

# THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXXII.—No. 40

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1912

PRICE TWOPENCE

*He who keeps back the truth, or withholds it from men from motives of expediency, is either a coward, or criminal, or both.—MAX MULLER.*

## The Test of Christianity.

Is the Christian religion true? "J. B.," in the *Christian World* for September 26, answers this question in the affirmative; and, of course, being by profession an exponent of that religion, it would not be reasonable to expect any other answer from him. The question was put to him by an unbelieving correspondent who, because his sexual nature every now and then gets the better of him, had been advised by some friends to become a Christian. Though occasionally doubting even the historicity of Jesus, he implores "J. B." to inform him what, in his candid opinion, he really ought to do:—

"Do you sincerely believe that if I give my heart to, and become a disciple of, Jesus Christ, I should receive a special power from heaven to help me? Here, again, the voice of Materialism seems to say, Bah! it is only a change of will-power. The whole thing seems to be a system by which one is made to trust in something outside of oneself. Do you think the Great God sends his strength down to help poor, feeble mortals? Can you feel it? I want to be sure before venturing; but I do want some power to help me."

An appeal of that kind can only come from a person who is more or less under the influence of religion. Though he has professed no religion, it is quite evident that Christianity forms a part of the writer's environment to which he is emotionally, but not intellectually, somewhat inclined to respond; and he seems willing to follow "J. B.'s" advice. Treating the question as a business one, the reverend gentleman states it thus: "Is Christianity a value in which we may safely invest? Is it a solvent concern which meets its engagements?" He frankly admits that "the modern world, in posing its query, is not to be put off with conventional replies, with casual reservations," or with "arguments from antiquity, from tradition, from established usage," and that "its present concern with religion is whether it has within it a best of its own which it is worth a man's while to possess for himself." In other words, the question of supreme interest to-day is, Does Christianity stand the practical test of application to the needs of human life?

"J. B." makes much capital of the fact that man depends very largely upon what is outside of himself. Surely this is the most obvious of truths. "Our nature, as it is built, through all its ranges, is an incessant appeal to the outward. Every bit of us, of body, mind, and soul, is on the half principle, a half in us which looks for its completion to another half outside. Our lungs call for air, our eyes for light, our ears for sound, our stomach for food." Now, while this is incontrovertibly true, yet an obvious fallacy underlies "J. B.'s" eloquent statement of it. Air, light, sound, and food are described as being "provided" to meet the requirements of our lungs, eyes, ears, and stomach; but the description is entirely false. Our perceptive faculties do not wait for the outside object, but are themselves the

product of the outside object; nor do our affections cry out for the treasures of love "provided" for their gratification. Our affections are the outcome of social life, and we can easily trace their gradual evolution. It is a most palpable error to represent social life—relations, friends, neighbors—as a "provision" for our affections. And yet "J. B." utilises such a misstatement as a foundation on which to build his one argument for the truth of Christianity. This is how he proceeds:—

"Waiting at all the doors of our nature are the answers for its appeal. Are we then going too far when we say that when, as with our correspondent, a man, at the centre of his life, when he has to fight his passions, to win out against his baser impulses, to struggle for the best and highest, he finds a need of re-inforcement, of spiritual help, this felt need is not argument for an existing supply? If the physical eye has its light punctually there, may there not be some for the mind's eye? Are all the other departments of us duly provisioned, while this highest, for which all the rest exist, is left destitute? If analogy speaks anywhere, it speaks here. It offers a most emphatic 'No' to that pessimism."

Even on the false assumption that light is a provision for the eye, sound for the ear, air for the lungs, and food for the stomach, it by no means follows that the mind must be supernaturally provisioned. The physical eye is provided with physical light, and analogically speaking, what the mind's eye needs is mental light; and adopting the apologist's language, is not this light also plentifully supplied within the limits of the natural world? When a man has to fight his passions, to subdue base impulses, to struggle for the highest and best, is not all possible reinforcement procurable from the social circle in which his lot is cast; and when this does not avail, is not his case absolutely hopeless? No Great God ever sends down his help and saves such a man. When a vice reaches a stage at which the man himself, aided by the love and sympathy of his fellows, is powerless before it, no passionate prayer, no loving trust in Christ, no earnest appeal to heaven, can do the least good. Every minister of the Gospel knows of many such cases. When natural help fails supernatural help never comes to the rescue.

As if conscious of the weakness of this argument, "J. B." devotes only one short paragraph to it, though the whole article is based upon it. His contention is that there is in Christ, whatever theories of his person and work be held, a power, a subtle, supernatural power which changes men's characters, changes their circumstances, changes their entire outlook on life, death, and eternity, makes them in every sense new creatures. This contention, we maintain, is wholly groundless. We positively deny, in the first place, that Christians are, on an average, of greater moral worth than non-Christians. Take Paul, who has always occupied the position of a demi-god in the Christian Church, and you will find it exceedingly difficult to prove that his conversion effected any real improvement in his life. Prior to it he persecuted the Christians, and subsequent to it he persecuted heretics and Gentiles generally. He could never brook contradiction. Everyone who differed in opinion from him was anathematised. As a Christian apostle he was zealous beyond measure, but extremely difficult to get on with. He quarrelled

with every fellow-worker that would not let him have his own way in everything; and it is on record (Acts xv. 39) that between him and Barnabas there "arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder one from the other." Does Peter seem so superior a character when exposed to the light of reason? Was he not a coward who miserably dissembled? Speaking generally, we are not afraid to affirm that Christians win no victories which may not be won, and which are not won, by non-Christians both in Christendom and Heathendom. "A holy personality," says "J. B." "rays out redemptive power as the sun rays out light and heat." If by "a holy personality" is meant a good man or woman, we fully endorse that statement, but if it signifies a pious personality our attitude is one of unqualified dissent. No one was ever more pious than Paul; but when anyone ventured to oppose his teaching he instantly flew into a towering passion, and cursed and swore like the veriest trooper, freely indulging in the Billingsgate of his day. "J. B." says that Paul "felt in his soul the power of Christ, and that millions have shared that experience." Perfectly true; Christians do feel what they believe to be the power of Christ; but its effect upon them is to puff them up, and make them narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant, and cruel.

Under the pressure of the only practical test, Christianity utterly breaks down. There are doubtless millions of people who are passionate lovers of Jesus Christ, who to their imagination truly exists; but Jesus Christ is an invisible, theologically constructed being, love to whom is a shocking misuse of emotional force. When it burns with fierce heat, which it does but seldom, it creates a dislike for earthly duties and obligations and an unnatural longing for the fancied blisses of a phantom heaven; but it never adds a single jot to the moral force of the personality. It must not be inferred from this that there are no excellent people among Christians. Some of the most beautiful, lovable, and loving characters on earth are professors of Christianity. Our contention is that such characters are not the products of Christianity. They are to be found under every religion as well as under none.

The only forces known to us are natural forces. So-called spiritual forces are figments of the theological imagination. Christ himself is a metaphysical hypothesis, variously and often contradictorily expressed. Force of character, love, sympathy, benevolence, these are purely natural forces, naturally cultivated, and to be naturally employed. "J. B." refers continually to the highest and best in man, which, according to him, must be nourished with supernatural food; but we hold that the highest and best in man is the social instinct, which urges him to love and serve his fellow-beings, the instinct which impels the strong to protect and help the weak, "the tender humor and the fire of sense," of which Meredith so sweetly sings, which render a man so

"full of heart for all,  
And chiefly for the weaker by the wall."

This is the only redemptive power known to us, and the best people are perpetually raying it out "as the sun rays out light and heat"; and whatever good influence the Christian Church has ever exerted upon the characters of men has been exerted by the exercise of this natural power. If a man suffers from the tyranny of his appetites and passions his deliverance must come as the reward of his own exertions and the loving co-operation of those nearest and dearest to him. Whoever cannot thus be saved is incapable of salvation. Had a God of love existed salvation would have been an unmeaning word. Such a God being conspicuous only by his absence and inactivity, human welfare can only be achieved by the resolute activity of human beings.

J. T. LLOYD.

## The "New Age" and the Great Conspiracy.

IN noting the various comments on Professor Schafer's address, I have reserved the notes of the *New Age* for separate treatment. It presents features of both likeness and unlikeness to those that have gone before. It is like many others because it dreads the effect of a disappearance of the belief in God and the soul; and it is unlike them inasmuch as it is positively alone in having discovered a deeply laid conspiracy—whether of the conscious or unconscious variety is not quite clear—between the Presidential address and the exploiting social classes. Until I read the *New Age* I was under the impression that the publicity given to Professor Schafer's address was entirely owing to its being good copy; its exciting nature being due, as I have already said, to the combined ignorance of journalists and public. In this it seems I was greatly mistaken. The writer of "Notes of the Week" suspected something long before the address was delivered, and his suspicions were duly confirmed on its deliverance. Being "perfectly certain that the Press are not so intellectually curious about the constitution of the universe as to draw attention quite gratuitously to the latest news of it; unless, be it noted, the latest news of it chimes in with the object of the proprietors of the Press," the writer was not long in discovering, in an apparently harmless address on the Origin of Life, a deeply laid plot against the wellbeing of the proletariat.

If it were not that the quality of humor seems taboo to the front columns of the *New Age*, one would suspect the writer of perpetrating an elaborate joke. But he is evidently in deadly earnest, even in scornfully asking whether the press will devote columns of special reports to the fact, "quite as well-authenticated as any other fact, that the soul exists and can exist apart from the body." One lives and learns; and until now I imagined that it was tolerably easy to get this class of information into circulation. Judging from the output, there is no difficulty in getting books on this subject published and reviewed. Most of the papers devote special columns to the topic, in spite of their being—so the *New Age* asserts—in the hands of Materialists and Atheists. Religious meetings and congresses are well reported, and one might be excused the presumption that all this was calculated to strengthen and preserve the belief that the soul exists and can exist apart from the body. And if the *New Age* writer will try his hand at getting into the Materialist and Atheist-owned press a few articles challenging the existence of the soul as a separate entity, articles that give fairly well-established conclusions as to the origin of the belief in a soul, his experience would be, I am inclined to think, educative. He might even discover that the belief in the soul is precisely one of those beliefs which the press treats as sacred.

However, from its knowledge of the press, the *New Age* was disposed to suspect the nature of the address that Professor Schafer would deliver. It would naturally be something designed to still further enslave an unsuspecting people. The result justified the suspicion. "As a fresh instrument in the exploitation of the poor, the address appears to be well designed." "The only effect on society that Professor Schafer's address can have is to depress still further the remnants of society's belief in the sanctity of man, and to justify still more completely the human blackguards who have already enslaved thirteen millions of our population." The address was, indeed, "both an apology and an invitation for the continued exploitation of man by man." Consequently, publicity was given to the speech because, if it contained truth, it was "a profitable piece of truth, a piece of truth good for society as it exists in its present half-rent condition, a truth for capitalists only."

These be startling words. The detection of Dr. Schafer in the character of apologist for the capi-

talists and exploiters, or as fellow-conspirator with the "human blackguards" above named, is as piquant as anything in the annals of Sherlock Holmes. And the acumen of the *New Age* is the more praiseworthy since, I am given to understand, Professor Schafer does not take any active or open part in political work. But this is, perhaps, part of the scheme. Let me note, in passing, that the *New Age* does not question the origin of life from inorganic matter. It affirms the possibility and probability of this, and says that the secret of life "has as good as been revealed. Its concern is that Professor Schafer dismissed God and the soul as useless, and it is on "the reality of God, the final cause of the disposition of matter, and the reality of the soul, as the privileged spectator of His handiwork," that our whole scale of value rests.

