

THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXXII.—No. 11

SUNDAY, MARCH 17, 1912

PRICE TWOPENCE

Rien est beau que le vrai.—BOILEAU.

Fried Souls.

WHO has not heard of fried sole? It is one of the greatest delicacies. But a great deal depends on the cooking. A heavy hand may dry it up to insipidity, or soften it with fat into nauseousness. When, however, it is cooked to a turn, and nicely sprinkled with lemon juice, it is a dish for the gods, and might be washed down with ambrosia.

Freethought readers will not blame us for this little excursion into gastronomy. It is only the asceticism of religion that makes a man ashamed of taste in eating. When the greatest and healthiest poet in the world devised a toast for a banquet, he wrote, "May good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both." We have not the slightest doubt that Shakespeare enjoyed a good dinner; it is also a thousand to one that he was a connoisseur in wine; though we imagine he knew when to refrain, and did not make the "good creature" an "enemy to steal away his brains."

Some people have no objection to good eating and drinking, but a mortal objection to puns. "Sir," said Dr. Johnson, "a man who would make a pun would pick a pocket." He would have modified the dictum if he had known Tom Hood. Perhaps the ponderous sage of Fleet-street—"Old Dread-Devil," as Cobbett called him—had been pestered by small punsters, always lying in wait for mere verbal analogies. Such punsters are the bane of society. They should be heavily taxed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But everyone is entitled to a certain allowance of weakness; and, for the sake of the "fried," at least, we hope our most relentless critics will pardon us for the pun in "souls." Anyhow, a bad bold editor will sacrifice his soul (there we are again, but it was an accident) for a "fetching" title. And having made this admission, we put on a brave front, and defy all our censurers.

Human beings have been fried in this world, generally by the friends of Heaven, for the glory and honor of God. At the stake they were *roasted*, and in hot oil they were *boiled*, but on an iron frame they were *fried*. Their souls, however—presuming they had souls—were only tortured indirectly, through the agony of their bodies. Human, and even ecclesiastical, malice was incapable of reaching their "glassy essence." But the Grand Inquisitor of the universe is able to burn "both body and soul in hell." And he has sworn that he will do it, and the oath of a god, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, is irreversible. Righteous or otherwise makes no difference. It is a question of consistency. As old Shylock says:—

"An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven!
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice."

Jehovah, the Bible god, that is, the Christian god, has a nose for a "sweet savor." He does not eat the fried souls, which are his special and registered delicacy. He only smells them, and therefore they are eternally cooked without ever being done. The steam of their cooking ascendeth for ever and ever. And all the angels in heaven share in this spiritual

repast. There is a great gulf between the upper circles and the pit, the dining-room and the kitchen; but the distance is not beyond vision and hearing; witness the parable of Dives and Lazarus. St. John, or the author of Revelation, being temporarily admitted into glory, held his nostrils over the reek of the damned, and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Many of the old preachers, also, contended that a great part of the happiness of the saved in heaven consisted in viewing the torments of the damned in hell, and that it would be a reflection on God's justice if he deprived them of this treat, as the relish of any pleasure is always heightened by a sight of the opposite misery. It may be concluded, therefore, that while manna is "angels' food," and sustains their corporeal structure, their more ethereal part is nourished by the "sweet savor" of fried souls.

The *chef* in Jehovah's kitchen is the Devil. His wages are nothing a year, paid quarterly. He was once a member of the celestial aristocracy, but, being disaffected towards the throne, he was cast down amongst the wretched democracy, where he is doomed to preside over

"that immortal fry
Of almost everybody born to die."

Lord Byron, whose verse this is, expected to join the "fry" himself, if there were any truth in the Scripture. And the reader will observe that he did not use "fry" simply through the exigency of rhyme. It was exactly the right word for the occasion. His lordship evidently had the very idea which we are seeking to convey. He is at one with us—or we are at one with him—as to the *frying*.

Robert Burns, the immortal poet and blasphemer of Scotland, whose lusty manhood offended the hypocrites as his strong intelligence frightened the godly—Robert Burns did not speak of *frying* in Hades, but he used another term of cookery. In one of his two masterpieces, he writes:—

"O Tam, O Tam, thou'lt get thy fairin';
In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin'."

Yet, in this sense, the roasting is so much like frying, that we may almost regard the terms as synonymous. Burns and Byron would have shaken hands over the difference, and a chat between them on the subject would have been worth listening to. Oh the mirth, the wit, the satire, the devilish abandon of such a conversation! Jehovah himself, and all his holy angels, might have listened at the keyhole, and found a joyous relief from the horrible monotony of heaven.

Bless the poets, the true ones, whose hearts were too big for the vile absurdities of religion. How refreshing it is to turn to them after a strong dose of divinity. Happily their tenderness has leavened the lump of humanity, and the frightful doctrine of hell-fire and everlasting torment is rapidly perishing. With it will go—it is only a question of time—all the rest of what Shelley called "the bloody faith." It is no longer conceivable to any sane intelligence that men will be the everlasting victims of their creator. We have heard the death-knell of Jehovah, the old savage god who delighted in the smell of burnt offerings, and mocked at human calamities. And once free from the awful nightmare, we can laugh at what terrified us. Yes, the monstrous apparition has sunk into a lighted turnip, and we pelt it with stones.

G. W. FOOTE.

The Happy Atheist.

WHEN conditions permitted, the Christian had a short and easy method of dealing with the Atheist. He burnt him. This plan had at least the merit of thoroughness, and it was the only religious argument to which there was no immediate reply. A reply, however, was forthcoming, and it was furnished by the race. As human society developed the practice of burning awakened misgivings. It seemed a poor use to put anyone to, and, as Voltaire said, it was attaching a very high value to one's own opinions to burn another man because he did not like them. So, gradually the Christian left off killing Freethinkers, for no other reason than that it no longer paid to do so. In default, he took to slandering them. They were not burned, but they deserved to be. And their being allowed to live should cause them to reflect upon the charity of their Christian neighbors, and upon the kindly feelings developed by Christianity.

Once more, however, development came into play. As the number of Freethinkers increased, they became better known. And being better known, Christian slanders began to lose their effectiveness. Moderate credulity may accept almost anything concerning a class of people about whom nothing is known. But it demands an abnormal credulity to accept wild stories about one's next door neighbor when his life is open to all. So, once again, there was a change of tactics. Instead of burning the Atheist, or slandering him, pious souls began to pity him. They expressed sorrow for him in the same tones that they might use of a dear friend who had just caught yellow fever. They were so sorry that Smith did not believe in a God. It was *such* a pity that his children should grow up in ignorance of the truth or value of religion. If Smith confessed to them that he was an Atheist, they received the confession with an air of commiseration, as though he had lost every penny he possessed—which, to the Christian imagination, is the greatest misfortune that can overtake anyone. Freethought has thus had to run the gauntlet of the biting Christian, the barking Christian, and the snivelling Christian. And, for my part, I prefer either of the two former to the latter. One can meet the persecutor with a good hearty hatred or a healthy opposition. The slanderer can be ignored. But the snivelling sympathiser crawls all over one, mentally, and leaves one with the impression of having rubbed shoulders with something unhealthy and unclean.

From the orthodox point of view, it is extremely probable that the really most deplorable feature about the Atheist is that he obstinately declines to live up to the character marked out for him by solicitous Christians. Instead of committing all the sins which Christians obligingly indicated he ought to commit, the Atheist went on his way, which, if not a better way than that pursued by Christians, was certainly not a worse one. Which added fresh fuel to Christian indignation. A wicked unbeliever the Christian could appreciate, even admire. He fitted in with the religious theory of things, and so long as he was properly and unquestionably a blackguard, faith received an ample justification. But an Atheist who was not a blackguard! What on earth was to be done with him? He was a living disproof of the Christian theory. Preacher after preacher had elaborated a code of misconduct, a kind of Atheist's guide to the Devil, and the same hardness of heart which led the Atheist to reject religion led him to refrain from becoming an incarnation of wickedness. Ingratitude could go no farther.

With equal "cussedness" does the Atheist decline to be as miserable as Christians assure him he ought to be. Atheism, considered by itself, the clergy have apparently never heard of. It is always "blank Atheism," or "barren Atheism," or "hopeless Atheism," or "the dreary creed of Atheism," or some other kind of Atheism equally suggestive of misery and despair. And in this the clergy are obligingly

helped by half-developed Freethinkers who accompany their statement of unbelief with a "wistful regret" that they can no longer accept the religious belief of their fellow citizens, and who, to do them justice, express their unbelief in so mournful a manner as to furnish some little support to the religious theorist. But the fully fledged Atheist will not live up to the character. Instead of weeping, he laughs. Instead of being miserable, he is happy. Instead of regretting the loss of his old faith, he unblushingly declares his joy at having got rid of it. And instead of being grateful for the sympathy of the Christian at his condition, he confounds the impertinence of the religionist, and expresses his practical sympathy with the deluded believer by seeking to convince him of the error of his ways. The Christian is, in fact, in the position of a man with a boil on his neck, wondering how other men manage to get along without poultices. The Atheist quite appreciates the position; all he reminds the believer is that he doesn't possess the boil, and therefore sees no reason to apply the linseed.

Of course, given the religious belief, it will be pleasant enough to discover compensating circumstances. Given a disease, one naturally looks round for an antidote. If a man really believes he is a miserable sinner, has what religious people call "a conviction of sin," he will naturally desire to find some other conviction of a more cheerful character. If he believes there is no hope and no happiness for the world apart from God, the world *minus* God must appear both unhappy and hopeless. The conclusion is involved in the belief, the belief necessitates the conclusion; and no one will dispute that, given the one, the other follows. The desire for an antidote follows the presence of a disease. But suppose one has not the disease; how then? What is the use of wooden legs to a man with the proper complement of limbs? And how absurd is the attitude of one with a couple of timber extremities lecturing other people on the impossibility of being happy in their absence!

The happiness of the Christian is really the joy of a man who discovers a little light in a generally dark outlook. If there is a hell, there is some pleasure in discovering how to escape it. If human nature is incapable of goodness by itself, it is pleasant to hear of some force that will make it good. If this life by itself is worthless, it is comforting to believe in another where things are better managed. If there is no answer to man's mental questionings save the theory of a God, the belief in God yields satisfaction. It all depends upon an "if." What the Christian argument amounts to is, "If man cannot be happy, or content, or good, or progressive without certain beliefs, then those without these beliefs cannot be either progressive or happy." As it stands, the proposition is little more than a truism. If A is the cause of B, then B is the effect of A. The conclusion is impeccable. It is the premiss that is open to question.

Now, the Atheist does not believe in hell; consequently he derives no pleasure from a belief in heaven. And a belief in heaven alone can hardly be a subject of pleasant contemplation for anyone. The Christian heaven never had anything else to commend it save that there is a hell to escape. The Atheist does not believe that human nature is incapable of goodness, because he has daily experience to the contrary. It is human nature that ennoble the belief in God, not the belief in Deity that ennoble human nature. The Atheist does not need the belief in Deity to silence or satisfy his mental questionings; on the contrary, as he is not afraid to follow his reason wherever it may lead him, he realises that the belief creates more difficulties than it destroys. And being an Atheist, he is without the difficulties that beset the Theist. He has no "problem of evil" to solve, since that only arises from the necessity for harmonising the existence of God with the existence of evil. He does not believe there is a Deity to consult or to petition, and so he is not puzzled to account for unanswered prayers.

He is not called upon to justify the "plan of creation" because he is unaware that any prearranged plan exists. He does not need the belief in a future life to cheer him up in his last moments, because he fails to realise how any possible future life can wipe out the circumstances of this one. His own problems are numerous enough to occupy his attention, but they are of a different order to those of a believer in God. They all arise out of the realities of life, and the Atheist is satisfied that sooner or later they will yield to human intelligence properly directed. Therefore the Atheist goes on his way quite happily, and the Christian remains perplexed and miserable at the sight. He has discovered a phenomenon that doesn't fit in with his philosophy.

