

# THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXXI.—No. 24

SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 1911

PRICE TWOPENCE

*The hunger of men for truth is immense; but they are not erect on their feet; the senses are too strong for the soul. Our senses barbarise us. When the ideal world recedes before the senses we are on a retrograde march.*  
—EMERSON.

## The Clergy and Discussion.

THE note in last week's *Freethinker* concerning the clergy and debate raises questions of more than passing interest. Those who have noted the history of Christian evidences will not have failed to observe the decreasing fondness of the clergy for discussions with qualified unbelievers. In the earlier years of the Secularist movement debates were by no means uncommon, some covering as much as a dozen evenings. And one may safely infer, knowing the character of the Christian clergy, that one reason and one reason alone could have been potent enough to cause them to abandon discussion as a means of advancing their views. And that is its complete failure either to bring Freethinkers back into the Christian fold, or to stop Christians leaving it. All the other justifications advanced for abandoning debate—the character of opponents, the dragging of “sacred” subjects into a too secular atmosphere, etc., etc.—are mere excuses to cover recognition of the vital fact that Christianity has invariably lost by open debate, and Freethought has invariably gained. It is one thing to discuss Freethought in the absence of Freethinkers, or where no talking back is allowed. It is quite another to discuss Freethought where misrepresentations may be corrected on the spot, or a lie promptly nailed to the counter.

In a sense, and that a sinister one, the clergy are absolutely correct in saying that the atmosphere of a debate is fatal to religion. In the first place, one cannot, in discussion, preserve an atmosphere of dogmatic certainty. The mere fact that a subject is being discussed involves the probability, or at least the possibility, of being in error. Without this the relations of two people are those of teacher and pupil, not opponents discussing a subject on an equal platform. The possibility is there, it is admitted by most, and felt by all. Christians hear subjects that they have looked upon as unquestionable not only questioned, but questioned with success. This belief may not be destroyed at once, but it is weakened. They see men of ability and character arrayed against their faith, and are forced to recognise that what they have regarded as belonging to believers may be possessed by those who glory in their unbelief. All the trouble taken by the clergy to surround Christians with an artificial environment favorable to the growth of religious belief is nullified by bringing them into contact with the facts of contemporary life and thought. They themselves do not state their faith on a debating platform as they state it elsewhere. In order to make a tolerable show the statement has to be accompanied with reservations and admissions that are often eye-openers to the orthodox. In this way all debates have a great educational value; but it is not a genuine education about which the clergy are anxious.

To the Freethinker who asks, Why should not the clergy debate? the Freethinker who knows the clergy

might well reply with the counter question, Why should they? They are in possession, and represent one of the greatest vested interests in the world. Their historic policy has been to protect their flocks from the influence of heretical opinions; and, from their own point of view, experience has justified the policy. A religious person in a civilised country is very much in the position of a tropical plant in a very temperate region. If it is to live it must be carefully fenced off from the normal influence of its new habitat. And if a religion is to live it must be carefully shielded from the winds of criticism, and protected from the influence of uncongenial opinions. The clergy have nothing to gain by debate, and they have everything to lose. They never convert the Freethinker; the Freethinker never fails to convert some Christians. This will be no news to Christians; they know it perfectly well. And a threatened interest has only one of two policies on which to fall back with any chance of success. It may either suppress its opponents by force, or it may seek a longer term of existence by silence and evasion. Christianity can no longer adopt the first plan on any general scale; it must perforce fall back upon the second.

It might be replied that the love of truth should urge the clergy to submit their views to the test of critical discussion. Certainly; if the clergy, as a body, were interested in getting at the truth. But has there been a clergy in any period of the world's history that has been interested in this? If there has been, I have failed to find any record of such a body. A clergyman here and there may have shown such concern; but he has usually been regarded as the black sheep of the flock, and treated accordingly. New views on religion are hated merely because they are new. Men who show any readiness to accept some of the truths concerning established creeds are either driven out of the churches, or, if they remain, are marked and treated with a silent, but none the less real, hostility. As a body, the clergy show little desire to get at the truth themselves, and still less desire to place it before their congregations. So long as the latter are satisfied with the old teaching, so long nothing else is provided. It is only when people become restless in the pews that the pulpit deals out a little of what intelligent laymen know to be the truth. The problem with the clergy is not even the comparatively honorable one of “How much of the new truth will a congregation take?” it is usually “How little will it be content with; how much of the old error will it retain?”

It is really time that we shook off the stupid superstition that the clergy as a body are a collection of high-minded men attracted to the pulpit by love of religion and devoted to the welfare of the people. The priesthood is entered as a profession, as a means of getting a livelihood, however much the fact may be disguised. It is often selected by a young man's parents, and, in spite of what may be said concerning the underpaid clergy, affords a better return for mental mediocrity than could be found elsewhere. Conventional phraseology often disguises the facts of the situation. When a young man selects the career of a doctor, a lawyer, an engineer, or a soldier, we do not talk about his experiencing a “call” which decides his future. We say the man must do something for a livelihood or a career, and

the selected profession obviously appeals to his nature. But solemn humbug accompanies religion from the earliest moment. We must surround the adoption of the priesthood as a profession with a number of semi-magical formulæ, as though each candidate for holy orders had to pass through a spiritually transforming operation. And meanwhile the older hands at the game are explaining to a befooled public that if the supply of the clergy is to be satisfactory both as to quality and quantity the priesthood must be able to compete financially with other professions. The solemn humbug of it all!

There is one other very powerful cause of the clergy shunning debate under equal conditions. On the one side, as has been already pointed out, is the fact that those who speak against religion are—so far as they are representative persons—usually better equipped than the clergy themselves. I do not mean better equipped in a mere scholastic sense. But while they know all the arguments in favor of religion, the clergy are seldom familiar with the arguments against it. This is one of the prices that religion pays for keeping its votaries secluded from antagonistic influences. But added to this is the steadily declining intellectual quality of the men who enter the ranks of the priesthood. This phenomenon is as obvious with Nonconformists as with the Episcopalians, although in the former case the bustling politician serves to cloak the intellectual mediocrity.

Even though the intellectual strength of religion remained absolutely unaffected by modern thought, the relative number of powerful intellects it could draw to its service would be bound to decrease. When Christianity was practically co-extensive with the State, and when religion wielded a commanding influence on life, men of ability could adopt a religious profession without any very oppressive sense of self-stultification. But as knowledge grew, as social life developed, and as fresh avenues of employment opened in science, in literature, and in politics, life drained religion of its men as knowledge divested it of its authority. The result has been that for the past seven or eight generations the number of first-rate intellects that have given themselves to religion have steadily declined. Let anyone impartially study the leaders of English Christianity—men like Clifford, Campbell, Horne, Horton, Jowett, or Morgan among the Dissenters, or the bishops and archbishops of the Established Church—and then ask whether in point of sheer mental ability they compare favorably with any other educated class of the community. The point need not be labored. The fact is admitted by the clergy themselves. The complaint as to the difficulty of getting men of ability into the Churches is common and constant. Church and Chapel have become the short and easy paths for the advancement of mediocrities.

There is small wonder, then, that the clergy show a growing disinclination for a form of encounter that can but exhibit their intellectual shortcomings to the public. From the point of view of a threatened corporation they have everything to lose and nothing to gain by meeting qualified representatives of opposite opinions. At the best they could only hope to hold their own, and experience has shown that this expectation is never actually realised. Doubts are suggested where none may have previously existed, and suspicions develop into certainties. Of course, if religious belief rested on an ascertainable basis of fact, no greater risk would be run in discussing it than one runs in discussing a question of politics or of science. In every other matter but religion discussion is recognised as the great touchstone of truth, the supreme detector of error. Religion is the one thing that flees direct controversy, and openly makes the cowardly claim that it can only live behind a protective wall of obscurity. Brought into the open, knowledge demonstrates its intellectual weakness and social life proves its inutility. And a belief that only flourishes so long as those who entertain it are protected from the full influence of

current life and thought naturally attracts to its service a timid, procrastinating intellect which finds discretion the better part of valor.

C. COHEN.

### The Passing Illusion.

LESS than thirty years ago a remarkable little book appeared which produced a profound and somewhat disturbing sensation throughout the religious world. It was a work the like of which had never been presented to the public before. Its very title was arresting, *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*; and its main object was to put an end to the conflict between science and religion which had been proceeding with such ferocity during the preceding twenty-four years. Henry Drummond's central contention was that science and religion run on parallel lines, but never touch, and that, therefore, nothing can be more absurd and disastrous than a forced quarrel between their respective representatives. Under the old orthodoxy such a notion was intolerable, and, realising this, Drummond whisked the old orthodoxy down the wind, and became, as he imagined, a scientific theologian. Nothing in the Bible contradicted the conclusions of science could any longer be regarded as belonging to religion. At whatever points science and the Bible clashed, the latter had to be sacrificed and the former upheld. Thus, as the eloquent Professor was fond of saying, science gave the Church a new Bible, a Bible that was to be taken poetically, parabolically, or allegorically wherever the literal interpretation brought it into collision with modern knowledge. Whatever may be thought of Drummond as an interpreter of Scripture, it is beyond doubt that his *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* has done much to hasten the disintegration and dissolution of the Christian Religion. The same thing is true of his second work, *The Ascent of Man*, for here also he stoutly maintains that science and religion deal with parallel phenomena, the phenomena of the natural and the phenomena of the supernatural, which, though parallel, never meet. They belong to two distinct worlds, the material and the spiritual; but the laws that bring them into parallelism are not parallel, but identical. There are no laws but those in operation in the natural world. Now, the curious thing is that these natural laws are declared to be in application in the supernatural world as well. Thus, two radically different worlds are yet governed by the same laws.

This is a point of vital importance. Horace Bushnell, of America, a much greater man than Drummond, was equally convinced of the reality of the supernatural, but logical enough to announce that it is fundamentally distinguishable from the natural. In his *Nature and the Supernatural* he describes the spiritual world "as another system of nature incommunicably separate from ours." He says:—

"God has, in fact, erected another and higher system, that of spiritual being and government for which Nature exists; a system not under the laws of cause and effect, but ruled and marshalled under other kinds of laws."

Bushnell's position is perfectly intelligible, though unbelievable; but Drummond's teaching is thoroughly vitiated by the strange admixture there is in it of scientific knowledge and theological belief. The eccentric combination leads to the following fallacious statement:—

"What is required to draw science and religion together is the disclosure of the naturalness of the supernatural. Then, and not till then, will men see how it is, that to be loyal to all of Nature, they must be loyal to the part described as Spiritual. No science contributes to another without receiving a reciprocal benefit. And even as the contribution of science to religion is the vindication of the naturalness of the supernatural, so the gift of religion to science is the demonstration of the supernaturalness of the natural. Thus, as the supernatural becomes slowly natural, will

also the natural become slowly the supernatural, until in the impersonal authority of Law men everywhere recognise the Authority of God."

It stands to reason, of course, that Nature cannot be at once Nature and Supernature. It cannot be one thing to science and another, essentially different, to religion. But, on the other hand, if what religion calls and treats as supernatural is identical with what science looks upon and deals with as natural, wherein, in the name of wonder, lies the difference between science and religion? What inference can be drawn from such a teaching but that religion is a dreamer of dreams, while science devotes itself to the discovery of facts, or the acquisition of knowledge? Religion's stock-in-trade are hypotheses, speculations, unverifiable assumptions, groundless conjectures, while science's wealth consists in natural discoveries, ascertained facts, systematised information, and theories thrown out by the imagination but suggested by definite conclusions already arrived at. In religion, truth signifies an abstract or metaphysical something concerning which nobody knows anything at all but over which the theologians have ever been splitting invisible hairs, but to science, truth simply means correct knowledge of natural processes and relations obtained as a result of patient investigation.

