others, are convinced that he never lived at all, a conviction shared by most Freethinkers. The Gospel Jesus, they argue, is a Divine Person, and it is impossible to believe that he ever existed. Others are fully persuaded that Jesus was a truly historical character, and is the basis on which the Christ of theology rests. Mr. Campbell wobbles. When you think you have fairly caught him on this side, he slips from your hands and smiles at you from the other. He *wants* a historical Jesus and does not know where to find him; but his *trust* is imposed in the Eternal Christ, who admittedly exists only as an idea, or principle, or the ideal humanity. And yet we are assured that the New Theology has been sent of God to endow Christianity with a new lease of life. In reality, however, the New Theology is one of the strongest symptoms that Christianity is doomed, and is actually dying.

In the course of a sermon on the Resurrection, the Rev. J. H. Rushbrooke asks a very pertinent question. Why, he asks, was not the "mighty fact" made plain to all? "Would it not have been more congruous, more befitting the vast importance of the event, that the proofs should be as abundant as they could be made, and that testimony should be borne by a great company of friends and enemies alike?" Having asked a good question, Mr. Rushbrooke follows with a bad answer. The resurrection was not made convincing to all because the religious value of assent to a phenomenon that compelled conviction would have been nil. But the value of the resurrection lay in its evidential character. And how could its value have been weakened by the evidence being so strong as to *command* assent? To argue that belief in the resurrection is an act of faith is to admit its non-historical character, and to invite the reply that some people can believe anything. But the credulity of one man cannot make any serious demand upon the rationality of another.

Those orthodox and evangelical divines of to-day who proudly describe Milton as "the choicest of all the Puritans" are careful not to refer to his awful heterodoxy. They never mention his anti-Trinitarian attitude or his materialistic conception of the Universe. Milton was an evolutionist. He believed that what was usually called Creation was nothing but "diverse modifications, inanimate or animate, of one primal matter," that "angels and men, no less than the brute world and the things we call lifeless, are formations from this one original matter." He went further still and maintained that "any radical distinction between matter and spirit, body and soul, is fallacious." Professor Masson informs us that he was bold enough to adopt the only logical inference from such a view of the Universe. "The soul of man, he holds, is not something distinct from the body of man and capable of existing apart, but is actually bound up with the bodily organism. Therefore, when the body dies, the soul dies also, and the whole man ceases to exist." Such were the cosmological beliefs of the great John Milton, whom the orthodox minister of Bloomsbury Baptist Chapel, the Rev. Thomas Phillips glories in as "the Baptist poet and the choicest of all the Puritans." "Baptist poet" is distinctly fine, a veritable stroke of genius.

The Bishop of London is becoming more sentimental and irresponsible every day. In the closing discourse of his Lenten Mission, delivered at Enfield, sillier and more nonsensical utterances than usual dropped from his lips.

"It is absolutely certain," he said, "it is one of those things which are evidences of themselves, that you are the maddest, most foolish person in the world if you do not believe in the grace of God." In the same sermon his lordship solemnly urged his hearers to be humble, and he gave a telling example of his *own* humility by loudly cursing all who differed from him in belief and opinion. He knows perfectly well that scarcely a million people in London avail themselves of what he calls "the means of grace," and he has the audacity to call the remaining five millions fools and idiots.

The grace of God must be an inconceivably poor thing if it can do nothing for a man unless he goes to church and exhibits his humility by patiently listening to such twaddle as flows from the pulpit in a never-failing stream. The Bishop believes that Naaman was healed of his leprosy by washing in the river Jordan, and that a blind man received his sight by washing in the Pool of Siloam; and it is only a person who believes in such absurdities who *can* believe in the saving efficacy of baptism, confirmation, and the Lord's Supper. Where the grace of God really comes in, and what it does, even on the Bishop's own showing, it is quite impossible to discover. And yet the Bishop receives a salary of £10,000 a year for preaching so indescribably impotent a thing as this proverbial grace of God!

The Church of Ireland Synod (Protestant) met at Dublin recently and discussed matters arising out of the Deceased Wife's Sister Act. Some of the men of God displayed to the full the worst taste and manners of their cloth. They decided *not* to bring their "table of kindred and affinity" into agreement with the law of the land. This was opposed, however, by the Bishop of Derry, who urged that it would help to increase the number of marriages before registrars. To that extent the Bishop was within his rights both as a clergyman and a gentleman—which, of course, are not always the same thing; but he was simply playing the hooligan when he described marriage at a registrar's office as "the machinery of sin." The most effective answer to such blackguardism would be a blow on the mouth.

The Mothers' Union appears to be a Church of England body. We see that a meeting of the district branches has been held at Derby, under the presidency of the Duchess of Devonshire, and a resolution carried against "any extension of facilities for divorce" on the ground that "the weakening of the marriage tie will lower the status of women, and is antagonistic to the interests of the family and the nation, to morality and religion." Note the humbug of this. The "facilities of divorce" already enjoyed by the wealthy and the well-to-do are not protested against; these Church "mothers" reserve all their indignation for the attempt to extend those facilities to the poor by making the operation of the law easier and cheaper. That is all.