The first thing that strikes one about the *New Age* discovery is that it is an old religious friend—with a difference. Religious people have always warned us that once we dismissed God and the soul we had opened the door to social disintegration. There would be no law, moral or other; there would be no justice, no respect for human life or dignity; above all, there would be no order. God and the soul and the future life were essential to keep people in order. Materialism was a doctrine that led to carnage, disorder, and social revolt. The *New Age* also protests against Materialism; it also wants God and the soul—but for slightly different reasons. It is Materialism that holds people in subjection and obedience to a given social order. They do not revolt because they are not encouraged to believe in a soul and in a God. If "man is a superior animal—the wage slave in particular—where are his rights? How did he acquire them in his possibly laboratory creation? Obviously he has no rights, nor is there any God that can enforce them in his behalf." Such will be the reasoning of people, "and a corresponding depression will steal over the wage slaves as the doctrine circulates without effective, simple, and authoritative reply.....Thence will come an increasing disposition to accept servitude as their lot, and the news of the Devilspel as their gospel." And to clinch the matter the writer reports that already in a railway carriage containing clerks on their way to business he had heard the remark, "My poor old soul." So rapidly does evil permeate society.

And yet—? Well, one feels that the psychology of the *New Age* is just a little at fault. In the desire to prove its case, it tends to the opposite. It would be safer to fall back upon the old religious plea that Materialism envelops society in such a miasma of immorality and general demoralisation that all notions of truth and justice and right are undermined. Far safer, and much more sensible, than to argue that men will calmly submit to injustice while all the time conscious of its impact and alive to its origin. Does it not strike the *New Age* as likely that if men believe that "rights" are based upon a belief in God and the soul, and that the negation of these beliefs destroys all warranty for the exercise of such rights, if people see this, may they not ask whence comes the "rights" of the exploiting classes, and their power to enforce servitude on others? May they not argue that if all "rights" disappear, this disappearance will include those of the ruler as well as those of the subject; those of the exploiter as well as those of the exploited. And if all "rights" are killed by disbelief in God and the soul, how can there result the continued servitude of thirteen millions in consequence of the belief in the "rights"—which have theoretically disappeared—of the aforesaid "human blackguards"? Surely, the writer cannot believe that the thirteen millions will be acute enough to see that Professor Schafer's Materialism destroys all "rights," and, at the same time, be foolish enough to create new "rights" for their own enslavement. One may say that Materialism destroys all "rights." One may say that Materialism leads to a policy of grab, of greed, of cruelty, of sensualism. None of

these statements are true, but they are intelligible. But a statement which says that Materialism robs a man of all sense of possessing "rights," and yet leaves him with a conviction that the "right" of certain "human blackguards" to maltreat him remains unimpaired, and fills him with the conviction that it is his duty to submit, is really not intelligible. Indeed, if it did not appear in the *New Age*, one would even call it stupid.

The *New Age* assumes that the question of whether man has "rights" or not is to be determined by whether we believe he is with or without a soul. The wealthy classes, we are informed, do not assume a soul in animals, and, therefore, they have no "rights." And, if man has no soul, his rights are also negated. But, surely, the *New Age* is aware of the fact that thousands of the wealthy classes do grant a "soul" to animals, and many supporters of the existing economic order have argued in its favor. I may also venture to remind the writer that, far from the wealthy classes denying the existence of a soul to their "slaves," they are most anxious that these same slaves should believe in its existence, and they take elaborate care for the cultivation of a sense of its presence. Rockefeller, in America, is passionately devoted to religion, and in England and Scotland and Ireland and Wales a very large number of those whom the *New Age* would class as among their "human blackguards" would shrink with horror from the suggestion that man was destitute of a soul. Has not the *New Age* heard of the exploiting and sweating of men and women by employers who were fully convinced of the existence of God and a soul? Has it not heard of the manner in which Bible readers are kept on the premises by people who paid their employees the smallest possible wage? Has it never heard of the doctrine of the divine right of kings, or of the religious sanction for slavery, or of the manner in which religion and tyranny have walked hand-in-hand throughout the world? What is the matter with the *New Age*?

If there is no God and no soul, man has "obviously" no rights! Beware of that "obviously." It is so often a synonym for mere assertion and an utter absence of proof. The *New Age* writes as though it still believes in the mediæval doctrine that all rights come from God, and that man enters society with a number of declared "rights," countersigned by Deity. For a journal that claims to put forward a scientific sociology, this is quite distressing. Really, apart from social convention, social expediency, and social necessities, the only "right" man has is the right to take and to hold so long as he can do either. Social right has nothing to do with God and nothing to do with a soul except so far as they are accidentally associated with it. The real influence of materialistic science on the notion of social right is to make it intelligible, and to give it a proper place in a sane sociology.

C. COHEN.

(To be concluded.)

## The Facts of Science and the Illusions of Metaphysics.—II.

(Concluded from p. 620.)

FROM the wild grasses, science has produced the golden grain of wheat, oat, barley, and rye. She has domesticated the dog, cat, goat, sheep, ox, horse, ass, and all the various forms of poultry, pigeons, and game quadrupeds and birds. Her cultivated plants gladden the eye, or minister to the culinary requirements of civilised humanity. The cultivated apple, tomato, grape, fig, banana, olive, onion, tubers, turnips, beetroot, with all the wealth of green vegetable growths, are her handiwork. Scientific breeding of animals, agriculture, and fruit culture have already banished the worst forms of famine from the world. It is only in those lands where science has not as yet penetrated that famine,

which, in the metaphysical past, was of normal occurrence, still continues to recur.

While the metaphysicians and theologians were in the ascendant, the science of life and the science of society could not exist. Biology, sociology, and economics were scarcely dreamed of. In the face of furious opposition, the modern natural history sciences slowly emerged. In a theologico-metaphysical atmosphere, the most preposterous beliefs concerning natural objects were (as they still to some extent are), entertained even by the so-called educated classes. Linnæus, Ray, and others made a beginning by classifying and describing plants, and the first-named did not escape the charge of indecency when he referred to the sexual organs of flowering plants. But even then the laws of life were not studied. Harvey, Goethe, Lamarck, Robert Brown, Erasmus, and Charles Darwin, Spencer, Huxley, and Haeckel were the chief creators of modern biology. In the powerful hands of the evolutionary school of naturalists, the doctrine of development became a tremendous force, and the philosophy of descent has probably done more to broaden man's outlook upon the universe than any other revelation the world has yet received. The theologians and their allies regarded life and society as manufactured articles; the scientific philosophers proved them to be the result of growth.

When, in the early nineteenth century, science was struggling for recognition, in Germany it was nearly strangled, as Karl Pearson reminds us, by the Hegelian metaphysic. Freethinking men of science of the standing of Mach, Virchow, Helmholtz, and Du Bois Raymond were so appalled by this danger that they ever after refused to accept any theory that was not thoroughly grounded in knowledge. But this revolt of the positivist scientists against the speculative spirit was to some extent attended with a danger of its own. It was largely, and perhaps entirely, responsible for Virchow's extraordinary attitude towards the doctrine of evolution. Mach is, and Helmholtz and Du Bois Raymond were, evolutionists in principle. But the latter's contemptuous references to Haeckel's avowedly hypothetical pedigrees (published in his *Natural History of Creation*) have been very generally misunderstood. Raymond refused to accept Haeckel's system of classification, because he held that it was insufficiently warranted by ascertained fact. And for that reason alone. But, curiously enough, many people imagine that such men as Virchow, Du Bois Raymond, Mach, and Helmholtz were supporters of the current creed. Now, as every educated German knows, Virchow was a freethinking Jew, Raymond a Prussian Agnostic, Helmholtz an utter unbeliever in the doctrine of design, and Mach is an unbending Rationalist.

The science and philosophy of evolution are not, as some seem to suppose, merely academic in their nature. Evolution bears upon every aspect of human activity. Art, literature, mental, moral, social, and physical science are all included in its province. Without some understanding of its message, no statesman or politician, writer or teacher, can fulfil his functions with due completeness. It is above all things essential to the physician, the cattle breeder, and the agriculturalist. The evolutionary studies of the biological unit, the cell, have been chiefly responsible for the wonderful recent growth of the important science of bacteriology, with all its manifold bearings on health and disease. Such investigations as these enabled Pasteur to save the silk industry of France from utter ruin; to reduce the deaths which attended chicken cholera from 10 to 1 per cent., and to successfully treat that fatal cattle-scurge, anthrax, which was such a terror to farmers in all parts of the world. "As to the money value of these discoveries, Professor Huxley gave it as his opinion that it was sufficient to cover the whole cost of the war indemnity paid by France to Germany in 1870."

The self-same spirit induced the late Lord Lister to conduct experiments which led to the discoveries

which have saved countless thousands of human lives. Difficult and dangerous operations are now successfully performed in our hospitals and elsewhere which were previously impossible. The study of Mendel's law is already rich in result. One line of Mendelian inquiry alone has laid the foundations of a method which, in the near future, will enable the scientific agriculturalist to banish the rust disease in wheat—which still costs the world many millions sterling per annum—from our planet. Cancer, consumption, and other foul diseases still await successful treatment, but their cure is only a matter of time.

We have long been immune from the numerous epidemics which, in the metaphysical Middle Ages, were so inimical to mankind. Such a dire disease as the Black Death is never likely to again cast its shadow over the world. The most fatal visitation of this terrible scourge was in the fourteenth century. It desolated the then known world from far-away China to the Emerald Isle across St. George's Channel. It ravaged England and the larger part of Europe in 1348 and 1349, again in 1861 and 1862, spending its last furies in 1869. The disease seems to have been a form of oriental plague, "with some special symptoms, mainly boils or buboes on the thighs and arms, and putrid inflammation of the lungs with vomiting of blood. Its black spots (whence the name) and tumors were the seals of a doom that medicine had no power to avert." The loss of life throughout Asia and Europe was appalling. Probably one-half of the population of Europe was swept away. 100 000 people perished in London alone, and the death-roll of that unfortunate city, Norwich, amounted to 60,000. Religious fears and fervors led to extravagances of fanaticism which stagger belief; debauchery and demoralisation everywhere abounded. The plague furnished an excuse for plunder and murder. The Jews were pitilessly persecuted, and in Mayence alone 12,000 are said to have been massacred.

This awful epidemic was, as a matter of course, attributed to the agency of supernatural powers, which took the form of violent climatic changes, earthquakes, and other terrestrial disturbances. But modern medical science is fully satisfied that normal natural circumstances are sufficient to account for the facts. Dirt and disease, then as now, dwelt together, and poverty and insanitary surroundings materially added to the mortality bill. The extreme improbability of any recurrence of such a terrible scourge must be placed entirely to the credit of science.

Familiarity with the achievements of science and invention blinds many to the fact that these indispensable conditions of civilisation are due to science at all. Nevertheless, our cheap and easy methods of transit; the printing press, which perpetually pours forth its countless publications; our cotton, silk, woollen, and linen manufactures, with other textiles and fabrics; outlery, tools, machinery, furniture, china, glass; gas, electricity, steam; our very milk, beer, wine, and all-important water supply are all due to science and to science alone.

Surely, it will be said, this beneficent fairy who, with her fact-collecting wand, has accomplished all these bountiful things in a few short centuries, should need no justification. This certainly seems sufficiently obvious. But a lying metaphysical spirit is abroad, and some there be who turn from the substance to the shadow. One or two specious reactionaries have recently caught the ear of that section of the community which has never really understood that great principle of natural causation, which is the most distinguishing feature of modern science. One outstanding reactionary was the late William James, who is already moribund. Another of these is undoubtedly the French metaphysician, Henri Bergson. Syndicalism hails him as its Messiah. He is acclaimed a biologist by unbiological people. And what is the sum and substance of his wonderful message? Bergson postulates a Vital Impetus or Life Force which acts independently

of all physical processes. He also requires us to believe that man has a certain limited and restricted freedom to create, and that intuition will serve us better than reason.

As that plain-speaking biologist, Professor Ray Lankester, has recently said, it is inaccurate to term Bergson a philosopher, and that his numerous books contain "worthless and unprofitable matter, causing waste of time and confusion of thought to many of those who are induced to read them." Or, as Mr. Hugh S. R. Elliott puts it, "The metaphysic of Bergson has all the qualities of incomprehensibility that are essential to the most respectable philosophy," and Mr. Elliott further maintains "that metaphysics is a maze of sesquipedalian verbiage beyond the reach of science to defend or to refute."