The "spiritual world" is variously conceived by different divines. Until recently it denoted the purely imaginary world which mankind were believed to enter at death. The usual name for it was eternity, and the supreme question which religion put to everybody used to be, "Friend, where are you going to spend eternity?" Nowadays, however, it is more customary, in Protestant circles at least, to understand by the spiritual world the so-called higher nature which germinally exists in every human being. Man is a being within whom are located three divinely graded theatres. There is first the bodily theatre with appetites and passions as play-actors. This is a low-grade theatre, to be shunned as much as possible. Then comes the intellectual theatre the stage of which is occupied by ideas, syllogisms, and logic-grindings. This is a middle-grade theatre, which is worthy of some encouragement, but in which there should be only occasional performances. The third theatre is described as a purely spiritual institution, in which only dramas dealing with dream-subjects and dream-experiences are ever put on the boards. We are exhorted to resort to this theatre as often as we can, and assured that it is not possible to have too much of it. Of course, this second signification of the spiritual world includes the first, because the doctrine is that at death man loses two-thirds of his present self, and enters eternity a severely, exclusively spiritual being, where his whole time will be taken up by blissful communion with an infinite three-in-one Being equally spiritual with himself.

Now, whatever conception of the spiritual world may be adopted by religious people, the fact that confronts us is that in every sense it must be pronounced a wholly Utopian realm, which never was on sea or land except in dreams, whether of the night or of the day. Christianity is pre-eminently a dream-religion. It has always revelled in the supernatural, in lurid pictures of heaven and hell, of God and angels, and gloried in its divinely appointed mission of converting natural men into spiritual, who, being "raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God," and who, because their "life is hid with Christ in God," set their affection "on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth." "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." Yes, Christianity is a supernatural religion, and a Christian is a supernaturally born individual, who is supported and nourished by supernatural grace, and who is looking forward to supernatural rewards hereafter. For him this natural world is "a barren land,"

through which he has to pass as a pilgrim and a stranger to his supernatural home beyond the skies. This is an accurate description of the nature and mission of the religion of the Cross, and there can be no doubt whatever but that, in the growing light of knowledge, it is being thoroughly exposed as a baneful superstition, of which we should get rid as speedily as possible. As it shares the qualities, it should also share the doom of all other supernatural religions the world has ever seen.

Some modern Protestant divines, when driven into a corner by undeniable facts exclaim, "That is not the definition of Christianity at all." "Christianity," they aver, "is a method of securing the greatest good and blessing for mankind, the best conditions of living, and the highest use of human faculties; a plan for the well-being of humanity..... No man is a Christian that does not make the world happier and better, and everyone who makes the world appreciably happier and better is a Christian." What unheard-of magnanimity! Even Atheists, if by their good deeds they "make the world appreciably happier and better," have the honor of being numbered with the redeemed of the Lord. But, unregenerate sinners that they are, they decline the honor with thanks. They are *not* Christians, and to be reckoned as such is an insult they positively resent. Firmly believing that Christianity, as a supernatural religion, is totally false, and, as a moral factor, painfully inadequate and misleading, they wish to be known as its active opponents, who are determined to do their very utmost, by all legitimate means, to drive it into the limbo of all forgotten illusions. In that conviction, they naturally rejoice to learn that, both in its Catholic and in its Protestant form, it has had its day, or, to adopt a slang, it is played out. Most of the best people throughout Christendom have ceased to believe in it, and are outside all its activities. J. T. LLOYD.

## The Apocalypse.—XII.

(Continued from p. 364.)

IN chapter xiv. the writer of the "Revelation" says: "And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having the name of God written on their foreheads." Upon this occasion the elect were singing "a new song" which "no man could learn.....save the 144,000" (Rev. xiv. 1—5). This ideal scene appears to have been suggested by a similar one recorded in one of the "holy books," in which the writer says:—

"I Esdras saw upon the mount Zion a great multitude.....and they all praised the Lord with songs. And in the midst of them was a young man of high stature, taller than all the rest, and upon every one of their heads he set crowns" (2 Esd. ii. 42—48).

This "young man," the writer was told, was "the son of God whom they have confessed in the world." It would thus seem that "the Lamb" was intended for this "son of God."

Next, the Apocalyptist says he beheld "another angel flying in mid-heaven, having an *eternal gospel* to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth"; which "gospel" may be summed up in two words—"Worship Yahveh" (Rev. xiv. 6—7). There is no "son of God" to be worshiped in this gospel; all the glory and worship is to be given to "him that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters," as narrated in Genesis.

Next comes a reference to the city of Rome under the name "Babylon" and to the punishment of the worshipers of the "beast" (Rev. xiv. 8—13), which are repeated at greater length further on. Passing over these items here, I come to the last paragraph in the chapter (Rev. xiv. 14—20), in which the writer says: "And I saw, and behold, a white cloud; and on the cloud I saw one sitting like unto a son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his

hand a sharp sickle." An angel then called out to this "son of man" on the cloud: "Send forth thy sickle and reap: for the hour to reap is come: for the harvest of the earth is ripe." Thereupon the man on the cloud "cast his sickle upon the earth; and the earth was reaped." After this, "another angel" appeared, "he also having a sharp sickle," who was told by "another angel" to send forth his sickle and gather in "the vintage of the earth"; which was done forthwith, the grapes being cast into "the winepress of the wrath of God." This winepress was then "trodden," with the remarkable result that "there came out blood from the winepress, even to the bridles of the horses, as far as 1,600 furlongs." The last statement would appear to mean that the blood stood up like a plateau to the height of the horses' bridles throughout the area mentioned, the extremities of which were like a wall all round, perpendicular to the ground.

With regard to the foregoing nonsense, we find a son of man in the books of Enoch and 2 Esdras, but not seated upon a cloud and holding a sickle. The Apocalyptist appears to have combined "the son of man" in Dan. vii. with the judgment of the nations in Joel ii., and then added a silly statement from 2 Esdras. These read as follows:—

Dan. vii. 13.—"I saw in the night visions, and behold, there came with the clouds one like unto a son of man.....And there was given him dominion, and glory," etc.

Joel iii., 12, 13—"Let the nations come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye; for the winepress is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great."

2 Esd. xv. 35—37.—"and there shall be blood from the sword unto the horse's belly, and to the thigh of a man, and to the camel's hough."

As regards Dan. vii., there are two very plain interpolations in that chapter. The first is that of God seated on his throne, there called "the ancient of days" (Dan. vii. 9—10); the second is the "son of man" (Dan. vii. 13—14). Where these interpolations originally came from is not known; but anyone who reads the whole chapter, omitting those four verses, will soon perceive that they have been inserted haphazard, and not only break the narrative, but have nothing whatever to do with anything narrated in that chapter.

In chapter xv. the Apocalyptist commences by saying: "And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having seven plagues, which are the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God." The pouring out of the vials of the Lord's wrath upon the devoted heads of the ungodly was, of course, inevitable: for had not the prophet Esdras, speaking in the name of the Lord, uttered the following prediction?—

2 Esd. xv. 27.—"For now are the plagues come upon the whole earth, and ye shall remain in them: for God shall not deliver you, because ye have sinned against him."

Next, the writer of the "Revelation" says that he saw "them that came victorious from the beast" standing "having harps of God," and singing "the song of Moses the servant of God, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God," etc. There are two songs of "Moses the servant of God"—Exod. xv. 1—18 and Deut. xxxii. 1—43—but the words put in the mouths of the saints in this chapter (Rev. xv. 3—4) are not found in either. They may all, however, be paralleled, sentence by sentence, from one or other of the "holy books." After the elect had praised the Lord God sufficiently, "the four living creatures gave unto the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God."

In chapter xvi. these angels are represented as pouring out the seven bowls (or vials) of wrath upon different portions of the earth in succession, and after the emptying of each bowl a new catastrophe occurred. Thus, we are told, the first angel "poured out his bowl into the earth; and it became a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast" (Rev. xvi. 2). This plague was sug-

gested to the writer by one of the ten which are said to have been brought upon the Egyptians by Moses.

Exod. ix. 10.—"And Moses sprinkled the ashes toward heaven, and it became a boil breaking forth with blains upon man and upon beast."

Next, the second angel "poured out his bowl into the sea; and it became blood.....and every living thing died that was in the sea." Similarly, the third angel "poured out his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of the waters; and it became blood" (Rev. xvi. 3, 4). These two plagues were also suggested by those brought upon the Egyptians.

Exod. vii. 20, 21.—"Moses smote the waters that were in the river.....and all the waters that were in the river were turned into blood. And the fish that was in the river died."

The fourth angel "poured out his bowl upon the sun.....and men were scorched with the heat; and they blasphemed the name of God." The fifth angel "poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast; and his kingdom was darkened, and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven" (Rev. xvi. 8—11). These two plagues appear to be original, and even more absurd than those suggested by the "holy books."

Next, the sixth angel "poured out his bowl upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way might be made ready for the kings that came from the sunrising" (Rev. xvi. 12). This was from the holy books.

Jer. l. 38.—"A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up: for it is a land of graven images."

2 Esd. xiii. 41—47.—"They entered by the narrow passages of the river Euphrates. For the Most High wrought signs for them, and stayed the springs of the River, till they were passed over.....And now when they begin to come back again, the Most High stayeth the springs of the River again, that they may go through."

The waters mentioned by Jeremiah were in Babylonia—hence the Euphrates. In 2 Esdras the reference is to the ten tribes that were carried away captive to Babylonia by Shalmaneser, who are said to have emigrated to an unknown country in order to worship the god Yahveh unmolested, and who in Esdras' time are stated to be about to return.

Lastly, the seventh angel "poured out his bowl upon the air.....and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders; and there was a great earthquake.....and the city of the nations fell: and Babylon the great was remembered in the sight of God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.....And great hail, every stone about the weight of a talent, cometh down out of heaven upon men: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail" (Rev. xvi. 17—21).

This last plague—which brings chapter xvi. to a close—is but a new version of one of the plagues of Egypt:—

Exod. ix. 23—26.—"And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the Lord sent thunder and hail.....and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt.....very grievous, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation," etc.

In Josh. x. 11 we have an account of hail-stones which the Lord God "cast down from heaven" upon the heads of the Canaanites against whom the Israelites were fighting, with the result that "they were more which died of the hail-stones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword." But the writer of the Apocalypse had not even the small amount of common sense possessed by the more ancient Hebrew writer; for he says that every stone was "about the weight of a talent," and though his hail-stones were also "cast down from heaven," the only effect they produced was to cause the men stricken to "blaspheme God." Now, the weight of a Jewish silver talent was 117 lbs., the weight of a gold talent was 181 lbs., and the weight of a talent "of the king" was 158 lbs.; hence, each of these hail-stones was a block of ice weighing something over a hundredweight. It is true that the Greeks had a talent which weighed only 57 lbs.

and it is just possible that the latter was the weight the Apocalypstist referred to. Assuming this to be so, the weight of each hail-stone would be half-a-hundredweight, and such being the case, it is safe to say that every man upon whom one of these blocks fell would be killed instantaneously: there would be no time to "blaspheme God."