The Rev. T. E. Ruth, of Liverpool, says that Protestantism and Roman Catholicism stand shoulder to shoulder "against the Atheism that would dethrone God, and the Materialism that would degrade man." Very pretty; and we do not deny that, in theory, and where professional interests are concerned, the statement may contain a truth. But we beg to remind Mr. Ruth that in his own city Catholics and Protestants appear to stand shoulder to shoulder only for the purpose of broaking each other's heads—which is certainly a Christian practice, even if it falls short of Christian theory. And in Liverpool, we may point out, it is not the Materialists and Atheists who disturb public peace and order and degrade man, but Christians who roar that the claims of their religion come before aught else. If Protestant and Catholic ruffianism could be banished from Liverpool, the police of that city would have a much easier time. We do not fancy Atheists and Materialists would need their attention to any large extent.

We see that a pious fanatic named Joseph Allen has been bound over in the sum of 40s. to keep the peace for six months. Being sure that there was a God, and having heard him though he had never seen him, this ardent Theist could not listen patiently to an atheistic lecture by Mr. F. Schaller, of the N. S. S., in Hyde Park. He therefore rushed at the platform like a mad bull, and threw it over, so that the lecturer fell on the ground. Mr. Schaller said that the man had assaulted him twice before, but he did not wish to press the charge, he only wanted the man to behave himself. The magistrate told Joseph Allen that he should not take the law into his own hands, but take down any "blasphemous" words and communicate them to the police. Would it not have been better if the magistrate had told him that any competent God might be left to vindicate himself?

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

(All early dates cancelled until further notice.)

To Correspondents.

- C. COHEN'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—April 17, Shoreditch Town Hall; 24, Liverpool.
- PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND: 1910.—Previously acknowledged, £198 13s. 6d. Received since:—J. Hibbott, 2s. 6d. *Per Miss Vance*.—E. C. Saphin, 5s.
Port Elizabeth Freethinkers.—G. H. Dann, 5s.; C. Tuson, 5s.; A. E. Halstead, 5s.; C. Clark, 5s.; T., 2s. 6d.; J. D., 5s.; J. Doneley, 2s. 6d.; Mac, 5s.; Harrison, 2s. 6d.; M. M., 5s.
- WILL correspondents please note that all letters not meant for Mr. Foote personally, but which contain matter of an editorial character, notices of meetings, etc., should be addressed "Editor of *Freethinker*"? Otherwise they cannot be dealt with in time for the following week's issue of this paper.
- R. WILSON.—Thanks for cuttings and enclosure. The former will be used later; the latter is duly acknowledged in another column. We do not think there is any chance in the near future of Mr. Foote lecturing near Hawick. Perhaps he may have the pleasure of shaking hands with you elsewhere.
- A. HINDLEY.—We are afraid a discussion on Freemasonry would be rather out of place in these pages. The last of your questions we can, however, answer in the affirmative.
- F. WYKES.—We cheerfully take the will for the deed, and think none the less of the gift because it is small. As you say, if *all* did their part, on only a similar scale, our "Target"—to use a Salvation Army phrase—of 3,000 shillings would be easily reached.
- G. T. A.—(1) Publius Lentulus was the supposed predecessor of Pontius Pilate, and author of a supposed letter to the Roman Senate about Jesus Christ. Every scholar knows it to be a modern forgery, but the Catholic Church, with its usual shamelessness, still palms it off on the illiterate mob. (2) Glad to hear that you, as a professional, attended Mr. Foote's lectures at St. James's Hall on Shakespeare, and "derived much benefit thereby."
- J. W. R.—The modern version of the old text has so often to run: "The spirit indeed is willing but the pocket is weak."
- R. DAVIES.—Thanks for your getting us four new readers; also for your cheery letter. Yes, the Freethought cause is winning all the time; but we can't expect it to win in a hurry, for our appeal is to the disinterested intellect, and most people are deficient in disinterestedness and would sooner walk ten miles than think ten minutes. Our conquests must be slow, but they are all the surer for that. With regard to Birmingham, you will see an announcement shortly.
- CHELTONA.—Glad to know of the "mental blessings" you have "derived from the *Freethinker*."
- E. B.—Sorry we cannot help you to the authorship of the lines. We agree with you in what you say about Eden Phillpotts. With regard to the sale of the *Freethinker*, you are probably right, but we have not the capital necessary to establish such agencies. For the present, we must depend chiefly on the efforts of our friendly readers to promote our circulation.
- J. J. BURY.—The "grace" was from *Macbeth*.
- JOE (Dundee) says: "I am a great admirer of your work and read the *Freethinker* regularly with much appreciation."
- N. FLETCHER.—Pleased to hear from a lady reader who "admires" our "grand work and courage."
- J. BRADFIELD.—A good letter. We wish *Freethinkers* would trouble the local newspapers more frequently than they do.
- A. GALPIN.—It is good of you to send "Easter Eggs" all the way from America. They arrived quite fresh.
- A. P.—Thanks for the papers with portrait of what you jokingly call "our favorite bishop"—but much more for the Latin compliment you add in your note.
- H. W. WHITEHOUSE.—Yes, up to date in a way, but treating God as a personification instead of a personality is Atheism. We wonder the lecturer doesn't see it.
- JOHN FOOT.—Thanks for your pleasant letter. Glad you thought the "social" so great a success. Have placed the cheque to Shilling Month.
- W. R. BRITTON.—May your good wishes be realised.
- PORT ELIZABETH FREETHINKERS, subscribing to the President's Honorarium Fund, desire to render thanks for a "weekly contribution of wit, learning, and pleasure."
- W. P. BALL.—Thanks once more for cuttings.
- P. Q.—Pleased you think the real value of this journal "cannot be expressed in money terms," and that you think our vindication of civil and religious liberty in reference to the present position in France "ought to be written in letters of gold and hung up in every household in the United Kingdom."
- J. HIBBOTT has "read the *Freethinker* from the first number and is as fond of it as ever."
- ALL Communications requiring assistance of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Services at funerals should be addressed to the secretary, Miss E. M. Vance.
- LETTERS for the Editor of the *Freethinker* should be addressed to 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

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

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.

