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Every noble life leaves the fibre of it interwoven with the work of the world.—JOHN RUSKIN.

Rational Salvation.

The Story of My Mind: or, How I Became a Rationalist. By M. M. Mangasarian. Independent Religious Society: Chicago.

MANY readers will thank Mr. Mangasarian for this little book. It is so bright, stimulating, and honest. The last quality is particularly valuable. Most persons who write about themselves suffer from over-selfconsciousness, and distort the truth, often unknowingly. Mr. Mangasarian is transparently modest and sincere. One feels that he may be trusted.

Mr. Mangasarian is to be thanked for something besides not blowing his own trumpet. He writes sound, pure English, and avoids the crowd of slang expressions to which his countrymen are too prone. Now and then a word or a phrase even lower than the vernacular is used effectively by the greatest writers, just as a bit of the language of the street may give a sudden and irresistible force to the utterance of a great orator. But such devices must be used sparingly, or they become "weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable."

We so much like and admire Mr. Mangasarian's style, and respect his general accuracy, that we may be forgiven for pointing out a few slips. Every writer is liable to them; and one does a writer an honor by taking the trouble to point them out. "Give a reason for the faith that is in you" is a common misquotation. The original is not "faith" but "hope," which is a very different thing. "Dependable" is a bastard word, like "reliable," which Coleridge long ago observed should be "rely-on-able,"—a perfectly impossible locution. Then again, it was Wordsworth, not Shakespeare, who sang of "the weary weight of all this unintelligible world." Finally, the Ingersoll "crutch" story, which Mr. Mangasarian treats as if it were true, is a mere fabrication. It was originally told of Ingersoll and Beecher, and was publicly contradicted by both of them.

Mr. Mangasarian will doubtless correct these few mistakes in the second edition. When he has done that his little book will be about perfect.

The charming dedication of this volume is to Mr. Mangasarian's "dear children." Now that they are old enough he tells them fully how, having been brought up as a Calvinist, he became a Rationalist. In doing so he pays a beautiful tribute to their mother:—

> "I wish you also to know that during those years of storm and stress, when everything seemed so discouraging, and when my resignation from the church had left us exposed to many privations,—without money and without help, your mother's sympathy with me in my combat with the church—a lone man, and a mere youth, battling with the most powerfully intrenched institution in all the world, was more than my daily bread to me during the pain and travail of my second birth. My spirits, often depressed from sheer weariness, were nursed to new life and ardor by her patience and sympathy."

There is another personal passage in this mental autobiography, in which Mr. Mangasarian writes of his own mother:—

> "My dear mother is still living, and is still a devout member of the Congregational church. I have not concealed my Rationalism from her, nor have I tried to make light of the change which has separated us radically in the matter of religion. Needless to say that my withdrawal from the Christian ministry, and the Christian religion, was a painful disappointment to her. But like all loving mothers, she hopes and prays that I may return to the faith she still holds, and in which I was baptised. It is only natural that she should do so. At her age of life, beliefs have become so crystallised that they cannot yield to new impressions. When my mother had convictions I was but a child, and therefore I was like clay in her hands, but now that I can think for myself my mother is too far advanced in years for me to try to influence her. She was more successful with me than I shall ever be with her."

What a commentary are these eloquent passages on the Christian theory that "infidels" are devoid of natural feelings! A theory which still holds its ground in the orthodox field, in spite of that lovely tribute of Renan's to his sister, and that still lovelier tribute of Michelet's to his mother,—a tribute written not in ink but in tears and blood.

Mr. Mangasarian gives a vivid and fascinating account of his religious experience. He was predevoted in his youth to the Christian ministry. This injured him in many ways. "Among other things," he says, "it robbed me of my childhood." He spent time in praying that ought to have been spent in playing. At the age of eight years he was invited to lead the congregation in prayer. Having finished at college he went to Princeton Theological Seminary. At the age of twenty-three he became pastor of the Spring Garden Presbyterian Church, of Philadelphia. Emerson and Theodore Parker presently unsettled his Presbyterian faith. He renounced Calvinism, but was pressed to retain his pulpit, which he is glad he did not do. He would have been merely a "preacher of ambiguities" or polite falsehoods. "From such a career of duplicity and arrested growth," he says, "I was saved by a fortunate decision on my part to give up Presbyterian property as well as the Presbyterian creed." A large part of his congregation followed him into St. George's Hall, but fresh trouble arose there. He was free to criticise John Calvin, but not free to criticise Jesus Christ. His friends clung pathetically to the term Christian. Mr. Mangasarian says he was very nearly swamped by the temptation to exalt Jesus as "a perfect moral teacher beyond all others the world had ever seen" in order to "soften a little the pain of losing Jesus the God." Unitarians offered him a pulpit, but his intellect put a straightforward question:—

> "If I could 'settle down' in Unitarianism, why did I leave the Presbyterian church? The difference between them is after all a difference of quantity. The Presbyterians believe more than the Unitarians, and while the Bible is inspired from cover to cover for the former, the latter believe only in the authority of certain portions of the book. Ernest Renan told the Protestants that they did not have sufficient reason for leaving the Catholic church. 'But we could not believe in the mass,' replied the Protestants. 'If you believe in the virgin birth and the resurrection of the flesh, what but a whim could prevent you from believing also in transubstantiation,' argued Renan. We can say the same of Unitarianism.

> If it can believe in parts of the Bible as 'inspired,' or if it can accept the unity of God, or the 'Lordship of Jesus,' why not believe a little more? If it drops one dogma on grounds of reason, it must drop all, and if it can accept one dogma, the 'Lordship of Jesus,' for example, on faith, why not also the Trinity? If God exists, he could be in three or more parts quite as easily as in one."

Spiritualism whispered seductively in his ear, but he was proof against its fascination. His intellect again would not let him rest in anything short of the assurance of truth. Mr. Mangasarian declares that "eternal life" is an inconceivability. "We do not affirm," he says, "nor do we deny, the inconceivable. The question of hereafter is still an open one. There is no reason why people should not speculate about it. We may even hope that to-morrow's science will throw more light upon this interesting problem, but to-day all we know about eternal life is that we do not know anything about it."

Mr. Mangasarian passed on logically to Atheism. He left the God idea far behind him. Joining the Ethical Movement, he worked in it for ten years, until he could stand it no longer. It had developed such "reactionary tendencies." Dr. Adler in America seems a fair match for Mr. Stanton Coit in England. Mr. Mangasarian is differently built. He has an honest intellect as well as an honest character. So he left the Ethical Movement and organised the Independent Religious Society (Rationalist) at Chicago, in whose service he has spent the ten happiest years of his life. The Society pay him a salary to express his real thoughts to them; they respect his independence, and he respects their intelligence by telling them what he deems the truth. The relationship is honorable to both sides. How free Mr. Mangasarian is may be perceived from the following Atheistic declaration, which is on the same lines that we have always pursued in the *Freethinker*:—

> "There have been those who have helped man to political liberty, and others who are nobly endeavoring to help him conquer industrial liberty; but not until man has thrown off the yoke of the gods can he be free indeed. The last king to be dethroned is the heavenly king. If he stays, Tzar and Kaiser, tyrant and despot, pope and priest, in some form or other, will remain with us. Here and there men may succeed in banishing or overthrowing the tyrant,—king or priest, but these will come back again and again, perhaps disguised, but ever really the same, until God from whom they derive their power is unseated, and man becomes forever free. Honor to those who taught us not to kneel before Cæsar, but greater honor to him who shall teach us not to kneel at all, and to accept nothing that is given to us for kneeling."

In reply to the timid or sleepy Ethicists, the "respectable" Agnostics, and all "unbelievers" who object to the war of ideas, Mr. Mangasarian argues that construction is impossible without destruction; nay, that destruction and construction are parts of one process. "The new edifice," he exclaims, "cannot rise side by side with the old—it must rise on the ruins of the old." This is what shallow people don't see and cowardly people won't see. We have often pressed it on the attention of our own superfine critics. In thickly peopled places you cannot build without first pulling down. Christian institutions occupy the ground. We don't want to build *de novo* in distant and desolate parts of the world; we want to build here in our own country; and we are obliged to follow the law of improved buildings in great cities.

We could say much more about Mr. Mangasarian's delightful volume, but our space is coming to an end. We wish it could be read extensively in England. It would do much good in many ways. We hope to be able to announce before long that it is available to English readers. It would have been brought before their attention before had it not been for our recent illness.

G. W. FOOTE.

Deceit and Evolution.

A NORTH-COUNTRY reader of the *Freethinker* sends me an interesting problem in psychological ethics, with a request that I would attempt its solution. He has been looking round, and has discovered that between actual facts and many of our copy-book moralities there is a wide divergence. Liars often prosper, dishonest men make their way in the world, self-advertising and egotistical persons are taken at their own valuation, the wicked flourish like a green bay-tree. In particular he notes the part played in life by deceit. He points out that in the plant world plants deceive insects by their markings or colors, and owe their life to the deception. Animals illustrate the same principle, and savage man captures animals by a number of deceitful methods. With advancing civilisation he sees greater opportunities for deceit in warfare, in social and in business life, and those who practice deceit often survive, while those who do not as often go under. And so my correspondent concludes that in the evolution of the race deceit has a certain value, and it would seem as though—deceit being an exercise of the intelligence—that races survive as they practice deceit in a more or less successful manner. A conclusion not quite in accord with our copy-books.

Well, what is the meaning of it all? Is it, as my correspondent thinks, that the struggle for existence places so much emphasis on the principle of deceit that its expression becomes a sign of increased development? From one point of view, a plausible case might be made out for this position. Putting on one side the unconscious deception involved in animal markings and coloration, it must be admitted that the deceptions practised by man on the animal world is at least an expression of superior intelligence. So, also, if we take warfare under either savage or civilised conditions. We have feints and ambushes, ships and guns colored and men dressed so as to deceive the eye, and the circulation of misleading intelligence to deceive the enemy. Here we have two rival bodies of men playing a game, the rules of which are understood by both, and, other things being equal, a superiority at the game is evidenced by the winner. In commerce, the rule of selling dear and buying cheap means, in practice, deluding the seller into the belief that the market is not so favorable as is actually the case, or persuading the buyer that the article for sale is better or of greater value than it really is. The wheels of social intercourse, it might also be argued, are lubricated by a number of petty deceptions. We pretend we are pleased or grieved when we are neither one nor the other. We hide our anger or conceal our opinions, and practice a hundred and one petty tricks by means of which social life runs more agreeably.

Now the first comment one has to make upon all these facts is that, despite them, the essential basis of all social life is mutual reliability and the confidence in one another that only proved reliability can breed. This is so obvious that I need not labor the point. It is true that with the development of society the number of deceptions increase, and that these are all expressions of intelligence. A little over four centuries ago, people who published books were compelled to use good paper; they did not know how to make poor paper. In this way we may say that the fact of adulteration evidenced an increase in knowledge. But if deceptions have multiplied in some directions they have diminished in others, while the general feeling against deception has increased enormously. The deceitful person is not held up as one to be imitated, nor, in a vast number of cases, does he really admire himself. Further, it is only the confidence that each one has in other people's general honesty—a confidence that must, on the whole, be warrantable, or it would not exist—that makes deception possible or profitable. The buyer takes the seller's word concerning the article he is purchasing because it has been his

experience that, in a general way, sellers are, up to a point, trustworthy.

