

# THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXXI.—No. 29

SUNDAY, JULY 16, 1911

PRICE TWOPENCE

*If I seem to be a tactless and inconsiderate "fighter," I pray you to remember that "conflict is the father of all things," and that the victory of pure reason over current superstition will not be achieved without a tremendous struggle.*—ERNST HAECKEL.

## Views and Opinions.

WE see by *John Bull* that a man in the employ of the Cleveland Dairy Company has been prosecuted under the Act of Charles II. for selling milk on a Sunday. "Serve him right," our contemporary says, "the Sunday drink traffic must be suppressed." The only lacteal fluid it is legitimate to dispense on Sunday is the milk for babes that is dribbled out—we had almost written drivelled out—in churches and chapels. Very poor, thin, watery stuff it is too, with the maximum of sloppiness and the minimum of nutriment. Even the babes are beginning to refuse it. But the clerical milkmen have nothing better to supply. Their friendly rivals, the publicans, carry on another sort of drink trade. Both are privileged and protected on the blessed Sabbath. Both really deal in "spirit"—one in disembodied spirit and the other in disembotled spirit. And the former is probably—we might say certainly—the more dangerous of the two. When a man is loaded up with publican's spirit he generally pulls his hat down over his eyes and makes tracks for home or some other place of refuge. He zigzags a good deal, but he keeps tenaciously in the right direction; and if you don't interfere with him he will reach his destination in time. But when a man is loaded up with parson's spirit he is generally quarrelsome and dangerous. His hat inclines to tilt the opposite way, his eyes look a challenge, his mouth calls for contradiction, he wants to break the head of somebody who differs from him, he regards the whole world around him as an exaggerated Donnybrook Fair. Few great crimes result from drunkenness; ever so many of the greatest crimes in history have resulted from religion.

\* \* \*

It is the fashion, we know, to deny that crimes have resulted from religion; the pretence is that they have resulted from the abuse of religion. But this is nonsense; what is more, it is hypocrisy. Persecution in the name of Christianity, for instance (as George Eliot pointed out in her fine review of Lecky's *Rationalism*, which is far more important than the book itself) is not a mere exercise in human cruelty under the cloak of religion. It flows, in truth, quite logically from the doctrine of salvation by faith. If man's opinions are determined by his will, and not by intellect and evidence, then his beliefs are really a part of his conduct, and are amenable to the application of punishment and reward to his motives. Wrong opinions are wicked opinions—a heretic is a perverse person—an Atheist is a leper—an aggressive Atheist is a poisonous serpent; and to imprison, torture them, or even kill them, is an act of social sanitation. Catholic and Protestant divines, in the old sincere days, had no doubt about the

matter; they practised what they believed; if their religion was right they were right; and in making a hell on earth they were only imitating the God they both worshiped, who had made an everlasting hell for his enemies hereafter.

\* \* \*

The theology which prompted the old cruelties was preached only the other day by the Bishop of Ely in St. Paul's Cathedral. He declared that "the spirit of infidelity had become a menace to the national life and social health of the people." What the Bishop of Ely wants is not the will, but the power, to set up a new hell of religious persecution. He would treat infidelity like small-pox, whose victims must be segregated for a start, and dealt with afterwards according to circumstances. There is no essential difference between the Bishop of Ely and the Pope of Rome on this matter. Never a Church in the world ceased to be a persecutor until it was obliged to. Ingersoll's epigram puts the case in a nutshell. The Church did not leave off burning people alive because it was ashamed; it left off burning people alive because there were too many people who objected to being burnt alive. Fortunately, the number of such people does not diminish. There are also millions of people who are practically indifferent to religion. And behind them, or in front of them, as you choose, there are thousands who would fight to the death for freedom of thought and speech. Theologians and bigots know that fact; they have seen it stand out vividly even in Spain and Portugal—and it holds them in check.

\* \* \*

One bigotry supports another; one superstition supports another. The Church has gained a great deal by the recent Coronation; for the altar supports the throne, and the throne supports the altar. We see that the Archbishop of York has just said that "the Coronation revealed the position of the Church in our national life," that "its ministry anointed and crowned the King," and that "it is for the Church to hallow and consecrate the national life." The parasites are to hallow and consecrate the organism on which they prey! It is unspeakable cheek, but it succeeds. That is the tragic side of it. The comedy is only too obvious to persons of intelligence and humor. The tragedy is less obvious, but it is more important. Mr. Shaw need not suppose that he is the only man in England who is not imposed upon by Coronation ceremonies, and who realises that the King is only a man. He knows very well that there are others. But he expresses a truth in his peculiar way. The multitude have been bamboozled by charlatans with solemn faces, in the interest of adventurers and exploiters. Loyalty—as it is called!—has become ignoble and hysterical; we have beheld an orgie of sentimentalism; and this besotting of the general mind is bound to bear its evil fruit. To stupify is to brutify. We are not at all sure that the English character is not lost beyond recovery. Even the praise of peace is very largely a fashion of the hour. The trail of the sword was everywhere in the Coronation processions. The talk is of peace, but the money is spent on "Dreadnoughts." And "where your treasure is there will your heart be also."

G. W. FOOTE.



## In Defence of Christians.

IF one listens to a certain type of Christian attacking Freethought the conclusion is that Freethinkers are a terribly debased lot of human beings. This is only what one who is acquainted with Christian history might expect. Christian charity usually takes this form towards its intellectual opponents. And it is a pretty problem for solution why religion in general, and the Christian form of it in particular, should produce this result. People hate each other in politics, in a way; and there are cases where diplomatic relations have been strained between advocates of rival scientific theories. But it is rare that people who disagree about political or scientific theories ease their feelings by attacking one another's moral character. In religion this is most often the case. Probably a deal of it is an example of the workings of social heredity. Newcomers in the religious world find the lines of procedure marked out for them: the stories are already prepared, and as religious education does not develop an over sensitiveness concerning truth, the same result is seen generation after generation with a monotonous and unedifying uniformity.

It is not surprising that Christians should attack the character of Freethinkers. The remarkable thing is that so many Christians should impeach their own character, and the character of their followers. And still more remarkable that so many Christians should regard an attempt to vindicate their character as an insult. The other week the Rev. R. J. Campbell delivered a long sermon, the gist of which was to demonstrate the fallacy of believing that men would labor for an ideal end if their own existence ended at the grave. In this he was only arguing as the vast majority of preachers argue. Other preachers go further still. Lloyd George—who is a preacher of a kind—believes that there would be no unselfish action in the world but for Christianity. Some Christians are more drastic. They point out that common decency would disappear were it not for religion. People are honest towards each other, wives and husbands are faithful to each other, parents care for their children, and children love their parents because of their faith in Jesus, in God, in a future life. And they who listen receive such statements as a compliment and resent their contradiction as an insult.

Now, while I am quite aware that humility is one of the Christian virtues, this certainly seems like straining a virtue until it becomes a vice. It is carrying self-depreciation too far. I do not like to hear a preacher asserting that he and his supporters are such irreclaimable ruffians that ordinary human feelings are not strong enough to keep them in order. That *some* of them are the better for a little watching I should be the last to deny, but that *all* of them are not in this condition I strongly affirm. I do not believe that my Christian neighbors are only kept from burgling my house either because they believe in a God or because of the policeman on the beat. Were they so inclined they could easily evade the latter; and experience proves that when the latter can be avoided, the former is not an insurmountable obstacle to rascality. I do not believe that Christian husbands and wives, or parents and children, are what they are because of their religious beliefs, otherwise I should be denying them the possession of qualities that are obviously possessed by those who have no religious belief. I do not believe that all Christians are rascals held in leash by the fear of punishment. Many of their preachers say they are, a number of laymen say they are, and a proportion act as though they are. But *all* of them! Well, I have a much higher opinion of Christians than to believe it.

I want to defend the character of Christians against the monstrous aspersions of their leaders. I claim that Christian men and women, as men and women, are as good as Freethinkers. And I am saying this in a Freethought journal because no

Christian journal would publish such a defence. They publish the libels only, and refuse to admit any vindication. The result is, that Christians who only read their own journals have come to believe in their own incurable villainy. They read what the Campbells and the Lloyd-Georges, and the host of smaller fry say about them, and they say to themselves, "Well, I suppose it must be true, all these good men are agreed that we are naturally a bad lot, and we are, I suppose, fortunate in having these men to remind us of our weakness. If we are what we are *with* religion, what on earth should we be without it?" And when these instructors of the people look at the Freethinkers and find they are not misbehaving themselves as they ought to be doing if they followed the program of *immoral* instruction laid down for their guidance, they are naturally annoyed. They feel that Freethinkers are not playing the game as it ought to be played, and they are as angry as a policeman hungry for promotion would be on a beat filled with none but law abiding citizens.

I claim that what the Freethinker can do the Christian can do. I believe in the substantial equality of the human race, and that all are alike in kind, however much they may differ in degree. And, therefore, I call attention to a significant fact, or series of facts. Freethinkers as husbands or wives, as parents or citizens, are as well behaved as Christians. No chief of police has ever reported that owing to the growth of non-religious opinions the number of crimes has gone up, and the police force has had to be strengthened. Freethought husbands and wives do not cut conspicuous figures in the divorce court. They are not notorious as child beaters. If Christians work for social and political reform so do Freethinkers. In extreme revolutionary movements Freethinkers have given their lives as cheerfully as have the religious. All over the country thousands of men and women give their time and thought and their financial aid to assist the propagation of ideas which they believe will benefit their fellows. When the Christian asserts that only the power of Christ keeps him sober, the Freethinker legitimately replies that he can refrain from getting drunk without such assistance. There is really not a single social or domestic virtue practised by Christians that does not flourish with at least equal strength with Freethinkers.

Why is this? Are we to accept the calumny of the pulpit, and say that the Freethinker is so much more richly endowed with the higher human qualities that he can do without religious hopes and fears what the Christian is only able to accomplish with their assistance. For that is really what the particular statement I am examining involves. It implies that love for his wife does not make the Christian a good husband, love for his children does not make him a good parent, a sense of duty does not make him a good citizen, a feeling of self-respect does not keep him sober or honest. The love of Christ alone constrains him. If that is so what a superior kind of mortal the Freethinker must be! I do not say he is, I do not even believe he is, it is the Christian who implies as much. I am putting the case bluntly because I want it to be seen plainly.

It is true that a little set-off against the charge is to be found in the fact that few Christians believe religion is necessary to keep themselves up to the mark. In confidence, each one would tell you that he would be all right without religion, so far as conduct was concerned. It is the other people he is afraid of, those who need the support of religion to keep them decent. And the other people are equally ready to give you the same assurance. Each one maintains the policeman for the sake of the other. There are many analogies in the world of ethics to the people who gained a living by taking in each other's washing.