Personal.

I AM handing the *Freethinker* over editorially to Mr. Cohen for a week or two. He will have assistance from Mr. Lloyd. And I thank them both for stepping into the breach.

I am in medical hands, and shall not be out of them for a bit. I have to undergo an operation, not dangerous in itself, but serious enough to keep me from any kind of work for a time.

It is a very awkward time, just in front of the N. S. S. Annual Conference, but I trust I shall be present at that gathering, even if I don't take as large a share of the burden of work as usual.

My interim engagements are of course cancelled.

My love for Freethought grows with my age. I hate being out of the fight even for a brief interval—but "who can control his fate?"

G. W. FOOTE.

Sugar Plums.

The Shoreditch Town Hall was well filled on Sunday evening last for the first of the course of lectures under the auspices of the Secular Society, Limited. Unfortunately, Mr. Foote's illness prevented his lecturing as announced, so that those who came for the special purpose of hearing him were inevitably disappointed. At short notice Mr. Cohen, who was disengaged, occupied the platform, taking the subject announced, so that one portion of the program was, at any rate, adhered to. The chair was occupied by Miss Kough, who carried out its duties in an exceedingly charming and tactful manner. Some questions and opposition from two gentlemen followed the lecture.

This evening (April 17) Mr. Cohen again lectures at the Shoreditch Town Hall. We hope that *Freethinkers* will make an effort to attend, and, if possible, induce Christian friends and acquaintances to attend likewise. Admission is quite free, so that no monetary obstacle prevents Christians from being present who might object to subscribe towards a Freethought meeting. There are really enough *Freethinkers* in the immediate neighborhood to fill the hall, and, needless to say, more than enough Christians.

The Secular Society's Social came off with complete success at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet-street, on Thursday evening (April 7). The attendance was much larger than on previous occasions, while a cheerful feature of the gathering was the number of young people who were present. An innovation on previous gatherings was made by the introduction of a little dancing, and also by a very clever sleight-of-hand performance by Mr. W. Kernan. Both features were highly appreciated. Miss Ettie Hadley delighted the gathering with her singing, and Mr. Charlton made an efficient M.C., besides contributing to the vocal portion of the program. Unfortunately, Mr. Lloyd was unable to be present, owing to a severe cold. A few brief words were addressed to the meeting by the President, who managed to disguise from all present the indisposition from which he was suffering.

As already announced, the National Secular Society's Conference will be held this year in London. Fuller details will be published in due course. Meanwhile, we express the hope that *all* Branches will be represented. There are many reasons why the representation should be as comprehensive as possible on such occasions. This period of the year, too, is perhaps the best to select for a visit to London, and, with the Anglo-Japanese Exhibition in full swing, it is possible that the occasion may be taken to arrange for a general visit of the delegates and friends. Branches sending delegates, and those visitors requiring assistance to secure apartments, etc., should communicate with Miss Vance as early as possible.

By an accident both Mr. Cohen and Mr. Lloyd have this week written on the same subject. But as they treat it from different standpoints we let both articles appear. Some readers will probably be pleased for once in a way with the comparative study thus afforded.

Evil Communications.

THE analogy is often drawn not only between the moral teachings of Buddhism and Christianity, but also the subsequent departure of each from their primitive purity, and the corruptions which both systems suffered in the course of their historic development. But such an analogy requires to be received with a good deal of caution; and a consideration of the influences which have evilly affected the degenerate forms of Buddhism, and brought about its ecclesiastical degradation, would seem to show that Christianity itself is not altogether free from blame in the matter. The circumstances upon which this comparison is founded may best be exhibited in the words of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. In the article upon "Buddhism," in reference to Tibet, it says:—

"Lamaism, with its shaven priests, its bells and rosaries, its images and holy water, its popes and bishops, its abbots and monks of many grades, its processions and its feast days, its confessional and purgatory, and its worship of the Double Virgin so strongly resemble Romanism, that the first Catholic missionaries thought it must be an imitation by the devil of the religion of Christ."

This resemblance between the Lamaic religious constitution and Roman Catholicism, so striking in its details, would indeed be a marvellous coincidence if its corrupt development had occurred quite independently, and uninfluenced by "evil communications." The following considerations, however, will make it apparent that there was a considerable amount of truth in the surmise of the Catholic missionaries.

In the first place, the country had been in touch with Christianity from an early period. Readers of Dr. Draper's *Conflict* will be acquainted with the dispute between Bishop Cyril, who was the murderer of Hypatia, and Bishop Nestor of Constantinople, and the defeat and persecution of the latter Bishop and his followers. With that vitality which persecution invariably engenders, his adherents had spread themselves over good part of Asia, zealously advocating their particular tenets and form of religion. It is known that these Nestorian Christians, who at one period outnumbered the whole of all the other sections of Christianity, had ecclesiastical settlements in Tartary before the faith of the Buddha found its way as far north as Tibet.