The Christian is not only perplexed at the sight of the happy Atheist, he is annoyed. He loses his temper and calls names. We do not agree with him; therefore we are different from him. And, being different, we are consequently worse. If we are happy as Atheists, it must be because we lack the fine moral development of the Christian. It is the pleasure of a pig wallowing in his sty, the comfort of a debased nature finding enjoyment in its own degradation. If we were only better, we should know how poor is the happiness we feel as Atheists.

The Atheist hears it all, and still remains happy in his Atheism. He declines to feel miserable, as he declines the pious invitation to be criminal. And he has the advantage over the Christian in knowing by experience what the "joys" of religion are really worth. He has tasted them, and there is not an Atheist in existence that does not feel happier and freer in his present mental life than he ever did as a fervent Godite. Difficulties, problems, sorrows, he has, as we all have, but they are the inevitable consequences of existence, not the gratuitously manufactured hardships of a wholly unnecessary theory. He does not play the coward by seeking refuge in "God," and, as a consequence, his mental life is the purer and stronger for conflict. He has no need to confuse his moral sense with attempts to explain why a God who ought to prevent injustice and wrong permits its existence, and this also gains in effectiveness from its alliance with a sane mental life. The Atheist's problem is not to justify the world, but to understand it and rule it in the interests of a better human life. And, as a consequence, his happiness is neither the vacuous enjoyment of the fool, nor the short-lived pleasure of the rogue. It is rather the expression of a disposition that has ceased to torture itself with foolish fancies, or perplex itself with useless beliefs. C. COHEN.

"The Shirt of Nessus."

NESSUS was one of the fabulous monsters called centaurs, with which students of Greek mythology are quite familiar. In form they were usually half man and half horse. The wisest and justest of them all, Chiron by name, lived on Mount Helion, and was on terms of friendship with gods and heroes. Nessus was a much humbler member of the family, his chief occupation being to carry passengers across the river Evenus for hire. On one occasion Hercules and Deianira were under the necessity of crossing this river. Hercules himself forded it, but requested Nessus to carry his wife. Nessus attempted to outrage her, and she screamed with fear. Hearing her cries, Hercules shot an arrow into the centaur's heart. Before expiring, Nessus instructed Deianira to take his blood with her, and to use it as a love-philtre if ever threatened with the loss of her husband's affection. At this point, the versions of the legend that have come down to us differ materially. According to one, it was his tunic or shirt, saturated with his poisoned blood, that the dying centaur gave the woman; and it is to this version we owe the symbolic idea of the Nessus-shirt. It is not, however, the version generally followed by classical scholars, nor is it mentioned by

Sophocles in his beautiful drama of the *Trachiniae*. At any rate, Hercules did fall in love with the fair Iole, and after killing her father and brothers, carried her off in triumph. As soon as Deianira heard of the sad event, she resolved to utilise the love-philtre in order to retain, or recover, her husband's love. According to Sophocles, she despatched the slave Lichas to Hercules, bearing

"This fine garment to that spouse of mine,
A present from my hand."

It is immaterial whether the tunic was one Nessus had worn, or one that belonged to Hercules himself, or a new garment sent by Deianira as a present, the only important point being that it was "drenched in the centaur's black, malignant gore." With delight the unfortunate hero put it on, and went to worship at the altar he had just erected to Zeus; but no sooner did it become warm on his body than the poison penetrated into all his limbs, and caused him the most excruciating pain. The worst of it was that—

"The tunic clung close to his sides,
As moulded by an artist, limb by limb,"

so that in his mad attempts to wrench it off he tore away whole pieces of his flesh.

It is clear now that by the shirt of Nessus is meant some terrible trouble, misfortune, or calamity from which there is no escape. Now, the Rev. Dr. Newton Marshall, of the Heath-street Baptist Church, Hampstead, informs us, in a sermon which appears in the *Christian World Pulpit* for March 6, that "in all its seething activities and struggles that shirt of Nessus, sin, clings to mankind"; and by "sin" here the reverend gentleman understands original sin, or the sinful condition into which our race is supposed to have fallen. In the course of his address, Dr. Marshall makes several true remarks. For example, he describes the doctrine of a fallen humanity as an essential of Christianity, as "a doctrine without which Christianity would be impossible." He says:—

"Just as no one would have any interest in medicine but for disease, just as Poor Laws would never be framed if there were no poverty, just as peace societies would be unnecessary if nations never went to war, just as social reform would never be dreamed of if society had not broken down, so but for sin there would be no need for Christianity, and Jesus Christ would never have died for men."

That is entirely true. Of course, Dr. Marshall, being a professed champion of science, repudiates the belief in the historicity of the account of the Fall in Genesis. He maintains that, "rightly understood, it is a very helpful and instructive story," but claims that to base the doctrine of the sinfulness of mankind upon it is "a complete mistake." He forgets, however, that the full historicity of the Genesis story was strenuously upheld by the orthodox Church until it was utterly discredited by the discoveries of modern science. What is now declared to be "a complete mistake" was formerly held to be a complete truth.

Dr. Marshall is also right in characterising human society as falling far short of perfection; but he is entirely mistaken when he asserts that it has broken down. Society is a growth, not a creation; a product of evolution, not a free gift from heaven. Human imperfection is an incontrovertible fact; but human sinfulness is a theological invention. When Dr. Marshall affirms that "humanity is, in point of fact, fallen," he is guilty of romancing. There is no such thing as a scientific doctrine of a fallen human race. To assert that the fall is "a human fact, borne out incontrovertibly by all the evidence that can be got," is to utter a deliberate falsehood. If the reverend gentleman seriously believes that his teaching is scientific, the sooner he is undeceived the better it will be for all concerned. From beginning to end his sermon bristles with dogmatic but unverified and unverifiable asseverations. That the human race is undeveloped, immature, corrupt, and faulty cannot be denied; but when was it otherwise? Did our ancestors at any period, however

remote, dwell together as a perfectly happy family, and so find life a thing of beauty, yielding nothing but joy? With all that Dr. Marshall says about the mysterious law of heredity we agree; but there is nothing in this law to indicate that there was a point of time at which sin entered into the world. When the preacher avers that "the stream of evil in humanity is traced back to a beginning," he only shows how utterly unscientific his method of reasoning is. What is called "the stream of evil in humanity" can be traced back for countless millions of years, but not to a beginning until we arrive at the beginning of life itself. Dr. Marshall practically admits this when he states that "sin is in our make," because "our make" is an inheritance from our animal progenitors. The truth is that this gentleman pats science on the back, expressing endless indebtedness to it, and then unblushingly talks blank theology in its name, which is by no means a creditable performance.

Dr. Marshall's habit of alleging that all great men are on his side is very amusing. On this occasion he claims Confucius, Laotze, Mencius, Buddha, Zoroaster, Mohammed, Moses, Isaiah, Socrates, Plato, Seneca, and Chrysostom, in fact "every sage and reformer and religious founder," all of whom, according to him, give evidence to the great and sad fact that humanity is fallen. Assuming that he has a right to associate all those great men with his theology, of what value would their testimony be? Most of them were theologians, not one a scientist; and they invariably expressed themselves in terms of theology or of metaphysics, never in those of exact science. The allusion to Omar Khayyam is specially unhappy. Dr. Marshall seems to take it for granted that the great Persian was a man who lived alone for carnal pleasure, whereas it is well known that he deliberately turned his back upon a life of affluence and ease which was within his reach, and chose, rather, to live on a moderate annual salary in order to devote himself to his favorite studies of mathematics and astronomy, in both of which sciences he won great fame. His poetical renown endures in its fulness to this day. Such a man could not have been the slave of appetite and passion, as hinted in the sermon. But he was a genuine Freethinker who vigorously inveighed, not against life, but against the narrowness, bigotry, and extreme austerity of the popular creed. Dr. Marshall contends that, though he "entered upon life quite in love with it," deeming it "beautiful and enticing beyond words," "yet when he had had his fill of wine and song and poetry, he turned with bitter reproaches on the world of which he had asked so much." This is a shocking misrepresentation of the facts. Omar loved life passionately to the very end. There is certainly no trace of disappointment or resentment in the last two verses of the *Rubáiyát* in Fitzgerald's version, in which he contemplates his own death:—

"Yon rising moon that looks for us again—
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;
How oft hereafter look for us
Through this same Garden—and for one in vain!
And when like her, O Sáki, you shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scattered on the Grass,
And in your joyous errand reach the spot
Where I made One—turn down an empty Glass!"

It is true that Omar did sometimes wax angry and bitter in his resentment, not against the order of Nature, not against the suffering and sorrow that darkened the lives of so many human beings, but against the God who was believed to be responsible for everything that existed. Whether he believed in the existence of that God or not, we do not know; but several parts of the *Rubáiyát* must be looked upon as containing a strong indictment against his character. Nothing could be more damning than the following:—

"Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!"

For Omar, as for present-day Freethinkers, Divine

Providence was non-existent. He looked hard for another world, and having failed to find it, resolved to make the most of this.

"I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that after life to spell:
And by and by my Soul return'd to me,
And answer'd 'I myself am Heaven and Hell.'"

The world is blind and blundering, groping its way through darkness and chaos, towards the light of knowledge and wisdom, but, happily, no shirt of Nessus clings to it, which can be removed only by supernatural intervention. It is neither a fallen nor a falling, but a slowly rising, world. As Tennyson says:—

"This fine old world of ours is but a child
Yet in the gocart. Patience. Give it time
To learn its limbs: there is a hand that guides."

Yes, there is a hand that guides, a providence that can be relied upon, and its name is—Science, Knowledge, Truth.

J. T. LLOYD.

Ecuador, Spain, and the Inquisition.

THE Spanish newspapers (*El Radical*, *El Progreso*, *El Liberal*, *El Motin*, and others) give the most heart-rending details of the horrible events in Ecuador which formed the subject of my article of March 2. From the fuller, and almost incredible, details with which we are now furnished we may learn an object-lesson not only in religious intolerance but in the dangers which await civilisation from the triumphant arms of Mother Church. We shall see what turpitudes are possible even in the full blaze of twentieth-century enlightenment when the priest holds the reins of power in his hands; for there, in Ecuador, dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we shall witness the most sanguinary atrocities—the worst excesses, in fact—of the Spanish Inquisition, reproduced by the present-day fanatic in the streets and prison dungeons of modern Quito and Guayaquil, without the saving grace of cold-blooded solemnity and decorous, formal, well-ordered brutality which, to say the least, dignified the murderous processes of the mediæval Inquisition.

In Guayaquil, after the capitulation of the defeated revolutionary forces, the populace, egged on by the ultramontane party, devoted itself to the assassination of the prisoners. General Montero, a well-known Freethinker, the President of the dissolved Revolutionary Junta, was dragged out of prison and taken to a public street. A huge fire, already lit, awaited him, and the General was flung into it, despite his desperate resistance and cries of horror. When he was already half burnt alive he was fished out of the fire, and flung into a vat full of water. He was then dragged out and thrown back into the fire. His martyrdom, before the end came, lasted more than an hour. No wonder Lucrotius of old—in presence of a less horrifying form of crime—exclaimed: Such were the evils that religion can work!

In Quito, the progress of religion and murder was even more appalling. We read (and our account is based on *El Progreso* of February 22) that the multitude, no doubt under "religious auspices," penetrated into the prison, and, with savage refinements of cruelty, killed more than a hundred Radicals (which also means Freethinkers) detained as conspirators against the dominant clericalist government. Four generals and the Freethought editor, Corral, were brought to the cemetery of San Diego. It was then and there that the horrible mutilations—the cutting out of the tongue of each of the five unhappy men, and their taunting invitation to make speeches, referred to in my last article—took place. They were afterwards tortured by a number of wounds carefully inflicted on the most sensitive parts of their bodies, a detail which suggests the clericalist refinements of Montjuich. Their hands and feet were then hacked off, and, continuing the hellish (or heavenly) work, the victims were suspended to high beams set up in the

ground. When they were half strangled the cords were cut, and their bloody members were saturated with petroleum and set fire to. When the poor wretches were half dead the fire was damped down, the bodies were wrapped up and carried away, and then the heads of the five unhappy men were cut off. The head and the heart of General Eloy Alfaro, were afterwards fixed on pikes and paraded through the city. From later information, published in *El Motin* of March 7, it appears certain that the murderous proceedings in Quito were provoked by the clergy. The proof their complicity is shown by the fact that the hordes that attacked the prison were led by the priests and by elements under their inspiration.