Secondly, the fact that A manages to deceive B does not prove that A is more intelligent than B, and that his action expresses a more advanced stage of intellectual development, or a more socially useful type of intelligence. It only represents a specialised cunning accompanied with a greater or lesser degree of moral deterioration; or, in its highest aspect, a mental trait of value in none but a special set of circumstances. The "smart" Stock Exchange operator is not of necessity the mental superior of his dupes, the jerry builder of those who purchase his houses, or the dishonest tradesman of those who buy his wares. They are merely demonstrating their superior "smartness" or cunning in a particular way, while it may well make them mentally inferior in many other directions. Indeed, they may be taken as representing, not an advanced stage of evolution, but a lower stage imposing itself on more advanced conditions.

For if we take deception in its broadest and most general aspect, the truth is reached that it is fundamentally a mode of protection adopted by the weak against the strong. Children brought up without positive fear of their parents or guardians show a far greater inclination to deceive than those who are the frequent subjects of punishment. Subject races show the same proneness to lie and deceive. People living under an absolute monarch exhibit a far greater measure of deception than those possessing self-government; while with an arbitrary power of inflicting and collecting taxes goes the inevitable concealment of personal wealth. Finally, under a military type of government, deception and cunning are the natural defences of weakness against the tyrannical exercise of brute force. Much is, of course, said about military honor and the like; and it is true that in associations for military, as for all other purposes, certain rules of the game are established and generally observed. Still, the fact remains that in a militant type of society cunning, lying, deceit, acts of treachery, and disregard of personal rights abound. In all these cases deception becomes the reply of weakness to strength, and represents the chief protection of the former against the assaults of the latter.

But the more command man acquires over natural forces, the greater the growth of intelligence; and the more elaborate and more important becomes the industrial life of society, the smaller becomes the protective value of deception and the more marked its condemnation. In the commercial world letters of credit and promises to pay are honored because the whole system would be impossible were it—except for a case here and there—otherwise. Contracts between employer and employee are carried out for the same reason. And in each direction those who are not inclined to "play the game" become marked men, and pay the penalty of the distinction. When people say that honesty in business is impossible, the reply is that business without honesty is impossible. Granted that the ethics of the business world is not that of the family circle, still it has its ethical code, which is as generally observed as are other ethical codes. Many of the deceptions in the business world instanced by my correspondent—placing large apples at the top of the barrel and small ones underneath—are only deceptions in intention, since I doubt if few are deceived in this way. And as buyers are on their guard, stooping to the trick really argues a lower order of intelligence, and not an advance. It is intelligence of an ostrich-like order. And the shopkeeper or commercial man who habitually deceives discovers that his business, instead of being of a cumulative character, tends to deceive.

Moreover the proof that deception does not represent a factor of abiding value in evolution is that by its nature it can only be practised in an intermittent manner. You cannot keep on deceiving even the dullest. It must be done occasionally, or with different persons. In this way the dice of fate are loaded in favor of the honest man; while the manner in which deceit is reprobated in politics and in general affairs is still further proof that the evolutionary emphasis is on the right side.

Unfortunately, there are two or three conditions that appear to give deceit an undue value. First, while the industrial State and the more socialised type of human nature is developing, we still have with us the militant and predatory type. And it is this predatory type of human nature, filled with the desire of gain at the expense of others, that is forced to seek satisfaction in the commercial world. Second, the religious type is still strong, and this gives a certain passing value to deception in intellectual matters. For average humanity, so long as perfect honesty of speech and action involves disabilities of one sort or another, deception will be resorted to as a means of defence by all except the few who are strong enough to face them. Here, again, as we have the truth brought out that deception is one of the means of protection adopted by the weak against a tyrannical exercise of strength. But here, as elsewhere, a more intelligent arrangement of social affairs is placing a growing value upon straightforwardness and a decreasing value upon deceit, even in its negative forms. Meanwhile, we have to recognise that in the course of human evolution, qualities that are of value in one stage of growth are not of value at other stages; and also that in the adjustment of human nature to new conditions it will happen that between certain individual natures and the necessities of the race there inevitably arises a conflict. The important point is in which direction is the general tendency of growth.

Finally, while I have taken the cases indicated by my correspondent, I might have argued the case on different grounds. I might have challenged many of the instances of people getting on by means of deceit, and denied that there was any real advantage gained. In any given transaction, who gains; the open, honest nature that is deceived, or the cunning, secretive, dishonest nature that deceives? And not the weakest part of my case would have been the fact that deception palls, sooner or later, upon those who practise it, while the man never lived whom honesty satiated. And this, not because of some supernatural or mystical quality attaching to honesty, but because man is essentially a social animal, and every violation of his social instincts carries its own Nemesis. The punishment consists not merely in the degradation of one's nature that is involved in a life of deceit and dishonesty, for it is conceivable that the degradation may be complete enough for the individual to be unconscious of it. It is in the fact that in all but rare cases the practice loses all attraction, the pursuit all interest, and the ungratified social instincts clamor for satisfaction. Man's social nature will not be denied. It demands recognition, and the whole course of social growth is to produce a growing identity between the interests of the individual and the species to which it belongs.

C. COHEN.

Is Religion an Instinct?

IT is a very curious and significant fact that there is no unanimity of opinion among the divines as to the origin and ultimate authority of religion. Some argue, with great enthusiasm, that "the soul has within it a conception of the Divine, an instinctive belief in the being of a God, and a consciousness of personal relationship to him," while others maintain, with equal cocksureness, that religion is altogether dependent on historical events and objective revelation. Others still contend that religion owes its origin to "the co-operation of what we call subjective and objective factors, the soul and its environment, the instincts of faith and the facts of history." These three classes of theologians resemble Bacon's three classes of philosophers. The first may be likened to spiders, "who make cobwebs out of their

own substance"; the second, to ants, who "only collect and use"; and the third, to the bees, who take a middle course, gathering their "material from the flowers of the garden and of the field," but transforming and digesting it by a power of their own. Freethinkers are convinced that all schools of theology are alike in total error as to the real origin and authority of religious convictions; but the object of the present article is merely to controvert the claim that man is by nature a believer in the supernatural.

In the *Christian World Pulpit* for July 6 there appeared a remarkable address, entitled "Faith and Fact: Religious Instincts Historically Justified," by the Rev. J. M. Hodgson, M.A., D.D., D Sc., given at the Sessional Anniversary of Lancashire Independent College. Dr. Hodgson is a very able man, and handles his subject in an eminently ingenious manner. His aim is to show that religion is inborn, that "men instinctively affirm and believe in the existence of a God, a Being who is the personal embodiment of their ideal of moral excellence," and that this instinct can be satisfied with nothing less than personal communion with a loving Heavenly Father. This is the central contention of Dr. Hodgson's oration; and it is highly interesting to examine the clever method by which he seeks to establish it. He opens his argument with the observation that "as finite and dependent creatures men are instinctively conscious of their need of something other than themselves in order to life and growth and well-being." This is doubtless a truth, though the present statement of it smacks of the theological motive behind it. It is an indisputable fact that men, like all the animals below them, have needs which require a certain amount of exertion for their satisfaction. The whole course of evolution, from the beginning until now, has been the direct outcome of the instinctive attempt to assuage natural cravings. Life is an instinctive struggle to supply the crying needs of the organism; and life serves no other known purpose. Dr. Hodgson admits that "men share this sense of need with all the living creatures by whom they are surrounded." William Law was quite right when he said that "the power that moves life everywhere is the power of desire." The desire for food and drink, for clothing and shelter, for comfort and rest, impels to effort to secure its fulfilment, and it is the putting forth of such effort that leads to physical growth and development. The appearance of the nervous system with the brain as its crown, created higher and subtler needs; and these needs again could only be supplied by means of the very system that gave rise to them. By what accident in the far-distant past Nature began to bestow special attention on the development of the brain-capacity of a certain Simian tribe, which resulted in the advent of the human race, we cannot tell; but it is beyond controversy that man's pre-eminence is due to his enormous power of brain, which has enabled him to thwart his enemies and gratify his natural senses and appetites by the use of his wits rather than by mere strength.

But however high we ascend in the scale of life we still continue under the dominion of natural law. Life is struggle, at whatever point or height we view it—struggle to satisfy its own needs. As an intellectual and social being, man has yearnings and aspirations and forms ideals which become his present status, and which are as natural to his mental and social life as hunger and thirst and the desire for shelter and rest are to his physical nature. As Dr. Hodgson truly says:—

> "It is good to be healthy and robust and skilful with the hands; it is better to be intelligent, educated, and possessed of well trained mental powers; but it is nobler still to be pure and kind and good; to be forgiving, to be a lover of peace, and a self-sacrificing helper of the needy. Character, in short, is the most precious and most essential thing in man; not what he has, or does, or can do, but what he is."

It is likewise true, as Dr. Hodgson adds, that "the fact that men cherish ideals implies, of course, that perfect humanity is not for them an actual attainment or possession," and that "the recognition of an ideal brings with it the sense of present incompleteness and imperfection." But what of that? If life is struggle, the loss of ideals would mean the cessation of struggle and, inevitably, of life itself. There is nothing to show that perfection is attainable, or that, if it were, it would be a good thing for humanity. Surely the sense of imperfection need not "assume for us the form of conscious unworthiness and the feeling of ill-desert." It is only in so far as he deliberately omits or neglects the struggle that a man becomes blameworthy. To call himself "a worm," "a miserable sinner," "a vile wretch," to abase himself in dust and ashes, crying "Unclean, unclean," simply because he and all others are imperfect, is at once to play the fool and the hypocrite.

At this point Dr. Hodgson goes completely and hopelessly astray. He treats the ideals which men cherish as if they were absolutely perfect, when they are only relatively so. It is well known that the ideals of different nations vary considerably, and that, like all else, they are subject to the law of evolution. The ideals which men naturally cherish necessarily concern social relationships. What Dr. Hodgson understands by "moral and spiritual cravings" is not at all clear; but, whatever they are, he assures us that they impel their possessors "to seek, in the hope of finding, some objective provision whereby those cravings may be satisfied." We hold that, for the satisfaction of all legitimate human cravings, the only reliable provision is to be found in a healthy social life. Instinctively and naturally we have no yearnings or aspirations that cannot find all reasonable satisfaction within the limits of humanity itself. But Dr. Hodgson autocratically declares that the only objective provision whereby man's cravings may be satisfied must be supplied by a personal Being who is at once infinite and absolutely perfect. Then, having asserted that men instinctively believe in the existence of such a Being, he proceeds thus:—

> "The name 'God' means for them the objective reality which answers to their highest conception of personal character and moral worth; and it is from him, and from him alone, that they feel that stimulus and power can, and will, come to further their efforts towards the realisation of their true and ideal self. Man's faith in the being of a God and his sense of dependence upon him for needed help are, in fact, as truly instinctive as is his quest for the food by which his bodily hunger may be appeased, or for the sympathy by which his social affections may be gratified. Men everywhere look with reverent dependence and grateful hope to One who in his own nature presents the supreme ideal as an actuality; and by his aid it is that they feel that they themselves may become more and more nearly conformed to that ideal. This is really what is meant by the assertion that man is by nature a religious being."