Buddhism, in the form known as the Great Vehicle, already much corrupted by Sivaism, a mixture of witchcraft and Hindu philosophy, was not introduced into that country till the seventh or eighth century of our era. The monastic communal life of the religious order must have established itself on very firm ground, and the monkhood, in the following centuries, gradually obtained influence and power, as by the thirteenth century we find the abbots of the monasteries struggling for supremacy with the independent chiefs who possessed the country. The title of Lama, which signifies a priest, was first bestowed on the head of the religion by the grandson of the first conqueror, Tchingkis Khan.

In a note at the end of the third edition of Father Sangermano's *History of the Burmese Empire*, Mr. Jardine tells us that Abel Remusat, the celebrated Orientalist, has made us acquainted in his memoir with a valuable fragment preserved in the *Japanese Encyclopædia*, which contains the true history of the Lamaic hierarchy. And the account given by this scholar, he says, of the Lamaic dynasty accords perfectly with another interesting document, brought to light, and translated into Russian by F. Hyacinth Pitchourinsky in 1828, and from Russian into French by M. Julius Klaproth, in the following year. From these we learn that Italian and French emissaries visited the court of the Khans charged with important missions from the Pope and St. Lewis, who carried with them church ornaments and altars to attempt a favorable impression on the minds of the natives. For this end they celebrated their worship

in the presence of the Tartar princes, by whom they were permitted to erect chapels within the precincts of the royal palaces. An Italian Archbishop, sent by Clement V., established his see in the capital, and erected a chapel to which the faithful were summoned by the sound of three bells, and where they beheld painted edifying representations.

Nothing was easier than to induce many of the various sects, which crowded the Mongol court, to admire and adopt the rites of the new religion. Some members of the imperial house secretly embraced Christianity, many mingled its practices with the profession of their own creeds, and Europe was alternately elated and disappointed by reports of imperial conversions and discoveries of their falsehood. Surrounded by the celebration of such ceremonies, hearing from the ambassadors and missionaries of the West accounts of the worship and hierarchy of their countries, it is no wonder that the religion of the Lamas, just beginning to assume splendor and pomp, should have adopted institutions and practices already familiar to them, and already admired by those whom they wished to gain. The coincidence of time and place, and the previous non-existence of that sacred monarchy—for it has been well shown by Fischer that no writer anterior to the thirteenth century gives a hint of this system—amply demonstrate that the religion of Tibet is but an imitation of Christianity. It is no less probable, or rather certain, says Mr. Jardine, that the inferior branches of the same religion either copied these institutions from Tibet or received them directly in the same manner.

Thus we see that the very worst features of this corrupt form of Buddhism have actually been borrowed from a sister religion more degraded than itself. The reader should, of course, bear in mind that the Great Vehicle—i.e., northern Buddhism—is a vastly different system from that obtaining in Burma, Siam, and Ceylon, and to which we recently referred in a note on the Buddhist priesthood. Indeed, the *Encyclopædia Britannica* says of the northern section that, while holding fast to the real foundation of Buddhism, its ethical views of self-conquest and charity, it has, in fact, developed an entirely new religion. And this new religion—the doctrinal development being followed by a development in ecclesiastical government—also resembled its Western sister in general moral and social results. Says the authority just quoted: "That the resemblance is not in externals only is shown by the present state of Tibet—the oppression of all thought, the idleness and corruption of the monks, the despotism of the Government, and the poverty and beggary of the people." The few travellers who have been able to enter the country uniformly testify that the slum alleys of the sacred city of Lhasa are "indescribably filthy, and the jostling crowd of persistent beggars probably not to be rivalled anywhere in the Eastern world." Sacredness and Filth! Such is the refining and elevating effects resulting from contact with a "divine" religion. The "ethical views of self-conquest and charity," the real foundation of Buddhism, are virtues all its own; the ecclesiastical vices, as seen in the system in vogue in Tibet, are largely those of Christianity.

JOSEPH BRYCE.

Persecution!

OR

The Attempt to Suppress Freedom of Speech in Chicago.

[We have great pleasure in reprinting for English Free-thought readers this splendid and noble protest of Mr. Mangasarian's against religious persecution in Chicago. This will be far better than "noticing" it in our columns. It shall speak entirely for itself.—EDITOR, "FREETHINKER."]

I INTEND to take for my text the resolution of the managers of the Orchestral Association to evict us from this hall, in which for the past five years our Society has held its Sunday morning meetings, to

present to this audience a study of religious persecution in Chicago in the twentieth century. As I do not wish to build on hearsay or mere gossip, my first duty will be to "make good" my text, which I shall do by briefly reciting the *species facti*—the facts in the case. Is it really true that the directors of this public hall, built by general subscription, and built as a secular hall, for musical, dramatic, and educational purposes—and not as a church or a synagogue—have actually passed a resolution denying its further use to this Society? We have in our possession an official communication from the Orchestral Association to that effect. It reads:—

"The trustees of the Orchestral Association have decided to use Orchestra Hall for other purposes Sundays of next season and I shall be unable therefore to renew the lease of the Independent Religious Society."

In reply to this notice, which is signed by the secretary of the Orchestral Association, the Independent Religious Society pleaded with the trustees to reconsider their resolution, which brought from them a second communication, as follows:—

"The trustees have decided not to reconsider the question."

Thus, it will be seen that on the expiration of our lease on the last day of May of the present year, Orchestra Hall will no longer be available for the purposes of Rationalism.