My friend, Francisco Gicca, writing on February 15 of these events in his paper (*El Progreso*, Buenos Aires), declares that the outrages were organised by the reactionary Government in order to get rid of the veteran general, Eloy Alfaro, the Freethinking ex-President of the Republic, and his brother, General Flavio Alfaro, who at the time of his murder in the cemetery at Quito, was the President of the Free-thought Ligue in Ecuador.

The reign of terror is not over yet. On March 5, General Julio Andrade, the military commander at Guayaquil, was assassinated—as the euphemistic telegram tells us—"by his own soldiers." Thereby hangs a tale. Andrade, though he was the political enemy of Alfaro and his party, was opposed to the defeated men being sent for incarceration at Quito, and, together with Plaza, did all he could to prevent the perpetration of these horrors. His murder marks the vengeance of the dominant Clericalist faction in Ecuador. No wonder Mr. Cunninghame Graham, writing to me from Rome, declares that "Ecuador is a disgrace to humanity." Other people think so, too. I learn that already in Peru, in the Argentine, in Chili, and in Panama a movement is on foot to demand that the Governments of these Republics should break off all diplomatic relations with the savages of Ecuador, whose piety is apparently only equalled by their ferocity.

These unspeakable acts were perpetrated by a Catholic populace educated in the holy fear of God, by men consecrated to the Heart of Jesus, who had read no other literature than the Christian Catechism. The Catholic authorities in Quito, like modern Sauls, consented to the crime, and the men of law and order applauded its commission. As *El Radical* declares, no Jesuit, no priest, and no high ecclesiastical authority did aught to prevent these *autos-da-fé*. Our contemporary wants to know what the Catholics and Conservatives of Spain, and elsewhere, have to say about these events? Let them compare these excesses with the paler events of the "tragic week" of Barcelona or the recent excesses in Cullera, and declare on their conscience if the barbarism is on the side of Christian religion or of the Secular School.

We agree with *El Radical* that religious fanaticism produces the same fruit in all countries and in all times. The fanatic of the twentieth century is the spiritual contemporary of the cave-man. The Catholic of Ecuador, drunk with blood and religion, the friend of fire as the "purifier" of men's ideas, is the barbarous and inquisitorial brother of the Spanish Catholic who executed the orders of Torquemada.

Quite recently, the Spanish nation was consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. *Absit omen!* If the people of Spain want to emulate the virtue of the Ecuadorian bigots, let them bring back Maura and the Catholic reaction, which is striving so hard to quench in blood and terrorism the salutary ideas of the Escuela Moderna. But it is not from the Spanish people that the evil is to be apprehended—it is from the children of Torquemada who chaunt the services of God in the churches, cathedrals, and monasteries of Spain, and use their influence to shut out the light of secular education from the eyes of the toiling masses.

In view of that modern miracle, the revival of the Inquisition under a twentieth-century republic, our

Spanish friends living under the monarchy of modern Spain do well to take alarm at the audacity and ferocity of the common enemy. *El Motin* declares that if the Catholics were to regain power in Spain they would put into the shade the abominations of Ecuador. Acting on the defensive against the eternal foe of human freedom, our brave Madrid co-worker continues its exposures of the Holy Inquisition. Its relation in the number for February 22 of the cruel martyrdom on May 30, 1554, of a young Jew, as recorded in the cold-blooded legal diction of the Inquisitorial notary, reads quite humane as compared with the recent outbreaks in Quito, and its excellent cartoon, which exhibits Pope Damasus, hatchet in hand and the Papal tiara on his head, directing the murder of the heretics, takes the mind back to days when the decencies of ecclesiastical assassination were better observed in the Basilica at Rome than in the streets of Quito. Nakens is not disposed to submit without resistance to the installation in Spain of the modern methods of the Inquisition. He has returned again to the charge with another damning exposure of the Holy Office, in his new book, entitled *El Santo Oficio*, showing the germs of the Inquisition: its establishment in Spain and its inner legislation. The work will be uniform with *El Almanaque*, recently reviewed in these columns, and I am waiting to receive this fresh fruit of the joint labors of José Nakens and Pey y Ordeix, in order that our readers may know more about the beauties and brutalities of the Inquisition. The work now launched is to be followed by another similar volume in this month of March, an announcement which I make merely to indicate in some faint measure the serious substantial literary output of our enterprising and industrious Spanish co-workers, and their deep sense of the serious dangers to civilisation lurking in the Church and creed which in Quito have again made the name of Christianity synonymous with barbarism.

WILLIAM HEAFORD.

Where Freethinkers Are Not.

(Reprinted from the New York "Truthseeker.")

Of the 1,132 prisoners in the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, when the Record Clerk prepared his last report, issued at the close of 1911, no less than 1,020 were users of liquor or tobacco, or both. The figures will provide temperance advocates and hygienists with an argument in favor of abstinence from liquor and tobacco.

But the statistics of this class are not the only interesting, or possibly instructive, ones given in the report. The religious denominations and preferences are worth studying, and may have a lesson for us.

There is no prisoner in that penitentiary describing himself as an Atheist, Agnostic, Freethinker, Infidel, Materialist, Rationalist, or Secularist, or by any term equivalent or related to any of these. The 66 disclaiming preference for any denomination may be lumped as unattached Protestants. The inmates are classified respecting their religious belief as follows:—

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----------------------|-----|----|
| Adventist | ... | 7 | No preference | ... | 66 |
| Baptists | ... | 295 | Plymouth Brethren | ... | 1 |
| Catholic | ... | 281 | Presbyterian | ... | 59 |
| Christadelphians | ... | 1 | Primitive Methodists | ... | 1 |
| Christian | ... | 48 | Quakers | ... | 4 |
| Christian Science | ... | 3 | Reformed Church | ... | 4 |
| Congregationalists | ... | 6 | Salvation Army | ... | 2 |
| Disciples | ... | 3 | Shintuism | ... | 1 |
| Dunkard | ... | 1 | Swedenborgian | ... | 1 |
| Episcopalian | ... | 51 | United Brethren | ... | 3 |
| Evangelical | ... | 3 | Universalists | ... | 1 |
| Free Will Baptists | ... | 1 | Hebrew | ... | 21 |
| Greek Orthodox | ... | 9 | Holiness | ... | 1 |
| Lutheran | ... | 33 | Volunteers of America | ... | 1 |
| Methodists | ... | 222 | Latter Day Saints | ... | 4 |

So far from combating the argument of the abstinence and hygienic people, drawn from the excess of rum and tobacco users in the prison population, we would encourage them to develop all

there is in it; nevertheless, we call their attention to the conclusion they must reach if they reason in the same way about the religious habits of the men concerned. The proportion of professors of religious preference to the whole is greater than that of the smokers and drinkers. The former number is 1,066; the latter, 1,020. And there are as many dispensers of religion as of rum—to wit, one minister and one Salvation Army captain against one bar-tender and one saloon-keeper. As the Leavenworth prison is for violators of United States statutes, such as the internal revenue law, one would think it might catch more saloon-keepers than preachers, since the liquor man comes into relations with that law in his business, while a minister does not, unless through counterfeiting or misuse of the mails, which are not the ordinary errors of the cloth. The saloon man might find himself in the federal look-up for selling to an Indian; the minister's offence would more likely involve a squaw. As Illinois sends its federal prisoners to Leavenworth, the Rev. Mr. Kaye, the Infidel smasher of Oak Park, convicted not long ago of counterfeiting, might be there now if President Taft had not pardoned him; while the Rev. Mr. Brewer, former chaplain at Fort Riley, who is implicated in the recent dynamiting of that military post, is a prospective inmate.

There were 16 bankers in the prison when the report was prepared, one being doubtless that eminent Catholic layman, Mr. Walsh, of Chicago, who wrecked a string of banks, was convicted, paroled, and later died. Actor Henry E. Dixey some time ago offered to wager a considerable sum that the clergymen in the gaols of the country far outnumbered the actor inmates. He proved his point, but at Leavenworth there are three members of the theatrical profession.

Because 566 of the convicts are bachelors or widowers and 419 married men, the *Leavenworth Times* draws the inference that "bachelors are more prone to crime than benedicts and ex-benedicts." Another inference is equally justified, namely, that a majority of criminals do not marry.

The nativity of the inmates is given. Of the 154 of foreign birth, 40 are Italians, 20 Germans, and 14 Irish. Russians number 11, and Austria, Canada, and England send 10 each.

The total absence of "Agnostics," which is noted in a headline of the *Leavenworth Times*, is the best of testimony to the law-abiding character of unbelievers. Many Freethinkers have been in prison in our day—there are two in gaol in England now for blasphemy—but in every case there has been an element of persecution, as in the imprisonment of Bennett, Harman, Heywood, and other victims of laws for the suppression of freedom.

AS IT ONCE MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

"I want," explained the advertising man, "I want a picture that has the idea of speed in it—real speed. I want it to go at a regular marathon. But it's got to be new. It's got to have a punch. I'm tired o' these here messenger boys and aeroplanes. What I want is for you to draw a picture that has speed in it without messenger boys and flying machines."

"Yes, I see." The artist from whom the drawing was being ordered nodded and picked up a pencil. "How about Mercury? Something like this."

He sketched, rapidly, the figure of the messenger of Olympus, winged sandals, winged cap, symbolic staff, and all. The advertising man watched him in silence, and when the tentative drawing was finished looked it over approvingly.

"Seems all right," he commented. "But what does it mean? Who's Mercury?"

"Oh, Mercury? He was the speediest thing that ever lived," the artist declared. "Mercury was the god of speed, you know."

But the advertising manager gave one long, regretful look at the sketch and shook his head.

"Too bad," he murmured sadly. "Too bad; I liked its looks, but it won't do. It won't do, young man. We can't get mixed up with anyone's religion like that."

Acid Drops.

One true thing was said at the Free Church Congress—in a letter from Canon Hensley Henson. "The economy of heaven," he wrote, "is dark." Perfectly true—but not original. Cowper wrote long ago:—

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

Poor Cowper! He knew it by experience. Religion drove him to despair and attempted suicide.

It was infinitely amusing, in its way, when the Free Churchmen at Cheltenham applauded Dr. Saleeby's address on Religion and Eugenics. To a certain extent Dr. Saleeby himself was a comic figure, for he has certainly not the reputation of being a Christian. Of course, he was getting a hearing for his opinions—but what company he was in! Some of the very men of God who cheered him to the echo must know how Free Churchmen as well as Anglicans—and more than Anglicans—howled at Charles Bradlaugh when he fought for free discussion of the population question, which is really the beginning of eugenics. It was the famous Dissenter, Samuel Morley, who besought the electors of Northampton to reject Bradlaugh. We are glad the Dissenters who howled at Bradlaugh now enjoy applauding Dr. Saleeby, but we give them no credit for the change; the tide of progress has been made by others—they are simply carried along with it. They are the enemies of human advancement wherever it begins, and its parasite; wherever it succeeds. They resist all progress at first; afterwards they live on it—and boast of having created it.

Mr. Asquith's letter, through the painfully moral Mr. Meyer, to the Free Church Conference at Cheltenham, was much applauded. Naturally. It was a promise from a political leader to an important body of his supporters. We venture to print it in full in our own columns, as it concerns a matter in which Freethinkers are particularly interested:—

"Dear Mr. Meyer,—In reply to your letter of the 27th inst., I may say that it is the intention of the Government to proceed next Session with the Education Bill, which I trust may prove satisfactory to those on whose behalf you write. I need hardly assure you that the Government have in no way lost sight of the grievances under which Nonconformists suffer, and the postponement of effective action has been due to the necessity for passing the Parliament Act and other urgent legislative and social reforms.—I am, yours faithfully,
(Signed) H. H. Asquith."