Naturally enough, the Bergsonian metaphysic has been received with delight in church and chapel circles. But those of us who possess any understanding knowledge of history, and add to that some acquaintance with the verities of science, and of their bearings upon human character, conduct, and civilisation, will decline to follow the newest *ignis fatuus* into the sloughs of metaphysical misunderstanding. With confidence we await fuller and stronger light from that sun of science which has scattered so much of the ignorance and folly of the past. Love and knowledge are the sole saviors of humanity, and are, consequently, the only divinities that truly claim our adoration, honor, and regard. In the eloquent words of that distinguished astronomer, Professor Norman Lockyer: "The work of the true man of science is a perpetual striving after a better and a closer knowledge of the planet on which his lot is cast, and of the universe in the vastness of which that planet is lost."

T. F. PALMER.

### Voltaire in Hades.

A Lecture delivered in the Studebaker Theatre, Chicago.

BY M. M. MANGASARIAN.

WAS it a dream? In one of my lonely moments I found myself in the company of the Immortals. We were all in the world beyond. By the "beyond" I mean the world peopled by the dead. By the *Immortals* I mean the men who have been, and are still, the light of the world. I dreamt that I approached as close as I could to one of the Immortals. I quivered when I touched his hand. Fortune had smiled upon me. The man whose hand was now in mine was Socrates! To him rather than to anyone else would I have wished to address my questions, for was he not ever ready to give sight to the blind.

"Socrates!" I stammered, as I reached for his hand.

"Who are you?" he asked, turning his eyes upon me quickly.

"A mortal athirst for knowledge," I cried.

"Knowledge!" he exclaimed, and his countenance brightened as though he heard the name of his first love, the bride he had wooed and won two thousand years ago.

"Deny it not to me," I implored, "I am willing to face any peril, and to submit to any conditions, to slake the thirst within me." And I pressed his hand and was about to raise it to my lips when he thus spoke to me again in fluent accents.

"Knowledge belongs to the seeker. Only the persistent wooer will win her. At first she is reluctant to reveal her charms or to bestow her favors, but persevere and she will return your caresses.

"But I am so helpless," I cried, "I need someone to guide me. I am so afraid—"

"No, no! Do not use those two words, Knowledge and Fear, together," he interrupted. "Come with me; I will lend you such assistance as I can."

Then I bent again over his hand, which I still held in mine, and kissed it as a youth kisses the lips of his love.

I was the happiest mortal among the Immortals, at least, so I thought, for there I was, in the broad fields of the sky, not as a shade, but as a soul still quivering with life.

"We are on our way to Hades," said my philosopher guide.

Hades! I remembered for the first time that I had heard the same place called by another name, and I shuddered.

Every now and then I raised my eyes to look at the skies before me, expecting to find them suddenly growing lurid with great pillars of choking smoke, and the sweet air turning foul with the fierce heat and odor of burning brimstone. At times, I even imagined I heard, like the roar of a far away sea, the shocking howl of the *damned* in their hopeless effort to escape the chains which confined them in gulfs of liquid fire, such as I had heard the good preachers describe, on Sundays, to their docile and obedient congregations.

These fears and fancies must have contorted my features somewhat, for Socrates, observing the apprehensive look on my face, and surmising the cause thereof, graciously hastened to my assistance.

"Do you realise," he asked, "how gorgeous the skies are, and how fragrant is the air?" Then calling my attention to a vast circular building directly ahead of us, which he called the *Palace of Philosophy*, he informed me that it was there Voltaire delivered his lectures.

"Can this be Hades?" I stammered.

"This is Hades," the sage replied.

Then, observing my perplexity, he continued: "It is on this side of the grave as it is on the other—the light and air are everywhere. Sun and stars shine in one place as in another; nor are the zephyrs, the seas, the shores, the song birds and the flowers respecters of localities. Happiness and misery are states of the mind, and by no means *qualities of places*. As you may observe yourself, there are no boundaries here—no gates or locks, walls or fences. We use the terms 'heaven' and 'hades,' as the people on the earth use the words 'Oriental' and 'Occidental,' for instance, not as designating two radically separate spheres between which no intercourse is possible, but as describing different sections of the same globe. People here go back and forth from one place to another as freely as you do from one country to another. It is not the place that makes the man, but the man that makes the place. You will find as many happy and good souls in hades as in heaven, and as many stupid people in heaven as in hades. The notion that one place is reserved exclusively for the virtuous, and the other for the vicious, is not only contrary to all experience, but it would also be subversive of all morals. Is it for their further ruin that all the wicked should be massed in one place? And of what use would goodness in heaven be if it could not go forth in loving service to the needy and the weak? A fountain that drinks its own waters would not be more useless than the sterile goodness of such a heaven. Even as it depends upon us, whether or not, we shall behold the daylight—for unless we open our eyes ten thousand suns could not give us light—or whether we shall know the truth by opening our minds, so does our happiness depend upon ourselves, and not upon *where* we are. Happiness is difficult to find anywhere, but if we cannot find it within it will be impossible to find it all."

Then I remembered the great verse of Omar Khayyam:—

"I sent my soul through the invisible,  
Some letter of that after life to spell,  
And by and by my soul returned to me,  
And answered, *I myself* am heaven and hell."

And the equally illuminating lines of John Milton:—

"The mind is its own place, and in itself hath power  
To make a heaven of hell—a hell of heaven."

I cannot begin to tell you, reader, how great was my peace when I stopped looking about me, with fear and trembling, for that dungeon of eternal despair, upon whose black gates I had fancied I

would find burned in letters of flame the hope-slaining words of Dante:—

"Through me you pass into the city of woe:  
Through me you pass into eternal pain:  
Through me among the people lost for aye,"

ending with that final stab that sinks tearing into the soul:—

"All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

With this fear gone, I felt like a different person. My heart resumed its normal beat, and my alarmed and perturbed imagination was once more as serene as that of my philosopher-guide—Socrates.

But how did I come to have such fears in the first place? Let me give you a page from my early religious training.

At the age of five I was taught in a Congregational Sunday-school to believe in such a dungeon, reserved for the lost beyond the grave. Many and terrible were the pictures of the place which were presented to, and impressed upon, my youthful mind. I was told that it was so written in God's book, and that was enough to make me believe it was real. Being of a very impressionable nature, and thinking that my good teachers would never tell me anything except what was absolutely true, the thought of this place of future horrors became a part of my mental make-up. It went to bed with me; it haunted me in my dreams; it rose with me in the morning, and it followed me like a sneaking shadow through the day. My childhood was bitten by it as the frost bites the young trees. I know many children have escaped its serious effects—but I did not. It was years before my mind could uncoil itself from the terrible twist it had received in the Sunday-school.

Perhaps my example will be a warning to those parents who permit their dear children to imbibe such teaching as is contained in the following extract—taken, not from some musty book of the remote past, nor from the pages of some obscure writer—but from a preacher, both modern and distinguished in the religious world—Mr. Charles Spurgeon. I regret that I am compelled to quote it, and the reason I quote this instead of any other passage, is that the book which contains it was placed in my hand when I had just completed my fifteenth year:—

"At the day of judgment thy body will join thy soul, and then thou wilt have twin-hells, thy soul sweating drops of blood, and thy body suffused with agony. *In fire exactly like that which we have on earth thy body will lie, asbestos-like, forever unconsumed, all thy veins roads for the feet of pain to travel on, every nerve a string on which the Devil shall forever play his diabolical tune of Hell's Unutterable Lament.*"

Another sermon slipped into my hands, as a boy, was "Turn or Burn," also from the same celebrated divine, who asked parents to commit to him the religious instruction of their children. In this sermon Mr. Spurgeon assures us that "When the damned jingle the burning irons of their torment they shall say, 'Forever!' When they howl, echo cries, 'Forever!'"

We rejoice that most of this kind of preaching has disappeared from both church and school, but it will not disappear altogether until the children, who are to be the people of the future, shall be reared by loving parents and teachers in a religion from which the last vestige of superstition has been eliminated.

Socrates assisted me to realise that there was no more hell beyond than there was here, and no more heaven there than we could have here. Wherever there is selfishness, ignorance, misery, there is hell. Wherever there is knowledge, goodness, love, there is heaven. In this thought of the reasonableness of things—the thought that both the here and the hereafter are governed by immutable laws, and not by the caprice or for the personal glory and pleasure of some deity, I found freedom from the tormenting phantoms of my early education.

When we entered the building and took our seats in the hall, I could hardly wait for the moment when Voltaire would appear upon the platform to deliver his lecture. My mind was so full of him and his

story that I took no notice at the time of the many distinguished people who were present. "Is it possible," I said to myself, "that I am about to see and hear the great Voltaire?" I felt as if for such a privilege I could taste the cup of death as calmly as Socrates did of the hemlock when he thought of the great society of Immortals awaiting him.

(To be continued.)

"Secretary Reichwald of the American Secular Union has finally beaten the police in the contest to see whether the laws providing for peaceable assembly and freedom of speech shall be administered impartially, as he contends, or used only for the benefit of religious exhorters. The fight to a finish was waged over Bertram Weber, the young man who has been giving Freethought addresses on the streets. Reichwald has contested every arrest of Weber for more than a year, and writes us that the field has now been cleared. The Socialist speakers, among whom was Mr. H. Percy Ward, arrested for street speaking, were discharged. On the day they appeared in the municipal court, the bench was occupied by Judge Perry L. Persons of Waukegan, sitting during the vacation of city members. Mr. Ward demanded a jury trial. Judge Persons looked over the copy of the ordinance governing street meetings and declared it to be unconstitutional, in that it gave the chief of police authority to grant or refuse a permit. All must be treated alike, he said, under the laws of this country. If the ordinance permits street meetings at all, the chief of police must grant permits to all who apply for them. If he does not he must refuse all permits. He cannot select those whom he will and those whom he will not allow to hold street meetings. Such an ordinance, the court reasoned, would put the power of saying what the people shall hear and what they shall not hear entirely in the hands of one man. It was too much power and too dangerous a power to delegate to any one man. Judge Persons therefore instructed the jury to acquit the defendant which was done."—*Truthseeker* (New York).

### National Secular Society.

REPORT OF MONTHLY EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON SEPT. 26.

The President, Mr. G. W. Foote, in the chair. There were also present:—Messrs. Baker, Barry, Bowman, Brandes, Cohen, Cowell, Davidson, Leat, Lloyd, Moss, Neate, Nichols, Quinton, Roger, Rosetti, Samuels, Silverstein, Wood, and Miss Kough.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The monthly balance-sheet was presented and adopted.

Members were received from Bolton, Burnley, Colne, and Leeds and Bradford Branches, and for the Parent Society.

Permission was given for the formation of two new Branches at Burnley and Colne.

The position in regard to the L. C. C. fight was discussed, and the replies received to the Executive circular inviting other bodies to join in a protest against the action of the Parks Committee were reported.

The Secretary further reported an interview with representatives of the British Socialist Party and the Independent Labor Party, at which it had been suggested that a deputation composed of delegates from the various other organisations suffering under the Council's prohibition should be formed to wait upon the Parks Committee, prior to the Conference of such bodies already suggested by the N. S. S. The Executive resolved that they would take part in such a deputation, and Mr. Foote and Mr. Cohen were elected as delegates.

The election of the Board of Management of the Scholarship Scheme was then proceeded with, Messrs. Lloyd and Moss being elected as representatives of the N. S. S. and Messrs. Roger and Cohen volunteering on behalf of the Secular Society, Ltd.

Other matters of minor interest were discussed, and the meeting then adjourned.

E. M. VANCE, *General Secretary.*

### USED TO IT.

A disembodied soul that during its earthly incarnation had had troubles of its own descended into Hades. In its new embodiment it was strolling along with a rather pompous air, when it met his Satanic Majesty.

"You act as if you were the owner of this place," observed the sovereign.

"I ought to be," replied the new arrival, airily; "my wife was giving it to me right along."