Of *faith*, Dr. Hodgson has a superabundance; but *fact* is a lamentably scarce commodity with him. He is a magnificent leaper in the dark, but a woefully blind walker along the solid paths of life in the full light of day. Does he not know, has he not heard, that no son of man has ever believed in God of his own accord, and without receiving any instruction whatsoever? Has he not known, has he not heard, hath it not been told him from the beginning, that in the entire absence of oft-repeated teaching and persuasion children grow up without a single shred of supernatural belief? Can he tell us why there are, in this country alone, as many as eleven Congregational Theological Colleges, the object of which is to manufacture young ministers and missionaries? The very existence of churches and ministers and missionaries stands up as an irrefutable evidence that the belief in God is *not* instinctive. To say that "man's faith in the being of God is as truly instinctive as his quest for the food by which his bodily hunger may be appeased," is to callously mock the truth and give facts the go-by. Dr. Hodgson has no right to mislead, in so wicked a fashion, the young people who listen to him. He

cannot help being aware that in France there are many millions of formally avowed Atheists, and that in our own land there are as many thousands; but, being aware of it, how on earth can he go on repeating the old lie that has been so often and so firmly nailed?

Faith in the being of God is in every case an *acquirement* made with difficulty and by many slow degrees, and an acquirement which, unless carefully and constantly guarded, is usually soon lost. Most middle-aged Atheists once had it in all its glory; but it was worked out of them much more easily than it had been worked in. And its vanishing was no loss, but a distinct gain. Indeed, it is not too much to affirm that "man's faith in the being of God, and his sense of dependence upon him for needed help," have acted as brakes upon the wheels of social development—have, in fact, almost entirely prevented moral progress for thousands of years. Men have relied upon, and waited for, a God that never responded, when they ought to have applied themselves to the study and solution of the many hard problems of life, relying upon themselves alone. It is utter folly to assert that, "apart from faith in the existence of a Being ideally perfect, the imperative and constraining character of the ideal which men cherish would not merely be unmeaning, but would really be unrecognised by them." That assertion sounds unspeakably absurd and nonsensical when it is well known that many of the greatest saints that ever lived were also the biggest rascals and criminals, and that the world has never seen a higher morality and greater social prosperity than those that prevailed in India, for three or four centuries, under Atheistic Buddhism. With Dr. Hodgson the wish is father to the thought, for he cannot support his contention with a single instance from history, while there are among us now living examples of the fact that the loss of God is a gain.

J. T. LLOYD.

Atlantic Waves and Ocean Foam.

Sable and Purple, by William Watson. Nash; 1910.

MR. WILLIAM WATSON is the most austere of the poets of to-day. We think of him not as we think of many poets, as men singing passionately in the guest hall, but as a white-robed ministrant to the Goddess of Liberty, burning, with a severe grace, the incense and the precious gums.

On the subject of death, indeed, Mr. Watson always writes with dignity. It is not too much to say that "Wordsworth's Grave," "The Tomb of Burns," "In Lalcham Churchyard," and "Shelley's Centenary" will be linked indissolubly with the memory of those great writers they celebrate, so penetrating is the insight into the genius of each poet. Maybe, Mr. Watson's finest effort in this direction was his "Lachrymæ Musarum," which made so notable a stir when Tennyson died. It must rank as one of the noblest poems we have had for many years. Mr. Watson handled that great theme of august death right worthily.

In the present volume Mr. Watson again writes on the subject of death; but there is a distinction with a great difference. He has chosen the death of King Edward as his theme, and cramped his poetic genius within the narrow limits of the conventional. It is a real tribute to Mr. Watson's powers to say that he is neither rhetorical nor dull. Compared with the official Laureate's crudities, Mr. Kipling's hysterics, and the tiny outbursts of loyal poetasters, the dignified dirge of Mr. Watson's is, at least, readable. Few real poets can write about contemporary royalties and remain poets. Even Tennyson did not do this thing with impunity, and his cloying compliments to the late Prince Consort and Queen Victoria represent but the excrements of his undoubted genius.

The trouble is that it is well-nigh impossible for a man to write exactly what he thinks, as a man, about English royal persons, and yet print what he writes. This makes poetry relating to English royalty possible, if improbable, and gives point to the gibe that there is less freedom in England under the rule of the Guelphs than in ancient Rome under the sceptre of the Cæsars. It was the sense of freedom that lent inspiration to the muse of Milton and Marvell when they sang of Cromwell; it was the absence of this freedom of utterance which has consigned tens of thousands of poems on royal persons to the limbo of forgotten things.

We will not labor this point; but the attentive reader will note that Mr. Watson shows to much greater advantage in the present volume when he is unfettered by his subject. In the poem entitled "In the Midst of the Seas" Mr. Watson has turned to excellent account the inspiration brought to him by a stormy voyage across the Atlantic. There is something here of direct feeling, of movement, of exuberant delight, even of passion. That is precisely what we miss in the chilly compliments to royalty. But here the energy is unmistakable:—

"Many have sung of the terrors of Storm;
I will make me a song of its beauty, its graces of hue and form;
A song of the loveliness gotten of Power,
Born of Rage in her blackest hour,
When never a wave repeats another,
But each is unlike his own twin brother,
Each is himself from base to crown,
Himself alone as he clambers up,
Himself alone as he crashes down;
When the whole sky drinks of the sea's mad cup,
And the ship is thrilled to her quivering core,
But amidst her pitching, amidst her rolling,
Amidst the clangor and boom and roar,
Is a Spirit of Beauty all-controlling!
For here in the thick of the blinding weather
The great waves gather themselves together,
Shake out their creases, compose their folds
As if each one knew that an eye beholds.
And look! there rises a shape of wonder,
A moving menace, a mount of gloom,
But the moment ere he breaks asunder
His forehead flames into sudden bloom,
A burning rapture of nameless green,
That never on earth or in heaven was seen,
Never but where the midmost ocean
Greets and embraces the tempest in primal divine emotion."

Another poem, "King Alfred," is a dialogue in blank verse between Alfred the Great and Bishop Asser, in which Alfred, after reviewing the many years' stress and battle through which he has gone, looks forward despondently to the future:—

"Yes, and at times, swept in a hurtling dream,
Again I smite the host at Ethandune,
And drive them flying before me to their hold,
With crash of battle-axe through scalp and skull,
And hewing of great limbs as boughs lopped off
When thunder hurls him on the cringing weald."

Mr. Watson himself seems to share some of Alfred's despondency. In his dispraise of New York, where, he says, people obey "some huge, voracious, hundred-headed thing armed with a million tentacles," he appears to be somewhat distrustful of the Democracy. Again, in his allegorical lyric, "The Threatened Towers," he sings in his dignified manner:—

"The ages, pondering at their toil,
Welded this stone and lime,
And no rash hands of haste shall foil
The slow, wise thoughts of Time."

We feel convinced that this is but a passing mood. We remember gratefully that Mr. Watson has, in his time, given us of his best, and that is the highest kind of poetry. He is one of the singers of the English race who has held his ear close to the movements of the modern world and brought away with him some sounding echoes of its music. We expect him to leave fulsome adulation of royalty to other writers. Mr. Alfred Austin and the editor of *Punch* can do these little things admirably. We would prefer that a real and unmistakable poet was silent than that he should stammer and stutter in such a chorus. We hope that in Mr. Watson's next volume we shall again hear, at its best and freest, that golden voice which has within it the deepest message known to the sons of men. For, in the last analysis, noble thinking means noble writing. All else is as ephemeral as ocean foam.

MIMNERMUS.

Acid Drops.

Writing last week on the Johnson-Jeffries fight, and the victory of the colored champion, Mr. Foote said: "Let us hope that Jeffries' white friends will not revenge themselves with fresh lynchings." The remark shows how well Mr. Foote understood the situation. Almost before the ink was dry on the paper he used for writing his article, the news was circulating in London of the nigger-hunt that took place in American cities to avenge Jeffries' defeat. It was a most disgusting exhibition of race hatred. We should call it a disgrace to a Christian country if we did not know something of the history of Christian countries.

The Johnson-Jeffries cinematograph pictures are being prohibited throughout the United States in order to prevent the stirring up of racial hatred. Would they have been prohibited if Jeffries had won?

"Heathen England" was the heading of a news item in the *Daily Chronicle* of July 8. But it really ought to have been "Christian England." People sometimes say "as drunk as a pig," but that is a slander on the pig. So our contemporary's heading was a slander on the heathen. The news item in question was a report of the speech by Surgeon-General Evatt the previous evening at the opening of the extension of Claremont Mission Hall, Canonbury. The speaker said he had been forty years in the Army and had been all over the world, but he had never seen so many broken down and helpless women as he had in that district of London. "Yet we talk about heathen races and savage countries," he exclaimed, "and call this God's England!" "I see women," he continued, "everywhere drinking in your pothouses. I never saw it any land as in England." "A hundred cases of cruelty to children," he went on, "in this country last year! And in India I have seen the Buddhist's children splendidly cared for, and in writing of Japan I have called it 'the land of happy children.'" At that stage the speaker should have suggested that missionaries from India and Japan ought to take the place of the English missionaries at Claremont Hall. This conclusion was so obvious! But the speaker did not see it. Perhaps he would not. What he said was really funny. "But the day is coming," he exclaimed, "when we shall be civilised." No doubt. But the work won't be done by Christianity. After two thousand years of that boastful religion, it is only in Christian countries that societies are needed for the protection of children, and only in Christian countries that female drunkards are to be found.

That "saintly" man, Dr. Edward King, late Bishop of Lincoln, who died on March 8, left estate of the gross value of £24,069. "Blessed be ye poor! Woe unto you rich!" and all the rest of the hypocritical stuff rises in one's memory at the sight of these figures.

The new Bishop of Lincoln (Dr. Hicks) was presented at Manchester recently with a cheque for £1,850. It is the fashion now for bishops to deplore their poverty. In acknowledging the presentation, Dr. Hicks stated that when he started business as a bishop he found himself, as all bishops do, one of the poorest of men; in fact, he had to go to a friend, and secure on his guarantee an overdraft at the bank, or he would have been in great difficulties. The gift of £1,850 enabled him to start pretty straight. From all which it is evident that bishops' salaries ought to be doubled. We pity their impecunious state, and hope Mr. Lloyd George, or the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, will speedily come to their relief.

The same morning newspaper that recorded the Bishop of Lincoln's will contained another, namely, that of the Rev. William Coleman, of Upper Norwood, who left £25,356. What a people the English are to put up with these hypocritical preachers of the gospel of the poor Carpenter of Nazareth!