That point being disposed of, the next question is: What prompted the board of directors of the Orchestral Association to take this action against the Independent Religious Society? A landlord may have many valid reasons for refusing to renew a lease with a former tenant. But if the question is one of more rent, the tenant who has paid his rent punctually, and has been an occupant of the premises for many years, is entitled, unless there are objections to him on other grounds, to, at least, an equal chance with any prospective tenant to bid for the lease of the property. I doubt whether there is a high-class business man in any city who will close a deal with a new applicant for his property over the head of an old and tried tenant, without first proposing to the latter the terms he is willing to accept from the former. Unless, of course, as I intimated, there are ulterior reasons which make the old tenant undesirable at any price. It will also be admitted that there is not a merchant or a banker who, upon learning that the offices or the store for which he has been paying rent promptly for a number of years has been rented to someone else without any notice of him whatsoever, will not characterise such treatment as extraordinary and unbusiness-like. If then, it is the prevailing custom—a custom approved of by the best people in the business world—to respect the rights of an old tenant, what shall we think of the landlords of Orchestra Hall, who, after receiving rent from us for five years, refuse us even the courtesy to tell us definitely why this hall is no longer available for our purposes? They have not asked us for more rent. We have offered to pay as much as any other tenant is willing to pay. Under these circumstances, their refusal to accept our bid, and their resolution to hand the hall over to our competitors, can only mean one thing: They are not disposed to be fair to us.

In the meantime, we were entitled to some consideration from the directors of this hall. When Orchestra Hall was first opened to the public, there was a great deal of adverse criticism its managers had to contend with. The acoustics were very defective; the ventilation was poor; the ascent to the balconies and galleries was so steep that people preferred to go away rather than accept the accommodations they offered. There was also a report that the hall was not adapted for speaking purposes, having been built primarily for orchestral music. There was still another report, I do not know to what extent it can be corroborated by the facts—a report that Theodore Thomas was so disappointed in the hall which was built for his Orchestra, that he worried himself sick over it—a sickness from which, unfortunately, he did not recover. The Independent

Religious Society took the hall by the year, when the hall had neither friends nor reputation—when it was still in the experimental stage, needing many repairs and changes, and when its great organ was still incomplete. We were the first people to use the hall for speaking purposes, and it was three or four years later that the Sunday Evening Club, following our example, began holding services here.

The Independent Religious Society helped the Orchestral Association to overcome the popular prejudice against the hall, and gave the managers an opportunity to make improvements. I remember very well that the first Sunday I spoke in this hall more than one-half of my audience complained that they could not hear me. The acoustics were, indeed, so imperfect, that we ran the risk of losing our audience by remaining in Orchestra Hall. We suggested changes, and made experiments by way of bettering the conditions at Orchestra Hall, and finally succeeded, with the co-operation of the management, in overcoming these difficulties. Being, as I said, the first to use the hall Sundays for public purposes, we were instrumental in bringing, if I may use a commercial term, a great deal of business to the association. Besides, we have advertised the hall extensively. Every Sunday, on the 3,000 programs we issue, and in all our publications of lectures and books, Orchestra Hall is announced. These considerations entitled us to a more reasonable treatment than we have received.

As it is not for more rent that we are being put out of the hall, the trustees should admit frankly that it is for our religious views. Why do they not? They are afraid. To strike openly at one of the fundamental institutions of this country—namely, the liberty of teaching—requires a boldness which they lack. They realise that the spirit of the age is squarely against such discrimination or class legislation. They feel also that they are dishonoring a great country, America,—born of the brain and fed from the breast of a Washington, a Jefferson, a Benjamin Franklin, a Thomas Paine—and its more recent representative, Abraham Lincoln—not one of whom was a communicant or a member of any church, and not one of whom but would frown upon anything that smacks of persecution. The directors of the Orchestral Association have preferred to be the hireling of the priest—Catholic or Protestant—the priest of a cult imported from Asia, rather than to be Americans, worthy of their great ancestors, whose names I have just mentioned. The real objection to us, then, is not that we do not pay enough rent, but that we do not profess the same faith. Religion, not money, is the reason for our eviction from this hall, but they are afraid and ashamed to own it.

The two or three trustees who, according to report, moved, seconded, and carried the motion to put us out of these premises, have admitted that our "religious views are not satisfactory to the established churches." The inference being that the established churches had made up their minds to punish us for not agreeing with them theologically. These same directors, later, changed their explanation, and declared that it was for "business reasons" that a new tenant was desired. Yet the case is quite clear. It needs no interpretation. I am not going to base my remarks upon rumors; the inner story is made manifest by the facts: We have had this hall for five years; we are in possession of it now for Sunday morning lectures; we are willing to pay as much rent for it as our competitors; what are the business reasons which make our eviction from this hall imperative? It appears that when Orchestra Hall was being built some of the contributors demanded, and secured, a promise from the managers not to allow the Theodore Thomas Orchestra to give public recitals on Sundays. These pious contributors, while they were interested in music, were more interested in the Sabbath. According to this understanding, no orchestral music is permitted in the hall on Sundays. We learn that the Association's recent appeal for funds with which to wipe out its in-

debtedness, gave the pious contributors an opportunity to impose a second embargo upon the management of this hall, by demanding that in addition to the prohibition against orchestral music on Sundays, the trustees shall adopt measures to suppress also the Independent Religious Society. If this is done, and Orchestra Hall is redeemed from the stigma of our blasphemies, the amount needed to cancel the mortgage on the building will be forthcoming. The trustees of this building, having bowed down to these contributors once, bowed down to them a second time, and this time much lower. They sold their consciences, and also the hall, to the friends of the Asiatic Sabbath and the enemies of America—for if America means anything it means liberty.