## Acid Drops.

Mrs. Brown Potter, the ex-actress, started business in the "occult" line on Sunday evening (Sept. 29) at the Ritz Hotel. To have appeared in ordinary Western costume would have spoiled the show. The lady, therefore, was "dressed in flowing Eastern garb," on a platform "bordered with colored lights," and standing between two palms. These foreign accessories, of course, guarantee the truth of all you say. She told the audience "It was for them to discover what was their psychic bank account." Some of them, probably, would have been glad to discover a good balance in a bank account of a different description. It appears that deposits for the psychic bank have to be obtained from the monks of the Gosainthan Temple, situated some 16,000 feet up the Himalayas. Mrs. Brown Potter thought it would interest the women of England to learn that they couldn't be punished for anything they did within 150 miles of that holy monastery. But what "militant" is going to perform where there is plenty of cold and no publicity—and perhaps no vote at the finish?

We have received the following:—

G. W. FORTÉ, Esq. Penang, September 6, 1912.  
 "SIR,—In your issue of the *Freethinker* of August 18, 1912, is a paragraph in your 'Acid Drops' about a lady by name of Mrs. Brown Potter, who, I understood, was an actress some few years ago. You further state that this good lady is going in for the study of 'Esoteric Buddhism.' I am at a loss to know what 'Esoteric Buddhism' is, as we know nothing of such Buddhism in the East. Neither are we aware of such teachings in the Sacred Books of Buddhism. We are pure Atheists as far as a God is concerned, as we know nothing of such belief. Neither do we believe in the existence of a Soul. I fear that the belief in either God or the Soul is the fancy of a deranged brain that needs a brain specialist.  
 "As for Mrs. Besant being a Buddhist, I never heard of it. I believe that she makes some profession of Hinduism, but she has never been recognised by the Orthodox Hindoo. Mrs. Besant is well known here in the East; she is declared to be like a chameleon that changes when it suits its purpose. In Europe she is a good Christian, in Ceylon she is a good Buddhist, in Egypt she is a good Mohammedan, and in India she is a good Hindu.—I remain, yours faithfully,  
 "REV. U. DHAMMALOKA."

The writer of this letter knows what he is saying, which is more than some of the "occult" ladies do.

The Church Congress is going to discuss a good many foolish things. One of the *most* foolish is "the philosophic basis of miracles." Miracles are supernatural or they are nothing. Explain a miracle and it ceases to be a miracle. Philosophy in a miracle-show only causes an explosion.

The Bishop of Durham is to address the Church Congress on the Unchanging Christ. This must be a misprint for the Changeless Christ. He never had any change in his pocket. When he wanted a penny he had to ask for one.

Had the Rev. Dr. Anderson, of Dundee, read Professor Schafer's Address with any degree of care, he could not have charged him with beginning with "a dead Universe." He did not so begin, but took the precaution of emphasising the fact that he started with a *lifeless* Universe. A *dead* Universe would be a Universe that had once been alive and gone through the process of dying. Of such a Universe science finds no trace whatever. The age of the living is but as a second to a thousand years in comparison with the age of the non-living. This is now a scientific truism, as the most cursory glance at geology would convince anyone.

But Dr. Anderson commits a graver blunder still. In his short article in the *Christian Commonwealth* for September 25 he says that "the world life must be extended to include the atom," which he describes as "an exceedingly complex structure, as truly organised as protoplasm itself." Dr. Haldane said the same thing at the recent meeting of the British Association; but he was more consistent than Dr. Anderson. What the former suggested was that "the inorganic world is not inorganic at all"; but the latter, while claiming even the atom as a highly organised structure, has the audacity to assert that we are surrounded by inorganic life. Will Dr. Anderson tell us where this inorganic life is to be found? Will he also inform us wherein what he calls "spiritual life" differs from the organic and the inorganic? Until he does this, we must hold him guilty of talking unmitigated nonsense, or the usual ignorant twaddle of the pulpit.

Professor Geddes strikes an admirable note in pointing out that the interest taken in Professor Schafer's address shows that the public will take some interest in intellectual matters if it receives encouragement. He says that the belief of most editors that "the public don't care for science," and are "tired of evolution and biology," is merely autobiographic; it represents their own state of mind more than anything else. Professor Geddes also suggests that newspapers might do well to throw open their columns to other discussions than those with which they are now concerned. We welcome the suggestion, although we are not sanguine of its adoption. The public are, unfortunately, in the grip of the newspapers; and the rush and skurry of modern journalism is all in favor of the superficial and sensational writer. It is one of the most serious aspects of modern life that our newspapers do far more to depress and degrade public taste than to elevate it. They concentrate attention on sensational and unimportant matters, and leave those of an opposite character untouched. And every newcomer in the field seems driven to the same policy or doomed to disappointment. One need only study a train-load of men going to or returning from business, and pay heed to their conversation, to realise the power and the ill-effects of modern journalism on the public taste.

It is astonishing how quickly religious people can recognise an evil when it presses on themselves. The *Catholic Times*, for example, notes the case of a Liverpool merchant who died leaving nearly a million sterling. One of the conditions of his will is that his children should forfeit all legacies should they at any time join the Roman Catholic Church. The *Catholic Times* naturally marvels at the testator's "bigotry," and says it is an attempt "to deprive people's consciences of their freedom by setting up sordid motives." Had the conditions of the will been the other way about, that it had provided for penalising people *forsaking* the Roman Catholic Church, the *Catholic Times* would have doubtless found the arrangement perfect in all ways. We regard the condition as detestable; but that is only natural in a *Freethinker*. The testator, however, was a Protestant, and naturally bigoted. But for the *Catholic Times* to stand forward as a champion of freedom of conscience is singular, to say the least of it.

The late Mr. Gladstone ("W. E. G."—"The Grand Old Man") saw strong proofs of the divine benevolence in the way in which God had fitted up the earth for man's habitation. He lived in a part of the world where the severest earthquake did no more than shake a cup and saucer, and where volcanoes do not exist. He would probably have dropped that argument in other parts of the world. Here is a telegram from the Milan correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* of September 28:—

"Stromboli is again in violent eruption, and no fewer than half a dozen craters are belching forth flame and white-hot cinders within a circuit of 400 yards.

"Boiling water and huge molten rocks are being hurled into the air to an enormous height from other apertures. The whole of the elevated region of the island is buried under ashes to a depth of from 6ft. to 8ft. The streets and roofs of the houses in the village of San Vincenzo are covered with about 15in. or 20in. of fine volcanic dust, and Fragnioni is smothered 3ft. deep with sand and small glass-like stones.

"Terrible distress prevails among the population, whose sole means of livelihood are the vast vineyards, which are now mostly overwhelmed and devoured by hailstones of fire.

"Some idea of the force of the eruption may be gathered from the circumstance that on a vineyard situated a mile away the active craters not only littered ashes but vomited boulders measuring more than two cubic yards, many of which penetrated deeply into the soil."

Beautifully prepared for man's habitation in that part of the globe—isn't it?

More "Providence." The recent typhoon caused great destruction and heavy loss of life in Japan. At Osaka 20,000 houses were ruined, and the breakwater and harbor washed away. Myriads of people were swept away by tidal waves, and countless vessels driven ashore. "I the Lord do all these things."

Why does the pious *Daily Mail* give the show away so recklessly? In its issue of September 28 it actually published the Bishop of Truro's warning to his clergy against thanking God for the bad harvest too effusively. "The failure of so many crops," he said, "should have the effect of chastening the exuberance of our language." His lordship advised them to be especially careful in the choice of hymns. There would be many parishes in which it wouldn't do to sing "All is safely gathered in" or "The valleys stand so thick with corn that even they are singing." The Bishop of

Truro knows that a lot of his clergy are fools enough for anything.

The President of the London Baptist Association is deeply impressed with the action of "good men" belonging to the music-halls in attempting to preserve Sunday as a day of rest, especially that very good man Harry Lauder. If Mr. Martin will look into the matter he may discover that the concern of music-hall artistes is not so much whether it is to be rest or no rest on Sunday, but whether it is to be pay or no pay. Only it would be thoroughly un-British not to cover this concern with a cloak of religion and morality. It was Emerson who said that the God of the English people showed a proper regard for a pound sterling.

Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* has taken its place in the picture theatres, and the film has been prepared, so far as Bunyan himself is concerned, in accordance with the evangelical tradition of Bunyan's early blackguardism and his moral conversion by the power of religion. Like most religious traditions, this is destitute of solid foundation. The picture begins, for example, with the author as "a tavern-haunting, wife-neglecting" person, and depicts his conversion after a grim experience in a gambling hell—all of which is part of the religious myth. Bunyan did not neglect his wife; on the contrary, he accompanied her to church; and it was while with her in church that he received the "sense of conversion." He went to taverns, of course—all men did in his day; but he never confesses to having been drunk, and distinctly repudiates sexual offences. Moreover, he worked steadily and well at his trade. He was neither idle, drunken, an ill-treater of his wife, nor a loose liver. His wife was a respectable woman, and he was always susceptible to the influence of good women. Evangelists have loved to picture him the reverse of what he was; but this was because it suited the Christian policy, and this has never been notorious for concern of truth.

The defamatory worshipers of Bunyan may cite his own language. But what does this amount to? At the age of ten, and even earlier, he tells us he was oppressed by the sense of sin. He was full of the joy of "sport and childish vanities." He felt himself—as a child—full of evil; yet "he would not let go his sins." The criminality of a child of ten could not have been a terrible affair, after all. Later, he admits that he fell into vice and ungodliness; but when one looks to see what the vice and ungodliness was, it amounts to little more than playing at games on Sunday, and doing things of a similar character, of which seventeenth century Puritanism disapproved, and making companions of "uncovered" characters. One needs to remember what seventeenth century Puritanism was to understand how easily a man could gain an evil reputation, and also to bear in mind what is the character of modern evangelicalism to see the reason for depicting Bunyan as a thorough blackguard before his conversion. Modern missions provide us with plenty of stories from boys who talk of their evil lives and depraved natures, when all they have been guilty of is a visit to a theatre or neglect of chapel. And "experience meetings" furnish dozens of characters who take a positive delight in exaggerating the crimes they committed before conversion. The motive is plain. The greater the villain, the greater the catch, and the more valuable as a working platform asset. Similarly, Bunyan's value becomes greater if he can be pictured as an idle, drunken scoundrel, saved by the love of Jesus. And Christians would not be Christians if they allowed concern for truth to stand in the way. Hence, the myth of Bunyan the blackguard. And now it is on the cinematograph, doubtless many will regard it as an ocular demonstration of the truth.

One of the few good things that the Gospels put into the mouth of Jesus is "Suffer little children to come unto me." That may be remembered when nearly everything else he is alleged to have said is forgotten. But the chaplain of Oxted Workhouse doesn't seem to attach much importance to this particular text. A caravan woman was admitted with twins, one of whom died when five days old. The poor little thing was not baptised, so the parson didn't hold any church service when it was stowed away in a common grave. The Board of Guardians passed a resolution practically censuring the man of God. But they may rest assured it won't make any difference to the child if it has gone to another world. No deity could possibly be such a malignant fool as to punish that baby for the negligence or bad manners of that parson.

Mr. J. L. Paton, High Master of Manchester Grammar School, told a boys' brigade meeting the other day that

children used to be terrorised by pictures of everlasting fire, but that kind of thing was dropped now. There was room for improvement, however, in other directions. The picture of heaven offered to young people didn't attract—"especially a boy of fourteen, with vitality tingling in all his muscles, who had no use for a place where there was nothing doing." Even temperance teaching was not all it should be. What of the following extract from a temperance hymn?—

"With ragged clothes  
And pimpled nose  
The drunkard goes  
Upon his way."

We remember lots of hymns like that in our childhood.

Three hundred children had just assembled for prayers at the National Children's Home and Orphanage in Bonner-street, Victoria-park, when a fire broke out. "Providence" had overlooked them. Fortunately the drill master was present, and he marched them all out into the playground. We suppose "Providence" will get the thanks.