Lord Justice Coleridge, in passing sentence of death upon John Alexander Dickman, the Newcastle murderer, used the regulation formula, including "May God have mercy on your soul." Was there ever more shockingly hypocritical language? The condemned man is to find no mercy on earth, but those who deny it express a hope that he will find it in heaven. "You are not fit to live any longer here," he is told, "but we hope God will find you fit to live with him hereafter."

Stanley Barber, junior, of Croxley Green, was summoned for driving a motor-car negligently. The car crashed into a fence, and the defendant told a constable that he had been asleep. Defendant's legal representative, at the Watford Police Court, set up a clever defence, which proved to be rather *too* clever. He argued that the salubrious air of Bushey Park overcame his client, who fell asleep in consequence, and thus lost control of himself and the machine. It was analogous to a man being struck by lightning. The defendant's sleepy condition was an act of God, and he himself was not responsible. But the magistrate took a different view and fined the defendant £5 and costs. Notice of appeal was given, however; so we suppose the legal gentleman will have another try at that argument. It seems to us that he ought to subpœna the party whose act he says it was that caused the mischief.

"Providence" extends no special protection to Sunday-school children. Five of them were drowned lately, belonging to a Sunday-school excursion from Kirkmichael. Six out of eleven thrown into the water by the boat capsizing were gallantly rescued by the Rev. Dr. Kellie and a schoolmistress. "Providence" declined the opportunity of saving the other five.

Dr. Horton says that in thinking of the completeness of Christ's power to save to the uttermost the very worst, the great thought dawns upon him, "Why should not we in this place become as we have never yet been before, an agency for saving the lost? Why should we not give ourselves to such work?" Has it never occurred to the reverend gentleman how inexpressibly silly this kind of talk is? If Christ is able to save the very worst, what right have Dr. Horton and his credulous followers to intermeddle with the business at all? The existence of such an all-powerful Savior would have been proved long ago by the non-existence of the lost. As it is, the very worst abounding among us still, the best Gospel that Dr. Horton can preach comes to this: Christ has absolute completeness of power to save, but we must do all the saving work.

If Dr. Horton studied the psychology of what he calls conversion a little more closely, he would see the utter absurdity of attributing the cases of conversion which he describes to any supernatural agency whatever. Fancy a man being allowed to become a confirmed drunkard and sink, through his own wasteful habits, into absolute poverty, and then, just to spite a publican who had refused him a drink, rushing to a Salvation Army meeting, flinging himself down by the penitent form, and, in the twinkling of an eye, getting saved and being born again by the Holy Ghost as representative of the God of love; and then fancy that supernaturally saved man becoming lost and being saved and born again a second time. As purely natural occurrences such things can be easily explained; but as acts performed by a Divine Being they are ineffably ludicrous and grotesque.

Mr. C. G. Hazell, who committed suicide by jumping overboard from the West African mail steamer *Tarquah*, was seen by one of the stewards in his cabin a few minutes before the catastrophe. He was then on his knees engaged in prayer. Presumably, therefore, he was not an Atheist; as, according to the chief Christian authorities on suicide, he ought to have been.

Religion was everything to the poet Cowper; or rather it was so in his periods of pious insanity, when it drove him to despair and prompted him to suicide. At other times he could be tolerably cheerful. There could even be such a thing as too much religion in the house for him. An instance of this occurs in a letter of his which was sold at Sotheby's lately. It appears that Mrs. Unwin was looking for a new servant. After mentioning the wages offered, and the qualifications expected, Cowper says: "We would rather leave it to the Lord to send us whom He pleases than insist upon having a converted one." This is not Cowper the melancholy-mad Christian; it is Cowper the sly humorist.

Henry Ward Beecher used to say that he believed in the Trinity, but did not know how the members of it got on together. Orthodox theologians, however, are much wiser, and undertake to tell us all about the interior and exterior relationships of the three persons. The Son is the Father's agent, revealing his all-saving love, and the Holy Ghost acts as both the Father's and the Son's agent. Now Professor Swete, being evidently in the confidence of the Holy Ghost, is able to inform us how exactly he does his work. He says: "The Spirit first creates right relations between the soul and God, and from these He proceeds to re-model personal and social life." We know nothing about the Trinity; but

we do know that, if the Holy Ghost exists and has made Professor Swete his confidant, he is not in a hurry to attend to his appointed job.

Dr. Meyrick Booth believes that if Christianity "is true, then, like all objective truth, it is authoritative." We agree; but, then, Christianity is not, and never has been, authoritative, though *men* have again and again exercised authority over their fellows in its name; and therefore, according to Dr. Booth's own principles, Christianity is not true.

"To the flames," cries a militant divine, "with any theory that drives God to the background and sets upon his throne blind, unintelligent forces." As a theory cannot be burned apart from the theorist, we conclude that this follower of the meek and lowly Jesus would like to have the stake brought back again. A Christian cannot help being a persecutor. Another man of God said, recently, that burning is much too good for heretics.

Mr. Ormsby-Gore asked Mr. Runciman in the House of Commons whether he was aware that the Church of England is growing rapidly in Wales. There does not seem to be evidence that *any* Church is growing—rapidly or otherwise—in Wales. Certainly the Church of England is not. The number of confirmations in 1905 was 15,649; in 1906 it was 10,679; in 1907 it was 12,530; in 1908 it was 11,465. Call you this growing rapidly? If you do, you should add the word "backwards."

The *Saturday Review* said an odd thing in its article on "The Missionary Conference." "Many of our present missionaries," it said, "could better do much of the work here than what they are trying to do abroad. To send men not highly educated and not gentlemen in manner to preach to educated Orientals, is foolishness, if not worse." Missionaries not good enough for the East are apparently good enough for the West.

There is another odd thing in that article. Jealousies and strife occur between rival Christian missionary settlements in "heathen" countries. This is more than unseemly; it gives the enemy cause to blaspheme. The *Saturday Review* suggests a remedy. Let every heathen country be divided up into "spheres of influence" so as to prevent competition and quarreling. Here the Catholic missionary, there the Anglican, there the Presbyterian, there the Wesleyan, there the Lutheran, there the Baptist, and there the Salvation Army. It is not a bad idea. But what a satire on Christian Missions—and two thousand years of Christianity!

A Missionary Festival was held at Trentham recently, and the speeches were really comic, if we may judge by the report in the *Stone Weekly News*. Rev. W. Carr Smith, of Sydney, said that Englishmen ought to feel ashamed at the thought of the treatment of the Australian aborigines. They had confiscated their land and shot them down; altogether the history of the aborigines was "one of the most melancholy that any man could read." Rev. L. B. Butcher, of Poona, India, admitted that "the majority of their converts" out there "came from the lower castes." Such admissions are calculated to damn the missionary business.

In connection with the Government proposals for amending the Coronation Oath, the Rev. Silvester Horne, M.P., has a motion down to eliminate the clause binding the Sovereign to membership of the Church of England. All he desires is to secure a *Protestant* succession, leaving the Sovereign free to be a member of any Protestant Church. If any sound intellectual principle animated Mr. Horne's action, he would advocate the abolition of a profession of religion altogether. As it is, it is merely a family affair. Mr. Horne wants it to be a family affair among Protestants, and to give Nonconformists a chance. For ourselves, we would give freedom to all—even to kings. No one seems to trouble about the poor monarch, though. Perhaps they feel that, as kings go, they will swear to any religion that is ordered—and, we imagine, often enough swear *at* it afterwards.

If we were in the king business, and meant to stick to it, we should view with great unconcern any alteration in any of the ancient formulas and customs by which it is surrounded. One never knows where the reforming spirit may stop, and a great many other things beside the Declaration concerning Roman Catholics might be revised. One of the objections raised against the Declaration is that it is antiquated. Quite so; but then the whole business connected with the coronation is antiquated—most of it more so than this particular Declaration. When we become civilised enough to elect a man to a post for the sole and simple reason that we want him to fill it, we shall also have enough common sense to treat him as a man, and drop all the senseless mummery that is nothing better than barbarism decorated by a twentieth century costumier. One paper, commenting on the Johnson-Jeffries contest, said we must admit that humanity is still barbaric, although its barbarism is covered with a thin veneer of civilisation. This is unfortunately true, and it applies to many more matters than prize fighting.

Less than a quarter of a century ago our annual expenditure on the Navy amounted to thirteen millions. It is now forty millions. Other Christian nations show a similar growth of expenditure, and not a shilling of it is due to fears of what non-Christian nations may do. It is needed (so they say) to protect one lot of Christians from the attacks of other Christians. Yet they all proclaim the power of Christianity to develop peace and brotherhood! If the matter were not so serious it would be a capital joke.

A number of Japanese, at present engaged in the White City, were induced to attend St. Paul's the other Sunday evening and listen to a sermon from the Bishop of Ripon. Among other things, his lordship told the Japanese visitors that the personality of Christ was the most potent factor in the history of the last nineteen hundred years. His hearers must have smiled. They would probably remember that when Japan set out on its work of reorganisation it was precisely this factor they decided was not worth bothering about. They did find much to learn from Western science, but in spiritual and moral matters they believed they had much better things at home than Christians could offer them. And they believe so still. We fancy, too, it is not unlikely that the Japanese at St. Paul's were wondering what amount of fairplay or justice the spirit of Christ would have gained for them had they not been strong enough to beat back the Christian power of Russia.

Many a presumptuous man of God has been pulled up by the Divorce Commissioners. We have referred to some cases already. Here is another. Canon Henson, of Westminster, in his evidence, said that the conditions of divorce should be determined by the State in the light of Christian principle. Sir Lewis Dibdin asked him: "What is Christian principle?" Of course he couldn't answer. He could only say that "Just now the existing law holds the field." Sir Lewis Dibdin pressed him further, asking him "What body representing the Church of England has any right to say what is according to Christian principles?" Canon Henson was obliged to reply that there was none. "Then," said Sir Lewis Dibdin, "it is impossible to apply your definition." Another windbag neatly pricked.

We said last week that there would be some fun over the resuscitation of Sabbatarianism at Yarmouth. The Chief Constable is directing the prosecutions, and he has naturally fallen foul of Mr. J. W. de Caux, who is one of the magistrates. Mr. de Caux insists that the Chief Constable, and everybody else concerned in these prosecutions, shall act with strict legality. The Chief Constable, however, is a hoighty-toighty sort of a gentleman, who fancies that everything he does must be right and proper, simply because he does it. But that is not a theory which a magistrate like Mr. de Caux is likely to endorse, though some of his fellow-magistrates seem to imagine that the Chief Constable, like the King, can do no wrong. There was a very pretty scene at the Police-court on Wednesday, July 6, between this pious gentleman (how is it that Chief Constables are all pious?) and Mr. de Caux. The latter had to teach the former his place, and did it most effectively.

Tobacconists and picture-postcard sellers are the great objects of the Chief Constable's persecution. Other traders are allowed to "desecrate the Sunday" to their hearts' content. And amongst these licensed traders is the Corporation itself. The Corporation tramcars run all Sunday, for money, of course; the Corporation Pier and Gardens are open, with a charge for admission and the sale of programs. Yet the very Corporation which does Sunday business in that way prosecutes individual small tradesmen for doing the same thing. Comment is unnecessary. The facts speak for themselves.