Mr. Asquith undertakes to do something for the Nonconformists as Nonconformists. They have no special "grievance" under the present Education Acts any more than other Non-Church citizens. They have to pay for what they don't approve, just as Jews and Secularists have. That is all. And what Mr. Asquith promises them is that Non-Christians shall still go on paying for Christian religious teaching, which shall be such as the Nonconformists do approve—in spite of the disapproval of both Catholics and Anglicans. It is to be a Nonconformist Education Bill. Such is Liberal statesmanship! But the present Government has brought in and lost three Education Bills already. We predict a similar fate for the fourth.

The Education Settlement Committee, a self-appointed body, consisting for the most part of Nonconformist ministers and a few Evangelical clergymen, published a plan for dealing with the religious difficulty in national education. The plan was "a compromise" between Dissenters and Churchmen, without the slightest regard to the rest of the community. And it is upon the basis of this plan that the Education Acts (Single School Areas) Amendment Bill is framed. As the second reading of this Bill has been carried by a majority of 78 (200 to 131), after being blessed by the Government as a valuable introduction to the promised new Education Act in the next session, it may as well be looked at rather closely. It deals with single-school areas, where Nonconformists have generally to send their children to a Church school. They have the Conscience Clause, of course, but while that is declared to be a perfectly just arrangement for Non-Christians of all varieties, it is denounced as an intolerable tyranny for Nonconformists. Consequently it is sought by means of this new Bill to cut off all public support from all the single-area schools at one fell swoop. These schools may, however, be handed over to the public authority on certain conditions. The first is that Cowper-Temple Christian teaching becomes the standard religious education; the second is that this may be supplemented by special religious teaching two mornings per week—this teaching to be decided by the parents and given by approved

persons, not being teachers employed in the school. Naturally the Church of England will fight as hard as it can against this Bill being carried into an Act of Parliament. The special religious teaching will be a difficult thing to carry out; on the other hand, Nonconformist religious teaching—for that is what Simple Bible Teaching is—will be permanently established as the official religious teaching of the national schools. Nonconformist religion will thus be endowed by the State—and taught with the authority of the State. Such is the base selfishness of those who clamor for the disestablishment of the Anglican and Welsh Churches.

Sir G. Croydon Marks, who moved the second reading of this precious Bill, sang the praises of the Bible like a mere Protestant partisan. He said he would like to see it in every school in the land—brutality and filth included, we suppose. Mr. Silvester Horne, who seconded Sir G. C. Mark's motion, was full of the "grievances of Nonconformists"—which are exactly the same grievances that all Non-Christians have to suffer under the united school-governance of Nonconformists and Anglicans. Mr. Horne told the House of Commons that if the Nonconformists couldn't get what they wanted "the great body of Free Churchmen would pass over to the side of secular education." In other words, if they cannot get suitable privileges, at the expense of the rest of the community, they will actually help the cause of justice and fair play.

This Protestant Evangelical amendment of the Education Acts was supported by the Irish Nationalists, who want to keep in with the Liberal party, which includes some two hundred members in the House of Commons. Mr. Dillon is a Catholic, and the Catholic Church will not be affected by this Bill. The Church of England will be affected, and Mr. Dillon doesn't care a straw for the Church of England. His speech in favor of this Bill was a piece of political strategy. That is all.

Mr. G. Hay Morgan threw a little fire of sarcasm into the ranks of the "moderate" religionists who were making up this nice little arrangement between them. He told them that the way in which they were going on "would convince the people of this country that the only possible solution of the difficulty was the secular solution." This was cheered by the Labor members. Mr. J. A. Pease, President of the Board of Education, had to get up and counteract this honest explosion. He said that "the State should not support sectarian religious education." By sectarian religious education he evidently meant the religious teaching of the Church of England. There was nothing sectarian, of course, about the religious teaching of the Free Churches. It is really enough to make an honest non-Christian, or a true Nonconformist of the old original school, perfectly sick.

"Religion becomes real," says the Rev. Carnegie Simpson, "when men feel their need of it." We agree, and that is the only time it is real. The unfortunate thing for the Churches is that, if men are let alone, they do not feel the need of it. It is an acquired habit, and the business of the Churches is to see that people get it. And on the same basis anything else is real and necessary—astrology, palmistry, even whisky.

There are limits, apparently, to what even religious papers can stand in the shape of stupid preaching—or, perhaps, it is a case of greater regard for safe preaching. At any rate, several organs of the press have protested against the blatant ignorance of the speech of Dr. A. C. Dixon, of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, delivered at the Free Church meetings at Cheltenham. Here is a passage from the speech in question:—

"Charles Darwin wrote two scientific romances, which he entitled *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man*, full of interesting facts and fascinating fiction. The phrase 'We may well suppose,' or its equivalent, occurs over 800 times in these volumes, and his scientific suppositions were treated almost as established facts. Many men of science took Mr. Darwin too seriously; they were so pleased with the result of his patient investigations that they accepted his romancings and built up on them a philosophy of science which was a scientific apostasy. The effect of his life-work upon his own mind was not pleasing even to Mr. Darwin, who was startled to find that he had lost all taste for poetry, music, and religion; but to the last he remained very fond of worms, delighting in their ways and works. The effect of his philosophy of science upon many of his followers was to turn them from the spiritual to the material; from music, poetry, and religion to worms."

If a visitor from China and Japan wished to represent the English people as a nation of savages, with their barbarism coated with a thin veneer of education, he could not find a better illustration than Dr. A. C. Dixon. Such men are a

much deeper disgrace to a civilised people than either drunkard or criminal.

The Rev. J. H. Shakespeare says that a large part of current theology would disappear like a bubble at a single touch of the hand of science. We have been saying this for years, and the *Freethinker* bears weekly evidence that there are none of the current theological teachings that can withstand really scientific and critical examination. The unfortunate thing in this country is that scientific and leading men, instead of speaking out what is in their minds concerning current theology, pander to its pretensions. If they do not actually support it by specious apologies, they remain silent, and so mislead believers as to their real opinions. What we need, more even than scientific criticism, is mental honesty on the part of all. If this obtained, theology among civilised people would soon become a thing of the past.

Dr. Frank Ballard informed the Free Church Council that the real question was not the possibility, but the credibility, of miracles; and Dr. Warschauer also informed the same audience that the whole question was one of evidence. No doubt it would be convenient to Christians if the miraculous was made a question of mere evidence—although no miracle we have heard of could stand the test. For evidence would involve an examination of the trustworthiness of the witnesses as regards both ability and truthfulness. And the witnesses would nearly all fail on the first count, and many of them on the second. But, as a matter of fact, the credibility of the miraculous turns, and properly so, upon their possibility. When we realise all that is properly meant by a miracle, it does become an impossibility so long as we retain a consciousness of what we know to be true concerning the operation of natural forces. We are in the position of trying to bring into our minds at the same time two utterly irreconcilable ideas. And there is the fullest warranty for saying that if one is true the other is false.

Take, for instance, the miracle of turning water into wine. We know the constituents of water, and we know the constituents of wine. And knowing this, we are warranted in saying that by no possibility could one be really converted into the other. Consequently, if anyone asserts that he saw the transformation, there is really no need to examine any evidence that may be proffered—in this case the only possible evidence would be that the testator believed it to be true—we should all dismiss the case as a sheer impossibility. It simply could not have occurred. The truthfulness of witnesses really has little or nothing to do with the matter. The belief in the miraculous is a manifestation of the mind in its pre-scientific condition. It exists everywhere where there is an inadequate knowledge of natural forces and conditions, and it dies out wherever such knowledge becomes adequate. That is why miracles never occur to scientific men—the one body of men who would be most impressed by their happening.

Mr. Sidney Low's article in the *Fortnightly Review* on "The Most Christian Powers" is not pleasant reading for English Christians. It laughs at the idea that "the professing Christian is necessarily a more virtuous man than the follower of the prophet, or the Buddhist, or Taoist, or Hindu." As for the collective action of the Christians, Mr. Low says it is like that of "robber bands descending upon an unarmed and helpless population of peasants. So far from respecting the rights of other nations, they have exhibited the most complete and cynical disregard of them. They have, in fact, asserted the claim of the strong to prey upon the weak, and the utter impotence of all ethical considerations." The dealings of Christian Powers with Turkey, Persia, and China are cited in support of this view. No wonder that Mr. Low sneers at "the mercy and justice which the Asiatic peoples can expect when they find themselves in collision with the relentless ambitions of the Most Christian Powers."

The Bishop of Kensington is a genius—of the kind the Churches develop, or discover, nowadays. Speaking at the Cannon-street Hotel, he said that all the unrest around us—labor trouble, woman's agitation, etc.—showed that people were dissatisfied. The information is timely—for those who might take all this unrest as a symptom of contentment. The Bishop also remarked that there must be a deep need somewhere, and this was the need for religion. Well, that, in its way, is information. Certainly the Suffragettes have never asked for more religion. They say they will be content with the vote. Nor have the minors asked for more religion. They only ask for more wages and better conditions of labor. Perhaps the Bishop meant that if everybody had enough religion they would put up with anything. And there is really a certain amount of truth about that.

"Will the following item appearing in the Washington Post of February 8 have the effect of stimulating gifts to the missionary cause?"—

'It seems hard to talk about China and not lie,' said Mrs. M. E. Goodrich, from Peking, President of the W. C. T. U. of China, at a meeting yesterday afternoon of the W. C. T. U. Mothers' Club. She denied many stories reflecting on Chinese life, and paid splendid tributes to Chinese mothers, and to the devotion of Chinese children to their parents. She emphasised the fact that a childless wife is not held in high esteem in China. 'Everything we want to give the Chinese,' she continued, 'we find they have had—for thousands of years—everything, except a knowledge of the Bible. Their literature is filled with beautiful thoughts; their teachings of home life embrace all the ennobling instructions and examples that could be desired. Motherhood is something holy in their estimation.'

Mrs. Goodrich finds the Chinese in possession and practice of a string of virtues which some Christians lack, all discovered and utilised without a knowledge of that Bible in which they are supposed to have been revealed to erring man. We have always understood that the heathen contrive to be as good without the Bible as Caucasians are with it, and it is not displeasing to have the fact confirmed by a person who knows both races and is not prejudiced in favor of the yellow one."—*Truthseeker* (New York).

There is a tearful article in the *Church Times* on the lack of tolerance shown by modern Christians. We had not observed any wonderful growth in this direction, but the *Church Times* article breathes a spirit of genuine Christianity that is quite refreshing in these days of pseudo-religious liberalism. To begin with, the writer complains that English society is not shocked when, as in a recent instance, a young English lady marries a Mohammedan and adopts her husband's religion. It would, of course, be all right if the case was reversed, because, as is ingeniously explained, Christianity claims to be the only religion. Nor do we remember that the *Church Times* complained when the present Queen of Spain adopted, on her marriage, her husband's religion. Another thing that raises indignation is the way in which our own Government in India places all religions on a level. Thus, when new colors were presented to certain native regiments, they were solemnly and "episcopally sanctified." They were then "handed over to the representatives of two other faiths for the performance of their own rites." We suggest that probably the Government did not want to run any risks. And with three competing medicine men on the spot, the sensible thing was all or none. Personally, we should prefer none, but as this course was not followed, we challenge the *Church Times* to say in what way the Christian consecration was better than either of the other two. We heard of a case recently which tends to show that sometimes the Christian consecration is positively fatal. A West African had been brought up in the religion of his own tribe, and flourished. He then became an initiate of Mohammedanism, and still flourished. Finally, he became a baptised Christian, came to England, and died of consumption. Anyone may draw the moral therefrom.

The *Methodist Times* trusts to the "triumph of Christianity, common sense, and good will" to the settlement of such matters as the coal strike. If there is only enough good will and common sense, we can well dispense with Christianity, and if neither common sense nor good will is present, Christianity will not count for much. At all events, it never prevented the development of conditions that produce strikes, and it is able to do nothing whatever to settle them when they occur. And organised Christianity will continue to act in accordance with its historic custom—hang on to the movement that promises most popularity and profit, careless whether justice be on that side or not.