Furthermore, the giving to "Babylon the great"—that is to say, to the inhabitants of Rome—"the cup of the wine of the fierceness of God's wrath" is another matter suggested by the "holy books"—in this case the books of Jeremiah and Isaiah.

Jer. xxv. 15.—"Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel: Take the cup of the wine of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it." etc.

Isa. li. 17—23.—"Awake, awake, O Jerusalem, which had drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury. ....Behold I have taken out of thine hand the cup of staggering.....and I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee."

The nation which had brought most affliction upon the Jewish people in the days of the Apocalypstist was that of the Romans, which the writer was afraid to name, and therefore only spoke of it under the designation "Babylon the great." ABRACADABRA.

(To be continued.)

### Hogarth as Heretic.

"He [Hogarth] was one of the greatest comic geniuses that ever lived.....His pictures are.....rich, exuberant moral satires, exposing vice and folly in their most ludicrous points of view, and with a profound insight into the weak sides of character and manners in all their tendencies, combinations, and contrasts."—WILLIAM HAZLITT.

NOT long ago I happened to make a bargain in the purchase of some Hogarth prints, and whilst travelling home by train, being rather anxious to inspect my good "deal," I opened my parcel of prints. This drew the attention of a clergyman sitting opposite me, who, seeing the contents, began a conversation, and I found that he was quite a Hogarth enthusiast, and boasted a very fine collection. At the time I was very much surprised that a parson (and an Anglican at that!) should take an interest in such a rebel as Hogarth; but I have since found out that Hogarth has ever been in favor with the clergy of the Church of England. Some fifteen years ago G. A. Sala, writing his Hogarth essays in the *Cornhill*, said he was so inundated with correspondence from parsons that one would think he was a heterodox Bampton lecturer!

How these parsons can take the irreverent Hogarth to their bosoms "passes"—like the peace of God—"all understanding." They must surely view his pictures through their stained-glass windows. Just imagine a country rectory with the "Modern Midnight Conversation"! In this print there is a company of twelve worthy upholders of "Church and State" in carousal. Some two dozen of claret have been squeezed dry, and, although the clock points to four in the morning, preparations are being made to sample a capacious punch-bowl, which is under the ladle direction of a rose-gilled member of "the cloth," actually identified with the Rev. Cornelius Ford, a dissolute cousin of Dr. Johnson: (the same Dr. Johnson who could only mention scepticism and immorality in the same breath). The final scene in the "Harlot's Progress" gave Hogarth another opportunity of limning one of the "third sex," a certain depraved and vicious "Chaplain of the Fleet," who was fond of a drop—only a little, but often!

Many have condemned Hogarth for exposing the private side of life, and perhaps it was "off his beat." But we shall see presently that he did not forget to relate what he found "on his beat." And with parsons, where he fills you with contempt at their private follies, he brings laughter for you when he tells of their public frauds.

Before mentioning the "irreverencies" of Hogarth, it is worth noting that the painter had a positive aversion to religious pictures, and protested against the array of "dead Christs, Holy Families, Madonnas, and other dismal dark subjects, neither entertaining nor ornamental." He frequently shows the homes of those whom he reviles for their follies or iniquities; decorated with paintings on Biblical themes, just to show, I suppose, the beneficent influence of religion.\* For instance, in "Mariage à la Mode" we have "Lot with his Daughters," "The Judgment of Solomon," etc., and in the "Harlot's Progress" there is "David dancing before the Ark," "Abraham's Sacrifice," and the "Virgin Mary."

Yet, strange to say, Hogarth himself perpetrated some religious pictures, but the circumstances were extenuating—each had a substantial purse attached. These pictures are "Moses before Pharaoh's Daughter," "Paul before Felix," and three altar pieces for St. Mary's, Redcliff. We can judge the artist's "reverent" attitude towards these subjects from the subscription ticket issued for the first two. This was a deliberate burlesque on "Paul before Felix." Sala thus describes it:—

"He shows us a stumpy Paul, mounted upon a three-legged stool, and haranguing an ignoble Felix and an assembly apparently composed of pettyfoggers from Thavies Inn, and an old clothesman from Duke's-place, seated in an area mean and squalid enough for a Court of Bequests. A hulking Angel with a Lifeguardsman's torso backs up Paul; but the *Avvocato del Diavolo* is present in the shape of a tiny Callottesque demon, who is busily engaged in sawing away one of the three-legged stool. It is difficult to determine which is the funniest of the two "Pauls," the one meant in earnest, or the one meant in jest."

As for "Moses before Pharaoh's Daughter," Haydon declared that if Hogarth really thought it was a serious painting, he deserved the straight-waistcoat. Even the altar-pieces have been censured for their want of "propriety" and "dignity."

Now for Hogarth's "irreverencies." Sala, in his memoir of the painter, would persuade his readers that Hogarth was a "decorous man in theology," and an upholder of "Church and State." Fancy a churchman treating the Holy Bible as Hogarth does in the first scene of the "Rake's Progress." It depicts Tom Rakewell taking possession of his inheritance. The room is being turned inside out. From an old lumber box has fallen, with other rubbish, a massive family Bible, together with a pair of newly soled shoes, repaired from the leathern covers of the *Blessed Book*!

Here is his next irreverency—"The Sleeping Congregation." This would have made an excellent frontispiece to Swift's sermon on "Sleeping in Church." What a perfect type of drawling monotone pulpiteer he depicts? His text is: "Come unto me all ye that are weary and I will give you rest," whilst upon the side of the pulpit is inscribed, "I am afraid lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain" (Gal. iv., 2). The whole congregation is moved to slumber, except the clerk, whose spirit struggles between the "Land of Dreams" and the "Venusberg"—one eye doing "twenty winks," and the other in a suspicious leer towards a buxom wench in the adjoining pew, who has fallen asleep with her Prayer-book opened at "Matrimony." In the first state of this print Hogarth indulged in an exquisite piece of blasphemy by making one of the angels who support the Royal Arms smoke a pipe of tobacco, which appeared to have been lighted at the holy fire surrounding a symbol of the Trinity. This print has slightly offended the commendators. Sala says it is a "censurable piece of irreverence," whilst another refers to the "slight spice of apparent profanity."

\* Speaking of the "beneficent influence of religion," it is strange that commendators speak of the unfortunate Kate as a clergyman's daughter. In the scene where she is apprehended there is a "Pastoral Letter" lying on the stool. Much good either did poor Kate.

Tom Rakewell's nuptials in the "Rake's Progress" brings another nasal-toned parson, who would, most likely, talk like the couple snored in Rowlandson's "Trumpet and Bassoon." The Church is in a state of dilapidation, and a tablet bearing the Ten Commandments is cracked across the centre. (The Commandments broken? What, in Christian England—never!) The Creed, another part of the decoration, is also destroyed; "by damp," says a commendator. (I suggest "dry rot.") And then there is the church "poor box"; a huge cobweb has grown over it. I hope Tom Hood saw this picture, it would remind him of:—

"Alas for the rarity  
Of Christian charity."

For downright blasphemy, the picture entitled "Credulity, Superstition, and Fanaticism" stands *facile princeps*. Horace Walpole considered it the "most sublime" of Hogarth's work for "useful and deep satire," whilst Hartley Coleridge is offended at its "profanity" (*Essays and Marginalia*). This plate has quite a history. Hogarth had finished a work entitled "Enthusiasm Delineated," in which he gave "a lineal representation of the strange effects of literal and low conceptions of sacred beings." Churchmen pretend that the attack was directed solely against the revivalists, Whitefield and Wesley, but it is clear that Hogarth was dispensing his satire against the entire fold of Christian superstitionists.

Hogarth's friends, fearing lest his intentions should be misconstrued, advised him to expunge some of his irreverencies. This deliberate perversion of Hogarth is only one of a legion in art and literature which Christians are responsible for. Christians draped Leonardo's "Leda." Christians substituted a secular *libretto* to Beethoven's "Mount of Olives." Christians suppressed the bitter lines on priests in one of Burns' poems. Christians "bowdlerised" the works of Sir Richard Barton. Fortunately, Hogarth "softened" very few of his irreverencies. Let me describe this print, the most profane in the realms of art.

It is a church interior. From a pulpit adorned with effigies of Julius Cæsar, George Villiers, etc. (before the alteration these figures were all Bible heroes) a stentorian parson, whose strength of lungs (says Trustler) is a convenient substitute for strength of argument, is "telling the tale." A "scale of vociferation" hangs near him, with "natural tone" as zero, rising to "bull roar"; the latter, no doubt, being frequently reached by the pulpiter, since the sounding-board above is cracked. This scale is surmounted by a repulsive, gaping mouth bearing the words "Blood! Blood! Blood!" a polite allusion to the Christian laundry recipe for soul washing. Peeping over the desk is the preacher's written sermon, the text of which is, "I speak as a fool." In one hand the parson holds out "rewards" in the shape of an impish devil with regulation gridiron, and a witch on a broom-stick in the other. This latter was substituted for a symbol of the Trinity. The preacher's violent orating disarranges his sartorial mummery, displaying underneath a harlequin's garb (unkind out!) His wig, falling off, reveals a Jesuit's tonsure, and what is deeper satire, the "halo," which surrounds the head, falls with the wig.

The clerk, said to bear the features of Whitefield, stands beneath the pulpit. He is a picture of the most abject misery, possibly engendered by the lugubrious hymns of Whitefield which engages his attention, bearing the sarcastic legend—"Continually do Cry."

As specimens of contemporary credulity, Hogarth has included the figures of a notorious Nail Spouter of Bilston, and a certain Mary Tofts, the Godalming rabbit-breeder. Close by these are two books, King James's *Demonology* and *Whitefield's Journal*.

A cherub bears in its mouth a scroll, upon which is written "To St. Money Trap,"—the poor-box—in the form of a mouse-trap! Near the pulpit is a kind of mental thermometer for religionists. "Zero" is represented by "Luke Warm," the degrees ascending

thus: "Love Heat," "Lust," "Ecstasy," "Convulsion Fits," "Madness," and "Raving"; whilst the degrees descend to "Low Spirits," "Sorrow," "Agony," "Settled Grief," "Despair," "Madness," "Suicide." (Religion and Lunacy was a theme Hogarth had touched upon before, in the Madhouse scene in the "Rake's Progress," with much discourtesy to the Christian faith.) This mental thermometer rests on two books—*Wesley's Sermons* and *Glanvil on Witchcraft*—the whole surmounted by the Cock-lane ghost and the spectral Tedworth drummer.

The occupant of the pew opposite the clerk has the "blessed book" in front of him, across which is laid a murderous knife, labelled "Bloody." Hogarth evidently thought the same as Shelley did when he wrote, "Bloody faith the foulest birth of time."

The congregation, with one exception, appear to be so affected with the gospel that brought "Tidings of great joy" that they are enivelling laboriously. The exception is a youth in process of "conversion," with a most terrified look on his face, due to the exhortations of one of Tennyson's "ghostly men," who directs the gaze of the unfortunate youth to the chandelier fashioned like a sphere, and called "A new and correct Globe of Hell." This is given the appearance of a face, no doubt to convey the idea of the human origin of this infamous doctrine.

To crown all, Hogarth has delineated an infidel surveying all this credulity, superstition, and fanaticism through the window, with a look of mingled disdain and amusement. What irony!