Has this society any grounds for legal proceedings against the three or four directors who are the authors of this objectionable piece of business? There is a difference of opinion about that. But after much deliberation in my own mind, I have concluded, speaking for myself alone, of course, that I would rather appeal to the American people—the court of public opinion—than go to law about it. In the cause of Rationalism, the pen is a more effective weapon than either the law or the sword. I am a jealous man, and I do not wish legal or physical measures to share with reason the credit for the progress of our cause. Let not our movement be under any obligations to the courts, to custom—to the throne, or to violence of any description. Of course, I do not believe in turning also the other cheek. I am not a convert to the doctrine of non-resistance. I am a soldier, and I carry a sword. But my sword is the pen. Blood flows from the sword; light from the pen. When a few months ago the elevated railway authorities in Chicago covered our advertisements to please their Catholic patrons, perhaps we should have gone to law about it; and perhaps again in the present instance, when three or four men, to please the fanatics, who are alarmed about their creeds, close a hall against a large organisation like ours, we should invoke the arm of the law. But a victory gained in the courts cannot help our cause, which is the cause of enlightenment, as a victory gained at the bar of public opinion. The latter victory requires more time, but when it arrives it is final.

To prevent Theodore Parker from speaking in Boston, some seventy-five years ago, even the Unitarians closed their chapels against him. The preachers asked God in public to put a hook in Parker's tongue that he might not utter blasphemies. Parker did not go to law about it. A few business men in Boston who believed in fair play, and who were the very opposite in courage and character to the trustees of this hall, met in a hotel and passed the following resolution. I want you to compare it with the resolution of the Orchestral Association. The resolution of the Boston business men reads:—

“Resolved, that Theodore Parker shall have a chance to be heard in Boston.”

You may search in the Old South Church in Boston, to-day, or in its magnificent library, but you will not find anywhere a prouder document. It is one of the assets of our American civilisation, and to-day, while the churches which slammed their doors in Parker's face, and the landlords who refused their halls to him, and the “holy” men of God, who cursed him in their pulpits, are ashamed of themselves and their religion, all the world is proud of that group of business men who defended freedom of speech against the cohorts of fear and fanaticism. That is the kind of victory that tells.

In making a diagnosis of the disease known as persecution, we find that the persecutor never admits that he is persecuting. Even when, as in former times, he is frying or roasting his neighbor in the fire, he protests that he is only loving him. That is one of the symptoms of the disease. While the persecutor is engaged in the act of stretching his victim on the rack, he is addressing him in the gentlest, kindest, and softest language conceivable. He is torturing his neighbor for the love of God, and not for any “business reasons.” The persecutor

never looks more like a saint than when he is playing the Devil's part. In religion this is called piety; in the secular world, it goes by the name of diplomacy. When a king is most active in preparation for war, he is sure to be loudest in his praise of peace. Monopolists pose as public benefactors when they are most aggressive in the violation of the laws. In the same way, religions are never so eloquent in their professions of tolerance as when they are most unrelenting against the alien in faith. To illustrate this, let us consider for a moment the attitude of the Catholic Church toward our democratic institutions. To hear the American priests speak, one would infer that they regarded democratic institutions as almost divine. But the truth is that Rome has damned democracy again and again, and if it had the power to-day it would gird with the sword another Napoleon III. in France, and install an American Napoleon, if one could be found, in Washington. I am willing to accept the challenge of any man to prove that, to Roman Catholicism, which claims to be the mother and protectress of free institutions, *liberty* is the forbidden fruit. But the Protestants are not behind the Catholics in affecting devotion to free institutions, which, I am sorry to say, is equally counterfeited. The Protestant directors of Orchestra Hall no more believe in free institutions than do the priests of the Catholic Church. They only profess to believe in liberty. Neither Protestants nor Catholics really believe in liberty.

They do not believe in liberty because they do not need it. Give a Catholic religious liberty, and what will he do with it? Give a Protestant liberty, and what can he do with it? What can a man, who holds in his hand the infallible word of God, do with liberty? How is he going to use it? Is he going to use his liberty to improve, or correct, or change, or suppress, or add to, or differ from, or protest against, the infallible word of his Maker? Is he going to use his liberty to produce a Bible of his own? Is he going to use his liberty to investigate the Deity? Neither Protestants nor Catholics need liberty; and, not needing it for themselves, they are the last persons in the world to go to any trouble to secure it for you.

It is equally true that people who do not need liberty do not want the truth. Indeed, people who have no liberty cannot have the truth. And it is as evident as a mathematical demonstration that people who do not want the truth for themselves have no respect for, or sympathy with, those to whom the pursuit of truth is a great happiness. To illustrate my thought: Suppose we wished to know how many seats there were in this hall. The only way to find out would be to count them. But if we are not allowed to count the seats, the inevitable inference would be that the truth about the capacity of this hall is not wanted. It is impossible to wriggle out of that conclusion. If the churches desired the truth about the Bible, why do they not let us discuss it freely and without fear of heresy trials and excommunications? They do not want us to know the truth about the Bible. A moment's reflection, as you see, tears the mask from the faces of these professors of freedom of thought and speech! Reason, the great unmasker, is after them, and they are alarmed. Both Catholics and Protestants take the holy name of liberty in vain.