Miss Elizabeth Blauvelt went to a church in New York to marry Mr. Morris Holmes, a rich Boston banker. When she came to it in the wedding service she wouldn't say the word "obey," and asked the clergyman to leave it out. He replied that he couldn't; the word was in the service and he could not remove it. She then appealed to the bridegroom, who declared that he would not be married to a woman who would not obey. "I insist," he said, "on my wife obeying my every wish." So the marriage was broken off at the altar, the bride going away in tears, and the bridegroom, we should imagine, making tracks for Constantinople. One wonders why the lady went to church at all. Wasn't she aware that "obey" was an integral part of the service? What was the use of a wrangle at the chancel-railing? Even if she had said she would obey her husband, and even if he believed she would, we all know she wouldn't. Why didn't she propose a civil marriage? It is just as efficacious as the other, and somewhat more decent.

A correspondent of the *Church Times* offers what will be very unwelcome counsel to those Christians who play at being Socialists, or to those Socialists who play at being Christians. He says:—

"The members of the Church Socialist League are under the curious delusion that they count for something in the Socialist movement. They are really an entirely negligible quantity. They are utterly despised by the more thorough and consistent Socialists, while other Socialists, less honest but more astute, make use of them for purposes of propaganda."

Perhaps the game is not quite so open nor so one-sided as this, but the description contains a truth. Short sighted Socialists undoubtedly think they are advancing their cause by playing to the Christians, while Christians imagine they are permeating Socialism with Christianity. Hence the alliance of two dissimilar and ever-antagonistic things. In practice, the Christian gains most, since the net result of his alliance is to rob the Socialist movement of real strength by the dual process of disgusting stalwarts and enlisting weaklings. The *Church Times* itself, in a leading article says, "Socialism, without Christianity, of course, we dread and hate." Naturally. What it wants is a Socialism or any other "ism" with Christianity. So long as that is there nothing else matters. It desires a revolution that will disturb nothing, a drastic change that will leave things exactly as they are.

A sparrow got in amongst the congregation at the harvest festival service in Bolney (Sussex) parish church. It wouldn't go out for anything or anybody. At last they started the collection. It went then. Knowing bird!

Richard Carlile, on November 16, 1819, was sentenced to £1,500 fine and three years' imprisonment for "blasphemy." Only a few days ago a "blasphemer" at Accrington, named Stewart, was fined 5s. for "profanity"—which was more "blasphemous" than anything that Carlile ever published. What a change in less than a hundred years! The next man had up for "profanity" may be paid 5s. out of the poor-box.

There was an alarming report in the newspapers of "Mr. Shakespeare's illness." Happily, after all, it was not the gentleman who is said to have written Bacon. It was only the Secretary of the Baptist Union. We breathed again.



### Mr. Foote's Engagements

Sunday, October 6, Queen's (Minor) Hall, Langham-place, Regent-street, London, W.: at 7.30, "Sir Edward Carson's 'God.'"

October 6 to December 15, every Sunday evening, Queen's (Minor) Hall, London, W.

### To Correspondents.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1912.—Previously acknowledged, £211 10s. 1d. Received since:—R. Wood, 5s.; Harry Organ, 2s.; James Brodie, 3s.; S. Tyson, 2s. 6d.; J. E. T., 5s.; F. R. A. S., £10.

E. D. EDWARDS.—Charles Bradlaugh's brother never was a Freethinker. In what way, therefore, can it matter what he is now? Charles Bradlaugh's daughter always has been, and still is, and is likely to remain, an Atheist. We had the pleasure of having her on our right hand (we being chairman) at the Bradlaugh Dinner at the Holborn Restaurant on Wednesday evening, September 25, and she spoke as an Atheist then. The notion of her being a Church of England Sunday-school teacher is *too* comical. Christians might lie a little more plausibly.

G. MACDONALD (New York).—*Truthseeker* hasn't been arriving lately.

E. RAGGETT.—Pleased to hear from one who is "grateful for a weekly intellectual treat."

H. WHATCOTT.—Everybody gets a day older every twenty-four hours. It isn't confined to you and us—is it?

B. BLACK.—Not so. Our proposal—unless the London County Council comes to reason shortly—is to fight it in the Law Courts.

HARRY ORGAN.—Glad to hear that words of ours, long ago, put an edge on your Freethought that has lasted ever since. It is welcome news that your daughter has done so well without religious education. We hope the Edinburgh friend who wants to go over to Glasgow and "see Foote and die" will be luckier than that, and "see Foote and live." We don't think Foote's lectures are likely to impair his longevity.

T. A. JACKSON.—As you have taken the trouble to write the report in such detail we have inserted it in its entirety. Even the most punctilious Freethinkers will see that the real objection of the prosecutors was as to *what* the lecturer said more than *how* he said it. We note the saying of the Church clergyman who told you that the sentence would do Christianity more harm than all the speeches against it. These "profanity" prosecutions are only bringing the Blasphemy Laws into deeper contempt.

E. B.—Many thanks. We are glad not to have missed the pamphlet.

A. C. WELLS.—There is no end to the "relics" of Christ scattered over Europe. We had heard of his blood, but it doesn't come out into the open, and become the subject of an annual miracle, like the blood of St. Januarius. We know nothing about the picture you refer to of Christ being crucified in his clothes. Thanks for your trouble.

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

ANTI-MAMMON.—Very likely there is a good deal in what you say. But we do our own work in our own way and we leave others to do ditto. There are many divisions in the Army of Progress. We enlisted in one of them. You have doubtless done the same. Glad to receive your good report of Messrs. Gott and Jackson.

E. G. B.—Didn't you mistake our point? It was not what a poet might think of himself in relation to others, but what he might think of others out of relation to himself. Certainly, a looker on sees most of the game, but you carry the proverb too far. If Fry or Barnes or Warner (say) were amongst the lookers on at a cricket match they would see more of the game than the rest of the crowd. Why? Because they are experts. They know the game from inside.

R. WOOD sends a second subscription to the President's Fund by way of "stimulating the sluggish flow of the current."

P. HUNT.—Literature is neither allowed to be sold nor given away in Hyde Park. That is the explanation. The *Freethinker* and pamphlets are on sale at most open-air meetings. You say you believe this journal is worth a shilling a number, but you would like to see it sold at a penny for the sake of its circulation. We very much doubt the greater increase. The fact is we only appeal to people who think. The mob wouldn't rush for a paper like ours even if it were only a halfpenny a copy. Its readers are too apt to judge other people by themselves.

J. B. (Birmingham) writes: "I am pleased to say that two little incidents occurred this week which seem to prove that if the sale of the *Freethinker* is taken up in earnest it will soon make its way. As I told you, I gave my word to buy six copies weekly—three from a local newsagent on condition that he exhibits one in the window, and three from Smith & Son, who have kindly put one in the rack at the door. The local man has sold his lot this week, and both Smith & Son and Messrs. Mapstone had not a copy left yesterday when I went for my three copies. This had not occurred previously, so I presume it shows that the *Freethinker* is going ahead in Birmingham."

There has been an improvement in our circulation during September.

JAMES NEATE.—It is indeed funny to see Miss H. Pankhurst described as a member of the Salvation Army.

A. THOMPSON (Rushton).—Glad to hear your good report of the work of Messrs. Gott and Jackson. We could make use of half-a-dozen such combinations if the "saints" would only subscribe the "necessary." We shall have to talk a bit louder on this subject.

J. W. GOTT.—Pleased to receive your very gratifying report of the Northern Tour, but we can't do much with it on Tuesday morning.

G. F. H. McCUSKEY.—Your letter breathes the right spirit. But it was sure to do that.

GLASGOW BRANCH.—No lecture notice from you.

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.

### Personal.

I AM sorry to postpone my last article on Shelley until next week. I am too tired to write it with any prospect of doing it justice. I must take a little rest. Few of the "saints" know how much I have to do, behind the scenes as well as before the footlights. Take last week, for instance—premiering that I live (and *have* to live) some forty miles from London. On Monday, September 23, I went up to London to attend a Committee meeting of the Secular Education League. Tuesday was press day with the *Freethinker*; and I reached home about 10 o'clock at night. Wednesday evening saw me in the chair at the Bradlaugh Dinner; I left home at 4.30 in the afternoon and got home again at 1.15 in the morning. On Thursday I occupied the chair at a Board meeting of the Secular Society, Ltd., and also at an N.S.S. Executive meeting; reaching home again that night at 11.20. Friday I had to myself. Saturday afternoon at 3 saw me leaving home again; I was at Manchester about 9.45. Sunday I delivered two lectures at Manchester, and worked very hard at them too. Monday morning I travelled back to London, spent a few hours at my office, and reached my residence again at 8 o'clock. There I sat writing for the midnight post. Tuesday I am at the editorial office again. And all my regular work of all kinds has had to be done in the intervals of such engagements as the foregoing. My readers will now understand why I postpone the Shelley article.

G. W. FOOTE.

### Our Fighting Fund.

[The object of this Fund is to provide the sinews of war in the National Secular Society's fight against the London County Council, which is seeking to stop all collections at the Society's open-air meetings in London, and thus to abolish a practically immemorial right; this step being but one in a calculated policy which is clearly intended to suppress the right of free speech in all parks and other open spaces under the Council's control.]

Previously acknowledged, £25 8s. 6d. Received since:—E. Raggett, 2s. 6d.; H. Whatcott, 2s. 6d.; R. Black, 2s.; R. Wood, 2s. 6d.; Harry Organ, 1s.; H. B. Dodds, 2s. 6d.; A. P., 5s.; W. Bailey, £1; S. Adams, 10s.; Dorothy W. Coleman, 2s. 6d.; R. Bell, 5s.; J. S., 5s.; C. J. Q., 5s.; A. B. Q., 5s.; W. W., 1s.; Mr. and Mrs. A. Leeper, 5s. H. Jessop, £2 2s.; Definite Article, 5s.; G. F. H. McCluskey, £1 1s.; W. Bean, 5s.; J. E. T., 5s.

## Sugar Plums.

Mr. Foote begins the new course of Sunday Freethought lectures at Queen's (Minor) Hall this evening (October 6), and will carry them right through to December 15. His subjects for the four October Sundays are printed on our last page. It will be seen that they are all up to date, but the programs for this course of lectures will be liable to alteration if the public mind is occupied by some passing event of transcendent interest, on which it may be possible to illustrate the principles of Secularism in a specially striking manner. This can hardly happen often, and may not occur at all. Mr. Foote's first subject, "Sir Edward Carson's 'God,'" is a happy text on which he can hang an eye-opening sermon on the way in which the name of "God" has been used by adventurers in all ages, as well as by the regularly constituted authorities, to bamboozle the people. The occasion is one very suitable for Freethinkers to bring along some of their more orthodox friends.

London "saints" who could help in advertising these Queen's Hall lectures are earnestly invited to circulate the small printed announcements which they can obtain by applying to Miss E. M. Vance at 2 Newcastle-street, E.C. They could do a lot of good in this way if they only would. Will they? We think we have a right to ask the question.

Mr. Foote had fine meetings at Manchester on Sunday, and his voice was in excellent condition. The applause at the end of each lecture was worth hearing. There was no formal opposition, but many questions were asked and answered. A considerable number of ladies were present in the evening—which Mr. Foote always finds a gratifying feature of his audiences. It was delightful to see their bright faces and applauding hands at the close of the peroration on Father, Mother, and Child as the real Trinity.

"Saints" attended Mr. Foote's lectures from all parts of South-East Lancashire, and even from some more distant places. Several spoke to Mr. Foote highly of the mission-work carried on by Messrs. Jackson and Gott.

Mr. Foote has usually opened the winter lecture season for the Glasgow Branch, but owing to the Queen's Hall engagement he was unable to do so this year. Mr. Cohen, however, makes an excellent substitute. We are happy to inform the district "saints" that he lectures at the Secular Hall, Brunswick-street, Glasgow, to-day (Oct. 6), and we shall be glad to hear of thoroughly successful meetings.