If all men and women were as bad as the Christian apologist would have them be, society could not hold together for twelve months. A policeman is a bad



teacher of morals, and he is certainly not improved by being shifted to an infinite distance and placed in an unlocalisable heaven. Mere law is equally ineffective. Laws, to be effective, must rest upon a basis of public feeling; they are only effective when they express the prevailing sentiment, which in reality creates them. The moral groundwork of social life lies in the feelings and instincts and ideas that are generated by social contact, and for this reason substantially the same moral phenomena is manifested by all irrespective of their religious or their non-religious opinions. The goodness of the Freethinker is a standing puzzle to the Christian. It is quite contrary to what he is led to expect. On the other hand, the goodness of the Christian—or his badness either—is no puzzle to the Freethinkers. His philosophy of life includes the Christian view in a way that the Christian philosophy cannot include Freethought. To the Christian the Freethinker is a man *plus* an opinion. The Christian hates the man because of the opinion, the Freethinker hates the opinion because of the man.

Hence my defence of the Christian against the slanders of his leaders. I am standing up for the innate equality of Freethinkers and Christians, because I do not believe that Freethinkers are made of such superior clay that they can play the part of real men and women under conditions that would demoralise a Christian. The Christian can be just as good as Freethinkers are if they only throw off the diverting influence of their creed. They are as good when they don't allow their religion to distort their view of human nature. If a Freethinker can be sober, honest, and reliable without religion, so can a Christian. He is not an incurable moral cripple that must get through life on crutches for the issuing of which the clergy hold the patent right. Underneath the Christian there is a man, or the nucleus of one, if we can only get at him. The trouble is that most of them have been brought up with the idea that the deeper the man is buried the better, and they resent all attempts to disentomb him. At any rate, when next they hear a preacher slandering them, and telling them that neither domestic affection nor social ties could keep them decent men and women without the addition of religious hopes, I hope that some Jenny Geddes will be present to treat the clerical libeller of human nature as he deserves. And let them remember that at least one Freethinker has spoken out in their defence, and be thankful.

C. COHEN.

### If Jesus Never Lived?

It is a curious and illuminating fact that, in the twentieth Christian century, Christian divines are vigorously discussing the question, Did Jesus ever live? The cry that was so popular in the Churches some thirty years ago, "Back to the Jesus of the Gospels," gave rise to the serious inquiry, Is a historical Jesus recoverable? Can he be found in the Gospels? The search for him has been going on very zealously ever since, some of the searchers claiming that they have actually found him, and others averring that he is not there at all. It is utterly foolish to maintain, as Professor David Smith does in the *British Weekly* for July 6, that "it is not open to question whether such a person as Jesus ever existed," the very idea that he did not being "simply ridiculous." That to Dr. Smith such an idea is objectionable may be true enough; but to characterise it as untenable is to fly in the face of incontestable facts. In almost every civilised country there are first-class Christian scholars who do question the historicity of the Gospel Jesus. For the last eighteen months the subject has been publicly discussed at such centres as Berlin, Bremen, and Marburg. The negative position is that it is absolutely "uncertain whether any such person [as the

Gospel Jesus] ever existed"; and Dr. Smith himself logically adopts it when he admits that "it is a reasonable contention that the evangelic narratives are a tissue of legends," for this is tantamount to admitting that it is reasonable to contend that no such person as we find therein portrayed ever lived. The lady, on whose behalf a friend consulted Dr. Smith, is "not at all sure that such a person as Jesus ever existed," and the Rev. Professor replies by saying that it is a reasonable contention that the Gospels are "a tissue of legends." What a desperate pass Apologetics has fallen into. The object of this article, however, is not to defend the position that the Gospel Jesus never lived, but, rather, to discuss the origin of Christianity, on the *assumption* that he never did.

Dr. Smith imagines that the existence of Christianity necessitates a historic Christ. He says:—

"And there is the historic fact of Christianity. A river has a source, and thence it is derived whatever tributaries augment it in its course. It does not follow that, because there is more of Plato than of Socrates in the Socratic dialogues, no such person as Socrates ever existed. And whatever part may have been played in its development by St. Paul [according to Pfeleiderer] or St. John [according to T. H. Green], Christianity derives ultimately from Christ."

This argument is fundamentally fallacious, and it is difficult to take it seriously. Specially inept is the allusion to Socrates, because it has no relevancy whatever. Nobody ever dreamed of denying the historicity of that great man on the ground that there is more of Plato than of him in the former's works. Both Plato and Xenophon picture him merely as a big-brained human being. Neither the one nor the other deifies him. Now, the Jesus of the Gospel is not a human being, but a supernatural being, only "in fashion as a man." Such a being Dr. Smith claims as the founder of Christianity, this religion being his supreme witness in history. If the Gospels are "a tissue of legends," does it not inevitably follow that their hero is a legendary being? Surely the one contention is fully as reasonable as the other. Yet Dr. Smith differentiates between them thus:—

"It is a reasonable contention that the evangelic narratives are a tissue of legends, and that little or nothing can be ascertained of the historical Jesus; but the idea that it is uncertain whether any such person ever existed is simply ridiculous.....That is a historic certainty."

We hold that the four Gospels are "a tissue of legends," and we are consistent enough to add that their hero is a purely mythical character.

Let us now face the issue boldly. Our contention is that Christianity can be fully accounted for without the introduction of a historical Christ. What is called liberal Christianity, as delineated by Professor Schmiedel, Dr. Neumann, and Professor Harnack, is not historical Christianity, but a new religion based upon the four Gospels bowdlerised beyond all recognition. These religious bowdlerisers do not hesitate to say openly that the doctrines of the incarnation, sacrificial death, resurrection, and second coming to judgment found in those documents "take common rank with other myths of the same character, and have the same value as these, neither more nor less." While in full agreement with them as to the mythical character of all such dogmas, we differ wholly from them as to the true nature of the Christian religion. Our firm conviction is that this religion differs in no essential sense from other great supernatural religions, but is fully as mythical as any of them. Its survival is no evidence of its truth, any more than the survival of Mohammedanism testifies to its Divine origin and power. The Rev. W. Wooding, of London, though a liberal theologian, states that "Christian worship began with a Divine person at its heart and centre," but argues that later this worship was "transferred to a man who in some way or other became confused with the Divinity." This is an exceedingly ingenious theory; but it rests on the insecure foundation of references from extremely vague expressions



in the Gospels and the Acts. One of those expressions is, "the things concerning Jesus," which occurs four times. The phrase is highly ambiguous; but the inference drawn from it is that there existed a pre-Christian Jesus-cult, which had already split up into various sects. Appollos represented one of these sects, for we find him at Ephesus (Acts xviii. 24—28), speaking and teaching carefully "the things concerning Jesus," when he knew nothing of the Gospel Jesus. Now the theory is that one of these sects was led by a man whose name happened to be Jesus, and that his personality was so attractive and compelling that under its magnetic spell most of the sects coalesced into organic unity. The only objection to this hypothesis is that there is absolutely no record of this man Jesus apart from the mythical ones in the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles. In the earliest reference to him he is on an equality with God the Father, and is spoken of as "the Lord Jesus Christ." He is worshiped as the conqueror of death, and as sitting on the right hand of his Father in heaven. In the earliest Christian literature the Jesus-cult is thus the cult of a Divine Being who, for redemptive purposes, has taken up his abode in human nature. That Paul regarded this Being as historical is clear from the fact that he speaks of his atoning death and justifying resurrection. The fourth Gospel identifies Jesus with the Logos, and the Logos with God.

The fact is that there can be no reasonable doubt but that, in the New Testament, Jesus Christ is the Son of God incarnate who has actually lived and accomplished a mighty work for the eternal benefit of mankind. Now, the liberal Christians of to-day positively strip the God-man of all his supernatural attributes, and reclothe him with such human qualities as they deem essential to a teacher sent from God; and thus clothed he is the recipient of their reverence and love. But this mere man is the creature of their own fancy, the idealised projection of their own opinions and aspirations. The truth is that as a human theologian and ethical teacher Jesus is as impossible as he is as a Divine Redeemer. No one has ever put his moral precepts into practice, just as no one has ever been saved by means of his sacrificial death. Dr. Smith waxes sentimental at the bare mention of such a conclusion, and exclaims:—

"Think of the saints—how they have loved Jesus. Think of St. Francis of Assissi and his transforming vision, of which it is written that 'from that hour his heart was wounded and melted at the remembrance of the Lord's Passion.' Think of St. Thomas Aquinas bowing before his crucifix. 'Thou hast written well of me,' said the voice; 'what recompense dost thou desire.' 'None other,' answered the saint, 'than thyself, O Lord.' Think of St. Bernard and his hymns: 'Jesu, the very thought of thee,' 'Jesus, thou joy of loving hearts'; and our own Rutherford: 'O Christ, he is the fountain,' etc. Was there ever a love like this? And the only possible object of love is a person."

One wonders how Dr. Smith can fail to perceive the fallacy that underlies this appeal to sentiment. Can it be true that the reverend gentleman is not in love with the offspring of his brain? Are there not ideas which are dearer to him than life? Would he not willingly die for what he believes to be the truth? Are there no creations of romance for which he cherishes fond affection? And will he not admit that ideal characters may be passionately loved, especially if they are believed to be objectively real? To his question, "Was there ever a love like this?" we unblushingly answer, Yes, innumerable times. There are hundreds of thousands of devout people who love Buddha with a love like that; but even Dr. Smith will acknowledge that loving Buddha as a God does not prove his Divinity. Neither does the love of Christians establish the historicity of the Lord Jesus Christ. The supernatural Buddha is a legend that has been woven round about one of the greatest teachers the world has ever seen. The supernatural Christ is equally a myth, and the New Testament is fully as legendary as the Lalita Vistara. But Christianity, like modern

Buddhism, will live as long as there are people foolish or selfish enough to treat myths and legends as if they were historical facts. However, the multitudinous discoveries of science in all its departments outside of the Church, and the growth and development of Rationalism in the misleading form of liberal Christianity within her, are rapidly emancipating the human intellect from its long-continued bondage to the mythological interpretation of the Universe. Gods and God-men are all doomed, while man is already being enthroned as "the paragon of animals."

Meanwhile, it cannot be too frequently or too emphatically insisted upon that the ecstatic experiences of saints possess no evidential value whatever. Luther's interviews with the Devil were quite as real to him as his colloquies with God and Christ. Neither God nor Devil has ever had dealings with people who do not believe in them. Supernatural persons have never taken the initiative in anything. They have never troubled unbelievers in any way. Free Church leaders are just now greatly concerned at the steady decrease in the number of the saints; but the Eternal Christ, the Lord and Head of the Church, takes no notice. Mythical beings have never interfered in human affairs: all the work has always been done by their deluded worshipers. The course of it all is that the work of the world has been sadly neglected because of the foolish expectation that God would come and do it himself.