Hogarth was decidedly a Freethinker. Certainly, the evidence is purely negative; but no Christian, even of the most liberal shade, could have handled the graver for such blasphemies as Hogarth's. There is certainly not a scrap of evidence that will go to back up Sala's contention that Hogarth was a Churchman; whilst his assertion that he was a "decorous man in theology" is, from the evidence of the foregoing, nothing short of ridiculous. The fact is, Christians cannot bear the thought that some of the world's greatest minds (as Mill once said) should reject their creed. And even when scorn is added to rejection, they still labor to retain the names of these illustrious heretics among those of the faithful.

H. GEORGE FARMER.

#### SONG OF THE TAPE-WORM.

Written by a distinguished Agnostic in reply to a pious theological rhyme sent him to show how God cares for all, even "the sparrow's fall."

Oh, I am a jolly tape-worm,  
And I live in a gallant man,  
Who labors day and night for me  
As hard as he ever can.

I gnaw his bowels every day  
And fill him full of pain,  
Till like a burning snake he writhes,  
And the sweat runs down like rain.

Oh, I live in his guts and laugh  
To see him work and eat,  
Till he starves his wife and children  
To give a tape-worm meat.

The jaws of my man make music  
That drives me wild with glee  
And I chuckle with joy when I think  
How the good God cares for me.

I am only a worm, I know,  
A worm of low degree,  
But I bless the Lord with all my heart  
For making a man for me.

The Lord is very good to me,  
And I thank him all I can,  
But after all I must confess  
He's damned hard on my man.

—*Secular Thought.*

## Acid Drops.

General Botha's excellent message to the peoples of Great Britain and South Africa was marred by its pious conclusion. "I pray," he said, "that the Divine blessing may rest on both our lands and on the great Empire we all love and serve." But if the being who dispenses the Divine blessing is "Our Father," why is it necessary to beseech him to be kind to his own children? And why should his attention be specially called to the British Empire—to the corresponding neglect (for the words have no meaning otherwise) of other portions of the world?

If Christianity is true, and the Bible the Word of God, the Deity would seem to have been annoyed at the King and Queen having gone to the Derby. A terrific storm was arranged, which burst over the South of England generally and London in particular. It began a few minutes after the King and Queen had driven from the race course. Myriads of people were drenched to the skin, houses were struck, and several persons killed. Nothing happened to their Majesties. When the Christian God wants to punish monarchs he does it by proxy—through their subjects, as in the famous case of King David, after the census he took, and after his little affair at Bathsheba. But if the Lord thought it prudent to respect royalty so far as to hold the storm back until the racing was all over, we may see the result of bottling up a rage in his striking the steeple of St. Paul's Church, in the city of London, and doing such damage that the whole edifice will probably have to be demolished. Trinity Church, Albany-street, N.W., was also struck, and the gallery and clock-tower set on fire.

The London clergy ought to have preached on that thunderstorm. But they didn't. "Fear God and honor the King," their "Book" says. They know which commandment should stand first. The King is here and God is—God knows where.

The Christian mob (nobody supposes that many "infidels" were there) at Epsom were delighted at a millionaire Jew's winning the Derby. What they really worship is money. This is the upshot of nearly two thousand years of Christianity. And we may judge from it what will be the religious value of the Coronation.

Christianity is losing in numbers and power, but it is not losing in wealth, for the classes quite understand that it is their chief defence against the masses. They don't believe it themselves, but it pays them to keep it going amongst the working people; for doesn't it promise them all sorts of good things in the sweet by-and-by in return for all the hardship and misery they suffer in this life? This is the explanation of the colossal, elegant, and expensive Young Men's Christian Association building which is being erected in Bloomsbury. It is to be replete with comfort and amusement, and Christian young men will have its advantages cheap. Everything will be there—but poor Jesus Christ. He is simply an apocryphal figure in the prospectus.

A *Methodist Times* correspondent writes complaining of the lack of reverence that accompanies worship in Nonconformist meeting-places. One cause of this, he explains, is the presence of children unaccompanied by adults. The children, he says, are sent to chapel to get them out of the way, and naturally do not conduct themselves properly. This lack of reverence, he also thinks, partly explains the declining hold of religion on the people. For our part, we are of opinion that the case is the other way about. It is the decline of belief that explains the lack of "reverence," and also—although it sounds paradoxical—explains its presence. Where religious belief is real and vital, there is no hard-and-fast line between that and other aspects of life. And, consequently, there is no special air of "reverence" assumed when talking about it. The man who talks about God easily and familiarly shocks the ordinary religionist, but his familiarity is born of unquestioning belief, the other man's attitude is an unconscious confession of nascent doubt. It is when unbelief creeps in that a special air and tone and temper is cultivated in relation to religion. And this is an admission that if religion is to be kept alive it can only be by maintaining a specially cultivated atmosphere that will protect it from the influence of contemporary life and thought. Otherwise, we see no reason why a church should demand a special reverential air any more than a theatre.

Ex-President Roosevelt calls upon the Young Men's Christian Association of America to broaden their basis. It

appears that the Y.M.C.A. over there, just as over here, keeps all the control in strictly Protestant hands. Only those members are allowed to vote and hold office who are "members in good standing of Evangelical Churches." This exclusiveness is intensified in the case of colored people even when they are quite evangelical. Not a single Y.M.C.A. in the United States will admit a colored member.

"Owe no man anything," says the New Testament. Half the churches in England start in debt—and some of them end in it.

What self-confusing language men will use. Dr. Hodgkin, author of a long and rather verbose history of *Italy and Her Invaders*, told an audience the other day that "Christianity must destroy war, or war will destroy Christianity." Now we should dearly like to know when and where Christianity has found itself incompatible with warfare, or when and where war has been restrained by the presence of Christianity? Has Dr. Hodgkin found any such cases in his study of Italian history? If so, he has curiously failed to embody the examples in his eight volumes. At what period of history was there more persistent warfare than during the typically Christian period? What has done more to sow the seeds of war than established Christianity? Are not the Christian nations first among the military nations of the world? Is not their example forcing non-Christian nations along the lines of military development? All these are questions to which Dr. Hodgkin might well devote a little attention. That might, at least, save him from such expressions as the one noted above.

Sabbatarians are raising bitter complaints against "Godless Sundays" in Washington. They are specially angry with a fashionable Washington Club, which recently gave a dinner (on Sunday) in honor of Miss Helen Taft, the President's daughter. All that the Sabbath-breakers can say is that the Sunday parties are "invariably informal and never pre-arranged,"—which is very feeble nonsense.

The Sabbatarians of Herne Bay are wild at the Council's refusal to stop the Sunday evening military concerts in the new Pier Pavilion "during divine service." "Let us have our go first," the clergy say, "and you have your go after." That is what they think fair. Naturally, the other side doesn't see it. And the clergy are so incensed that some of them are now agitating for the suppression of Sunday music altogether. They have lost in one big fight, and they think the way to win is to start a bigger one. Which shows their wisdom.

Lord Darnley suggested to the Rochester Diocesan Conference a Sabbatarian compromise in the shape of a "split Sunday." Let the morning be kept for religious worship, and the afternoon devoted to games and recreations. But how about the evening? Are the clergy to have that too? If so, we should say that the arrangement would suit them nicely. It is not likely, however, to suit anybody else, except, perhaps, a few pious old ladies—of both sexes.

The Rev. Eric S. Waterhouse has no patience with people like some Higher Critics, who do not believe in the historical existence of the Gospel Jesus. Naturally; very few men have patience with anything that makes against their interest—whether it be financial or otherwise. And yet that the Gospel Jesus is a myth is admitted in a far larger measure than many of the advocates of the theory recognise. Let us look at the facts. The New Testament Jesus is a character who was born, lived, acted, and died in a particular manner. And, above all, he rose from the dead and ascended to heaven. Now, the extent to which anyone dismisses the reality of any of the incidents or characterisations in the Gospels that goes to make up the personality of Jesus is the exact extent to which he writes Jesus Christ down a myth. Yet, among so-called believers, some deny the miraculous birth, others the miracles, others the dealings with Satan, others the resurrection. If these denials do not make for a confirmation of the mythical theory, what is their implication? It will not do to reply, as is often done, that there must have been some actual personality to which these mythical stories were attached. The man who declares the Gospel story a myth is not called upon either to admit or deny this. But if there were, this unknown and undesirable person is not the Jesus of the New Testament. For the Jesus of the New Testament is not merely the person about whom these stories were told, he lived them, he did them, and unless they are a record of his actual life, the New Testament character—as an historical personality—falls to pieces.

Let this consideration be borne in mind, and the demonstration of the mythical character of the New Testament Jesus is a comparatively easy matter. There is, first of all, the inherent improbability, not to say impossibility, of the stories related. None of these would be believed by Christians of any character outside the New Testament. This alone is proof of their inherent unbelievableness. Then, added to this is the innumerable parallels of the Christian story in contemporary and pre-existing creeds. Christian scholars are just realising that not only were the doctrines and symbols associated with Christianity there before Christianity appeared, but that the language of the Christian worshiper was a language common to the believers of many other religions. And what the believer in the historic reality of the New Testament Jesus has to explain is, how the Gospel stories came to be related by other religions before and independent of the New Testament. It is really too much to ask us to believe that while all these things were myth before Jesus, Jesus translated myth into reality by living in his own life all that was fabled of other saviors. And if we are not to believe this, what remains but the admission that the Gospel Jesus is a myth? This, indeed, seems the most certain of all conclusions. How the myths grew up, or whether there was or was not a certain man around whom all these stories gathered, are other questions. But they do not, we repeat, affect the obviously mythical nature of the Gospel character.

"Providence" has been extremely active, or extremely negligent, of late. The village of Oroschon, on the Pamir Plateau, has been completely overwhelmed by an avalanche. Many homes were destroyed in four other villages, and 128 persons were killed. "He doeth all things well."

Asiatic cholera has appeared in Constantinople. We hope it will not spread farther West, for these epidemics only enable the priests to trade upon the ignorance, credulity, and terror of the multitude.

We referred last week to some choice "blasphemy"—as it would be called if *we* said it—from the lips of Lord Charles Beresford at a Cecil Hotel dinner. One item was a mention of Elijah as the first aviator. We did not notice the addition (for it did not appear in the report we used) that "unfortunately he had not returned to earth since his first flight." Lord Charles probably did not remember at the moment that the same remark applies to Jesus Christ. That personage has not returned either, although he has been expected for nineteen hundred years, and is still looked for by a number of foolish followers, who are incapable of being undeceived. The Second Adventists in America keep their ascension robes ready to put on at any moment. Jesus Christ may appear in the air any day or night, and they believe they will be caught up in the air to meet him. Some very stout old ladies expect to fly up in spite of gravitation.

We have more than once noted the growing orthodoxy of the Rev. R. J. Campbell. That this is not a wild discovery of ours is shown by the following paragraph from the *Boston Congregationalist* :—

"Intimations from London are to the effect that Rev. R. J. Campbell is becoming so pronouncedly orthodox as to endanger the continued adherence of a certain Liberal and Socialist element which formerly hailed him as their particular protagonist. We have had the lurking feeling for some time that not only his critics but that Mr. Campbell himself somewhat overestimated the extent of his divergence from the faith of the fathers. His Easter Sunday sermons must have been acceptable to the theological conservatives, for both morning and evening he said that he believed the Gospel narratives of the resurrection are strict records of what took place."