It is a mistake to make concessions to the Sabbatarian bigots. The practice is creeping in at seaside places of including a hymn—"Abide with Me" or something of that kind—in the Sunday evening program at the bandstand. By way of mollifying the pious opponents of the Sunday

concerts in Preston Park, Brighton, the municipal orchestra wound up with singing "Onward Christian Soldiers." *Christian* soldiers! When there must be many Freethinkers and Jews in the crowd,—especially Jews.

The "Alexander Irvine" whom we pilloried a few weeks back as the author of a "tall" Bradlaugh story, is, we see, a New York clergyman. Probably he thought New York was far enough away from the Hall of Science for his yarn to pass unchallenged. Evidently he reckoned without the zeal of English Christians,—to say nothing of the existence of the *Freethinker*.

The Rev. A. W. Hutton, Rector of Bow Bells, has a column of twaddle concerning prayers for the dead in last Sunday's *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*. On the Continent this practice has its commercial value, the priests being paid to deliver souls from Purgatory.

The Rev. R. S. King, Rector of Leigh, Essex, is a "whole hogger." Writing in his Parish Magazine on the subject of divorce, he says that Parliament now claims the right to alter "God's laws." To which laws does the rector refer? The polygamous rules of the Old Testament and the celibate suggestions of the New Testament are both impossible to-day.

They'll want another Commission of Inquiry at Liverpool presently. Catholics and Protestants are already tired of keeping the peace. There was another shindy last Sunday. Orangemen had their annual church parade and got into collision with the Catholics. It took a lot of constables and several mounted police to separate the rival factions of Christites. Otherwise the hospitals and cemeteries would have been largely recruited.

Memorials to living people are a nuisance. They are an attempt to forestall the verdict of posterity, and posterity is apt to resent the insolence. General Booth, however, thinks otherwise. He actually wrote a letter to be read at the ceremony of fixing up a memorial stone on the spot in the Mile-end Waste where he started in business for himself some forty-five years ago. The inscription on the stone runs: "Here William Booth commenced the work of the Salvation Army, July, 1865." This memorial stone was fixed up by one of Booth's own satellites, Commissioner Rees; and is thus a partisan thing altogether. No doubt the Salvationists, and perhaps a few other enthusiasts, believe that General Booth's name is destined to immortality. We don't. He has simply built up a big business organisation, which is pretty certain to go to pieces rapidly after his death. Not a trace of it may be left twenty, or even ten, years afterwards. In that case, future generations will be perfectly indifferent as to whether William Booth started the Salvation Army in London or at Timbuctoo.

The Elijah Royal Black Preceptory sounds like a Presbyterian body. It is not so directly, however, for it is a Masonic body; but it is so indirectly, for it had an annual service lately at the First Presbyterian Church, Coleraine. The preacher was the Rev. G. W. D. Rea, B.A. This gentleman bewailed the growth of Catholicism, and prophesied that the "true Church of Christ" (his own, of course) was coming in for a bad time. The day would sooner or later arrive when "the fires of Rome will burn again." The preacher had a lot to say against persecution and in favor of liberty. It was all very well in its way, but it sounded odd from the mouth of an Irish Presbyterian. The persecution of Catholics by Protestants in Ireland, for a hundred and fifty years before Catholic Emancipation, was without a parallel in the history of the world. That is a general criticism. Now for a particular one. These sour Coleraine Presbyterians are fighting tooth and nail against Sunday liberty. They even wish to put down Sunday golf at Portrush by Act of Parliament. All the liberty their opponents would ever get, if they had their way, would be the liberty of a mouse between the paws and the mouth of a cat.

Rev. A. J. Waldron is quite a reformed character. We mean religiously, not morally, of course. He has been holding forth on the diabolical power of money. One time he used to say that "infidels" couldn't get hold of much money, while the Christians got hold of any quantity of it. Now he almost exclaims, "Throw money to the dogs; I'll none of it." The reverend gentleman takes music, art, and literature under his patronage. With respect to art, of which we guess his knowledge is far from infinite, he says: "Your great artist does not paint the Madonna and Child nowadays. It does not pay." Mr. Waldron will perhaps tell us when great artists, *in England*, ever did paint the Madonna and Child. It may be to his advantage, in several ways, to remember that he is speaking in a non-Catholic country.

Another lost saint! The Rev. W. Blackmore, Vicar of St. Austell, has been found guilty by his religious superiors of "immoral conduct," and deprived of all ecclesiastical office.

Rev. L. S. Wainright, of St. Peter's, London Docks, is a terrible sort of fellow. He has just issued a notice with reference to the Deceased Wife's Sister question, that on "no account whatever" would he tolerate such a marriage in his church. Neither would he administer the Communion to them. Still further, when such people died he would not allow their bodies to be brought into his church, nor would he say the Burial Service over them. Altogether, he tells them, in the language of Heine, to go to hell in their own fashion—they need expect no assistance from him. A man who will not stand nonsense is the Rev. L. S. Wainright.

The "Jonah and the whale" religion is being discredited at last. Despite the efforts of 50,000 parsons and 100,000 amateur evangelists, England is still uncivilised. Last year there were 100,000 cases of cruelty to children, yet the clergy prate hypocritically of heathen races and savage countries.

An enterprising publisher with a nautical name has issued a volume of Spurgeon's sermons. The writings of the "hell-fire" preacher should possess an archæological value at a time when parsons are trying to explain that hell is an ice-cream factory.

"Father" Vaughan says that the decrease in the birth-rate in one generation is "simply appalling." The cradles of the West-end were as empty as its churches. Well, what is "Father" Vaughan doing to fill them? Time was when priests were pretty active in that direction. We suppose they never break their vows now.

When this "Father" who has no children refers to marriage as "fast ceasing to be recognised as a Divine institution," and prophesies that this will mean the moral ruin of England, he is talking professional nonsense. Men and women who get married at the registrar's office are not conspicuous for immorality. As a matter of fact, the overwhelming majority of Divorce Court cases involve husbands and wives who were married in church.

The *Church Times* has made a discovery. It finds out that much of the praise bestowed upon Darwin of recent years has been indiscriminate. It admits that every word said in his praise as a naturalist (which does not happen to be his greatest quality) was deserved, but "as a leader of thought he must be placed on a much lower level." Well, all we have to say is that, in our opinion, there are few men of the nineteenth century who led thought more decisively than did Charles Darwin. In a single volume—say *The Descent of Man*—Darwin throws off enough in the shape of asides and stray suggestions to make a reputation for a smaller man than himself, and enough to outweigh the mental output of the *Church Times* and its staff for a generation. And whatever modification later knowledge demands in the Darwinian theory as originally propounded, the fact of evolution, and of natural selection as a factor in evolution, is unquestioned by anyone who has a right to express an authoritative opinion on the subject.

The Bishop of Birmingham says there ought to be a "trumpet call" to the ordinary citizen to rally round the Church on the question of education. If Bishop Gore will only face facts he will discover that the ordinary citizen cares very little about the matter; above all, he is heartily sick of the eternal religious squabble, and if the matter were put before him fairly and squarely would most probably vote dead against the Bishop and his interests. Unfortunately, education is not a subject in which the average citizen is keenly interested. He sends his children to school, for mixed reasons, and may be induced now and again to take a passing interest in the general question. If it were otherwise the religious difficulty, and many other difficulties, would soon be solved. But the question remains, generally, a reformer's question, who is treated as either an amiable faddist or a dangerous agitator; and a parson's question, who is interested in developing customers for his spiritual wares. And the apathy of the mass is as helpful to the parson as it is obstructive to the reformer.

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

(Lecturing Suspended during the Summer.)

To Correspondents.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND: 1910.—Previously acknowledged, £228 3s. 7d. Received since:—H. J. Whipp, £1 1s.

LIONEL DAWSON.—Tennyson may have said in conversation: "What the sun is to that flower Jesus Christ is to me"—though we don't remember it and cannot spare time to search through his voluminous biography.

J. H. KENNETT.—Thanks, but month-old news is rather stale for "Acid Drops."

T. FRANKLIN.—The law on the matter is perfectly clear. Letters cannot be published without the writers' consent. This is common sense and common decency as well as common law. We should act promptly against any infraction of our own legal rights in this direction.

N. GOODMAN.—We could easily show that we were in very good company in objecting to such tomfoolery. But one sentence from Carlyle must suffice—a sentence from the third chapter of the second book of *Past and Present*. "What sight is more pathetic," he asks, "than that of poor multitudes of persons met to gaze at Kings' Progresses, Lord Mayors' Shows, and other gilt-gingerbread phenomena of the worshipful sort, in these times; each so eager to worship; each, with a dim fatal sense of disappointment, finding that he cannot rightly here! These be thy gods, O Israel!"

C. SIDEBOTHAM.—We fear the matter would not be of sufficient interest to our readers, who are scattered all over the kingdom, and indeed all over the world. It seems a domestic squabble between the man of God and his congregation, who are not devout or liberal enough for his taste. Thanks, all the same; the next cutting may be more lucky.

T. POWELL.—(1) Mr. Foote never debated with a Latter-Day Saint called Rushton, or with any other member of that fraternity. (2) Christians always do "smash" Freethinkers in debate. Christians themselves say so—and it *must* be true.

G. ROLEFFS.—Thanks for cuttings.

R. C.—Compelled to shorten.

CLARA GUNNING.—No apology is needed. We are glad to have your letter. You will see that Mr. Foote is lecturing at St. James's Hall in September.

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

S. C.—Order passed over. Your suggestion shall be considered. Have you overlooked the N. S. S. badge? You have ideas, but you do not (yet, at any rate) express them adequately in verse. Much practice is needed for any proficiency. Shakespeare himself, you may depend upon it, spoiled reams of paper before he printed anything.

O. FORD.—Thanks.

H. J. WHIPP subscribes to the President's Honorarium Fund as "a small token of appreciation from one who has much to thank you for."

H. SMALLWOOD.—Sent as requested. Thanks for congratulations and good wishes.

J. B. C. B.—Tuesday too late; next week. Thanks.

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

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

WHEN the services of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications 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.

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

St. James's Hall has been engaged again by the Board of the Secular Society (Ltd.) for Sunday evening Freethought lectures during September and October. The lecturers will be Messrs. Foote, Cohen, and Lloyd. Fuller announcement will be made in our next issue. Shoreditch Town Hall is also being engaged for November or December.

A special object like the representation of the National Secular Society at the International Freethought Congress, to be held at Brussels in August, may well be the occasion of a special appeal. We desire to raise £30 or so towards the expenses of the delegation. Will those of our readers who can afford to subscribe kindly do so promptly? The Congress will be largely a vindication of Francisco Ferrer. The cause for which he died—liberty of thought and teaching—will be the one subject for discussion at this gathering, which promises to be largely attended by representatives from all parts of the world. Great Britain must not lag behind.