J. T. LLOYD.

### Social Reform Without Christianity.

FROM a speech delivered by Mr. Arthur Henderson, M.P., on "Democracy and Christianity," at Browning Hall, some time ago, it is quite clear that Mr. Henderson is not prepared to argue with the Freethinker the important question as to whether Christianity is true or not. On that point his mind is made up; not as the result of reasoning the matter out, nor of weighing evidence; he accepts Christianity as true purely on faith, and mainly because he was born of Christian parents and trained from his childhood to believe in its tenets, and is too prejudiced constitutionally to consider whether the objections of Freethinkers are valid or not. To him politics and sociology are subjects for argument and disputation; but Christianity is matter for unquestioning belief. If Mr. Henderson understood his mental attitude accurately, his proper place is in the Roman Catholic Church and not in the non-descript dissenting body associated with Browning Hall. Here are Mr. Henderson's words:—

"Now there are other objections that are raised to religion. During recent years it has been very much attacked from different quarters. Unbelief has been concentrating against it. The literature poured out from the Press has struck at the very vitals of the teachings of Jesus Christ. We have been told 'religion is a fabric of impossibility erected upon a foundation of error.' We have been told that Jesus Christ, whom we claim as the Son of God, our Savior, is nothing more than a myth. We have been told that this Bible is an unsafe and a dangerous book, and that it would not be difficult to write a book much more adapted to the needs of man. This is part of the attack. How do we meet it? It may be that many of us are unable to reply and enter into intellectual discussion with those who propound these new theories against our position. But some of us can apply to experience. What does experience enable us to do? Experience enables us to meet these charges by standing four-square and saying, 'I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep against that day that which I have committed unto Him.' Our experience enables us to say 'Whereas once I was blind, now I see'; and so positive is my sight, so tenaciously by faith do I cling to God that—

'Should all the forms which men devise  
Assault my faith with treacherous art,  
I call it vanity and lies  
And bind Thy Gospel to my heart.' "



Of course, after such a statement as this, reasoning on the matter with Mr. Henderson is quite out of the question. All we can do, in the circumstances, is to leave him in his primitive state of ignorance and beautiful faith and argue the question of Christianity and Social Reform without his assistance. In my previous article I dealt with the important part education necessarily plays in the social evolution of the people, and pointed out that previous to the passing of the Compulsory Education Act in 1870, organised bodies of Christianity had grossly neglected the elementary instruction of the rising generation. Christians had also allowed the masses of people to live in hovels, under very unwholesome and demoralising conditions, and it was not until Parliament had established the London County Council as the central administrative authority for London that anything of a very drastic character was done towards housing the working population of the metropolis. Now, I maintain that the London County Council is not a purely Christian body, any more than the House of Commons or the Water Board or any of the Borough Councils are Christian bodies. They are bodies composed of members holding almost every conceivable view on religion; some of them, it is true, are professing Christians, many of them are non-Christians, and many more do not seem to care a bit about Christianity or any other form of religious belief.

Private enterprise having failed to make provision for the housing of the working classes, the County Council and the other municipal authorities had to provide the extra accommodation. That accommodation was made by the erection of very much improved dwellings in the metropolitan area itself, and a large number of smaller houses in the suburbs. By the introduction of the electrical tramway, working men were taken away from the madding crowd of the city to comfortable homes outside the London area. This was a real step in social reform. By this means people were taken from unwholesome surroundings and placed under more favorable conditions in districts in which they had room for growth, for physical and mental development. And in this very important change Christianity, as such, had no part. It is true that Christian men on the Council gave their support to the various schemes of reform, but they supported them on purely secular grounds, viz., that they were for the general benefit of humanity; that these schemes would promote health and happiness among a very deserving section of the community, i.e., the toiling masses of London.

Now let us see what else the London County Council does for the social well-being of the community; and of course what the London County Council does for the Metropolis the various Councils throughout the kingdom do for the provincial cities or towns. Well, then, the L.C.C. runs

"a tramway service of 128 miles of rail; maintains 10 bridges, 3 tunnels, and a free steam ferry; manages 4 housing estates covering 350 acres, workmen's dwellings, and 3 lodging houses; controls 113 parks and open spaces covering 5,000 acres in all; has charge of some 27,000 lunatics, 20,000 of which are lodged in 11 asylums managed by the Asylums Committee, and is entrusted with the education of three-quarters of a million children in 915 elementary schools, in addition to those in 116 physically and mentally defective schools, 20 secondary schools, and 7 industrial schools, and pupils in 7 training colleges" (*London Year Book*, p. 13).

These are only a few of the things the County Council does for the ratepayers of London; and in the administration of all these places and institutions the Council contributes largely to the social improvement of the people. The Metropolitan main drainage area is 140½ square miles. The County Council attends to the health of London; it also has important duties connected with the administration of the Building Acts, and its latest powers embrace the collection of local taxation duties and the administration of the Old Age Pension Act. Then the County Council provides bands in the parks and at various open spaces, and these perform on Sundays,

as well as week days, to the evident enjoyment of thousands of the citizens. And all this contributes in unmistakable fashion to the social improvement of the masses. Indeed, one has only to attend these band performances with some degree of regularity to recognise that during the last ten years a very marked improvement has taken place in the musical tastes of the people; and whereas a few years ago the masses cared only for the simple melodies of the old writers, they now enjoy the classical masterpieces of Wagner, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and others. Further, the County Council looks after the public health by clearing away insanitary areas, the prevention of the spread of the diseases of animals, milk inspection, control and provision of lodging houses, offensive trades, and nuisances. All this is purely secular work, whose end and aim are to secure the health and happiness of the people now, without reference to the consideration of whether there is or is not a future life.

Now turn for a moment to the work of the various Borough Councils and see what they do for the social welfare of the people. Many people think that Borough Councils deal mainly with the repairing and cleaning of our roads, with the removing and destruction of house refuse, and such matters; but they deal also with the health of the people, and the medical officer and his staff on every Council finds plenty of employment in dealing with cases of infectious diseases, and the sanitary inspectors in seeing that dwelling houses and shops are kept in good sanitary condition, and that people are not defrauded by shopkeepers who endeavor to sell adulterated goods for the genuine article. The Borough Councils also provide public baths and wash-houses, free libraries and art galleries, pleasure grounds and open spaces for the public use, and when people die, they also provide, within the Borough, a beautiful cemetery wherein they may be buried.

What more can they reasonably do to promote the health and comfort of the people? When all this is done for the peoples benefit by purely secular agencies, what is left for the Churches to do in the way of social reform? It is true that they provide occasional concerts for their congregations, but these entertainments are nearly always inferior in quality to those provided, at very reasonable rates, at the various theatres and music halls either in London or in the provinces; they also give lantern lectures and cinematograph shows, but in this line they are outclassed by the shows provided at the fine picture palaces all over the country. The Christian Churches, therefore, can only claim to provide one thing that cannot be got from any of the secular institutions I have named. They supply what they call "spiritual advice and comfort," or what might be more aptly called "theological soothing syrup," for it is a medicine that is nauseating to those who are intellectually strong, and leaves those who systematically take it a prey to every form of priestcraft and superstition.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

### Most Unnatural History.

"In religion,  
What damnèd error, but some sober brow  
Will bless it and approve it with a text."

—SHAKESPEARE.

THOMAS CARLYLE, probably prompted by an unusually severe attack of dyspepsia, once drew upon his recollection of Shakespeare, and described man as a "two-forked radish." It must be confessed that the term was more insulting than accurate. For instance, it would not have won the approval of that eminent scientist, Charles Darwin, or even of Professor Ernst Haeckel. Yet Carlyle erred in the most distinguished company. If Jehovah, who, it is alleged, inspired, or wrote, the Holy Bible, could not recollect accurately such an elementary fact as that the whale was not a fish, although he is supposed to



have made millions of them, there is every excuse for the Sage of Chelsea.

Curiously, our Heavenly Father was always a most inaccurate writer. He was as careless of facts as a Christian Evidence lecturer. He could frankly contradict himself on occasion, and, when bankrupt of ideas, simply copy a passage he had written elsewhere in the same book and filled the vacancy. He very frequently said the things which were not. His crowning glory was his knowledge of natural history, which was both peculiar and extensive. His mathematics would disgrace a fourth-form school-boy; his geology was stupid, his history was almost entirely imaginary; but his zoology is almost too funny for words.

Wordsworth has told us that "Nature never did betray the heart that loved her." And this reminds us that there is such an astonishing discrepancy between the zoological conclusions of earnest students of nature and the so-called science of the three-headed idol of the Christian Trinity. The consideration of this difference affords us material for a few genial comments, entirely free from that acrimony so often imported into the writings of theologians.

In natural history proper not the veriest tyro, the most myopic bungler, would confound the hare with the ruminants. Yet the religious people would have us believe that the Creator of Linnæus blundered about the hare chewing the cud, and fondly imagine that the Maker of Cuvier wrote delirious jargon about clean beasts and dirty beasts. As a fact, it was actually reserved for mere worms of the dust like Buffon, Lamarck, and Darwin, to clear out the Augean stable of the divine ignorance and to create the science anew.

Æsop and Bidpai, Phœdrus and La Fontaine have shown us that everything talks, from a potato-bug to a hairdresser. Even the taciturn tapeworm unfolds itself when in liquor. From their animated descriptions there appears to be an international Esperanto. Surely, the Ancient of Days could have effected the capture of the various animals as simply as we capture sparrows by salting their tails. A few minutes' private conversation would then have verified the accuracy, or otherwise, of his extremely entertaining Unnatural History.

In spite of George Meredith's remarks about the "Homeric laughter of the gods," the venerable Jehovah has no sense of humor. The Christian God is rather the cause of laughter in his creature. He is as silly and as simple as a spring curate, and his scientific descriptions could not be improved upon for unconscious fun.

"Wild beasts used once to roam at will through the whole of England, but now wild beasts are only found in theological gardens," wrote a very juvenile writer. Similarly, in the sacred volume all the animals are "freaks." Where else can you find a talking snake, a lodging-house whale, or a pigeon co-responder? Where else are the fiery serpents, the dragon, the cockatrice, and the worm that never dies? Where, oh where, other than in the sacred Zoological Gardens, are the bedevilled pigs, the four-legged fowls, the unicorn, the cherubim, the ventri-loquial ass of Balaam, to say nothing of the menagerie of the Apocalypse? Even the "human" beings in the Bible act most strangely. The average lives of the patriarchs ran into centuries, and many fortunate persons had two funerals apiece. Some were so magnificently developed that ordinary men looked like grasshoppers beside them. Among such a collection of marvels it is remarkable that cats are nowhere mentioned. Maybe the third person of the Trinity, that Holy Dove, had a mortal objection to the animal. For the cat is, above all things, spiteful, and the Paraclete was such a nervous bogey.

These nonsensical ideas emanate from the Holy Bible, for, of all the strange, frantic, and incomprehensible books which have issued from the addled brains of religious enthusiasts, this volume is one of the worst. And the work which Freethinkers have set themselves is that of freeing mankind from the

absurdities of pre-scientific times which are perpetuated by this fetish-book. To class the Bible as a scientific book is the last word in absurdity. It is a Salmagundi of riotous, exuberant, Oriental imagination. If people would only read the volume instead of worshiping it, such absurd veneration would be impossible. The first stage in religious evolution is to regard such a comedy of errors as divine truth. The final stage would mean that England would sink to the level of Spain or Russia, where one person in thirty can read or write, liberty is a dream, and Freethinkers are shot like rabbits.