We expect to find the Samson of the New Theology preaching "the old, old story" before the finish—working with all the strength left him in the mill of the Philistines. His books and his sermons show that he is by no means a thinker.

Rev. A. J. Waldron writes to the press announcing his interest in a cure for alcoholism. It is a wonderful remedy, for you haven't got to leave off drinking while you are applying it. "It is not expensive," Mr. Waldron says, "and it can be paid for by instalments if desired." "I shall be pleased," he adds, "to attend to any inquiries and place them in the proper quarter, where they will receive immediate attention." No doubt!

"Plate should be kept in safe custody and adequately insured." So said the Archdeacon of Rochester in the course of his recent annual visitation. We wonder what

Jesus Christ would have thought of the necessity for such advice. And what about the efficacy of prayer as compared with insurance? The very Churches leave as little as possible to "God's" care. They "butter" him, but they don't trust him.

Rev. Robert Henry Nisbett Browne, of Inverness-terrace, Bayswater, W., left £32,019. "For their works do follow them"—but not their cash—which would melt.

The very worst performers of the "confidence trick" are those who cadge money for converting the heathen. These people foregather at this time of the year. One body, that we never heard of before, is the Cambridge Mission to Delhi. Its annual meeting was held recently, not at Cambridge or at Delhi, but at Church House, Westminster. The Bishop of Rochester was in the chair. The first speaker, one of the illustrious obscure, a Mr. Colin Sharp, spoke of the "blank materialism" that the educated natives of India were falling into, and of the awful results that must follow if English old ladies with long purses did not shell out in support of the Christian Missionaries. What though "fruit" is so scarce. Mr. Sharp says we must think of "the future of India." From that point of view "the money were well spent, even if not a single convert were obtained." That takes the cake. We wonder if Mr. Sharp has read Hood's "Black Job."

Sir Hiram Maxim has been telling the *Liverpool Evening News* that "the higher mechanical arts which are absolutely necessary to-day require men of brains, men who can think, and these men refuse to take any interest whatsoever in dogmatic theology. These men work hard 5½ days in a week, and it is nothing more than reasonable that they should wish to enjoy themselves one day in the week."

The following passage from Sir Hiram Maxim's communication to the *Evening News* is very interesting :—

"Some years ago a pious lady came to Crayford with a view of starting some sort of a religious organisation for our men. I gave my consent and introduced her to the men. After several interviews with them she came to me and said the task was hopeless as none of the men believed in the dogmas of the Church.

I instructed one of the timekeepers to find what percentage of the skilled mechanics believed in dogmatic theology. He reported that there were about four or five in a hundred."

This is cheerful news for the clergy.

According to the Bible the Ark, with old Captain Noah and his family and their menagerie, landed (or stranded) on the top of Mount Ararat. A different theory, however, is entertained by the people of the Pyrenees. They believe that the Ark settled on the Puy de Prigue, one of the highest peaks in the Désert de Carlite, which is about 10,000 feet above the sea level, and contains no less than 60 lakos of different sizes, the water having been left there when the Flood subsided. The peasants point to an iron ring to which the Ark was moored when Captain Noah landed. That settles it. Only a hard-hearted sceptic could possibly think of reopening the question.

"The Pope condemns in vehement terms the new law for the disestablishment and disendowment of the Roman Church in Portugal." Naturally. It was not intended for his approval.

Rev. R. Railton, of Clithero, objects to his Sunday-school lads and lasses joining in the Coronation field day. He says that unwholesome results follow a promiscuous gathering of that kind. Rev. J. Wrigley, also of Clithero, says that the other man of God ought to be ashamed of himself, and broadly hints how the Christian crowd would deal with any Secularist lecturer who made such a charge in the market place. How they agree! And how mild and sweet they are!

According to the advertisement of a new book on religion, which we cannot afford to advertise gratuitously, the "Catholic Faith only can stand the tests of Reason and of History." Surely this is something new. How can any Faith stand the test of Reason? Catholic divines have always taught that Faith, not Reason, is the organ of Religion. Cardinal Newman plainly said that neither Catholicism nor any other religion could stand against the corrosive influence of the restless intellect of man. And he was certainly right. We advise Catholic writers to leave Reason alone.



**Mr. Foote's Engagements.**

(Lectures suspended for the present.)

**To Correspondents.**

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1911.—Previously acknowledged £248 18s. 3d.

L. D. HEWITT.—There have been two or three such publications. Cassell & Co. issued a Child's Bible. But the expurgation was not done by the authority of any Church. We are not surprised that it took some twelve years to wean you from Christianity—especially as you were a church organist. The religion of childhood takes a dreadful hold on most of us. And the clergy know it. They don't want public debates; they want to nobble the schools. Thanks for your trouble.

JOSEPH BATES, sending useful cuttings, says: "Your wind-up in the debate was splendid, and that of your opponent extremely mean—and typical."

J. C. ARMSTRONG.—You ask "What created life?" No such thing as *creation* is known to us. The word is borrowed from the jargon of theology. Nor is life a *thing*. It is a quality or condition of certain forms of matter. From man down to protoplasm the line of life is natural. Why should not the next step from the organic to the inorganic be equally natural? Nothing is known to the contrary. As to "Who wrote the Bible?" we must refer you to good manuals such as Canon Driver's *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Many persons wrote the Bible at various times and places; some known, and some unknown. The one person who certainly didn't write it is "God."

A. LANG.—Unfortunately too late, partly, no doubt, owing to the holidays.

W. LEWIS.—See "Acid Drops." Thanks.

"RAND SAINT," writing from Johannesburg, says: "I only took to reading the *Freethinker* seven months ago, but how I wish I had made its acquaintance as many years before! I read a good deal, but nothing that I read gives me so much pleasure and satisfaction as your bright little paper. Your 'Acid Drops' and 'Sugar Plums' are most palatable sweetmeats. I can assure you that Thursday (English mail day) is now quite a red-letter day to me."

E. B.—The extracts will be useful. 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.**

We intended to deal this week with the Rev. Dr. J. Warschaner's pamphlet concerning his debate with Mr. G. W. Foote. But as we only obtained it just before starting off for the National Secular Society's Annual Conference we have not been able to find time to write about it in this number of the *Freethinker*. All we can say at present is that while we were prepared for almost anything from Dr. Warschaner, we hardly expected anything quite so bad as this. He seems to be a worthy compeer of the late Rev. Hugh Price Hughes and a serious rival of the Rev. Dr. Torrey.

Mr. S. H. Swinny has been visiting Portugal, and in the June number of the *Positivist Review*, which he edits, he

gives his "Impressions of the Portuguese Republic." We are glad that he is able to testify to the honesty of the Government, which is composed mainly of Freethinkers. "In one respect," he says, "the absence of corrupt advancement in the public service, the present Government affords a splendid contrast to its predecessors. By its honesty it has gained the confidence of the business community. If it falls, it will fall, not because of the many things it has done well, or the few things it has done ill, but because it has been unable to fulfil the extravagant expectations of the people. It has not been able to work miracles." The President, Dr. Theophilo Braga, who is a Positivist, and therefore without a particle of supernaturalism, continues to command great public respect. Mr. Swinny "heard little but praise" of him:—"Some, indeed, blamed his Republican simplicity, while others loudly applauded. A chief of a State who refuses to occupy an official residence, who lives in his own modest house in the suburbs, unnoted in the Directory and unconnected with the telephone, is something new in Portugal." Religion in Lisbon "seems rapidly passing out of the life of the people." Mr. Swinny saw about 250 people present, barely 50 being men, at the principal Sunday Mass in the great Cathedral.

Mr. Swinny notes one very curious result of the secular legislation of the Republic—controlled by Freethinkers:—"A weekly day of rest has been established for almost all workers. The shops are now as much shut in Lisbon on Sunday as in London, while formerly they were almost all open." What a strange commentary on the orthodox text that Christianity secures the weekly day of rest while Freethought would destroy it. Both in Paris and in Lisbon this theory has been quite falsified. It stood to reason, of course, that Freethinkers couldn't be as madly in love with work as the Christians pretended. Most of them, indeed, would far rather have two Sundays a week than none.

Mr. Frederic Harrison begins in the June number of the *Positivist Review* a series of articles on "Nature Worship"—which promises to be very interesting. Mr. Harrison is not lacking in outspokenness; witness the following:—

"Christendom has retained, along with the best ideas of Fetichism, some of the trivial and unprofitable practices it formed, without understanding their meaning, and quite debasing their use.....All our festivals, including the supposed anniversary of the birth of Christ, are based on primitive observances of the Moon and the Sun. So, too, the Puritan conception of the Sabbath, with all its forbiddings, is a survival of Fetichist taboo foisted on to the Jewish seventh day of rest. Still more distinctly do Fetichist superstitions which once had admirable utility survive in the use of perpetual lamps burned before the image of the Madonna, in the use of candles on the 'altar,' for which even Protestants are ready to defy both Prelates and Judges. Still more visibly Fetichism—and Fetichism in its hideous side—survives in the Catholic and Evangelical conception of the 'Lamb of God,' the lamb being merely the sacrificial victim, which gradually superseded the human victim, whose blood was ceremonially poured out to rescue the worshippers from the vengeance of some terrestrial or celestial power. The entire hagiology or Hadology, and the Satanology of Christianity in all its forms, Catholic or Biblical, from Jerome and Tertullian down to Father Vaughan or General Booth, the whole Bible of Hell, Satan, and demonology, in all its repulsive and savage developments, is just a survival of Fetichistic superstition, which in its most ghastly form survives in Dahomey and Hayti."

We look forward with interest to the continuation of this series of articles from Mr. Harrison's able pen.

The Prussian Government have succeeded in passing a Bill permitting cremation in the kingdom. It was passed by a narrow majority of two in a House of 312. The majority consisted of Liberals and Socialists, the minority of Conservatives and Catholics. The religious aspect of the matter was not emphasised as much as it might have been, but it was urged that cremation would be a breach with ancient Christian usage and an injury to some of the most sacred aspects of Christian symbolism. It is a cause for congratulation that common sense triumphed over such considerations. But the battle is not yet over; it will be continued on other grounds; for the erection of crematoria is dependent on the vote of two-thirds of the inhabitants in every district. Nevertheless the Bill, as representing the opinion, sentiment, and will of the nation, is a distinct gain.

"A Nebraska woman, writing to us of the death of her husband, who was latterly a subscriber to this paper, says: 'I have had plenty of hard work in my life, so I could not study and read as he did. He was more considerate and

more kind to me after reading Robert Ingersoll's writings than before. I love Robert Ingersoll. He did great good.' More than one wife, and more children than can be counted, have reason to love Robert Ingersoll. His lecture on 'Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child' is the text-book of consideration and kindness for subject members of the family.'—*New York "Truthseeker."*

We attach a good deal of importance to a letter we have received from Cornwall. It is addressed to the President of the Secular Society. The writer says:—

"I am in quest of a paper known as the *Freethinker*. I have failed to get it anywhere here. I hope you can give me information. Permit me to say that your debate, as it appears in the *Christian Commonwealth*, with the German doctor was a Freethinker's victory. As I go about I hear your words repeated: 'Atheists do not know anything about God, and we think you Christians know as much.'"

It is gratifying to find that even our opponents are helping us to sympathy and appreciation. We have had the four numbers of the *Freethinker* containing the verbatim report of the Warschauer-Foote debate forwarded to our Cornish correspondent. We should be happy to do the same for scores of inquirers.