Mr. M. M. Mangasarian, lecturer to the Independent Religious Society (Rationalist), Chicago, who addresses an audience of two thousand every Sunday, and is probably the first Freethought publicist in America to-day, sends us a characteristic letter of congratulation—grave and gay together. "It was a great pleasure," he says, "to read of your return to perfect health after your recent illness. You have an increasing host of admirers the world over, and their prayers for your recovery have been answered. We leave it to the Christians to tell us who it was that answered impious prayers." They'll soon do that if we ask them!

Mr. Mangasarian is not visiting Europe this summer. We were looking forward to meeting him again, and we are disappointed. What we chiefly regret is the cause of his having to remain at home—Mrs. Mangasarian's illness. We hope soon to hear of her recovery. It is in the home that a soldier of Freethought is most vulnerable to the shafts of fate. He can stand up against all outside troubles and dangers; inside he must bear and suffer like weaker men.

Mr. Cohen is lecturing to-day (July 17), afternoon and evening, in Victoria Park, at the Bethnal Green Branch's stand, near the fountain. North and East London "saints" should try to bring their more orthodox friends along to one, or both, of the meetings.

Mr. Cohen's articles on "Freethought and Reform" are dissented from, quite naturally, by some readers wedded to the theory he opposes. We should put the essential question at issue thus: *Is man governed by his belly or his brain?* Mr. Cohen does not deny the power of the belly, but he believes that human progress is through the brain. We need hardly say we are with him. We have always held that man—from the moment he was entitled to the name in the course of evolution—has been under the dominion of his ideas. False ideas mislead him; true ideas lead him right. But he cannot help being led by them, whatever they are. They are the "suggestions," as the new psychologists would say, under which he acts; and if you don't change his "suggestions" you won't change his actions. That is why a change in opinions and sentiments must precede all other changes. And this is not only the justification, but the exaltation, of Freethought propaganda. This is denied by a certain school of Socialists; the same, generally, who regard circumstances as everything and character as nothing. There are other Socialists, of course, even including Mr. Belfort Bax, who warmly dissent from the theory of that school. It will not do, therefore, to press the theory into the definition of Socialism. We were often minded to say something on the subject, but we never found the time to deal with it as we wished. It was in satisfactory hands, however, when Mr. Cohen took it up. One of our readers, Mr. J. E. Cooper, suggests that the four articles should be reprinted in pamphlet form, under the title of (say) "The Fundamental Principles of Reform." Mr. Cooper is himself a Socialist, and he thinks the pamphlet would do "tremendous good" in the Socialist ranks. No doubt it would do as much good in other directions.

Mr. Cooper ends his letter with a few words to us, which other readers of ours might like to read. "Let me thank you," he says, "for giving me a real live and thoughtful outlook on Life. You and Robert Blatchford between you have enabled me to shake off the shackles of superstition, in spite of twenty-three years as a chorister and ten years as a Sunday-school teacher. May you be spared many years yet to lead your brilliant staff on the *Freethinker*." We say "Amen to that sweet prayer." We fancy the staff will say "Amen" too.

During the holiday season Freethinkers, like other people, travel a bit and meet fresh acquaintances. May we ask them once more to take every opportunity that arises of bringing the *Freethinker* to the attention of free-minded persons who might be likely to read the paper regularly if they only knew of it? We have gained many readers in

this way, and we hope to gain many more; indeed, we shall do so if our friends will only help us in the manner suggested. We may add that it would be well if our friends had a copy of the paper about them somewhere. To produce it, and pass it over, is the best method of clinching the recommendation.

We are also anxious to receive the names and addresses of persons who might be likely to become regular subscribers if they had the *Freethinker* placed before them six weeks in succession. We will forward gratuitous, post-free copies to such persons for the six weeks with pleasure. We have gained a good many new readers in this way also.

The *Freethinker* keeps up its circulation very well, but it has not been increasing lately, as it will do if its friendly readers throw a little fresh energy into the effective advertising which they can do at a very slender cost to themselves. If all did what they could we believe our circulation might be doubled in twelve months. And unless a paper goes forward it is bound to go backward. Some of its readers die every year, some grow old and dependent on non-sympathisers, some go to foreign parts, some (alas!) become too poor to spare the twopence for any luxury. That is the natural outflow, and there must be a compensating inflow if the paper is to hold its own—to say nothing of improving.

Whence and Whither.

By James Clarence Harvey.

Out of the great Unseen, Unknown,
Into the Present, swiftly flying,
Borne on the wings of a mother's moan,
Cometh life, with its tears and sighing.
Out of the dread, chaotic Past,
Into the tangled dreams of Earth,
Hours of pain for moments of mirth,
No man knows how the die is cast.
Questioning, plodding, searching ages
Con the Future's mystic pages,
Ah! how vainly, for God's own hand
Lifts the veil to the Unknown land.

Into the clouds that wrap the world,
Down in the depths of Ocean peering, [whirled,
Searching the Earth, through broad space
Sages old, white-haired, unfearing.
Strive to learn what subtle spark
Makes a soul, a mind, a thought,
Athrill, with pulse and feeling fraught,
Spring from sources vague and dark.
The Whence and Whither transcends our ken;
The Past and Future to mortal men
Is bridged with a single, sombre span,
And the price of light is the grave of man.

Whence cometh life and Whither goes it?
All seek to learn, yet no one knows it.
Death yields the torch, though none may choose it,
And Life's last faint perception views it.
The lips are sealed that might have told it,
And pulseless hearts till doomsday hold it.

—*New York American.*

Asked by a correspondent if the Grace of God can change the temperament, Professor David Smith confidently answers, "Of course it can." We challenge Dr. Smith to verify that cocksure assertion in a straightforward manner. He offers the apostle John as an example; but a moment's serious thought suffices to make it perfectly clear that John cannot honestly serve in that capacity. In the first place, John's history is unknown. There is absolutely no evidence that his temperament was ever changed. The only glimpse we get of him in the Gospels shows him, as Dr. Smith admits, to have been ambitious, intolerant, and passionate. That is the only peep at the man's *temperament* that the New Testament affords. *Was* it ever changed? Irenæus records that when the apostle went to take a bath in Ephesus, and saw Cerinthus within, he rushed away from the room without bathing, saying, "Let us flee, lest the room should indeed fall in, for Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is within." Dr. Smith must find another example, *if he can.*

Religion of To-Day and Yesterday.

By John Emerson Roberts,
Minister of the Church of This World, in Kansas City.

If a boy went fishing on Sunday he fell in and was drowned; if he swiped a pocketful of apples he fell out of the tree and broke his neck—that was the way the Sunday-school books gave it to us a generation or two ago. Adults were served in the same cheerful way at the hands of the pulpit. If a farmer worked overtime, and stacked his wheat on Sunday, he had the satisfaction of seeing the lightning smite and burn it up. If he expressed an honest criticism about the Bible he was stricken dumb.

These childish stories had their suggestion and parallel in the Bible. You recollect the story about the ark, when it was being taken up to Jerusalem. The ark was a kind of a box about four and a half feet long, a foot and a half wide, and a foot and a half deep. It had been placed upon a cart to which was attached a yoke of oxen. As it approached the city the people gathered around it and sang and danced. They made miscellaneous sounds with harps and timbrels and cymbals and trumpets. The oxen became nervous. They didn't understand the hilarity, and in their excitement shook the ark till it was like to fall. One of the attendants put out his hand to stay it from falling, and was struck dead. You recall the story about Jonah, who had been directed to go somewhere as an evangelist, and declined. He took passage on a vessel. Then the Lord stirred up a great commotion in the deep, and the sailors came to look upon Jonah as an undesirable passenger, and threw him overboard. Then the whale annexed him, with the intent, presumably, of benevolent assimilation; but Jonah stirred up a great commotion in the whale's plan, whereupon the whale changed his mind.

Then there were Mr. and Mrs. Ananias in the New Testament story. They had just joined the Church. It was a rule that all converts should bring their possessions and worldly goods and give them to the Church. If they had any land, they should sell it and bring the proceeds. Ananias was thrifty and careful. He was not entirely sure about the new religion, and thought he would be wise and keep a little land in case the new religion failed. When he made his return they asked him if he had sold all of his land. He said "Yes," and was struck dead for lying. Then came his wife, and they asked her the same question. "Yes," they had sold it all, she said, and had brought all the proceeds. Then they said to her, "Look at your husband, and there you go," and she fell down dead. That may be one of the reasons why so few of the ancient Israelites engaged in the real estate business. It would tend to lessen the enthusiasm of a man in his business if he knew that every time he lied he was to be struck dead. The only really safe and profitable business would be that of the coroner or the undertaker.

Puerile and childish as these things appear now, yet they hold the germ of the essential doctrines of the old system. While that system has had endless variations, and been wrought out until it has become elaborate and complex, yet it yields to analysis until it is both simple and brief. The one salient feature of the religion of yesterday is the God idea. That religion is deocentric. About that concept all of its other doctrines are subordinate, and arrange themselves in place. That old system might be epitomised like this: Man is nothing, God is all; man has not the ability to acquire knowledge, hence the necessity of a divine revelation. Man has not the ability for moral progress and development, hence the necessity of a vicarious Savior and a divine plan of salvation; man has not the ability for self-help and personal direction, hence the necessity for prayer and special providence.

The religion of yesterday was based on fear and servitude. Its direct and most potent appeals were made to the cowardly and selfish elements of human nature. A religion that holds on one side the threat

of hell and on the other the promise of paradise owes an apology to the intelligence of mankind. A God that ordained an endless hell and feeds its fires with the souls of hapless men may expect neither homage nor reverence from civilised men. The central symbol of the religion of our fathers, the cross, is an emblem calculated to strike terror and fear. Why was the cross and for what purpose? That upon it God might sacrifice his only begotten, might look upon him, drawn and distorted, torn and bleeding, might look upon his suffering, agony, and death, might hear his cries to the heedless heavens, might see the blood and sweat and be satisfied. We are trying to abolish the gibbet. We would expunge it from the face of the earth; we would place it among the mournful mementoes of a benighted and barbaric past. I hope that the time will come when the Church will take from temple dome and cathedral spire, from wall and niche and nave and transept, from mitre and crown and sceptre, from gown and robe and surplice and stole, will take away forever the sign of the cross, that ancient libel on God.

The deocentric dogmas served their purpose, served them well. That hypothesis was in the early times not only natural but necessary. Men have to explain things. The law of thinking, the law under which mind exists, compels an answer. We are forever seeking causes to account for effects, and the early people knew nothing of this world, nothing about the universe. They thought this was the only world in space. It had been made specially for them. They knew nothing about law and order, nothing about sequence, nothing about cause and effect. "God" was their answer to every question; faith was the short cut across all difficulties.

One of the nearest instances in which the Nazarene ever came to being humorous was where he told the man if he had faith he could remove mountains. Now if a man has an intelligent faith that he can do that thing, he can do that thing. The humor lies in the fact that no intelligent man would believe that he could do that thing.