Christian Socialism has the defects of all hybrids. Mrs. Stansfield, wife of the Rev. Robert Stansfield, is a Christian Socialist and one of the Labor members of the Keighley Board of Guardians. So is one of our readers, Mr. H. C. Shackleton, who is also a member of the Keighley Rural District Council, and a member of the Steeton with Eastburn Parish Council. Mr. Shackleton is well known to be a Freethinker, and the ratepayers preferred him to the Christian whom he displaced. Mr. Shackleton presents three papers weekly to the Workhouse, one of them being the *Freethinker*, and the thanks of the Board were tendered to him in common with other donors. But the lady Labor member "hoped the Chairman would not include her thanks for one of the periodicals. She was not going to give thanks for a certain paper which had been sent to the Institution." The Chairman told her "she should have taken exception before." Several members asked what she was objecting to; she did not reply, but Mr. Robinson answered for her, "the *Freethinker*."

We are sorry for the poor lady's injured feelings, but Mr. Shackleton did not send the *Freethinker* for her reading, though it might do her good. He sent it for the Workhouse inmates, who are probably pleased to have something livelier to read than Mrs. Stansfield would have them supplied with.

How the clergy hate opposition! Even Catholic priests, who don't object to public amusements in Catholic countries, join hands with Anglican parsons and Dissenting preachers to keep "The Lord's Day" to themselves in England. All Christian denominations, for instance, co-operated in a great meeting at St. Andrew's Parish Hall, Earlsfield, called to protest against the Sunday Pictures at the Premier Electric Theatre. They were a happy family for once. Their professional interests were concerned—and that is about the only thing that brings the household of faith together.

Miss Rosa Woods, of Great Malvern, who left £15,000, ordered that no Jesuit, Papist, Ritualist, or Unbeliever should inherit any portion of her estate. The Unbelievers, at any rate, will survive it.

There was a long and interesting account of the Camorra trial in the *Westminster Gazette* of March 5. The trial began a year ago and seems as if it would last until the second coming of Christ. A greater display of rascaldom was probably never seen than the collection in the prisoners' cage. With one exception they appear to be all very pious. We ask our readers to ponder the following extract from the *Westminster* article:—

"On the approach of Holy Week the prisoners petitioned for an adjournment to allow them to take part in the important sacred functions and to prepare for their Easter Communion. All the prisoners, save one, it appeared, were loyal Churchmen, the exception being a Freethinking professor, nicknamed 'the Heretic' by his fellows, who was observed always to sit in an extreme corner of the cage and to be conscientiously shunned."

Poor Heretic! Perhaps innocent—for all the accused can hardly be guilty. Anyhow, he is a heretic, and blackmailers and murderers feel themselves too good for his company.

Last week's *Athenæum*, in an article on Peace with relation to two new books on War and Patriotism, said:—

"Speaking as an orthodox Christian, Canon Crane openly acknowledges that 'the breach between the creed and conduct of Christendom is peculiarly flagrant' where war is concerned. Even more attention might be called to the attitude of the clergy, especially those of the Church of England, in time of war. For one who lifts his voice in the pulpit against violence and against the wholesale extermination of human life, there are scores who openly or covertly fan the flames of passion and hatred."

The truth is gradually leaking out.

"Stands Scotland where it did?" This classic question must be answered now in the negative. The "orthodox who believe in John Knox" are thinning down sadly. The Ardrossan United Free Presbytery, for instance, has just been bewailing "a serious leakage." The figures are almost too sad for reproduction. All classes are affected by the blight of reason. But the rich the most of all. They go motoring or in pursuit of "other mere material pleasure" on Sunday, and neglect the Church of their fathers. Poor John Knox! Poor Scotland! Poor Presbytery of Ardrossan! Let us pray.

MINISTERS' OLD CLOTHES.

A bundle of clothes from the mission lay on the tailor's table.

"What did you send these things around to me for?" he asked. "They seem to be in pretty good condition."

"They are in good enough condition," said the missionary, but they will never be acceptable to the derelicts we expect to distribute them among until the ministerial cut is modified. Every coat in the lot has belonged to a preacher, and its style betrays its ownership.

"Most of the men who apply at the mission for hand-me-downs haven't much pride left, but they balk at a parson's coat. Unless actually driven to it, they will not wear one."

"Clothes twice as badly worn but of a business cut are chosen instead. Most ministers have hard work disposing of their clerical clothes. Conscientious scruples against masquerading in religious garb have nothing to do with these men refusing the ministers' coats. They simply don't want them because they dread the taunts the coats are likely to provoke among their fellows."

Mr. Foote's Engagements

Sunday, March 17, Queen's (Minor) Hall, Langham-place, W. : at 7.30, "William Shakespeare and Jesus Christ."

March 24, Leicester.

April 14, Glasgow; 21 and 28, Queen's Hall, London.

To Correspondents.

J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—March 31, Queen's Hall, April 21, West Ham.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1912.—Previously acknowledged, £101 9s. 11d. Received since:—Juliet and Julian, 5s.; A. S. Vickers, £1; C. T. Simpson, 10s. 6d.; H. F. Stripp, 2s.; M. H. H., 2s. 6d.

W. BROADBENT.—Your letter was dated March 6, Wednesday, and reached us on Thursday. The *Freethinker* leaves our hands for the press on Tuesday night. You see why you were too late.

J. PRESSMAN.—We don't think the matter you have kindly translated from the *Odessa News* would be of much interest to our readers. Your wish to see "politics and economics" discussed in the *Freethinker* cannot be gratified. It would kill the paper—or divert it entirely from its proper object. We started an "Independent Department" many years ago, but it never caught on; nobody worth reading contributed to it, and we dropped it. With regard to Socialism in particular, don't you think it has plenty of means of propoganda without encroaching on the only weekly journal in England devoted to Free-thought?

ALEX POYSER.—Much obliged; it will be useful.

JULIET AND JULIAN, subscribing to the President's Honorarium Fund, do so "for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise"—an amusing use of a passage in the Church of England's "Morning Service."

A. S. VICKERS.—Please convey our sympathy and regards to Friend S.

M. H. H.—Pleased to hear from one who has read the *Freethinker* for thirty years, and "looks forward to it more anxiously than ever."

C. F. MACKENZIE.—Very sorry to hear of your father's (G. L. Mackenzie) breakdown. It is very sad. Shall be glad to hear from you again as you suggest. Our opinion of your father was expressed in the Preface we wrote to his *Brimstone Ballads*.

R. CHAPMAN.—Pleased to hear the South Shields Branch began its new course of meetings so well last Sunday. We hope Mr. Joseph Bryce's lecture will be as well attended to-day (March 17).

H. C. SHACKLETON.—See paragraph. Accept our best thanks.

W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for cuttings.

W. STEWART.—We cannot see our way to extending to other Societies the free advertisement we cheerfully give to N. S. S. Branches.

NORMAN MURRAY (Montreal).—Arguing that Free-thought propoganda is useless is scarcely a thing you can expect to find room for in a Free-thought journal.

G. W. POST.—It is a hoax. The verses are quite ancient. We certainly saw them forty years ago, and they appeared in more than one Free-thought periodical. We are making arrangements for more book reviews, etc., in the *Freethinker*.

A. MURRAY.—From Bakounine's treatise on God.

H. CLOUGH.—Thanks, though we had already heard from Mr. Shackleton.

R. STEVENSON.—See paragraph. Glad to hear you "love the *Freethinker* as much as ever."

W. BINDON.—We are not printing the lecture on "Robert Blatchford and William Shakespeare." Mark Twain's *What Is Man?* is able in its way, but he makes the mistake that Robert Blatchford makes in regard to "praise and blame" under Determinism. This point is ably and satisfactorily dealt with in Mr. Cohen's new book. We cannot tell you why Mark Twain's book was withdrawn by the English publishers.

W. J. WILDER.—There is no active Branch of the N. S. S. at Hull at present. Clodd's *History of Religion*, a cheap little book, might suit you. There is a good work on the *Evolution of Sex* in Scott's International Scientific Library. *Flowers of Free-thought* contains a number of essays and articles on religious questions. *Bible Romances* deals in a humorous as well as scientific way with the Creation Story, the Flood, and similar things. The N. S. S. secretary will supply a Secular Burial Service for twopence.

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 Shop Manager of the Pioneer Press, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., and not to the Editor.

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

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

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Foote's lecture at Queen's Hall this evening (March 17) will be on "William Shakespeare and Jesus Christ." His object will be to show first that Shakespeare was not a Christian, and secondly that his ethical philosophy is far superior to the very best teaching ascribed to Christ in the four Gospels. It would do Christians good to hear a lecture of this kind. Freethinkers should therefore try to induce some of their more orthodox friends and acquaintances to attend this meeting.

Mr. Foote's lecture at Queen's (Minor) Hall on Sunday evening was listened to with the profoundest attention and enthusiastically applauded. Mr. A. B. Moss occupied the chair. Amongst the questions asked at the close of the lecture was one as to the possible date of publication of Mr. Foote's projected book on Shakespeare, and from the sympathy with which the question was received by the audience it appears that a considerable number of Freethinkers are looking forward to this volume. A good deal of it is written, and it could be finished in a few months if Mr. Foote had less drudgery to do and more leisure for better work.

Mr. Cohen is paying South Wales a visit to-day (March 17). Particulars of his lectures will be found in our advertisement columns. As the miners are all keeping holiday (in a fashion) just now Mr. Cohen ought to have specially good audiences.

We are glad to see further Free-thought letters from Councillors Moss and Hearson in the *Camberwell Borough Advertiser*. We are also amused by the letter of an orthodox correspondent, who utters the last word in Christian controversy. "This Moss," he says, "has the impertinence to quote Milton." That takes the cake. When Mr. Moss has duly apologised for quoting Milton, and even for reading him, he will no doubt apologise for living on the same planet with "Thos. A. Rayment."

Mr. E. Morris Young, ex-reverend seceder from the Church of England, having satisfied himself by continued study that he is definitely on the side of Reason in its great battle with Faith, called to see us lately and gave us to understand that he is anxious to work in connection with the Secular movement. Branches of the N. S. S. might invite him to lecture on their platforms for a start. We have not heard Mr. Young speak in public, but he seems to us a man of geniality and ability, with a way in conversation that promises success on the platform. Letters will reach him at 35 Store-street, London, W.C.

Mr. Morris Young, by the way, lectures to-day (March 17) for the Birmingham Branch on "Reason and Theology"—at the King's Hall, Corporation-street, at 7 p.m. Local "saints" should take a taste of his quality.

There was a good attendance at the fifth Annual Meeting of the Secular Education League held at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Wednesday evening, March 6. Mr. Halley Stewart presided. The Report and Balance Sheet were adopted unanimously. Mr. Halley Stewart was re-elected President,—Mr. Harry Snoll continuing in office as Secretary. The Executive Committee was reappointed, the list being as follows:—The Right Hon. Thomas Burt, M.P., Herbert Burrows, C. Cohen, Sir Henry Cotton, G. W. Foote, F. J. Gould, G. Greenwood, M.P., Rev. F. Hankinson, Rev. S. D. Headlam, A. Henderson, M.P., Rev. G. R. Hogg, Rev. Donald Hole, Sir Maurice Levy, Mrs. Miall Smith, Halley Stewart, S. H. Swinny, and Rev. John Day Thompson. Mr. G. Roberts, M.P. for Norwich, a Labor member, was added to the list. The Balance Sheet showed an income of £266 14s. 7d., an expenditure of £225 7s. 1d., and a balance in hand of £57 3s. 2d. Non-members can obtain a printed

copy of the Report and Balance Sheet by applying at the League's office, 19 Buckingham-street, London, W.C.