The promised pamphlet exposing the Rev. Mr. Dixon, who is coming from America to take the pastorate of what used to be Spurgeon's Tabernacle, has not been forgotten. What with our extra work in connection with the N. E. S. Conference, and the hindrance caused by the excessive, or at least, unusual, heat, we have been unable to get as far forward as we hoped to be with this pamphlet. Besides, on looking through the materials more carefully, we found that there was more to do in the way of revision and compression than we thought there was while merely trusting to memory. We do not intend to spoil or weaken the exposure of Libeller Dixon by unnecessary haste. We want to deal with him as effectually as we dealt with Dr. Torrey. One libeller of Ingersoll is settled. The other must share his fate.

## Tales of Our Times.

BY A CYNIC.

### I.

THERE was once a country entirely ruled by priests. The governing body consisted of a Lower House of Priests and an upper House of Archbishops and Bishops, all elected by themselves and acting under one supreme head who was called the Archbishop Sacro-Sanct—but the initials were never used alone lest they should give rise to misunderstanding.

As might be expected under these conditions, the Statute Book of this realm was of a very comprehensive and somewhat terrifying character. The offences were numerous and the punishments were varied, ingenious, and picturesque—having been borrowed chiefly from the glorious annals of the Holy Inquisition, but exhibiting many modern improvements which would have put Torquemada to the blush for his own incompetence. For instance, it was an offence not to take off your hat when you met a priest; and as every third man you met in the streets was a priest, and as the punishment for this offence had something to do with boiling oil, a walk down town was not without a certain spice of danger.

But the supreme, transcendent, and ultimate offence was refusing to lie down on your stomach when you met the Sacrament being carried through the streets. This offence was called blasphemy against the Holy Host, and for it—*incredible though this may seem—no punishment had been awarded.* But the explanation was simple. When the two Houses of Convocation drew up the Penal Code of the country they proceeded to consider in order all possible offences and their appropriate punishments from the least even unto the greatest, and when they came to blasphemy against the Holy Host they found that every imaginable form of punishment had already been awarded, and their ingenuity had reached its limit. Moreover, it was, of course, needful that the punishment for this supreme offence should be proportionately greater than that awarded for any other; but, cudgel their brains as they would, the two Houses—sitting in Grand Committee with the Archbishop Sacro-Sanct in the chair—could think of nothing horrible enough. So they decided to leave it alone, and gave out that for mere men to devise a punishment for this offence would itself be a sort of blasphemy.

Such an offender must be left for the Deity himself to deal with.

Now, it may be laid down as a fairly safe maxim in matters of legislation, that if any offence be left without a specified punishment, sooner or later some individual will come along and commit that offence out of sheer perversity; and so it was in this case. In the fulness of time it came to pass that one day, as the Sacrament was being carried along the street, a man not only stood bolt upright on both legs, but applied the thumb of his right hand to the extremity of his nose and expanded his fingers vertically in front thereof—which is quite different from "crossing yourself." Why the lightning didn't fall from heaven and strike him dead no one could explain, but it certainly didn't, for with a derisive laugh the man passed on his way and no harm befell him.

But worse was to follow. At the very next Eucharistic Congress half-a-dozen other people behaved in just the same disrespectful manner, and on subsequent occasions the number of these offenders kept on increasing—so contagious is evil example.

Something had to be done, so both Houses of Convocation assembled in solemn conclave, and by a supreme and united mental effort—probably assisted by direct inspiration from on high—enacted a punishment adequate to the offence of blasphemy against the Holy Host. What this punishment was, never became known—nor was there any need for its publication. The knowledge that it was there—ready for the next offender—had a quite sufficiently sobering influence over the most flippant blasphemer, and the Holy Host encountered no more outward signs of disrespect when taking an airing.

Thus was it discovered that, as God Almighty is apparently unable to protect himself from insult, his faithful people must do it for him—which is the great and sacred principle lying at the root of all Blasphemy Laws.

### II.

Old Mrs. Britannia had such a large family that it sometimes caused her as much embarrassment as history tells us was experienced by that other elderly dame who lived in a shoe. But Mrs. Britannia's children were not all her own progeny, for she had a curious fondness for adopting other people's children and making them live in her house whether they wished to or not. She justified this little eccentricity of hers on the ground that there was so much room for children in her big house, and that her methods of juvenile education and management were so much better than those of her neighbors.

Of course, with such a large family, Mrs. Britannia had to have several nurseries in her house. Besides the Home Nursery, a very crowded little room over which Mrs. Britannia herself presided, there were four other much larger nurseries under the supervision of as many head nurses. There was the South Nursery, No. 1, a big room very sparsely occupied by a few of Mrs. Britannia's own children. There was the Asiatic Nursery, another big room but densely crowded with brown-skinned children whom Mrs. Britannia had adopted—for she was not particular about color. There was the South Nursery, No. 2, also rather sparsely occupied by a mixed assortment consisting of a few of her own children, some other white children whom she had recently adopted—by main force—and a large number of black children whose residence in Mrs. Britannia's house was also not entirely voluntary. Lastly, there was the West Nursery, containing a few of Mrs. Britannia's own children, and, like the two South Nurseries, affording plenty of accommodation for more.

The unequal distribution of Mrs. Britannia's children among her five nurseries was evident to the most superficial observation, for while the Home Nursery and the Asiatic Nursery were so crowded that the children had scarcely room for a romp, the two Southern and the Western Nurseries—magnificent spacious apartments—seemed almost empty by comparison. The remedy for this state of things would appear to be sufficiently obvious, but Mrs. Britannia had a good deal of worry over the matter. The children in the Asiatic Nursery rather objected to being kept cooped up in their crowded quarters, and were continually running into the three large, roomy nurseries, where there was so much more space for their games; but the children in these three nurseries strongly resented these incursions. In fact, so strongly did they object that the children of the Asiatic Nursery were eventually forbidden to enter South Nursery, No. 1, on any pretence whatever, and they were only admitted to South Nursery, No. 2, under rather humiliating conditions: such as not being allowed to sit on the chairs, but only on the floor, and other equally invidious distinctions. In the West Nursery, too, things were rather unpleasant. And what made all this the more deplorable was, that when Mrs. Britannia had been going around collecting her family by her peculiar method of compulsory adoption, she had

always assured everybody concerned that in *her* house all children enjoyed equal rights and "British" justice—evidently meaning a superior brand of the article which she kept on her own premises.

It has been suggested that Mrs. Britannia would avoid a deal of worry by allowing some of her numerous family to start entirely independent establishments, but the old lady has a curious, old-fashioned objection to this idea—which is all the more remarkable as some of her children did, not so very long ago, set up business for themselves, and are now doing uncommonly well.

Meanwhile, the neighbors are looking on with some interest, and wondering how it is all going to end.

### III.

Once upon a time the Blessed Virgin appeared to a Hermit who lived in a cave near a spring, and kindly cured him of rheumatism. Of course, the water of the spring soon became endowed with miraculous powers, and the cave became a holy Shrine whither thousands resorted yearly to be cured of their ailments. The pilgrims brought money in their purses and the Shrine grew wealthy, an additional source of income being the sale of the spring water, which was sent all over the country and retailed at eighteen pence a bottle, or fifteen-and-six a dozen—and very cheap too.

One day the good Father of the Shrine fell ill himself—suffering much pain in the region of the loins on the left side. But he was a sensible man, so instead of bothering the Blessed Virgin about a little thing like that, he sent for the best Physician in the nearest town, who was in charge of a big hospital.

"Hum," said the Physician after he had examined the patient, "a case of advanced Calculous Pyonephrosis. It was just as well you sent for me, Father. We ought to operate without delay, so you had better come into hospital to-morrow."

On his departure the Physician had to pass the Shrine, and a Lay Brother in attendance there kindly offered to show him over the holy place.

"This," said the Lay Brother, "is the Holy Well. There, where the Altar now stands, is the exact spot where the Virgin appeared. And these crutches here have all been left by pilgrims who have been cured. I daresay you are familiar with this apparatus which was worn for many months by a boy with a twisted spine."

"Yes," said the Physician, "and here too is a wooden leg which rather interests me. Did the Virgin make the owner's natural leg grow again?"

"Well, no," said the Lay Brother. "This leg belonged to a lady who came here regularly for twelve years, till the Holy Virgin appeared to her in a dream and suggested that she should buy a new leg of an improved pattern. She did so, and left her old leg here as a votive offering."

"I see," said the Physician with a grim smile as he turned to depart.

The operation was quite successful, and in due time the Father was back at the Shrine again. Soon after his return he received a parcel containing a letter from the Physician, which was as follows:—

"Reverend Father,—

The stone enclosed herewith really belongs to you as it came out of your left kidney. Perhaps you would like to add it to your pathological museum."

And the good Father did so, as a memorial of the Virgin's beneficence in bringing him safely through the operation.

But nobody laughed; or, if they did, the kept their merriment to themselves; for open hilarity is incompatible with a truly pious frame of mind.

"I say to myself that Giles be of the sort that have to larn in a cruel school. The hard have to be treated hard afore they'll understand. And God as made all, knows how to lead all." [Alison Cleave.]

"Ban't only the hard be treated hard. That's man's justice, and I've nought to say against it. But 'tis the soft, and gentle, and harmless, be treated hard. That's what I don't understand. 'Tis women and children be scourged; that's where the Almighty's way beats a plain sportsman like what I be. I'm not saying it isn't right and proper, you understand, for, if I did, I should be setting myself up to know better than my Maker; but I'm saying it don't look on all fours with what a decent man would do in the same case."

—Eden Philpotts, "Demeter's Daughter."

### ABOU BEN ADHEM.

.....Abou spoke more low  
But cheerily still, and said, "I pray thee, then,  
Write me as one that loves his fellow men."  
The Angel wrote and vanished. The next night,  
It came again, with a great wakening light,  
And showed the names whom love of God had blest,  
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

—Leigh Hunt.

## The Conference—And After.

I ARRIVED home from the N. S. S. Conference on Monday evening about eleven o'clock, and had to be at the editorial office of the *Freethinker* again on Tuesday morning. Sunday and Monday were long days with me, and the tropical weather is quite overpowering. All I can do is to pen this slight introduction to the Annual Report which I read to the Conference, and leave the rest of the report for next week's issue of this journal.

The Conference was very harmonious and successful, although the delegates and visitors were nearly melted with the heat. The luncheon tables at the Colonnade Hotel were well patronised between the morning and afternoon business sessions. Some of the older members looked astonishingly young. Dr. Nichols, with his genial face and portly person, was a pleasant spectacle in spite of his seventy-five years; and Mr. Richard Johnson, the same age, was one of the brightest and liveliest figures of the whole gathering. Everyone felt Miss Vance's absence, and joined in the resolution of sympathy that was ordered to be sent to her. A supplementary resolution decided that a Testimonial Fund should be raised in acknowledgment of Miss Vance's long, eminent, and valuable services as Secretary; and the President was requested to take charge of it in the *Freethinker*. I shall inaugurate this Fund next week with a carefully written appeal, and acknowledge any subscriptions sent in by "saints" who may not think it necessary to wait for a formal invitation. I am very happy to add that Miss Vance is still improving. But she will have to recuperate by the seaside before she is fit to resume her duties. To be alive at all is something after the ordeal she has passed through.