(To be continued.)

Shilling Month.

Easter Eggs for Freethought.

FOURTH LIST OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

(The Figures mean the number of Shillings.)

E. B., 10; Cheltona, 2; Haughley Saint, 1; R. Davies, 5; G. S., 2; H. W. Parsons, 10; Joe, 2½; W. J. Parnall, 2; N. Fletcher, 1; Amy, 1; Four Dane Hill Freethinkers, 4; A. Galpin, 5; W. J. Conroy, 1; G. J. Finch, 5; F. J. Short, 1; T. H. Mosley, 2; W. R. Britton, 5; John Foot, 21; W. Turner, 4; P. Q., 20; H. B. Dodds, 2; A. G. R., 1; J. Hibbott, 1; R. Wilson, 5; F. Wykes, 1. *Per Miss Vance*:—J. Lucas, 2s. 6d.; H. St. J. Jewell, 10s.; J. Halliwell, 5s. 1s.; J. Wilson, 2s. 6d.; Miss H. Baker, 1s.

Morality and Necessity.

BY G. W. FOOTE.

(Part of a Speech in a Public Debate.)

A WORD as to our criterion of morality. Dr. McCann wants to know how we are to apply the criterion. Like you do every other criterion, by the exercise of intelligence and common-sense. You may make mistakes in applying it. That is no fault of the criterion. You may make mistakes in the scientific laboratory, but that says nothing against the rules of research. It is your own ignorance and clumsiness. Society does not know everything to-day, but if you have a criterion you can go on applying it, and in the long run you can find out what is right and what is wrong. Of course, we do not begin every action afresh, any more than when we sit down to dinner we have to study *de novo* whether every article is nutritious or poisonous. The experience of previous generations, as well as our own, has taught us many things. Murder, theft, adultery, lying, and many other actions have been discovered to be wrong. There is no need to argue about them now. We take for granted what reason and experience have settled. We take it for granted just as we do the truths of the multiplication table. The great laws of morality are obvious to the commonest intelligence, and starting from these certitudes we proceed with fresh experience and study that brings us new truths. (Applause.)

I know something of matter; so does Dr. McCann. I know nothing of spirit, and I think he knows as little. (Cheers and laughter.) It appears to me that I am more likely to be a product of the known than a product of the unknown. (Hear, hear.) Dr. McCann may, of course, entertain a different opinion. He may prefer springing from the unknown, and I decidedly think that some of his arguments to-night have sprung from that source. (Cheers and laughter.) It is a condition of morality, says Dr. McCann, that an action should be praiseworthy or blameworthy. But no one in the world ever disputed it. (A voice, "Certainly not.") Is there any need to insist on truisms? Is there any need to emphasise what nobody thinks of contradicting? I know that actions are praiseworthy or blameworthy, but the question between us is, Why are they praiseworthy or why are they blameworthy? (Hear, hear.) If the doctrine which Dr. McCann calls necessity—but which I prefer to call causation—is incompatible with morality, I must say that, according to history, three-fourths of the Christian teachers, from St. Augustine to Luther and Calvin, have all held doctrines incompatible with morality. (Hear, hear) The dogma of free will was never taught until men declared that there was an all-good God and at the same time all-powerful, and thus found themselves face to face with the problem of evil. In order to save the omnipotence of God on the one side, and his omniscience on the other, they promulgated the doctrine that man had a free will, that all the evil in the world was the result of his own voluntary action, and not ascribable to the God who made him. Suppose we take some of these great Christian philosophers—if Dr. McCann will pardon me for applying such a term to them—(laughter.) I will take as a typical one Martin Luther, because I hold that on the whole he is the most representative theologian Protestantism has produced—and, of course, Dr. McCann belongs to the Protestant side of the happy Christian family. (Laughter.) Said Luther: "The human will is like a beast of burden. If God mounts it, it wishes and goes as God wills. If Satan mounts it, it wishes and goes as Satan wills. Nor can it choose the rider it would prefer, or betake itself to him, but it is the riders who contend for its possession." There is free will for you. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) I need not say that John Calvin did not teach free will. Jonathan Edwards, the greatest theologian that America has produced expounded and illustrated the doctrine of causation in morality as clearly and as powerfully as any man in the world ever did. The great consensus of authorities on Dr. McCann's side is against free will, and in favor of moral causation. Yet, he stands here to-night with that historical fact behind him, and tells us that the doctrine of necessity is incompatible with morality. Then so much the worse for the Church that has maintained, through so many centuries, by so many able teachers, the doctrine which Dr. McCann now reprobates.

Dr. McCann appears to forget one thing, and that is the very theory he is combating. He might have remembered the story of the schoolboy and the Calvinistic master. The boy was about to be flogged when he said, "Sir, it is wrong to flog me, it was all predestined, I could not help it." "Right, my boy," said the master, "and I was predestined to flog you—(laughter)—and the next time you are about to do the same thing you will remember the flogging, and you won't do it." You see it cuts two ways. (Laughter.)