After the Secular Education League's formal business was over there was a public meeting in the same large room. Mr. Halley Stewart delivered an eloquent presidential address which was very much applauded. Speaking as a true Nonconformist, representing the old Nonconformist tradition, he denied that the State should have anything whatever to do with religion, either in churches or in schools; and insisted on the injustice of using the money of all rate and tax payers to promote what at the very best is grossly sectarian teaching. Mr. Stewart's peroration, despite the fact that he was not too well, aroused the greatest enthusiasm. A resolution was then proposed by Mr. G. Greenwood, M.P. :—

"That this meeting, recognising that the sole responsibility for religious education rests with parents and Churches, expresses its conviction that there can be no final solution of the religious difficulty in national education until the Education Act is amended, so as to secure that there shall be no teaching of religion in State-supported elementary schools in school hours or at the public expense."

Mr. Greenwood's speech was wise and witty—an instruction and an entertainment. His sly suggestion, made originally to his Christian friends in the House of Commons, that "even an Agnostic might possibly possess the rudiments of a conscience," tickled the meeting immensely. The resolution was seconded by Mr. G. W. Foote in a characteristic speech, and supported by Mr. G. Roberts, M.P., whose able and lucid speech was thoroughly straight and very warmly cheered. Mr. Roberts assured the meeting that he was voicing the general view and policy of the Labor Party. Rev. Donald Hole, who had arrived late after a professional engagement at his church, further supported the resolution in a bright, brief speech. He said that when he was coming along to the meeting he looked at the list of speakers (including himself) on the program, and said, "What a collection!" The audience laughed at a good joke thrown out so breezily. But the serious side of it was apparent when the speaker remarked that the very fact that they were such a collection showed that they were in all probability right and bound to win. The "secular solution" of the education difficulty was not a partisan policy; it satisfied honest men of all parties except Roman Catholics, —and even they preferred it to the Nonconformist policy of Simple Bible Teaching. The resolution being carried, Mr. Swinny, the Positivist leader, moved a vote of thanks to the chair, which was supported by Mrs. Miall Smith. The President's benediction closed the meeting, which was thoroughly successful from every point of view.

We are informed that M. Canalejas, the Spanish Prime Minister, has signed the decree pardoning Firmin Sagrista, the artist, who designed some Ferrer cartoons, which nobody would object to in England. Sagrista thus escapes the balance of his nine years' imprisonment—thanks to international action on the part of artists and others.

CONVERSION BY KINDNESS.

Is our monistic propaganda a commercial venture, a peddling of bon-bons, a disposing of Freethought lots? Or is it scientific, intellectual warfare?

Timid commercial "Rationalists" have always clung firmly to the former, fearless and aggressive ones to the latter view, namely, that the conflict between entrenched parasites and scientific evolution is evermore unconditional warfare, a fight to the finish, in which each does his worst until the weaker succumb and the "fittest" or toughest survive.

On both sides and on every battlefield of human contention, intellectual or bloody, "cautious" and "rash," timid and brave soldiers, low or high, have always participated in the struggle. Conservatives are usually afraid, cautious, cowardly, tricky, smooth; progressives, daring, courageous, aggressive, sometimes overheated and rough. In desperation either side may occasionally be reckless, or even brutal, to achieve decisive and lasting victory.

In our ongoing struggle between Monism and Dualism, between the people and their innumerable parasites, gentle tactics would no doubt be indeed preferable for the entrenched defenders. But would it, therefore, be the most promising tactics for the besieging army, the brave aggressors, also? Hardly, as a rule. In order to get at their opponents at all, they will have to go for them. Heroic natures are impatient, chafe at being held back, want to accomplish something while alive, and therefore prefer to risk charging or bombarding the enemy even if they fall and fail, while timid or treacherous ones prefer to save their own precious hide, capture the enemy's grub, start a grocery store, sell him soft-boiled eggs, and politely "win him over by kindness."—K. M. Teigen, M.D., in the "Truthseeker" (New York).

Old Testament History.

TURNING over the pages of the current week's *Inquirer* recently, my attention was drawn to a brief notice of a newly published work entitled *The Story of Israel and Judah*. This work, the reviewer says, is written on the lines suggested by the great Biblical critic, Dr. Driver, in the following statement :—

"It ought assuredly to be possible so to teach the historical parts of the Old Testament to those who have reached the age of fifteen or sixteen that, when they enter into manhood, they may have *nothing to unlearn* on the ground of either science or history."

"These wise words," says the reviewer, "formed the ideal which the author set before himself in writing this book"; so that "at length, even by conservative scholars, with whom the writer takes his stand, the Bible is interpreted like any other book."

I have not read this new Bible history for young men. After being informed that the conservative author commences his "history" with Abraham, and follows the Bible narratives to the time of Nehemiah, there was no need to do so. The writer—who, of course, is a "Reverend"—has simply omitted the first eleven chapters of Genesis, which chapters, according to Professor Ryle, are merely "the popular and unscientific narratives which, in early Hebrew traditions, conveyed pictorially the prevalent conceptions as to the origin of the Universe and the foundations of human society."

The omission of these eleven chapters is, beyond doubt, a concession to both science and history; but, under the latter head, much more—very much more—of the Old Testament narratives will have to be sacrificed. The so-called Bible "history" of Abraham, as well as that of Isaac, Jacob, and the twelve reputed sons of the last-named patriarch, is nothing but a collection of ancient Hebrew legends without any historical foundation whatever. The stories of Moses and the Israelites in Egypt, of the ten plagues, of the Exodus from Egypt, of the giving new laws at Sinai, of the construction of a grand Tabernacle and the appointment of an army of Levites, of the forty years' wandering in the wilderness, and of the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites under Joshua: these Bible narratives are all of the same character—legendary and unhistorical. Instead, then, of merely striking out the first eleven chapters of the first book in the Bible, we must cut out the whole of the first six books; that is to say, the entire Hexateuch. To these should be added the first two chapters of the book of Judges; for the first scrap of history in the Old Testament is the following :—

Judg. iii. 5-6.—"And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites; the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite; and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods."

The term "Canaanite" is usually understood as signifying all the different tribes and peoples inhabiting the land of Canaan. The Hebrew writers, however, used the name in a restricted sense, and applied it only to the Phœnicians who lived near the sea coast. See Num. xiii. 29. All the peoples named in the foregoing passages were, with one exception (the Hittites), Canaanites; that is to say, original inhabitants of the land. But to this list should be added the Israelites themselves; for all five were of the same race, the same language, and the same religion; the only difference in the latter being the name of the god worshiped. Upon this subject Professor Sayce says :—

"The Hebrew language was the language not only of the Israelites, but also of those earlier inhabitants of the country whom the Jews called Canaanites, and the Greeks Phœnicians.....From the Moabite Stone we learn that the language of the Moabites differed less from that of the Israelites than does one English dialect from another."

Here Professor Sayce apparently assumes that the Israelites took possession of Canaan as recorded in

the book of Joshua. There was no such conquest: the Israelites were themselves Canaanites. As to the Hittites, that people were a great and powerful nation that occupied a district N.E. of Palestine, who had for several centuries prior to the time in Judges lent assistance to the tribes of Canaan against the invading armies of the Egyptian monarchs. It would not, then, be the least surprising that many of this friendly nation had in the course of centuries settled in Palestine.

That the tribes of Israel were descended from the more ancient inhabitants of Canaan is affirmed by the prophet Ezekiel, whose writings are probably more authentic than those of any other Hebrew prophet. Speaking in the name of "the Lord God," that writer says (xvi. 3, 44, 45):—

"Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem: Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of the Canaanite; an Amorite was thy father, and thy mother was an Hittite.....Every one that useth proverbs shall use this proverb against thee, saying, As the mother, so is her daughter.....Your mother was an Hittite, and your father an Amorite. And thine elder sister is Samaria that dwelleth at thy left hand."

In this chapter the tribes which composed the kingdoms of Israel and Judah are likened to two sisters who had been unfaithful to their husbands (i.e., had forsaken Yahveh, and gone whoring after other gods). This circumstance does not, however, affect the fact stated as to their origin. The argument is that, being of Canaanitish descent, there need be no surprise if they returned to the gods of their ancestors; that such backsliding was only what might be expected.

In the poem which most critics regard as the oldest fragment of the Hebrew Scriptures (dating probably from the eleventh century B.C.)—viz., the Song of Deborah (Judg. v.)—mention is made of the tribes in Canaan that fought against Jabin king of Hazor. This Song is said to refer to the battle fought by the tribes under Barak, recorded in the previous chapter (Judg. iv.). The name of Barak, it is true, is now found in the Song; but, for all that, the poem refers to a great battle fought centuries before Barak's time. We find the same "Jabin king of Hazor" in Josh. xi.; but in the latter account that Canaanitish sovereign enters the field accompanied by half a dozen other kings of Canaan. The battle is fought near the waters of Merom, with the result that Jabin and his allies are routed and exterminated by the twelve tribes of Israel under Joshua. In the story in Judg. iv., Barak, with 10,000 men of the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun, is stated to have defeated and exterminated the army of Jabin under that king's general, Sisera, the battle being fought in the neighborhood of Mount Tabor and the river Kishon.

That the great victory commemorated in the Song cannot refer to that by Barak is evident from the following passage:—

Judg. v. 19.—"The kings came and fought; then fought the kings of Canaan, in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo."

This portion of the Song takes us back to the battle recorded in Josh. xi., in which "the kings of Canaan fought," the engagement taking place near the waters of Merom.

Again, the tribes named in the Song do not agree with those mentioned in Judg. iv. In the poem six of the tribes were engaged—viz., Issachar, Zebulun, Naphtali, Ephraim, Benjamin, and Machir. Three other tribes are named that "came not to the help of Yahveh" on that eventful day.

Judg. v. 17.—"Gilead abode beyond Jordan; and Dan, why did he remain in ships? Asher sat still at the haven of the sea, and abode by his creeks."

According to statements in the Pentateuch, Manasseh, the reputed father of one of the tribes, had two sons, Machir and Gilead: also, when dividing the land amongst the tribes, Joshua is said to have given a portion on the west of Jordan to half the tribe of Manasseh, and another portion on the east of Jordan to the other half of that tribe. These statements

were evidently made to conceal the fact that Machir and Gilead were two separate tribes in no way related to each other. Machir from the first dwelt on the west of the Jordan, his territory adjoining that of Ephraim, the two sharing the district which, many centuries later, became the province of Samaria. The territory of the Gileadites had always been on the eastern side of Jordan, the men taking their name from the mountains in the region they inhabited. There can be no doubt, then, that the nine tribes named in the Song—which collectively were known as Israel—were old inhabitants of the land, who had formed a league for mutual defence against powerful and hostile invaders. Moreover, these nine comprised all the tribes of Israel; for the writer of the Song had evidently no knowledge of any others.

The great battles commemorated in the Song of Deborah were two, both fought by Thothmes III., king of Egypt, against a coalition of kings of Canaan, directed and assisted by the Hittites (about 1480 B.C.). The first was fought in the valley of Megiddo, and, for a long time, was obstinately contested on both sides; but the Confederates at length gave way, and took refuge within the walls of Megiddo. Thothmes laid siege to that city; but it withstood for a time all his efforts, though ultimately it was captured, and the whole country subjugated. The other battle commemorated was one in the north of Canaan, near the waters of Merom, Hazor, the capital of Jabin, being taken. Among the list of towns which submitted to the arms of Thothmes—and are now inscribed on the temple walls of Karnak—we find Megiddo, Taanach, and Kishon to the south of Mount Tabor, as well as Kadesh, Merom, and Hazor in the north, near the waters of Merom.

Amongst the spoils taken from the Hittites were 924 war-chariots, one of them (evidently that of the king) being of gold or gold-plated. Thus, it was not "Jabin king of Hazor" who possessed the 900 chariots of iron, as stated in Judges, but the Hittite king who had come to the assistance of the kings of Canaan. Again, it was neither Barak nor Joshua that gained the victory recorded in the Song, but Thothmes III., king of Egypt. The Hebrew writer has simply ascribed the honor of victory to his own people, as is also the case with regard to all the conquests recorded in the book of Joshua.

ABRACADABRA.

(To be continued.)

The Inquisition.—IV.

(Concluded from p. 157.)