It is a perfectly well understood fact that the shrines and healing places of the simple-minded people have produced a great number of physical cures. Somewhere near Montreal is the shrine of Saint Anne. There, carefully guarded and sacredly kept, is a glass case, and in that glass case is the bone of one of the fingers of the saint. Hundreds and hundreds of people believe in the curative power of that bone. When they go up to Saint Anne's shrine they feel that they are standing in the presence of a part of the genuine skeleton. Their imagination is inflamed. Who can tell what the mental processes that take place within them are? And they are cured—thousands—there is no longer any reason to doubt it. Nor is there any reason to think that these things are wrought by miraculous means. They are effected by some mental processes or intellectual excitation or appeals to the imagination that we are not yet able to understand. But the power of the bone is in proportion to the want of intelligence in the one that seeks its aid. I have a friend who went to this Saint Anne's shrine. The priest was showing him around. The priest said, "There is the bone of Saint Anne's finger." My friend asked the priest which finger. The priest was scandalised, and politely invited my friend out of the sacred presence.

Now a man with a sceptical mind, without any faith in the bone of the finger of Saint Anne, if he had a physical ailment and Saint Anne's entire sanctified skeleton was there, it wouldn't have had the slightest effect on the unbeliever. We know there is no such thing as the forgiveness of sin. We know that there is no reason to believe that any God ever interfered to arrest the consequences following from a word or a deed. We know that we live under the stern dominion of inexorable law, and the faith in the guiding Providence and in the sanctified Christ is dying out of the lives and minds of men.

The old-time religion, that of yesterday, is surely passing. The process of disintegration is manifest in the multitude of sects and dogmas, of cults and schools. They betoken the unrest, they voice the unanswered cry; they speak again of the unsatisfied hunger. In the olden times men were familiar with God. They knew his plans and his purposes. They didn't hesitate to make suggestions to him.

The old-time religion is being killed with material prosperity. The modern church is the highly excellent and eminently respectable club of the prosperous, well-to-do, and rich. The barefoot man isn't in the Church; the mother, wan and worn with privation and overwork, isn't there; the dissolute and despairing and distressed aren't there. The cathedrals of the olden time were built by the patient toil and loving sacrifices of generations; but the modern church on the boulevard is built with the munificent gifts of some lucky speculator or by the abounding and overflowing wealth of men who have appropriated to their own use what rightly belongs to others. The wealth that is put into those temples is the logical antithesis of the privation and poverty of multitudes. God's servant isn't there. Those splendid edifices belong to man, and his name is inscribed all over them. And without, along the curbstone, are the imposing rows of automobiles with the drivers sitting in their seats. They don't go into the temple, they are just common men. The religion there isn't for them. Their souls are not worth saving; they can go—to sleep. And within is seen a goodly company. There is a lordly feast spread at the table of the Lord, splendid appointments, furnishings luxurious, sensuous beauty and the languorous charm of color, music, and song, while the well-gowned and groomed worshipers complacently approve, while the hyper-refined preacher places God under a glass case and Christ in cold storage. The Church is dying with its prosperity.

The old-time religion is passing away, and the religion of to-day—there is none, in the sense of a widespread and universal assent; in the sense of a general moral enthusiasm, bent upon the accomplishment of a common purpose, there is no such thing to-day. There are religions, there is no religion. There are enthusiasms, but there is no central, commanding, definite enthusiasm of men for men. This time that we are living in is a time of transition—which is sufficiently trite, of course. What does the casual observer see? He sees a gentle and more or less genial modification of some of the old dogmas; he sees a decreasing emphasis laid upon rite and ritual and ceremony. He sees a gradual weakening of the authority of tradition and ecclesiastical precedence. He sees a tentative utterance of half-truths, but these are only superficial. The change is deeper. It is radical and revolutionary. It has gone to the heart of things. The central and masterful idea of the religion of yesterday was the God concept. Men were told to worship God and fear God. That idea is being revolutionised. God is growing less and less compulsive. But out yonder in the darkness and in the mist, down in the depths, struggling, now and then wailing and moaning, there comes a figure, bent and bruised and bleeding, torn and disheartened, but struggling still. And what is that figure? It isn't God, nor an angel from the sky. I will tell you what it is. It is our brother man.

The religion of the fathers hasn't made the world beautiful and peaceful and blessed. And the religion of the future—bold, indeed, will be the man who should attempt to outline it. But we may conjecture with reasonable certainty that its central feature will be, instead of the worship of God, the service of man. He will be esteemed holiest who is most useful, most just, most kind. Helpfulness will be accounted for righteousness. This world isn't a bad world. Men and women aren't bad, make a due exception of the people, the very few, who may be called degenerates. The average man and the average woman would rather be right than wrong, rather be truthful than deceive, rather be good than bad. The Church has preached so long that we are all damned sinners, that we have half come to believe

it ourselves. What the world wants is to have not a condemnation, but a new hope, a new faith in man. The clouds of ecclesiastical condemnation and the darkness and despair of threats must pass away.

Part of the religion that is to come will be man's faith in his fellowman. Want and poverty are crimes—not crimes of the men and the women who are poor, but crimes of a Christian civilisation that makes want inescapable and poverty compulsory. Remove both want and the fear of it, and we will have come nearer to removing evil and wrong.

There are a few things that seem to me ought to belong to our human world, unappropriated and unmonopolised; unheld by avarice or greed. It seems to me that some things should be as free as possible to the children of the world. Those things are the sea and earth and sky. By the sea I mean simply water to drink, water for cleanliness, water to keep the flowers blooming and fresh in the dooryard. By sky I mean light, light to live in, light to expand in, light to fight back the darkness and evil of uncleanliness and disease with, light to protect from moral and spiritual asphyxiation and air to breathe. By sky I mean room and space for normal living and healthful development. And by earth I mean so much of the old planet as each one can profitably use for making his own food and raiment and shelter. And I think that when our civilisation has reached a degree where it is justified in calling itself intelligent and just, things will somehow so have changed that people won't be crowded into tenements and live in semi-darkness, without air and light, without room and space, but they will live out in the open, free and healthful and virtuous. That I think will be the concern of our new religion. It will be a passion for humanity. We will set voluntary limits upon our avarice and our greed. We will refuse to be perfectly happy while the world is filled with suffering, wretchedness, misery, and want. Society, civilisation, is the great malefactor. The new religion will aim, not at the salvation of individual souls here and there, but the lifting up of the human family, making of society better, purging civilisation of its great wrongs. You know how we throw sops to our conscience now, how horrified we feel at the exposures of wrong and evil every once in a while. The other day our immaculate police commissioners, our stainless officers, our good and godly plain clothes men, raided a place of ill repute, took out the men and the women, and we feel that we are very much more secure since these watchful guardians of our peace and our purity were alert in this matter. I haven't the slightest sympathy for raids of that kind. They accomplish nothing, they get nowhere. No weak and wayward woman was ever yet called back to self-respect and virtue by a policeman's club. When Christ was on this earth he stood there with the police commissioners, with the plain clothes men, before just such a person, and they said, "This woman is an outcast, and by our law we shall stone her." And he said to her, "I don't condemn you. Go and sin no more." I hate religion with its formality and its coldness and its hardness of heart. I love the human, the tender, the Christ-like under any and every name. The new religion will have for its passion the making of this human world a fitter and better place.

WHAT THE LIGHT REVEALED.

A story is told of a Methodist minister who was not sufficiently eloquent or businesslike to be approved by the presiding elder.

Through the influence of the elder he felt sure he was appointed to a small and widely scattered settlement where there was much hard work and the results were necessarily meagre.

One day he was commenting sadly on the narrowness of his opportunities to a friend, who said gravely that he ought to pray for light that he might see the hand of the Lord in his appointment.

"I have, brother," he answered, 'again and again. But so far," he added with a whimsical smile, "I've only had light enough to see the interfering hand of Elder Brown."

Apame.

Sometimes in the pages of history a solitary name will appear almost unconnected with the narrative. To the casual reader this excites no curiosity, and he passes on, soon forgetting where it is and what it is.

Now, if there be one narrative more than another in the Bible that has attracted world-wide attention, it is that relating the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon and the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Temple under Zerubbabel. Thousands of disquisitions have been written, and tens of thousands of sermons have been preached about this subject alone. Yet how many Bibliolaters are there who even suspect, let alone know, that these momentous events were brought about by the indirect instrumentality of a young lady of easy virtue? But such was the case, as anyone may see for himself if he will only take the trouble to look.

If we refer to the First Book of Esdras in the Apocrypha we shall find in chapters iii. and iv. an account of a sort of literary contest between three wise men for the amusement of King Darius, who himself was to be the judge as to the merit of the pieces submitted. These three compositions took the form of what may be called novelettes. The first discoursed on the power of Wine, the second on the power of the King, whilst the third, submitted by Zerubbabel himself, enlarged on the power of women—and it is here we come across the name of a certain Miss Apame, whose temporary influence over the monarch Zerubbabel skilfully works into his tale in order to enhance the force of his arguments.

The name appears but once in the verse. And in 1 Esdras iv. 28-31 we read:—

> "Is not the King great in his power? Do not all regions fear to touch him? Yet did I see him and Apame the King's concubine, the daughter of the admirable Bartacus, sitting at the right hand of the King. And taking the crown from the King's head, and setting it upon her own head; she also struck the King with her left hand. And yet, for all this, the King gaped and gazed upon her with open mouth."

And let here be noticed the cloven hoof of the true Oriental. No mention is made of the girl's beauty or charm but that she is the daughter of the admirable Bartacus, who most probably was present and saw and heard all.

This dissertation on the power of women, followed by a homily on the advantages of Truth (strange subject, indeed, to be discoursed of by a Jew) gained for its author the approval of King Darius, who forthwith desired him to name what he would by way of reward—mayhap, for anything we know, prompted thereto by the blandishments of the flattered and gratified Apame herself—and Zerubbabel at once clinched matters by demanding the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple.

Of course, we shall be told other means, if necessary, would have been devised to bring about the "Return"; but, be this as it may, there stands the record of history that the turning again of the "Captivity" of the Jews and the erection of the Second Temple were indirectly brought about through the influence of Apame the King's concubine, the daughter of the admirable Bartacus!

Walter G. Christie.

A Nice Case.

A blackmail charge of an extraordinary nature was heard at Birmingham yesterday, when Herbert Green, described as a Clerk in Holy Orders, was committed for trial for having, as was alleged, attempted to obtain money by threats from his sister-in-law, Mary Fereday, matron of the Penkhull Cottage Homes, Stoke-on-Trent.

Prisoner was said to be a young man of ability and eloquence. Seven years ago he became a student at Handsworth Wesleyan Training College, and was about to be ordained, when something about him came to the knowledge of the principal, and he was expelled. Later he applied for

admission to the Anglican Church, and the Bishop of Exeter accepted him as a candidate, but it was discovered that the reference he had presented as from the principal of Handsworth College was a forgery. From that time onwards he obtained positions as lay reader or curate in various places, and in August last became curate of Old Dalby in Leicestershire. He remained there until March, when he left hurriedly, deserting his wife and child.