The speakers at the evening public meeting were all in their best form. After the President's introductory speech, the audience was kept in a continuous state of pleasurable excitement by Messrs. C. Cohen, J. T. Lloyd, F. A. Davies, W. Heaford, and A. B. Moss—and Miss Kough. Every one of them was in tip-top form. Not a sign of restiveness was displayed by the audience during nearly two hours and a half, in spite of the "melting mood" induced by the weather.

Monday's excursion to Stratford-on-Avon was blessed with glorious weather. One unannounced and unexpected feature was a brief address by me from the stage of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre to the N. S. S. party comfortably seated in the dress circle. The invitation was sprung upon me as I entered the Memorial building, and I was so hot and dusty that I felt like declining; but I was so pressed to "oblige," and so sensible of the curator's kindness, that I gave way; and the spot, and the surroundings, and my love for the Master inspired me to perform a not too easy task with some degree of success, which was exaggerated by the kindness of my audience. I shall always regard that sudden opportunity as a signal honor.

G. W. FOOTE.

## National Secular Society's Annual Conference.

### ANNUAL REPORT.—BY THE PRESIDENT.

IN presenting this Annual Report, with the Balance-sheet, to the present Conference, the Executive finds it still necessary to repeat an old warning. Neither the Report nor the Balance-sheet covers anything like the whole work of the Society or of the movement which it mainly represents and embodies. The Branches of the Society, throughout London and the provinces, are all autonomous, carrying on their own operations and raising and expending their own funds. The Central Executive exists to do certain collective work which the Branches cannot do separately. This work has never, except on special occasions, involved a large expenditure of money. It must also be borne in mind that a good deal of the most expensive work is now undertaken and financed by the Secular Society, Limited; including costly series of lectures and the principal part of the Secretary's salary. The expenditure of that Incorporation amounts to several hundreds of pounds per year, nearly all of which represents effort running parallel to, and in harmony with, that of the National Secular Society. The Incorporation also makes grants of money to the N. S. S. Executive and Branches which are in need of greater financial assistance than the Executive is able to render.

During the past year the public mind has continued to be immensely pre-occupied with politics, and as the nation can only stand a certain amount of excitement, all advanced

movements either go backward or merely mark-time in such circumstances. The National Secular Society has not gone backward; it has held its ground, and has even met with some encouraging experiences.

Your President has had gratifyingly large audiences both in London and the provinces, and other lecturers, including Mr. Cohen and Mr. Lloyd, report well-maintained audiences in most places and improved audiences in others. Mr. Joseph Bates, formerly of Boston, has addressed good outdoor meetings in Lancashire and Yorkshire. Mr. Moss and Mr. Heaford have been able to join again in the Society's propaganda, particularly at Birmingham, where frequent Sunday lectures have taken place at the hall in which this Conference is meeting. But the most surprising thing of all is the coming-on disposition which Christians have shown in the matter of public debate. Mr. Cohen held a debate in North London with the Rev. C. Gunn, and your President held another at Caxton Hall, Westminster, with the Rev. J. Warschauer. These debates attracted large audiences, and a good number of Christians must have heard the Freethought position expounded for the first time. This, indeed, is the trouble with our opponents. They are once more finding that debates are of doubtful value, and not the most effective means of eliciting the truth; in other words, that they are an injury rather than an advantage to the Christian side. No doubt this explains, to some extent, the exhibition of orthodox temper which Dr. Warschauer has made, and is still making, in connection with the late encounter at Caxton Hall.

The importance of the Warschauer-Foote debate from one point of view may be seen from the fact that the *Christian Commonwealth* reported it at considerable length after special pre-announcement. As there is no love lost between Dr. Warschauer and the conductors of that journal, it was not a personal interest that prompted the editor's action. He was simply after paying copy—likely to increase the circulation of his paper.

It is regrettable that public debates between leading Freethinkers and more or less leading Christians cannot be held frequently. The Freethought side would hail them with delight. But as it is otherwise with the Christians, who find that faith loses rather than gains by every appeal to reason, it would be too sanguine to expect more debates in the early future. There is no sign of Dr. Warschauer's accepting the offer of a Socratic debate that was made to him. His love of questions and answers does not carry him to that extent.

New Branches of the National Secular Society have been established at Rhondda, Maesteg, Alfreton, and Edmonton. The great difficulty in maintaining new Branches, and even some old ones, in a state of efficiency, is the paucity of lecturers who could keep on tour, and deliver lectures almost nightly, at a minimum cost of travelling, etc. It may be possible—perhaps by the aid of the Secular Society, Ltd.—to find and support one or two such lecturers in the future. Certainly it would be an immense advantage to the movement if this could be done.

In London, of course, where so many lecturers reside, where travelling expenses are light, and where open-air lectures can be delivered on Sunday, that part of the Society's work is adequately carried out. Lectures are delivered at a considerable number of these stations every Sunday. The London County Council grants permits to make collections and sell literature in open spaces under its control, and it has been found advisable to arrange for these permits through the General Secretary at headquarters. The County Council requires, in return, an account of income and expenditure. Hence the new item in the present Balance-sheet. It should be added that, during the summer season, a large number of people are addressed by the lecturers at various stations, and the Freethought seed thus scattered must spring up into some harvest for the movement.

The Sunday lectures at Queen's Hall do not technically fall under the heading of your Society's work, but they are conducted to a large extent by your machinery, and are largely delivered by your Society's lecturers. The audiences during the past winter have been on the whole good, and sometimes excellent. It is pleasant to note that Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner occupied the platform one Sunday evening. It is to be hoped she will also figure in the next winter's program. Good audiences assembled also at the Stratford Town Hall (likewise under the auspices of the Secular Society, Ltd.) at Mr. Cohen's and Mr. Lloyd's lectures. At the concluding lecture by your President the hall was crowded.

It is an agreeable thing to record, in passing, that the West Ham Borough Council, which, at the instigation of bitter and unscrupulous bigots, excluded the *Freethinker* years ago from the reading-room tables in the Public Free Libraries, has restored the paper to a level of equality with other publications. It now lies openly on the tables, instead

of being kept behind a screen. Visitors have not to make themselves conspicuous by asking for it, and it will therefore be more extensively read. This happy issue of a long struggle may no doubt be largely credited to the success of the Freethought gatherings which have been held every year in the Stratford Town Hall.

In the provinces there have been large audiences in places like Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham. Things go smoothly and evenly at Glasgow, where the Sunday meetings are always bright, often large, and sometimes crowded. Liverpool has had a similar history during the past twelve months. Your President has had his usual big audiences at Manchester, and the Branch reports improved audiences in the case of other lecturers. Birmingham has waged a gallant fight against active bigotry, with no mean success. This Conference would have taken place in the Town Hall, as on previous occasions, but it was refused for the purpose. Fortunately the present handsome and commodious hall was available. Christian bigotry thus perceives that Freethought is not easily suppressed in Birmingham. It has a courage and a tenacity which are worthy of the older and better traditions of the city. And it has been happy in having the strong financial support of the Secular Society, Ltd., without which its energy and valor might have been exerted in vain.

Your Executive has subscribed the usual £5 to the funds of the International Freethought Federation. Under the auspices of that Federation an International Freethought Congress was held last autumn at Brussels. Your Society was represented by Messrs. Cohen, Lloyd, Heaford, and Roger—the President being unable to attend. Interesting reports of their experiences appeared in the *Freethinker*. The chief topic of discussion at the Congress was the martyrdom of Francisco Ferrer and the steps that should be taken to vindicate his character and perpetuate his memory. It is not very clear that these International Congresses are of much practical advantage to Freethought, but they advertise the cause, they bring its representatives in various countries together, they stimulate the spirit of fraternity, and they show that Freethought is as world-wide as the superstition to which it is opposed.

Another subscription of your Executive's was £5 to the funds of the Secular Education League. The League does good work in circulating carefully prepared literature. Some of its leaflets are really admirable. Branches of the National Secular Society might usefully distribute some of these things. Public meetings are of little benefit at present, for the cause of Secular Education is not just now at the front, nor does it seem likely to reach that position in the immediate future. The Liberal Government will avoid bringing in another Education Bill as long as possible. They have had a bitter experience of three already. But when the matter of Education takes its turn the Secular Education League will be as active on the platform as it is in the press. At the annual meeting Lord Weardale resigned the presidency on account of advancing age; the vacancy, however, was filled by the election of Mr. Halley Stewart, a veteran Radical, with whom the principle of religious liberty and equality is a passion. Mr. Stewart's first year of office was signalised by a powerful article on "The Policy of Secular Education" in the April number of the *Nineteenth Century—And After*. It was the first time that such a defence of Secular Education had appeared in a leading magazine; neither timid nor apologetic, but firmly occupying its position, and boldly replying to the attacks of the enemy. The League has obtained permission to reprint the article in pamphlet form three months after publication. It should be mentioned that two members of your Society's Executive are also members of the Executive Committee of the Secular Education League. They do not represent the N.S.S. as delegates, but their presence is a moral guarantee that the special view of the N.S.S. (if it can be called special) will not be overlooked.

Several members of your Executive happen to sit upon the Executive of the newly formed Rationalist Peace Society. They are not delegates either, but simply persons whose co-operation was thought worth having. The object of this Society is to enable Freethinkers to work for Peace without being entangled, compromised, and annoyed by the obtrusive Christianity of the other Peace Societies. Mr. J. M. Robertson, M.P., is the Rationalist Peace Society's first President, while Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner is "chairman" of the Executive Committee. Mr. Foote, Mr. Heaford, and Miss Kough are members of the Committee. An admirable manifesto has been drafted and printed, and should be judiciously circulated by Freethinkers all over the kingdom.

Social events worth referring to are the successful Annual Dinner at the Holborn Restaurant early in January, and several less ambitious gatherings that have taken place at Anderton's Hotel. These enjoyable functions help to weld the party together socially. They are organised by the Executive because for all such purposes London counts as

one place. Individual Branches could not possibly undertake the work. A collective effort can only be made by a collective agency.

This is perhaps the place where a personal matter may be mentioned. Readers of the *Freethinker* will remember the case of Mr. Frederic Walsh, the Freethinker who bears his peculiarly sad fate with so much fortitude, and even cheerfulness, in a public institution in the Midlands. The Executive has made Mr. Walsh an honorary member of the National Secular Society.

At this point, also, the death of two Vice-Presidents may be mentioned. Mrs. Fathers, wife of the President of the Birmingham Branch, was highly respected by the members, and is much missed by all of them. Mr. Frederic Smallman was one of the oldest members of the Society. He was a liberal subscriber to its funds, both regular and special. Circumstances did not allow of his taking a share in the active work of the movement; but, considering the influence of his intellect and character, his private advocacy of Secularism must have been extremely valuable. The Freethought movement never had a more loyal supporter. It is not surprising that he remembered it handsomely in his will. Some months ago he advised your President that he had left the Secular Society, Ltd., a bequest of £500.

Another of the Society's Vice-Presidents nearly lost, but happily not quite so, during the past year is the lady who acts as Secretary to the Central Executive. All who are here this morning deeply regret that she is unable to be present. Miss Vance's loss of eyesight has been followed by heart trouble, and her recent attack of that malady threatened a fatal termination. She is on the road to recovery now, however, and will doubtless be able to resume her duties before very long. She is fretting because she has been laid aside for this Conference, and fancying that all sorts of things will go wrong. But she has better friends around her than she seems to realise. Moreover her absence creates an opportunity for suggesting that a tangible recognition might now be made of her long and faithful service to the movement. On this point your President will submit a resolution to the Conference.