MIMNERMUS.

## Acid Drops.

We have drawn attention to the danger of allowing Catholic processions in the streets. They involve a serious risk of a breach of the peace. Catholics are never satisfied without having all their own way. They demand more than fair-play; they demand monopoly. When their processions go along the streets the general public must either applaud or look dissent with bated breath and whispering humbleness. An instance of this truth occurred at Canning Town on Sunday. There was a Catholic procession "in honor of the Immaculate Mother of God." One member of the general public didn't approve of such processions and said so, whereupon he was mobbed, and had to be rescued by the police. "Other men," according to the *Chronicle* report, "who expressed themselves against the procession en route were also threatened by the crowd, and matters at one time assumed such a threatening appearance that the police had some difficulty in preventing a serious breach of the peace." Does not this bear out our view of the matter? The 3,000 processionists claimed to dictate to their fellow citizens in all the streets they chose to march through. That is what Catholics call liberty. And it is the only liberty allowed where Catholics rule the roost. Let us never forget the late spectacle at Montreal, where the "Host"—that is the central object of a Catholic religious service—was carried at the head of a great procession and guarded with drawn swords and naked bayonets.

A correspondent who only half fulfils our conditions—giving his name as A. Lang and his address as simply Glasgow—sends us some cuttings, which he hopes we will "read and take note of," and tells us that he will "look forward with impatience to the next issue of the *Freethinker*." We have a sort of suspicion that this correspondent is a Catholic; but he shall not have less attention on that account. His first cutting is about another wonderful cure at Holywell. It appears to be from a Catholic journal. Here it is in full:—

"A cure which has caused interest among the visitors to Holywell has been effected at the famous shrine of St. Winefride.

Patrick O'Reilly, of Ballintougher, Downpatrick, Ireland, interviewed last week, stated that in November, 1901, he was working as a dock laborer at Liverpool, and lived at 73 Berry-street, Bootle, with his wife and family. While working in the rigging of the s.s. *Shannandore*, in the Hornby Dock, he slipped and fell to the deck, a distance of 35 feet, sustaining spinal injury. For eight years he had been getting about on crutches.

On June 13 he came to Holywell, and bathed in the well. At the third bath he suddenly felt a shock go upwards from his legs to his head 'like the shot of a gun.' When he got out of the water he was able to walk all right, and walked back to the hospice, leaving his crutches in the crypt of the well.

In reply to questions, he stated that the pain in his back was quite gone, but that there was still pain in his head, which was, however, decreasing daily."

Our correspondent may think this a poser. Let us examine it a little.

Now, in the first place, nobody is obliged to explain alleged facts. They must be real facts. The story is told very circumstantially, but there is a characteristic omission of certain details. Who interviewed Patrick O'Reilly? We haven't even got that important fact, which is absolutely necessary for a start. Without it all other inquiries may be mere waste of time. Further, we are not told if Patrick O'Reilly saw this report of the interview, and if he signed it by way of authentication. Moreover, it would probably be very difficult to learn much at Bootle of a dock laborer who lived there ten years ago; and it must be admitted that inquiries at Ballintougher might not only be very difficult but very unsatisfactory. Finally, there is no testimony of



any medical man who attended Patrick O'Reilly as to his condition before and after the alleged miraculous cure. All we really have, indeed, is a story which might not stand five minutes' examination. Its appearance in print proves nothing. Some lies are printed, and some are not—as Robert Burns observed.

We will now suppose, for the sake of argument, that Patrick O'Reilly did hobble into St. Winefride's Well, that he did feel the shock as described, and that when he got out of the water he was able to walk all right. We will not even pause to smile at the pain in his back going while the pain in his head remained—so that it was rather a half than a whole miracle. We want to ask why even a *bona fide* recovery should be a miracle at all. Had the crippled Irish laborer gone into the well with one leg and come out of it with two, there would be no need of further argument. But his malady was evidently nervous, and any doctor will tell you that what one nervous shock has caused another nervous shock may remedy. Women have become demented in child-birth and have sometimes recovered their sanity with the birth of another child. Paralytics have been known to get out of their beds and run from the house in case of fire. Cures have even occurred, in a perfectly natural way, though in a most astonishing manner, in cases of chronic paralysis. A case in point is that of the late Eugene Lee-Hamilton, the poet, and author of one sonnet, at least, which is sure of immortality. For many years, as long as twenty we believe, he was in a state of perfectly helpless paralysis, lying on his back and dependent on others for every convenience of life; but suddenly, without a note of warning, the powers of life began to work in him, and presently he regained the use of his bodily functions, getting up, walking about, and living like any other man—even marrying and having a family. Patrick O'Reilly's recovery, even if it happened, is not as wonderful as Eugene Lee-Hamilton's. And there was no likelihood of a miracle in the poet's case—for *he was a Freethinker*. The sonnet that secures immortality for him carries the Landor-and-Wordsworth idea of the sea-shell to its final evolution. The murmur of the sea-shell when you apply it to your ear is not reminiscent of the ocean whence it came; it is the reverberation of the blood-pulse in your own veins; and thus its mystical significance vanishes for ever, leaving Atheism the gainer and Theism the loser.

Our correspondent's second cutting contains a summary report of a sermon of Cardinal Logue's, in which his Eminence declares that "the world is ever degenerating, becoming more corrupt, and further removed from the principles of Christian faith and morality." As far as morality is concerned this statement is ridiculously false; the rest of it is seriously true. But what does it amount to at the finish? Why, simply this—that Christianity is an utter failure, after a trial of nearly two thousand years.

Our correspondent's third cutting reports that Father Dobson, S.J., one of the leaders of St. Bruno's College, near St. Asaph, had his left hand blown off while experimenting with a new kind of explosive. Well, what does this show? Simply this—that there is no special providence for Jesuit Fathers.

We do not often find ourselves in agreement with Bishop Gore, but we do agree with his conclusion as to the duty of those clergymen who have lost faith in certain portions of the Christian faith. The Bishop says he is caused "great anxiety" by certain tendencies in New Testament criticism. He has noticed a number of books written by Church of England clergymen casting doubts upon the New Testament miracles, and upon the supernatural character of Jesus Christ. And he adds:—

"Now the expressed doubts and denials which I have referred to above raise two quite different questions—the question of historical truth and the question of public honor. As to the question of historical truth—I do not myself believe that any legitimate criticism can reduce the Person of Jesus Christ to the human limit or eliminate the strictly miraculous from His life. I do most certainly believe that it is those who doubt or deny the occurrence of the miracles of the Gospel, and the miracles of the Creed, who do violence to the evidence. I think the miracles and the teaching, the supernatural characteristics of the Person and the supernatural events, cohere and are indissoluble. But if the final judgment of anyone is that the events in question did not really occur, it is to me certain that he cannot serve the cause of public morality by constantly professing his belief that they did occur."

With the concluding sentences we cordially agree.

But there is really more in the matter than is expressed in Bishop Gore's closing sentence. The clergy form a body

of men who pride themselves, not only upon being our guides in matters of religion, but also in matters of morals. And it would certainly seem that a body of men who had any justifiable claim to the latter function should not need to be solemnly warned that public morality is not served by publicly professing a thing to be true while believing it to be false. To proffer this advice to men *out* of the pulpit would be in the nature of an insult. It is, apparently, accepted as a necessary counsel when it is addressed to the clergy. And it is necessary because it is expressing the true state of affairs. Many of the clergy, of course, do believe in the New Testament story in a fairly honest manner, but it is unquestionable that a very large number would throw certain Christian doctrines overboard if they could do so without financial or social loss. As it is, they hang on to their positions in spite of their disbelief in the doctrines they preach, solacing their consciences with a number of jesuitical excuses that the ordinary business man would be ashamed of. Hence the necessity for a Bishop to solemnly admonish his clergy that to tell a lie and act a lie is not the best method of promoting morality.

The subject affects more than the clergy. The laity are in much the same position. Anyone with a fairly large circle of religious acquaintances must be aware of a number of people who continue their attendance at church and chapel, and so support religious doctrines, without any real faith in them. Their attendance and their support have become social functions, badges of correct behavior, or methods of advancing their more material interests. Never having had the duty of intellectual honesty enforced by their religion, that virtue assumes to them the character of a luxury in which the foolish or the extravagant may indulge, but with which people of a more "practical" turn of mind have no necessary concern. The result is, that the pew does not practise honesty towards the pulpit, and the pulpit replies by acting dishonestly towards the pew. If the people demanded honesty the clergy would be more likely to give it; if the pulpit gave honesty, the pew would be more likely to expect and demand it. But as each is engaged in keeping the other toeing the line of unprovable doctrine, each assists the other in a process of intellectual demoralisation, and, incidentally, illustrate to the outside world the corrupting influence of religious teaching as the higher life man.

Most of our readers will have seen something in the newspapers concerning the expulsion of Pastor Jatho, of Cologne, from his church on a charge of heresy. His heresy appears to have been of a mild kind, from our point of view, but it has raised a storm in religious circles. A *Christian World* correspondent, in reporting the case, notes that "the journals which have been such warm defenders of the liberty of conscience and of expression are precisely those journals which in ordinary times concern themselves least with church matters," and adds, "An unpleasant feature connected with this press campaign is the fact that the most pro-Jatho journals are those owned and written by men who are not Christians at all." This is precisely what we should expect to be the case. A Freethinker who only desires liberty for himself, and who joins in suppressing by force opinions with which he does not agree, is a disgrace to Freethought. He is merely replacing one tyranny with another. But we are quite at a loss to see why the *Christian World* should regard this as an "unpleasant feature" of the campaign. The only unpleasantness, in our opinion, is the Christian bigotry that set on foot the persecution.

We hope we are not too far behind date in referring to the June number of the *Polytechnic Magazine*. Writing in this pious publication, "Nemo" says:—

"I want to impress on the Christian worker that he is in possession of the Christian citadel with the enemy at the gates. It is not enough that he should say 'I am safe and comfortable inside.' There are others outside, and one must go out and fight in order that they may gain safe entrance. Every day in our parks and street corners men are preaching forms of Atheism, and even in some of our churches very questionable doctrines are taught. Our young members come under those influences and are easily led."

"The sale of rationalist literature," this writer adds, "is enormous." Poor Christians! They are really feeling the wind. We begin to pity him.

A verdict of suicide during temporary insanity was returned in the case of the Rev. Arthur Ernest Goodman, who was found drowned in a pond at Oxted. Mr. Goodman had been a missionary in India for twenty-one years, and it was said his health was broken owing to his work there. Thus does the Lord reward those who labor for him in the vineyard.