Mrs. Green went to live with the prosecutrix for a time, and afterwards obtained a situation as nurse at Douglas, in Lanarkshire. The prisoner followed her there, and pestered her for money. As she had no money she offered him her ring, which he took. He also sent a telegram in his wife's name to prosecutrix asking her to send £2 "to get Bert away from here." Mrs. Fereday sent the money, and then found the prisoner had sent the telegram.

Prisoner next turned up in Birmingham, and from that town sent the letter complained of to prosecutrix. In this he said:—

> "I have just come from seeing Tilly [his wife]. For the first time since I have known her I find her guilty of lying and misrepresentation. It would appear to me that you and your family have had a great deal to do with her present attitude. Now I am in pressing need of £5 in order that I may get abroad, make a position, and win her back again. I shall call at the Birmingham General Post Office on Friday morning for a letter from you, addressed to Mr. H. Green, and containing £5 in postal orders. Failing a reply on Friday morning containing the £5 I shall feel it my duty to communicate to your husband the fact of your misconduct with Mr. H. H—— at my house in Wallsend."

Upon the receipt of this letter Mrs. Fereday placed the matter in the hands of her solicitor, and the prisoner was arrested.

On being committed for trial prisoner said he would take his punishment as a man.—*Daily Chronicle*, July 2.

Spain's Mistake.

"INTELLECT OF NATION FELL WITH FERRER."

MADRID, July 5.—In the Chamber of Deputies to-day Senor Salillas, Republican, spoke on the fall of the Moret Cabinet, and said that he believed it was due to a trap on the part of the Conservatives. He then referred at considerable length to the Ferrer case, and regretted the harm it had done abroad and the mistakes they to-day deplored.

The Speaker recalled the two trials of Senor Ferrer. The first, which followed on the explosion of a bomb on May 31, 1906, evoked a stir in Europe that struck fear into the heart of Spain. The second ended in the execution of Ferrer, but Spain's reply to the outburst of European indignation was characterised by temerity.

That, Senor Salillas declared, was a fatal political mistake. Senor Salillas pictured the serene and sublime countenance of Ferrer in the trenches of Montjuich, when, in defiance of the rifles of his executioners, he shouted, "Long live the modern school!" He continued: "With the death of Ferrer there fell also, mortally wounded, the intellect of Spain. That," he added, turning to the Conservatives, "was your disastrous and abominable policy."

The Minister of Public Instruction replied, characterising the speech of Senor Salillas as violent and completely irrelevant, because the matter under discussion was the reply to be made to the message from the Crown. It was also inopportune, as it seemed to tend towards a revision of the trial of August last, which Parliament could not sanction, as sentence had already been carried out. Further, the Government would formally refuse any such request.—*Reuter.*

"Take, oh take those lips away," sang Shakespeare. "Take, oh take those breasts away," cries the parish priest of Sarmenstorf, in the Canton of Argovie, Switzerland. He refuses to let ladies wearing open-work blouses enter his church. Men crowd in to see the ladies refused admittance. They enjoy the comedy; the blouse-wearers are indignant. We wonder whether the priest or the ladies will win in the end.

Rev. F. C. Spurr gets a bigger salary at Melbourne, but his manners do not improve. Some Australian journals called the fluent public weeping over the death of King Edward "organised hypocrisy and humbug." So the reverend gentleman says in the *Christian World*, but he is probably summarising. On his own side, Mr. Spurr calls these journalists "Anarchists and Atheists of the most virulent and scurrilous type," and speaks of the "depth of baseness existing in their hearts." But the Rev. F. C. Spurr always was a Christian gentleman.

PROVIDENCE AND THE NUNS.

When the great earthquake overwhelmed Messina, the disaster was attributed to Divine vengeance on account of certain insults which were said to have been offered to the Bambino—a doll representing the baby Jesus and carried in procession through the streets—by a number of men who had been gambling and had lost money. It was stated that the men who committed this deadly sin came out of a café just as the Bambino was passing, that they spat upon it, insulted it, and trampled over it, and that three days afterwards, in less than a minute, Messina was blotted out. Now news has reached us of a fatal landslide in Spain, by which a convent at San Pablo, near Manresa, has been buried, three nuns being killed outright, and nine seriously injured. To what offence will this disaster be attributed? For we presume that landslides are just as much Divine visitations as earthquakes. When Signor Ferrer was before the court-martial, one of the charges against him was the absolutely untruthful one that he had incited the mob to attack the convents, a charge which, probably, more than any other was intended to justify his execution in the minds of the people. Providence, apparently, has no special regard for Spanish convents, it has shown itself less merciful than the rioters who attacked them, for they, at least, permitted the nuns to walk out unharmed. We are sorry for the nuns who have been killed, and deeply sympathise with those who have been injured by the landslide. But it is evident that so far as convents are concerned, Providence is even less to be trusted than the mob.—*The Examiner* (Christchurch, New Zealand.

Spare me the whispering, crowded room,
  The friends who come, and gape, and go;
The ceremonious air of gloom—
  All which makes death a hideous show!

Nor bring, to see me cease to live,
  Some doctor full of phrase and fame,
To shake his sapient head, and give
  The ill he cannot cure a name.

Nor fetch, to take the accustom'd toll
  Of the poor sinner bound for death,
His brother-doctor of the soul,
  To canvass with official breath

The future and its viewless things—
  That undiscover'd mystery
Which one who feels death's winnowing wings
  Must needs read clearer, sure, than he!

Bring none of these; but let me be,
  While all around in silence lies,
Moved to the window near, and see
  Once more before my dying eyes

Bathed in the sacred dews of morn
  The wide aerial landscape spread—
The world which was ere I was born,
  The world which lasts when I am dead;

Which never was the friend of *one*,
  Nor promised love it could not give,
But lit for all its generous sun,
  And lived itself, and made us live.

—*Matthew Arnold.*

Obituary.

ON Tuesday, July 5, the death occurred of Albert Geo. Herzfeld, Professor of Music, aged 77. Mr. Herzfeld was well known (especially in the parks) in North London, where he had resided some years. He was a pronounced Freethinker, and it is worthy of note that the doctor's first words at the inquest were, "The brain is that of a very intellectual man." He had left directions in writing, "I am an Atheist, and do not wish any religious ceremony at my funeral." It appears, however, that he had a grave of his own in Tottenham Cemetery, and desired to be buried there with his deceased wife, so that he had added to his instructions, "If a religious ceremony is inevitable, I don't suppose it will harm me much." We understood from the clergyman that, being consecrated ground, no other but the Church Service could be used. We are informed that the relatives would have had the Church Service all the same, and in defiance of his strongly expressed wishes. The funeral was on Saturday last. A good many Freethinking friends, and friends from Harringay Ethical Society, attended, but we all refrained from entering the church, and also from viewing the grave until after the other mourners had withdrawn.—R. C.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

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

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3.15, Debate between A. Hough and W. J. Ramsey, "Shall We Live Again?" 6, W. J. Ramsey, a Lecture.

ISLINGTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Highbury Corner): 12 noon, Walter Bradford and S. J. Cook. Newington Green: 12 noon, J. J. Darby. Clerkenwell Green: 12 noon, H. King and T. Dobson. Finsbury Park: 3.30, F. A. Davies, "Religion and Life." Highbury Corner: Saturday, at 8, H. King and T. Dobson.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (Ridley-road, Kingsland): 11.30, C. Cohen, "The Advance of Atheism."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill Fields): 3.30, Miss Kough, "What Has Become of Hell?"

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford): 7, S. Cook, "A Plea for Atheism."

WOOD GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Jolly Butchers' Hill, opposite Public Library): 11.30, Mr. Davidson, a Lecture. The Green, Enfield: 7, G. Smith, a Lecture.

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

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

SOUTH SHIELDS BRANCH N. S. S. (above Tram Hotel, Market-place): 7.30, Annual Meeting—Conference, Election of Officers, etc.

OUTDOOR.

HUDDERSFIELD AND DISTRICT BRANCH N. S. S. (Market Cross): 8, G. T. Whitehead, a Lecture. Saturday, at 8, G. T. Whitehead, a Lecture.

LAINDON, ESSEX (near Luff's Hairdressing Saloon): 7, R. H. Rosetti, "The Sabbath."

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

President: G. W. FOOTE.

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

Principles and Objects.

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

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

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

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

Membership.

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

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

Name.....

Address.....

Occupation.....

Dated this.....*day of*.....*190*.....

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

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

Immediate Practical Objects.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE SECULAR SOCIETY
(LIMITED)

Company Limited by Guarantee.

Registered Office—2 NEWCASTLE STREET, LONDON. E.C.

Chairman of Board of Directors—MR. G. W. FOOTE.

Secretary—MISS E. M. VANCE.

THIS Society was ormed in 1898 to afford legal security to the acquisition and application of funds for Secular purposes.

The Memorandum of Association sets forth that the Society's Objects are:—To promote the principle that human conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action. To promote freedom of inquiry. To promote universal Secular Education. To promote the complete secularisation of the State, etc., etc. And to do all such lawful things as are conducive to such objects. Also to have, hold, receive, and retain any sums of money paid, given, devised, or bequeathed by any person, and to employ the same for any of the purposes of the Society.

The liability of members is limited to £1, in case the Society should ever be wound up and the assets were insufficient to cover liabilities—a most unlikely contingency.

Members pay an entrance fee of ten shillings, and a subsequent yearly subscription of five shillings.

The Society has a considerable number of members, but a much larger number is desirable, and it is hoped that some will be gained amongst those who read this announcement. All who join it participate in the control of its business and the trusteeship of its resources. It is expressly provided in the Articles of Association that no member, as such, shall derive any sort of profit from the Society, either by way of dividend, bonus, or interest, or in any way whatever.

The Society's affairs are managed by an elected Board of Directors, consisting of not less than five and not more than twelve members, one-third of whom retire (by ballot) each year, but are capable of re-election. An Annual General Meeting of members must be held in London, to receive the Report, elect new Directors, and transact any other business that may arise.

Being a duly registered body, the Secular Society, Limited, can receive donations and bequests with absolute security. Those who are in a position to do so are invited to make donations, or to insert a bequest in the Society's favor in their wills. On this point there need not be the slightest apprehension. It is quite impossible to set aside such bequests. The executors have no option but to pay them over in the ordinary course of administration. No objection of any kind has been raised in connection with any of the wills by which the Society has already been benefited.

The Society's solicitors are Messrs. Harper and Battcock, 23 Rood-lane, Fenchurch-street, London, E.C.

A Form of Bequest.—The following is a sufficient form of bequest for insertion in the wills of testators:—"I give and "bequeath to the Secular Society, Limited, the sum of £—— "free from Legacy Duty, and I direct that a receipt signed by "two members of the Board of the said Society and the Secretary "thereof shall be a good discharge to my Executors for the "said Legacy."

Friends of the Society who have remembered it in their wills, or who intend to do so, should formally notify the Secretary of the fact, or send a private intimation to the Chairman, who will (if desired) treat it as strictly confidential. This is not necessary, but it is advisable, as wills sometimes get lost or mislaid, and their contents have to be established by competent testimony.

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