The ninth annual Bradlaugh Dinner, under the auspices of the Bradlaugh Fellowship, took place at the Holborn Restaurant on Wednesday evening, September 25. The company at the tables numbered a hundred and forty. The dinner was excellent and well served, and the musical entertainment afterwards was provided by Miss Lilian Gordon and Mr. Harry P. Hayward, with Madame Saunders as pianist. Mr. G. W. Foote, who presided, proposed the toast of "The Memory of Charles Bradlaugh," making a reference to Bradlaugh in one of George Meredith's letters the text of his address. Mrs. Bonner responded in an excellent speech. Other toasts were proposed and responded to by Messrs. A. B. Moss, G. Standing, Mr. T. Perkins, Mr. B. T. Hall, Mr. E. Garitty, and Mr. E. Haywood. A very successful function terminated soon after eleven o'clock by toasting the Chairman with honors. It was a funny incident that everybody's name was on the Program except the Chairman's, and Mr. Moss got on as Mr. Nurs. This comes of not seeing proofs. The explanation is very simple.

We were happy to see the veteran Mr. Side, of Walworth, at the Bradlaugh Dinner. In spite of his eighty-eight years he was as lively as ever, and his bright eye almost suggested that he had taken another long lease of life.

*Bible and Beer*, the first number of the projected series of remarkably cheap "Pioneer Pamphlets," is slightly delayed at the printers' but in a day or two it will be on sale at the Pioneer Press publishing office. This is a new edition of a pamphlet long out of print. It was originally published at fourpence; the price now is only one penny—and the new edition contains some interesting and important fresh matter. Persons not in the trade, or advanced societies, wishing to distribute or circulate copies of this pamphlet, can be supplied on special terms if they communicate with the Pioneer Press manager.

## Tacitus and Poggio.

BY THE LATE J. M. WHEELER.

*Sub-Editor of the "Freethinker" and Author of the "Biographical Dictionary of Freethinkers," etc.*

EVERY student of Christian evidences knows the passage in the Annals of Tacitus, telling of the horrid tortures of Christians under Nero, and saying that the "author" of their name was Christus, who, in the reign of Tiberius, was put to death by the procurator, Pontius Pilate. Here is the passage in Gibbon's translation:—

"With this view he inflicted the most exquisite tortures on those men who, under the vulgar appellation of Christians, were already branded with deserved infamy. They derived their name and origin from Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, had suffered death by the sentence of the procurator, Pontius Pilate. For a while this dire superstition was checked, but it again burst forth; and not only spread itself over Judæa, the first seat of this mischievous sect, but was even introduced into Rome, the common asylum which receives and protects whatever is impure, whatever is atrocious. The confessions of those who were seized discovered a great multitude of their accomplices, and they were all convicted, not so much for the crime of setting fire to the city as for their hatred of human kind. They died in torments, and their torments were embittered by insult and derision. Some were nailed on crosses; others sewn up in the skins of wild beasts, and exposed to the fury of dogs; others, again, smeared over with combustible materials, were used as torches to illuminate the darkness of the night. The gardens of Nero were destined for the melancholy spectacle, which was accompanied with a horse-race, and honored with the presence of the emperor, who mingled with the populace in the dress and attitude of a charioteer. The guilt of the Christians deserved, indeed, the most exemplary punishment, but the public abhorrence was changed into commiseration, from the opinion that those unhappy wretches were sacrificed, not so much to the public welfare as to the cruelty of a jealous tyrant."

Gibbon said, and gravely too, that the most sceptical criticism must respect the integrity of this passage. Freethinkers usually have been content to point out that it does nothing to confirm the miraculous character of Christianity, which alone they dispute. They may add that the absence of the name of Jesus indicates that Tacitus was speaking rather from report than knowledge, and that, so far from describing Christianity as divine, Tacitus calls it a pernicious superstition, and says that its disciples "deserved exemplary punishment." But sceptical criticism has been forced onward since the days of Gibbon, and, from the passage being suspected as an interpolation, it has come that the entire Annals has been challenged as a forgery. The first to oppugn this passage, so far as I am aware, was the Rev. Robert Taylor, in his *Diegesis*, 1829. Examination of Christian evidences had made him cautious as to their claims. He points out that this passage was never once quoted by any of the early Christian fathers. It is not mentioned by Tertullian, though he had read, and largely quotes, from Tacitus; nor by Clement of Alexandria nor Eusebius, who set themselves to collect all Pagan testimonies. There is no vestige nor trace of its existence anywhere in the world before the fifteenth century, while its testimony is falsified by that of Melito, Bishop of Sardis, who says that the Christians had never been persecuted before his time—the third century.

Robert Cooper and Judge Strange took the same position, which was carried a little further by T. L. in his *First Seven Alleged Persecutions*, some of whose points I epitomise. There are no known Roman laws or edicts directing persecution on account of religion. This persecution was unknown to the author of the Acts of the Apostles, who (xxviii. 30, 31) represents Paul as dwelling two whole years in Rome, preaching freely at that very time and after (63-65), and who drops no hint of his having suffered persecution or martyrdom there. There is no evidence that the followers of Christ called themselves Christians at Rome then, and it is most improbable that there

was a "vast multitude" of Christians at Rome A.C. 64, since there was not a vast multitude of them at that time even in Palestine; and Josephus, who is said to have lived at Rome from the year 70 till the close of the century, knew nothing of them. It is still more improbable that, if numerous, the Emperor would seek to shield his own infamy by casting it on the most innocent persons, and himself reside at atrocious tortures directed against this particular sect. Some stories are too thin, but here the colors are laid on too thick.

It is, however, to a Scotsman of the name of Ross that must be ascribed the merit of having revealed the forger in the person of Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1459), the alleged discoverer of the manuscript, which was said to be found, at first vaguely, "in the forests of Germany," and afterwards located at the abbey of Corvei. The work by Mr. Ross is entitled *Tacitus and Bracciolini: The Annals Forged in the XVth Century* (1878). It was severely criticised by a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, but the reviewer by no means answers the points raised by Mr. Ross. Nor does he note how all literary genius at the time of the Renaissance was bent on recovering and rehabilitating the old Roman world. The desire of knowing the past ages of Roman grandeur, which at this era animated the humanists of Europe, was checked by the want of documents. The Christian monks destroyed, as far as possible, the remains of heathen learning, and now a new order of men found fame and fortune in refinding them. Demand begets supply, in literature and Christian evidences, no less than in pork and potatoes. Poggio was apostolic secretary under nine popes, from Innocent VII. to Calixtus III. He was a thorough man of the world, and Latin was native to him. Such men then held the veritable keys of the kingdom. Luther said, a century later, that in Rome everything was permitted save honesty; and this was as certainly true in the time of Poggio, who personally witnessed the burning of Jerome of Prague in 1416. He has left a vivid description of this martyrdom, which Mr. Ross finds to be very similar in its Latinity to that of the *Annals* ascribed to Tacitus.

In Poggio's own correspondence with Niccoli may be traced the evidence that he was, from 1423, engaged in some underhand work. He notes that "what the ancients did quickly and easily was to him tedious and burdensome"; but *labor omnia vincit improbus*. We find him asking for Ptolemy's Geography, Plutarch, Suetonius, and other historians, for the purposes of his own work. It should be noted that the passage in question is mainly an amplification of what is narrated concerning Nero and the Christians in the chronicle of Sulpicius Severus, dated about 422 B.C., but possibly itself a monkish forgery. Poggio's discovery of Tacitus, when first announced, was continually asked for, and as constantly put off.

Of course, if the *Annals* is forged, one expects to find slips and anachronisms betraying the fact. Mr. Ross notes many such, into which it would be tedious here to enter. One instance that may be briefly mentioned is the statement (xiv. 33) that London was famed for the great number of its merchants and its commerce. In the time of Julius Cæsar Britain was so barbarous and obscure that even merchants only knew the regions opposite Gaul. That London was really an important town, or known at all in Rome, in the time of Nero, is wildly improbable; but it was natural that Poggio, who had visited and knew its importance in his own day, should make such an error.

In 1890 P. Hochart threw further light on the question in his work entitled *De l'Authenticité des Annales et des Histoires de Tacite*. It was by his study of the question of the persecution of Christians under Nero, *Etudes au sujet de la persécution des chrétiens sous Néron*, that he was first led to see that this particular passage was, at any rate, an interpolation. An examination of the evidences showed their entirely dubious character, and enabled him, following Mr. Ross, to bring the charge of forgery

home to Poggio. He examines the manuscripts, of which he gives photographic reproductions. He finds their history suspicious, and their caligraphy spurious. He holds they contain much Tacitus could not have written. He shows how the book was composed, Poggio using the remains of Dion Cassius, Plutarch, Suetonius, Josephus, Tertullian, Orosius, and Sulpicius Severus, to which he added from his own invention and his wide reading and knowledge of the human heart and human affairs. M. Hochart points out an absence of a knowledge of war, inexplicable in Tacitus, but natural in Poggio, who makes Mithradates follow exactly the same route as that which the Emperor Julian describes as his own. The full weight of such arguments it must be left for scholars to decide; but, assuredly, there are few great works now under a heavier load of suspicion than the *Annals* of Tacitus.

A surmise may be made that Poggio had as model for the character of Nero the real character of his master, Pope John XXIII., and that the real martyrdoms of Huss and Jerome may have suggested those of the early Christians. M. Hochart, while finding the original of the story in the chronicles of Sulpicius Severus, thinks the details of mockery were supplied from the execution of Jerome. The refinements of cruelty attributed to Nero were less known in the Pagan Roman world, but were to be found in the annals of the Inquisition. M. Hochart holds that the merits of Tacitus have been much exaggerated. This may be; yet it must be confessed that, if a forgery, the forger was no common man. Poggio was assuredly a man of great erudition and industry. He was as certainly avaricious and entirely without scruples. His heart was in antiquity, and he was a Latinist of many styles by profession. Of his *History of Florence L'enfant* says: "On ne saurait le lire sans y reconnoître Tite Live, Salluste, et les meilleurs historiens de l'antiquité." One cannot read it without recognising Livy, Sallust, and the best historians of antiquity.

I do not pretend that the question of the forgery of the *Annals* is by any means as clear as that of the passage in Josephus, which bears the mark of the Christian so legible on its face. But this I do say, that this passage is of so dubious a character as to render it quite unfit to be cited as evidence of an infallible revelation. Christianity, if from God, should be so clear and convincing that there could be no gainsaying its evidences. Like Cæsar's wife, it should be above suspicion. As a matter of fact, there is not a single item of Christian evidence untainted.

### More "Profanity."

At Accrington Petty Sessions, on Wednesday, September 25, Thomas William Stewart appeared in answer to a summons charging him with having used "profane" language in the course of a lecture upon Accrington Market Ground on the 12th instant.

Police-Serjeant Lennox, called for the prosecution, said that he went to the Market Ground at 9.5 p.m. on the 12th instant in consequence of a complaint which had been made to him. He found the defendant speaking to a crowd of about two hundred persons. He remained in the crowd from 9.5 to 10 p.m., and heard the defendant on several occasions make use of profane language. He heard him say:—

"Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. One night Noah got drunk and lay on the couch naked and went to sleep. When he awoke and found his youngest son, Ham, had seen his nakedness and the depth of his debauchery, he (Noah) cursed him till he went black in the face; and that's the reason why there are niggers to-day."

(Much laughter in court, which was sternly suppressed.) He also heard the defendant say:—

"The mother of Jesus was a virgin. She was a virgin after she had had Jesus. She had five other children—still she was a virgin."

At which (continued witness) there was great laughter from the crowd. He also heard him say:—

"Mary [Magdalene] washed Jesus's feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair [here he made, witness said, a pause, and then added] the dirty dog!"

Further, defendant said :—

"You are told that God made you. If God made me he was damned short of material."

Also :—

"No Christian can be honest. If he is a Christian he is a blackguard."

Further, he said :—

"God is no fit companion for me. I got three months in Armley Gaol for saying that in Leeds."

He made this statement, said witness, several times.