Sir J. Crichton Browne does not suffer from over exactitude of statement when he is dealing with purely scientific matters. When he is dealing with other topics he is likely to be still more inexact. The other day he gave an address at the annual meeting of the Mother's Union on the Marriage Laws. It was a subject on which he might have said something truthful and useful. What he did say was neither the one nor the other. His prevailing impression seems to be that it is possible to settle all questions about marriage laws by appealing to what "Our Lord said," or by discussing the meaning of doubtful New Testament texts. Such a state of mind is really deplorable in one who stands forward as a scientific man. Marriage is fundamentally a social fact, and it must be discussed, if it is to be discussed properly and profitably, with a view to social utility and well being. To imagine that modern methods can be altered, or the modern point of view destroyed by an appeal to the New Testament—the two principal figures in which were celibates, and which is disfigured throughout by the ascetic taint—is the dream of a religious enthusiast, not the considered view of a man of science or a sane social reformer.

Dr. Crichton Browne appears to be under the impression that monogamy was gradually established by the Christian Church. If that is so, we would remind him that the Old Testament is polygamous throughout, and that there is not a word against polygamy in the New Testament. Some of the greatest names in Christian history have plainly stated that there is nothing contrary to polygamy in the Christian religion. Monogamy is an ideal that the modern world owes immediately to Greece and Rome, and it is the persistence of their influence to which it is due. Moreover, the whole influence of Christianity was to coarsen and brutalise the relation of the sexes. It saw in marriage little more than the animal relations of men and women, and tolerated it more as a concession to human infirmity than for any other reason. This has been pointed out by no less an authority than the Rev. Principal Donaldson, and those who know Christian history will be the last to traverse his statements. Dr. Crichton Browne would be well advised to restrict his observations to departments in which he has some claim to speak as an authority. To venture into others is only to raise a smile on the faces of decently informed people.

The Coronation superstition is being exploited to the very last dregs. The robes which King George and Queen Mary wore during the Westminster Abbey tomfoolery are actually being exhibited at the Imperial Institute. The price of admission on the first day was half-a-crown—then came a shilling, and finally sixpence, so that silly people of all classes might be accommodated. In the same way, moon-struck monarchists paid ten shillings each the first day to see Westminster Abbey as it was during the Coronation; that is, to see a lot of wretched woodwork in the grand old building. That was bad enough, but to pay to see the King's and Queen's mere clothes is worse still. It is worthy of mental and moral children. We believe some of them would pay to see the King's nightshirt.

The Lower House of Convocation has been discussing the Church Marriage Service, and has adopted the Committee's suggestions. The first was that marriage was ordained, not for such a coarse thing as "procreation," but for "the increase of mankind"—which is a genteel distinction without a particle of substantial difference. One would think that brides and bridegrooms did not know the way in which "the increase of mankind" is effected. The second suggestion was that the clause relating to marriage as ordained to prevent fornication should be omitted altogether. Prebendary Pennefather tried to get in the words, "secondly, it was ordained for a remedy against sin"—another genteel expression for a very ungentle thing. The Archdeacon of Taunton tried to get in the words, "secondly, it was ordained to consecrate the union of man and woman." Both reverend gentlemen failed. "Procreation" and "fornication" are thus to be kicked out of the Marriage Service, if Parliament can be induced to give its sanction to another revision of the Prayer Book. We hope, however, that the Church is not foolish enough to imagine that it will be able to save the situation so easily. The wife's promise to "obey" her husband is ridiculous in an age which sees forty thousand ladies in a procession seven miles long demanding Woman Suffrage. Besides, the word "obey" belongs to an older and lower stage of social development. George Eliot well said that marriage was a union either of sympathy or conquest. We may add that the days of the marriage of conquest are over. And if the word "obey" doesn't go it will empty the churches. Yet how can it go when it is in the New Testament?

The broad objection to the Church doctrine of marriage is that it was never "ordained" at all. It grew up, like all other human institutions. The priests simply got hold of it as they got hold of everything else that was really important. They did not make marriage; it would be truer to say that marriage made them. They pretended that they invented it, and that it would disappear without them. The real truth was, of course, that marriage had a sociological justification. It was the only method revealed by experience for the rearing of offspring. No marriage, no home; no home, no family; no family, no tribe; no tribe, no nation. This is now perceived by educated people, who know something of history and evolution; and with this the Church cannot possibly reconcile herself.

Why did the *Daily News* think it necessary to notice the Tory charge that Baron de Forest was a "Catholic"? To notice such charges at all is to assist in playing the game of bigotry. The proper thing for a candidate to do who is charged with being a Catholic, or an Atheist, is to reply: "I don't know what my religious ideas have to do with this political contest; but since some people are so full of what I consider illegitimate curiosity I will ease their minds for once. I am a Catholic (or, I am an Atheist). What then?" That would end it. Bigotry would be checkmated by a plain challenge.

Canon Newbolt says that the reason why the familiar lines of the National Anthem—

"Confound their politics  
Frustrate their knavish tricks"

was altered at the Thanksgiving service in St. Paul's was that the language sounded "too strong for a consecrated building." It has taken these Christian guides a long while to recognise the ignorant impertinence of the lines, and even now there have been numerous protests against the alteration. Still, it is rather dangerous work praying for the frustration of knavish tricks. The deity might, perhaps, give the advice a wider application than some of the dignified clergy would find either pleasant or profitable.

The Archdeacon of Lincoln refuses to take any part in a funeral service where the remains are cremated. He says the whole practice of cremating the human body is contrary to the divine intention. We should hardly have thought so. On the contrary, a continuous cremation was once held to be part of the divine intention as regards the larger portion of the human race. And even now the largest Church in Christendom still keeps to the cremation theory, and announces itself as the only authorised holder of the keys to the crematorium.

A gleam of common sense has appeared on the Bournemouth local Council. It has agreed to Sunday music on the pier during July, August, and September. If nothing frightful occurs as a result of this wild debauchery we presume the music will be continued next season. A proposal was also brought forward to run the trams on Sunday. This was deferred until the next meeting. Sunday trams and Sunday music at one meeting was rather more than the reckless dare-devils of the Bournemouth Town Council could stand. Still, moral deterioration is easy, and having once embarked on the primrose path of debauchery, there is no telling to what dread excesses Bournemouth may come.

The newspapers report the death of the survivor of the two Davenport brothers who exploited the Cabinet trick in the name of Spiritualism. Merely as a trick it would have taken its place with other tricks on the music-hall stage; but being surrounded with mystery, and professedly done with the aid of "spirits," it caught on immensely with the long-eared public. The exposure of the trick by Maskelyne and Cooke, who proved it to be purely mechanical by doing it themselves without the aid of anything but their own skill, took the cream off the Davenports' business. But even to this day there are Spiritualists who believe that the clever Yankoes, who were the sons of a Yankoo detective, had the assistance of "unseen agencies." So powerful is a full-grown superstition!

A young Jewess, who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit during the late Pentecostal Convention at Sunderland, is reported to have "been wonderfully healed by the dear Lord." Her spine, which was bad, is now almost straight. "She had one leg," *Confidence* says, "three inches shorter than the other, and they are now the same length." This leaves us in doubt as to which leg the Lord operated on. Was the short one lengthened or the long one shortened? We pause for a reply.



## Mr. Foote's Engagements.

(Lectures suspended for the present.)

## To Correspondents.

**PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1911.**—Previously acknowledged £260 3s. 3d. Received since:—South African Rationalist Association (per J. D. Stevens, Hon. Sec.), E. J. Chapman, £2 2s.; M. Torrente, £1 1s.; Dr. Sage, 10s. 6d.; J. D. Stevens, 10s. 6d.; E. P. Beer, 15s.; Mrs. E. P. Beer, 10s.; C. Marzoff, 10s.; R. Upstill, 10s.; F. Forssell, 10s.; E. T. Jarvis, 5s.; J. L. Black, 5s.; J. Hallick, 5s.; J. Cunningham, 5s.; R. Rosenthal, 5s.; H. Sidersky, 5s.; J. Dnery, 5s.; L. Joffe, 2s. 6d.; J. J. C. Leyds, 2s. 6d.; G. B. Logan, 2s. 6d.; E. R. Levy, 2s. 6d.; V. Reeman, 2s. 6d.; F. Weiner, 2s. 6d.; F. G., 2s. 6d.; G. A. Mücke, 2s. 6d.; Dr. D. B. Drosinsky, 2s.; F. M. J., 2s.; D. Coll, 1s.; E. W., 1s.—Total, £10. A. H. Deacon, 2s. 6d.; A. Harvey, 5s.; R. Wood, 5s.

**THE VANCE TESTIMONIAL FUND.**—Previously acknowledged, £75 3s. Received since:—W. Wheeler (per S. Samuels), 5s.; D. J. D. £1; J. Hockin, 1s.; T. A. Matthews, 10s.; Gwilym Hughes, 1s.; D. W. D., 5s.; E. B., £1 1s.; A. Harvey, 5s.; Blackheath, 2s. 6d.; R. Wood, 2s. 6d.; Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Nash, 2s.; N. Levy, 3s.; J. Foot, 10s. 6d.; J. Bevins, 5s.; H. Tucker, 5s.; G. McClusky, £1; L. Kettridge, 4s.; W. Ross, 2s. 6d.; J. Ross, 2s. 6d.; W. Heaford, £1.

**A. BLAMFIELD**—We used to see the *Bulletin* regularly when it was sent to us from the office, but it has not reached us for some years now. For the rest, see paragraph.

**E. B.**, subscribing to the Vance Testimonial Fund, says: "I deeply sympathise with Miss Vance's misfortune, for to me the deprivation of sight appears to occupy the second place in the long list of terrible afflictions that we are liable—the first, of course, being the loss of reason."

**A. J. MCKIRDY.**—Order passed on to shop manager. Professor Romanes, who was brought up as a Christian, thought himself into Atheism, and wrote a defence of it under the pen-name of "Physicus." He died of a long lingering illness, and his religious wife, aided by the Rev. C. Gore, now Bishop of Birmingham, took care that he finished as a member of the Church of England. But he never answered his own book. Thomas Cooper reverted to Christianity some sixty years ago. But facts like these prove nothing. Against them stands the fact that all the great leaders of Freethought were converted from Christianity. Personalities are not principles—which are true or false according to the evidence.

**W. E. ALLEN.**—We have no right to give you the address, but we have sent him your letter.

**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.

## A Correction.

We regret to find that in our issue dated December 25, 1910, in a reprinted article entitled "Blasphemy," we gave publicity to statements reflecting on the professional character of Miss Elizabeth Jones, the Head Mistress of the Somercotes Infant School, Alfreton. We admit that there is no foundation for the imputations reflecting on Miss Jones and express our sincere regret for the annoyance caused to her.

G. W. FOOTE.

## Sugar Plums.

Miss Vance, who is on the East Coast, in care of her friends, Miss Kough and Miss Stanley (who, by the way, were added to the list of N.S.S. vice-presidents at the Birmingham Conference) is making good progress towards recovery. The fine weather and the fresh air are doing her a world of good. And then there is the rest. What a grand thing it is to lie fallow for a bit—careless of chronology, to imitate, at least in one respect, Dickens's idle apprentice, who didn't "get through the time" but let it get through him!