LET us now describe the *auto-da-fé*, at which heretics were publicly burnt. The prisoners were kept until they were numerous enough to make a good show, and there was then a general gaol-delivery. The locality fixed for the celebration was usually a large square, and the population were invited to witness the edifying spectacle. On the previous day, those who were condemned to be *relaxed*, the euphemism for burning, carried to the pile the fuel with which they were to be consumed (Chandler, p. 273). A sermon was preached by a Dominican friar to the multitude, who were as far as possible accommodated with seats. The banners of the Holy Office, supported by the highest nobility, waved in the breeze; and "the ceremony was not unfrequently countenanced by the royal presence" (Prescott, vol. i., p. 319).

After the sermon the butchery began. The prisoners, dressed in the yellow *san-benito*, heard their sentences read. Those who were to receive slight punishments, such as flagellation, came first; and then the secular authorities were admonished to kill the rest. Some who repented, and died in the true faith, were strangled before being cast into the flames. The remainder were burnt alive.

Dr. Geddes, who witnessed one of these holocausts, says that ordinary malefactors were regarded with

great compassion by the Spanish and Portuguese, but the punishment of heretics was witnessed with "transports of joy and satisfaction." When the victims were fixed on their seats and chained to the stake, the people cried—"Let the dogs' beards be made!" Flaming furzes, attached to a long pole, were then thrust against their faces, until they were burnt to a coal. Their beards being thus trimmed:

"Fire is set to the furze, which is at the bottom of the stake, and above which the professed are chained so high, that the top of the flame seldom reaches higher than the seat they sit on; and if there happens to be a wind, to which that place is much exposed, it seldom reaches as high as their knees; so that though, if there be a calm, the professed are commonly dead in about half an hour after the furze is set on fire; yet, if the weather prove windy, they are not after that dead in an hour and a half, or two hours, and so are really roasted, and not burnt to death" (Geddes's *Tracts* vol. i., p. 447).

Miserecordia por Amos de Dios, Mercy for the love of God! cried some of the poor wretches in their agony. But the multitude, rendered callous by religion, mocked at their plea.

Wilcox, afterwards Bishop of Rochester, witnessed an *auto-da-fé* at Lisbon, and described it in a letter dated January 15, 1706, to Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury. The victims were a man and a woman.

"The execution was very cruel. The woman was alive in the flames half an hour, and the man above an hour. The present king and his brothers were seated at a window so near as to be addressed to a considerable time, in very moving terms, by the man as he was burning. But though the favor he begged was only a few more faggots, yet he was not able to obtain it. Those which are burnt alive here are seated on a bench twelve feet high, fastened to a pole, and above six feet higher than the faggots. The wind being a little fresh, the man's hinder parts were perfectly wasted; and as he turned himself *his ribs opened* before he left speaking, the fire being recruited as it wasted, to keep him just in the same degree of heat. But all his entreaties could not procure him a larger allowance of wood to shorten his misery" (Chandler, p. 287).

Perhaps the most frightful scene ever witnessed at an *auto-da-fé* took place about 1586 in Holland. Some women were taken to the fire when in the pains of childbirth, and were actually delivered at the stake (Rule, vol. ii., p. 9).

Another terrible execution was that of Le Blas, who, for breaking a wafer, and crying "misguided men, do ye take this thing to be Jesus Christ your Lord and Savior?" was dragged on a hurdle, with his mouth closed with an iron gag, to the market-place. "Here," says the historian, "his right hand and foot were burnt and twisted off between red hot irons. His tongue was then torn out by the roots. With his arms and legs fastened together behind his back, he was then hooked by the middle of the body to an iron chair, and made to swing to and fro over a slow fire till he was entirely roasted" (Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, vol. i., p. 385).

Before closing this chapter of horrors, we venture to give a few well-authenticated personal histories of victims of the Inquisition.

William Lithgow, a Scotchman, was arrested at Malaga, in 1620, on suspicion of being a spy for the English fleet. He was sent to the Inquisition, where he was treated with the greatest barbarity, the only person who showed him the least sympathy being a "pitiful Turk" who acted as his gaoler. After lying for some time half-starved in a miserable dungeon, he was brought to the rack. In removing his irons they struck off about an inch of his left heel. Being stripped to the skin, he was mercilessly racked, so that, in his own words, "the sinews of my two thighs burst asunder," whilst the flesh of his arms was out to the bone. To still his violent cries, he was beaten on the face with cudgels. After an hour of this torture, water was poured down his throat until his belly swelled; and then he was reversed for the water to discharge. Six hours passed in this way, at the end of which he was carried back to his cell, where he lay utterly helpless, while the vermin

feasted on his sores. Some days afterwards an English priest came and desired him to profess the Catholic faith. His refusal led to fresh tortures.

"I was disburdened of mine irons, unclothed to my skin, set on my knees, and held up first with their hands; where, instantly setting my teeth asunder with iron cades, they filled my belly full of water, even gorging to my throat; then, with a garter they bound fast my throat, till the white of mine eyes turned upward; and being laid on my side, I was by two sergeants tumbled to and fro seven times through the room, till I was almost strangled. This done, they fastened a small cord about each of my great toes, and hoisting me therewith to the roof of a high loft (for the cords ran in two rings fastened above), they cut the garter, and there I hung, with my head downward, in my tormented weight, till all the gushing water dissolved" (Davie, p. 220).

Lithgow was accidentally discovered and released by some English factors at Malaga.

An Englishwoman, Elizabeth Cheffer, left Arling-ton, in Devonshire, in 1685, and married a Spanish physician at Maderia. In 1704 she was taken dangerously ill, and lost consciousness for a time. On recovering she was told that she had changed her religion. She repudiated the idea, and was in consequence imprisoned by the Inquisition. Being shipped to Lisbon, her plate, goods, and money, were appropriated to the Holy Office, and she was immured in a dark cell, five feet square, for nearly ten months. Torture was then applied to reduce her obstinacy. Her back was lashed with knotted cords; and, after an interval of thirty days, her breast was laid bare, and she was burnt to the bone with a red-hot iron in three different places on the right side. Subsequently she was bound in a chair, and the flesh of her left foot was burned away with a red-hot iron slipper. She finally lost her resolution and her senses, and signing a paper without knowing its contents, she was discharged in a state of destitution (Davie, pp. 233-237).

Mary de Bourgogne, a native of Burgundy, was tried on a suspicion of Judaism at Saragossa in 1557. Notwithstanding her great age (she was nearly ninety), she was subjected to the moderate torture; but "such were the effects of this gentle application that the unfortunate Mary ceased to live and suffer in a few days after" (Llorente, p. 171).

Donna Bohorquia, in the sixteenth century, was arrested at Seville on suspicion of heresy. Being six months gone with child, she was not at first strictly confined; but eight days after her delivery, the child was taken from her, and she was imprisoned in one of the common dungeons. According to Llorente, she "was not yet quite recovered when she was tortured. The cords with which her still feeble limbs were bound penetrated to the bone, and several blood-vessels breaking in her body, torrents of blood flowed from her mouth. She was taken back to the dungeon in a dying state, and expired a few days after" (pp. 226, 227). After they had murdered her with the torture, the inquisitors were unable to procure sufficient evidence to condemn her, and they were obliged to pronounce her *innocent* (Llorente, p. 227; Chandler, p. 241).

Leaving Spain for awhile, let us turn to the Netherlands, where the Inquisition was introduced by Charles V. in 1522. Philip II. tried to organise the eighteen Inquisitions of Flanders on the model of that of Spain, but "the Flemings persisted in opposing everything like the Inquisition, and their resistance was the cause of the long and bloody wars which exhausted the treasures and armies of Spain during half a century" (Llorente, p. 187).

Motley has told that startling tale of superhuman cruelty and superhuman resistance; and after recording such atrocities as the execution of Le Blas, he adds that, "These things are the history of the Netherlands at that period." The number of the victims under Charles V., he says, "have been placed as high as one hundred thousand by distinguished authorities, and have never been put a lower mark than fifty thousand" (*Rise of the Dutch Republic*, vol. i., p. 114).

The bigoted and persecuting Philip found a fit lieutenant in Alva, who was perhaps the ablest general and the most ferocious butcher in Europe. Yet this man was the darling of Rome. In 1567 all persons suspected of heresy fled from their homes. The fugitives, says Motley:—

"Were hunted into rivers, cut to pieces in the fields, hanged, burned, or drowned, like dogs, without quarter, and without remorse. The most industrious and valuable part of the population left the land in droves. The tide swept outwards with such rapidity that the Netherlands seemed fast becoming the desolate waste which they had been before the Christian era.....The new religion was banished from all the cities, every conventicle was broken up by armed men, the preachers and leading members were hanged, their disciples beaten with rods, reduced to beggary, or imprisoned, even if they sometimes escaped the scaffold. An incredible number, however, were executed for religious causes. Hardly a village so small, says the Antwerp chronicler, but it could furnish one, two, or three hundred victims to the executioner" (Vol. ii., pp. 95, 96).

It was Philip's deliberate intention, in despatching Alva to the Netherlands, that all the leaders of the anti-Inquisition party should be put to death. Trials being too slow work, they were sent "in batches to the furnace." The Inquisition assisted Philip in his fell design.

"Upon the 16th February, 1568, a sentence of the Holy Office condemned all the inhabitants of the Netherlands to death as heretics. From this universal doom only a few persons especially named were excepted. A proclamation of the King, dated ten days later, confirmed this decree of the Inquisition, and ordered it to be carried into instant execution, without regard to age, sex, or condition. This is probably the most concise death-warrant that was ever framed. Three millions of people, men, women, and children, were sentenced to the scaffold in three lines" (Motley, vol. ii., p. 158).

The people were dragged to the stake wholesale. Eight hundred were ready for their doom at the end of the holy week. Prisoners' tongues were screwed into an iron ring, and seared with a hot iron, so that the swelling and inflammation might prevent them from speaking on their way to the slaughter. None but Catholic midwives were allowed to attend at births, in order that the infants might be immediately baptised by the priest; and spies were set to watch the dying, in order that if they dispensed with Catholic rites, their bodies might be burnt and their property confiscated. The enormities of the subsequent struggle between Alva and the Netherlands beggar description and stagger belief. A cobbler was hanged for having eaten meat-soup on a Friday. Gibbets laden with mutilated bodies lined all the roadsides. At Mechlin "men were butchered in their houses, in the streets, at the altars. Women were violated by hundreds in churches and in graveyards" (Motley, vol. ii., p. 416). At Zutphen, Alva sent orders to his son to leave *not a single man alive in the city*, and to burn every house to the ground; and the order was carried out, says Motley, "till scarcely chastity or life remained." At Naarden, after a solemn promise that the lives and property of the inhabitants should be sacredly respected, the chief citizens were assembled in the town hall and massacred, after which the building was set on fire "and the dead and dying were consumed in ashes together." The town was then fired, and as the people rushed out they were chopped to pieces with axes, or surrounded by troops of laughing soldiers, who tossed them to and fro with their lances. In their frenzy the soldiers "opened the veins of some of their victims, and drank their blood as if it had been wine."

Enough! Motley's summary must now suffice.

"Men, women and children, old and young, nobles and paupers, opulent burghers, hospital patients, lunatics, dead bodies, all were indiscriminately made to furnish food for the scaffold and the stake. Men were tortured, beheaded, hanged by the neck and by the legs, burned before slow fires, pinched to death with red-hot tongs, broken upon the wheel, starved, and flayed alive. Their skins, stripped from the living body, were stretched upon drums, to be beaten in the march

of their brethren to the gallows.....Unborn infants were torn from the living bodies of their mothers; women and children were violated by thousands; and whole populations burned and hacked to pieces" (Vol. ii., pp. 503-504).

In the midst of these atrocities, the Pope sent Alva a jewelled hat and sword, a gift such as the Church only bestows on her greatest champions. The autograph letter from his Holiness reminded the pious butcher of "the heavenly crown which was ready for all princes who support the Holy Church and the Roman Catholic faith" (Motley, vol. ii., p. 282).