Turning to the Society's ordinary business again, it has to be said that a sub-committee of the Executive was appointed to consider and report on Motions 12 and 14 on last year's Agenda, relating to Lectureships and Cremation. The sub-committee, however, has not yet presented its report, so that the Executive has nothing to present to the Conference. Your President, who was (it will be remembered) not able to be present at the sitting of last year's Conference at which those two Motions were carried, would be far from surprised to learn that the sub-committee found the matters more difficult and thorny than they expected. He may exercise his right to say something about them in the discussion arising on the Report he is now reading.

Your Executive sent a message to President Braga, the head of the Portuguese Republic, who is a distinguished Freethinker, with Freethought colleagues, and engaged in undoing the mischief wrought by the Catholic Monarchy. A message was also sent to the Spanish Cortes congratulating it on discussing the Ferrer case and hoping it would be reopened for the vindication of that hero's memory. Unfortunately, the reopening was not secured, but great good was done by the speeches of the Anti-Clericals in the Cortes. The Executive has postponed a message of sympathy to the latest Freethought martyr in Russian Poland, in the expectation that a message would be sent to him direct from this Conference.

It is customary to look round the outside world a little before closing this Report. Turning to America it is to be noted that Mr. Ellis still upholds his monthly *Secular Thought* at Toronto, although there seems to be no Freethought organisation remaining there. Mr. George Macdonald gallantly maintains the *Truthseeker* at New York, where a good deal of sporadic Freethought work goes on. The latest organisation there is the Free Speech League, which apparently owes much to the worthy son of a veteran sire—Dr. E. B. Foote. Dr. Foote is obliged to take a pessimistic view of the future of free discussion in the United States. What with the doings of creatures like Anthony Comstock, and the Post Office censorship of mailed publications, and the usurpations of the police, freedom of speech is in deadly peril except in the field of party politics, where the utmost license is permitted. Questions that have no relation to votes and elections are increasingly difficult to discuss except in language of futile obscurity. In this condition of things it is to be hoped that the Free Speech League will be able to raise a strong agitation in favor of open debate. Away at Chicago both Mr. Mangasarian and Mr. H. Percy Ward deliver Freethought lectures on Sunday. Small local Freethought Societies exist in many American cities, but a common organisation is lacking. There is much Freethought in South American cities, with several Freethought journals. Freethought is gaining ground in South

Africa. Two propagandist organisations have lately been started there. Freethought is spreading rapidly amongst educated Hindus, and offers a formidable barrier to the success of Christian missions. Educated Chinamen are naturally sceptical. They are imbued with the secular philosophy of Confucius. And the wonderful work of the Chinese Government in suppressing the opium traffic, which the (British) Government of India strives to uphold, shows the absurdity of Christian boasts of superior morality in that part of the world. According to the latest reports, Freethought continues its conquest of Japan. In New Zealand it is matter for congratulation to find Mr. W. W. Collins still lecturing at Christchurch to large audiences, and still carrying on his monthly *Examiner*. A pleasant fact, not too trivial, perhaps, to be recorded, was the sending from Christchurch, through Mr. Collins, of a beautiful New Zealand travelling rug to your President after his last year's illness. A charming letter accompanied the gift, signed by thirty-eight Secularists, all of them readers of the *Freethinker*; a paper, by the way, which circulates throughout the civilised world, and whose circulation steadily, if slowly, increases—in spite of the amazingly well-sustained conspiracy of silence against it. What the Freethought cause has now to fear is not so much active persecution as a silent boycott. People are told that the Freethought cause does not exist now, that it died with the late Charles Bradlaugh, that its lecturers and audiences have all disappeared, that it is no longer to be found in the land of the living. It is for the National Secular Society to explode this calculated and characteristic lie by the energy and enthusiasm of its propaganda. It is impossible to hide the truth altogether, even by the most cunning tactics of the Great Lying Church. The Freethought movement cannot be lied out of existence. If it could be the Christians would be quite equal to the performance. But the most expert liars in the world cannot achieve the impossible. And it may confidently be predicted that the Freethought cause in general, and the National Secular Society in particular, will not succumb to difficulties which it has successfully defied for fifty years; and that another fifty years will make a vast difference in the respective armies of Faith and Reason. The drift from the Churches has more than begun. They are losing members, losing brains, and losing respect. Nothing will be left them in time but the incurably feeble-minded. And all their wealth will not help them then. Humanity will leave them behind, and press forward to fresh triumphs of intellect and new developments of character; and the false Fatherhood of God will give place to the true Brotherhood of Man.

## Correspondence.

### NEBULAR HYPOTHESIS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER"

SIR,—With all due respect to Mr. Mann's scholarship, I beg to differ from him on the ground of priority for the claims of the Nebular Hypothesis. He says that—

"Buffon, the great naturalist, was the first in the field, and his ideas upon the subject, contained in his *Theory of the Earth*, were founded upon the calculations of Newton. Like Galileo he was forced to recant his views. Five or six years later came Kant's *General Natural History and Theory of the Heavens*; or, *A Research in the Construction and Mathematical Origin of the Entire Universe on Newtonian Principles*, in which the Nebular Hypothesis was first propounded. Three years later still, in 1796, Laplace published his *Exposition of the System of the Universe*, and later, his *Celestial Mechanics*. In these famous works he lays down the 'Nebular Hypothesis' of the origin of the heavenly bodies, a process which accords so well with the known facts and calculations of astronomy that it is held, with some modifications, by all astronomers to-day." (See *Freethinker*, p. 347.)

This statement is true enough as far as it goes, but he apparently forgets the statement made by Thomas Paine in the first part of his *Age of Reason*, first published towards the end of January, 1794. He says:—

"The probability is that each of these fixed stars is also a sun, round which another system of worlds or planets, though too remote for us to discover, performs its revolutions, as our system of worlds does round our central sun." (See *Age of Reason*, p. 41, published by the Secular Society in 1901.)

James Ferguson, the herd laddie, the Banffshire astronomer, and under whom Thomas Paine received lectures on astronomy, also propounded the Nebular Hypothesis on or about the same time as Thomas Paine did. This is another instance where Thomas Paine anticipated the conclusions even of scientists in their special work. Thomas Paine and James Ferguson were the discoverers of the Nebular Hypothesis, anticipating both Kant and Laplace.

W. P. ADAMSON

**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, F. A. Davies, Lectures.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3.15 and 6, C. Cohen, Lectures.

FINSBURY PARK: 11.30, Miss K. B. Kough, a Lecture.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (Ridley-road): 11.30, F. A. Davies, "The King and the Bible."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill): 3.30, Miss K. B. Kough, a Lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford): 7, J. Rowney, "How and Why Christianity Conquered."

WOOD GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Jolly Butchers Hill, opposite Public Library): 7, E. Burke, "Reason and Superstition."

**COUNTRY.****OUTDOOR.**

BLACKBURN BRANCH N. S. S. (Market Square): Joseph A. E. Bates, 2.45, "Some Ethical and Economic Objections to the Salvation Army"; 7, "Kingcraft—Past and Present" (with some reference to the forthcoming Coronation of George V). Monday, June 12, at 7.30, "The Tragedy of the Cross."

CHORLEY (Market Square): Joseph A. E. Bates—Wednesday, June 14, "Phantoms of the Clouds"; Thursday, "The Great Enigma." At 7.30.

LAINDON, ESSEX (opposite Luff's Hairdressing Saloon): Saturday, June 10, at 7, R. H. Rosetti, "The Soul."

LEIGH, NEAR BOLTON (Leigh Market): 3 and 7, Joseph M'Clellan, Lectures.

**FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT**

By **G. W. FOOTE.**

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

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

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

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

**BUSINESS CARDS.**

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

PROPAGANDIST LEAFLETS. New Issue. 1. *Hunting Skunks*, G. W. Foote; 2. *Bible and Teetotalism*, J. M. Wheeler; 3. *Principles of Secularism*, C. Watts; 4. *Where Are Your Hospitals?* R. Ingersoll. 5. *Because the Bible Tells Me So*, W. P. Ball. Often the means of arresting attention and making new members. Price 6d. per hundred, post free 7d. Special rates for larger quantities. Samples on receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—N. S. S. SECRETARY, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

**THE****MARTYRDOM OF HYPATIA.**

An Address delivered at Chicago by

**M. M. MANGASARIAN.**

Will be forwarded, post free, for

**THREE HALFPENCE.**

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

**Ralph Cricklewood,**

A Twentieth Century Critical and Rational  
Exposé of Christian Mythology.

(IN THE FORM OF A NOVEL.)

By **STEPHEN FITZ-STEPHEN.**

A Well-Wisher of the Human Family.

**388 pages, cloth. Price 3s. 6d.**

Post Free.

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

**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 formed 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Improvement by all just and wise means of the conditions of daily life for the masses of the people, especially in towns and cities, where insanitary and 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 mere detention, but places of physical, intellectual, and moral elevation for those who are afflicted with anti-social tendencies.

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

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

America's Freethought Newspaper.

**THE TRUTH SEEKER.**

FOUNDED BY D. M. BENNETT, 1873.

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

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

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES.**

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

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

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

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

**A NEW (THE THIRD) EDITION**

OF

**FROM FICTION TO FACT.**

By F. BONTE.

(Issued by the Secular Society, Limited.)

REVISED AND ENLARGED.

SHOULD BE SCATTERED BROADCAST.

SIXTY-FOUR PAGES.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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

**PAMPHLETS by C. COMEN.**

- Foreign Missions, their Dangers and Delusions ... .. 3d.  
Full of facts and figures.
- An Outline of Evolutionary Ethics ... 6d.  
Principles of ethics, based on the doctrine of Evolution.
- Socialism, Atheism, and Christianity.. 1d.
- Christianity and Social Ethics ... 1d.
- Pain and Providence ... .. 1d.

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

**DEFENCE OF FREE SPEECH**

BY

**G. W. FOOTE.**

Being a Three Hours' Address to the Jury before the Lord Chief Justice of England, in answer to an Indictment or Blasphemy, on April 24, 1888.

With Special Preface and many Footnotes

Price FOURPENCE. Post free FIVEPENCE.

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

## A LIBERAL OFFER—NOTHING LIKE IT.

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

### Most Grateful Testimonials From Everywhere.

Gudivoda, India: "It is a store of medical knowledge in plainest language, and every reader of English would be benefited by it."—W. L. N.  
 Triplicane, India: "I have gone through the book many times, and not only benefited myself but many friends also."—G. W. T.

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

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

**Price EIGHT SHILLINGS by Mail to any Address.**

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

### THE POPULAR EDITION

*(Revised and Enlarged)*

OF

# "BIBLE ROMANCES"

BY

**G. W. FOOTE.**

With a Portrait of the Author

*Reynolds's Newspaper* says:—"Mr. G. W. Foote, chairman of the Secular Society, is well known as a man of exceptional ability. His *Bible Romances* have had a large sale in the original edition. A popular, revised, and enlarged edition, at the price of 6d., has now been published by the Pioneer Press, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, for the Secular Society. Thus, within the reach of almost everyone, the ripest thought of the leaders of modern opinion is being placed from day to day."

**144 Large Double-Column Pages, Good Print, Good Paper**

**SIXPENCE—NET**

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