Viscountess Harberton was often one of Mr. Foote's auditors at Queen's Hall and elsewhere in West London. She directed in her will that her funeral should be of the simplest sort, that her body should be cremated, and that no one who professed to have any affection for her should wear mourning.

Amongst the new Civil List pensioners we are glad to see Mrs. Davidson, the widow of John Davidson, the poet, whose tragic death stirred the nation a few years ago. One of Davidson's troubles was that his genius was not marketable enough to make any material provision for his wife. Real genius seldom is. The £75 a year granted to Mrs. Davidson is money well invested. Davidson was a true poet, a true man, and a true Freethinker. He thought that even the Atheist did not go far enough. Nothing could be more uncompromising than his declaration against all forms of Theism. The gods went as man arrived. They were the imbecilities of his infancy. Man was the universe aware of itself. Man, and not any inmate of the pantheon, was the true deity. Thus did Davidson dot the i of Shakespeare's superb panegyric on man in one of those magical prose passages of "Hamlet."

We are glad to see Mr. W. H. Davies in the new list of pensioners. £50 a year will keep him at least from the apprehension of inability to "keep body and soul together." Mr. Davies was "discovered" by Mr. Bernard Shaw. His poetical output is small, but some of it is perhaps the most beautiful and inevitable poetry of our age. His prose is quite as remarkable. He is a *bona fide* realist; a realist who knows nothing about realism, but writes realistically because he is built that way. Mr. Davies lived the life of a beggar and a tramp, and is not ashamed of it. He is not cut out for what the world calls work. Only of late years has he found his true function. He is a born writer—and born writers are one of the world's rarest possessions. We are glad that Mr. Asquith, or whoever is responsible, has had the sagacity and courage to put Mr. Davies on the Civil List—in spite of the Philistines.

We do not grudge Mr. Frederick Rogers his £50 a year. He has worked hard for many years, in his own way, to promote the success of the Old Age Pension idea. We only wish he wouldn't be so ridiculously blind as to fancy that his Master (John Ruskin) was the originator of that idea. Mr. Rogers, being a Christian (of a sort) himself may think it a duty to claim the honor in question for Ruskin because he also was a Christian (of a sort). But the fact is that Thomas Paine actually sketched out a scheme of Old Age Pensions in *Rights of Man* before John Ruskin was born.

Mr. W. B. Yeats, the Irish poet and dramatist, is in the new Civil List for £150 a year, and Mr. Joseph Conrad, the novelist, for £100 a year. Mr. Conrad is not even a Britisher, although he writes in English; but who would begrudge him his pension if he were ten times a "foreigner"? The encouragement of genius in literature and art (genius in practical science can generally take care of itself, being related to the commercial side of things) is one of a nation's best efforts towards a higher civilisation.

"I must tell you," writes a Melbourne correspondent (Mr. H. A. Blamfield), "how dearly I love the *Freethinker* and the men who write it. It is the 'moon of my delight, that knows no wane.' One thing I am sorry for is that your splendidly sustained advocacy of Freethought, and all that it implies, meets with such scant recompense. But you are too old a battler to be discouraged; and, believe me, if to be well beloved by your friends, and hated by your enemies, is to achieve success, then this it is you have achieved." We endorse some of this. The *Freethinker* is hated like poison by myriads of Christians; on the other hand, it is intensely loved by many of its readers, and is a part of their



very lives. To be loved and to be hated—what can a flag like ours want better?

"You may be interested," a correspondent writes, "in hearing of a plan I have tried for increasing the sale of the *Freethinker* in this town. I order two copies, and arrange with my newsagent that he displays *prominently* on his counter the second copy. If he does not sell it before the following Thursday, I take it. But if he *does* sell it during the week, he immediately orders a third copy and places that on his counter. He may, or may not, sell it—but if he does not, I take it. So that, whatever happens, the newsagent runs no risk of having an extra copy thrown on his hands, as I guarantee to buy it, and this is all *he* cares for from a business point of view. As far as we have gone the experiment is quite satisfactory." We wish other friends would go and do likewise. The *Freethinker* has always been supplied to the trade on "sale or return," but after the lapse of thirty years several agents don't know it—or pretend not to know it. And either way does us a mischief, for retail agents cannot speculate if they cannot return the copies that are unsold. This correspondent's guarantee to his newsagent turns the scale in our favor.

"The small Branch of the N. S. S. here," write J. and S. Thomson, from Renfrew, "is making an impression. Early in the summer we began holding open-air meetings on Sunday evenings. This attracted an anti-infidel lecturer from Glasgow. He is getting all he asked for—and more. We have large audiences, which are more sympathetic than we anticipated."

Not long ago we mentioned the formation of a new South African Rationalist Association, and soon afterwards the fact that the President had forwarded to us through the Hon. Sec. (Mr. J. D. Stevens) the sum of £4 towards the President's Honorarium Fund. We did not know at the time that the President was Mr. John Latham, an old friend (though not an old man) of Joseph Symes at Melbourne, and a valued friend of our own since he came to England some eleven years ago. The Association has since supplemented its President's donation handsomely. A cheque for £10 has just reached us, accompanied by the following letter from Mr. Stevens:—

"At a general meeting of the Association recently held, and at the Sunday evening lecture held yesterday, the question of the N. S. S. President's Honorarium Fund was raised, and I have much pleasure in transmitting herewith contributions as per list enclosed."

It is pleasant—yes, and encouraging—to find that we have readers and friends at such a distance. The *Freethinker* goes wherever the English language is spoken. And we bear that cheering fact in mind in editing it. Many paragraphs written in London are necessarily more or less local, though never insular in intention and significance; but our articles are generally of universal interest. Freethought is international, and its principles are everywhere the same.

We have been asked whether Secular Education literature for distribution can be obtained from the Secular Education League. Our reply is in the affirmative. Application for a list of the League's publications should be made to Mr. Harry Snell, secretary, 12 Buckingham-street, Strand, W.C.

"Bertrand L. Weber, the many-times-arrested Free-thought speaker of Chicago, is now at liberty under \$400 bonds. The last arrest, it seems, was caused by Catholics, and he was roughly handled by the arresting officer, named Riordan, being thrown into the police wagon and his books—scattered by the officer's upsetting his stand—piled in on top of him. The crowd, which was with Weber, rushed the officers, who made a quick escape, some five hundred following and demanding Weber's release. Bail was refused until the young man had been for some time in a cell. All this is persecution, for religious speakers are not disturbed. Other Chicago Freethinkers may conclude to try street speaking to ascertain whether the rule of the Catholic police against such speaking can be enforced. Meanwhile the authorities will be mandamus'd to show cause for the suppression of free speech."—*Truthseeker* (New York).

#### GOOD EARS OF ANGELS.

Mamma: "Yes, dear, the angels can hear everything; they heard your prayers last night."

Effie: "That's funny; I didn't say them."

## Sirens—and Superstitions.

"*Siren Land*. By Norman Douglas (London: Dent & Sons, Ltd. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.; 1911. Pp. 302, and 25 illustrations. 6s. net.).

SIREN LAND comprises the sun-bathed stretch of country from Pompei to Punta Campanella, with that jewel of delight, Capri, and the neighboring islets and rocks which adorn the Gulf of Naples and the Gulf of Salerno—a land richly laden with tradition, over which these charming pages linger lovingly. I can imagine no richer reward of virtue than to be privileged to read this fascinating book and dip into its pages amidst the scenes of enchantment made vivid for us by Mr. Douglas's magic pen. For not only are the themes dealt with of deep and varied interest, abounding in entrancing *aperçus* upon the story of a corner of Italy where the ancient and modern world and world-ideas still meet, and, indeed, remain inextricably intertwined, but their treatment is by a masterly hand, cunning not only with rare gifts of style, but bold in carving finely chiselled thoughts and expressing daring judgments on topics which ordinary writers hold taboo. Siren Land, as our author tells us, is truly "a favored land, flowing with milk and honey, particularly the former. Saint Non mentions as proof of its fertility the fact that you can engage wet-nurses there from the ages of fourteen to fifty-five."\* For that reason it abounds with interesting saints and tales of wonder.

The Sirens, like so much else in our modern outfit, came direct from ancient Greece. Homer knew all about them, and sang what he knew in the *Odyssey*. But, as Mr. Douglas remarks, like many other things, they were only an importation, one of the new ideas that, following the trade routes, crept in to feed the artistic imagination of the Greeks:—

"Now that we know a little something of the ancient civilisations of countries like Egypt and Phœnicia that traded with Greece, we can appreciate the wonderful Hellenic genius for borrowing and adapting. Hermes, the intelligent thief, is a typical Greek. For whatever they stole or appropriated—religions, metals, comforts of life, architecture, engineering—they stole with exquisite taste; they discarded the dross and took what was of value."

The stolen material was remodelled till its original creator could hardly have recognised it. The grotesque, the cruel, became humane. Borrowed gods of frantic aspect put on fair and benignant faces. And every item was forthwith stamped with the hall-mark of Hellas: temperance. But after Hellas came the Alexandrian period, with its philological and historical vagaries, and the prodigious syncretism of gods in the second and third centuries; then mediævalism, which dwarfed Hellenic shapes into caco-demons and with their glories crowned its saints. All this, and more, Mr. Douglas tells us, and how the Siren Parthenope escaped by taking refuge during mediæval storms in the narrow confines of an amulet—such Siren-charms as are still seen in the streets of Naples and credited with peculiar efficacy against the evil eye. Others, such as Venus, sheltered themselves behind musty saints; Santa Venere is in high repute as Healer of certain diseases.

What to the Greek was poetry became to the mediæval Christian an ugly heap of prose. Amongst the Greeks the Sirens are stamped with features of eternal youth. They linger on sea-girt rocks, tyre in hand, or rise from the gleaming water, clash their cymbals, and again vanish. But all these fanciful allegories were hardened into gross and sordid superstitions when Christianity finally quenched the light of Hellas. For instance, in the royal archives of Portugal are preserved the records of a costly litigation between the Crown and the Grand Master of the Order of Saint James as to who should possess the Sirens cast up by the sea on the Grand Master's shores. The suit ended in the King's favor: "Be it enacted—that Sirens and other marine monsters ejected by the waves upon land owned by the Grand



Master shall pass into the possession of the King." A pity the decree did not include Centaurs and Unicorns.

One of the Sirens, the chaste Parthenope, found a resting-place and an honored tomb on the spot where now stands Naples. For a thousand years she dominated its social and religious institutions. She dominates them still. Is Parthenope dead? If so, says Mr. Douglas, who, then, is Santa Lucia? The madonnas of Naples are all sea-queens whose crowns shine with a borrowed lustre; the Madonna della Libere, the Stella di Mare—they are the re-incarnations of antique shapes, of the Sirens, of Leucothea, etc., and their cult to this day is pagan rather than Christian, and peculiar to this part of Italy.