Is a man, says Dr. McCann, free or not? I will answer that question when you tell me what you mean by free. Free means many things. (Hear, hear.) According to some persons I was a free man when I was in Holloway Gaol. (Laughter.) I did not think so. (Laughter.) But there is a difference of opinion on the matter, and clearly therefore we are not all agreed as to what free means. There is physical freedom, there is intellectual freedom, and there is moral freedom; and so far as these words have any meaning to me I will tell you what the meaning is. Physical freedom, as applied to a man, is the freedom of his body. A man is not physically free if his motor nerves are paralysed. A man is not physically free when chained or locked up by his fellow-men. A man is intellectually free when he consciously thinks with freedom upon all subjects presented to him. I do not hold that an orthodox person is a Freethinker, as he sometimes pretends, simply because you cannot prevent him from thinking as he thinks. He has been taught from his earliest childhood that if he faces evidence in certain directions it will lead him to conclusions for which he will be punished; consequently he shirks the evidence, although if he faced it he could not resist the conclusions. (Hear, hear.) When is a man morally free? He is morally free when he acts according to his own nature without restraint. (Hear, hear.) That is the only sense I can attach to the word. If a man acted as Dr. McCann thinks, in some incalculable way, if he were not subject to moral causation, you could not discern your friends or foes from day to day. A man who acted honorably yesterday might be a rascal to-morrow, and the man who acted as a rascal yesterday might be an honorable man to-morrow. Fortunately such a chaos does not exist. When an external motive acts upon an organism, and the two co-operate to produce a volition, you know that that act is the inevitable result of that motive at that strength operating upon his character—(hear, hear)—and you know very well that he will do the same thing again under the same circumstances as long as he lives. "You have betrayed me," says a man, "and I never trust you more"; or, as Othello says to Cassio, "I love you, but never more be officer of mine." If a man lies to you deliberately, you cannot trust him again. If a man deceives you deliberately, you cannot place confidence in him again. You may talk about it, and pretend confidence, but you will not stake anything upon it, and that is the real test of the state of your mind. (Hear, hear.)

Now let us work out this notion of moral causation with these ideas of moral freedom. Has a man no power of selection? It depends upon what you mean by selection. If you mean, Is it possible for a man to act in opposite ways at any given moment? I say no. Given a man's character, and given certain motives operating upon him, and I say he can and will only act in one way. A man leaves his work and says, "I am a free agent, I can either take a walk, go to the club, go to the theatre, go outside the city altogether and wander at large, or go home and sit with my wife." Now what does he mean by this? He means at bottom that either of these actions is possible if he wills to do it. (Cheers.) But the question is, which does he will to do, and why does he will to do it? (Hear, hear.) He might go to the theatre, he might go to the club, he might go for a walk, or he might go home to his wife: but the action which expresses his volition will in each case depend upon the motive which proves itself the strongest, and defeats the others in the conflict of motives. (Hear, hear.) Now let me show, as a Necessitarian, as a moral Causationist, as a Secularist, that this very truth has a great promise for us. Instead of wasting our time in savage indignation with those who have gone wrong; instead of wasting our time in regrets which are infinitely vain—for if wishing forward is stupid, wishing backward is the height of imbecility—when we get hold of criminals now, we do not torture them as we used to do. Given their moral constitution, their bad training, and the whole circumstances that preceded and accompanied their career of crime, what they are is the inevitable result. Consequently the tendency of all our criminal legislation now—slow, I admit, but sure—is to reform the criminal instead of degrading him. (Hear, hear.) And what does that mean? It means stimulating those latent faculties in the man which have been as though dead during his life outside prison.

Men deceive themselves in this, that they think themselves free. Now, in what consists such opinion? Solely in this, that they are conscious of their actions, and ignore the causes that determine them. The idea that men have of their liberty comes, then, from this, that they know not the cause of their actions, for to say that these depend on the will is to use words to which no meaning is attached.—*Spinoza.*

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.

SHOREDITCH TOWN HALL: 7.30, C. Cohen, "What the World Owes to Unbelief."

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 3.15, A. B. Moss, "The Old Faith and the New."

ISLINGTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Highbury Corner): 12 (noon), Walter Bradford, a Discussion. Finsbury Park: 3.30, Walter Bradford and Sidney Cook.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford): 7, W. Davidson, "The Last Ditch."

WOOD GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Spouters' Corner): 11.30, N. J. Evans, "A Fallible Bible." The Green, Enfield: 6.30, N. J. Evans, "A Fallible Bible."

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12 (noon), Class; 6.30, Miss Kerry, "Eugenics and Race Culture."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, C. Wilson, "Topics of the Week."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, W. A. Rogerson, "Truth versus Falsehood: a Challenge to Christianity."

NOTTINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Cobden Hall, Peachey-street): 7.30, J. Coates, "Nietzsche: the Man and his Philosophy."

OUTDOOR.

HUDDERSFIELD BRANCH N. S. S. (Market Cross): 8, G. T. Whitehead, "Christianity and Progress." Saturday, at 8, "Suffragettes and Christianity."

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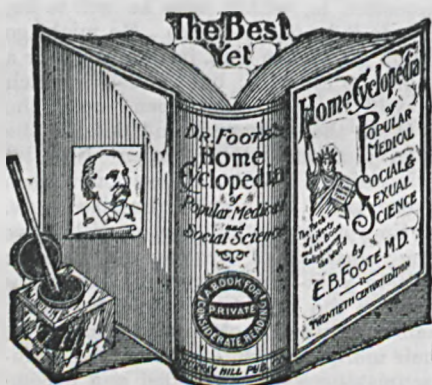
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