He also, witness said, made some remark which he (witness) couldn't hear, but which made the crowd laugh, and then he said, "Priests are dirty dogs"—in a "very contemptible way." He also said :—

"If there is a God I will give him two minutes to strike me down dead. If he doesn't do it in two minutes, I win!"

Witness continued that after defendant had done speaking a Mr. Bates, who was with him, went round selling books, and the defendant took up a collection in aid of the propaganda. Witness went to defendant, at the close of the meeting, and obtained his name and address.

Cross-examined by defendant, witness refused to say who made the complaint which caused him to go to the meeting; in which he was upheld by the bench. Proceeding to cross-examine, the defendant asked, What do you consider profane language?—Ridicule of the Bible and its teachings.

Are you a student of the Bible?—No.

Do you know that, according to the Bible, Noah got drunk?—No.

And exposed himself?—No.

And cursed his son Ham?—No; he knew there was a Shem, Ham, and Japheth, but he didn't know anything about it. (The witness's Biblical knowledge caused much mirth in court, especially among the reporters.)

Defendant, proceeding, suggested that in the passage referring to the Mother of Jesus he had added the words "according to orthodoxy."—Witness didn't hear that, and didn't think he had said it.

Referring to the passage "God not a fit companion," etc., defendant suggested that he was then reading from a printed report of his trial at Leeds (a copy of which he held up).—Witness admitted that the pamphlet was sold, but he didn't think that he was reading from it at that time.

So also with regard to the quotation about "priests." Witness did not agree that that was a quotation from a book entitled *Priestcraft*, although these books were on sale at that meeting.

P.C. Cartmell corroborated in the main, but added that he was present sooner and left earlier than the previous witness. A Mr. Bates had spoken before the defendant.

Mr. Bloomer was then called, and said that he was the individual who had complained to Serjeant Lennox. He heard Mr. Bates speaking, and then the defendant. He corroborated the police witness, with the (in his opinion serious) addition that defendant had said "The man who is not afraid of hell-fire is not afraid of Armley Gaol." The language was offensive and annoying to him personally, and he had heard several others about him who seemed annoyed.

Cross-examined, he said he also objected to Mr. Bates, and thought he ought to have "been here" as well. He was annoyed at defendant saying he was "not afraid of God, man, nor Devil." He did not like the way Bates and he referred to the Deity.

T. W. Stewart, called upon for his defence, said that he came to Accrington on the occasion in question at the request of his friend Mr. Bates. He was not a professional lecturer, but a manufacturer of wax models. Referring to the phrase in the summons charging him with having spoken "to the annoyance of the passengers," he claimed that as he was (as the police admitted) very hoarse from a bad cold, and as also there were three other meetings in progress at the same time, he could only have been heard by those who actually went to the trouble of stopping to listen. Coming to the question of profanity, he argued that the Act of 1847 did not contemplate cases of this kind. The word was used in the Act as the equivalent of "obscene"; and as no suggestion of obscenity had been thrown out, he argued that this summons was wrongly issued. He was quite willing to take his trial for blasphemy, but he objected to the present proceedings. He did not like being even apparently mixed up with such a thing as obscenity.

The Magistrates' Clerk interposed to say: If you were guilty of two offences it is open to the authorities to proceed either way.

Defendant, continuing, said: The word "profanity" is derived (*pro* = out of or from; *fanis* = the sanctuary or temple) in such a way as to mean anything which is not ecclesiastical. In that sense, your Worships, this court is a profane court and these are profane proceedings. Going on to refer to a summons against him in Leeds,

which, he said, had been dismissed, defendant quoted Mr. Atkinson (the Leeds Stipendiary) as having said that "whenever your statements are mere reiterations of Scriptural fact, no proceedings can be taken." His remarks about Noah were simply a reiteration of Scriptural fact. So also was the statement about the mother of Jesus and her five children, and the statement about the other Mary washing Jesus's feet with her tears and wiping them with her hair. He complained that the police had made it appear that the reference to Mary was to Jesus's mother. According to the first chapter of Matthew, he continued, Mary was a virgin after Jesus was born. Of course, he didn't believe the story, or that Matthew wrote it, but he claimed that he was only repeating what the Bible said. He was used to being opposed; in fact, the organisation he represented (the Freethought Socialist League) was so strong that it had provoked the envious enmity of every Socialist in the kingdom. He, personally, had no use for hypocritical Christian Socialists. Proceeding, he claimed that the passage cited, "Priests are dirty dogs," which the police witness had said he had spoken in a contemptible tone—he supposed he meant contemptuous—was a quotation from John Kensit, embodied in a work called *Priestcraft*, which he was selling at that meeting. He had also read from the pamphlet report of his Leeds trial the passage which had been cited in which he referred to God as "no fit companion" for him, and claimed that he could not be proceeded against for quoting from, and referring to, words for which he had paid the penalty. He thought he had grave reasons for complaint in that the police had artfully worked into their evidence a reference to the fact that he was a convicted blasphemer, which, he thought, was calculated to prejudice the Bench against him at the outset. He might mention that his imprisonment had provoked a very widely signed petition for his release. Returning to the police evidence, he claimed that he had not said the words "dirty dog" after the reference to the washing of Jesus's feet in the manner in which the police had sworn; he had really said that "if any man came to you to-day and said he had let a woman do that to him, you would say 'dirty dog!'" He complained again of the general ambiguity of the word "profane," and concluded by asking the Bench to dismiss the case on these grounds: (1) Because the Act did not strictly apply to this class of case; (2) Because it would be better to direct the police to issue a summons for blasphemy; and (3) Because of the prejudice he had suffered from the unnecessary introduction into the police evidence of reference to his previous conviction. It was, he added, the first time he had spoken in Accrington, and he thought it would be the last; and also he hoped the Bench would understand that he hated to be summoned under the same Act as a man for selling dirty postcards. If the magistrates held that the Act applied to his case, he would have to ask for an adjournment.

The Magistrates' Clerk: You should have asked for that after hearing the first witness.

After a slight discussion between the defendant and the Clerk, the former, saying he had no witnesses to call, admitted that the language alleged was "nearly correct," although not in the sense which the police alleged.

The Bench then withdrew for some ten minutes, and on their return the Chairman said they found the offence proved, and, taking into consideration that this was the defendant's first visit to the town, they would deal with him leniently. He would be fined 5s. and costs, or seven days.

Mr. Stewart then said that, with their permission, he would like to say that his son was ill with scarlet fever and his wife was also unable to leave her bed. Consequently, he would submit to paying the fine, although, under normal circumstances, he would sooner have gone to gaol.

THOS. A. JACKSON.

## Tales of Our Times.

BY A CYNIC.

### I.

THE old tower of Christian Superstition had stood for many centuries, but was now showing unmistakable signs of decay. Legend had it that long ago it was surmounted by a proud and lofty pinnacle named Temporal Power; but this fell with a crash one stormy winter, and since then the glory of the tower steadily diminished. Ominous cracks appeared in the walls, showing a subsidence of the foundations. The mighty bells which aforetime had sent their deep, solemn tones of authority and power over the countryside, compelling reverence and obedience in all hearts, had now to be rung with some care and restraint lest their own

vibration should damage the crumbling walls, and, indeed, some of the heavier ones were rarely rung at all. The custodians of the tower themselves had given up occupying the higher floors, but they still crowded all the lower rooms and basement, and still protested that the tower was quite safe and would stand for ever.

For men had grown doubtful of the tower's stability, and some had openly said, "The tower is doomed. We must build a new one with firmer foundations." So they set to work and, choosing a spot where the solid rocks of Truth appeared above the shifting sands of Speculation, proceeded to build the tower of Human Knowledge. The work was terribly painful and slow, especially as the custodians of the old tower put all possible obstacles, and did all they could by coercion and threats, to prevent others from joining the builders. But stone by stone the tower of Human Knowledge rose, each granite block hewn and trimmed with beautiful precision, and cemented into place with the firm indestructible cement of Reason. Some of the greater stones were inscribed with the names of the greater builders. For instance, there was a magnificent block marked Copernicus, and presently, a little above it, appeared others marked Bruno, Galileo, Newton.

Meanwhile the old tower had gone on crumbling slowly, and now presented a curiously riven appearance, a section of the edifice around one corner standing out separately from the rest in a more or less isolated position. This had been caused by the development of a great fissure between these two parts, followed by a displacement and fall of masonry on each side, which served to widen the breach. Of course, this was a really alarming sign of danger to the whole structure, but there were some who actually rejoiced in it, thinking that this separation of the tower into two portions afforded a proof of strength and a promise of endurance. And, strange to say, these people, led by one Martin Luther, claimed the greater strength and endurance for the smaller detached portion than for the main structure, though this looked much the more solid and firm.

The builders of the new tower smiled at these delusions, and pointed out that cracks, fissures, and breaches in a building were scarcely signs of strength and permanence; but they were not heeded. So they went on quietly with their work, and the new tower slowly but surely rose in solid strength. The names of the greater builders were still being imperishably recorded in the noble structure, and stones inscribed with such names as Laplace, Haeckel, Darwin, Spencer, now adorned the upper courses of the tower.

But while the tower of Human Knowledge is steadily rising, that of Christian Superstition is as steadily decaying. The process of disintegration is most noticeable in the smaller detached portion of the tower, where the numerous and ever-widening cracks and crumbings of the masonry have been dividing and re-dividing the structure into a number of small isolated pinnacles sticking up in all sorts of grotesque shapes. The main portion of the tower, though still fairly solid, is also showing signs of slowly approaching ruin. Even the custodians of the tower are becoming anxious. A good deal of underpinning work is going on, supporting piers of cheap masonry are being built outside the old crumbling walls, and clumsy-looking buttresses are being thrown out in all directions, completely obliterating the fine bold lines of the ancient architecture. Worse than all, attempts are even being made to tinker with the very foundations themselves. Cracks and hollows are being filled up with mortar, and here and there old worn stones are being taken out and replaced by new ones.

But the fatality of these expedients is very evident, and most thinking people are coming to see that the old tower is really doomed. It may stand for some centuries yet—especially the larger and more solid part of it—but the final crash seems to be only a question of time.

## II.

Astronomers have proved to their own satisfaction that the giant star Arcturus is five thousand times as brilliant as our sun, but it is not so well known that the inhabitants of the planets which revolve around that resplendent orb exceed ourselves in knowledge and intelligence in about the same proportion. One of their most striking discoveries was a method of traversing space by utilising what they called the "Differential tension of the ether"—quite a simple method of locomotion when once it was thoroughly understood. This great discovery had rapidly established complete inter-planetary communication throughout the Arcturian system, but no extended journeys beyond the limits of the system had been attempted till there arose a very bold and enterprising Arcturian—quite the Christopher Columbus of those regions—who conceived the idea of penetrating the vast abysses of interstellar space. He was led to this idea by a persistent notion that three-dimensional space, though boundless, may not be infinite, and might, therefore, possibly be circumnavigated.

As the minds of the Arcturians had rather more definite glimmerings of dimensional space than even our profoundest mathematicians possess, their Columbus did not experience as much difficulty in getting his views favorably considered as did the great Genoese navigator. And, fortunately for the Arcturian Columbus, his claims had not to be submitted to a jury of ecclesiastics, nor were they open to condemnation on the authority of a sacred book—both ecclesiastics and sacred books having long ago perished in the light of Arcturian science.

So the great enterprise was readily approved, and the daring navigator and his companions were sent forth under the patronage of a Committee elected by the scientific societies of all the Arcturian planets. Their instructions were, in the first place, to "Make such observations as may throw light on the question of the possible super-dimensional curvature of space," and, in the second place, to "Effect landings whenever practicable on the worlds encountered on the journey, and to observe the condition and characteristics of their inhabitants, if any. But," the instructions went on, "no time should be wasted in observing the habits of creatures in an obviously low stage of evolution which not be likely to prove of interest or instruction to Arcturians."