Mr. Norman Douglas knows and loves this land of unfailing enchantment, this beautiful Siren Land, overgrown with hoary traditions, of which that of the sea-maidens is only one. His life has been spent amongst these villages and farms, whose inhabitants reflect the various cultures that have been imposed upon them during the last two thousand years of political changes. Perhaps only those who have seen Capri and caught a near glimpse of paradise from its commanding heights—a glimpse not merely of physical wonders, spread out lavishly in that favored region, but of a scarce-buried antiquity whose outcrop is still seen in the institutions and scenes around—can fully appreciate the allurements of Siren Land. But let Mr. Douglas sing its charms and uses:—

"An old Hebrew, who taught the pleasures of a virtuous life after exhausting those of a voluptuous one, said: Go to the ant. He forgot to remember that the ant sleeps for half the year. Man alone is a perennial drudge. Yet many of us would do well to *mediterraneanise* ourselves for a season, to quicken those ethnic roots from which has sprung so much of what is best in our natures. To dream in Siren Land, pursuing the moods and memories as they shift in labyrinthine mazes, like shadows on a woodland path in June; to stroll among the hills and fill the mind with new images upon which to browse at leisure, casting off outworn weeds of thought with the painless ease of a serpent, and unperplexing, incidentally, some of those questions of the day of which the daily papers, nevertheless, know nothing—this is an antidote for many ills."

The attentive reader will see for himself how effectively a leisured "mediterraneanisation" has given Mr. Douglas the strength to cast off outworn weeds of thought.

Mr. Douglas has some pertinent remarks on the Bourbon misrule which long desolated this region. We cannot, as he tells us, estimate the vital strain of a century of terrorism, its effect upon the organic system of communities—upon their arts, commerce, industry, and all the finer fibres of their social being. Those Englishmen who complain of certain unpleasant characteristics of modern Neapolitans, might do well to remember that the Bourbons, whose iniquitous rule British arms maintained, had been incapacitated from further mischief when their saviors came from over the sea and practically re-imposed for another half century "that rule of brigands, monks, *lazzari*, and other vermin which was responsible for this deplorable state of affairs." There had been tyrannies before in Naples, odious tyrannies; but despots, secular and religious, had been powerless to smother the grand traditions of Hellenic culture, the envy and delight of ancient and mediæval Europe. Naples was ever the first city of Italy for speculative thought:—

"The Neapolitan Academy for the Study of Nature was the first to be founded in the world; it preceded the English Royal Society by nearly a century. One of the brightest pages in human history is the successful struggle of the Neapolitans against the inquisition. This, and much else, might be said in praise of pre-Bourbon Naples. But where philosophical books may not even be imported into a country, much less printed, where the reading of Voltaire is punished with three years' galley slavery, and that of the Florence newspapers with six months' imprisonment—how incredible it seems nowadays—the flower of civilisation withers and fades away."

Southern Italy—the land of Bruno, himself born close to the realm where the Sirens held sway—still bears the stigmata of these ferocious raids of religion upon human freedom. Mr. Douglas shows that the Spanish domination is responsible for the cloud of monks and confessors that settled like locusts upon the land; for the shattering of political life and of wholesome domestic ideals by spy-systems, Jesuit-horrors, and the enforced seclusion of women in inner chambers, of women in convents. The Spanish influence brutalised the Neapolitans by beast-shows, maddened them by outrageous exactions, by the gallows, the rack, and the wheel. It filled the provinces with the fierce unrest of banditism, and smothered letters, music, arts, and science in the sandy deserts of theology. It infected decent Catholic observances with a still-persisting realism, such as when, on Good Friday, the head of Christ crucified is ornamented with real human hair, while his body and the snowy winding-sheet are bespattered with fresh cow's blood, in order to make the effect more life-like (pp. 195-6). To-day, the problem of Southern Italy is the biggest problem the Italian statesman has to face.

A fascinating chapter is that on Tiberius, who, in the closing ten years of his reign, ruled the world from Capri. His retirement to this outpost of Siren Land is of grave significance in the world's history, inasmuch as then, for the first time, the centre of the world was displaced, and, in the words of J. R. Green, "never thoroughly restored. If Milan, Ravenna, Nicomedia, Constantinople became afterwards her [Rome's] rivals or supplanters as the seat of empire, it was because Capri had led the way." It is impossible to-day to credit the calumnies of Tacitus and Suetonius concerning the sage and philosophic emperor whose fundamental sanity is shown by the following trait:—

"A man [I quote Mr. Douglas] was about to be put on his trial for insulting the divinity of the deceased Augustus, but the emperor stopped the proceedings by saying that 'Gods could avenge their own wrongs' (*deorum iniurias deis curæ*)—a genial, golden pronouncement which deserves to be graven over the portals of every church on earth. I suspect [says Mr. Douglas] that the chief reason why it pleased us to dislike Tiberius arose from the fact that Christ was crucified under his reign; the culpability of the emperor in this matter is not obvious, but when religious feelings come into play the mind ceases to trouble itself with cause and effect."

The changes of two thousand years, the tramp of armies, and the innovations of new-fangled religions in Siren Land, have left the basic elements of humanity essentially unchanged. Mr. Douglas holds that the proper decipherment of the human palimpsest of the Parthenopean region will show how faint are the traces of Græco-Roman schooling, how skin deep—as regards primitive tracts of feeling—are the scars of mediæval tyranny and bestiality:—

"Christianity has only left a translucent veneer like a slug's track, upon the surface; below can be read the simple desire for sunshine and family life, and a pantheism vague and charming, the impress of nature in her mildest moods upon the responsive human phantasy. Theirs is a Christianity with a pagan plus. Every one of the heavenly host may be cheated at a bargain; the Virgin and her infant Son—the adult Jesus is unknown here—are adored with feasts and flowers; they are *tanti belli*; but to endeavor to imitate either of them would be deemed a most unprofitable speculation. A Greek fashion of regarding the gods."

But the pearl of precious price in this work is the superb chapter devoted to the life of Sister Serafina. Born at Naples on October 24, 1621, the incidents of her birth, life, and death—of her doctrinal and mystical vagaries—are modelled upon those of the more celebrated Spanish nun, Saint Teresa, who was born nearly a century earlier. At an early age,—

"her trances were of so peculiarly an automatic form that at the sight of a crucifix, for instance, she would at once fall into an ecstasy, thus learning to believe implicitly and devoutly what most of her fellow Christians can but dimly hope to understand: the Real Presence. The crucifix which *spoke to her* (like that of St. Thomas Aquinas) is still preserved at Massa."



I cannot resist the temptation to cite this further delineation:

"Like Santa Teresa, she merely coquetted, if I may decently so express myself, with the mysteries of the Trinity, that tremendous doctrine which exerts, from its very incredibility, a magnetic attraction upon this class of persons, affording the simplest test of what constitutes the true religious mystic, whose mind, attuned to improbabilities, discovers to be plain, necessary, and beautiful, what others describe as simply puzzling. Santa Teresa's epigram on this subject, 'the greater the absurdity the more I believe,' finds an echo in Sister Serafina's pious exclamation, 'O luminous obscurity, so clear to all those who adore you.'"

A frame of mind this which wonderfully fits the average believer from Tertullian to General Booth. The very name of Jesus was of so sweet a taste in her mouth that on uttering it she frequently swooned away—like a certain Bishop of Saluzzo, who, according to the pornographic Saint Alfonso de Liguori, perceived such a pleasant aroma in his mouth each time he pronounced the sacred word *Maria*, that he invariably licked his lips afterwards (p. 160).

The morbid sexual basis of her mysticism was such that she refused to sit in chairs that men, even priests, had previously occupied; suckling infants of the male sex were not tolerated within the precincts of her convents (p. 171). Even the motherhood of the Madonna, so touching and sublime to many, was hardly congenial to her ultra-virginal mind. We learn that when the Virgin and Son appeared to her simultaneously she was always in a dilemma whom to adore, and finally she prayed the Virgin not to bring the Son, as he attracted her so strongly that she feared to be wanting in due reverence towards her (p. 172).

She was a strange amalgam of contradictions. At one time she exclaims, "Oh that I could steal all the children from their mothers and lock them in a monastery." In another mood, her tolerance becomes an example to Christians of all colors. Mr. Douglas's summing-up is that had the adherents of Christianity thought and felt as Serafina did in matters of toleration "there would have been no burnings and thumb-screwings, no haggings as to probabillorism, *filiouque*, or Gadarene pigs—unlovely phenomena, calculated to make the world-reformer despair of uplifting a race that can wallow in such abysses of criminality and absurdity." And yet, despite her miracles and macerations, her sanctity and her conventual foundations, her beatification is still deferred, although the price of canonisation, according to Silvagni, has now been reduced to 200,000 francs!

But I must plunder no more from this treasure-house. The reader must go himself and revel, as I have done, in these pelucid pages. Rarely have I lighted upon such a happy combination of literary grace and philosophical clarity.

WILLIAM HEAFORD.

## The Apocalypse.—XVI.

(Concluded from p. 445.)

THERE are many more passages in the "holy books" which the writer of the "Revelation" made use of to make up his grand prophecy of "things which must come to pass hereafter"; but I can only find space for the following extracts relating to the last Judgment, a new heaven and earth, the New Jerusalem, the light of God in heaven, and the "River of the water of life":—

### THE REVELATION.

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them"—"And I saw a great white throne and him that sat upon it..... And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the *Book of life*: and the dead were judged

### THE HOLY BOOKS.

"I beheld till thrones were placed.....the judgment was set, and the books were opened" (Dan. vii. 9, 10). "I beheld the Ancient of days, while he sat upon the throne of his glory; and the *Book of the living* was opened"—"The earth shall deliver up from her womb, and Hades deliver

### THE REVELATION.

out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works.....And death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.....And if any was not found written in the *Book of life*, he was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 4; 11—15).

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away.....And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God" (Rev. xxi. 1, 2).

"Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them and be their God: and he shall wipe every tear from their eyes" (Rev. xxi. 3).

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (Rev. xxii. 13; xxi. 6).

The New Jerusalem—"having twelve gates.....and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east were three gates; and on north three gates; and on the south three gates; and on the west three gates" (Rev. xxi. 12, 13).

The New Jerusalem—"And the building of the wall thereof was jasper; and the city was pure gold.....The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all manner of precious stones" (Rev. xxi. 18, 19).

"And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it"—"The Lord God shall give them light" (Rev. xxi. 23; xxii. 5).

"And he showed me a river of water of life.....proceeding out of the throne of God..... And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (Rev. xxii. 1, 2).

No one who has read the source passages from which the Apocalypticist derived his ideas can be in doubt as to the character of his so-called "revelation." It is needless to say that the Apocalypse contains no revelation whatever. The writer neither saw nor heard any of the matters he describes—either in a vision inspired by God, or when "in the spirit." His book is but one of the many frauds perpetrated in the name of religion in an age of gross credulity and superstition. He was one of the Essenes to whom Josephus was referring when he wrote: "There are also among them who undertake to foretell things to come by reading the holy books and being perpetually conversant in the discourses of the prophets." The Book of Revelation is the best example of this method of predicting future events now extant, and there can be no doubt as to the writer being fully qualified for the concoction of such a work.