The number who perished in the Netherlands cannot be computed, although it must have been terrific. Llorente has, however, estimated the victims of the Spanish Inquisition, the last of whom that perished at the stake was a poor woman who was burnt on November 7, 1781, for witchcraft. The numbers are:—

| | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|---------|
| Burnt at the stake | ... | ... | 31,912 |
| Burnt in effigy | ... | ... | 17,659 |
| Condemned to severe penances | ... | ... | 291,450 |

The number of those condemned to minor penances might be reckoned by the million.

Here is the secret of the degradation of Spain. She was once the mightiest empire in the modern world; she is now one of the lowest, and almost outside the comity of Europe. The Inquisition, as De Maistre argues, may have enabled her to escape the religious wars which distracted other countries; but this internal peace was fallacious; it was the peace of stagnation and decay.

G. W. FOOTE.

Correspondence.

CORNERING THE CLERGY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR.—I am in hearty agreement with Mr. R. D. Morris that pulpit inaccuracies should, if possible, be brought to the notice of the congregations to whom they are addressed. A few Christian ministers already provide an opportunity for their audiences to ask questions in public, and it is for Free-thinkers to endeavor to secure an extension of this practice.

Does Mr. Morris really mean what he actually says in this sentence: "The authors of these loose statements invariably know them to be such"? I think the charge of hypocrisy is one which cannot properly be made in such wide and general terms as these. It is only applicable to specific persons, it should be based only upon unmistakable evidence, and employed only in the very last resort. Is it not Olive Schreiner who says: "There are more fools and fewer hypocrites than this wise world dreams of. The hypocrite is rare as icebergs in the tropics; the fool common as butter-cups beside a water-furrow"?

I think a little introspection would often make us gentler in our denunciations. For my own part, when I was a Christian I was quite as honest in declaring certain things to be truths as I am now in holding them to be falsehoods.

The name "hypocrite" is one which most of us are too much inclined to hurl about. The assumption of honesty is one of the necessary conditions of all useful controversy, and I hope your correspondent will not mind my saying that his imagination has produced one of those very exuberances which both he and I so much deplore in our Christian adversaries.

R. NORTH.

If you address any average modern English company as believing in an Eternal life; and then endeavor to draw any conclusions from this assumed belief, as to their present business, they will forthwith tell you that "what you say is very beautiful, but it is not practical." If, on the contrary, you frankly address them as unbelievers in Eternal life, and try to draw any conclusions from that unbelief, they immediately hold you for an accused person, and shake off the dust from their feet at you.—John Ruskin.

ANOTHER ENDOWMENT NEEDED.

Levi P. Morton has given away his pew in church, and it is forever a free pew. The next move should be an endowment to pay somebody to sit in it.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON**INDOOR.**

QUEEN'S (MINOR) HALL (Langham-place, W.): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "William Shakespeare and Jesus Christ."

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Workman's Hall, Romford-road, Stratford, E.): 7.30, W. Davidson, "Cobbling Up the Gospels."

OUTDOOR.

EDMONTON BRANCH N. S. S. (The Green): 7.45, H. Harrison, "Christian Evidence and Science."

COUNTRY.**INDOOR.**

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (King's Hall, Corporation-street): 7, E. Morris Young, "Reason and Theology."

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 6.30, a Lecture.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, "Life in Other Worlds." Lantern illustrations.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, E. Egerton Stafford, "Man."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, W. Sanders, "Quack Remedies for Poverty."

SOUTH SHIELDS BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Hall Buildings, second floor): 7, Music; 7.45, Jos. Bryce, "The Teaching and Influence of Buddhism."

OUTDOOR.

COVENTRY (Market Square): Joseph A. E. Bates—Thursday, March 14, at 7.30, "God is Dead"; Sunday, 17, at 7, "Christ: Man, Messiah, or Myth?" Monday, 18, at 7.30, "The Great Enigma"; Tuesday, 19, at 7.30, "Materialism in the Nineteenth Century"; Wednesday, 20, at 7.30, "The Folly of Sabbatarianism"; Thursday, 21, at 7.30, "The Paradox of Christian Socialism."

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.

SUPPLIES A LONG FELT WANT.

NOW READY.

Determinism

OR

Free Will?

BY

C. COHEN.

Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.

A clear and able exposition of the subject in the only adequate light—the light of evolution.

CONTENTS.

I. The Question Stated.—II. "Freedom" and "Will." III. Consciousness, Deliberation, and Choice.—IV. Some Alleged Consequences of Determinism.—V. Professor James on "The Dilemma of Determinism."—VI. The Nature and Implications of Responsibility.—VII. Determinism and Character.—VIII. A Problem in Determinism.—IX. Environment.

PRICE ONE SHILLING NET
(POSTAGE 2d.)

Published by the WALTER SCOTT COMPANY.

Also on Sale by

THE PIONEER PRESS, 2 NEWCASTLE STREET, LONDON, 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 Batcock, 23 Rood-lane, Fenchurch-street, London, E.C.

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

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

WORKS BY G. W. FOOTE.

| | s. | d. |
|--|--------------|-----|
| ATHEIST SHOEMAKER, THE, and the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes | post 1/2d. | 0 1 |
| BIBLE ROMANCES. Popular edition, with portrait, paper | post 2 1/2d. | 0 6 |
| BOOK OF GOD, THE, in the Light of the Higher Criticism. With Special Reference to Dean Farrar's Apology. Paper... .. | post 2d. | 1 0 |
| Bound in cloth | post 2d. | 2 0 |
| CHRISTIANITY AND SECULARISM. Public Debate with Rev. Dr. McCann | post 2d. | 1 0 |
| Bound in cloth | post 2d. | 1 6 |
| DARWIN ON GOD | post 1d. | 0 6 |
| DEFENCE OF FREE SPEECH | post 1d. | 0 4 |
| DROPPING THE DEVIL: and other Free Church Performances | post 1/2d. | 0 2 |
| DYING ATHEIST, THE. A Story. | post 1/2d. | 0 1 |
| FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT. First Series, cloth | post 3d. | 2 6 |
| GOD SAVE THE KING. An English Republican's Coronation Notes | post 1/2d. | 0 2 |
| HALL OF SCIENCE LIBEL CASE, with Full and True Account of the "Leeds Orgies" | post 1d. | 0 3 |
| INTERVIEW WITH THE DEVIL | post 1/2d. | 0 2 |
| IS SOCIALISM SOUND? Four Nights' Public Debate with Annie Besant | post 1 1/2d. | 1 0 |
| Bound in cloth | post 2 1/2d. | 2 0 |
| INGERSOLLISM DEFENDED AGAINST ARCH-DEACON FARRAR | post 1/2d. | 0 2 |
| IMPOSSIBLE CREED, THE. An Open Letter to Bishop Magee on the Sermon on the Mount | post 1/2d. | 0 2 |
| JOHN MORLEY AS A FREETHINKER | post 1/2d. | 0 2 |
| LETTERS TO THE CLERGY (128 pages) | post 2d. | 1 0 |
| LIE IN FIVE CHAPTERS, or Hugh Price Hughes' Converted Atheist | post 1/2d. | 0 1 |
| MRS. BESANT'S THEOSOPHY. A Candid Criticism | post 1/2d. | 0 2 |
| MY RESURRECTION. A Missing Chapter from the Gospel of Matthew | post 1/2d. | 0 2 |
| NEW CAGLIOSTRO, THE. An Open Letter to Madame Blavatsky | post 1/2d. | 0 2 |
| PECULIAR PEOPLE. An Open Letter to Mr. Justice Wills | post 1/2d. | 0 1 |
| PHILOSOPHY OF SECULARISM | post 1/2d. | 0 3 |
| REMINISCENCES OF CHARLES BRADLAUGH | post 1d. | 0 6 |
| ROME OR ATHEISM? The Great Alternative | post 1d. | 0 3 |
| SALVATION SYRUP: or Light on Darkest England. A Reply to General Booth | post 1/2d. | 0 2 |
| SECULARISM AND THEOSOPHY. A Rejoinder to Mrs. Besant | post 1/2d. | 0 2 |
| SIGN OF THE CROSS, THE. A Candid Criticism of Mr. Wilson Barret's Play | post 1 1/2d. | 0 6 |
| THE PASSING OF JESUS. The Last Adventures of the First Messiah | post 1/2d. | 0 2 |
| THEISM OR ATHEISM. Public Debate | post 1 1/2d. | 1 0 |
| WAS JESUS INSANE? | post 1/2d. | 0 1 |
| WHAT IS AGNOSTICISM? | post 1/2d. | 0 3 |
| WHO WAS THE FATHER OF JESUS? | post 1/2d. | 0 2 |
| WILL CHRIST SAVE US? | post 1d. | 0 6 |

THE NEW ERA UNION, ABERTILLERY, MON.

Mr. C. COHEN

Will deliver two lectures under the auspices of the above Union on

Sunday, March 17, 1912,

AT THE

Tillery Institute.

AT 3 P.M., "MAN AND HIS SOUL."

AT 6 P.M., "MORALITY WITHOUT RELIGION."

Admission by Silver Collection.

Come in crowds and hear this great Secularist Orator

J. W. GOTT

TO ALL FREETHINKERS

Although my business has been severely shaken by the Blasphemy Prosecution and my Imprisonment, I am still able to supply the very finest goods at very reasonable prices, always guaranteeing satisfaction. I intend, in the near future, to visit all the Lancashire and Yorkshire towns, organising a campaign against the Blasphemy Laws, and shall be glad, at the same time, to call on friends with samples of my High Class

SUITS TO MEASURE,

COSTUMES TO MEASURE,

BOOTS AND SHOES.

I expect, and feel sure, that I shall not be disappointed—that I can rely on my Freethought friends to favor me with their orders. Patterns free to all towns I do not visit. During the next four weeks I hope to visit Manchester, Bolton, Blackburn, Wigan, Accrington, Barnley, Nelson, Oldham, Rochdale, Failsworth, Colne, Clitheroe, Leeds, Huddersfield, and Southport. On April 20 I publish a book containing a graphic account of my Trial and Gaol Experiences as a Prisoner for Blasphemy. Order at once. Paper covers, 1s. 8d.; cloth, 2s. 3d., post free.

J. W. GOTT, 28 CHURCH BANK, BRADFORD.

America's Freethought Newspaper.

THE TRUTH SEEKER.

FOUNDED BY D. M. BENNETT, 1873.

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

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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

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

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

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

A NEW (THE THIRD) EDITION

OF

FROM FICTION TO FACT.

By F. BONTE.

(Issued by the Secular Society, Limited.)

REVISED AND ENLARGED.

SHOULD BE SCATTERED BROADCAST.

SIXTY-FOUR PAGES.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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

ct in
tion.

Will."
lleged
"The
ations
II. A

ET

C.

ling of
lect
rso.
mited,
urity,
make
their
nsion.
cutors
rse of
ed in
y has

ok, 23

rm of
re and
—
ned by
retary
or the

r wills,
ary of
to will
ssary.
3, and
uy.

SUNDAY EVENING FREETHOUGHT LECTURES

(Under the Auspices of the Secular Society, Ltd.)

AT

Queen's (Minor) Hall,
LANGHAM PLACE, LONDON, W.

March 17.—Mr. G. W. FOOTE:

“William Shakespeare and Jesus Christ.”

„ 24.—Mrs. H. BRADLAUGH BONNER:

“Charles Bradlaugh and the Myth Makers.”

„ 31.—Mr. J. T. LLOYD:

“Secularism as a Philosophy of Life.”

MUSIC BEFORE EACH LECTURE.

Front Seats, 1s. Second Seats, 6d. A Few Free Seats at Back.
Doors open at 7. Musical Program 7 to 7.30. Lecture at 7.30.

A LIBERAL OFFER—NOTHING LIKE IT.

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

Most Grateful Testimonials From Everywhere.

Gudivoda, India: “It is a store of medical knowledge in plainest language, and every reader of English would be benefited by it.”—W. L. N.

Triplicane, India: “I have gone through the book many times, and not only benefited myself but many friends also.”—G. W. T.

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

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.

Price EIGHT SHILLINGS by Mail to any Address.

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