When the explorers returned home, they prepared a "Report of the Arcturian Interstellar Expedition," compared with which the report of our famous Challenger Expedition would have seemed a mere pamphlet. Buried in the depths of these marvellous volumes appeared a few lines which seemed to indicate that the Arcturians passed through our solar system and caught a glimpse of the earth revealing to their view the western part of the United States of America. Their account runs thus:—

"We next traversed a small planetary system belonging to the 19th magnitude star, marked X47,063 in our micro-graphic charts. We observed eight planets in this system, and our course took us within a moderate distance of the third planet from the central sun. This little body seemed to have reached a well-advanced stage of physical evolution, and presented a picturesque appearance with its clearly defined oceans and continents, its snow-covered mountains, and polar ice-caps. On the western limb of the disc, an elongated mass of land stretched from north to south, and at one point in the northern part of this continent what appeared like a large city was just emerging on to the illuminated area. We turned on the micro-etherscope to observe details, and were somewhat astonished at what it revealed. A dense crowd of living creatures was assembled in a large open space of the city surrounding a blazing fire. Chained to a stake amid the flames writhed and struggled another living creature of similar shape to those in the crowd, but of a darker color. This creature was evidently being burned to death, and we at once concluded that we were witnessing some savage orgy of a sacrificial or retributive character, such as our own sociologists have often recorded in their accounts of the early religious stages of social evolution. As these were evidently savages of a most degraded type, and as a closer study of their ways seemed little likely to afford either pleasure or profit, we decided to waste no time in landing on this planet, and so proceeded on our way."

It is really to be regretted that the Arcturians came so hastily to this conclusion. Had the Arcturian Columbus taken the trouble to land on North American soil, he would have discovered that its inhabitants, so far from being savages in a lower stage of culture than those whom his terrestrial predecessor had found in those regions, are supposed to be among the most advanced and enlightened peoples of the earth.

## A CERTAIN GERMAN BARON.

A good story is told about a certain Baron of German extraction who shall be nameless, and doubtless speculation will be rife as to who the noble Teuton can be who laid himself open to a discomfiting sally by an Irishman who was one of a crowd he was haranguing in the course of a political campaign.

He was a bit of a snob, and when he was standing for his constituency he thus addressed the meeting, which, as usual, had an Irishman in its midst:—

"My friends," exclaimed the Baron, "my title is of no mushroom growth; my grandfather was Baron, and my father was Baron —"

Then came the Irishman's chance.

"An' it's a great pity yer mother wasn't Baron, to," he shouted, to the joy of the meeting and the discomfiture of the titled alien.—Lord Rossmore, "Things I Can Tell."

A little boy was asked by his Sunday-school teacher why a certain part of his church was called the altar. "Because it is where people change their names," he promptly answered.

## 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, Regent-street, W.): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "Sir Edward Carson's 'God.'"

#### OUTDOOR

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. Boyce, a Lecture.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (Ridley-road, High-street): 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "How I Fell Among Thieves."

WOOD GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Jolly Butchers Hill, opposite Public Library): 7, Debate between Mr. Allison (N. S. S.) and Mr. Legge (N. L. C. E. L.), "The Historicity of Jesus Christ."

### COUNTRY.

#### INDOOR.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, Fred Morgan, Miscellaneous Dramatic Recital.

#### OUTDOOR.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE: Thos. A. Jackson—Bury (front of Circus): October 6, at 3, "The Bible and Beer"; at 6.30, "The Salvation Army"; 7, at 7.30, "The Latest Thing in Gods." Preston (Market Ground): 8, at 7.30, "The Bible and Beer"; 9, at 7.30, "The Faith of an Infidel." Blackburn (Market Ground): 10, at 7.30, "The Bible and Beer." Colne (Cumberland-street): 11, at 7.30, "The Bible and Beer." Nelson (Chapel-street): 12, at 7.30, "The Bible and Beer."

## MURRAY'S BIBLE REFERENCE CARD.

"A Strange God," List of References to Obscene Texts, "Bible Saints," "Inhuman Laws," "Human Sacrifices," "Slavery Authorised," "Contradictions," "Strange Words and Actions of Jesus." Indispensable for controversialists. Three for 3d., five for 4d., ten for 6d. Post paid to any address. Penny stamps will do in emergency.

NORMAN MURRAY,

233 ST. JAMES STREET, MONTREAL, CANADA.

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

## 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 VESY STREET, NEW YORK, U.S.A.



*To My Freethought Friends*

*I am in a position to supply you with  
A Suit to measure 30/. Trowsers 10/6.  
Overcoat to measure 25/. Raincoat 25/-.  
Boots, Ladies or Gents 10/6 per pair  
Dress or Costume Materials, 2/11 per yard.  
Ask all Freethinkers to give me a trial order  
because Christian Boycott as only CHRISTIANS Can*

**Patterns Sent on Approval. POST FREE.  
EVERYBODY SERVED HONESTLY & WELL**

## THE SECULAR SOCIETY (LIMITED)

*Company Limited by Guarantees.*

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

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

Secretary—MISS E. M. VANCE.

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

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

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

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

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

The Society's affairs are managed by an elected Board of Directors, consisting of not less than five and not more than twelve members, one-third of whom retire by ballot) each year,

but are capable of re-election. An Annual General Meeting of members must be held in London, to receive the Report, elect new Directors, and transact any other business that may arise.

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

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

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

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

**WORKS BY G. W. FOOTE.**

|   | s. | d. |
|---|----|----|
| ATHEIST SHOEMAKER, THE, and the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 1  |
| BIBLE ROMANCES. Popular edition, with portrait, paper ... .. post 2½d.  | 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  | 6  |
| DROPPING THE DEVIL: and other Free Church Performances ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 2  |
| DYING ATHEIST, THE. A Story. ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 1  |
| FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT. Series I. & II. cloth ... .. post 3d.   | 2  | 6  |
| GOD SAVE THE KING. An English Republican's Coronation Notes ... .. post ½d.   | 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 ½d.  | 0  | 2  |
| IS SOCIALISM SOUND? Four Nights' Public Debate with Annie Besant ... .. post 1½d.   | 1  | 0  |
| INGERSOLLISM DEFENDED AGAINST ARCH-DEACON FARRAR ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 2  |
| IMPOSSIBLE CREED, THE. An Open Letter to Bishop Magee on the Sermon on the Mount ... .. post ½d.                              | 0  | 2  |
| JOHN MORLEY AS A FREETHINKER ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 2  |
| LETTERS TO THE CLERGY (128 pages) ... .. post 2d.   | 1  | 0  |
| LIE IN FIVE CHAPTERS, or Hugh Price Hughes' Converted Atheist ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 1  |
| MRS. BESANT'S THEOSOPHY. A Candid Criticism ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 2  |
| MY RESURRECTION. A Missing Chapter from the Gospel of Matthew ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 2  |
| NEW CAGLIOSTRO, THE. An Open Letter to Madame Blavatsky ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 2  |
| PHILOSOPHY OF SECULARISM ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 3  |
| REMINISCENCES OF CHARLES BRADLAUGH ... .. post 1d.  | 0  | 6  |
| ROME OR ATHEISM? The Great Alternative ... .. post 1d.  | 0  | 3  |
| SECULARISM AND THEOSOPHY. A Rejoinder to Mrs. Besant ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 2  |
| SIGN OF THE CROSS, THE. A Candid Criticism of Mr. Wilson Barret's Play ... .. post 1½d.                                       | 0  | 6  |
| THE PASSING OF JESUS. The Last Adventures of the First Messiah ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 2  |
| THEISM OR ATHEISM. Public Debate ... .. post 1½d.   | 1  | 0  |
| WAS JESUS INSANE? ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 1  |
| WHAT IS AGNOSTICISM? ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 3  |
| WHO WAS THE FATHER OF JESUS? ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 2  |
| WILL CHRIST SAVE US? ... .. post 1d.  | 0  | 6  |

**WORKS BY COL. INGERSOLL**

|   | s. | d. |
|---|----|----|
| A CHRISTIAN CATECHISM ... .. post 1d.   | 0  | 6  |
| A WOODEN GOD ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 1  |
| CHRISTIAN RELIGION, THE ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 3  |
| CREEDS AND SPIRITUALITY... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 1  |
| CRIMES AGAINST CRIMINALS ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 3  |
| DEFENCE OF FREETHOUGHT ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 4  |
| DEVIL, THE ... .. post 1d.  | 0  | 6  |
| DO I BLASPHEME? ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 2  |
| ERNEST RENAN ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 2  |
| FAITH AND FACT. Reply to Rev. Dr. Field ... .. post ½d.                               | 0  | 2  |
| HOLY BIBLE, THE ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 6  |
| HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH, THE ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 2  |
| HOUSE OF DEATH (Funeral Orations) ... .. post 2d.                                     | 1  | 0  |
| INGERSOLL'S ADVICE TO PARENTS.—Keep Children out of Church and Sunday-school ... .. 0 | 1  |    |
| LAST WORDS ON SUICIDE ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 2  |
| LIVE TOPICS ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 1  |
| LIMITS OF TOLERATION, THE ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 2  |
| MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE. An Agnostic's View ... .. post ½d.                              | 0  | 2  |
| MYTH AND MIRACLE ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 1  |
| ORATION ON LINCOLN ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 3  |
| ORATION ON THE GODS ... .. post 1d.   | 0  | 6  |
| ORATION ON VOLTAIRE ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 3  |
| ROME OR REASON? ... .. post 1d.   | 0  | 3  |
| SHAKESPEARE ... .. post 1d.   | 0  | 6  |
| SOCIAL SALVATION ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 2  |
| SOME MISTAKES OF MOSES. 136 pp., on superfine paper ... .. post 1½d.                  | 1  | 0  |
| SUPERSTITION ... .. post 1d.  | 0  | 6  |
| TAKE A ROAD OF YOUR OWN ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 1  |
| THREE PHILANTHROPISTS, THE ... .. post ½d.  | 0  | 2  |
| WHAT MUST WE DO TO BE SAVED?... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 2  |
| WHY AM I AN AGNOSTIC? ... .. post ½d.   | 0  | 2  |

*Orders to the amount of 5s. sent post free.*

*Postage must be included for smaller orders.*

**THE PIONEER PRESS,**

**2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.**

**PAMPHLETS by C. COHEN.**

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>An Outline of Evolutionary Ethics ...</b>                     | <b>6d.</b> |
| <i>Principles of ethics, based on the doctrine of Evolution.</i> |            |
| <b>Socialism, Atheism, and Christianity..</b>                    | <b>1d.</b> |
| <b>Christianity and Social Ethics ...</b>                        | <b>1d.</b> |
| <b>Pain and Providence ...</b>                                   | <b>1d.</b> |

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

# SUNDAY EVENING FREETHOUGHT LECTURES

AT

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

BY

**Mr. G. W. FOOTE,**

*Editor of the "Freethinker," President of the National Secular Society, and Chairman of the Secular Society (Ltd.).*

From October 6 to December 15, inclusive.

- 
- October 6.— "Sir Edward Carson's 'God.'"  
 „ 13.— "The Pulpit and The Stage on Sunday."  
 „ 20.— "Religion and Marriage."  
           With remarks on Mr. H. G. Wells's new Novel.  
 „ 27.— "The Peace of the World and the Failure of  
           Christianity."

Subjects always liable to alteration in cases of special urgency.  
 Announcements will appear in Saturday and Sunday papers—such as the *Daily News*,  
*Chronicle*, *Star*, *Westminster Gazette*, *Reynolds'*, *Weekly Times*.

Reserved Seats, 1s.      Second Seats, 6d.      A Few Free Seats at the Back.  
 Doors Open at 7.      Chair taken at 7.30.

---

## PIONEER PAMPHLETS.

A series of pamphlets under this general title is being issued by  
 The Secular Society, Ltd.  
 They are to be **Extremely Cheap** and of the **Best Quality**.

### NUMBER ONE

Is a new and revised edition of a publication long out of print.

# BIBLE AND BEER.

BY

**G. W. FOOTE.**

Forty Pages. Well Printed on Good Paper,  
**PRICE ONE PENNY.**

**Special Terms for Quantities for Free Distribution or to Advanced Societies.**

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