If we take up a Christian commentary on the Apocalypse, we shall find the book described as an inspired prediction, in an emblematic or symbolical character, of events occurring in the progressive kingdom of Christ, or in the history of the Christian Church, from the apostolic age to the end of time. Jesus and his Church are said to be referred to from

### THE HOLY BOOKS.

from hers, that which it has received.....He shall select the righteous and holy from among them"—"I swear to you, ye righteous, that in heaven the angels record your goodness before the throne of the Most High"—"Woe to you, ye sinners.....you shall be burnt in the fire, and be recompensed according to your deeds" (Enoch xlvi. 3; l. 1; civ. 1; xcix).

"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.....for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy" (Isa. lxxv. 13, 18).

"I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people"—"And the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces" (Ezek. xxxvii. 27; Isa. xxv. 8).

"Thus saith the Lord.....I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God" (Isa. xlv. 6).

"And the gates of the city shall be after the names of the tribes of Israel; three gates northward.....and at the east side.....three gates;.....and at the south side three gates;.....at the west side three gates" (Ezek. xlviii. 31—34). [Here a tribe is named for each gate.]

"For Jerusalem shall be builded with sapphires and emeralds, and precious stones; thy walls and towers and battlements with pure gold" (Tobit xiii. 16, 17).

"The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto them an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory" (Isa. lx. 19).

"And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow every tree for meat.....It shall bring forth new fruit every month, because the waters thereof issue out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for healing" (Ezek. xlvii. 12).



beginning to end, the symbolical drama concluding with the triumph of the Church and the downfall of all its enemies. The author of the book, of course, is alleged to be the holy apostle John, who actually saw and heard all he has described in a vision inspired by God or Jesus Christ. The "lion of the tribe of Judah" (v. 5) is Jesus Christ. The Lamb with "seven horns and seven eyes" (v. 6) is also Jesus Christ, the seven horns symbolising "the fulness of his power," and the seven eyes "the fulness of his vision." The four grotesque "living creatures" with eyes and wings (iv. 6-8) suggest "whatever is noblest, strongest, wisest, and swiftest" in animate nature. The Woman clothed with the sun (xii. 5) represents the Church, the Man-child she gives birth to being the "seed of the woman" in Gen. iii. 15. The Man sitting on a cloud holding a sickle (xiv. 14) is the "crowned Christ"; the Bride (Rev. xix. 7; xxi. 9) is the Christian Church, notwithstanding the fact that the writer says that it is a city—Jerusalem. The Man on the white horse (xix. 11) is "the glorified Christ, the royal Commander"; etc., etc.

As I have already shown, there are in the Apocalypse proper (Rev. iv. 1—xxii. 15) a number of Christian interpolations, the majority consisting of but a few words, such as—"and of the lamb"—"and of his Christ"—"and the testimony of Jesus," etc.; and also that if these be erased there remains a purely Jewish Apocalypse. This very important fact is sweetly ignored by Christian commentators, though in the majority of cases the interpolations are plain and obvious. This matter has been dealt with in two of the early papers; but to the reasons there adduced may be added some fresh marks of the non-Christian character of the writing.

1. In Rev. xx. 11—15 and xxi. 5—7 the Judge in the last Judgment appears to be the Lord God; but in Matt. xxv. 31 and John v. 22 it is stated that all judgment had been given to the Son. The apostle John, assuming he wrote the latter passage, would have full knowledge of this divine arrangement; but the writer of the "Revelation" certainly knew nothing of it.

2. No church officers, such as bishops, presbyters (elders), or deacons have a place in the Apocalypse, though they are mentioned in some of the New Testament writings. (See Phil. i. 1; Eph. iv. 11; 1 Tim. iii. 2, 8; James v. 14).

3. Unreasoning "faith," the great essential to salvation in the Christian religion, is not found in the Apocalypse; its place is given to "works."

4. Of the Epistles to the seven churches (Rev. ii. and iii.) two are addressed to Thyatira and Philadelphia, two small and insignificant places; while large cities such as Tralles, Magnesia, Hierapolis, Colossae, Troas, Adramyttium, Miletus, Halicarnassus, Dorylaem, and Synnada, most of which must have had Christian communities before the end of the first century, are passed over as non-existing. Moreover, the Alogi, an early Christian sect that rejected the Apocalypse, assigned as one reason for so doing that no Christian church existed at Thyatira—which was doubtless correct.

This last objection brings me to the question of the relation of the first three chapters to the Apocalypse proper. As regards this question, I find these chapters to be of nearly the same character as the rest of the book; that is to say, Essene. The only interpolations that can truly be called Christian are the 5, 6, 7, and a few words in Rev. i. 9, 10, 18, and Rev. ii. 2, 8, 18. When these Christian additions are erased, the three chapters are non-Christian and Essene. These chapters contain the same marks of their Essene character as the Apocalypse proper, to which I must now add another which is found only in this section. Josephus says of the Essenes:—

"They preserve the books belonging to the sect, and the names of the angels."

The "angels" were the ministers or teachers of branch churches of the Essenes, and as such they are designated in this section of the Apocalypse.

The Epistles to the "seven churches" were each addressed to the presiding "angel." Thus, we read:—

Rev. ii. 1.—"To the *angel* of the church in Ephesus."

Rev. ii. 8.—"To the *angel* of the church in Smyrna."

Rev. ii. 12.—"To the *angel* of the church in Pergamum," etc.

From these Epistles it would appear that the many small communities of Essenes scattered throughout Asia were directed and supervised by the president of the central society, then located at some place not mentioned. We may also be sure that if there was no Christian church at Thyatira, there was certainly a small body of Essenes residing there. The word "angel," in the sense of "pastor" is found eight times in this part of the Apocalypse; yet Christian commentators seem loth to admit that it refers to a spiritual leader, probably for the reason that no such title was ever given to one in authority in the Christian Church.

The first three chapters of the "Revelation" have no connection with the Apocalypse proper, and appear to have been composed *after* the other was completed. This is evident from passages like the following:—

"Rev. ii. 11.—"He that overcometh shall not be *hurt* of the second death."

Rev. iii. 12.—"He that overcometh.....I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of.....the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from God."

Here are clear references to matters described for the first time in the Apocalypse proper, and of which the reader is assumed to have a full knowledge. What is meant by being "hurt of the second death"? This, in Rev. xx. 14, is stated to be—being "cast into the lake of fire." What, again, is meant by "writing upon him the name of God"? This, according to Rev. vii. 3, refers to the servants of God being "sealed" with the name of God on the forehead. Also, in Rev. xxi. 2, the New Jerusalem is first mentioned as "coming down out of heaven from God."

The Apocalypse, being founded on predictions in the "holy books," was bound, as a matter of course, to contain a "Son of man"—the latter personage figuring in the books of Daniel, Enoch, and 2 Esdras, not one of whose fraudulent writers could have had any knowledge of Jesus Christ. Neither, apparently, had the Apocalypticist. The short apocalypse in Rev. i. 10—20, which Christian commentators say symbolises Jesus Christ, is a new and later version of the Man on the white horse (Rev. xx. 11—21).

ABRACADABRA.

#### RESEMBLANCE TO A GREAT PREACHER.

A Presbyterian clergyman, recently candidating for a pastorage of some importance in a Scotch community in the middle west, gives his experience—or rather a single characteristic incident out of it—in the following language:

"The evening service was like that of the morning, the only difference being that I saw this sturdy people in the light of the setting instead of the rising sun.

But still no word, or hint, revealed to me the favor, or disfavor, with which my efforts had been received by the members of the congregation, save only that one man had ventured to remark 'that I had brought him in mind of Thomas Chalmers.'

I hurriedly exclaimed: 'Is that so?' in a tone which all too plainly implored him to go on.

'Yes,' said he, 'when ye blawed yir nose, if my een had been shut, I cud hao swore it was Chalmers.'"

#### AN EXCLUSIVE CHURCH.

An old darky wanted to join a fashionable city church and the minister, knowing it was hardly the thing to do and not wanting to hurt his feelings, told him to go home and pray over it. In a few days the darky came back.

"Well, what do you think of it by this time?" asked the preacher.

"Well, sah," replied the colored man, "Ah prayed an' prayed, an' de good Lawd he says to me, 'Rastus, Ah wouldn't bodder mah haid about dat no mo'. Ah've been trying to get into dat chu'ch mahse'f fo' de las' twenty years and Ah done had no luck.'"



**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, Lectures.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): A. Allison, 3.15, a Lecture; 6, W. J. Ramsey, "Why I Reject Christianity."

EDMONTON BRANCH N. S. S. (The Green): 7, J. W. Marshall, "New Gods for Old."

FINSBURY PARK: 11.30, C. Cohen, a Lecture.

ISLINGTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Highbury Corner): 12 noon, Ivan Paperno and Walter Bradford. Newington Green: 7.30, Ivan Paperno, a Lecture. Highbury Corner: Wednesday, at 8, Ivan Paperno, a Lecture.

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

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill): 3.30, C. Cohen, a Lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford): Excursion to Loughton. Train from Stratford, 11.3.

WOOD GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Jolly Butchers Hill, opposite Public Library): 7, F. A. Davies, "Prayer."

**COUNTRY.**  
**INDOOR.**

RHONDDA BRANCH N. S. S. (Gwalia Restaurant, Tonypanyd): 3, T. Evans, "Morals and Moral Sentiments in the Making."

**OUTDOOR.**

Huddersfield Branch N. S. S. (Market Cross): 8.45, Geo. T. Whitehead, "Cash, Christ, Cant, and Crime." Saturday, at 8, Geo. T. Whitehead, "Civil Servants—Divinely Called."

NELSON, LANCs (Chapel-street): Joseph A. E. Bates—Sunday, at 7.15, "Kingcraft—Past and Present"; Monday, at 7.30, "Some Chapters from Christian History"; Tuesday, at 7.30, "Booth's Bunkum: Sidelights on Salvationism"; Wednesday, at 7.30, "The Prince of Hell"; Thursday, at 7.30, "The Free-will Fallacy."

**FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT**

By **G. W. FOOTE.**

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.

**HARRY BOULTER**, the Freethinker's Tailor, 108 City-road (2nd floor), opposite Old-st. Tube Station. Suits from 37s. 6d.; Ladies' Costumes from 45s. Catholics, Churchmen, Jews, and Nonconformists support their own. Go thou and do likewise! 10 to 8 at 108.

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, 25 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. VANCM, 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 incommensurable dwellings, and the want of open spaces, cause physical weakness and disease, and the deterioration of family life.

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

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

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

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

America's Freethought Newspaper.

# THE TRUTH SEEKER.

FOUNDED BY D. M. BENNETT, 1873.

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

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

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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

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

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

THE TRUTH SEEKER COMPANY,  
Publishers, Dealers in Freethought Books,  
62 VESBY 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. COHEN.

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, 1883.

With Special Prefaces 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. I.

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

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

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

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

## 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.**